

SAN QUENTIN⁷⁰ to ATTICA^{x 6373}



the sound before the fury



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We thank the Liberated Guardian Collective for
its help in producing this pamphlet.

Early on the morning of Thursday, Sept. 9, 1971, inmates from cell-blocks A, B, C, and D of Attica State Prison overtook prison guards and shortly thereafter secured control of D yard. Within hours they had

founded a nation within a nation. Prisoners forged an inter-racial alliance under third world leadership, elected delegates to a negotiating committee and issued the following declaration:

Sept. 9, 1971

From: ALL INMATES OF ATTICA CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

to: THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA

The incident that has erupted here at Attica is not a result of the dastardly bushwacking of the two prisoners Sept. 8, 1971, but of the unmitigated oppression wrought by the racist administration network of this prison, throughout the year.

We are MEN! We are not beasts and do not intend to be beaten or driven. As such the entire prison populace has set forth to change forever the ruthless brutalization and disregard for the lives of the prisoners here now and throughout the United States. What has happened here is but the sound before the fury of those who [are] oppressed.

We will not compromise on any terms except those that are agreeable to us. We call upon all the conscientious citizens of America to assist us in putting an end to this situation that threatens the lives of not only us, but each and everyone of us as well.

We have set forth demands that will bring closer to reality of the demise of these prison institutions that serve no useful purpose to the People of America, but to those who would enslave and exploit the people of America.

Our Demands are Such:

- 1 We want complete amnesty, meaning freedom from any physical, mental and legal reprisals.
- 2 We want now speedy and safe transportation out of confinement to a non-imperialistic country.
- 3 We demand that the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT intervene, so that we will be under direct FEDERAL JURISDICTION.
- 4 We demand the reconstruction of ATTICA PRISON to be done by inmates and/or inmate supervision.
- 5 We urgently demand immediate negotiation thru Wm. M. Kunstler, Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, the Solidarity Prison Committee, Minister Farrakhan of MUHAMMED SPEAKS, Palante, the Young Lord's Party Paper, the Black Panther Party, Richard Roth of the Courier-Express, the Fortune Society, David Anderson of the Urban League of Rochester, Blond-Eva Bond of NICAP, and Jim Ingram of Democrat Chronicle of Detroit, Michigan. We guarantee the safe passage of all people to and from this institution. We invite all the people to come here and witness this degradation, so that they can better know how to bring this degradation to an end.
- 6 We intensely demand that all communication will be conducted in "OUR DOMAIN."





"Our domain" consisted of cell-block D, D yard, a neutral area -- a yard, between twelve and fifteen hundred inmates and 38 hostages. New York State Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve said of D yard:

"Believe me, these brothers had built themselves a community. They had tents, they had dug tunnels where they could sleep or protect themselves. They had a system because the bathrooms did not work, where they dug holes so they could go to the bathroom. They had a kitchen for coffee. The rations were given equally among all, and as a doctor stated who went in and out, the hostages ate first. When they had one sandwich the hostages had two. When they had little water, the hostages drank water first. When they had coffee, the hostages drank coffee first. When the doctor came in, they directed the doctor to the hostages first. When the nurse came in, they took care of the hostages first...When I went in the first time [Thursday, Sept. 9th] the inmates asked for a doctor to come in and treat the hostages. The second thing they asked for was a medical list of all of the hostages they had. They gave the names of the hostages and they asked 'Give us a medical report on each one.' Whether he had a heart problem, whether or not he had an asthma condition, whether or not he had any kind of ailment which would in fact endanger his life while he was inside cellblock D. Anyone and I re-

peat anyone that they or the doctor who came in, felt was in danger, because of a medical record and condition was allowed to leave cell block D. And the press never told you this. There were a number of hostages that were allowed to leave when it was felt that staying inside would endanger their lives." (Buffalo Challenger, Sept. 30, 1971)

Throughout Thursday and Friday those who were to comprise the "Committee of Observers" began to arrive at the prison. Some were invited by the inmates, some by the Department of Corrections, some by the Governor. The inmates had made it very clear that any and all negotiations would take place within D yard where all of the men could hear what was being said. State Correction Commissioner Oswald refused to re-enter D yard after a particularly stormy session Friday afternoon. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis, committee members were pushed into the position of mediators, attempting to win concessions from the state on behalf of the prisoners and avoid bloodshed while the state endeavored to manipulate and undercut their credibility with the inmates -- holding committee members as quasi prisoners themselves locked in a stewards room, at the mercy of Oswald not only for access to D yard but for access to the bathroom. (Access to the latter required permission and an official escort.)

