

STATUE OF LIBERTY 'PLOT'

Police Provocation Bared

By Paul Boutelle

NEW YORK — An all-white jury found three Negroes and a white woman guilty on June 14 in the case of the "plot" to deface the Statue of Liberty and other national monuments. Judge Herlands gave the Negroes the maximum sentence of five years on each of two counts of the indictment, or ten years total. Michelle Duclos, the French-Canadian woman who pleaded guilty on one count, and who testified for the state, was given five years. The judge provided for a review of the sentences in 90 days.

On Feb. 16, Raymond Wood, Robert Collier, Khaleel Sayeed, Walter Bove and Michelle Duclos were arrested and charged with "plotting" to dynamite the Statue of Liberty, the Washington Monument and the Liberty Bell. Wood was released shortly after his arrest, when it was announced with great fanfare at a press conference that he was the police "undercover agent" who "cracked" the case.

Cop's Idea

It soon became clear that Wood, the cop, hatched the "plot," organized it, and paid for it with police money, in order to entrap the defendants. The police hoped to smear black militants and the civil rights movement with the case, and turn attention away from their own record of brutality against the Negro and Puerto Rican communities.

Defendants Sayeed and Bove testified that Wood proposed to dynamite waterfront docks as a method of drawing attention to the plight of Negroes in this country. Bove said he was "dumbfounded" at this suggestion, and asked Wood, "At what point do you stop? Why not blow up Grand Central Station or the Empire State Building?" Someone then mentioned the Statue of Liberty jokingly, and Wood said, "That's a good idea." Thus the "plot" was born.

Under cross examination, Wood admitted that he paid most of the expenses for the "plot," including \$112 of police money used to rent a car to take him and Collier to Canada to arrange to secure dynamite. Wood also admitted that he brought, unasked, an army manual on demolition and ex-



Mark Lane

plisives to a meeting with Collier.

Police say that a case of dynamite was brought to New York from Canada by Michelle Duclos. When she arrived in New York, she contacted Wood, who was the key man in the operation, to arrange for delivery. Wood then telephoned Collier, and drove him to the spot where the dynamite was supposed to be, and the police arrested Collier there.

Wood worked hard at being an agent provocateur, which is a police agent who is sent into an organization to advocate or carry out some criminal act for which the organization can then be blamed. Last year, while a member of CORE, Wood participated in an all-night vigil protesting the government's inaction concerning the three civil rights workers killed in Mississippi.

I was told by a Negro minister, Rev. Robert M. Kinlock, that Wood suggested to him at the vigil that bombing Times Square would be a good idea. Wood made the same suggestion that night to a young member of CORE, Jerry Tehan. Defense attorney Mark Lane tried to have Tehan tell his story on the stand, but the judge sustained prosecution objections, and Tehan was not allowed to explain this incident.

The trial made it clear that the police department makes it a practice to infiltrate Negro organ-

izations. Wood was sent into CORE as his first assignment. As a CORE member, he accompanied former Bronx CORE chairman Herb Callendar in an attempted citizens' arrest of Mayor Wagner — for which Callendar was arrested and convicted of a misdemeanor.

His next assignment was to join the Metropolitan Committee of the Freedom Now Party, of which I was chairman. Through the FNP he met Robert Collier. He infiltrated a small and inactive organization called the Black Liberation Front, which Collier and the other defendants were supposed to be long to.

The role of Wood as a police agent deliberately roping frustrated young civil rights fighters into "plots" of his own making, was ignored by the judge, who was neutral on the side of the prosecution (something like the neutrality of the U.S. on the side of the junta in Santo Domingo).

Contradictory Testimony

Wood's testimony was contradictory and confused. Under cross examination by Mark Lane, who was one of four defense attorneys, a typewritten report supposedly turned in by Wood was proven to be vastly different from the handwritten report it was supposed to be a copy of. The typewritten copy told of plots to sabotage police stations, airfields, docks, etc., and spoke of guerrilla warfare from coast to coast by troops able to march all night on a cup of rice. The handwritten report contained none of this malarky, which was obviously fashioned in the police headquarters.

On the typewritten report, which Wood claimed was written by him, the initials "TT" and "FM" appeared. Wood said he didn't know the name of his superior officer, which turns out to be Teddy Theologis. He also said he didn't know a police stenographer named Francis Molina. Then he said maybe he didn't type that report.

Wood's testimony was also somewhat confused about certain wire recordings of conversations between him and the defendants, which he denied existed, but which later turned up in court.

Mark Lane said that the defense intends to appeal the verdict and demand a new trial.

DeBerry Assails Cops, Calls for Review Board

NEW YORK — Clifton DeBerry, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, sharply assailed current police efforts to block establishment of a civilian review board for the Police Department. He charged that those behind the anti-review-board petition being circulated by cops are "helping to promote Birchism in New York."

He warned that police brutality against Negroes and Puerto Ricans would increase if the efforts to thwart formation of a review board are successful.

DeBerry said the petition campaign is a particular cause for concern because it coincides with a mounting drive by right-wingers across the country to make the police even more free of civilian control than they already are.

Rightwing Influence

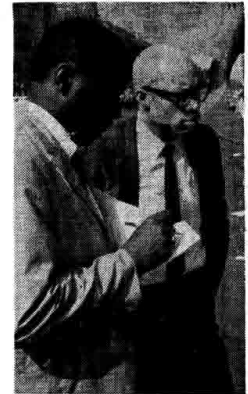
In the Los Angeles area, he said, the John Birch Society is sparking a "support your local police" campaign in answer to the growing demands for civilian review boards. In at least one Los Angeles suburb the Birchers have virtually won control of the police department.

