

MARCH WITH GUNS

The Black Panthers Tell Why They Went to Sacramento

taken from the
"Black Panther"
newspaper, with
permission.

To get a clear picture of the significance of Black Panther Day — May 2, 1967, we will quickly run it down. The mass media has indulged in an orgy of distortion, lying and misrepresentation; it has refused to report the chain of events that led up to the Black Panthers' visit to the Capitol.

A KILLING

April 1, 1967, Denzil Dowell, 22, was killed by a racist cop on the Contra Costa Sheriff Department force. The press has failed to connect the outrage felt by the black community with the later actions of the Black Panther Party. The fact of Denzil's murder are as follows:

- 1) The doctor on the case told relatives that Denzil must have been shot with his hands raised.
- 2) The coroner's report stated there were six bullet holes, while the Richmond Independent newspaper said there were only three bullet holes.
- 3) The Coroner said that

death was due to bleeding, yet no blood was found at the site of the body. The Dowell family was denied the right to take pictures of the body; to this day, Denzil's clothes, which would provide further evidence, have not been returned.

No clearer case of unjustifiable homicide exists. No entry had been made into the building that the killer-cop assumed Denzil had robbed. Denzil had a hip injury, which the cop knew of as he had arrested him before. Denzil did not have a gun - a trained protector of society could have detected this. So how could six bullets have been justifiable?

PANTHERS CALLED IN

The Black Panther Party was called into Richmond by the Dowell family. We found they had gathered 1200 signatures on a petition calling for a Grand Jury investigation.

Tuesday, April 18, the Black Panthers went around to see Richmond D.A. Nejedly. We voice

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SUMMER

Where does the trouble begin

Everyone says, "Oh, there's going to be trouble this summer," and everyone who hears this nods his head. And what else are we to believe: all the big papers, all the TV station experts, in fact all the experts who have a chance to print or say something carry on about how much trouble we're going to have this summer.

This works very well for the experts. If there is trouble, they can say "I told you so." If there's no trouble, they can take credit for warning people so they could carefully take steps to avoid it.

But while the experts make out alright, as usual, a lot of other people have to suffer. If you are 16, and you read and hear everywhere that there is going to be trouble, you don't doubt it--you go out to find out where it is.

And if you are a policeman, whose job is to stop trouble, you believe the experts, too, and you go out to find out where the trouble is--so you can stop it.

So here we are. The calendar says it's almost summer; the experts say the natives are restless. And our phone starts to ring:

"Did you hear about the shooting out at 100th Ave.?"

"Will you come out and take a picture right now--we want a picture of the blood all over the street."

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Panthers March

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ed our grievances and he said he would do all he could to set up an investigation. He also said he would recommend to Sheriff Young of Martinez that he remove the killer-cop from the force until the investigation was over.

On April 19, the Black Panther and concerned citizens went to have a meeting with Sheriff Young and Undersheriff Ramsey. The Sheriff had agreed to this meeting but refused to allow Panthers into his office with guns. Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense, agreed to talk to the sheriff without guns present, because it was more important to demonstrate to this racist sheriff that the Panthers are willing to exhaust all available channels in an attempt to give the Dowell family visible support.

This meeting ended in frustration because Sheriff Young refused to remove the killer-cop pending investigation. He also refused to give any assurance when refused to give any assurance whatsoever to the black community that he would exercise his exclusive authority to adopt the policy that members of the police force be instructed to refrain from killing suspects when only property is involved in a suspected robbery. The citizens and the Black Panther Party for Self Defense saw this refusal as total lack of concern for black people who were expressing a desire to guard against more unwarranted deaths.

"I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE UPSET"

Undersheriff Ramsey then made two ridiculous statements. First he said, "I don't know why you're so upset - this is the first death we've had in the county." Secondly, Ramsey said, "If you people want the policy changed you should go through the legislature."

This is exactly what the Black Panthers did. Yet, in the assembly, Undersheriff Ramsey spoke in favor of the Mulford gun bill. This time he said, "This kind of legislation will be necessary because first they were in Martinez with guns, causing a disturbance; today they're here and who knows where they will show up next." He had forgotten his own advice.

Contrary to what the newspapers have reported, the Black Panthers were escorted to the Assembly hall by a horde of TV men with cameras, and the Capitol police. There is an observer box in the Assembly and it was to this area that the Panthers, the members of the Dowell family, and the concerned citizens were directed.

The first words that came from the Assembly speaker's microphone were, "Will the guards please remove those TV cameras from this Assembly!" If it was the men with guns who upset the Assembly, then the first words coming from the speaker should have been, "Will the men with the weapons remove themselves from the Assembly."

