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3 Guards, 3 Cons Slain In Quentin Break Try

By Larry D. Hatfield

Three prison guards, two white convicts, and "Soledad Brothers" George Jackson were slain yesterday in a bloody escape attempt during what prison officials called "the blackest day in San Quentin's whole history."

Angry Associate Warden James W. L. Park blamed the brief but savage escape try, apparently led by convict Jackson, on "bull - - - talk by dilettante revolutionaries" and "people who advocate murder."

Three other guards were wounded, one of them critically, in the mid-afternoon incident in which the 29 year old Jackson was shot to death by a guard and the three white guards and two white inmates killed had their throats slashed by other inmates.

Shakedown for Weapons

The sprawling Marin County prison was under "the tightest security" today while a general shakedown for weapons continued.

Park said the search was concentrated in the maximum security adjustment center which houses death row and the cell tiers in which yesterday's violence occurred.

Saying that Jackson fired "one or two shots" from a

.38 caliber pistol smuggled into him, Park told a news conference just inside the prison gates:

"There may be another gun . . . and there may be explosives."

He declined to elaborate.

"Until we're sure this institution is secure, we're going to stay locked down," Park said, repeating earlier prison officials' warnings of a return to "tough old-fashioned correctional practices" if the growing violence in the California prison system continues.

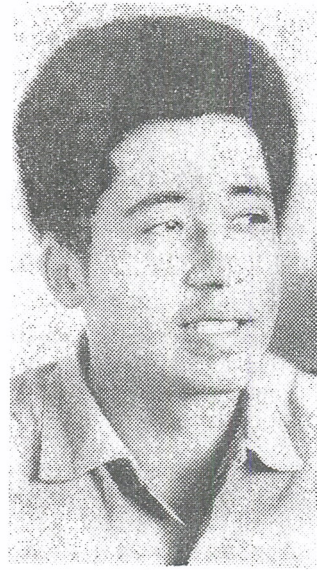
20 Prisoners Involved

From "17 to 20" prisoners were involved in the incident, including the other two Soledad Brothers, Fleeta Drumgo, 26, and John W. Cluchette, 28, and Ruchell Magee, the black convict who faces murder-kidnap-conspiracy charges with Angela Davis as a result of the Aug. 7, 1970, shootout at the Marin County Civic Center. It was not clear as to what extent they participated in the break.

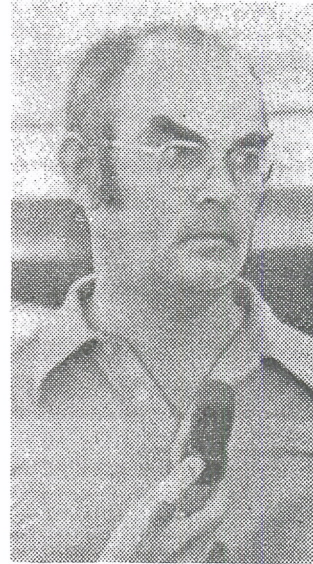
Jackson's younger brother, Jonathan, 17, was killed in the 1970 shootout after he smuggled guns into a courtroom.

Describing what preliminary reports indicated hap-

—Turn to Page 28, Col. 1



GEORGE JACKSON
Killed in outbreak



WARDEN PARK
Another gun?

—Examiner Photo

pened in the most-fatal prison incident in Bay Area history, Park said.

"Today, at about 3 p.m., there was an attempt to break from our adjustment center. Apparently a gun was smuggled in.

"Three guards, two white-tier tenders were killed.

George Jackson was killed as he broke and ran outside the adjustment center.

'Didn't Deserve to Die'

"It apparently was a carefully planned attempt to break out . . . it was a foolish attempt . . . with complete disregard for three officers who didn't deserve to die and two inmates who didn't deserve to die."

Details were unclear on just what happened in the adjustment center which shares the three-story north cell block with death row. The 30 seconds of violence was confined to the first floor of the block where prisoners awaiting trials for capital crimes, including several accused of cop-killing, and inmates considered "excessively dangerous" are celled.

Prisoners in the maximum security unit are normally kept in their locked cells but Park said "some of them" were out of their cells returning from visits or on other business, when the incident started at 3:10 p.m.

