

# He is with us today saying, 'Rise up and walk'

KAREN WALD

The week between the assassination of George Jackson on August 21 and his revolutionary funeral August 28 was one filled with confusion, pain, torture and bloodshed, with Prison Administration (everchanging) lies, and with painfully smuggled-out truths from the prisoners. It was also filled with judicial indifference, legal wranglings and mass demonstrations. It was a week both of tears and revolutionary response, with people demanding investigations and an end to torture-revenge.

For three days after George Jackson was gunned down inside the San Quentin prison walls, no word came out to help people understand what had happened. There were only the pronouncements of San Quentin Warden Nelson and Park, and Calif. Dept. of Corrections chief Raymond Procunier. No one who knew the Soledad Brothers, or George (through his writings) or was familiar with the penal institutions of this country, was disposed to believe them, even if their stories had been consistent and reasonable. But they were not.

Assoc. Warden James W. L. Park held a series of press conferences. On the first day we "learned" that a gun or guns had been smuggled into the prison, leading to a massive jail break attempt, in which George Jackson was killed, along with 3 guards and 2 white inmate trustees. The guns were suspected of having been brought in on a tourist bus, or by a visitor or "one of those radical lawyers."

In the days that followed, it was

## George Jackson's murder, the reign of terror at San Quentin, his tearful funeral and the wave of reprisals that followed

stated by prison officials and dutifully printed as the "real, inside story" by the straight press, that a 9 mm gun had been smuggled into George by a young attorney, Steve Bingham. When people pointed to the heavy search of both visitors (they must have all possessions checked while they go through a metal detector) and inmates (who are strip-searched on leaving and reentering the so-called Adjustment Center), Warden Park suggested the gun came in inside a tape recorder. It was smuggled back in George's long, Afro-style hair. The next day, officials reported that George had lately taken to wearing a tight knit cap at the back of his head, and the

gun was hidden half inside the cap and half in his hair, but was spotted by a guard. Still not believed, they changed the following day to announce they had discovered an Afro wig flushed down a toilet — clearly the means by which George had hidden the gun. The *San Francisco Chronicle* on Friday reported they had purchased an identical 9mm gun and had a black model try to hide the gun beneath a wig. At first it wouldn't fit. When he finally removed the wig and with great difficulty forced it back onto his head with the gun inside, the *Chronicle* reported the "wig was obviously askew and with every step he took the gun wobbled dangerously,

bringing his hands instinctively to his head." The *Chronicle* observed without comment that if the prison's version were true, Jackson would have to have walked 50 yards under the eyes of a guard until he reached the Adjustment Center, without having the gun observed.

On Sunday, the Warden calmly announced that the gun was not, after all, an 8 1/2 inch Spanish Astra M-600, as had been reported, but instead a much smaller, similar type of gun. He did not explain why officials had given such a specific erroneous report previously. Even stranger was the fact that when the gun was described, it was declared to have been purchased by Black Panther Landon Williams two years ago, according to the gun's serial number. The warden did not state whether the gun he described on Sunday was also purchased by Williams. A number of people, including Mark Allen of the Political Prisoners Solidarity Committee, had pointed out that the various police departments had a huge arsenal of guns confiscated from Panthers in the last few years, which they could easily plant on George if they so desired. Landon Williams has been in prison in Colorado for two years; it is more likely that the police had Landon's guns than that he did in August of this year.

The first version of Saturday's events from the prisoners came when

**Revolutionary  
Memorial Services  
for**



**George Jackson**

**Field Marshal, Black Panther Party**



**Date of Birth:  
September 23, 1941**

**Date of Death:  
August 21, 1971**

**Order of Service**



Recorded Statement of George Jackson

Song .....

Father Earl Neil

Song .....

Poem ..... Read by Masai Hewitt  
Minister of Education  
Black Panther Party

Message ..... by Bobby Seale  
Chairman, Black Panther Party

Song ..... Elaine Brown  
Black Panther Party

Statement ..... by Huey P. Newton  
Servant of the People  
Black Panther Party

Song ..... Elaine Brown  
Black Panther Party

**HONORARY PALLBEARERS**



Jonathan Jackson

Hugo Pinell

Ruchell Magee

Fleeta Drumgo

John Clutchette

And All Revolutionary Brothers in the  
Prison Camps Across America

"If we must die let it not be like hogs,  
hunted and pinned in an inglorious spot,  
while around us bark the mad and hungry dogs  
making their mock at our accursed lot;  
If we must die then let us nobly die,  
so that our precious blood may not be shed in vain.  
Then even the monsters we defy  
shall be constrained  
to honor us though dead.