NEGROES WITH GUNS! That was the only issue at the Capitol. The antique racists in the power structure were 'disturbed,' not because of any overt or threatening action by the Black Panthers; they were disturbed by their own guilt-ridden white racist psyches in which they suffer nightmares of the armed masses someday rushing in upon them while they are in the act of plotting their characteristic assaults upon the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of the people. In the crags of their brains, they know that

they fully deserve the full wrath of the people.

THE COLOR OF POWER

To these 'disturbed' gentlemen, Negroes and guns just don't go together. This reaction was similar to that of white America generally to the slogan of BLACK POWER. The logic of the racist just can't put those two words together.

Were someone to raise the slogan, BLACK WEAKNESS, it would appear very logical and acceptable to racists. So would the headline UNARMED NEGROES INVADE THE CAPITOL. The point is that in America the color of power is white and black is the color of weakness.

What was clear from the appearance of armed black men at the capitol is that blacks are no longer ruled by fear, that not only are blacks still ready to die but now they are ready to kill.

From another point of view the hysterical reaction of the legislators was ludicrous, because if the Black Panthers had come to the capitol with evil intentions, there would have been a lot of dead cops and legislators. The Panthers are an organization dedicated to defending Black people from the wanton aggression of the cops in particular and this white racist society in general.

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SUMMER Richmond being sued for \$100,000 because of police brutality

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"They're coming out just like they did last summer--in marked and unmarked cars, four in a car. They're there the minute something happens, and that brings people out to see what's going on, and then there's a mob on the street, and they start arresting people.

"Just like last summer."

Policemen do seem to be the first to get jumpy. Some weeks ago, a Sheriff's deputy in Contra Costa county killed a young man who was supposedly trying to rob a liquor store. The account of that shooting by the Black Panthers (see their story about their march to Sacramento in this issue) is evidently quite correct.

This is backed up by an official report from the City of Richmond Human Relations Office.

The report finds that the incident would have ended much differently if Richmond Police had been involved--they rarely use shotguns, it says "for the last 12 years, no Richmond police officer has fired a shotgun at a person." There seems to be little question that a warning shot, or the use of a different weapon would have meant that Denzil Dowell would now be alive.

But the important finding in this report is that the officials--in the Sheriff's Office, the Coroner's office, the DA, and so on--did not try to move to help the Dowell family in any way.

The pictures on this page tell a part of the story of the arrest and beating of one young man in Richmond. But his story is only part of a much more important thing.

Within weeks of this shooting, Clarence Young was stopped and brutally mistreated by police.

The story, as we have been able to get it from several accounts is this: Mr. Young's car had run out of gas. He and some friends were pushing the car down the street.

A police car was cruising in the area--it passed them several times. Finally, the car stopped and a policeman got out and told the men to move the car over to the curb.

As they started to do this, a policeman came up behind Mr. Young and said "Let's see your I.D., Clarence." Before Mr. Young could turn around, he was sapped across the back of the head.

It seems there was no question of a stolen car, or anything like that: the policeman knew Clarence by name, and knew that the car (a bright yellow, easily recognizable car) was his.

The intersection where all this took place was a brightly lighted one. There was no question of confusion about who was involved.

Clarence Young was arrested and charged with failure to show identification and resisting arrest. Though his head was badly cut (as you can see in the picture here) he was not allowed

to see a doctor for several hours.

The case is now before the court--though the only charge now is resisting arrest.

At the same time, Mr. Young is suing the City of Richmond for \$100,000. A copy of part of his claim against them is printed below:

TO THE CITY OF RICHMOND, A Municipality, and TO THE RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT. TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, AND TO EACH OF YOU PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

I, CLARENCE YOUNG, of Richmond, California, declare:

That on or about May 8, 1967, I was brutally and maliciously attacked and injured by police officers employed by the RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT, City of Richmond, who were acting within the course and scope of their employment as agents of the POLICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, and THE CITY OF RICHMOND. That said attack was wanton and willful, and without provocation by me. That as a result of said attack, I sustained serious and painful injuries requiring medical care and attention.

That as a direct result of the negligence, wanton, willful and malicious acts of police officers of the CITY OF RICHMOND, I sustained injuries and damages consisting of physical injuries, pain and suffering, incarceration in the city jail, causing me em-



Clarence Young, arrested for "failure to show identification"

barassment and humiliation, all to my damage in the sum of \$100,000.00

We wish that someone could sue to force the city--all the cities--to educate their policemen. This is not to say that no one ever deserves to be arrested, or that policemen should be made to walk around with their hands in their pockets.