Jackson, wielding the

smuggled gun, and an undetermined number of other prisoners somehow got the drop on the guards and released other prisoners from their cells.

Jackson Shot

Jackson was shot as he "broke and ran" outside the adjustment center. He also fired "one or two shots" but it was unclear whether the bullets hit anyone. A second prisoner, identified only by his last name — Spain — was the only other inmate who actually got out of the block, Park said, and he suffered "minor injuries."

Meanwhile, three guards and two white inmates — tier tenders who serve other prisoners their meals and perform other duties — were knifed to death.

Asked why the two inmates were slain, Park said, "I don't know, maybe they (other inmates) didn't like them."

Dead Officers

The three dead officers were identified as Sgt. Jere Graham, 39, a seven-year veteran who was recently transferred to Quentin from the Sierra Conservation Center; Frank P. DeLeon, 44, at Q for the past four years, and Paul Krasner, 52, a guard for 22 years at San Quentin.

The dead inmates, besides Jackson, were identified as John Lynn, 29, of Ventura, who was serving sentences

for second degree murder and first degree robbery, and car thief Ronald L. Kane, 28, of Fresno, who was serving a sentence for escape with force. Lynn was one of two inmates who participated in an escape shootout in 1967 in Lake County court house in which a deputy was killed.

Wounded Guards

The wounded were identified as guards Charles Breckenridge, 21, in critical condition; Sgt. Kenneth McCray, 39, in good condition, and Urbano Rubiaco, 24, who was released. All were treated for stab wounds at Marin General Hospital.

Guards normally do not carry weapons while on duty inside the cellblocks and Park said it was unclear how many of the officers involved were in the adjustment center at the start of the violence.

Few Shots

"It lasted about 30 seconds," he said, adding that the only shots fired during the "actual violence" were "one or two" by guards and whatever Jackson fired.

Another volley of perhaps 30 "warning shots" was fired as the prisoners were stripped and moved out of the center into the yard under leveled shotguns and machine guns. They were held nude outside while the shakedown for weapons and possible explosives began.

Park refused comment on how the gun Jackson had was smuggled in. He also refused to say whether Jackson had had any visitors yesterday and replied "no comment" when asked about reports that he had been visited by an attorney associated with the Soledad Brothers case.

The attempted breakout

came little more than an hour after visiting hours closed yesterday.

Asked if Jackson was the ringleader of the break, Park said, "I don't know. He was the first out (of his cell) and he had the gun. You can draw your own conclusion."

He added: "I'm sure there was a conspiracy, certainly

"I think that a lot of this bull---- talk by dilettante revolutionaries — and they aren't here getting killed — contributes to this kind of thing.

"It is a direct outcome of all this violent talk — 'kill the pigs' and this crap — but it's still murder.

"This dilettante revolutionary bull---- is getting people killed who didn't want to buy into it in the first place . . . but they (the revolutionaries) aren't laying here in a pool of blood.

"I'm surprised at nothing done by people who advocate murder and whose supporters advocate murder."

Fear At Prison

State Corrections Director Raymond Procnier flew to San Quentin from Sacramento immediately after the violence to discuss ways to defuse the growing atmosphere of fear at the big prison.

Park, asked if tougher measures might be instituted, said, "We're going to take an assessment of the situation. Our officers simply are not going to have to work facing these kinds of hazards."

Procnier and Loren V. Smith, general manager of the California State Employees Association, met for two hours in Warden Louis S. Nelson's office last night.

Smith said afterward that Procnier had ordered every prison in the state to call in

Examiner coverage of the San Quentin story was by reporters Dick Alexander, Susan Almazol, Sam Blumenfeld, Stephen Cook, Malcolm Glover, Larry D. Hatfield, Robert Hollis, Will Ellsworth-Jones, and Dexter Waugh, and photographers Jim Domke, Walt Lynott, and Fran Ortiz.

extra personnel at once. He said the director was "concerned with the safety of staff and the inmates" at all the institutions.

The Correctional Officers' Union recently announced that it would file an action with the State Industrial Relations Department charging "unsafe working conditions" at the prison. Their action was prompted by the fatal stabbing of a guard who had been on special duty protecting an inmate in the prison hospital.