We kinsmen must meet the common foe,  
though far outnumbered, let us show us brave,  
and for their thousand blows,  
deal one death blow.  
What though before us lies the open grave,  
like men we'll face the murderous pack,  
pressed to the wall, dying,  
but fighting back."

— Claude McKay



Fleeta and John, the two surviving Soledad Brothers, were brought to court on Tuesday. They had been prevented by prison authorities from appearing at their scheduled hearing on Monday, and it took a court order to get them there. Their attorneys said this was because they were still beating them on Monday. Fleeta and John, scarred from beatings, burned with cigarettes, suffering from internal injuries — for prison guards are well-trained in the art of giving beatings designed to be invisible externally — were also suffering from the mental torture inflicted on all the Adjustment Center inmates since Saturday — the constant death threats by the guards. Nevertheless, they brought with them a handwritten affidavit, signed by all 27<sup>7</sup> inmates involved in Saturday's events, daring to tell the truth of what had happened. Even before their statement was read to the press (the judge refused to allow their attorneys to present it to the court), Fleeta and John had told the people on the other side of the bullet-proof screen dividing the courtroom that George

Jackson had been cold-bloodedly murdered. "He was shot in the back," said John, "and when they saw he still wasn't dead, they shot him in the head."

In their discussions with their lawyers, John Clutchette and Fleeta Drumgo further elaborated Saturday's incidents. They stated that they knew something was wrong earlier because the guards had begun inexplicably moving people from the second and third tiers to the first. When they had everyone they wanted on the first tier, they ordered them out. When the firing began, George Jackson, knowing that the guards' principal aim was to murder him, ran out the open door to the courtyard, to draw the fire of the guards on himself and thus spare the other prisoners. The yard — which is normally sealed shut by a heavy door that can be unlocked only from the outside — provides absolutely no possibility of escape. It is surrounded by a 20 foot wall mounted with expert marksmen guards in watchtowers. There is no spot in the yard where a person is not exposed to the gunsites of the guards'

rifles.

When Fleeta and John reappeared in court Thursday, two days later, they reported they had been beaten and burned with cigarettes again when they returned to prison on Tuesday. Fleeta, visible trembling the entire time he was in the courtroom, sent "last messages" to friends and supporters, requesting them to carry out specific tasks if he should never see them again.

Fleeta's mother fled the courtroom crying. Soon after, Mrs. Maxwell, John Clutchette's mother, began crying uncontrollably, calling the unfeeling, unyielding judge a series of epithets. No bailiff moved to quiet her, nor to ask her to leave. Instead, the SF Tactical Squad, standing helmeted with clubs ready at the back of the sealed spectators' section of the courtroom, waded in with clubs flailing. Although most of the people who moved around Mrs. Maxwell to keep her from being dragged out were black women, it was two black men whom the Tac Squad and Sheriff's deputies chose to attack. They began one of the longest, most vicious and

most bloody beatings ever witnessed in a demonstration or riot — not to mention inside a courtroom where the handful of people and reporters were totally sealed off from anyone but themselves. For long moments the Tac Squad beat Phil Price as he lay on the ground, bending his leg over a chair and slamming a club on the leg repeatedly, trying to break it. Then the Sheriff's deputies moved in, lifting Phil to his feet, slamming his already profusely bleeding head repeatedly, then forcing him against a wall where they continued the beating. Marty Price, Phil's older brother, was being choked around the neck with a Tac Squad club, but he wasn't beaten as was Phil. Instead, both were dragged inside to a prison holding cell, where the guards forced Marty to watch as his younger brother was clubbed and beaten some more. When they finished, an officer said, "We need some injured men" and several officers wiped their hands in Phil's blood, rubbed it on their own faces, and went off to have their pictures taken. The brothers were charged with assaulting an officer.

Although this second hearing failed, as had previous ones, to get Judge Carl Allen (who sat impassively watching as the beatings were going on), to set aside discussions of old motions and deal with the problems of San Quentin, the people on the outside had been acting. Demonstrations of increasing numbers went on outside the prison, blocked by shot-gun carrying guards from approaching the prison gates.

