

# an special report

THE INSTITUTE OF THE BLACK WORLD  
87 Chestnut Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314

February 1975

## Author of "Inside Missouri State Penitentiary,"

### JESSE LANG

### Dies of Unknown Causes

Jesse Lang, author of our September Special Report, "Inside Missouri State Penitentiary," died of unknown causes on January 9 while still incarcerated at Missouri State Pen. It has been speculated that the prison administration may have been responsible for his death and that the publication of the essay may have been related to it.

Although the actual cause of death has not been determined, an autopsy has revealed that there were massive blood clots in the deceased's lungs, a condition difficult to explain in the 31 year-old brother since it is usually only found in the very old. According to Jesse's mother, when last seen alive, he was shackled and under the influence of some kind of medication. Because Jesse's body had already been embalmed at the time of examination, the autopsy was unable to determine whether or not his death was related to the drug treatment. But an examination at the time of death revealed that there were traces of at least two drugs in his system.

Jesse, who had been incarcerated since 1968, was first labelled a "troublemaker" and a "communist" about three years ago when he became interested in political writings and requested that his family send him such material. From that point on, he was constantly intimidated by the prison officials.

He spent much of the last two years of his life being shuttled between the prison hospital and the Maximum Security wing of the prison. In Maximum Security, he continued to come under attack, was frequently placed in solitary confinement and denied all privileges. When these pressures brought on a nervous breakdown, he was transferred to the prison hospital. There, he is said to have been drugged repeatedly with the depressant Prolixin, which caused him to "act strange." Upon release from the hospital, he was immediately sent back to the "hole" where he had another breakdown.

Our report this month is dedicated to the memory of Jesse. It is also a call for your assistance in helping to change the conditions that led to his death and threaten the lives of other brothers and sisters who are still being dehumanized by the nation's prison systems. We shall make no attempt to eulogize him, nor to speak for him. We shall let him speak for himself, for he can do that much more fluently than we ever could.

In "Inside Missouri State Penitentiary," Jesse presented an unremitting and penetrating account of the realities of prison life at the Missouri institution. It was written in July 1973. Five months later (December 1973) he wrote the essay presented in the following pages. Entitled "Details from My Nervous Breakdown," it is a perceptive account of the pressures that led to his first major psychological

crisis. A postscript, an excerpt from a journal Jesse kept during the last few months of his life, speaks to some of the questions left unanswered in "Details."

Jesse's sister, Ruth (Yohance) Lang, first brought him to our attention. She has also been closer to Jesse and his situation than anyone else outside the prison. On page 7 she relates some of her concerns about the events surrounding Jesse's death. There, she also tries to see past the anguish and frustration she feels about his death to the hope that finding out what happened to him may save someone else's brother's life and change the conditions Jesse so graphically described.

Finally, we report on the efforts that have been made thus far to launch an investigation into Jesse's death and change the conditions affecting other prisoners at Missouri State. We also suggest some ways in which you can become involved.

## Details From My Nervous Breakdown

By Jesse Lang

I was under heavy tension for two straight weeks when it happened. The local dogs here had been persecuting me and I had just lost a very important connection in my life. She was a nice woman and among my few enjoyments were her knowledgeable correspondence and the kindness and patience she had shown. I became very irritable as I saw people that I hated everyday, but I could do nothing about my situation that wouldn't be harmful to me.

Then they put this Muslim in the cell with me. His name was Nathaniel Shabazz. He was 38 years old and a very strange looking man. From the very first second he came into the cell with me, I felt a deep nervousness. I was overcome with the thought that this person spelled trouble for me as if I had already experienced this before.

As he was put into the cell with me, I introduced myself and we immediately began to talk about the local dogs here. I made the brother welcome to all of my possessions, (i.e., commissary, soap, toothpaste, stamps and reading material) as I do with all the people who are put into my cell. This person was closely watching me as if he was investigating me or something. All he ever talked about was Mr. Elijah Muhammed and white devils. He would read my Marxist Leninist literature and then would deliberately attempt to lure me into an ideological argument with him. But being like I am, I don't argue. I'd always use his own conversation to throw him off--an old Chinese tactic, i.e. use a person's own weight to throw him.

