

PONTIAC PRISONERS SUPPORT COALITION



NEWSLETTER

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No. 10



ILLINOIS PRISONS IN CRISIS

The events of the past few months make it clear that Illinois prisons remain in crisis. Since the Pontiac rebellion in July, 1978 Governor Thompson and the State of Illinois have been engaged in a much-publicized campaign to destroy any kind of resistance among Illinois prisoners. Millions of dollars have been spent to back up the rhetoric about "taking back control of the prisons." The state has been in control of the prisons all along--but as long as the content of that control continues to be racism and repression, prisoners will continue to challenge it by any means available to them. As more and more Black and Latin youth are forced into the prisons resistance is inevitable, and the increasing repression only makes the situation more explosive.

On September 24, 1979, prisoners in the Orientation Unit at Stateville Penitentiary, which houses Illinois' Death Row as well as other prisoners in segregation, seized the unit and held several hostages for three hours. They were protesting the abusive treatment and lack of access to counselors, recreation, and showers. After Warden Reed met with them about these grievances they released the hostages unharmed and returned to their cells--apparently this dramatic action was necessary for them just to obtain a hearing. Occurring just days after the latest well-publicized "shakedown" of the prison the Orientation Unit uprising showed once again that no amount of "security" and repression can prevent people from rebelling against inhuman conditions.

CONTINUED ON P. 4

cases of the 14

The first of the trials of the fourteen Brothers charged with crimes other than murder is set to begin January 7, 1980 in Bloomington, Illinois.



Two Latino Brothers, Luis Perez and Manuel Santiago, are charged with aggravated battery of a prisoner on July 22nd during the Pontiac Rebellion. The State has advanced this frame up charge first, in order to make it seem that they have the interest of prisoners at heart. Having seen the brutal treatment given prisoners during the deadlock and understanding that it was this treatment that ignited the uprising, we can understand and refute this aspect of the State's strategy.

The cases of the other 12 Brothers indicted on charges other than murder are moving at different rates through the pre-trial proceedings. The State has moved to break up these cases into separate, isolated units in the attempt to break down the Brothers' unity and exhaust their support. Five of the eight cases are now holding hearings in Bloomington; the other three are still being heard in Pontiac, although none of the trials will be in Pontiac. One of these remaining three will move to Bloomington for trial; the cases of Larry Johnson and Robert Tosado, however, which are being heard by Judge Harrod, will be moving to Peoria. This surprise move was revealed to the defense only in October, and represents another effort by the State to move away from any potential support for the Brothers.

Alongside these courtroom moves, the Department of Corrections is doing its best to further the frame-up by preventing the Brothers from organizing their defense. On August 8, Judge Glennon issued a court order that three of the Brothers--Alan Mack, Arthur Jones and Mike Mitchell--be allowed two phone calls per week in order to communicate with their attorneys. But, as the Brothers testified weeks later, they were still not receiving those calls because of arbitrary interference and the refusal of the DOC to comply in practice with the court order. The DOC also sought to frustrate the intent of a court order that these Brothers be permitted to read the discovery material (the record of the State's investigation and the evidence against them), by having them shackled and handcuffed when they were allowed access to the papers--with guards standing over their shoulders--making it virtually impossible to study or take notes on what they read.

Nonetheless, the judges are pushing to start the trials at the earliest possible dates. Judges Harrod, Dearborn and Townley have all set trial dates in January and February for the cases before them. All three of them choose to ignore the special problems facing defendants who have been the targets of a major, million-dollar frame-up by the State of Illinois and proceed on a "business as usual" basis. And of course, business as usual is always stacked against Black and Latin defendants. Trying Black defendants in communities like Bloomington and Peoria, where they are separated from their communities and virtually assured of facing all-white juries is business as usual. It results in conviction rates that are much higher than those of white defendants.

Our support and participation in these cases is vital to the Brothers' effort to break through the frame-up and the racist atmosphere that supports it.

PLEASE CONTACT PPSC IF YOU CAN ATTEND COURT IN CHICAGO, BLOOMINGTON, PONTIAC, OR PEORIA. WE HOPE TO BEGIN COORDINATING OUR EFFORTS TO INSURE A PRESENCE IN SUPPORT OF ALL THE PONTIAC BROTHERS IN COURT.

