

*NVT Magazine - 8/1/71 - I just found this, but have already cut up the rest of the article. Perhaps the statement by Jackson will be of interest to you*

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# George Jackson Radicalizes the Brothers in Soledad and San Quentin

By TAD SZULC

**T**HEY walked in goose-stepping, and when they leave they'll be wearing the black beret," said George Jackson of many of his fellow convicts in prisons across the United States.

We were spending an hour together in San Quentin's tiny locked visiting room one lovely day late in April (only I, having straddled past the flower beds between the prison's outer and inner gates and felt the fresh breeze over San Francisco Bay, knew it was a beautiful day). Jackson, brought from solitary confinement to meet me, was saying that he thought American prisons were transforming black and even white and brown inmates into politically conscious men and potential revolutionaries.

George Lester Jackson, San Quentin Prison No. A-63837, is a black man. He has light skin, but he

TAD SZULC, a correspondent in the Washington Bureau of The Times, is at work on "Innocents at Home," a book of reportage on the American scene.

After Tad Szulc's prison conversation with George Jackson in April, he submitted four additional questions to Jackson through one of the lawyers in the case. The questions were these: (1) Aren't any black people guilty of crimes in American society? (2) Aren't any of them criminals—for example, a black man who rapes or murders a black woman? (3) What about a black man who guns down a Black Panther? (4) Are you really saying that all criminals are victims of society?

Here is the response that Jackson wrote in longhand on ruled, legal-size paper:

Nat Turner was asked to confess to crimes of murder and other connected charges before being hung. He indicated that he would so that he could seize the opportunity to make public these sentiments: "I've been asked to confess . . . to what?? I simply don't feel guilty, I have ven-

ured my life for the deliverance of my kind, I am a willing sacrifice to their cause. I have failed, and if you gentlemen would render me a favor you would take me out and hang me immediately." Another pointed example of how blacks view what the interpreters of society term crime can be had by recalling a later (1850) statement accredited to Martin Delaney: ". . . my house is my castle. If any man approaches my house in search of a slave I care not whom he may be, whether constable or sheriff, magistrate or even Judge of the Supreme Court. If he crosses the threshold of my door and I do not lay him a lifeless corpse at my feet I hope the grave may refuse my body a resting place." Fugitive slaves were criminals!!! Anyone offering them aid was also considered part of the criminal act, according to the accepted standards of so-called American society. These are parallels from history, valuable in that they have undoubted relevance upon the ingained attitudes of two sections of the people whose real interrelations have changed in name and form only.

The question "Aren't any black people guilty of crimes in American society?" can best be answered by stating that the first crime is attempting to establish society above society, and then seriously questioning whether blacks have ever been any part of American society. I say we haven't. History states that we haven't. We're captives of this thing termed American. As such it is and has always been our obligation to resist; resistance to unjust bonds, organized injustice, can never be interpreted as crime, be it individual or organized mass resistance. Is it criminal for the black mine worker in the Union of South Africa to steal a diamond when he can, or

for the workers in mass to take the mines? Were the Jews of Warsaw 1944-45 criminals? The men who live above and at the center of American corporatism—understand—clearly, the issue at question. Through their machinating, any activity can be made to seem criminal. Most crimes are economic in nature—85 per cent, in fact. These figures will alter as the revolution upstages, but the underlying motive will still be economic. Consequently the realistic situation is one where a very small knot of men and women are protecting "their" constitutional right to own or control the means of the people's subsistence by defining criminality. The relatively small percentage of what is left—thrill crimes, or as your question runs: "the black man who rapes and murders a black woman." Every revolutionary theoretician and psychologist accepts as elementary the tendency of violence to turn inward when the oppressed can find no externalization, "the collective autodestruction" phenomenon. Again the basis is economic oppression or the effects of a dying civilization tied to an economic arrangement that was decadent 100 years ago. Part of the myth that we must destroy is that "the people" have a choice of action. Invariably their response will take some form of violence. I term this violence, individual or collective, not crime but anti-violence, individual or collective, not crime but anti-violence, individual or collective, not crime but anti-

Society above society has had 7,000 years of society pregnant with a new one. "Violence is the midwife of every old trial. It has never worked. Pure totalitarianism is impossible—all so-called criminal action is governed by cause and effect, as is everything material. All criminals are victims of the attempt to maintain hierarchy. Any other conclusion denies original innocence, or in effect advances that men are criminals before they are born.

George Jackson  
San Quentin Prison  
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