

Last fall in Jena, Louisiana the day after two Black high school students sat beneath the “white tree” on their campus, nooses were hung from the tree. When the superintendent dismissed the nooses as a “prank,” more Black students sat under the tree in protest. The District Attorney then came to the school accompanied by the town’s police and demanded that the students end their protest, telling them, “I can be your best friend or your worst enemy... I can take away your lives with a stroke of my pen.”

A series of white-on-black incidents of violence followed, and the DA did nothing. But when a white student was beaten up in a schoolyard fight, the DA responded by charging six black students with attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

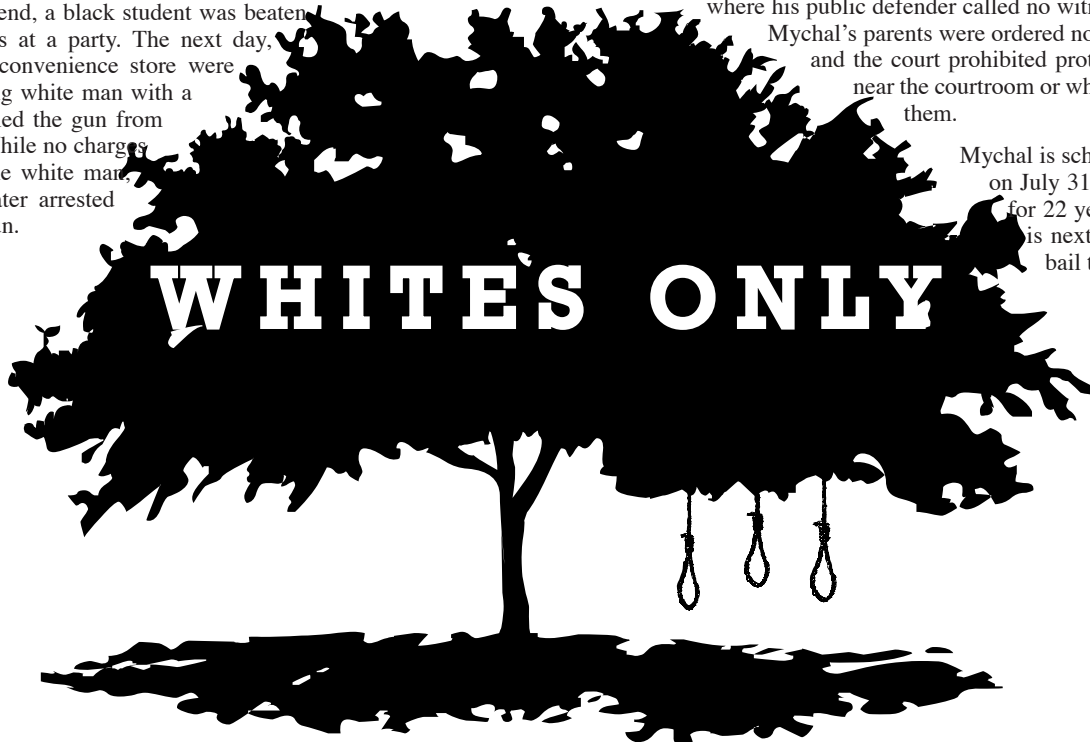
It’s a story that reads like one from the Jim Crow era, when judges, lawyers and all-white juries used the justice system to keep blacks in “their place.” But it’s happening today. The noose-hanging incident and the DA’s visit to the school set the stage for everything that followed. Racial tension escalated over the next couple of months, and on November 30, the main academic building of Jena High School was burned down in an unsolved fire. Later the same weekend, a black student was beaten up by white students at a party. The next day, black students at a convenience store were threatened by a young white man with a shotgun. They wrestled the gun from him and ran away. While no charges were filed against the white man, the students were later arrested for the theft of the gun.

That Monday at school, a white student, who had been a vocal supporter of the students who hung the nooses, taunted the black student who was beaten up at the off-campus party and allegedly called several black students “nigger.” After lunch, he was knocked down, punched and kicked by black students. He was taken to the hospital, but was released and was well enough to go to a social event that evening.

Instead of treating the incident with the same indifference as with the three boys who hung nooses from a tree, or with the integrity of a simply high school fight, District Attorney Reed Walters decided to charge six Black students with aggravated assault and conspiracy to commit murder which carries a sentence of 20-100 years of prison.