Finally, all of a sudden one day, he said that in order for two people to live in a cell together one had to conform to the other. They had to be in unity or they would be in each other's way and would cause a friction; and that with two ideologies in the same cell one must be true and the other must be false and that he must seek the truth; that if Marxism and Leninism is true, Islam

was either a lie or Muhammed is not a prophet and he must constantly seek the truth. He told me that one of us was practicing falsehood.

At this point, I told him that the proof was in the pudding. I asked him what was he looking for; that if it's peace he seeks, he can get it easily. I would give it to him on demand, but if he sought trouble, to take it to the so-called "devil white man" and practice it on him. For I had enough troubles of my own and I wanted peace with my brothers. Then he told me that peace is in truth and that it was his job to show me the truth because he teaches absolute truth and that he was going to put the truth in me as he was sent to the prison to put truth in men here. I told this nut that when a flint rock is struck onto a hard surface, that there is always a spark and that a spark always creates fire, and that fire burns and has no conscience. This man said he didn't want fire, so I told him that he shouldn't rub the rocks then.

Things went smoothly for a few days until I began to show my manners again. I bought him \$5.00 worth of food and some stamps and responded to him very kindly. He started telling me of all my nice qualities: that I didn't smoke, eat pork, use profanity; that I ate right and exercised properly; and that I loved my people. Now, he said, all I had to do was to submit to Allah and I would leave this cell a Muslim; that he was going to teach me Islam and make me a Muslim; that Allah said that all Black people are Muslims and Mr. Muhammed was going to get us or kill us before he'd let the devil have us. He told me that I was following the devil, Lenin and Marx, and that Allah was going to whip me for it and that in the name of Master Fard Muhammed, that he was going to teach me Islam. I told him to take a good look at me, and asked him if I looked like a child that he could tell what to do. He should try to be in peace with me, I said, instead of trying to change my life which

I had made up myself. I told him that I didn't need Islam; that I could live right without having a God to enforce powers on me and I needed no crutch and that if he didn't want his crutch broken, that he should keep it to himself.

This man became angry, and when I sensed it, I started to attack him before he blew up on me first. We got into a violent argument, and he told me that I was trying to protect the devil Marx and Lenin and that I was attacking the Black prophet Muhammed in the name of the devil. I told him that I was protecting myself from his verbal attacks on me and that I didn't want trouble and arguments because I didn't argue. He stayed on my back like a bug in my ears for about two more days. So, I told him that I believed he didn't want a cellmate, so I would get myself moved so we wouldn't have to hurt each other. I told him that my fight was against the local dogs and not the brothers.

**A**fter I tried to get moved to another cell, the local dogs laughed at us and enjoyed listening to Shabazz make a fool out of both of us. It got so bad until I started to karate chop him in the throat and snuff him out because he was looking for a killing. But being that I have killed two brothers for misusing me, I started feeling guilty for even letting it enter into my mind. So I told the local dog that his plan wouldn't work; that he was trying to get me or Shabazz hurt but if he wanted one of us hurt, that he'd have to do it himself. I called the guard a "6'6" yellow dog gutless-coward" and told him that whenever the doors to my cell opened up, he was going to get what he was looking for. I was going to kick his big white ass! He'd never get us to kill each other while he sat back and laughed. He laughed and walked on.

At this point, I was so mad that I wanted to kill him then. I mean I was boiling. When I got through threatening him, Shabazz said, "When you leave here you'll know they're the devil, they're going to make you run to Allah and to Mr. Muhammed." I got so mad until my legs were shaking, and I had to lay down and rest -- for I was under a double yoke: that of the local dogs and that of Shabazz's.

While I lay down resting, Shabazz got on his job -- he started preaching Islam and praising the Honorable Elijah Muhammed and chastising me saying: "You chose the Devil to follow and so Allah is going to whip you." I warned him to be careful and laid back down and waited for him to start at me again. I wanted peace with this brother so badly. I love my brothers and it was the "brothers" who had always forced my hand and not me. I had not been the aggressor.

Since the local dog wouldn't let me move, it had come to a point where we had to live together, and my nerves were so much on edge that if Sha-

bazz had only sneezed or accidentally coughed -- I would have killed him. It had reached a point where one of us was going to give the local dogs what they wanted -- disaster; or one of us was going to give in to the other, (i.e., I was going to get some peace or he was going to convert me).