In Newark, he added, Mayor Hugh Addonizio was moved to make public note of the fact that right-wing "crackpots" are rallying behind the cops there who are picketing City Hall in protest against the suspension of a white patrolman who killed a Negro prisoner.

DeBerry also pointed out that New York cops are going over to Newark to join the picketline. Meanwhile, others have been picketing in New York as a demonstration of solidarity with Lt. Gilligan whose slaying of a 15-year-old Negro youth touched off last summer's explosion in Harlem.

Dangerous Development

"This is an ominous development," DeBerry said. "And I don't mean just for Negroes and Puerto Ricans who catch the most hell from the cops. Racism and reaction go hand in hand, and every big-city police department has more than its share of both. If



CLIFTON DEBERRY, interviewed by Harlem newsman.

the trend is permitted to continue nobody will be safe on the streets.

"I hope the civil rights forces in New York will see the urgency of the situation," DeBerry said. "I hope they will answer this right-wing drive with a really vigorous campaign for a civilian review board with authority to act against any cop that gets out of line."

"For my part," he added, "I intend to do everything I can in this campaign to rally public support for such a board. The people have to control the cops."

DeBerry's Stand

So far, DeBerry is the only candidate in the mayoralty race to back the demand of the civil rights and civil liberties forces for the establishment of a civilian review board.

Republican John Lindsay has already come out against the proposal by way of offering an empty "compromise" formula of adding a few civilians to the existing Police Department review board of three police officials. This board is notorious for its consistent whitewashing of cops charged with beating or killing prisoners.

Anniversary of a Witch-Hunt Execution

By Hal Verb

NEW YORK — Some 200 persons paid tribute here to the memory of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the "atom spies" who were executed in the electric chair at Sing Sing twelve years ago, on June 19, 1953. The memorial meeting, sponsored by the Sobell Committee, was held at the Sheraton-Atlantic Hotel on June 17.

The Sobell Committee is organized to secure justice for Morton Sobell, who was convicted with the Rosenbergs and sentenced to 30 years in prison. He has served 15 of those 30 years already.

The Rosenberg-Sobell case began when headlines blared the arrest of Julius Rosenberg as the "atom spy" who gave Russia the "secret" of the atom bomb. A short time later, his wife, Ethel, was arrested, as was Sobell. Although he was not connected with any atomic project, Sobell was later convicted of "conspiracy to commit" espionage.

The Rosenberg-Sobell case was political persecution, staged by the government to fan the flames of the witch-hunt hysteria. Because of the political nature of the prosecution, a powerful wave of protest and indignation swept the

world. Not since the days of the Sacco-Vanzetti frame-up had there been such a public outcry against an injustice. Thousands of organizations and noted intellectuals, jurists, legislators, educators and clergymen took a stand for the doomed couple and demanded that the U.S. government stay the executions and release Sobell.

But the government ignored this world-wide outcry, and executed the Rosenbergs. The Rosenbergs became the most outstanding victims and martyrs of the witch hunt.

Since the development of Soviet H-bombs, rockets and spacecraft equal or superior to those of the U.S., the idea that the Rosenbergs were responsible for the Soviet A-bomb appears especially ridiculous. Even back in the early Fifties, a number of scientists had ridiculed the notion that there was, in fact, an "atom bomb secret."

Time magazine reported on Jan. 2, 1950: "There has been no 'atom bomb secret' which the Russian spies needed to steal. This fact has been asserted again and again by the Atomic Energy Commission. . . . Last week the AEC's files yielded documentary proof: The Russian scientific papers on the

project, published in 1940, before the United States started its atom bomb project. . . . The basic 'secrets' were already in their files."

The Rosenbergs declared their innocence to the end. Julius Rosenberg declared in prison shortly before his death: "If we are executed it will be the murder of innocent people and the shame will be on the government of the



Morton Sobell

United States. History will record, whether we live or die, that we were the victims of one of the most monstrous frame-ups in our country's history."

Sobell spent years in Alcatraz, before that notorious prison was closed down, Rev. Peter McCormack, who was the Protestant minister and chaplain at Alcatraz, while Sobell was there, said: "The cry for justice has sounded many times through the centuries from the time of Amos the Prophet down to the present. To me no cry has had such merit to it as the cry for justice for Morton Sobell. I feel satisfied in my own mind that Morton Sobell is innocent, a victim of perjury, politics and prejudice." McCormack lost his job for this stand.

Despite statements to the contrary, the Supreme Court of the U.S. has never reviewed the case. Justice Douglas granted a stay of execution order just before the legal murder, but was over-ruled by a 6 to 3 vote of the Court.

In his dissenting opinion, Justice Hugo Black stated: "This Court has never reviewed the record and has never affirmed the fairness of the trial below. Without an affirmation of the fairness of the trial by the highest court of the

land there may always be questions as to whether these executions were legally and rightfully carried out."

On Feb. 6, 1963, the U.S. Court of Appeals acknowledged that the trial of the Rosenbergs and Sobell would be considered unfair today. Speaking at the memorial meeting, Mrs. Helen Sobell, the wife of Morton, said that the fight on behalf of her husband and for the vindication of the Rosenbergs was a "hard fight — it has been fought with blood and goes deep, deep into the roots of our history."

The lesson we must learn from this case, she felt, was that all the fear and hysteria of the McCarthy era may come into being again unless we do everything we can to erase the "enormity of injustice" of this entire affair. It would be a "bitter illusion," she said, if her husband were freed while the war in Vietnam was continued.

She also announced the publication of a book on the case titled *Invitation to Inquest*, by Walter and Miriam Schneir.

Contributions to the Sobell Committee to help it carry on its fight can be sent to: Sobell Committee, 150 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y. 10011.