

A Jackson Friend Slain in Ambush

By Kevin Leary

Ex-convict James E. Carr, an enigmatic figure in the wings of the interlocking "Soledad Brothers" and Angela Davis cases, was shot and killed from ambush yesterday morning outside his home in a pleasant, tree-lined neighborhood of San Jose.

Police captured two suspects in a car carrying weapons and firebombs less than 30 minutes later and booked the young men from Southern California into San Jose jail for investigation of murder.

They were identified as Richard Rodriguez, 22, a Chicano, of Baldwin Park, and Chester Duane Ligons, 28, a black, of Los Angeles.

GUNFIRE

Carr, 28, a close friend and former cellmate of George Jackson, the slain prison revolutionary, was cut down by gunfire after he stepped out of the big, rambling home at 795 Morse street on his way to work about 7:10 a.m.

Police said the killers, who obviously had waited in ambush for some time, hit the husky black man with at least six shots from a rifle and a shotgun.

Witnesses said Carr staggered across the dirt driveway of the three - door garage and collapsed over the wheel of his Jeep. He died immediately.

The two gunmen escaped in a Ford LTD but police,

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supplied with a description, stopped the two suspects about 20 miles south in Morgan Hill.

The young men put up no resistance, although the car contained a rifle, a shotgun and a bucket of Molotov cocktails, police said.

Inside the house at the time of the killing was Carr's wife, Betsy, and their baby girl. Carr's mother-in-law, Joan Hammer, the owner of the house, is a friend of Angela Davis and a wealthy sympathizer of radical causes.

A guest in the home at the time was Elizabeth Coby, a legal colleague of attorney John Thorne, who represented George Jackson until the abortive escape attempt at San Quentin prison last August in which Jackson and five others perished.

She complained to reporters that Carr had been the

ing cigarettes, bewilderedly asked newsmen what was happening, saying she knew nothing herself.

"All I know is that he didn't deserve to die," she said, tears welling in her eyes.

FRIEND

One facet of Carr's life was certain: he was a close friend and loyal follower of George Jackson, who taught the semi - literate Carr how to read effectively after they met at the Deuel Vocational Institute at Tracy. In later years they shared a cell at



JAMES E. CARR
Killed at his home

target of death threats for the past several weeks, but that the police failed to provide protection.

One puzzling aspect of the killing was the discovery of

a revolver buried by its barrel in the dirt of the yard. Officers were trying to determine its ownership.

As to the motive behind the murder, police in San Jose were keeping silent. There was speculation from other sources, however, that Carr had been caught up in the violent undercurrents of the black revolutionary movement.

REASONS

"I can think of lots of reasons why someone would want to kill him," his attorney, Richard Hodge, said. "People from the far left, the far right and in between could have wanted to kill him because he was a very controversial leader in prison.

"Some people thought he was a CIA agent, others thought he was a super radical."

At the door of her home a few hours after the shooting, Mrs. Carr, a frail, pale young woman chain - smok-

San Quentin Prison.

On parole from the California Men's Colony at San Luis Obispo, Carr was a student at the University of California at Santa Cruz for the fall and winter terms of 1970-71.

He was a trouble - maker on campus, university officials said, although he displayed a "remarkable talent in mathematics."

MELEE

He was returned to confinement on April 6 of last year after a melee in the

courtroom where Jackson and the two other so-called Soledad Brothers were being tried for the murder of a Soledad Prison guard.

Jackson hit a bailiff and Carr, who was in the spectators' section, vaulted over the railing to come to the aid of his embattled friend. Fistfights and scuffles broke out all over the courtroom. In the end, Carr was led away charged with assaulting peace officers.

He was still in San Francisco county jail when he was implicated by authorities in the bloody escape attempt at San Quentin.

NOTES

They said that they first learned of the escape plans — although not the precise details — after a Santa Cruz laundry turned over incriminating notes found in trousers left by the - then student Carr.

Carr, in a prison interview, denied the allegations.

Finally last December, after waiting nine months for disposition of his case, Carr was released from county jail and resumed his married life in the handsome, three-story, yellow house owned by his



UPI Photo

CHESTER LIGONS
No resistance



A. P. photo

RICHARD RODRIQUEZ
Weapons in car

mother-in-law.

Her name figured in the opening statements of the Angela Davis trial. The prosecution said Joan Hammer loaned a car to Jackson's brother, Jonathan, a day before the Marin Civic Center shootings which followed a kidnap - escape attempt instigated by Jonathan Jackson. The state contends Miss Davis supplied Jonathan with the guns he used in this incident.