I had decided that, since he would not live in peace with me and since he mocked me while the local dog, stood by enjoying himself -- they had deliberately put him up to what he was doing. So I made my mind up to gouge him in the eyes, kick him in the groins, bind him in shoe strings and gag him to shut his damn mouth for a while. This brother almost drove me nuts. It was good that he said nothing else at this time.

Suddenly, while I was having these thoughts, three local dogs came to my cell. I thought it was "jump time," but they told me to get my stuff so I could be moved. I felt like a new man, I was so happy to get away from Shabazz. I thought they were going to put me in the "cage." The "cage" is a cell that no one likes, but I had been in there before and liked it because you were off to yourself and could read without being disturbed. The dogs wouldn't put me in the cage for this very reason. They put me next door to a white dude who was absolutely nuts and sang the song, "I Hear the Trains a Comin'" for at least 20 hours per day. This dude never slept (I don't believe). He looked like a wild animal and he smelled so bad that it seemed he was in the same cell with me. I hurried and adjusted to him very quickly. I diagnosed his sickness as loneliness and guilt for killing his former cellmate; he was sorry for this. His keeping me up didn't bother me much because while he sang his song I would do exercises until I got so tired that I would have to lay down and go to sleep.

Shortly after that, they put a man in the "cage" who feared being there. He would scream every once in a while and when he did, he would always

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*"I was trapped between two nuts...*

*(who) were always talking about eating cleanser cans and drinking ammonia."*

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catch you off-guard; you were never ready for his screams. I was trapped between two nuts. What made it worse, they started talking to each other. They were talking about eating cleanser cans and drinking ammonia, eating soap sandwiches, etc. They always talked about eating something to cleanse their insides, such as soap, cleanser and ammonia or bleach. After paying close attention to them, I realized that these men had guilt complexes and were wanting to be cleansed for their wrongdoing. After I realized this, I adjusted to them and was no longer affected by them.

As soon as I got adjusted to this, the local dog whom I had called a coward, accompanied by his

friends, started coming to my cell and faking that they were shooting guns at me. They would tell me that I was going to die, etc. I would get so mad until I would almost explode and by trying to hold it in, the pressure kept building up.

I started thinking real hard about my sister and mother. They love me so much that they would never be any more use if the local dogs killed me. My sister was having her problems on the street and when I'd explain things to her, she would immediately get over them and would thank me. This made me feel better, plus, I love her and mother even more than they love me. I didn't want to disappoint them by letting the dogs destroy us; for if they killed me, they would have killed three blacks with one stone. So each time they'd say they were going to kill me, I'd think of mother and sister and get "uptight."

When my sister visited me around the first week in August, I tried as best I could to explain my situation to her. I told her she must not look on me as being hard as a rock -- indestructible like a God, etc. My sister hadn't cried for years and could not shed tears when she had tried. Instead of tears falling from her eyes, she would break out in a rash and get welts all over her body. She would scratch like hell.

I told her what all the local dogs were doing, on top of what they had already been doing for over eight months (trying to get me killed by another prisoner because I refused to drop the Civil Complaint; jumping me twice; putting me in the hole for writing my attorneys, etc.; taking my legal law petitions, etc. and all sorts of harassments). Now they were trying to get my mind and my life. When I finished explaining to her what she must face, she couldn't take it and broke into tears and they flowed like rain for at least 30 minutes. This made me feel good -- my mishaps had cured her and she could cry (do something healthy and normal). I rapped to her so strong about the situation that she left feeling strong and ready to face it. Believe it or not, I told her what was going to happen before it took place!

I went back to my cell feeling good and ready for the local dog; and the first one that approached me -- I had plans for him. I had planned to jam his nuts up into his stomach and cave his adams apple in and burst his ear drum with an ear pop and then give him a double slash into his eyes with my fingers and pop his eyes out. Yes, I was going to make a fine example out of the first local dog that touched me. I was ready to defend myself even unto death.