The ground rules under which the 17 Brothers charged with murder will be tried are being set in the pre-trial hearings now going on. Recent court appearances have involved argument by defense lawyers for a Bill of Particulars, a change of courtroom, and for access to the State's witnesses.

Bill of Particulars

In perhaps the most important ruling to date, Judge Miller denied a defense motion to supplement the indictment with a Bill of Particulars. As the indictment now reads, each of the 17 Brothers is charged in identical language with killing all 3 of the guards in five different ways. What this means is that each Brother is charged with doing the exact same act in the exact same place, at the exact same time. As everyone is charged with everything it is impossible to tell specifically what anyone is supposed to have done. The defense motion would have forced the State to say who did what, where, and when. The judge ruled the Brothers were not entitled to this information.

Courtroom

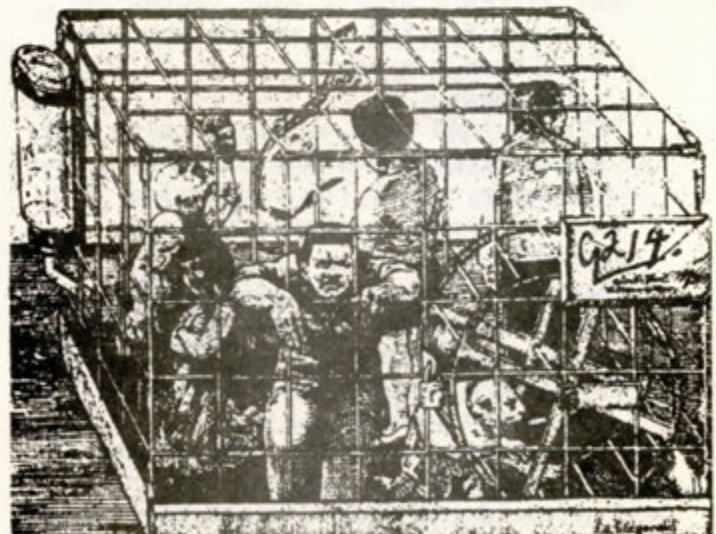
The case is currently being heard in a special courtroom in which the spectators are separated from the defendants, the judge and the attorneys by a bullet-proof partition. This special glass wall makes it almost impossible to follow the proceedings, which can only be heard over loudspeakers transmitting from microphones inside. The defense presented expert testimony that the partition created an atmosphere of fear prejudicial to the defendants by giving the impression that they are extraordinarily dangerous men who cannot be tried in an open courtroom. Indeed, the only comparable courtroom situation that the expert who testified was aware of was the trial of Adolf Eichmann, a Nazi mass murderer who was tried in an Israeli courtroom and enclosed in a glass cage to protect him from the wrath of his victims. The clear evidence is that such a courtroom tends to convince

potential jurors that the defendants are guilty and discourages supporters from attending the hearings. Nonetheless, Judge Miller, although never denying the validity of these claims, ruled that the harm done was not a constitutional violation and refused to transfer the case to another courtroom.

States Witnesses

Not surprisingly, almost all of the prisoners who have agreed to testify for the State have been paroled. The State has admitted that they have relocated some of these witnesses which means they have provided them with new identities, homes, social security numbers, etc. The defense, of course, cannot interview these witnesses unless provided with their new addresses. The state has refused to turn over the addresses, but has offered to provide the witnesses. The problem is the State's offer means the prosecutors will be present during the interviews. Their presence means the witnesses will not feel free to tell the truth, but will be compelled to tell the same story they originally told the prosecutors in order to obtain their paroles and new lives. Obviously, this kind of interview is worthless.

