

Pitt County grand jury to probe Ayden killing

(Reprinted from *The Daily Tar Heel*)

A special session of the Pitt County Grand Jury Monday will investigate the death of William Murphey, a black farm laborer slain by a highway patrolman in August.

Murphey's death has prompted several protests resulting in more than 900 arrests, including 25 UNC students. The students face trial today in Pitt County for violating a parade ordinance and have indicated they will ask for a continuation until after exams.

The special session was ordered this week by Superior Court Judge Robert Rouse. Rouse called for the probe "to determine if there is probable cause for

accusation of criminal conduct in connection with Murphey's death."

Rouse's order is part of a ruling in which he denied a petition by the Greenville American Civil Liberties Union to make public the confidential State Bureau of Investigation report into the Murphey death.

About 62 protestors arrested in the past week in Greenville, site of the beginning of a proposed week-long march to Raleigh, were sentenced to three days in jail for failing to heed a parade ordinance.

Murphey was slain by Highway Patrolman Billy Day, who was cleared of any criminal charges by the SBI investigation and a coroner's report.

James Monroe

'I'm ashamed of my passivity'

November 21, 1970 saw brother James Cates stabbed repeatedly on the University of North Carolina campus by a white motorcyclist known as a Storm Trooper. This act of overt aggression was done in the presence of hundreds of UNC students and the campus "pigs." Brother Cates bled for 30 minutes outside the Carolina Union while the campus "pigs" looked on. Cates' death was definitely unnecessary. Cates' death was without provocation. Cates' murderers were set free by Orange County.

I, for one, am ashamed and hurt at my own passive actions. It took Attica,

Wilmington and Ayden to make me realize white people do not need a license to murder blacks. We must wake up from this nightmare and open our eyes black people. We must realize that we cannot make it by saying "well that happened to him and not me." We cannot close our minds and think we are safe. We cannot afford to drop our guard.

Black people please wake up because I need you. James Cates needs you. William Murphey needs you. Angela Davis needs you. But most of all, you need yourself. You especially need you when you ain't got nobody else.

* * *

We gathered in multitudes to pay tribute to a fallen brother. Brother James Cates was murdered last year and nothing much was said or done.

November 19, 1971 saw the Black Student Movement, the Afro-American Society of Chapel Hill High School and the general community joined together to let the "man" know we care. We know that Cates is not forgotten and that racism is never going to be forgotten.

After weeks of planning, 300 blacks gathered at the statue of Silent Sam with colors of liberation draped over the

"You especially need you when you ain't got nobody else."

symbol. Black people had gathered to protest the death of Cates and the racism that exists in this country. Ron Wesson, former chairman of the Black Student Movement, informed the people about the details of the march and asked: "Who killed James Cates, William Murphey, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X?" Wesson then asked them where they were when Cates' death occurred.

Sandra Clark of the Chapel Hill High School Afro-American Society spoke of the firebombing incident following Cates' death. She expressed concern for the arrested brothers and questioned the validity of the arrest period.

After the speakers, the brothers and sisters turned and marched. The onlookers were shocked as we chanted "Power to the African People." We marched down Franklin and Cameron Streets and then on to the Pit.

We arrived at the Pit around 12:36 p.m. and the Brother Reverend C.L. Helton told the people, "We were not responsible for the problem and we will not be responsible for the solution." The chairman of the BSM, Jimmy McRae, then traced the plight of black people in America. He ended his speech by saying: "When we look at UNC, we see an

institution which leeches off the community, and as long as UNC is UNC and continues to be a racist institution, we will condemn it for for it is."

From A & T State University, former BSM chairman Cureton Johnson told the people to wake up and forget thinking racism will just fade away. He said only by fighting the "man" can we ever hope of winning our freedom and protecting our people.

After this series of speakers, we heard some beautiful selections from the BSM Gospel Choir. They enchanted the brothers and sisters with their songs of pain and hope. We were indeed honored by the efforts and contributions.

The Reverend Leon White, North Carolina Executive Director of the Commission for Racial Justice quoted verses from the Bible calling for revolution and used these verses to inspire black people to move on. Rev. White made the brothers and sisters proud to be black. Dealing with the idea of black people voting, White said: "White people tell black people to get out and vote and use their black power but black people know that voting for the devil ain't black power, but enslavement."