But while I was doing a karate dance in my cell, Shabazz started talking Islam on the walk and I knew that his talks were aimed directly at me. As I moved swiftly around in my cell, I simultaneously high-thrust kicked and leaned back and kicked; forward, snap-kicked; stab eye level, and punch, etc. -- I became very angry at Shabazz. It seemed that I was beginning to move too fast and my kicks and thrusts were too smooth. I started see-

ing the molecules of the air and it felt as if my whole body was in harmony with nature itself. I started seeing things! The wall of my room opened up and a man walked in with a fezz on his head that had a moon and crescent on it and we began to fight like hell. He spent me as I kicked at him. He jumped on my back and rode me down to the floor and forced me into a Muslim prayer position, prostrate on the floor. He tried to make me face the East and couldn't make me do it.

I started struggling to get him off my back and couldn't. He then placed some fangs in my mouth and I became very angry and my jaws began to snap like a crocodile. He told me to stay in that position until he said move; and all that time -- I was exercising my jaws and claws. I felt very, very strong, like a wild animal, and felt that I could break out of the cell whenever I felt like it.

Then my head began to wiggle on the floor as if someone was screwing my forehead into the floor. I then heard keys jingling. The guards were getting near my cell. I could smell them as they came closer and closer and just as they were visible before the door, at that very instant, I sprang up like a leopard and spun around in the air and was facing the east wall and they didn't even get the chance to see me leap up; for my speed was quicker than their reflects. The man in the fezz told me not to reveal this strength to the devil until it was time for all of us to attack the devil. We would move so quickly and with such force that the devil wouldn't even see it.

As the guard told me to get my mail, I turned around and faced him. He asked me what was wrong with my forehead -- for blood was running from my forehead where this man had been screwing my head into the floor. So, I told him it was a prayer mark and I know not why I said that to this very day.

The remainder of that day I was tripping hard trying to figure out how in the world I could have had such a "dream," or if I was losing my mind, and wondering what I could possibly do to save myself?

Later that night as I lay asleep, I woke up cursing and screaming. There were some guards standing in front of my cell -- about eight of them. This guy with the fezz appeared and told me that I would show them something so ugly until I would frighten them.

I jumped from my bed face-down right up to the bars with such force that they were startled, and my arm flew through the bars and my fingers got one of them on the nose. They looked as if they had seen a ghost. I told them that I had looked left, right, back and forth and I couldn't find any peace and that they were going to give me peace. I then started to call out names ask-

ing who believed that I was going to get some peace -- and the inmates said yes.

By this time, the man in the cage woke up and screamed and I yelled so loud that the guards had to grab their ears. They looked as if they didn't believe a voice could get so loud! The Captain stuck the key in my door and said, "Let's get him."

I leaped on the bed and ripped the sheet and mattress to shreds as if they were only paper. I saw the cell being disarrayed, and then I jumped to the bars and grabbed them and they rattled like they were going to give -- the guards looked pale in the face with fear! I thought I was comrade George (Jackson) and I leaped back on the torn mattress and bit the rest in two pieces with my teeth. My jaws began to snap again and I felt like a wild tiger with claws and all.

The man with the fezz leaped on my back and tried to hold me down and told me that this was enough and that the guards now feared me. I started to yell, saying "get off my back, nigger" and he wouldn't let me go. So, I said "Get off my back, nigger, I'll kill them." He wouldn't let me go so I said -- "Nigger-r-r-r-r!" He hit me in the back of my head and it hurt worst than any pain I have ever felt, but I said for a second time, "Let me go, nigger," and he hit me again and the pain was twice as bad. I yelled again -- "Let me go, nigger" and he hit me again. The pain made me start screaming because it was unbearable and my screams grew louder and louder. Each scream had a higher pitch than the former one, and the guards and the man on my back grabbed their ears -- for my screams were unbearable.

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*"I thought I was a Muslim and the most potent warrior in the Nation of Islam."*

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The man on my back told me that he would give me any two things I wanted if I'd only stop screaming. So I said, "All I want . . ." and he hit me again as if to make it difficult for me to say. He said, "Get it out of you." I said, "God-dammit, all I want is . . ." and the pain almost overcame me, and he said, "Get it out." I said, "Oh God, all I want is Yohance\* and Tamu\*\*," and my pain left me and the guards called me in very soft, calm voices: "Lang, are you okay now?" I said, "Yes, sir." They opened the door and when they came in they seemed to be moving in slow motion and I could see all of their movements in slow motion. When the Captain touched me, I fainted.

