

Get Down

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Ken Cockrell

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Ken Cockrell is a Black revolutionary, "so-called attorney," and a member of the central staff of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in Detroit. His rap was taped, transcribed and edited by Newsreel for this ARM issue on the day of the Los Angeles police attack on the Panther office, before that news was made public.

There's cats all over man, army dudes, what, Fort Jackson nine, Fort Hood 43, Fort Dix 38, Panther 21, man this shit just keeps going on. The Presidio 19. It's unbelievable.

The Panthers however, represent kind of a peculiar case. The cats are gettin' vamped, the whole Panther structure, it doesn't seem as if anyone's left of the so called national piece, with the exception of DC and Masai. They've got Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense. he's jammed. Jammed tighter than a fuckin rubber band. Huey's jammed. Eldrige is jammed, Bobby is jammed. Bobby is never going to see any motherfucking daylight no matter what anybody says, Bobby Seale is not going to see any daylight. They busted Warren Wells and the other cats off the April 6th thing. The thing off of which they were coming with Eldrige.-So that leaves Masai, the current Minister of Education and D.C., the Field Marshall.

So when we look at what's coming down with the Panthers, and that's all over the country, Seattle, Oregon, Denver, they're jammed all over, the Panthers just got their asses kicked, as you will recall, in Kansas City, just last week. The roller beat their ass, fractured their skulls, and shit. Four Panthers went in to make a presentation to the police chief of Kansas City, got wasted. Standard motherfucking things.

Just dealing with the Panthers organizationally, you're seeing, of course, the same pattern that you've seen with all of these black organizations, starting to say with Garvey, they couldn't get Garvey on anything so they cracked Garvey on mail fraud, you will recall. They cracked Garvey on mail fraud. They cracked the honorable Elijah Mohammed when he first came through Detroit and started his thing.

The same with the SNCC thing, but you look at it in terms of being responsive to a certain objective level of development, man, and then getting that kind of Draconian response from the powers that be. They got all of the SNCC cats jammed. Rapp's jammed, Stokley's jammed, although we deal with Stokley ideologically on a whole other level because that shit Stokley is running is fantastic. Just anyone of those cats you can name out of the original SNCC structure, with the exception of James Foreman who has done all the time in the world and Jim's laying kind of cool, but they got another thing for Jim that comes to the part when they come for us, because that Black Economic Development Conference is just one pretext and they'll probably come off of that you know for the federal thing, and start coming our way, and start coming to the League.

They got sufficient laws, in quotes. "Laws" to do almost anything that they would want to do. What lessons do we learn from this? I don't know that there are any lessons we can learn from this except, of course, one that is very obvious, and that is this, that the man is behaving precisely as one would expect that he would behave. No one who is any way rational, can justifiably expect the man to do anything but move resolutely, move most resolutely, man, most energetically, most diligently, to minimize the sphere within which you are going to be permitted to function

in any way that is politically relevant to conditions of oppression, besetting blacks and other oppressed people. He is not going to give you any air, anyone who expects that he's going to give you any air is, of course, asinine.

What is the problem? The problem that I see is not so much the fact that he's doing what logically he would do, the problem is the ease with which this motherfucker can run his version of what he has done and have it regarded as being plausible by people who live in this country. You hear fantastic things.

They came out, Hanrahan who is the State's Attorney there, and the DA in Chicago, he comes out and calls a press conference, he commends the policemen for not being any more frantic than they could have been in a most provocative situation, and he suggests that all decent, right thinking men ought to likewise commend them. You know, we support totally the police action in this situation, we say their conduct was commendable and we say that all decent citizens ought to do likewise. And decent citizens, in quotes, will do likewise.

The Panthers are black people, no. 1, and we claim them we claim them all.

They are black people who are in a situation where there is a scarcity of persons who are in anyway responsive in a way that is externalized politically to what's going down in this country, so we claim them we have to say that they are representative of a very scarce and very valuable resource And any attack on them has to be regarded by us as being essentially an attack on us.

Black people must understand that the Black Panther Party represent a concrete response to conditions of oppression. And all of these efforts and all of these activities that were undertaken under the aegis of the Black Panther Party were undertaken in the name of all black people and all oppressed people. Everyone has to respect that and everyone has to accept that, and everyone has to support these cats and resolutely condemn these fuckers for murdering them. We have to go much beyond condemnation because when you look at the ledger in terms of who is getting killed, and you've got so many of us getting killed, what we have to do is arm. What all people who are serious about political struggle have to do is arm. And in that sense we have a positive aspect with all of our shootings.

Rollers kicking brothers ass every day, they'll beat your motherfucking ass and run you down to the hospital, then say oh, I blew it, I beat the motherfuckers ass so bad he had to be treated, therefore we must charge him what do we charge him with. Yeah, we charge him with assault and battery on a police officer, interfering and obstructing police officer in the performance of his duty.

Standard thing, man. One response—we've got to arm. We've got to be very rational however, about arming because we've got all these adventuristic young cats, like you see what's happening in \ the high schools now, got all these cats, running all these wolf tickets down to the man, selling wolf tickets like a bitch, out there with rocks and pop bottles and shit, and they will do the man in. Man fall on the set, one or two cars, and he's wasted. They snatch him out of the car and kick his ass, but the man says right on with that because he's ready, he will buy every wolf ticket you sell. He's got machine guns, shotguns, carbines, M-1's, A-1's, he is ready to do it. We ain't got but one thing to do man, we have got to really, vigorously and rationally to begin convincing our people that it does make some sense to talk about arming. Because the truth of the matter is, the man is committed, I don't care what anyone says, it is not black nationalist paranoia, it is not so called extremist schizophrenia, the man is committed to our destruction. They can have nice seminars, can it happen here, is Hitler really dead—we can talk about it in a million and one different ways—there's some sort of 'innate goodness of the American people, some sort of fundamental thread that runs through the matrix of American society that just obviates the possibility, but see, you have a hard time running that shit on niggers, because this motherfucker is coming for us, he's coming for us and he's not bullshitting.

We got to end press conferences, end declaiming to the world at large that it's appalling, that it's only like an aberration in the operation of the system.

Clearly a deliberate design. What was their thing? They had a search warrant. They had a search warrant from an informer suggesting that there were weapons that were being illegally possessed in that apartment. So they go into the pad. Then they come out on TV and they stick up rows of ammo. Hell man, they can go into any one of our pads and find pieces galore. Any time they want to—30.06s, .22s, .308s—yeah because everybody that's rational is strapped. You know, so everybody is armed and they can do that shit any time they want to.

So they get a search warrant, they go in and do that shit and everyone buys that shit, we have to simply understand for ourselves, people on the left, people who are black, people who are chicanos—the law ain't our ally. The

law ain't our ally and these pigs out here who theoretically enforce the law are nothing but our enemies. They are flunkies for the system, yeah, they are intermediaries to be sure, they don't have objectively the kind of stake in this society that you would expect persons have who were prepared to commit such atrocities. Nonetheless, apparently, to give them a \$10,000 a year salary, like for example a cop in Detroit gets \$10,300 after a couple of years, even at the rank of patrolman,—you give that kind of stake, plus you got all of the recoil from progressive moves in our society, campus, students, civil rights. That recoil has created a mass reservoir that is predisposed to legitimate anything these motherfuckers do, and they're simply doing it, so we're going to have to deal with them.

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