

Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality

P. O. Box 44925 Detroit, Michigan 48232

African-American History Month Newsletter

February, 1999

PUBLIC HEARING FIRES UP STRUGGLE TO STOP POLICE BRUTALITY



Dale Rich Photo: Michigan Citizen

Hundreds of citizens packed a City Council public hearing last November 30 in a powerful display of outrage over police forces running wild in Detroit and the metro area. For the first time in recent memory, the media blockade on coverage of police brutality cases was broken.

Family members of murdered citizens and others who had been beaten, threatened, and harassed by the police were prominently featured on local television and radio spots, as well as on a CNN special that aired nationwide

the next day. The entire hearing was broadcast the same evening on the cable channel which regularly covers City Council proceedings.

Ron Scott and Gloria House of the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality opened the hearing. They detailed the long history of the struggle in Detroit against police brutality, particularly in the Black community, and gave a national context for the current-day struggle. A list of demands including community control of the police through election of a strengthened Police Commission and the Police Chief was presented.

Coalition members Herman Vallery, Arnetta Grable, Arnetta Grable, Jr., and Jamellah Sombai described the murders of their family members Lamar Grable and Rahaab White. Gwen Washington and Yvonne Purifoy gave details of the struggle to save the Fine Arts, followed by tenants of the Packard plant who were also assaulted by the police. Numerous others testified. The Coalition calls on all to support them and the Coalition this month in many scheduled hearings and events!

EVENTS CALENDAR

Call (313) 331-7794 to confirm dates; 36th Dist. Court. times posted at court entrance the morning of trial.

Tues. Feb. 2 & Wed. Feb 3, 9 am City-Cty Bldg.

Pack the courtroom in support of Gwen Washington and the **FINE ARTS THEATER**: City-County Bldg: Judge James Rashid, Rm. 1111 (county side), Nine A.M.

Monday February 8 9 am City-County Bldg.

Support the family of **LAMAR GRABLE** as their lawsuit in his murder goes to trial. City-County Bldg., Judge Isidore Torres, Rm. 1011, Nine A.M.

Monday Feb. 15, 10 am City-County Bldg.

The **COALITION VS. POLICE BRUTALITY** appears at the City Council to hear the response of the Police Dept. & City to the demands presented at the PUBLIC HEARING. Pack the **Council Chambers 13th Flr. CCB.** to support our demands (see pages 3, 4).

Wednesday February 17 36th Dist. Court

CORNELL SQUIRES is scheduled for trial after being viciously assaulted in front of his home by Detroit police, leading to his father's heart attack. 36th Dst. Madison Ave..

Tuesday, February 23 36th Dist. Court

JOAQUIN RAMOS goes to trial for informing his friends of their rights with the police.

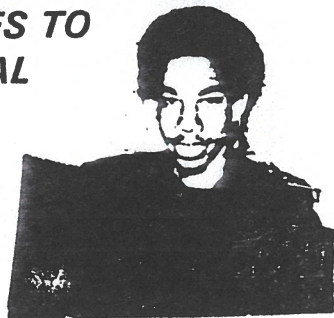
Saturday February 27, 1999 7 PM Fine Arts

PAM AFRICA speaks at a rally to save **MUMIA ABU-JAMAL**, and support the **FINE ARTS THEATER**,

Sunday, February 28, 1999 4 PM

The Coalition vs. Police Brutality sponsors a **Forum on the History of the Police and the Black Community**, featuring local attys. Fine Arts Theater, 2752 Woodward.

LAMAR GRABLE CASE GOES TO TRIAL



Lamar Wayne Grable

On Monday, February 8 in the court of Judge Isidore Torres, the case of **LAMAR GRABLE** is scheduled for trial. The civil lawsuit brought by Lamar's mother Arnetta Grable cites his killer, Police Officer Eugene Brown, and Brown's partner Vicki Yost, whose identity the City is still trying to conceal by referring to her as "Jane Doe."

