

# Free the Atmore-Holman Brothers

## Stop the racist repression

### DEATH LIST

On March 4, 1974 a trustee at Holman Maximum Security Prison came across a handwritten list of names of inmates of the Alabama prison system. Almost all of the 23 prisoners named were members of the IFA. The list made it clear that the prison officials wanted the named prisoners killed and would take no action against any prison guards who participated in such a process.

At the head of the list was George (Chagina) Dobbins, the Chairman of the IFA, who had been murdered by Alabama officials in the aftermath of the January, 1974 rebellion at Atmore Prison Farm.

Among the other names on the list were Tommy (Yukeena) Dotson and Willie Joe Menefee. Dotson was able to obtain the list and smuggle it out of Holman Prison. There was an urgency as he presented the list; "I might be next," he said. And he was. On March 13, Dotson was beaten to death by five guards at Holman Prison. Three days later the Mobile Register reported that Willie Joe Menefee had been stabbed to death at Atmore Prison.

When the existence of the death list got coverage in the *Mobile Register*, Commissioner L.B. Sullivan's response to questions about it was "no comment." But there must be a comment, especially since 7 of the 9 Atmore-Holman Brothers facing trial are on that list.

The Alabama prison officials are working their way down the "death list" systematically eliminating every prisoner who will speak out against the barbaric conditions of the Alabama prison system. The frameup cases of the Atmore-Holman Brothers, nine Black men who have spoken out in just such a manner, is another brutal act in the implementation of the death list.

**THIS IS A PEOPLE'S CASE—  
IT NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT**

The state plans to put the brothers, who are the victims of violence and inhuman conditions inside the prisons, on trial as the villains. If the state wins, the wardens and guards will know that

they can keep on working their way down the death list and no one will ever prosecute them. They will also know that they can safely use death as a method of discipline against any prisoners who buck the brutal system that exists, who support programs like the IFA's for basic human rights. If these methods of maintaining order at any price are allowed to succeed inside the prisons, then they will be used outside too. This is why the Atmore-Holman brothers defense—like other cases such as Attica—is not for them alone, not even for prisoners alone. Their defense is for the people also.

**PEOPLE MOVE TO DEFEND THE  
IFA**

People throughout Alabama, the South and the country have responded to the call by the brothers for support. Prisoners' relatives have organized into support groups called Families for Action in both Mobile and Birmingham. Former prisoners and IFA members have been instrumental in organizing defense efforts on behalf of the brothers on the inside. And others: workers, students, teachers, welfare rights, tenant rights, and union activists have organized defense committees to support the IFA's demands and fight to free the Atmore-Holman Brothers.

Also a legal committee has been organized, bringing together lawyers from all over the South to represent the Brothers. In addition, offensive legal action is being planned against prison

and state officials for repression and violence against IFA members.

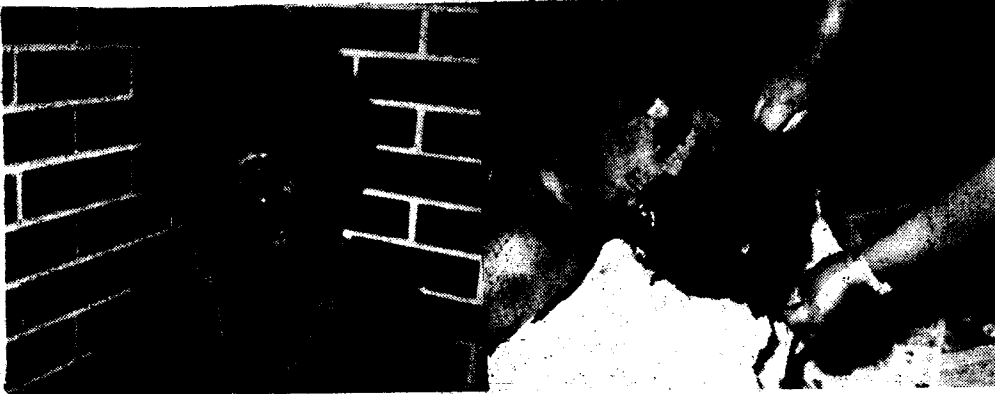
The supporters of the Atmore-Holman brothers are now working to mobilize national support for the case and to bring people to the trials in Brewton in February.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

1) Money is desperately needed to help the families of the Atmore-Holman brothers, most of whom are from Birmingham, to get to Atmore regularly, since only they and the lawyers can see the Brothers. In addition there are dozens of important daily expenses, court costs, and rental buses to get people to the trials. This is a people's trial and only the presence of the people will force any justice into the courtroom.