Our last speaker was brother Bernard Lee, Assistant to Rev. Ralph Abernathy,

"We were not responsible for the problem and we will not be responsible for the solution."

Rev. C.L. Helton

who told black people "they are heirs to the Kingdom of God." He urged black people to give up a semester of study and to devote it to the fight for freedom. Brother Lee, an integrationist, told Black people to lock arms with their white brothers and fight together for equality.

As the forum came to a close a silent prayer was said in the name and memory of Brother Cates. Brother Bruce Sampson closed the program with: "You can kill a revolutionary, but you can't kill the revolution."



Pitt county movement comes to Carolina

by Doris Stith
Managing Editor

More than two hundred persons participated in a rally held in the UNC Pit on Wednesday, November 10. The rally, organized in protest of police brutality in Pitt County and Ayden which has gone without redress, featured such speakers as Donovan Phillips, Golden Frinks, and Jerry Paul.

Golden Frinks is field secretary for SCLC and has been active in the Pitt County Movement since the slaying of a Black farm laborer, William Murphy, by Highway Patrolman Billy Day on August 6, 1971.

"Billy Day's a murderer and he's teaching self defense, right here in the Institute of Government," said Frinks. He advocated that Day be fired and that all policemen be give psychological tests before they become police.

Frinks went on to say that they would continue to march and demonstrate and tell the story until justice was done.

Mary Lacewell Justice to Cates and Murphey

It was a year ago that James Cates, a black Chapel Hill youth, was murdered by a member of a white Durham motorcycle gang known as the Storm Troopers. An all night dance was being held at the Carolina Student Union preceding the Carolina-Duke football game. Cates was coming out of the Union Snack Bar, he was shoved to the side and fatally stabbed.

Earlier that night, Cates and some friends from Chapel Hill went to a local tavern, The New Establishment, and encountered the Storm Troopers. A brawl ensued and Cates and his friends left immediately for the Union. The Storm Troopers weren't satisfied with the results of the brawl and followed them to the Student Union.

At the Union, the Storm Troopers

Donovan Phillips, another speaker for the nonviolent movement spoke out against the injustices done to Blacks in Pitt County. "If this keeps going on, there won't be a Pitt County, North Carolina," declared Phillips as a tear streamed from his eye.

The rally then moved from the Pitt to the Institute of Government where Billy Day was thought to be, but, the Institute did not deny or affirm the group's accusation.

Jerry Paul, attorney for the Pitt County United Effort Coalition, was the main speaker for the occasion. Paul relayed his experiences to the attentive group of the conditions existing in Pitt County. He said that the American government was racist and that the group was "dealing with a question of survival."

"We'll continue the marches and demonstrations until justice reigns in North Carolina," Milton Fitch told a reporter at the end of the rally. Fitch is state coordinatory of SCLC.

went for the first Black they saw. Their victim was a simple and quiet young man who had done harm to no one. Their victim was James Cates.

A Storm Trooper was later arrested and charged with the death of Cates. How did justice prevail? An all white jury from Hillsboro cleared the Storm Trooper of the murder charge and was set free. "The freeing of the storm trooper who murdered Cates is a good example of the racist nature of American justice, or to be more exact, white justice," said a black marcher at memorial services for Cates. "I'm marching to show these white justice makers that I will no longer sit down and forget or accept their unfair decisions complacently. My marching today is only the beginning. . . ."

* * *

The second black murder victim memorialized was William Murphey. Murphey was a black farm laborer who was shot and killed on August 6 by a white highway patrolman, Billy Day, on a rural road two miles South of Ayden. On

disagreed with Day's account of the incident. A Black witness testified that Murphey was handcuffed when apprehended and had limited means of defense. They consider the trial and decision unfair and accordingly have been

"My marching today is only the beginning . . ."

—A Black marcher

September 25, a coroner's jury ruled that Day shot Murphey in self-defense.

Day testified before a coroner's jury that he arrested Murphey for public drunkenness. Inside the car, according to Day, a struggle began which resulted in Day shooting Murphey in the stomach.

The Black community of Ayden

protesting in the eastern North Carolina towns of Ayden, Farmville, and Bethel.

25 UNC students were arrested in Ayden for violating a town ordinance for parading. The group was arrested while marching to Ayden to mail a letter to Gov. Robert Scott demanding that an investigation be held.