Simultaneously, the state's propaganda machine was busy grinding out its version of the on-going events. By Sunday, newspaper headlines read "Attica prisoners win 28 out of 30 demands but still resist." The illusion created was that prison officials were fair and negotiating in good faith and that the prisoners were totally unreasonable. The reality, however, was that, in the words of Brother Champ, one of the inmate leaders, "in the final analysis if a massacre takes place here and the lives of the hostages and inmates are lost, the world must know that the animals are not in here, but outside running the government and the system."

The state created myth consisted of 3 major lies. . .

1 that the 28 state "accepted" proposals were indeed inmate proposals

2 that those 28 proposals were negotiated in good faith and could and would be honored

3 that the Committee of Observers had recommended the acceptance of the proposals to the inmates and had agreed that they release the hostages.

The 28 "accepted" proposals amounted to nothing more than what the observer committee could get out of the prison authorities by the process of begging and cajoling. Of those 28 proposals, Commissioner Oswald had no power to implement 11, since implementation was dependant upon either New York State legislative monetary appropriations, changes in the current penal law, changes in the practice of the parole board, or changes in the states civil service hiring and promotion procedures. Fourteen other demands were within Oswald's province and all he assured the committee was that they would be carried out "when practical and feasible" or "as soon as possible" or when "appropriate." The three remaining proposals provided for food, water and shelter for the rebelling inmates, a method for a bloodless surrender monitored by the observers and administrative and civil amnesty.

Finally, on Sunday afternoon, without informing the observer committee, Oswald passed a note into D yard, advising them that the committee recommended the acceptance of the proposals and the freeing of the hostages. The committee had in fact NEVER accepted, rejected or recommended anything to the inmates. "It was a fantastic lie," said Assemblyman Eve. "What it did was break down our credibility with all the inmates and in fact put our lives in jeopardy."

The one demand insisted upon by inmates (all of whom could be confined for life for the "kidnapping" of 29 hostages), amnesty from criminal prosecution, was from the standpoint of the state non-negotiable. All attempts by observers to gain at least a promise of no "dragnet" conspiracy indictments met with failure.



Then Monday morning, in the space of a quarter of an hour, it was all over. Helicopters sprayed tear gas, 1,000 state troopers, national guardsmen, sheriff's deputies and prison guards stormed the prison. Civilized order had been restored.

Immediately the prison was shut tight. The first of the many lurid reports of hostages' deaths and mutilations were ground out by Deputy Commissioner of Corrections Walter Dunbar. By Wednesday the Monroe County Medical Examiner had established that all the hostages had died from gunshot wounds, that none had been castrated and that all had died that Monday morning.



The atrocities Dunbar failed to describe were the actions of the state troopers, national guardsmen, sheriff's deputies and prison guards once the prison had been secured. Inmates have since testified to beatings, being forced to run gauntlets, torture with lit cigarettes, segregation of "alleged" leaders identified from Daily News photographs, individual death threats, a three day wait for the removal of bullets and treatment of gun shot and other wounds, massive

round the clock interrogations, destruction of what meager personal property the men had, and most significant of all -- murder.

For at 1:15 the afternoon of the assault, one and a half hours after the prison was secured, Dunbar took Assemblyman Eve and a few other members of the observer committee into Cellblock D to show and tell them what happened. While on that final tour, Eve saw four inmates, fully clothed lying on the ground. "I remember one of them was a young man by the name of L.D. [Elliott Barkley]... I said to Senator Bobby Garcia, that's L.D... at least he's alive." Elliott Barkley turned up on the official list of those who were killed during the massacre that Monday morning.

In all 32 inmates and 11 guards were killed. Doctors and lawyers, mobilized by the Guild, arrived at the prison gates late Monday night. A federal court order directing their admittance was submitted to prison officials, but the gates remained shut. On Tuesday, prison officials issued an emergency call for more medical personnel, while 20 feet from the prison gate, doctors who had remained there all night were barred from entering.

The final word must be left to the inmates of Attica.

TO: The Bereaved Brothers, Sons, Daughters, Wives, Mothers, Fathers and other relatives and friends of the Brothers who were vamped by Rockefeller's Gestapos in Attica Concentration Camp

Street: All Ghettos, Black-Latin-White
City: Ghettoville, State AMERIKA

9/13/71

From: The Brothers and Comrades of Attica Concentration Camp.

Beloved Brothers and Sisters:

We the undersigned, and on behalf of all the revolutionary brothers, of Attica and all concentration camps of Amerika do hereby issue this "proclamation - in - memorium" in solidarity with the bereaved, on behalf of our Slaughtered Brothers.

—Memorium—

Carl Jones
Kenny Orr
Frank Smith
Wm. Peacock
Ed Dinghe
Bill Outlaw
Joe Doerle
James Broen
Michael Lewis Jr.
Phil Myhand
Nicky Reign
John A. Boyd
Frank Lott
Donald (Sami) Noble
Peter Butler
Herbert X. Blyden

(The Attica Liberation

Conrad X
Armando (P.R. Free)
Robert L. Robinson
M. "Dalou" Gonzalez
Laurence Killebrew
Ahmel U. Akba
Francis J. Huen
Michael Smith
Milton Jones
Williw (Natu) McCullough
Bro. Richard 3X Clark
Alcenius Harden
Jerry "the Jew" Rosenberg
H. Akil
Richie Anderson
Phillip Shields

Attica Concentration Camp,
New York State.)