Calls went out to noted black Congressmen, publishers, doctors and others. On Thursday a few lawyers were allowed into the prison for the first time. They confirmed what Fleeta and John had told their attorneys; all the prisoners told essentially the same story: there had been no escape attempt, only brutal, premeditated murder and unabated torture, both physical and psychological. By Friday morning, with the demonstrations at the prison now drawing crowds of over a thousand, three white reporters from Establishment press were allowed into the Adjustment Center — accompanied by prison officials. Not unexpectedly, the distrustful black and brown prisoners who filled the Adjustment Center had little to say to these white strangers, and the reporters told the story they were sent in to tell: they saw little evidence of torture or recent beatings. They weren't allowed to see Mancino, whose leg had been shot up, nor any other prisoner injured seriously enough to warrant sending them to the hospital. But if nothing else, their visit meant a lessening of the beatings for at least 24 hours for most of the prisoners. It also kept the guards from killing Fleeta Drumgo, as they had promised to do. But this may be only a temporary respite.

The same public pressure which led the Prison Administration to make a showcase for the three reporters also finally forced them to allow Congressman Ron Dellums, State Legislator Willie Brown, and Doctor Carleton Goodlett in the AC on Friday afternoon, although Warden

Park and CDC chief Proconier had denied their request the previous day. But like the reporters, the black legislators got a superficial tour and had little to say substantiating the lawyers and prisoners' reports.

The congressmen were able to partially substantiate the fears of the lawyers and movement people concerning the next subjects of attack by the prison officials. For they said that it appeared most prisoners had not been beaten in the past 36 hours — except for Hugo Pinell. Pinell, born in Nicaragua, serving a life term and accused of killing one of the 8 San Quentin guards who had been slain in the year prior to August 21, has been beaten every day, without stop. Pinell, as a lifer, faces an automatic death penalty if found guilty of killing the prison guard. Some of the administrators' rumors imply he was responsible for the knife-slayings of the five guards and two white trustees on Saturday.

The prison officials are circulating rumors of conspiracy indictments, charging that George Jackson was involved in a preplanned prison break attempt involving a number of other

(please turn to page 10)



(continued from page 3)

inmates. In addition to Fleeta Drumgo, John Clutchette and Ruchell Magee, the people who head the list of rumored "conspirators" include Pinell, another inmate named Johnny Spain, the young lawyer Steve Bingham, who was the last to see George, and an ex-cellmate named Jimmy Carr, who is now in the SF County Jail.

Johnny Spain, a 20-year-old mulatto arrested in Los Angeles for robbery and recently transferred to San Quentin from Soledad, has been described by his lawyers as a "young George Jackson" — incredibly abused by the prison system and in the process of becoming politicized because of it. Prison authorities say Johnny Spain ran out into the courtyard with George in what they describe as an escape attempt, but was not injured because he ducked behind some bushes. Spain was the only convict the white reporters described as being obviously injured; they said his body was a maze of raw, red open sores.

On Saturday, August 28, several thousand black and white, old and young people gathered at St. Augustine Episcopal Church in Oakland to show their love and respect for George Jackson. The "Panther Church" was the scene of Jonathan Jackson's funeral just a little more than a year ago. But although there were uncontrolled tears rushing down many faces, there were no tears from Mrs. Georgia Jackson, (who was described by George after Jonathan's funeral as "the perfect revolutionary mother" for her strength and understanding in the face of Jonathan's death). The funeral was not a moment of mourning but a call to action. Father Earl Neil described George as like the Apostle Peter, who told a crippled beggar at the steps of the temple that he had no silver or gold, but would give all he had — then commanded him to rise up and walk. The condition of black people in this country, said Father Neil, is like the beggar crippled from birth. Imprisoned for many years, George Jackson had no money, no cars or TV's to give the people. But he gave all he had — his passion, his life. "Last Saturday, this system called 'American Justice' murdered George Jackson." Father Neil told the 200 relatives and comrades gathered inside the church, and the thousands listening outside. "They tried to end the life George gave us . . . but George still lives on. He is with us today, and he is saying to us 'rise up and walk — take some steps for liberation.'"

Hours and days of discussions have taken place since Saturday, August 21, trying to understand and explain what happened, and why. There are

still too few facts, too many theories and speculations. Although most people feel convinced he was set up by the guards to be murdered, no one feels totally certain it wasn't in some way related to an escape attempt. George has long made it known he was opposed to the "concentration camp" mentality, believed in the right of political prisoners or prisoners of war to escape, and would do so when the time came. But many question whether this could have been the time — three weeks before the start of a trial in which he could more massively than ever before reveal the barbarity of the California prison system and the farce of American justice to the eyes and ears of an intensely interested world. It

was not in his interest — a totally political being, dedicated to the struggle in the prisons — to miss out on this opportunity by risking death or even going underground after a successful escape. After all, he could just as well escape after trial. His physical conditions in jail could not have gotten any worse.

