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MEMPHIS IGNITES

"NOBODY WAS HURT UNTIL
THE POLICE OFFICERS
GOT THERE"

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MEMPHIS "NOBODY WAS HURT UNTIL TH



The distorted face of 17-year old ELTON HAYES was clear evidence of the viciously sick nature of the various pigs who took their turns on him.

Southern tradition, like baseball and aggressive warfare, is part of the American life-style. When the racist ruling class refers to the "southern tradition" or the "old South", they refer to an image of "lovely" white ladies and "fine" gentlemen sitting on the verandas of large white houses engaged in poetic conversation,

drawled out in sweet, melodic tones. Black people, however, know the "southern tradition" in its ugly reality: The hanging tree, for the Black man who is even accused of so little as looking at the "lovely" white woman; the tar and feathers; the vigilante mobs of "fine" gentlemen; the bombings of Black churches; the "NO NIGGERS -

Whites Only" signs; the kitchens and fields of the master - all adding up to the complete disregard by those in power, and their followers, for the rights of Blacks as human beings, or even the thought in the first place, that we are human beings.

To be familiar with a particular way of life, however, is not to accept it or to tolerate it. We are simply familiar with the phenomenon of the "southern tradition". We do not accept it. Earlier this month, deep in



Shelby County police reported that ELTON HAYES was riding in this truck.

Dixie, Black youth of Memphis Tennessee, righteously exhibited the anger and dissatisfaction of Black people with the "southern tradition". They also forecast the means through which an angry people will finally resolve the contradiction between ourselves and our oppressors.

On October 16th, three young Black brothers were driving a truck along country road, outside of Memphis. The truck belonged to the father of the driver. The driver was 15-year old George Barnes. The passengers were 14-year old Calvin McKissack and 17-year old Elton Hayes. It was a good day. They were out on a Saturday afternoon, looking to have some fun. Brother George Barnes bet his two friends that he could drive to the top of a hill before other cars could reach the bottom. The idea came to him when he saw two other cars coming over the top of the hill. They took off. The whole area was empty. There was hardly anyone around, except three friends in an old truck having a good time.

As Brothers George and Calvin and Elton were riding like the wind up the hill, George spotted flashing lights behind them. After turning a corner



ELTON HAYES,



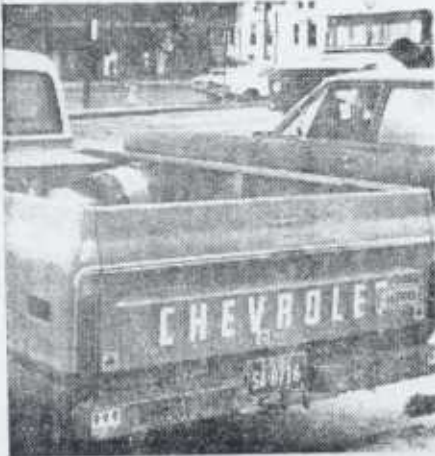
CALVIN McKISSACK



GEORGE BARNES

S IGNITES POLICE OFFICERS GOT THERE"

George pulled the hand brake ("I was afraid to hit the brakes, because the truck might roll..."). The truck slid halfway into a ditch. By this time, the two pigs chasing them, E.C. Mullins and J.B. Dyer, had called for other police. Altogether, twenty-eight full grown pigs emerged from their various cars to attack the three young brothers, once they had stopped. As Brother Calvin stated, "There wasn't any wreck. We just slid into the ditch. Nobody was hurt until the police officers got there." All twenty-eight



ELTON HAYES' death was a "traffic fatality".
NOT AN "accident".

pigs converged on the brothers. Brother George later described the horror: "I grabbed my head and they began poking me in the ribs with sticks. I could see policemen on their knees in the ditch, swinging their sticks up in the air. But, I couldn't see who they were. Then, they knocked me down and started kicking me in the side and stomach. I never heard anything from Calvin or Elton. All I could hear was cops calling us everything but a child of God..."