The Chain of Events

DECEMBER 1969

Soledad—W. L. Nolan, a politically active prisoner, tells family that "prison authorities are out to get me."

JANUARY 1970

Soledad—Nolan and two other black brothers are shot dead by prison tower guard during a set-up fight between black and white prisoners.

Soledad—Guard killed; wing where he was offed put on lock-up.

Soledad—George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo, and John Cluchette put into solitary confinement and not permitted mail or visitors, but Cluchette smuggles note out to his mother saying: "Help! Life in danger."

FEBRUARY

San Quentin—Ruchell Magee, in the same wing as William McClain and William Christmas, signs affidavit after watching guards tear gas and beat a brother to death.

Monterey County—Grand jury indicts George, Fleeta and John for murder of the Soledad guard; shooting of Nolan and others declared "justifiable homicide."

MARCH

San Quentin—William McClain charged with assaulting a guard, with Magee and Christmas as witnesses; first trial ends in hung jury.

JUNE

Salinas—Brothers win a change of venue to San Francisco and are moved to San Quentin.

San Quentin—Prisoners go on strike over conditions and in support of the Soledad Brothers.

Soledad—Guard offed in the prison.

Salinas—Seven Soledad prisoners indicted for the murder of the guard

AUGUST

Marin—Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, William McClain, and a judge killed when Jonathan attempts to free McClain (in court for second trial in assault case) and take hostages to win the release of the Soledad Brothers. Ruchell Magee and several hostages wounded.

San Francisco—Police claim Angela Davis, active in Soledad Brothers Defense Committee, supplied guns used by Jonathan Jackson in shootout.

SEPTEMBER

Marin—Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee indicted for murder in the Marin Courthouse Shootout.

Salinas—Charges dropped against 4 of the Soledad seven in case of the June murder.

New York—*Soledad Brother*, George Jackson's book, published, but banned in California prisons.

OCTOBER

New York—Angela Davis found and arrested by the FBI after a nationwide hunt.

DECEMBER

Soledad—Another guard offed.

MARCH 1971

Soledad—Another guard offed.

APRIL

San Francisco—Fight occurs in courtroom between guards and spectators after George Jackson defends himself from a guard's attack. Steve Bingham, activist lawyer, engaged to defend spectator arrested in that fight.

MAY

Salinas—Remaining three prisoners in Soledad Seven case are acquitted.

JULY

San Quentin—Guard offed.

AUGUST

San Quentin—George Jackson murdered on the 21st.



San Quentin was in the riot season. It was early January 1967. The pigs had for the last three months been on a search and destroy foray into our cells. All times of the day or night, our cells were being invaded by the goon squad; you wake up, take your licks, get skin-searched, and wait on the tier naked while they mangle your few personal effects. . . . Rehabilitational terror.

—Soledad Brother, April 4, 1970

August 21, 1971 was another "riot day" at San Quentin—the day George Lester Jackson, age 29, died in a courtyard of San Quentin Prison. California State Prison officials constructed an elaborate myth to cover up their murder of Jackson. The myth, simply stated, is that George Jackson, with the aid of revolutionaries from the outside and criminals from the inside, tried to escape and was shot down with a gun in his hand as he ran toward the north prison wall. Their offer of proof is as follows:

Early on the afternoon of August 21, Jackson was escorted from the Adjustment Center across a courtyard to "A" visiting room where he met with attorney Steve Bingham. After the meeting, Jackson was escorted back to the Adjustment Center and skin-searched. At that point, a guard noticed an object which he thought was a pencil sticking out of Jackson's hair. When the guard reached for the object, Jackson removed a wig, whipped out a gun and two clips of ammunition, inserted a clip into the gun and confronted the unarmed guards. (Another version states that a guard noticed something funny about Jackson's hair and asked "what's that?" Jackson replied "we've got to do it now." In yet another version the only words Jackson said were "This is it"). Jackson then ordered the cells of 25 inmates opened. Then, at some point—the time is unspecified—Jackson and another Black inmate, dashed out of the Adjustment Center. The other inmate ducked into the bushes and was unharmed. Jackson was shot from the south gunwalk, stumbled and was shot again.