Six Black Jena High students, Robert Bailey (17), Theo Shaw (17), Carwin Jones (18), Bryant Purvis (17), Mychal Bell (16) and an unidentified minor, were expelled from school, arrested and charged with second-degree attempted murder. The first trial ended last month, and Mychal Bell, who has been in prison since December, was convicted of aggravated battery and conspiracy to commit aggravated battery (both felonies) by an all-white jury in a trial where his public defender called no witnesses. During his trial, Mychal’s parents were ordered not to speak to the media and the court prohibited protests from taking place near the courtroom or where the judge could see them.

Mychal is scheduled to be sentenced on July 31st, and could go to jail for 22 years. Theo Shaw’s trial is next. He will finally make bail this week.



If you would like to receive updates on the case, show support or contribute to the campaign for justice, write to:

Jena 6 Defense Committee,
P.O. Box 2798,
Jena, Louisiana 71342

Further information is available through:

<http://www.ColorofChange.org/>
info@colorofchange.org

Minister Alan Bean, Friends of Justice
<http://friendsofjustice.wordpress.com>
(806) 996-3353/ (806) 729-7889
(email)bean@cebridge.net

You may also sign an online petition at:
<http://www.petitiononline.com/aZ51CqmR/petition.html>

**STAND WITH THE
FAMILIES OF
THE JENA SIX,
JULY 31ST JENA
LOUISIANA**

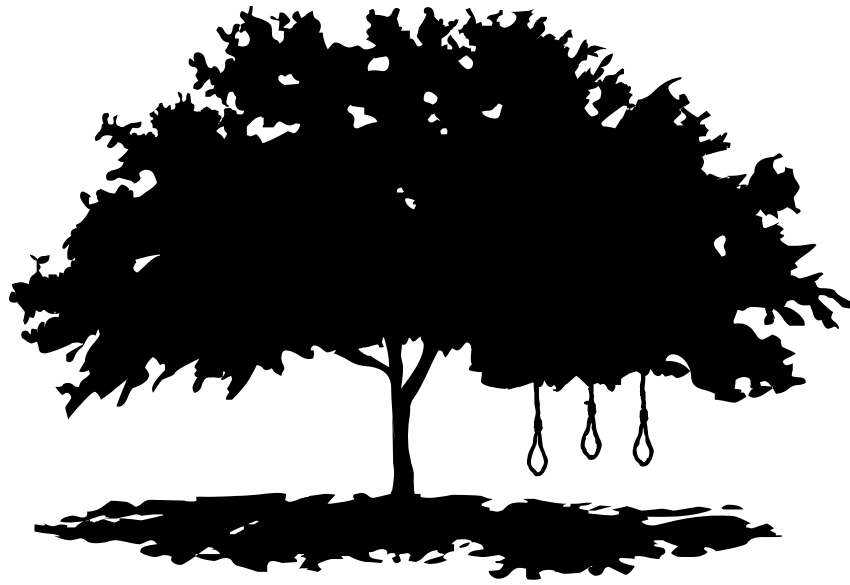
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
www.ColorofChange.org

**Tell District Attorney J. Reed Walters
To DROP THE CHARGES against the
Six Boys.**

District Attorney J. Reed Walters
P.O. Box 1940
Jena, LA 71342-1940
LaSalle Parish
(318) 992-8282

**Tell Governor Blanco to intervene
IMMEDIATELY and end the injustices**

Governor Blanco
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004
(225) 342-0991



WHITES ONLY

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jenadefense@gmail.com

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• **Tell District Attorney J. Reed Walters to**
• **DROP THE CHARGES** against the six boys.

• Call or write:
• P.O. Box 1940
• Jena, LA 71342-1940
• LaSalle Parish
• (318) 992-8282

• **Tell Governor Blanco to act immediately**
• **and end the injustices**

• Call or write:
• Governor Blanco
• P.O. Box 94004
• Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004
• (225) 342-0991

**STAND WITH THE
FAMILIES OF
THE JENA SIX**

**GATHER IN
JENA, LOUISIANA**

JULY 31ST

**STOP THE SENTENCING
OF MYCHAL BELL**