

Panther Link Under Quiz in Carr Slaying

By Don West

Examiner News Staff

SAN JOSE — Police today are investigating a Black Panther link with the assassination of James Edwin Carr.

Carr, 29, a former Soledad cellmate of George Jackson, was killed in a barrage of gunfire as he left his mother-in-law's home for work yesterday morning.

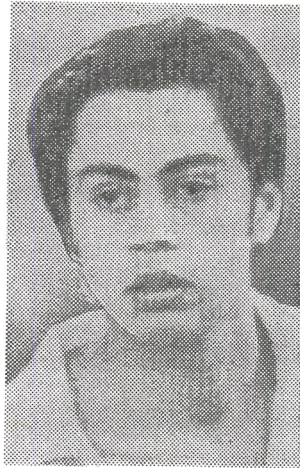
At least one of the two men arrested and charged with murder less than 30 minutes after the slaying reportedly had links with Los Angeles Black Panthers.

"Jimmie was not on the best of terms with the Panthers," Carr's attorney, Richard Hodge of San Francisco, admitted.

Richard Rodriguez, 24, of Baldwin Park, one of the two men charged with killing Carr, was known by Los Angeles Police to be linked to the Panthers. He was arrested with Chester Duane Ligons, of Los Angeles, who was rebooked today as Lamar Lloyd Mims, 21.

Both were apprehended 22 miles from the scene by Morgan Hill police. Their car carrying Ohio license plates was said to contain a rifle, shotgun, revolver and a bucket of handmade fire bombs.

Friends of Carr said he had been worried about a death threat since March 24 when two firebombs were



RICHARD RODRIGUEZ
Charged with killing



DUANE LIGONS
Under arrest

found outside the house where he was killed.

Two firebombs were found that evening in a Salvation Army sack with a crude map showing the house and one next door after prowlers were heard.

Carr had been working as a construction laborer here and living at the home of Joan Hammer, his mother-in-law.

Mrs. Hammer testified before the grand jury hearing that led to the Angela Davis murder-kidnap indictment.

Her home at 795 Morse St. was the site of the first organizational meeting for the Soledad Brothers Legal Defense Fund in August of 1970 in which the mother of George Jackson participated.

Her daughter, Betsy, 20, was married to Carr. They have a seven-month-old daughter, Gea.

Carr had just had breakfast with his wife, daughter, mother-in-law and Elizabeth Coby, an attorney who also lives at the home, before leaving for work.

As he opened the door of his jeep, he was shot several times. At least one round was fired through the vehicle's window.

Carr had been paroled from San Luis Obispo State Detention Center in 1970 after serving six years of a Los Angeles robbery.

Marshall Sylvan, a UC-Santa Cruz mathematics professor whom Carr helped complete a book on statistics, recalled the ex-convict as a "dedicated, hardworking man" who seemed well adjusted and who won his admiration and respect.

Carr, whom Hodge said entered prison a functional illiterate and left an educated person after being influenced by Jackson, studied mathematics and took part in seminars on prison life.

While he never worked as a paid member of the university, he had informal jobs as a "reader" of papers for various instructors. He tutored at least one high school student from Santa Cruz.

Carr left school after hav-

ing his parole revoked in an incident April 6, 1971 during a Soledad Brothers hearing in which he was accused of having assaulted a police officer.

Hodge said that since his recent release Carr had been "toeing the line to keep from breaking parole."

The Black Panthers only last year had pictured Carr as a victim of society in an article entitled "We Must Not Forget The Jimmie Carrs."

Carr, who was in prison at the time the Panthers party was formed, met Huey Newton while both were held at the San Luis Obispo facility.

Capt. William McKenzie, who is heading the San Jose investigation, declined to "speculate on any connections between this case and other elements," but his inquiries to southland police agencies have included questions about Panther links.

Bomb Factory

Carr was under investigation in the murder of Fred Bennett, a Stanford graduate student, at a "bomb factory" in the Santa Cruz Mountains in January, 1971.

Thomas Mosher, a former pre-legal student at Stanford, testified Carr was the killer before a U.S. Senate committee, saying Bennett was slain because he had been intimate with the wife of a prominent Panther leader.

No charges were ever brought against Carr in connection with the case, however.