CONTINUED ON P. 8



SCANDAL AT DWIGHT

Also in September, a sex scandal at Dwight, the Illinois women's prison, was exposed by the testimony of three courageous women prisoners. The three women, all of whom took and passed lie detector tests, revealed that Dennis Klosteroff, director of internal operations, and Denver Weakly, chief guard, had been forcing women prisoners to have sex with them and employing other prisoners as procurers. Despite the prison administration's attempts to cover up the scandal and keep the women away from visiting reporters, many women came forward to expose the abuses that the administration had been hiding for years: sexual coercion and rape, beatings of women by male guards, forced drugging, and isolation of those who resisted. They also described the racism rampant in the prison: guards using racist epithets, denying furloughs to Black women while granting them to whites, etc. They exposed the fact that in prison the exploitation of Black women by white men is no different than what it was under slavery.

"MORE VIOLENCE, MORE RIOTS"

And in October, a special commission formed by the state legislature six months after the Pontiac rebellion to investigate the Illinois prison system released its interim report. The commission embodied its preliminary findings in four recommendations:

- *Establish a pre-release center in Chicago for 500 prisoners who have less than six months to go on their sentences;
- *Clarify and make explicit rules and regulations governing prisoners behavior, which the commission said are now overbroad and confusing;
- *Upgrade prison industries, which now employ only 500 out of 11,000 state prisoners;
- *Develop a computerized system for prisoners records.

The commission concluded that unless immediate steps were taken, the prison system would experience "more violence, more riots."

The committee's report reflects conflicting influences. Many of its objectives are the same as Thompson's. The best example is the call for an increasingly sophisticated record-keeping system, which ties into the national strategy of centralizing prison and law-enforcement systems. Hundreds of prisoners--especially political prisoners--are being moved out of state prisons into the federal system as part of this move to set up one all-encompassing system of police control. But in part the committee's report also reflects the attempt to coopt prisoners' demands, raised continuously through a variety of channels including the suit brought to end the deadlock at Pontiac as well as the many rebellions. Prisoners have forced the state to acknowledge the need for access to their families and communities and the reality that most prisoners have no real work or educational opportunities. In so far as the legislative committee recognized, even in a minimal way, the legitimacy of these demands, it must be seen as a serious blow to Thompson's stone-wall policy of unrelieved repression.



The responses to these crises are consistent with the general approach to the criminal justice system that Governor Thompson represents. The grievances of the prisoners who rebelled in Stateville's Orientation Unit will not be addressed; instead, the state is preparing criminal indictments against them and

"reviewing" its security procedures. At Dwight, no action will be taken to insure that women are protected against sexual and racist abuses; the two employees accused were allowed to resign without charges being brought and a new warden was appointed to provide the impression of change. Of the recommendations made by the legislative commission, only one is being implemented--developing computerized records on prisoners. More efficient repression is the state's only concern. The recommendation for a facility to be located in Chicago--where over 60% of all Illinois prisoners come from and where they must rebuild their lives after they are released--was rejected out of hand by the Governor.

THE THOMPSON RECORD

These events are the latest results of years of systematic efforts to make the criminal justice system of Illinois--including its prisons - more punitive, more repressive, and more racist.

Jim Thompson rose to political prominence as a prosecutor under the Nixon administration. And, like the Nixon-appointed Supreme Court and many other repressive forces, he has continued to carry out the same basic political philosophy. He ran for governor on a law and order platform. One of his first acts as governor was to sign

the death penalty law back onto the books. Since Thompson has been in office 16 men have been sentenced to death in Illinois. Another 70 or 80 are being tried on potential death penalty cases--including 17 of the Pontiac Brothers. Thompson was also primarily responsible for the notorious Class X law (Bill 1500), which vastly increased the amount of time people spend in prison, while giving line guards the power to add years to prisoners' time simply by writing disciplinary tickets.

The same philosophy has been reflected in the internal working of the Illinois prisons. In October, 1978, Charles Rowe, then director of the Illinois Department of Corrections (DOC), made the following statement to the Adult Advisory Board of the DOC in reference to the conditions that led up to the Pontiac rebellion: "If anything, this institution was over controlled. It was not lax in terms of discipline." But after the rebellion, the response was more "control." Prisoners have been subjected to an endless series of lock-downs, shakedowns, "take-overs," and harassment. To take the heat off himself and his administration, Thompson saw to it that 31 Black and Latin prisoners were framed as scapegoats on criminal indictments and 67 on administrative charges. The rebellion has been used as justification for a stepped-up campaign of torture and repression.