But for the discrepancies, contradictions, ambiguities and outright lies, any one of these narratives might be believable. In an attempt to give more credence to that story prison officials assert that they knew for a long time that Jackson was planning to escape. They say that on August 1, of this year, Jackson his friends and relatives went through a dry run of the jail break. They claim to have found a cap pistol in a holster taped to the inside thigh of Jackson's 12 year old nephew, as well as toy pistols concealed in holsters hidden in the clothing of his ten year old niece and five year old nephew. Authorities further reported that they obtained a copy of a letter Jackson sent to a former cellmate which laid out the blueprint for the escape. His sisters were allegedly to smuggle in derringers in hollowed out heels of their shoes and plastic explosives in tampax containers.

As a rule, prisoners from the Adjustment Center are routinely handcuffed and observed during visits and blocked from giving or receiving items by means of a grill separating them from their visitors. Yet, while claiming to have knowledge of this elaborate escape plan, on August 21, the day of his death, when Jackson was escorted to the visiting room to meet with attorney Steve Bingham, prison authorities say that Jackson was not handcuffed because "he had been cooperating lately." In addition, the official report claims that the grill which always divides prisoners and visitors was left open in the room where Jackson and Bingham met. In further contravention of normal prison routine, prison authorities claim that no guards watched the two men during their conference.

Thus the Marin County District Attorney set the stage for his announcement on September 1, that it was Jackson's visitor attorney Steve Bingham who had brought in a gun, ammunition clips and a black wig which he passed to Jackson during their visit. In an affidavit, the DA alleged that Bingham smuggled in a 9mm automatic pistol concealed in a hollowed out tape recorder. The tape recorder was located in a 18" x 24" briefcase. According to a prison guard, the tape recorder registered on a metal detector and when opened it was found to contain only batteries.

Of the gun itself, prison officials first reported that Jackson hid the gun in his bushy Afro. Then they claimed it was hidden in a skull cap. Finally, they stated the gun had been concealed in a wig.

The San Francisco Chronicle (August 29) tested the official version with a wig and a 9mm automatic pistol. The test was unsuccessful—the gun couldn't rest in place. When this story appeared, the size, shape and make of the gun was altered. It was suggested successively that a .38 caliber gun, a 9mm foreign made automatic, a Spanish made Astra m-600 and finally a Spanish made Llama Corto, 5¾ inches long, firing a .380 projectile was used.

The inmates of San Quentin's Adjustment Center have another story. According to them, who were, in fact, the only eye witnesses to the event, a guard pulled a gun on Jackson when he returned to the Adjustment Center, and a guard, not Jackson ordered the cell doors opened. When the inmates came out of their cells they heard shots, and ran for safety toward the rear wing hoping to get out of the line of fire. Jackson, in an attempt to protect the other inmates, ran outside drawing the line of fire toward himself.

Besides Jackson, five others lost their lives that afternoon—three guards and two inmates. Their bodies were found in Jackson's cell. The inmates state that the guards, not the prisoners, placed the bodies of the other five victims inside of George Jackson's cell. The inmates further charge that it was the guards that killed the two white inmates because they refused to be part of a plan to kill Jackson.

Those two white inmates were not alone in their refusal to go along with such officially spawned plots. On March 17, 1971, almost five months before Jackson was murdered, Soledad Brother defense attorneys obtained this affidavit from a white inmate:



I, ALLAN MANCINO, declare:

Toward the end of January, 1970 I was transferred from "max row" at Soledad Prison to another section of "O Wing" at that prison—that being the second tier. At the time of this transfer, I was then the only white inmate on that second tier; the other inmates were all Black and there was known open racial combat at "O" Wing.

Approximately one week after I was moved upstairs from "max row" to the second tier in "O" Wing several guards including one officer Spoon came to my cell which was the next to last cell on the tier; the last cell being empty. Apparently they entered the tier through the back way through the "tunnel", so that they did not pass in front of any other cells on the tier. They came at night about 10:00 P.M. and told me to come to the bars. They told me to strip which I did and they examined me with a flashlight without yet opening the door. Then they had me dress.

Officer Spoon then cracked open the cell about 6 or 8 inches and told me to turn around. Spoon then handcuffed me with my hands behind my back which is not unusual. He then placed a blindfold over my eyes so that I was unable to see and this struck me as unusual and scared me.

When I asked why I was blindfolded, I was told by Spoon that somebody wanted to talk to me and gave me a cigarette.

They then took me out of my cell and out the back door of the tier a short distance into the "tunnel" from where they had entered the tier earlier. During the move, I did not have to pass in front of any other inmates cells. As soon as I left the tier and I was in the "tunnel" I recognized several other voices being present nearby. One of these I recognized as Captain Moody's voice, since he often frequented "O" Wing because of the troubled status in the part of the prison.

Moody began to address me and asked how I liked being among the "niggers" on the second tier, and asked how he felt about George Jackson specifically.

He asked if I would care if anything might happen to George Jackson to which I answered that I didn't care one way or another. Moody then asked me directly if I would kill George Jackson. He said that he did not want another Eldridge Cleaver.