That guard, Leo G. Davis, was the first guard killed at Quentin in 19 years. He had been guarding an inmate who is a key witness in the Soledad Brothers case which involves the killing of a guard last year at Soledad Prison in Monterey County.

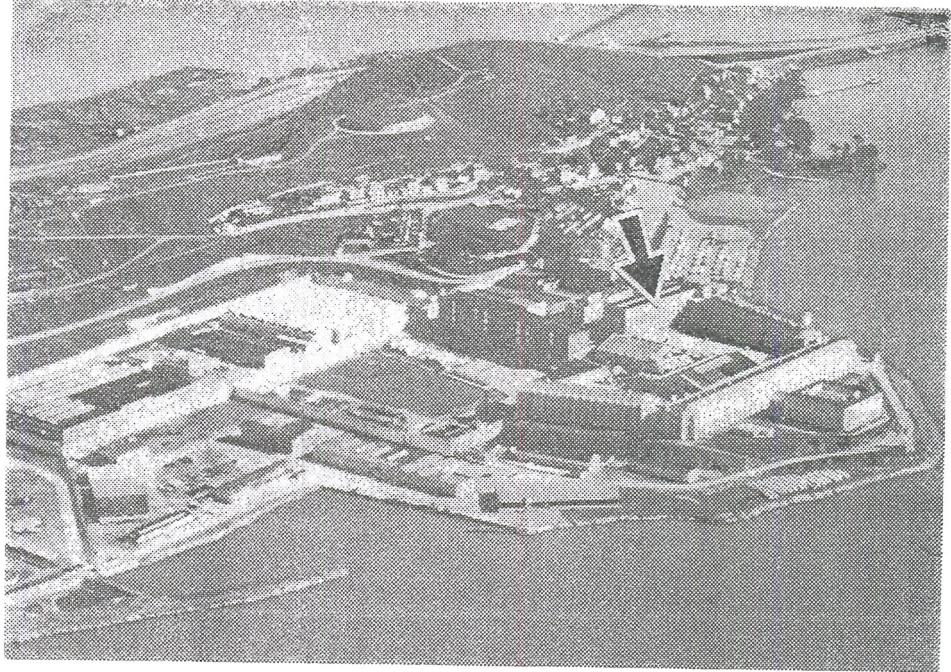
'Prison Revolt'

A series of near-fatal stabbings has plagued San Quentin recently as the focus of the so-called "prison revolt" in California shifted there from Soledad.

The prison grapevine only two weeks ago tingled with rumors that three guards would be killed by a week ago today.

'Shock'

When the rumor started, one guard already had been stabbed, and two others were stabbed by the deadline, prison sources said.



Aerial view of San Quentin Prison shows (by arrow) the adjustment center, adjacent to death row quarters,

where three guards and two convicts were slain and where "Soledad Brother" George Jackson died.

—Examiner Photo

Smith said all the staff at Quentin last night was "in a state of shock" over the violence.

Park described the staff as "angry . . . and rightfully so."

Warning shots were fired, he said, "to make them understand we meant business. There were angry officers here and the shots were fired to let them (inmates) know if there was a false move, they would be dead. And I wouldn't apologize for that one bit."

When the alarm was sounded, a mutual aid call went out to other Marin County law enforcement

agencies, and scores of heavily armed California Highway Patrolmen, Marin sheriff's deputies and police from various cities converged on the prison within minutes.

Roadblocks were set up on roads around the prison area and officers said they had information that the escape attempt might receive attempted aid from outside.

("Prison officials declined comment on reports they had been tipped earlier this week that a breakout might be in the making with the help of "people on the outside.")

At one point yesterday, a dozen officers with guns lev-

eled stopped a rented yellow van approaching the prison, calling to mind a similar yellow rental van used in the Marin Civic Center shootout which ended with a judge, two convicts and Jackson's younger brother dead. Yesterday's yellow van, however, was not involved in any escape plot.

Hearses for 6

Two hours after the violence, four hearses from a San Rafael mortuary departed the prison carrying the six bodies.

Two coroner's investigators were also at the prison but were tightlipped.