"When I got up," George continued, "they were still swinging the sticks; but I didn't know on who. They carried somebody out of the ditch and put them in the sheriff's car and let out - for the hospital, I guess." Inside the pig car Brother George Barnes recalled the conversation: "They cursed us all the way to town; and one time one of them spun around in the seat, shook his finger and said, 'Don't you know if you had killed those two officers in that car, it would have been worse for you than raping a white woman? We'd sure enough killed you and left you laying where you fell.'"

Seventeen-year old Brother Elton Hayes was beaten to death in that



For Black youth in America, there are no care-free days.

ditch. It was his body that Shelby County Police (of which Memphis is a part) whisked out of sight. It was youthful Elton Hayes that they had beaten beyond recognition.

To disgrace this tragedy even more, a Black police officer who was on the scene could have prevented Elton

Hayes' death. Shelby County Deputy Sheriff, Lieutenant Wilkes, not only participated in beating Elton Hayes, but also was in a position within the police chain of command to have ordered the rest of his fellow-pigs to stop. Wilkes was one of the five County police on the scene; the other twenty-three were

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Twenty-eight full grown pigs beat Elton Hayes to death.



Ku Klux Klansman stripped their old uniforms and stopped burning crosses.

MEMPHIS IGNITES

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CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE
city police. In their pig hierarchy, the County forces have authority over the city; and Wilkes was the highest ranking dog among the other County deputies.

Now, what shall we say for Elton Hayes. The Black youth of Memphis, particularly, did not say much. They acted! On Saturday, October 19th, there were memorial funeral services for Brother Elton Hayes. His distorted face was clear evidence of the viciously sick nature of the various pigs who took their turns on him. No Black youth, in fact, really no Black person in Memphis, could forget. Instead of sending flowers, some of them chose to take action against the oppressors in any way they could. Recognizing the close (if not inseparable) tie between

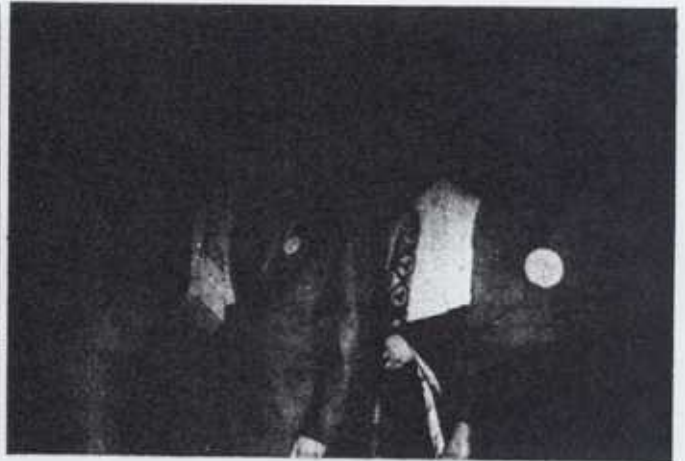
business and government, they began destroying the immediately available signs of our oppression. On the night of the funeral, some people burned a place called Speedy's Drive-In to the ground.

Their anger was vented in many ways from then on, and for many more reasons. Not only had the pigs beaten Elton Hayes to death, they lied about it to the People. The murder of Elton Hayes was recorded on official police reports as a "traffic fatality". Then, to even further underestimate the People's intelligence, Memphis Police Chief Henry Lux (who has since resigned) called himself "relieving" the twenty-three city pigs of their duties.

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Calvin McKissack won't forget being told, "...if you had killed those two officers, it would have been worse for you than raping a white woman."



We are a people who anger slowly, but rage undamned.