No. All citizens realize the police are an important part of the running of a city.

But we wish that the police

would try not to think of all the trouble this summer, would try not to let the possibility of "riots" come in to their minds every time they make an arrest in the flatlands or anywhere.

Because we think a scared policeman can't be a good policeman. To be sure, some of the experts who are interested in scaring people work for the police. They have an interest in keeping people outside stirred up about how bad things are.

We wish their interest in keeping peace was strong.

Does Anybody Care?

I am going to lay myself down on a tree and many a man hereafter will come forward and pound in a nail. I don't have to sign my name, the author is known to all. I don't have to reveal the time and the place and the characters -- those facts are also known to all. The place is always and forever OAKLAND, the time is now and the faces of the characters change from Bailiwick to Bailiwick but the words they are saying are the same words... only the faces change.

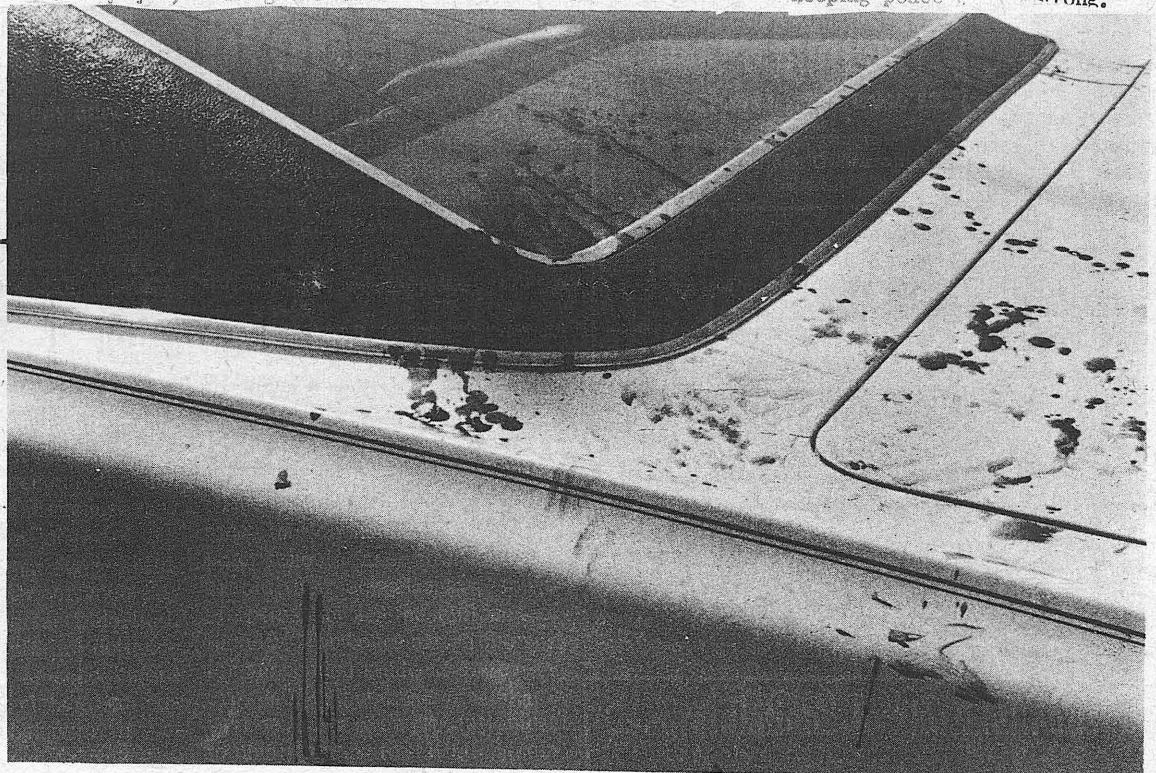
Many things lead up to a crucifixion and the price is just as cheap as it ever was -- 30 pieces

To each that query comes whispering back until the sound is so soft we can only hear the blurred ROAR.

One by one they pick the pawns off the table. Mark is in jail, Baker's pumping gas. Many a bootstrapper sold out a long time ago, and so have a lot of others. The residue is foaming and fermenting and when the wine is ready, the bottle will be uncorked. YOU HEAR ME? UNCORKED.

HELP

Anyone hear? The uncorking is coming. HELP, help help. Don't you care? Does anybody



Dried bloodstains on Mr. Young's car the morning after his arrest.

Neither this picture nor the

picture of the head wound have been retouched in any way.