2) It is crucial to show that the Brothers have broad and national support. You or your group can help by sponsoring the Defense Committee and publicizing the case and by distributing the newsletter and buttons.

3) You can also write to L.B. Sullivan, Commissioner of the Alabama Board of Corrections, 101 South Union Street, Montgomery, Alabama and Gov. George Wallace, State Capitol, Montgomery, Alabama.



Last picture taken of Tommy Dotson alive.

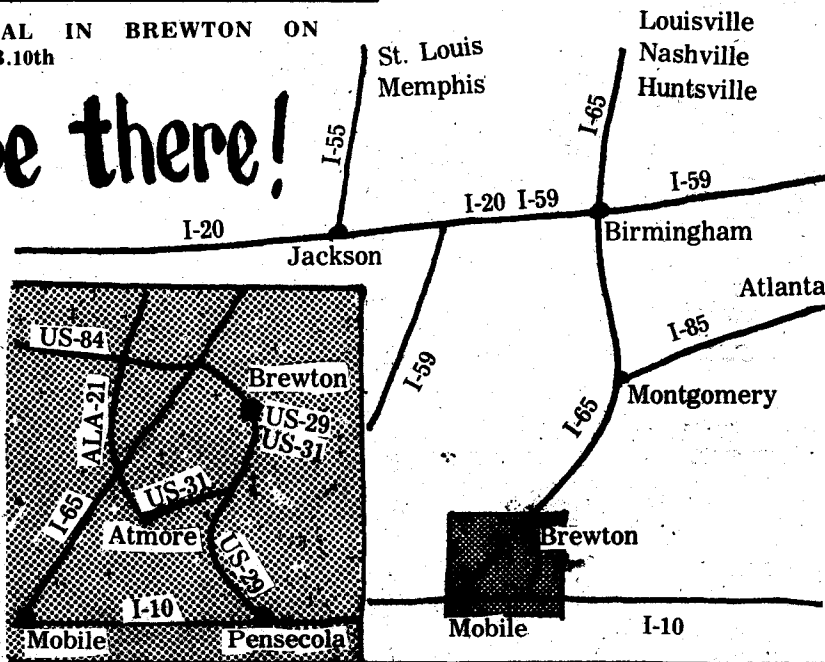
*Dotson savagely mutilated.*

and protest these trials and false charges.

4) Finally, send some letters to the Brothers. They are locked in isolation cells where it's hard for them to hear the voice of the people in their support. The mailing address for Anthony Paradise, Johnny Harris, Lincoln Heard, Grover McCorvey, and Charles Beasley is Rt. 2 Box 38 Atmore, Alabama 36502. For Edward Ellis, Jessie James Clanzy, and Oscar Johnson, write Rt. 5, Box 125, Montgomery, Alabama 36109. For Frank X. Moore, write Escambia County Jail, Brewton, Alabama.

TRIAL IN BREWTON ON  
FEB.10th

# Be there!



# Conditions in Alabama prisons

In the Alabama Correctional System working inmates are paid 15 cents a week at the 13 road camps; \$1 every three weeks at Atmore Prison Farm, and 75 cents every three weeks at Holman Prison Unit. These are the wages received by more than 90 percent of all the prisoners in Alabama. A bar of soap in the prison store now costs more than half what most prisoners earn for three weeks of labor—45 cents.

The prisoners work from sunup till sundown on the state land under shotgun-toting guards, never benefiting at all from what they produce. The income from an 8,000 acre farm like Atmore, which is substantial when all the labor is free, lines the pockets of the prison guards and the state. This amounts to a modern-day system of slave labor.

With the long hours in the fields, the bad food, and constant beatings, many of the inmates are in need of medical attention. But as United States District Court Judge Frank Johnson stated in an opinion delivered on October 28, 1971: "The record is filled with examples of correctional staff members denying inmates the right to be examined and treated by trained medical personnel and further refusing to provide medicine and other treatment prescribed by a physician."

In March of 1974 a subcommittee of the Alabama Bar Association issued a report documenting the "overcrowding, inadequate rehabilitation programs and facilities, and conditions which "in general are demeaning to human existence." The report said: "The public should be informed that those persons sent to these institutions are housed in facilities that are little better than those into which animals are herded."