\* Yohance is his sister.

\*\* Tamu is the woman he had been corresponding with.

I was taken to the Psychiatric Ward and given a Prolixen shot and released the next day. The Lieutenant said in a very nice voice, "What happened last night?" I thought it was only a nightmare, so I told him it was a bad dream. I found out that I really had torn my cell up. It was in such bad shape that they put me in the cell next to Nathaniel Shabazz.

My attitude toward Shabazz became one of much respect -- I thought he was the Supreme Captain sent here by Messenger Muhammed to lead us in an attack on the devils here. So, I thought I was a Muslim and was the most potent warrior in the nation of Islam. From that moment on, everything Shabazz would say sounded good to me and made so much sense. I was saying "As-Salaam Alaikum, brothers" -- "yes sir." I believed that Karl Marx and Engels and Lenin, were the Devil and so I separated all of my Black literature from my white literature. I put the book, "Comrade George" and all of my Black history books together and put my Marxist Leninist books by the door, which is in the West; and my Black literature in the East facing the Holy City (so I thought at this time). Everytime the devils would come in the hall, I smelled gasoline and thought they were bringing barrels of gasoline to throw on any person who was caught facing the West to burn them up. For all that faced the West was to belong to the devil.

They (the guards) tried to give me mail and I refused it and faced the East wall -- they were behind me as long as I faced the East, I felt safe as long as I would face the East also. They tried to give me food, but I refused it and faced the East wall until they left the cell. I told them that all I didn't have, I didn't need and that I would eat after we made "apartheid" and separated from each other. They tried to trick me to come to the door of my cell, but each time, I would smell gasoline and would turn around and face the East until they had left.

I made a mistake and slept with my head to the West and each time a guard got anywhere near my cell, I would smell gasoline; so I knew when they were close, for the smell of gas was on them. It got to the point where I got the message and would no longer sleep with my head to the West; while facing the East I no longer smelled gasoline and so I stayed to the East.

That next night, my delusions got worse, and I was put in the hole for hiding behind my bunk, and clothes out, and everything else visible so that the cell was empty except for the mattress. I started tearing the mattress up and threw it out of the cell so there would be nothing to burn inside when the devil came with the gasoline. The man in the fezz told me that the gas wouldn't burn me if I faced the East even if I was naked -- that the gasoline couldn't burn pure Muslims and that we needed no clothes where we were going because they don't wear clothes where we were going because they don't wear clothes in Heaven;

so we were to give the Devil all of his possessions and get ready to go to Heaven, which was in the East, and leave the Devil's hell the way it was.

After I was put into the hole and separated from the rest of my brothers, I was told that they wouldn't leave without me and that the devil would have to let me go or his hell would be hell for him as long as I was here with him. But the devil wouldn't let me go. The next day, I was told to still face and sleep in the East so that the Devil couldn't sneak up on me and that my hearing would be so keen until I would hear him coming three minutes before he got there and that I was to face the East until he came. For if he caught me facing the West, he could claim me and keep me in his hell, but if he saw me facing the East and called my name; that when I turned and looked him in the eyes, that he would be destroyed by the power that lies in the East.

I was told that at a certain time in the morning that I was to get up and wash myself and be cleansed before the sun would rise and that when the sun came out, I was free to do as I pleased because the sun was from the East and was the ruler of the day. Since the sun is an Eastern power, it gives us all of the privileges to exercise authority over the devil. The devil was afraid to face us in the light of the day. So -- when it was day, I started testing my strength. I was told that my brother and sister were coming here to exercise their authority while it was still daytime and that they were going to take me to heaven. They told me to turn around so they could put handcuffs on me and I thought nothing of it because the day was to be ours -- so I let them bound my hands and they took me toward the hospital; which is behind the visiting room. When I was taken past the visiting room, the man in the fezz said, "Since you knew the day was yours, then why did you let the Devil bound your hands. You didn't have to let him bound you, you should have exercised your authority -- now you are his slave, for you fell for the Devil's tricks." I was taken to the psychiatric ward instead of the visiting room, and diagnosed as suffering from delusions.