I thought that this was very strange—possibly a set-up for further criminal charges if I agreed. I didn't really understand what Moody was trying to do at this point. I was on the second tier and Jackson was on "max row".

Moody then hypothesized of a situation where I would be taken out in the yard one night to locate a knife. He said that it would be unfortunate if I should break toward the fence and be shot if such an event actually happened. I understood this hypothetical to be a direct threat on my life if I did not kill George Jackson. I realized that Moody was completely serious.

When I refused to join in this plot to kill George Jackson, I was taken back to my cell.

A few days after this incident with Moody and Spoon and the other, I was transferred out of "O" Wing in Soledad to Palm Hall, Chino.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed at San Luis Obispo, California

March 1 1971

ALLAN MANCINO

On Saturday August 21, Allan Mancino was back at San Quentin, in the Adjustment Center. He has since been transferred across state lines to a prison in Nevada. No one has been permitted to see him.

When the two remaining Soledad Brothers were finally brought to court for a scheduled appearance in their case they brought the following with them:

We, the undersigned, each being held incommunicado because of suffering from both wounds and internal injuries inflicted on our persons by known and unknown agents of Warden Louis S. Nelson.

That Warden Louis S. Nelson and Associate Warden James W.L. Park through their agents, did, on August 21, 1971 kill one George Jackson, and conspired to murder the undersigned who refused to join in the state official's conspiracy.

That Officers Doe 1, Doe 2, and Doe 3 did open the cell gates and order the undersigned to come from their cells, thereafter gunshots or what appeared to be gunshots went off and all went into the cells in the back of the same building to avoid being shot. Thereafter the prison guards, armed with guns, entered the cell block and ordered the undersigned to come out or be killed. The undersigned was ordered by the officers to take off all their clothes and walk from the cell one at a time. Each of the undersigned received vicious physical beatings by prison guards with blackjacks, clubs and guns. Each of the undersigned was handcuffed and made to lay on the ground naked from approximately 4 o'clock P.M. to 10 o'clock P.M. at which time, one inmate, Allan Mancino, who was hand and leg chained on the ground was begging the guards to loosen the handcuffs cutting him and was told to keep his mouth shut by the officer guard who shot part of his leg off with a rifle. There one Mancino was made to lay begging for for approximately an hour before the guard would allow him moved. Thereafter, the undersigned was made to lay on the ground while prison guards threatened to kill them and shot all around the undersigned; beating the undersigned in such a way wounds and injuries still show on them, their bodies, and they still suffer from aforesaid beatings, being held incommunicado the undersigned are being constantly threatened by prison guards.

That the undersigned are suffering from the wounds, injuries and living in an atmosphere of fear by reasons that have been heretofore stated.

That the undersigned are denied the right to have legal papers, and seek permission from the court to further offer affidavits in testimony upon hearing, if heard by this court.

That defendant Nelson will continue his beastly acts while the court grant the relief sought. I declare under penalty of perjury the foregoing is true and correct,

Kenneth E. Devons
David Johnson
Charles Cardner
Felton Cooper
Robert (Bobby) Soto
Bernard G.
Louis N. Telamontes
Arthur E. MacHays
Gary Hetlind
Allen Fisher
Ruchell Magee
Earl Gibson
Lawrence Justice

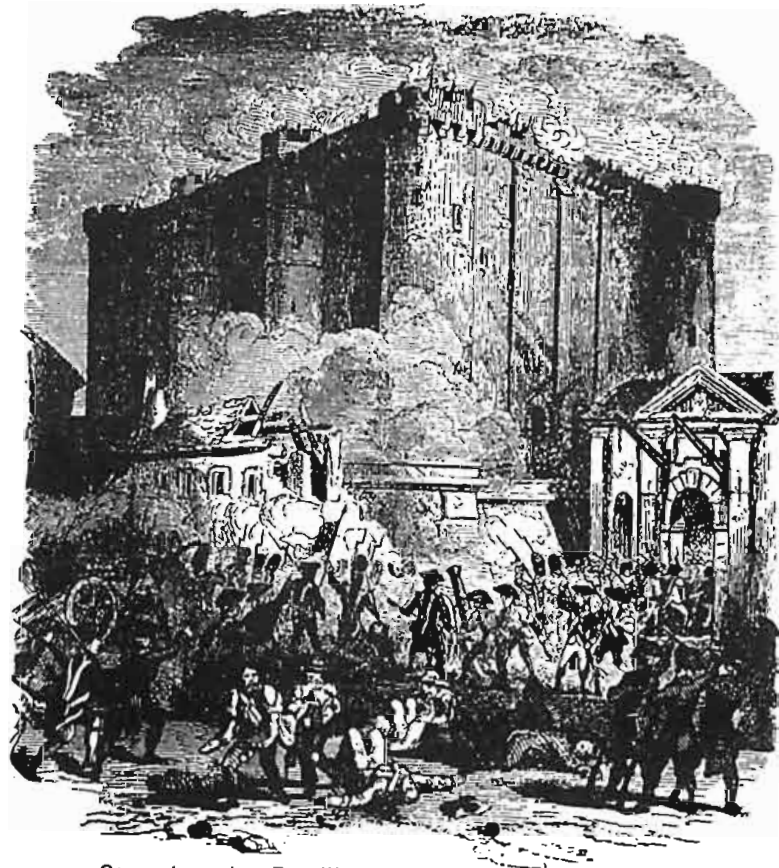
Arthur Anderson
Bobby Maybe
Hugo Pinel
Willie Tate
Jack Joukes
Lawrence Fields
Louis Lara
Allen Mancino
Raymond Ward Carager
Berbard John Gordon
Arthur Gibs
Johnny Larry Spain
John Wesley Cluchette
August 23, 1971

