

POLICE TERRORISM OF NEGROES IN HARLEM

By GEORGE PADMORS.

"Three thousand Negroes in Harlem are ready to go to jail. We are ready to make any kind of sacrifice for freedom," was the militant ultimatum issued by E. B. Knox, acting president of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, to the Tammany hall "cossacks", who have launched a campaign of police terrorism in Harlem.

Despite every effort to suppress the growing militancy among the Negro masses, especially those elements which assemble at the open air street meetings to hear speakers inform them as to the only way for emancipation, through their organized strength and power, the patrolmen are openly interrupting speakers and breaking up meetings under the dirty pretence of regulating traffic.

This form of terrorism has become so pronounced that today certain speakers are looked upon as "marked men" and every effort is being made by the blue-coated bullies to frame them up.

Among these militants are, William Grant and Pedro Suner. Because of their open radicalism, the police have succeeded in getting them involved in the case of Clarence Donald, a victim of police brutality which nearly led to a riot in Harlem, some weeks ago.

Near Riot in Harlem.

On the evening of July 22, 1928, a man named Clarence Donald, 36, living at 328 Seventh Ave., went to the home of one Zerlena Clavis, 559 Lenox Ave., near 139th St., where it is said, a dispute took place. She raised an alarm and Donald ran to the street where he was chased by Policeman Kuberl.

Donald, seeing that he was covered by the constable, raised his hands to surrender. At this time another policeman, named De Stella, came to the assistance of Kuberl and while Donald had his hands up started to beat him brutally with his night stick.

This savage and cowardly act drew the attention of passersby who protested against the police conduct. A woman shouted, "Shame on you, the police have no right to be beating up an unarmed man like that!" As she said these words, De Stella turned away from Donald and made an attempt to slap the woman.

Her male companion immediately rushed forward and landed the officer a square blow in the face, throwing him to the ground.

Stabs Donald.

By this time, Charles Brown, a detective, got an alarm and hurried to the scene. He drew his pistol but the crowd which had gathered prevented him from using it, by closing in on him. He then pulled out a knife with which he stabbed Donald, who was struggling to free himself from the grip of Kuberl. No sooner had this act been committed than the crowd became infuriated and began to land blows on him and patrolmen Young and MacFadden, who had joined the fray.

Somebody telephoned the 135th St. station and Captain Burnell, with a squad of men rushed to the scene where they attacked the crowd with their fists, feet and night sticks.

Armed With Machine Guns.

There were about 150 officers armed with machine guns, service pistols and rifles. The fire department assembled engines across the street and warded off the crowd

the situation. The Boston cloak and dressmakers do not see any reason to fight their brothers. Realizing his failure, Mr. Sigman is now forced to send his best "friend" Breslaw to save the situation. Mr. Breslaw is due here soon. Whether he will succeed, remains to be seen; we are confident, however, that the cloak

with volumes of water, while the ambulance attached to the Harlem hospital hurried to and fro with wounded civilians who were felled by the police clubs.

As the fight progressed, thousands of Negroes congregated at the corner of 138th street and Lenox avenue and took up the cause of the civilian element against the police, who were indiscriminately beating up men, women and children. While the struggle was going on, Donald was hurried off to the 135th street station in an automobile where he was beaten so badly that he had to be carried to the Harlem hospital for treatment on a stretcher.

The Hearing.

The case against Donald was first called on July 31st, but was adjourned until August 14th when he was sentenced to 10 days by Magistrate Dodge at the Heights Court. This trial was a typical farce to which workers are daily subjected.

Donald was able to offer three witnesses who refuted the charge of disorderly conduct, but the judge accepted the complainants' word and convicted the prisoner. The trial was a real Tammany "burlesque" with the poor Negro as the "scapegoat."

Suner, one of Donald's witnesses, having dared to deny the charges of Patrolman Young was immediately arrested after he left the stand and charged with assault.

Torture Grant.

The same thing happened to Grant, who told the court he saw Patrolman De Stella on the night of the riot wound Patrolman Kuberl with a kick in the groin which he had aimed at Donald but missed.

This charge enraged the police so that they were determined to take it out on Grant. They took him to the Wadsworth ave. station and later to the 123rd street station where he was beaten up unmercifully and burned with cigar ends and matches, in an attempt to get him to make "a confession."

The next day they charged him with robbery and brought a white taxi driver, named Herman Ellis, a police "stool-pigeon", to swear that Grant had robbed him on the morning before the riot. Grant was brought before Magistrate Bushell in the Harlem court and placed on \$5,000 bail.

Interviewed in the lock-up, Grant said that he was the victim of a frame-up. "Some weeks ago, I had to report a cop named Blankey of 135th street station to Police Commissioner Warren and Inspector Ryan for breaking up my meeting. They are therefore trying to get me in jail so as to keep me from talking to my people."

Attorney John Smith, 26 Courtland street, who represented the men told the court that the arrest of the witnesses was the most high handed and outrageous intimidation he had ever heard of.

Protest Meeting Called.

The Negro masses in Harlem are in a state of revolt against this open and flagrant campaign of police terrorism. All sections of the population, even the most reactionary elements, are voicing their protest.

Richard B. Moore, national organizer of the American Negro Labor Congress, when interviewed stated that his organization has recently issued an appeal to various organizations and prominent race leaders to stage a monster protest meeting in Harlem and to organize the broad masses of the workers to continue to fight vigilantly against this unwarranted police assault, which the authorities are carrying on to crush the militant spirit of the Negroes, so as to make them easy pawns for capitalist exploitation.