

Black Liberation News

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Letters to to the Editor

OPEN LETTER FROM A BROTHER

Dear _____

_____ and I would like to thank you and your wife for the wonderful hospitality you extended to us while we were in _____. Also, extend our greetings to _____ and As _____ may have told you, the FBI and immigration authorities were waiting for us at the _____ on the _____ border that Monday that we left _____. I suspect they had the phone tapped and heard me tell _____ that we couldn't take her sister to the airport that night because we wanted to be home by _____ that evening.

The Pigs took us through a thing at the border, stripping me naked, copying every phone number out of the address books we had and refusing to allow _____ to re-enter the USA. After some hot verbal exchange which was all I was in a position to do at the time, we went back to Canada where the Canadian Pigs had a deportation order made out for _____. Since deportation would take a few days we managed to get in touch with some friends who had a few connections. We spent up until Wednesday trying to obtain a student visa so _____ could re-enter raceland USA. We finally got in. The entire event was just another example of how the US and Canada cooperate to inflict Blacks with oppression,

with harassment or any tactic necessary to perpetuate a decadent system of exploitation and racism.

So, Brothers, let all understand the nature of the beast with whom they look up to for justice and protection. Let them understand that such things cannot come from a tyrannical bureaucracy of international thugs. There is only one justice for Blacks and other oppressed peoples and that is the justice with which we struggle to freedom. There is only one protection and that is the unity and support we share.

Presently I am in _____ as I indicated to you on my visit where I would be for a year or so. There are some beautiful brothers and sisters here; however, the work to be done is tremendous.

I hope the work of the organization in _____ is going well. Everyone was anxious to see the papers that I brought back from _____ (the Pigs tried to confiscate them but I refused to hand them over). _____ was made aware of what was going on and enquired about _____. Keep on pushin'.

Your Brother

... citizens review board

against the Police Department. Recent incidents have shown the Police Department not to be very responsive to the wishes of the people of Toronto. For example:

- 1) The controversy over school crossing guards - The Police refused to heed the wishes of the citizens of Toronto, even though accidents increased where crossing guards were removed.
- 2) The victimization and surreptitious handling by the Police Department of the Angelo Nobrega case.
- 3) The ramifications of the Nobrega case as manifested by the loss of confidence of the Portuguese community in the Police Department.
- 4) The intentional promotion of racial strife as a method of division between the black and the Portuguese communities as manifested by the Alexander Park "incident".

We insist that the Police Department should be responsible to the citizens of Toronto.

As it stands now, the citizens have no control over "their" Police force.

As a former Police Commissioner, Mr. Albert Campbell, said "They are not responsible to anyone ... they don't feel responsible to anyone."

The Police Department's reaction to citizens' complaints is automatically in defence of the Police.

For instance, Judge CO Bick, Chairman of the Police Commission, justified the promotion of the anti-black film, "Revolution Underway", as part of an educational program for the Toronto Police. When asked by a few concerned blacks to view this film the request was denied. The Police Department did, however, show the film to the South Parkdale Residents' Association (for "educational purposes ...") (???) This action of the Police Department in their so-called campaign to bridge the gap between the community and the Police actually - because of the film's racial overtones and the support of the film by the Police Department - was most violently rejected by the Parkdale Association as a device to create racial strife. This film was produced by the National Education Association, a right-wing association operating from the campus of Harding College in Sercy, Arkansas.

Decaying relations with the Police are by no means limited to ethnic and racial minorities. Although the number of Police cars and police on foot-patrol in the Cabbagetown area, for instance, gives the appearance that this

community is being more than amply "served and protected", the actual fact is that the "serving and protecting" is only of the property of the absentee landlords and store-owners, and the community itself is more harassed than "served and protected". In other words it seems that in the value system of the Police, materialism takes precedence over human dignity.

As the Police Commission automatically defends the Police Department, a vicious circle of hostility develops between the individual policeman and the citizens. Since the members of the Police Commission are appointed by those with vested interests in the city's bureaucracy, and not elected by the people, they remain beyond the control of YOU, the ordinary citizen and taxpayer.

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This Citizens' Review Board should not be enacted officially as part of the present political structure, but rather remain an independent body without ties to City Hall or the Police Commission to be effective in resolving complaints and making recommendations.

We are aware that the Citizens' Review Board, if enacted by the present political structure, can become just another bureaucratic extension of the same structure, alienated from the people. Therefore, our recommendations are:

- 1) A Citizens Committee for a Citizens' Review Board be established and maintained as an independent body.
- 2) The dissolution of the present Police Commission. The members of a new Police Commission would be elected by the people, with representation from minority groups.
- 3) It is also imperative in this overhaul that the Chief of Police (in Metro and elsewhere) be elected to have the confidence of the populace at large.

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