

exactly have they been charged with?

Lefcourt: It is a thirty count indictment, the most comprehensive ever returned against a political organization in this country. It does not charge one act such as Huey Newton shooting a policeman or Bobby Seale ordering a murder in Connecticut. It charges thirty acts, some of which sounded like conspiracy which means conspiracy to bomb public buildings such as Macy's, Gimbels, various police precincts throughout the city, subways and railways. Including the ridiculous charge of conspiracy to blow up the Bronx Botanical Gardens. Maybe the Panthers wanted to see Black flower power. I don't know. The indictment also charges, besides the conspiracy to do all these things, the actual bombings of police precincts back in January of 1969. Therefore, the charges are arson, attempted murder, conspiracy to murder, conspiracy to bomb, and possession of a huge amount of weapons.

CPS: Quite bluntly, do you think they're guilty?

Lefcourt: Well, no, But I should say that I don't think black people struggling for their freedom in this country can be guilty of anything. I sort of subscribe to what Tom Hayden was saying back in the May Day demonstrations in New Haven: that guilt or innocence is not really important any more; what is more important is the goals the party stands for, the party programs and the relationship of the party to white people; a movement to change their views on imperialism and capitalism--it seems to me to be more important. The Panthers in New York get involved in what they call revolutionary self-defense. When you're fearing imminent destruction by the police,

attacks through frame-up prosecutions and physical assaults from officers, you prepare and if you don't prepare then you're committing suicide. It is easy to turn that preparation into an indictment against almost anything. I assume that every Panther in this country is guilty of conspiracy in one sense and that sense is that they are conspiring to be free.

CPS: What is your definition of subversive?

Lefcourt: They stand for no more oppression, no more racism, no more war, no more imperialism, no more capitalist exploitation, and in that sense they are completely subversive. I can't talk in terms of definitions in the sense that the attorney general does. His definition of subversive is anyone who wants to change the existing condition of the United States, which I guess should be termed pre-revolutionary conditions. I assume he is right.

CPS: Have you had any trouble in the subpoenaing of newsmen to reveal their sources?

Lefcourt: I've been in contact with a lot of newsmen who have either been the subject of subpoenas or threatened with them. I don't think we can talk in terms of what the government violates. It's really nonsense. They're going to do what they have to do to meet the challenge of this movement. People too naively talk about the government not complying with the law. It's really silly. Because the government makes the law. The attorney general makes the guidelines and he can change them or do what he wants with them. I mean, there is an executive policy in this country executive stemming from the President of the United States