San Quentin was closed to all visitors for five days after Jackson's death. Since its "re-opening" severe restrictions have been placed on attorney-client communications. Lawyers have been forced to wait up to five hours for visits which have been officially cut to 30 minutes. Visits with Adjustment Center inmates take place in the two condemned row rooms. Prisoners are often so tightly chained that they are in terrible pain throughout the interview. They can't sign papers and can't write notes to avoid the guards who sit only a few feet away listening to the conversation.

On October 1, a Marin County grand jury handed down indictments against six Black and Brown inmates—Fleeta Drumgo, David Johnson,

Hugo Pinell, Johnny Larry Spain, Luis Talamantez, Willie Tate and attorney Steve Bingham. It charges them with five counts of murder, one count of conspiracy to escape, one count of conspiracy to possess firearms and one count of conspiracy to kidnap. Additionally, the inmates are charged with assault and attempted murder of prison guards. The weapon named in the indictment is a 9mm automatic pistol.

Three members of the grand jury walked out of the grand jury sessions, and one of them has since resigned. Another had this to say of the indictment: "What this grand jury does isn't justice but vengeance. This grand jury reflects society, which it represents, which is suffering from racism paranoia and economic bias."



Storming the Bastille

In April of 1970 George Jackson wrote:

any fool who falls in here and can sign his name might shoot me tomorrow from a position 30 feet above my head with an automatic rifle! He could be dead drunk. It could really be an accident (a million to one it won't be, however) but he'll be protected still. He won't even miss a day's wages.

Soledad Brother



GEORGE JACKSON

And, of George Jackson—the following message from the Seventh of August Movement—from his cellmates, comrades, students and followers. The brother who sent the message knew George Jackson for ten years, inside the prisons.

THIS MESSAGE IS FROM THE SEVENTH OF AUGUST MOVEMENT. IT HAS NO NAMES ON IT, BECAUSE THEY ARE ALL STILL PRISONERS IN CALIFORNIA'S MAXIMUM SECURITY INSTITUTIONS. THEY ARE THE CELLMATES, THE COMRADES, THE STUDENTS AND THE FOLLOWERS OF GEORGE LESTER JACKSON. THE BROTHER WHO SENT THE MESSAGE KNEW COMRADE GEORGE FOR TEN YEARS, INSIDE THE PRISONS.

There are many of us assembled here today who knew our comrade, George Lester Jackson, directly or indirectly. But only those who really knew him can begin to imagine the egregious loss that fascist Amerika has once again bestowed upon us.

Speaking for myself and countless others whom society terms "convicts", he was many things. First and above all, he was a man. Not in the abstract sense of a man, but in the concrete sense; George was a leader, not in the abstract sense but in the concrete; George was a love, not in the context that we understand it, but in the remote ways that we wish it would be; George was and always will be with us, the members of the 7th of August Movement, the epitome of manhood.

George gave us our manhood, showed us our creed through his everyday actions and teachings. For many years George was forced, out of historical necessity, to carry the load of those comrades much weaker than he. He was a man who could not stand to see wrong perpetrated by the unjust upon helpless and defenseless people. This is one of the reasons why he was singled out to be murdered by California's Department of Corrections.

In the year 1961, when racism in the California penal institutions was at its zenith, countless blacks were dying at the hands of the neo-Nazis. It was George who taught us how to defend ourselves. It was George who founded the so-called "Capone Gang", which later came to be called the 7th of August Movement in honor of Jonathan Peter Jackson's seige of the Marin Civic Center.

George taught us that freedom came out of the barrel of a gun (but in our particular case, from the point of a knife) and since we were a minority, mostly uneducated, we had no politics, and very few of us could read or write. But George Jackson was a natural-born teacher. He taught us to read, he taught us to write, and our basic arithmetic; he taught us to form collectives within the prisons. George's mother, who was always at his side, used to send him money each and every month. There were many of us who had no families, consequently we had no funds. But through the collective it was possible for everyone to have something.