MEMPHIS IGNITES

"NOBODY WAS HURT UNTIL THE POLICE OFFICERS GOT THERE"

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He neglected to mention that they were still receiving their pay. Leave with pay can only amount to a paid vacation. Then, there was the question of the other five pigs. None of them were even reprimanded. The instantly angry response of the Black community had eked the little image of concession out of Lux. Nothing moved the county authorities, so it seemed.

The shock of Brother Elton Hayes' murder had hardly rocked the Black community, when, on the very next evening, vicious, unconcerned, racist pigs violated the People again. Supposedly, rushing to an area where there was a fire-bombing, two pigs decided that they didn't need to stop when Robert Reed, Jr. crossed their path. He was three years old. He is dead. Memphis pigs ran over him and killed him.

They have said that they are sorry.

Certainly, this was unbearable. Many more fires were set. Memphis Mayor Loeb was in a dilemma. He didn't even imagine that the good Black folks of Memphis could be pushed too far. He generously decided that he had better talk to some Black people to settle things. Even the curfew that he had imposed was being ignored by the masses of Black people. Calling for a meeting with "responsible" Black leaders, he naturally neglected to include members of the Tennessee State Chapter of the Black Panther Party, whose main office is in Memphis. Among those who were a part of this meeting, however, was Black singer Isaac Hayes, who was in the area to entertain. Along with STAX Recording Company, Hayes promised Loeb an end to the "rioting" if the curfew would be lifted. Hayes, after his performances, went out into the Black com-

munity with the intent of quelling the "riots". He bought free records and candy bars. The idea of giving away STAX records and candy bars did not work. STAX' and Hayes' promise was not fulfilled. Black people, especially the youth, moved against various businesses (the reminders of oppression) with the harsh memories of Elton Hayes and three-year old Robert Reed, Jr.

Suddenly, the people's uprising stopped. The People have decided to wait until the next City Council meeting, where the demand for the arrest of all officers involved in Elton Hayes' murder will be heard. The People will decide the next move.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE
Tennessee State Chapter
Black Panther Party

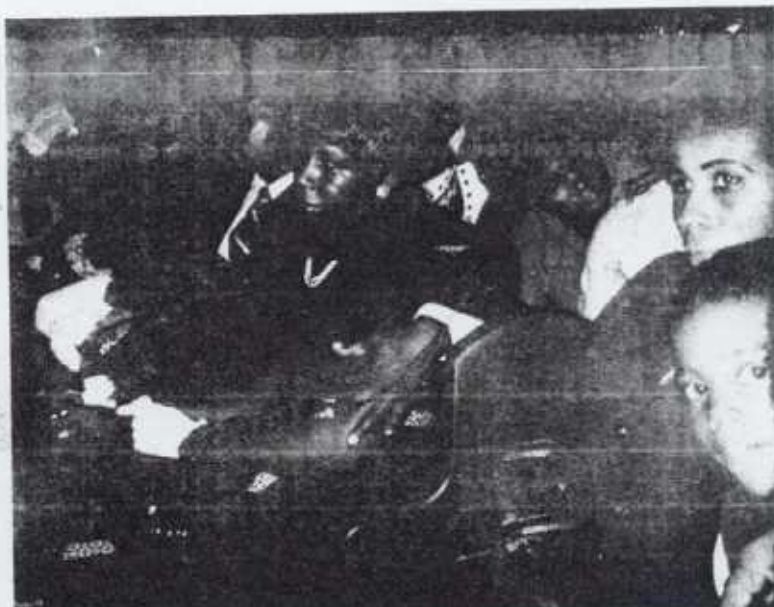
NOTE: All captions on this page are quotations taken from THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLKS, by W.E.B. Dubois.



"... For surely, surely this is not the end. Surely there shall dawn some mighty morning to lift the Veil and set the prisoned free."



"...He might have borne his burden more bravely than we, -- aye, and found it lighter too, some day..."



"In vain, in vain! - for where, O God! beneath thy broad blue sky shall my dark baby rest in peace, - where Reverence dwells, and Goodness, and a Freedom that is free?"