But it was in the interest of the prison authorities — at the highest levels — to silence him before he could take that stand. George Jackson was a very sharp thorn in their sides, not only because he so effectively educated and organized the prisoners in every prison they sent him to. George Jackson was an eloquent and articulate spokesman who had been able to gain the attention of the outside world at a time when prison officials were being plagued by calls for prison reform by those whom they considered "bleeding heart liberals" (to quote Warden Park). A number of Investigating Commissions have toured various California prisons in the last year or two; without exception they have come out with scathingly unfavorable reports. Undaunted, the prison hierarchy maintained the status quo, even promoting officials of some of the worst prisons, such as Soledad. But they very much wanted to stop this flow of criticisms in the press and the State legislature, and they also wanted to clamp down on these radical lawyers who have lately been bombarding the prison system with demands for the rights of prisoners. Killing George Jackson not only silenced the voice which was causing them so much discomfort; it served as a pretext to, in the words of James Park, "go back to old-fashioned prison methods." While presumably he means to stop short of the stocks, Park clearly means and intends raw brutality on the inside coupled with maximum efforts to keep the outside world from getting

in. Newspapers, such as the Black Panther paper and the Berkeley Tribe will be banned (probably resulting in a court battle, since prisoners are entitled to receive anything that can legally be sent through the mails). Tape recorders, a

key instrument not only of reporters but of defense attorneys and legal workers, will also be banned. Only state-licensed private investigators will be allowed to interview prisoners, thus eliminating the numerous volunteer investigators whose free work (as compared to the high rates of licensed investigators) makes possible defense on a small budget. Only one lawyer will be allowed to visit a prisoner, limiting a prisoner's right to counsel by the number of times his one lawyer can get out to visit him, while balancing that time with the time he must spend working on other aspects of the case, defending other clients, etc.

But even more, as Angela pointed out, it means the return to raw terror. Fleeta and other prisoners were not killed last week — as they had been assured by the guards they would be — perhaps only because the cries of the people enabled reporters and congressmen to enter the prison. Next week, when the spotlight fades, any one of them could be arbitrarily murdered. It's been known to happen before. That's what started the Soledad case. It can only be prevented by continued, constant focus on the prisons.

In the early morning hours of August 28, bombs went off in the offices of the California Department of Corrections (the euphemism for the prison department) in San Francisco, San Mateo and Sacramento, doing extensive damage. Two of the bombings were claimed by the Weather Underground, the third by the People's Revolutionary Army. Like the firebombings of State vehicles and a Bank of America carried out by other groups earlier in the week, these bombings were an expression of rage at the murder of George Jackson, and in a broader sense, at the murder, torture and imprisonment of untold numbers of revolutionary brothers and sisters throughout the country.

Although the bombs themselves could not effectively impair the functioning of the California prison system, their significance should not be underestimated. On one level, they were gut response, an outpouring of

## Los Angeles Free Press

outraged love and hatred of the brutal forces who, outside our control, could so easily gun down a captured liberation fighter. The news of the bombings caused smiles to spread on many faces that had known only tears for a week. Powerless in themselves, the bombs kindled a sense of retaliation, a feeling of strength. In part, this was due to the second level of significance these bombs had.

The Weatherman Communique expressed it:

"There must be a price for racist attacks; a higher price for murder. Mass actions outside the Tombs last year might have prevented the murder of two Puerto Rican prisoners a week after the Rebellion. If Edward Hanrahan had been dealt with for the murder of Fred Hampton, James Park might have thought twice before participating in the murder of George Jackson. Every prison official must learn to balance his actions with his desire for personal safety.

Pointing to the passionate resistance waged by black liberation fighters and prisoners, the Com-

munique asked whites if the blacks and browns must continue to fight alone, inside the prison walls. Quoting George Jackson, they concluded:

"I'll never forgive, I'll never forget. If I'm guilty of anything, it is of not leaning on them hard enough. War without terms."

That war is clearly going on inside San Quentin and countless other prisons this week and in the weeks to come. If there is no help from the outside, the revolutionary prisoners will be quietly and systematically murdered. Like George Jackson, they wage the most perilous of revolutionary struggles.