

## Policeman Denies Panthers' Charge

Special to The New York Times

NEW HAVEN, Feb. 7—A Black Panther charge that one of its leaders had pleaded guilty in the fatal shooting of another Panther because his brother, a policeman, had put extreme pressure on him was labeled "an unmitigated lie" by the policeman yesterday.

Sgt. William Kimbro of the Dade County, Fla. Police Department is the brother of 35-year-old Warren Kimbro, who pleaded guilty here on Jan. 16 in the slaying of Alex Rackley, 24, who was tortured and killed. The younger Kimbro said he had shot the victim in the back of the head.

Earlier, another man, George Sams Jr., 23, of Highland Park, Mich., pleaded guilty of taking part in the kidnapping and torture murder in Middletown, Conn., last May 21.

### Pressure Is Denied

Of the 14 persons in the case, one other has pleaded guilty. Three, including the national Black Panther party chairman, Bobby G. Seale, are in other states fighting extradition to Connecticut.

Eight months of pre-trial hearings were completed in January, clearing the way for a trial that may begin in the spring.

The Panthers have described Sergeant Kimbro as a "racist pig" and have charged that he had visited his brother and applied "extreme pressure" to get him to plead guilty.

"That's an unmitigated lie," Sergeant Kimbro, who is 50 years old, said in an interview. "He was not innocent and he

was not railroaded. There's no person living who could put pressure on that kid. When he was 15 years old, I took a strap to him to keep him in school. I couldn't do it."

Two years ago, Warren Kimbro worked with underprivileged youngsters on the fringe of New Haven's black slum. At that time, he thought black militancy was "foolishness," his brother said.

But impatience for social change became anger after bureaucratic red tape and delays prevented him from "getting what he wanted" for the youngsters.

"He always been hotheaded," the brother said. "He was having domestic troubles, too. And then he met that girl Ericka."

Ericka Huggins, now one of the 14 co-defendants in the Rackley murder case, is a prominent Black Panther whose husband was killed in a California gunfight a year ago, reportedly over an internal party power struggle. She apparently met Warren Kimbro when she came East to bury her husband, a New Haven man.

### Divorce Action Stopped

Last April, court records show, Warren Kimbro's wife, Sylvia, began a divorce action. Sergeant Kimbro said she took the couple's children and left their apartment at 365 Orchard Street, which had become local Panther headquarters.

"But she went back a week before this thing [the murder] happened," and she withdrew her divorce action after her husband pleaded guilty, Sergeant Kimbro said.

Sometime in the two years since the two brothers had seen

each other last—when "Warren talked about the foolishness of the militants"—Warren Kimbro became the head of the New Haven Black Panther party.

Four weeks ago, the brothers met again, this time in a jail cell where Warren Kimbro was being held. A few days later, Kimbro appeared in court and pleaded guilty to second-degree murder, admitting he had fired a shot into the head of Mr. Rackley, who was suspected of being a police informer.

In two subsequent court appearances, Kimbro insisted that his plea was made voluntarily. "The only pressure on me was the pressure of my conscience," he said.

Sergeant Kimbro said his brother had written to him from jail on Dec. 21. He quoted the letter: "There's a lot I would like to talk to you about, but some of it I can't write. One thing I will say is I got caught up in something. I shouldn't have..."

On Jan. 10 Sergeant Kimbro arrived in New Haven. He said his brother "seemed relieved and anxious to talk to me."

"He told me they put a gun in his hand and if he had not fired the shot he would have been killed. He told me how they took Rackley upstairs... and tied him to a bed and then took my 8-year-old niece into the room because they wanted her to remember what a pig looked like."

Since Warren Kimbro's confession, Sergeant Kimbro said, his brother has gone through a change. He went back to the Catholic church, serving as altar boy in prison and "he started taking the sacraments again."