George taught us that we were black, and that all that really meant was our culture was different from the Europeans', and that we came from Africa and were descendants of kings.

He taught us that if we were to walk with our heads unlifted, in reality it would be one and the same as denying our heritage.

George explained that we were a minority. He taught us the mechanics of slavery, capitalism and imperialism on a level where we all could understand it. In this way it was possible for him to revolutionize the consciousness of countless blacks.

George taught that all people could live together. He constructed programs, starting in around 1966, which were composed of blacks, browns and whites. He attempted to use the marxist world outlook of historical and dialectical materialism to transcend racism. He pointed out to us the commonality of our circumstances and that the same pig that had a boot up a black's ass, just so happened to be the same identical fascist that had the same boot up this white guy's ass. This basic truism, along with hours and years of teaching, is the cause and the birth of the present prison movement.

George grew through the years. When we were cell-partners he would read as much as 16 hours a day. And he had a way with words and books, where he could take the most complex matters and break them down to the simplest form. George, unlike most university intellectuals, was outgoing and longed — sometimes demanded — to share a new-found truth. This is why he's a leader.

The Prison authorities started to witness something new among the prisoners: the kind of man who, despite a seventh-grade point average on his achievement tests when he entered prison, could use words and etymologies in a context to defend himself in disciplinary hearings; the kind of man who would finally object to working in the cotton mills, furniture factories and shoe shops for the meager sum of 3c an hour. George taught us how to organize strikes, he set out the guidelines for lists of demands, explaining to the prisoners that we were part of the working class and consequently we were entitled to at least a minimum wage.

Naturally the idea of prisoners running around talking about minimum wages, striking and disrupting Pat Brown's and then Ronald Reagan's slave wage system, just could not be tolerated. And it was at this point that George Lester Jackson was singled out to be murdered.

This is the creed of the 7th of August Movement:

Ulysses' Vow

If ever I should break my stride,
Or falter at my comrade's side,
This oath will kill me!
If ever my word should prove untrue,
Should I betray the many or you few,
This oath will kill me!
Should I be slow to make a stand,
Or show fear before the hangman,
This oath will kill me!
Should I misuse the people's trust,
Should I submit ever to greed or lust,
This oath will kill me!
Should I grow lax in discipline,
In times of strife, refuse my hand
This oath will surely kill me!

When Fidel Castro, who was later to lead the Cuban people to freedom, was captured by the Batista forces and brought to trial, he uttered a statement that went down in history, known as "History Will Absolve Me." In that speech to the fascist court, he spoke of the revolutionaries in the prisons; and we adopt his words as our own:

"We were never permitted to talk or remain in the same prisons; yet we were in full accord as to how to act. When men carry the same ideals in their hearts, nothing can keep them isolated, neither the walls of prisons nor the sod of cemeteries, for a single memory, a single spirit, a single idea, a single consciousness, a single dignity, will sustain them all."

From the 7th of August Movement

OFFICIAL COMMENT

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Nelson Rockefeller	Governor, New York State
Russell G. Oswald	Commissioner of Corrections, New York State
George McGrath	Commissioner of Corrections, New York City
Maurice Blow	Superintendent, Naponoch Prison, New York State
Harold Butler	Chief Troubleshooter for Commissioner Oswald
Raymond G. Procnier	State Correction Director, California
James W.L.Park	Associate Warden, San Quentin Prison, California

We have a problem, we've never had before with a new type of prisoner who is not concerned with traditional things or driven by traditional motivations. They don't admit they have a problem, they think society has a problem.
Procnier, Oakland Tribune, August 24, 1971

If I had to make the decision over again, I would undoubtedly have to do the same thing. . . . it became apparent to me shortly before the attack that we were dealing here with men who were fanatical, men who are revolutionaries.

Oswald, New York Post, September 1, 1971
Many of us assume some of the blame for this incident by trying to be as liberal as possible, by being afraid of shyster attorneys, by trying to deal with some of these people as reasonable individuals. This is going to change,
Park, San Francisco Examiner, August 23, 1971

It's unfortunate that we have such violence and militant people in our prisons. There are numerous radicals. This sort of thing can set progressive corrections back many years.
McGrath, Daily News, September 15, 1971

We just have to segregate revolutionary type inmates from the rest of the inmates.
Procnier, San Jose Mercury, Aug. 24, 1971

I will recommend to Mr. Oswald the establishment of a maximum security facility to which the more militant people, the aggressive people within the state's prison population would be concentrated so they won't spread their poison to other inmates.

