

SF Chronicle APR 8 1972

# Jimmy Carr, Prison Pupil

By Tim Findley

Earlier this week, Jimmy Carr found two unexploded Molotov cocktails on the front lawn of his home in San Jose. Crude arrows drawn in the turf pointed from the gasoline bombs to the house.

It was that kind of taunting menace that had recently become a part of Carr's life. In the last year, he was rumored to be close to conspiracies, radical politics and death.

**A  
News  
Analysis**

He had been, perhaps, George Jackson's best friend. The deep bond between them was born in the friendship of men locked up together in the adjustment center at Deuel Vocational Institute in Tracy — the maximum security institution for youthful offenders.

Jackson was gaining a reputation as one of the toughest men in prison. Jackson also had a reputation for what Carr once called "a phenomenal mind."

Jackson read books sent to him by his family, and when he'd read the material, he passed it on to other convicts. Carr, then only 18, began receiving his only formal education that way.

## COLLECTIVE

In the adjustment center at Tracy, Jackson formed a collective, which Carr remembered in a recent interview.

"... a lot of the people there, a lot of the so-called convicts, didn't receive money or anything like that. So some guys were going without. From George's viewpoint, no one should. So

consequently, everybody put their money in a pool and it was just distributed equally."

For that kind of activity, Jackson was transferred from Tracy — to the more severe restriction of San Quentin. Carr finished his youth authority term and went out on parole.

## NUMBER

But they met again in 1964. Jackson was still doing time in San Quentin as an armed robber who stole \$70. Carr was also in for armed robbery.

A year ago, Carr told a reporter:

"... the Capone gang (of San Quentin inmates) prob-

ably existed in 1961... but George took leadership of the gang and changed the orientation from just violence and hustling and gave it a political tinge..."

## LEARNING

Carr too was carrying on with a new-found passion for learning. He and Jackson ended up in maximum security again, this time they shared a cell for eight days in San Quentin's grim "B Section."

Carr, a brooding quiet young man, began to absorb himself in books on mathematics.

Jackson and Carr got reputations in prison as agitators and organizers. By

1965, prison authorities had split them up. Jackson stayed at San Quentin, Carr went down to the newer institution of California Men's Colony-East at San Luis Obispo.

## STUDY

The two men would not meet again while both were prisoners, but Jackson's effect on Carr's life was abiding.

It was in his role as a politically aware convict leader that Carr first encountered Black Panther co-founder Huey Newton. Newton had been sentenced to CMC-East for manslaughter.

Then in 1970, Carr was at last granted parole. He went to work as a student-instructor in mathematics at

the University of California at Santa Cruz. He married Betsy Hammer, daughter of radically oriented Joan Hammer of San Jose.

## DAUGHTER

Jimmy Carr's life was coming together. He and Betsy had a baby daughter. He went on with his studies.

He could not leave prison behind, however. It followed him with relentless emotion after his friend and mentor, George Jackson, was accused of killing a Soledad prison guard. And it surrounded him as organizations sprung up to defend the "Soledad Brothers."

Not only Carr, but his wife and his mother-in-law engrossed themselves in the struggle for the three Soledad Brothers. Carr met George's brother, Jonathan,

and he met Angela Davis, herself becoming ever more dedicated to the Soledad Brothers.

The Soledad Brothers Defense Committee was said to have been formed at Mrs. Hammer's San Jose home.

## CAR

And sources close to the trial of Angela Davis said

the prosecution is set to show that Miss Davis was staying at the Hammer home up to two weeks before the shootout at the Marin County Civic Center in which youth Jonathan Jackson was one of those killed.

There was talk, but no firm indication, that Carr would be called to testify in Angela's trial.

In April, 1971, the grisly remains of Black Panther

Captain Fred Bennett were found in the mountains near Santa Cruz, near a group of cabins in which authorities found 149 sticks of dynamite. Authorities said they believed an explosive device put together in those cabins was used to blow up a Marin courthouse a few months before.

A suspect in the killing later testified in secret to authorities, and reportedly linked Jimmy Carr to the killing of Bennett.

#### TUSSLE

But Carr was not arrested. He remained at work on his studies and on behalf of the Soledad Brothers until April, 1971, when George Jackson was suddenly involved in a rolling tussle with bailiffs as he left the last court session he ever attended. Jimmy Carr jumped in to help George and was booked for parole violation and assault on an officer.

Jimmy Carr went back behind bars. He remained in the San Francisco jail through August, through the bizarre and still mysterious action at San Quentin that killed his friend George Jackson and five other men.

Again, the incident touched Carr in a curious way. Authorities said, in a

moment of apparent laxness in their own secrecy over the incident, that months before they had discovered notes in a pair of pants Carr sent to a Santa Cruz laundry. The notes, authorities said, linked Carr with a possible escape conspiracy.

#### PROBATION

But he was not charged, and eventually he was freed again, given two years probation for the courtroom assault.

He went back to live in San Jose, still a quiet, studious-seeming young man.

Yet there was one more curious touch in Carr's life. In October, 1971, a young man named Louis Tackwood revealed to radicals in Los Angeles that he had been a police agent sent to spy on various radical groups.

Tackwood, other sources revealed, was related by marriage to Carr.

#### THREATS

Lately, Carr had come to live with threats on his life that he reported to close friends and associates. He had come through some tough times with some of the hardest of men in prison. He did not scare easily, not even when a bullet nicked into the San Jose house a month ago.