

RIZZO'S REIGN OF TERROR



Frank "Bozo" Rizzo

If you liked Rizzo's reign as Philadelphia's Police Commissioner, you'll love his repressive rule as Mayor. Earlier this year, this News Service published an article titled "Rizzo Runs For Mayor", which gave a long, but incomplete list of crimes committed by the police department under his leadership. His campaign for the primary elections was stained with blood, as to be expected. In the primary election held on May 18th, he won the "Democratic" Party nomination, and all past events along with the April 10th incident about to be described can give you an idea of the bloody siege we can expect if he wins the mayoralty election in November.

On April 10th, 1971, a Rizzo rally was held at a Rizzo campaign office near Front and Lehigh in Kensington, a largely white-working class community of Philadelphia. A number of members of the October 4th Organization attended, not to stir up any trouble, but to merely hold political conversations there with people in the crowd about Rizzo's candidacy.

Before we describe the gruesome events that occurred there, we will give you a brief account of incidents that led up to the brutality of April 10th, so that it will be clear that this was not a usual spur-of-the-moment type case of brutality, but the cold execution of a conspiracy previously conceived in the ranks of the Philadelphia Police Department. The October 4th Organization is an organization of revolutionary whites who live in the Kensington area. They had been active in organizing around various community issues, such as the Bicentennial. One of their projects was an attempt to organize a food-co-op in Kensington, which had become the target of Civil Disobedience Squad member's verbal threats and a raid by Narcotics agents who planted heroin in the building. They had also participated in demonstrations against Pflaumer Brewing Co. - which wants to build a trucking terminal on land that the community wants for housing. One of their

members is JoAnn Frankenhauer, wife of Paul Frankenhauer who was murdered by police on Sept. 1, 1970 in Rizzo's presence. JoAnn, since her husband's brutal death, has been the target of constant police harassment; and April 10th was no exception.

A week and a half before the Rizzo rally, October 4th received word that Lt. George Fencel, head of the CD squad had promised to "Get those Kensington people good" at the next opportunity. A few days before the rally, Marry Comer, Democratic Committeeman and State Senator, who let Rizzo use his office as a campaign office, told the mother of one of the October 4th members that he was getting some people to "take care of" her son and his friends "if they cause any trouble." However, the members of Oct. 4th took the threats to mean that if they caused a disturbance there would be trouble. They had no idea that there would be a vicious unprovoked attack on them.

Therefore, they went to the rally, only intending to talk to the People there, not to demonstrate or carry signs, etc. (After all common sense told them not to try to stir up a pro-Rizzo crowd.) They arrived when Rizzo was finishing his speech and inviting people to come inside the office. The Rizzo supporters talked with them, disagreeing, but not being hostile.

JoAnn, who was 9 months pregnant and carrying her two year old son in her arms, tried to join a line of people waiting to meet Rizzo. She wanted to talk to him about the murder of her husband 7 months earlier and show him the son of the man whom he killed. Rizzo staff members, on orders from the CD squad blocked her entrance to the door and told her she couldn't come in. Then they began polking her in the stomach and shoving her off the steps.

The group decided to leave, wanting to avoid trouble in a pro-Rizzo crowd from which they could expect little support, and started across the street. It was obvious to everyone there, police, CD and the crowd, that they were leaving; however, Curtis and Turner of the CD squad followed them across the street and continued poking JoAnn in the stomach and insulting her. When her brother, John Foster, Jr., tried to stop them, Turner grabbed him and threw him against the wall.

This seemed to be a prearranged signal to attack. Suddenly 20 or 30 police charged across the street with guns drawn, and nightsticks began cracking on heads. The ground was covered with blood and some of them became unrecognizable as blood gushed down their faces. Even the pro-Rizzo crowd was appalled at the utter brutality and began screaming "They're killing them! They're killing them!" Apparently, the pigs thought that they were because they stopped, threw them into a corner and moved the patrol wagon so that as few people as possible could see the bloody spectacle.

Seven people in all were arrested, four of whom were taken to Episcopal Hospital, including JoAnn's father, John Foster who suffered a fractured wrist. Roger Tauss and John Foster, Jr. suffered fractured skulls. All of the gashes required a total of 58 stitches to close. One of those arrested had tried to take pictures of the beating and had his camera confiscated and was charged along with the rest of them.

The horror continued at the hospital. Roger and John were supposed to be under a doctor's care for at least 72 hours, but were released to the police department within 24 hours. Dr. Henry, a black neurosurgeon, had given the 72-hour order and remained firm against police pressure to release them; however, a white resident released them the next morning. They were kept at Police Headquarters, 8th and Race, for at least 9 hours in a cell without food and water.