CONTINUED ON P. 6

In January, 1979 Jim Thompson and Gayle Franzen hosted a two-week long meeting at Stateville Penitentiary to map out the future direction of the Illinois prisons. The participants included a group of national "advisors" who were presented to the media as evidence of the seriousness of Thompson's campaign to "take control" of the prisons. These are some of the people who Thompson and Franzen recruited to help guide their campaign:

Anthony Trivisono, former director of the Rhode Island prison system, who resigned after two Governor's Commissions found his maximum security prison to have filthy and unsanitary conditions, racist hiring practices and attitudes, inadequate or non-existent education, and rampant guard brutality.

Charles Fenton, ex-warden of Marion federal prison, who has repeatedly taken part in beatings of prisoners using baseball bats and ax handles at Marion during the summer of 1972; and who personally supervised prisoners running a gauntlet while being beaten by baseball bats and ax handles at Lewisburg federal prison in 1977.

There is currently a six million dollar suit filed against him for this incident, and recently a federal court in Lewisburg has held him in contempt of court for defying court orders.

Donald Hutto, former director of the Arkansas prison system, which was condemned for medieval, racist and cruel and unusual conditions that were not changed despite a court order.

This is the kind of national direction that Thompson and Franzen are looking to to help plot the future of Illinois prisons.

The history of the past ten years should be enough to prove that no prison system can stop the struggle of Black and Latin people inside and out for their rights by these means. The prison struggle began before the Attica rebellion in 1971 and it did not end with the Pontiac rebellion in 1978.

"We are MEN! We are not beasts and do not intend to be beaten or driven as such." That statement, first made by prisoners at Attica, expresses the basic reason why U.S. prisons are and will be in crisis--because they treat human beings as "beasts" to be "beaten and driven"--in short, as slaves. And this is the condition of a growing proportion of the Black community that is behind bars.

In a period in which huge numbers of Black and Latin people are being forced out of the U.S. economy, Jim Thompson has made himself the major representative in Illinois of a political philosophy based on ever-increasing repression of ever-larger numbers of Black and Latin people as the answer to America's problems. Crime increases as Black youth are cut out of the job market and social services are cut back?--Hand out longer prison sentences in more isolated prisons! Prisoners rebel against inhuman and brutal conditions in antiquated Kamps?--Kill some of them, and keep the rest under still worse conditions for still longer terms. In every case where there is a problem that demands response, Governor Thompson and others like him choose more repression as the answer.

Politicians like Thompson are thriving on the basis of this philosophy because it represents the attitude of a large and powerful part of white America today. Increasing demands for the death penalty, for limiting the rights of defendants, for an end to all efforts to combat the effects of discrimination against Black and Latin people--this has been the dominant mood of the past several years. It is echoed in the liberal community by an increasing tolerance for racism and apathy in the face of these attacks. It is in this atmosphere that Jim Thompson is being talked about as a possible Vice-Presidential candidate in 1980--and who knows about 1984?



Thompson's role is important both because he does represent a larger trend and because of the concrete life-and-death power he holds over Illinois prisoners. He and his aide Gayle Franzen have been using the racist fantasy of a Black "gang conspiracy" behind the Pontiac rebellion to justify still more inhuman measures inside. The indictments of 31 Black and Latin prisoners as scapegoats for what happened are central to this official conspiracy to cover-up what is really happening in Illinois prisons. These indictments can do nothing to change the situation in which prisons serve as warehouses for a large segment of the Black community; nothing to eliminate the gross violations of human rights that prompt any people to rebel; nothing to correct any of the real problems that exist. What the indictments can do is take the blame of Thompson, Franzen and the State of Illinois and place it on Black and Latin prisoners instead.

Jim Thompson needs to convict the Pontiac Brothers. Their convictions would support his claim that violence in the prisons is the result, not of racism and brutality but of vicious Black conspiracies. Their acquittal would refute this lie; it would mean that the state's case was found to be a frame-up even in the courts; it would smash the cover-up and the false, racist solutions to the crisis in Illinois prisons.