When I came to myself, I found that my brother, Luther, had come to visit me that previous Sunday -- but the local dogs were afraid to let him see me in such a terrible state. So they took me to the psychiatric ward and filled me with Prolixen. The following Tuesday, my brother returned to see me; for they had told him on Sunday that I had refused to see him. He wasn't satisfied with that lie, so he came back on Tuesday. I was so full of Prolixen until I hardly knew him, mother and my sister. I knew they were

mine, but I didn't have any thinking sense -- it all seemed like a bad dream.

I stayed in the psychiatric ward for over two weeks, and when I came down I was immediately given ten days in the hole. When I came out, I still smelled gasoline whenever the so-called Devil got close to me. One day I was sitting in my cell and couldn't get rid of the smell of the gasoline. I heard the man in the fezz say that I was going to be burned up with this gasoline because I didn't fully submit to the will of Allah. This particular day, the local dog Donald Wyrick was down here in the maximum section and I smelled so much gasoline that it was taking my breath away. The closer he got, the stronger the smell would get. I began to start taking all of my clothes off so that nothing on me would burn, as the man in the fezz had told me this.

I faced the East, but I smelled gasoline even in the East. I started calling people I knew and asked them to witness for me and to write my sister and let her know that the Devil had burned me up with gasoline -- they said they would be my witness. I then went completely berserk and now I only have a vague recollection of what all I did.

I had a delusion that my mother and sister appeared here and that they were angels and told me not to provoke the devil and that if I bowed down to the Devils, that if they threw gasoline on me, they would be destroyed by God. I had the delusion that my mother and sister were Muslims and when I was taken out of the cell, we passed by all the cells and spoke to each and everyone saying, "Wa-Alaikum Salaam, brothers." Then the local dogs took me out in the corridor and from that point on, I cannot remember anything else except that I came to my senses and felt that I had been asleep and had experienced a very bad dream. I wondered how I had got back on the Fifth Floor Psychiatric Ward.

I got completely over my illness after Representative Fred Williams came to see me; for I had the delusion that he was God's "right hand man" and was sent to give me comfort. Now, I look back at it all -- it was the weirdest "trip" I have ever experienced, and I definitely do not want to repeat it. Sometimes I believe I was given a hallucinatory drug or something to cause all of the delusions I had. It just doesn't seem possible to experience what I have.

Now . . . . I feel great and better than ever.

December 1973

### Postscript: December 6, 1974

Everybody is grabbing onto something to prop themselves up on. The revolutionaries ain't revolutionaries; the pimps ain't pimps; men ain't men; Muslims ain't Muslims; gangsters ain't gangsters. The only things

that turn out to be what they say they are are the dick suckers and the white Ku Klux Klansmen and Nazis. Almost all the brothers have crawled off into some kind of shaky shell. They want a dream to lose themselves in and all I want is true reality no matter how harsh and cold.

I have to keep checking on myself to see if I'm normal. I constantly try to evaluate myself. I am all alone it seems. Not lonely, but alone. No one wants to talk to me. I believe it is that I excite some kind of fear in them. Not from physical harm, or because they think I'm crazy, but because I refuse to ride on cloud nine. It hurts me some, but I can cope. I've had two nervous breakdowns, but I seemed a little sharper witted after I recovered from each of them and it seemed that my mental resistance became much stronger. I must learn more about the mind and its functions, because it's a threat to us all when a man gets to the point where he takes flight from reality in order to cope. If I know more about human behavior, it will give me an edge and I will be able to dissect these fantasies and give them a real challenge. Fantasies affect my people more than white people because we are the underdog of the underdog.

The brothers here are good at blotting out what's really going on by taking flight. In order to cope, they carry on all sorts of things such as horse play, homosexuality, playing the dozens, loud shouting and cursing and especially playing sports. Anything at all except facing the problem head on and trying to get at the very active nerve of the thing. They've become passive and weak and have taken refuge in dreamland. Nothing hurts them more than the truth but it drives them off into the world of "peter pan". For submitting to the truth means that they must fight the situation or admit that Johnny-come-lately has whipped them into the state of being of a boy or a robot or any old thang.