While they were awaiting arraignment, their lawyer,

Jack Levine, told Judge Ann Clark that two people were down in the cell block with fractured skulls and asked her to give the police an order to have them brought up for arraignment immediately. This was exceptional in view of the fact that persons who had arrived on the cellblock after Roger and John, were arraigned before them. Judge Clark's reply was that Levine's request was unreasonable and to shut up. However, she felt that dinner was more important and refused to order Roger and John brought up from the cellroom for arraignment. Immediately after the total bail of \$8500 was set, John and Roger were whisked off to Holmesburg Prison.

On Thursday, May 13th, a People's Tribunal was held to examine the facts of the case. Victims and witnesses alike testified, including Dr. Frederick Cimlone, chief neurosurgeon at the University of Pa. Hospital, who treated Roger Tauss approximately a week after the incident. Dr. Cimlone's testimony brought out that Roger's skull was fractured so severely in one spot that a plastic plate had to be inserted in his head because the bone had splintered too badly to knit. Roger had received no specific treatment except diagnostic X-rays, until he saw Dr. Cimlone who had to operate. The neurosurgeon also brought out in his testimony that police beatings are not rare cases brought into his hospital and that a man was brought in with multiple police-inflicted gunshot wounds just last week.

It was decided by the panel at the Tribunal which consisted of two ministers, a lawyer and a doctor that the information would be passed on to the D.A., the state attorney general and the state governor.

The police version of the April 10th incident was full of lies and contradictions. They presented the incident as a fight between pro-Rizzo and anti-Rizzo people from the community. Yet, all the injuries received were from police billy clubs. At the preliminary hearing, they testified that the defendants shouted obscenities at Rizzo - another outright lie. To bolster their ridiculous case, the police said that the defendants were rioting, (would JoAnn Frankenhauer, 9 months pregnant at the time and carrying a baby in her arms, go to a Rizzo rally to riot.)

Rizzo also claims that his back was turned in the office when the bloodbath was going on, which is an astounding feat with all the screaming and skull-cracking in progress outside. Even at least a half dozen of his supporters have already come forward with testimony confirming the cruel actions of the Police Department on April 10th.

Rizzo and the Police are the Problem. Community Control of Police is the Solution. If you want to help make Community Control of Police a reality in Philadelphia, contact:

The Black Panther Party
3625 Wallace Street
Phila., Pa. 19104
Ev 7-2867

Contributions to aid the defense of the victims of April 10th may be mailed to:

Kensington Defense Fund
Box 14745
Richmond Station
Phila., Pa. 19134

Contributions to aid the victims of police brutality and their families in general may be sent to:

The People's Memorial Defense Fund
c/o Black Panther Party
3625 Wallace Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

PIGS LIE TO FURTHER VILIFY THE PHILADELPHIA BRANCH B.P.P.

On May 18, 1971, the Philadelphia Police Department, along with elements of the news media, again attempted to vilify and discredit the Philadelphia Branch of the Black Panther Party. Early that morning, two former Party members, who had been expelled from our ranks earlier this year, Michael Byrd and Anthony Jones, were accused of robbing the Holiday Inn along with two other individuals completely unknown to our membership. Det. Capt. William McDonough claimed that all four are members of the Black Panther Party, which they definitely are not. The Bulletin and Daily News, without making any

investigation gave great publicity to this lie in stories printed on May 18.

The frame-up attempt deepened when it was claimed that Orlando Davis, one of the four, whom we have never heard of until now, was carrying a fragmentation grenade similar to the ones confiscated after the killing of Park Guard Sgt. VonColln last August 29th. It is obvious that again they are trying to link the Party with that death with which we have no connection. Furthermore, the Bulletin also printed the Police Department's statement that this grenade is similar to the ones used to destroy police

cars in November, 1969, an alleged act with which the Black Panther Party had no connection.

The Black Panther Party has absolutely no knowledge of the alleged hold-up attempt at the Holiday Inn, and we view this linking of our organization with this incident as an attempt to vilify us and destroy our image in the eyes of the People.

Anthony Jones and Michael Byrd were expelled from our ranks because of their utter disregard of Party principles. They were not servants of the People while in our ranks - a requirement of all Party members.

Our program of serving the People is operating survival programs, such as the Free Breakfast Program, Free Medical Clinic, Free Medical Clinic, etc. Robbing the Holiday Inn, as these four have been accused of doing, and other adventurist acts are not in the interest of the masses of People and therefore not part of our Party Program, principles or actions.

The fact that the news media, with a very few exceptions, are determined to brainwash the People by presenting a totally false and negative picture of our Party is evident in the fact that only two

representatives of the media appeared at a press conference we called on May 17th, regarding the trial of Bobby Seale and Ericka Huggins, but lost no time in publicizing the outrageous falsehoods stated above.

We will continue to serve the People Body and Soul through our Programs and will not let the vicious frame-up attempts of the police and news media deter us from this goal.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
Philadelphia Branch
Black Panther Party