These documented facts indicate to

some extent the deplorable situation within the Alabama prison walls. The facts support the inmates' claim that they are forced to live in filth; that their food is of the lowest quality and nutritionally inadequate; that dental care and indeed all aspects of medical treatment are grossly deficient; and that rehabilitation efforts are non-existent. Given this, the violence and corruption that is a way of life in the Alabama prison system, the widespread use of drugs and alcohol, the rapes, and the blatant racism that is fostered, can all be seen as



symptoms of the same disease.

However, recognizing the disease that infects the prison system, and understanding that it is society that creates this system, gives us only a taste of the horror and despair confronted daily by the inmates. An inmate must choose one of two paths: he may shrink in fear and watch the methodical disintegration of his own soul, or he may choose to face the beast—the members of the IFA have chosen to look squarely into its cold steel eyes, and fight for human dignity.

# Program of the IFA

The IFA has carefully worked out a political program of concrete issues and demands.

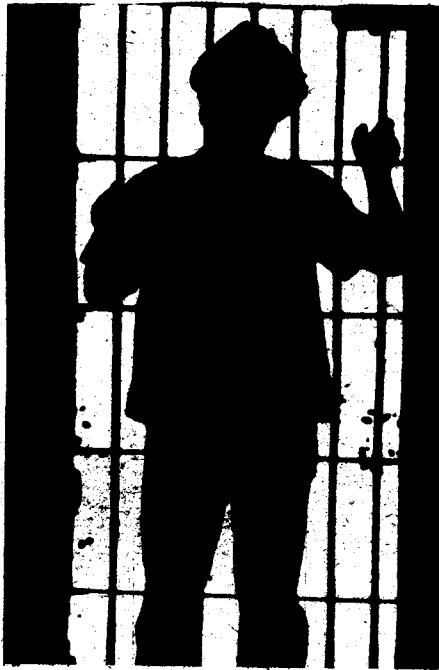
The IFA program demands adequate and competent medical and health care, decent and nutritious food served hot, across-the-board upgrading of all Alabama penal facilities, and the improvement and expansion of

educational and vocational facilities.

More and better correspondence privileges are demanded, together with the right to receive educational and political material through the mail. Improved visiting privileges and no less than three conjugal visits yearly for every prisoner.

Working prisoners should receive the official minimum wage and be allowed to form and join labor unions. Religious freedom is demanded for all prisoners. The abolition of punitive isolation and solitary confinement is demanded. Paroles should be possible on life sentences after seven years and automatic after a maximum of ten years.

An inmate-workers' insurance plan is demanded, as well as a legal aid program. Officers and prisoner-elected inmate committees on disciplinary boards, classification boards, custody boards, etc., are demanded. Constitutional rights, civil rights, and



privileges are demanded and the ending of further construction of prisons, jails, and juvenile training centers. The alternative, the IFA demands, should be community-based treatment centers.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE IFA

The IFA is composed of four committees. Any prisoner becoming a member of the IFA participates on one of the committees in support of the overall program. This creates a collective cohesiveness. The central committee is the ruling body of the organization. It consists of all the officers and the chairman of each of the other three committees.

The Legal Committee handles all the legal work and insures the legality of the organizational work and action.

The Action Committee handles actual agitation, education, and mobilization of the prisoners. It works closely with the other committees to insure that the IFA program is carried out exactly.

The Information and Communication Committee is responsible for all publications, the gathering and distribution of printed information, and correspondence with outside groups, the press, and public officials.

IFA programs are scheduled as follows: Mondays, recruitment and political education; Tuesdays, general education (math, science, reading, writing, and methods of thinking for one's self); Wednesdays, constitutional-legal first-aid is studied

(prisoners are taught their rights and law); Thursdays, black history; Fridays, revolutionary theory; Saturdays, study of imperialism, capitalism, fascism, colonialism, socialism, nationalism, etc.; Sundays, current events—local, national and international.

After each day's program the meeting is open for questions, comments, corrections, criticism, and self-criticism.

## OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO THE IFA

The case of the Atmore-Holman brothers, the death list, and daily brutality has been Alabama's response to the IFA. But the Brothers, and their organization, grow stronger every day. Victory is certain.

**IMPLEMENT THE DEMANDS OF  
THE IFA!!!**

[Taken from an article by Mafundi in the May 1974 Southern Patriot].