THE PONTIAC FRAME-UP

7

On July 22, 1978, prisoners at Pontiac State Penitentiary in Pontiac, Illinois, rose up against the inhuman conditions and racism of the prison. The causes of this spontaneous rebellion were so obvious that the director of the Illinois prisons said, "It came a year later than most of us anticipated. You can only crowd so many people into a warehouse for so long before something happens." 3 guards were killed and 3 others injured; damages were estimated at \$4 million. Many prisoners were injured by guards and National Guardsmen retaking the prison.

The entire prison population was then put on deadlock — locked in their cells 24 hours a day without showers, visits, recreation, work, or basic necessities like soap and toilet paper. The deadlock continued for 8 months.

The "investigation" that was carried out under deadlock conditions consisted principally of attempts to coerce prisoners to testify against selected scapegoats by threats and bribery. Not until 3 months after the rebellion did State officials begin to claim that the prisons were "run by the gangs" and that the Pontiac rebellion had been a "gang" conspiracy. This phony story both took the responsibility off Governor Thompson and the State officials running the prison and placed it on Black and Latin prisoners and prejudiced the public against the men to be indicted.

Administrative charges were brought against 67 prisoners, each of whom was sentenced to a year in segregation and loss of one year good time without a single witness being presented.

On March 5, 1979, an all-white grand jury handed down indictments against 31 prisoners — all Black and Latin. 17 were charged with murder and 14 with other felonies. The State's Attorney had already announced that he would seek the death penalty for any prisoner convicted of murder, making this the largest mass death penalty case in the U.S.

WHO WE ARE

The Pontiac Prisoners Support Coalition is a broad-based coalition of community and human rights organizations. The PPSC is organizing in primarily white communities while other organizations are working in Black and Latin communities.

We share the conviction that the Pontiac Rebellion was a natural and predictable response to the inhuman treatment of prisoners, most of whom are Black and Latin.

We understand that this inhuman treatment begins on the outside, in the community, where Black and Latin people live with many different forms of oppression. Those men and women who organize against this oppression are warehoused into cages in overcrowded prisons and jails where slave labor, inhuman conditions and arbitrary rules are enforced by racist guards.

We know that the indictments against the Pontiac 31 are the product of a frame-up carried out under coercive conditions and not a genuine investigation.

The PPSC respects and supports the initiatives of prisoners, takes leadership from them, and unites with them on the following demands:

- * Abolish all inhuman and abusive conditions at Pontiac and other Illinois prisons.
- * Repeal Class X legislation.
- * Revoke the death penalty.
- * Expose the investigation and its coercive strategy to scapegoat prisoners.
- * End the deadlocks.

* Drop the indictments.

* Free the Pontiac Brothers!

We have taken responsibility for:

- * Educating white people about the racist nature of the prison system.
- * Combatting anti-prisoner, racist attitudes and practices.
- * Winning support for the demands of the prisoners.
- * Providing ongoing political and legal support for the Pontiac Brothers.

ACT NOW! WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

- _____ I want to work on one of the PPSC committees.
- _____ I can arrange for PPSC to show its slideshow or give talks to people or groups I know.
- _____ I enclose \$10.00 for a 1-year subscription to the PPSC Newsletter.
- _____ I enclose a \$ _____ donation to the Pontiac Brothers Defense Fund.

RETURN THIS FORM TO: PPSC
c/o Alliance to End Repression
407 South Dearborn Street, Room 1000
Chicago, Illinois 60605
OR CALL: (312) 427-4064

Attend the Hearings!!!

The manipulations by the State amount to treating all the Brothers as guilty until proven innocent - subject to being tried in a special glass cage, having the witnesses against them "protected" from legitimate defense investigation, and prevented from learning the details of the charges against them. On all of these issues, Judge Miller's attitude has been that it is up to the Defense to prove that the State should not be permitted to take these exceptional steps - not that the burden should be on the State.

This attitude will not be lost on a jury. The Court's disposition toward the State must be exposed and combatted in the courtroom and public forums. For this reason, we urge you to attend these court proceedings. The Defendants and their attorneys have requested our presence. The State is doing everything they can to prevent us from establishing such a presence. We must stand up and be counted, we must show which side we're on.