There is no unity. There is murder of inmates at the drop of a hat, and the shaking of knees at the loud shout of a guard. They are sitting ducks for racial attacks by white racist extremists who them at random.

There are Muslims who are for real, some

There are Muslims who are for real, some of them; and there are those who use Mr. Muhammad to soothe their wounds and who use his success in the midst of the white man's world, to nourish themselves and to make themselves a part of his flesh. They see him as their ownself and have become a part of him and lost themselves. He is their symbol of success and strength. There are those who can hold their own and there are hypocrites who latch onto him for psychological reasons. It appears that everyone wants to be somebody except their own true self. They seem as though they are little turtles drawing up in a shell. The day that this happens to me, I hope someone steals my life away for it would be no use to me. There are a lot of brothers here who are beautiful people inside, but it seems as though they must have that shell to draw up into, or a crutch. It is the crutch that keeps us from dealing with the real problem. There is also the ever present bumping of egos' and I am going to learn how to deal with these personality conflicts because they are our No. 1 enemy. That is why the white man keeps us down.

I want a real everything, freedom and all and nothing less. The Muslims say we are the best and are supposed to get the best and nothing less and this I believe in, if nothing else. My change in view of some of the Muslims comes from a close look at their motives and answers. I must keep a close watch on things myself and others. There is a big difference between believing in a thing because you are for real with it, and just submitting to it for security reasons and guilt or other psychological reasons, just as there is a difference between the man who becomes a revolutionary because he is for real, and the man who becomes a revolutionary because of his ego and its challenges. This is what I meant when I said, Muslims ain't Muslims, revolutionaries ain't revolutionaries and the only thing real is the dick suckers and ect. I am not trying to make myself seem like a knight in shining armour either, but trying to interpret things to the best of my ability from my own eyes, for I can't see through Henry's or Jack's.

## Call for Investigations

LETTER FROM  
RUTH LANG

February 13, 1975

Dear IBW:

Well, we finally received the Autopsy Report. And, as we suspected from the beginning, we have the cause of Jesse's death --but we are still left "in the dark" as to what actually prompted the cause. And -- so is the Doctor. He was able to determine that Jesse died from "massive blood clots in both lungs," but, he was not able to determine what caused the

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massive blood clots to be in both lungs. So, this is the mystery -- why did he have these blood clots in the first place?

Another somewhat "strange" occurrence is the fact that we received the autopsy and the Death Certificate (from Boone County) at the same time. The autopsy was performed on January 13 but we just received the report yesterday, February 12. Jesse died on January 9 and we just received the Death Certificate on February 12 also. All I know is that my brother is dead and there are a lot of strange occurrences still taking place--and a lot of unanswered questions. Besides the bruises on the wrists, the bruise on the forehead and another bruise (or scar) on his shoulder, Jesse died a "normal death." Very interesting, but normal.

I have realized many things during this "crisis," and I believe like Jesse believed -- those guards and prison administrators are some "heartless, racist people," and will do anything to "break a nigger." I also believe that this will happen again, of course, to another Black prisoner who has a suit in against the prison administrators. They will torture him the same as they tortured Jesse -- first they will keep him in Maximum Security until his mind gets "bad," then they will send him to the prison hospital and "do their thing" again. And then, the same will be said -- "Black Prisoner Dies of Unknown Causes," or nothing at all will be said. This is how they will get rid of a lot of our Black brothers - shut them up for good.

**CURRENT EFFORTS**

State Representative Fred Williams (St. Louis, District 78) has been actively involved in trying to improve conditions inside the state penitentiary for the last two years. Next to Jesse's sister, he has also been the person most concerned with trying to deal with Jesse's particular situation. Since October 1973, he has been in the forefront of an effort to launch a state-sponsored investigation into conditions in the Missouri prison system. His current attempts to initiate an inquiry into the causes of Jesse's death is a continuation of that effort.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO**

You can participate in this effort by writing to Rep. Williams and demanding that the state hold an investigation into the causes of Jesse Lang's death and into the general conditions at Missouri State Penitentiary. Your letter will become part of his citizens' appeal for the inquiry. Send your letter, card, or telegram to State Rep. Fred Williams, 6621 Chamberlain, St. Louis, Mo. 63112.