On the evening of Sept. 21, 1996, Lamar left his father Herman Vallery's house with a friend to go to a church party. Only moments later, he was dead, shot eight times including twice in the back, with three shots to his chest at such close range that they left powder burns. Police claim Lamar had a gun, but the only witness other than Brown and Yost to claim they saw the gun at the scene was a police officer who saw it in Vicki Yost's waistband. Vicki Yost herself brought the gun to the police lab. No neighbor witnesses saw the gun.

Lamar was not known for carrying weapons. He didn't have a criminal record and the toxicology report indicated no drugs or alcohol in his system. Said his mother Arnetta, "*Lamar was a loving son, brother, grandson and father. He was a hard worker and very active in community affairs.*" His family had to battle the Police Department for access to the physical evidence in the case and information on the records of Brown and Yost. It was revealed at the deposition that Brown killed another man in 1995, after joining the police force only in 1993.

Because Lamar's family has led the city-wide struggle against police brutality, they have faced constant harassment by the police. His 17-year-old brother Aaron has been falsely arrested three times and stopped numerous other times. His mother and father have been stopped and detained prior to attending important events sponsored by the Coalition Against Police Brutality.

While Arnetta Grable was appearing on Ron Scott's show, FOR MY PEOPLE, the police invaded her home and placed defamatory calls about her to her neighbors. Her next-door neighbor's home was mysteriously shot up, forcing her to move her family for their safety. During the second-year memorial vigil at Field near Kercheval, where Lamar died, a young friend of his and a Coalition member were harassed and threatened with arrest by police officers who came to the scene in five cars. One of the officers had accompanied Lamar's body to the hospital on the night of his death.

The Coalition calls on everyone to show their support for Lamar and his family by packing the courtroom on Feb.8, 9 am, Rm 1011, City-Cty. Bldg.

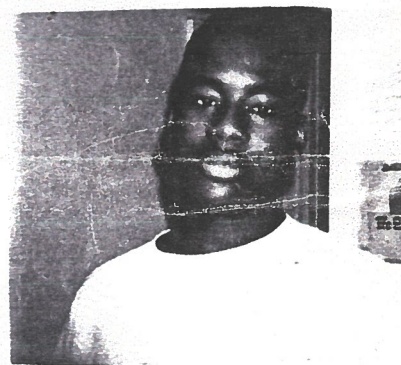
JUSTICE for RAHAAB

The family of **RAHAAB WHITE** is pursuing their struggle for justice in his death at the hands of off-duty policeman **Thomas E. Phillips**. Phillips, a white 23-year veteran of the Detroit Police Department, shot and killed Rahaab in a parking lot near the Union Street Restaurant on Woodward and Alexandrine on December 9, 1995.

A lawsuit citing Phillips and Omed Bahoura, the owner of Extravagante Valet Parking who was present when Rahaab was shot, as well as the City of Detroit and the Police Department, has been filed in Wayne County Circuit Court. An initial hearing before Judge James Rashid is likely soon.

Rahaab, 21, had just left his home after having dinner with his mother, sister and fiancée. A half-hour later he lay mortally wounded. Numerous conflicts between the story told by Phillips and Bahoura and the actual evidence exist.

Although Phillips and Bahoura claim Rahaab tried to rob them in the parking lot, his family observed a trail of blood leading from half a block away into the parking lot after the incident. Rahaab's wallet, ID, jewelry and other personal possessions were missing when he was picked up by EMS. His car was moved several blocks away, and only one key out of twelve on his key ring was returned to his mother.



Rahaab Sekou White

Rahaab did not own a gun. Witnesses at the scene state there was no gun lying near Rahaab as police reports allege. The only money on Rahaab was the money he left home with, although police state he pocketed the proceeds of the alleged robbery. A friend of Rahaab's, Tony Ingram, who said he knew more about what happened, died under mysterious circumstances several weeks after Rahaab.

