Black Puerto Rican anarchist Martin Sostre recently won his release from prison after a struggle against police brutality, torture, and mass incarceration.

Martin, who participated in his Afro-Asian Bookstore shortly after the guerrilla assault in Buffalo during the summer of 1967. Since the police investigation of him in any illegal political activity, he was booked on convicted drug charges and brought to jail. He is a white judge who admitted his involvement in the police line-up. Martin remained in prison for nine years, and was subjected to beatings, solitary confinement and more trials. And for nine years he was unawing in his resistance. He refused to submit to mental degradation and he was moved to jail. He became a self-taught jailhouse lawyer, winning many landmark decisions for prisoners.

Because of Martin's courageous resistance and his remarkable skills, an international movement coalesced around the demand for his release. The London-based Amnesty International wrote that he had been imprisoned, "not for his crimes, but for his ideas." Finally, after years of rallies, protests, and other actions, New Governor Carey succumbed to the pressure and granted Martin clemency last December.

Martin's models plans to open another bookstore. He's also working through New York assemblywoman Marie Runyon's office so he can have access to the prison where he continues to work with inmates, working in housing court to assist tenants in their struggle against slumlords, and maintaining and expanding the activities of his defense committees. The Open Road recently spoke with Martin in his Harlem office.

**Q—While in prison you became a 'jailhouse lawyer.' When did you get into law and what effects on prison life have your suits had?**

A—Well, as you know, I did a previous sentence, the time to letters to your attorney without them being censor- ed; the right to not be put in the box solitary confinement, newspaper and other literature, the funky back without being notified of the charges in advance and without going through some sort of trial, although it's a sham. They never present, everything now, they don't have any rights, you can't have a judge, you can't find yourself in a little bullshit hearing. Whereas before some pig would grab you, and say, "okay, you're going to the box. And that was it. You would stay in the box until after you were in. I also won the right to help other prisoners in their legal seeking. If you are a lawyer and you caught you with another prisoner's papers that you were helping him with, that would be enough grounds to put you in the box. In my previous sentence I also won the right of Muslims to practice their religion.

**Q—Your legal suit, Sostre vs. Rockefeller, all cases of prison examinations after another inmate, Jimmy Sullivan, overheard guards "plot and plan" to either kill you or to attack those attacking you, were beaten by seven guards for refusing to submit to a rectal, then convicted of assaulting them. Could you elaborate on that incident a bit?**

A—Yeah, sure. In 1971, when federal judge Motley first ruled that the rectal examination was dehumanizing and degrad- ing, it would have seemed that the rectal examination would be prohibited, but it was not. You're dealing with a closed society (in prison). They have thirty foot walls. They have gun towers. Nobody can go in. We lost an important decision last year, changing the right of the press to go in. The courts ruled that the press could not go into a prison unless they were allowed by the warden. So they get away with anything dehumanization. To me it's a worse injury to do that than to take that beating from those seven goons. At least I would maintain my personality and I would maintain my spiritual dimension. They destroyed my bookstore and they had me in a cage but one thing they could never destroy was my personal freedom and that was what I hold onto all those years. In Q—How could they rationalize accusing you of assaulting them? What happened in the trial itself?**

A—It's just like out here in the street when you get stopped by a cop, especially if you have long hair, a beard, or show any hairstyle that is contrary to the system. I spent years in solitary because of my long hair, and not once they ever shake you down just because they don't like your attire or your demeanor or your lifestyle. And you refused your question, "What are you gonna shake me your attorney and friends. "If you're gonna stay around, you're gonna stay around, you're gonna stay down over, they bend over. And as I said, they leer at them and make sarcastic remarks while they're shaking them down, and they may say "okay, shave those sideburns" because they have an order. No one can say you're not supposed to extend beyond your ear lobes. "You got too much fuzz under your chin", they say. You request not supposed to extend below the corners of your mouth. But length of your hair is not supposed to be the collar of your shirt. Yet these people who cooperate were beaten and arrested. They were arrested they had long hair. They were long sideburns down to their jaws but now, all of a sudden, they stop and say, "Okay, the pig tells them to do these things. And they don't question. They accept anything, any injustice that is heaped upon them. They'll not only obey like a slave, but they'll cooperate and pretend like we who resist become more or less like the enemy. These cooperators consider us a threat because we're working harder. We're making the prison officials angry and they figure this will bring down repression — don't make the prison officials tighten up on what ever little crumbs they're getting. Just like here the war. Left went against the SLA and go against any comrade who wants to do more than just support the SLA. They in a way say that this is "anti-revolutionary" and they'll label you a "terrorist," that you cause repression to come down on prisoners, while they aren't even doing anything. They'll work with the pigs to get the right press. The way so-called movement papers came down on the SLA, was indefensible from the street level.