Butler, New York Times, September 23, 1971
We're not going to have any goddam parade of lawyers coming in anymore. Of course we're going to protect and honor an inmate's right to counsel. . . . but if he has one attorney of record he doesn't need a goddam army of lawyers running in and out of here.
Park, San Francisco Chronicle, August 24, 1971

I do not see how I could have done differently. . . . I think the extraordinary thing is that 28 out of the 38 hostages actually were saved.
Rockefeller, Daily News, September 16, 1971
and finally,

They say they haven't Spanish newspapers here. Of course we do. We get the Amsterdam News and some of those other papers. Only a couple of books we don't allow—Soledad Brother and another derogatory book that urges them to murder white people.*

Blow, New York Times, September 22, 1971

*Amsterdam News is a Black owned paper, printed only in English.



Prison—walls, bars, chains, clubs, cold cement floors, rotten food, cheap slave labor, bad medical care, isolation and solitary confinement. Prison—a place where hired guards and hired wardens hold immediate power over life and death. Prison—a place of banishment for those who can not, will not accept the status quo. Prison—a place where the political, economic and cultural conflicts of our society are reflected and intensified.

In the prison, Black America clashes head on with white America, poor America is cut off from affluent America, revolutionary America confronts fascist America. For those in prison, the questions of life and death, of freedom and repression, of dignity and fear, are crystalized in an everyday pattern.

American prisons are an experiment in the dehumanization and victimization of the men and women they hold. Yet somehow, the product of these prisons is a new breed of humanists, victors over oppression, men and women who have dared to win their freedom their rights, their humanity. In this new flower of humanity, those in prison must sometimes refuse to bow down

before authority, must refuse to compromise their integrity. The collisions, clashes and confrontations which follow are sure to be bloody and deadly.

The Attica prisoners were shot down because they showed the strength of people who are organized to fight for their freedom. George Jackson was killed at San Quentin because he was a revolutionary, a political leader to men and women throughout our prisons.

When asked to explain the ever increasing ferment within their institutions, prison officials lay the blame on inside troublemakers, the revolutionary inmates, and on outside agitators, the radical lawyers. The wardens and correction officials fail to comprehend that they and their bosses have created the conditions which foster the organization and encourage the rebellion they seek to blame on others.

Caught in their racism, wardens can not fathom the idea, or do not wish to acknowledge the truth, that it does not take an attorney to make Black and Brown prisoners aware of their oppression. A Black inmate does not need a lawyer coaxing her to get angry at institutionalized racism. A Chicano prisoner does not need legal counsel to tell him that naked terror must be halted. Prisons are schools for revolutionaries.



In this situation, what can lawyers and law workers do? The struggle of the prisoners can be supported in many ways by people with legal skills. Lawyers can see into the prisons and report back to the community. They can provide a vital link between the world within the walls and the world outside—a world prisoners with their new insight refer to as "minimum security." Law workers can use the law to fight for improvements in prison conditions, to fight for the prisoners' right to uncensored reading material, for adequate medical care, and for the right of prisoners to organize themselves. A lawyer can attempt to insulate prisoners against arbitrary and punitive administrative reprisals. Law workers can assemble and circulate materials for prisoners to use in representing themselves and protecting their own interests. The tasks are overwhelming, but much can be done—much more than is now being done.

Lawyers and law workers serving the prison movement have been and will continue to be attacked, harassed and intimidated. The state will

try to make us scapegoats, and charge us with fomenting rebellion. Prison authorities will try to keep us from coming into prisons, prevent the visiting of clients and sabotage our legal representation. But, we must not be intimidated. We should redouble our efforts to serve the prisoners who have gathered themselves together in a movement which has inspired everyone in this country with ears to hear and heart to understand.

This movement is a part of a process from which there is no turning back. Prisoners are no longer "cons" to each other or lepers to the straight world. The poor and the oppressed, the robber and the burglar, caught at desperate acts of survival are calling themselves by their rightful name—political prisoners. This name once taken, this insight once won, has forever changed the nature and significance of the struggle in the prisons. Those of us with legal skills must call it an honor to participate in this next period of American history—a period as full of promise as it is of danger.



Funeral of Attica inmate "L.D." in Rochester, N.Y.



The entire incident that has erupted here at Attica is a result . . . of the unmitigated oppression wrought by the racist administration network of this prison.

We are men. We are not beasts, and we do not intend to be beaten or driven as such . . . What has happened here is but the sound before the fury of those who are oppressed. We will not compromise on any terms except those that are agreeable to us.

We call upon all the conscientious citizens of America to assist us in putting an end to this situation that threatens the life of not only us but of each and every person in the United States as well.

—L.D. (James Elliott Barkley)



Tell my wife and children that I am ready to die. I cannot live any longer as a caged beast. I know they are going to kill us. Tell them, we are doing this so that in the event my children, or grandchildren, should slip along the way, they will not have to live like dogs.

Tell them, it is better to die like a man, than to live like a dog.

—Brother Richard