

# More Amerikan Murders

Fifth Estate Collective

1970

## Augusta

On May 9<sup>th</sup> Charles Oatman, a mentally retarded black youth was tortured to death in the Richmond County jail in Augusta. The county sheriff alleged that other cellmates had done the killing, but black community residents felt that the torture could only have been done by the jailers or with their knowledge.

A march of 900 blacks was organized that night to protest the killing. At the Augusta municipal building the marchers lowered the Georgia state flag (which has the Confederate stars and bars emblazoned across it). The flag was burned and police armed with shotguns and M-14s moved in to confront the demonstrators.

The people then dispersed into the surrounding ghetto and proceeded to loot some of the mainly white-owned ghetto supermarkets and department stores. Police followed and engaged in a six-hour turkey shoot against unarmed looters. Witnesses report that the police seemed bent on killing as many blacks as possible. They would give looters a chance to run and then mow them down with gunfire. Several of the people killed were not looting. None of them were carrying weapons. ALL WERE SHOT IN THE BACK.

Governor Lester Maddox blamed the disturbances on a Communist conspiracy in the black community and imposed a curfew on the town.

## Jackson

In Jackson, Mississippi, two students of Jackson State University were killed as Mississippi State troopers and city police opened fire on a girl's dormitory on May 15. Police were equipped with shotguns, automatic weapons and a machine gun mounted on a city-owned riot tank. The students were protesting the US involvement in Cambodia and the disproportionately high number of black people drafted and killed in Southeast Asia.

Observers reported that the police gave no warning or order to disperse prior to opening fire. Although students were concentrated in front of the women's dormitory, the police chose to use their guns rather than tear gas. The police justified their action with the charge that there had been sniper fire from the direction of the cafeteria. Students denied that there was any gunfire prior to the police fusillade.

As compared with the Kent State massacre, there was relative casualness in the police operation and in the clean-up that followed. Twenty minutes after the shooting had stopped State Highway Patrolmen got around to ordering ambulances for the wounded. (They spent the first twenty minutes picking up the spent cartridges from their weapons.) An eyewitness reported that after the cartridges had been collected one Highway patrolman's radio came on. "He took it out and somebody on the radio said, 'I guess we'd better send some ambulances on in.' And he said, 'Yeah, I guess you'd better. We got a few niggers dying over here.'"

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# more amerikan murders



## augusta

Augusta, Georgia, is a city of 100,000 people, and it is one of the most violent cities in the South. In 1980, there were 100 murders in Augusta, and in 1981, there were 120. The city is known for its high rate of violence, and it is one of the most violent cities in the South.

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Kent, Ohio, Augusta, Georgia, Jackson, Mississippi. The pendulum of repression swung south again last week. The same machine that killed four white students in Kent, Ohio has now murdered another nine black youths—seven in Augusta on May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and two in Jackson, Mississippi on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The ratio of four whites to nine blacks killed illustrates the higher level of repression that black people face daily in Amerika. The relatively mild reaction from whites following the latest Augusta and Jackson murders reveals the fact that the State machine is able to continue its fascist repression of black people only because of white racist indifference. Whites who were beside themselves with horror over the Kent atrocities pretty much shrugged their shoulders over Augusta and Jackson.

# fifth Estate

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/106-may-28-june-10-1970/more-amerikan-murders>  
Fifth Estate #106, May 28-June 10, 1970

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