**FREE THE PONTIAC BROTHERS
T-SHIRT... get yours now!!**



**all shirts are black
\$6. each (proceeds to
Pontiac Brothers Defense)**

enclosed \$ _____ size(s) _____
name _____
address _____
city, state, zip _____

PPSC
407 South Dearborn Street, Room 1000
Chicago, Illinois 60605

from the kamps

WHY THE REBELLION



FROM A PONTIAC BROTHER

1979 is drawing to an end. PPSC has been working around the cases of the Pontiac 31 for over sixteen months. Much has been written and spoken about the cases in this interval but few documents speak as eloquently to the causes of the July 22, 1978 rebellion as the following article. For this reason we are reprinting it in its entirety as a pamphlet.

The Brother who wrote this article,

like 16 other Pontiac Defendants, is facing 15 counts of murder, and if he is found guilty on any of them, he will be subject to the electric chair. Soon the trials will begin. It should be clear from this Brother's words that the State of Illinois, personified by Governor "Big Jim" Thompson, is not interested in guilt or innocence. Only the participation of people will force such considerations into the courtroom. We of PPSC urge you to read these words, and then to ACT.

The following article was wrote August 13, 1978 by one of the Pontiac Brothers that was indicted March 5, 1979 for 15 counts of murder, 2 counts of attempt murder and one count of mob action.

Since the Rebellion at Pontiac Prison July 22, 1978, so much has been and will be said and wrote about it. The reason, cause, and blame has been put on the weather, overcrowding, lack of security, and the gangs. It has been said that the killings of the three guards and the assault of three others was senseless, done by men who needs no reason to kill or rebell. We all know that men do not kill or rebell just for the sake of killing or rebelling, something had to be wrong and it had to be wrong for a long time for so many men to just kill or rebell knowing that in doing so, they will also be killed or spend the rest of their lives in prison.

I have been an inmate of Pontiac Prison for five years, considering the years that I have been confined here, I am considered a veteran. Since 1973, I have seen four different administrations, the population change over, and the overcrowding become unbearable. Back in 1975 when the inmate population first began to rise, new officers was hired, the attitudes, knowledge and understanding of their jobs was not a must, and they brought with them a farmer's attitude, an overseer's understanding and the knowledge of a moron's concerning young black men from an urban area opposed to their upbringing in a small rural town.

The senior officers recognized that it would soon be trouble and requested to be transfered out of the cell houses and many sought employment elsewhere. Then came the doubling-up (two men to a cell), that was protested peacefully, verbally and in the courts to no avail. Since then there has been problems with the food, medical care and basic needs that one needs to live everyday such as soap, toothpaste, toilet paper, etc. Winter coats were not issued until February and heat was not put on until late February regardless of the cold weather.

At one time men could work, go to school or participate in some kind of training program, but this year at least

1400 men are without jobs, schooling and other assignments. These men must stay in their cells up to 21 hours a day and those three hours that is spent out of the cell each day except for weekends (22 hours in the cells) are spent for feeding, yard period, showers and any other movement allowed.

The overcrowding brought on cut-backs, and soon the food was not fit to eat at all, the heaters was not being fixed, no clothes were issued for months and no recreation equipment was issued such as baseballs, footballs, bats etc. The living conditions for the inmates and the working conditions for the guards was deplorable and filthy.

Soon resentment and disrespect was a common sight between guards and inmates. Disciplinary reports was wrote on inmates for little or no reason and inmates was placed in segregation and good time was lost because of it. The parole board was not paroling the men and giving them the excuse, "that a parole at this time would promote disrespect for the law." In spite of the fact that some men had went without any disciplinary reports for years, had jobs and had did just about all their time, the parole board still refused to allow them a chance at parole. Some men after appearing in front of the parole board felt that they would never have the chance of being free or ever have their manhood returned. Others just refused to appear at the parole board hearings because they felt the parole board would not give them a parole anyway.