Says his mother, Jamellah Sombai, of her son, "*I was very pleased with Rahaab as a son. He served me well. He was a good brother to his sister Akua, and a helpful neighbor; he had plans to go to college and marry at the time of his death. That's why I'm fighting so hard for the truth to come out and for justice to be done!*"

3 Generations Suffer

On Oct. 23, 1998, Cornell Squires observed his 17-year-old son being questioned by police in front of his home on Detroit's far southwest side. When he tried to find out why, he was told to get back. He did, but the white male cop, P.O. Feld, badge #1778, ran after him screaming racial insults and attacked, throwing him through a door.

Mr. Squires' father, who lives across the street, saw his son being beaten. He suffered a severe heart attack. After weeks in intensive care, he is now home.

Cornell Squires was arrested by the assaulting policeman and his partner, a Black female. Says Squires, "Victims across the city are being unjustly assaulted by the police. It's time for the city administration to take action!" His hearing on charges of interfering with a police officer is scheduled for Wednesday, Feb 17, in 36th District Court on Madison Ave.

Gas Co. Worker Attacked by Dearborn Hts. Officer

On Nov. 14, 1998, Francheska E. Greene, a meter reader for Michigan Consolidated Gas Co. who is African-American, went to 6873 Mayburn in

Dearborn Heights to read the home's meter. As she went into the backyard, the homeowner, Kenneth Serwatowski, a Dearborn Hts. policeman, released his German shepherd dog which charged her. In self-defense, she sprayed the dog with mace, which is gas company policy.

Serwatowski's neighbor saw what happened and said Ms. Greene was justified. As she was reading the neighbor's meter, Serwatowski came up to her and threatened her with bodily harm, such as macing. He followed her to the next home's meter. On her cell phone she dialed 911. Some time later Officer Tomburrow arrived and told her a supervisor had to be called on an incident involving a fellow officer. When this "supervisor" finally arrived, he told Miss Greene she couldn't continue her meter reading route or "you'll see what will happen to you."

She was bullied, harassed, stalked, physically threatened, mocked and intimidated, and forbidden to do her job, which she has since lost. The Coalition is working with Ms. Greene and her family to obtain justice, and calls on all concerned citizens to call the Dearborn Heights City government to protest, at (313) 277-7413 (Mayor Ruth Canfield).

Latin Youth Assaulted

In May, 1998, Joaquin Ramos stopped to talk to his cousin outside a store in southwest Detroit. When two other men came out of the store, police drove up and told everyone to get up against the car, cursing at them. When Joaquin began advising his fellow detainees about their rights, officer Michael Madrigal began harassing and threatening him, stating "Anything you do that annoys me I can arrest you for."

He arrested Joaquin when he couldn't produce ID and charged him with "interfering with a city employee in the performance of their duties." The police report says Joaquin told the others police could not search them without their consent. Joaquin's lawyer said "the police aren't used to anybody asserting their rights."

Joaquin asked for a jury trial rather than copping a plea to bring attention to the police harassment of young people. At the Nov. 30th public hearing, Joaquin told how a police officer forced him into an alley, put a gun to his head, and threatened to kill him if he didn't give him information on some local robberies. Joaquin goes to trial on Tuesday, Feb. 23 in 36th District Court, Madison Ave.

Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, Repression, and the Criminalization of a Generation

STOLEN LIVES: METRO DETROIT AREA

Partial listing of recent cases

January 27, 1999

Lamar Grable, 20: 9/21/96

Shot 8 times, twice in the back, by Eugene Brown, partner Vicki Yost.

Rahaab White, 21: 12/9/95

Shot multiple times by off-duty P.O. Thomas E. Phillips in concert with Omed Bahoura, at Union Street Restaurant parking lot.

Jimmi Ruth Ratliff, 47: 12/9/97

Executed in her bedroom, 1300 E. Lafayette, by a massive task force led by Benny Napoleon.