**Q—Some people have made the point that it wasn't just SLA's direct repression on the left, but rather the left that brought down repression on the SLA.**

A—Exactly. These righteous cooperators, inside or outside, are cooperating with the system. They make certain privileges or leave them alone and let them do their thing. For example, when we had the three white cooperative- ing corporals started going around urging people not to join the strike. As a matter of fact, they were co-opting. We only got forty out of about twenty hundred so they took the corporals to the police station and book you for resisting arrest and assaulting an officer. You'll end up with a million dollars in order to justify their assault on you.

This is a favorite device of making the victim the criminal and making themselves the victim. So here's a fifty-year-old corporal charged with raping a goon squad of seven guards. They're all football players. They don't have any small pigs on that they're charged with raping a goon squad of seven guards. Here I am in solitary confinement, buck naked and I weigh only a hundred and six-fifty-five pounds. Yet the jury believed them and found me guilty of jumping on a goon squad of seven guards.

**Q—You've criticized what you call "right- co-operative." Self-described revolutionaries, right wing judges end injustice upon themselves and others.**

A—Yeah, during the time I was in the box. I resisted their rectal examinations and resisted the beard. Before that in Auburn and in Walkill prisons I organized unions. I helped organize a prison strike in Auburn prison where they make the license of the entire state of New York.

While I was resisting, the overwhelming majority of the prisoners were cooperating in their own oppression; because of repres- sive acts, solitary confinement, threat of loss of parole, threat of a beating, the threat of being denied visits from your loved ones, the
One thing they could never take was my personhood.
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anarchism. As a matter of fact they are anarchists. This change has come about very slowly and has taken many, many months, to my knowledge. They’re widely read. No doubt they’ve read about it before and I think they’ve thought about it but I mean, the decision to embrace revolution, at least in the form in which it appears in letters after they were incarcerated and I was still incarcerated. I’ve sent them anarchism and I’ve also asked people on the West Coast to send them reading material, books on anarchism to further rouse their indoctrination and inform us of the different facets of anarchism. The last letter was from Joseph and Joe and Russ, have shown that they have embraced anarchism and they’re very happy about it. And I think they’re still studying naturally, like all of us. We’re still studying anarchism and learning. It’s a very heavy step and a step in the right direction because it’s a step toward maximum freedom. It’s a step away from the party line type of philosophy where other issues orders and you follow a step too great an independence. So I’ve done...

I have supported these brothers and this sister even before they were captured. I was one of the few voices on the Left which supported them all the way while they were still captive. So far as the fact that I was a refugee and a despoliate I included it in a little heavier because they saw by my letter that it was a question of justice and the gradation of whether you are a Marxist-Leninist or any other Lefite, one should not side with the enemy denouncing a comrade because the comrade’s activity does not seem to please you. I guess you read some of the denouncements in the Left papers — calling the SLA terrorists and this and that — in the New York Times and New York Daily News.

So, these comrades in prison now are sincere comrades who should receive the help of the Left and the person of conscience to get them out. They’re victims of a war and they’re given their all. They’ve put their lives on the line. They went beyond just spouting rhetoric. The comrades are the ones that used all means necessary to overthrow the system. You can’t ask any more than that. They’ve put their lives on the line. They’ve done more than that; than when you put your life on the line.

So I urge everyone to support these comrades by using all means necessary to get them out. This is a death grip that the enemy has upon them.

Q. Do they correspond to the legal revolutionaries who tell us that armed action comes after mass consciousness has already been developed? You can’t do it in this state of being.

Well, that’s a cop-out. I’ve always said that it’s a cop-out for not doing anything. This is also a cop-out. You just have to be courageous to confront the system, to stand up and do what has to be done. Whenever there is a opportunity to stop oppression by all means necessary. There’s nothing they can defend that these people aren’t ready for revolution.

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East Timor located 400 miles north of Australia

FREITILN holds out in Timor

able and fixed prices.

On the student front UNETIL just failed to attack a FRETILN post. In
Largs, 12 Indonesians were killed.

"Indonesian forces were shellling Callaco... and FRETILN people were
controlled by FREITILN."

Readers can keep infor-

mation of the struggle in East Timor by subscribing to the
monthly bulletin of the British Campaign for
Independent East Timor, 40 Concanon Road, London, S.W.2 England
(Most of this and the next reporter's reports are drawn from a
much longer article which appeared in "Asia & the Pacific", Vol. 17, No. 6, available from the Institute of Race

FREITILN holds out in Timor

continued from p. 4

6th June, 1976, more than 500
were arrested. The DINAs
formed a guerilla group, a
in 1976, a group called
and other officials. Many of
and invest death, shared
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and the rank-and-file com-
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form of arms of the
Chilean workers to be
of a continent-wide move-
That's why it has helped to
technical assistance to
the ELP of Argentina, the
the ILC and the

represent fascism; unlike "official" fascists, they do not
enjoy the tightly controlled status of a mass movement, and they have
been able to conserve resources for expansion and to become a
powerful force in the country.

A recent translated document, What is the MRP, which was
distributed in the country, claims that the MRP is a part of the
movement that contains an element of the bourgeoisie.

The position of MRP is that the
organization of the MRP will be
the best force to defend the
dermatism.

The ELP is based on the
the Social Revolution

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