Over the years a bomb was in the making at Pontiac and Gov. Thompson supplied the finishing touches and the fuse with his Class X law. Making men do longer sentences, the men knew that there was little hope of ever getting a parole and then with the Class X law, that little hope was taken away. Men started wondering how was they going to earn a day good time when disciplinary reports was being wrote for being five minutes late on a pass when they had no control over the officers who had the keys that unlocked the doors that they must go through to reach their destination. Some men was doing long sentences and

there was no way possible to go ten years without receiving a disciplinary report from a racist guard. The Class X now put the power in the guard's hand on who would earn good time and how much good time will he earn. Disciplinary reports was being wrote for anything and everything you say or do to the guards liking or disliking. Every infraction is a loss of good time, not less than ten days and no more than one year.

In the last five years numerous laws have been enacted to keep one in prison longer, the electric chair is now dusted off and awaiting for its first victim with great anticipation. The lock 'em up, throw away the key concept is here once again and you ask, "is there going to be another rebellion?" Indictments are a sure thing and regardless if one is guilty of any acts because of his participation in the rebellion, that will not be the issue, any one of us can and will be used to take the blame because of our attitudes against the way men are treated, our affiliation with certain organizations and groups, and that we were in the building that the officers were killed in, plus the fact that we are black men and white officers was killed. Inmates will give false information against others for many reasons, but the main reasons will be from fear and intimidation, and many will give false information for promises of parole or time cut from their sentences. In all my years being in prison, I have never seen an inmate give truthful information because he is a law abiding person.

Gov. Thompson think that building more prisons, keeping men confined longer and the electric chair would solve the problems of crime in the State of Illinois. The money that he is using to build more prisons could go into the communities that the men comes from for better housing, schools, social and welfare programs. Something must be done before a man gets to the point that he must rob to feed and clothe his family, that problem should be addressed. The State of Illinois have enough prisons; the way they are ran and the way men are treated is the problem. Build a new prison and paint it with bright colors, but still if you don't have any meaningful education and

vocation programs and still treat the men as dogs, then still you will have created another situation that forces men to rebell. If there is no change in our penal system we can expect more rebellions in the near future. Maybe something will be done to change the penal system since guards and inmates have gave their lives for the change. We must always keep in mind that, "men without hope, has no fears, not even death."

Bruce Jackson wrote about prison after the Attica Riot and the following are excerpts taken from his book, ATTICA.

"Prison is the only garbage dump we have that is so repulsive we encircle it with barbed wire and a stone wall. Prison is a place where all sorts of things are not there. What is there hurts; guards walking the halls who find you strange and alien and perhaps even hateful and evil because you've been adjudged a criminal by a group the law insists represents your peers. They look at you with fear or contempt, perhaps only because you're a nigger or a spic or perhaps just because they don't know what is going on in your head, and that alone is frightening enough to make them hate you or fear you. And you them-hate and fear are always bilateral affairs. The sameness bars, guards and guards in towers with guns.

"A good inmate is one who makes no trouble for the institution. He may do whatever he wants, as long as he is quiet about it and makes no trouble that the administration can't ignore. A bad inmate is one who makes ripples, someone who complains about treatment or food or lack of educational opportunity or humiliation by the guards; a very bad inmate is one who talks such things up among his fellow inmates; an outrageously bad inmate is one who suggests to his fellow inmates that they do not have to stand for such treatment, who tells them that the courts may have sentenced them to punishment by incarceration but that does not mean that the prison authorities have any duty or right to punish them further.

"Confusion, violence and repression seem more and more common in prisons, and more and more inmates are responding with riots, strikes, assassinations, and sabotage. The institutions are cracking at the seams and though one hopes they will crack enough to let in some light and decency, one fears they will again snap shut like a giant sea clam, suffocating in darkness everything and everyone within.

"And they will blow up again. There will be more Atticas, there will be more George Jacksons, men turned bitter as gall by years behind a welded door, men spitting back in the face of certain death because they find defiance preferable to the slow death of day-after-day living in brutality and squalor and lawlessness."



The Pontiac Prisoners Support Coalition (PPSC) is a broad based coalition working to build political and legal support for the Pontiac Brothers primarily in the white community. We take political di-

rection and leadership from the prisoners and their representatives on the outside. For more information call us at (312) 427-4064 or write PPSC, % Alliance to End Repression, 407 So. Dearborn, Room 1000, Chicago, Illinois 60605.