Cora Bell Jones, 79: 8/15/98

Shot in her east side home, partially deaf and blind.

Demetrius Posev-Horsely, 19

12/5/98: Shot to death by 9th Pct. officers the night P.O. Bandy died.

Bernard Salazar, 19: 9/98

In his Homer St. home, shot in the head after police broke in.

Theodore Laroque, 28: 9/14/98

Shot 4 times by P.O. A. Goree, of Mayor Archer's security squad.

Wayne Garrison, 47: 7/26/98

Shot in his W. Chicago apt. bldg.

Robert Villareal, 29: 3/5/98

Shot multiple times and trampled in a massive police assault.

Roy Hoskins, 14: 4/20/97

Shot in the back by James Woods.

Jose Iturralde: 4/28/93

Killed by Rico Hardy and Ira Todd.

Ricardo Gordy, 21: 3/24/93

Choked to death in police car near his home on Seyburn.

Malice Green, 11/92

Beaten to death by Larry Nevers and Walter Budzyn, now free.

John Cosby III, 26: 8/2/94

Almost beaten to death in Macomb County Prison.

Dante Foster, 26: 3/27/98

By Royal Oak P.O. Mark Porter at Diamond Lincoln/Mercury.

Dalon Gunn, 24: 7/19/97

Killed by Dearborn P.O. Michael Christoff during car chase.

David Dowd, 40: 6/6/98

Shot by Southgate police after they rammed his car, trapping him.

Mark Gaydos, 37: 6/12/98

Shot by Redford Twp.; stopped for "squealing his tires."

COALITION SAYS 'NO' TO HOLLOW POINTS

On December 18, the Coalition Against Police Brutality led the opposition to the Detroit Police Department's plan to introduce hollow point bullets. Ron Scott, Henry Dudzinski and General Laney were among the speakers at a press conference and demonstration of the effects of hollow point expansion rounds held at Laney Gun Supplies on Detroit's east side.

Said Scott, "The police have instituted a true policy of deadly force. There is no justification for allowing the police to escalate the already alarming amount of police violence described at our public hearing November 30." Dudzinski called hollow points "nothing more than an execution bullet." Laney said "Instead of an arms race, we need police to learn more about citizens they are paid to protect as public servants."



Photo: Michigan Chronicle

Henry Dudzinski and Ron Scott

Despite hard-hitting questions from City Councilman Kenneth Cockrel Jr., Chief Benny Napoleon was unapologetic at a City Council discussion of the issue in January, stating, "Officers are not trained to wound, or to maim, but to kill." The Police Commission has already voted in favor of the proposal. The contract for the bullets is expected to come before the City Council soon. **The Coalition calls on all citizens to flood the Council with phone calls in opposition, and to attend the Council hearing on the day of the vote.**

SAVE THE FINE ARTS

For over nine months, Gwen Washington and Yvonne Purifoy have been waging a pitched battle to maintain the Fine Arts Theater as Michigan's only Black-owned and operated theater. During that time, the theater has become "liberated territory," welcoming meetings of progressive groups across the city.

On May 28, 1998, the Detroit Police Department led a massive assault on a Roy Ayers concert at the theater, with over 50 police cars, a SWAT team, helicopter, and the gang squad in evidence. They were doing the bidding of Dennis Archer and Mike Illitch, who wants the property for his Foxtown fiefdom.

After months of delays in the court system, Gwen Washington is finally scheduled to have her case heard in front of Judge James Rashid on February 2 and 3. **LET'S PACK THE COURT!! TELL ARCHER: IT'S OUR TOWN, NOT FOXTOWN!!**

Come to the Detroit Coalition Vs. Police Brutality meetings Wednesdays at 6 P.M. at the Unitarian Church Parsonage, 4605 Cass at W. Forest. Funds are also needed to continue our work!! Send your contributions to our P.O. Box!

Samellah Sombai
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