





# The Soledad Brothers: How a Prison Picks Its Victims

**T**HINK OF CALIFORNIA'S Monterey County and you'll probably imagine quaint shops in Carmel, gnarled pines hanging wind-swept above one of the most dramatic beaches on the West Coast, or exclusive mountain hide-aways for the wealthy. You may remember that Joan Baez has her school for non-violence in Monterey, that the Esalen Institute offers sessions in sensitivity training, or that hitchhiking hippies are taking over beautiful Big Sur.

Images of the easy life come to mind quickly. But there is another side to the county not mentioned in Chamber of Commerce leaflets and not part of the tourists' beaten paths. Inland from the resorts lies the Salinas Valley, flat acres of rich farmland whose white owners once employed vigilance committees and strike-breakers to intimidate and occasionally kill migrant workers. This is the part of the county that John Steinbeck saw. South from Salinas is an even uglier reality—Soledad Prison. Here, the violence and brutality that were once part of the chaos of the Depression have been evoked again with the murders of three of the prison's black inmates.

When Soledad (more properly known as California Training Facility at Soledad) opened in 1946, it was touted as a progressive institution. Perhaps it is, but over the years prisoners have come to know it as the "gladiator school" or the "front line" because of the intensity of the racial hostility which exists between guards and inmates, and among the inmates themselves. Letters detailing the brutality of daily life inside the prison have made their way to inmates' families and attorneys and finally to the attention of legislators in Sacramento. Finally, in early June of this year, California State Senator Mervyn Dymally made an inspection of the maximum security part of the prison, accompanied by two staff members and Bay Area attorney Fay Stender. The group wanted to distribute a questionnaire, to be filled out and returned on the spot by prisoners so that no one would be punished for complaining about conditions.

The plan ran afoul of Ray Procunier, Director of the California Department of Corrections, and of the czars of the prison. "If there's any questionnaire," said Procunier, "I'm going to put it in there. If there's anything wrong going on down here, we want to be the first to know about it." Dymally submitted, and after touring the prison's "O" wing, the senator's group reassembled in the warden's office to talk over what they had learned from brief discussions with inmates. They were especially concerned about black prisoners' complaints about food being contaminated, urine

in their coffee and similar harassments.

"It's my opinion that the food is not being tampered with," said Procunier. "From a management point of view, we don't want it. There's just a bad set of feelings going around this joint." When Dymally suggested that there must be some basis for the fact that so many letters and complaints had mentioned this, Procunier turned to his prison officials. "Now I want you to tell me the truth," he warned. "Has it ever happened that someone has urinated in anyone's coffee?" When the four men shook their heads from side to side in unison, he turned back, satisfied.

After they had asked a few more questions and received Procunier's arbitrary answers, Dymally's group left Soledad without ever getting to the prison's major problem—the rampant racism that has led to a series of murders of black inmates and, more recently, to the outrageous framing and prosecution of three others who have become known as the Soledad Brothers.

**A** BLACK INMATE IN Soledad's maximum security section wrote recently about the racial hatred there: "On —, A.B. and myself were transferred to Soledad Correctional Facility. We were placed in the Max Row section, 'O' wing. Immediately entering the sallyport area of this section I could hear inmates shouting and making remarks such as, 'Nigger is a scum low-down dog,' etc. I couldn't believe my ears at first because I knew that if I could hear these things the officers beside me could too, and I started wondering what was going on. Then I fixed my eyes on the wing sergeant and I began to see the clear picture of why those inmates didn't care if the officials heard them instigating racial conflict. The sergeant was, and still is, a known prejudiced character towards blacks. I was placed in cell No. —, and since that moment up til now I have had no peace of mind. The white inmates make it a 24-hour job of cursing black inmates just for kicks, and the officials harass us with consistency also."

On "Max Row," prisoners remain in solitary confinement in little cells like iron boxes 23-1/2 hours a day. Heavy screens, not just bars, shut them in, and they are fed through holes in their respective doors.

Another prisoner wrote from "O" wing about food service there: "The prison officials here stopped serving the meals and deliberately selected the Caucasian and Mexican inmates to serve the meals and they immediately proceeded to poison our meals by filling food to be issued to us with

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by Eve Pell



cleanser powder, crushed glass, spit, urine and feces while the officials stood by and laughed."

For many months prior to January 1970, inmates of "O" wing had not been permitted to exercise in groups. The deputy superintendent of Soledad, who has called "O" wing "a prison within a prison," explained that "difficulties between inmates had occurred, and fights—serious fights, assaults, assaults without weapons, assaults with weapons—had occurred when we attempted to permit people to exercise together." Last December, a new exercise yard was built for these inmates. It didn't open on schedule because some work remained unfinished. A black prisoner wrote, "I did notice that white inmates and officials were awfully cheerful for some reason or another and they continuously didn't forget to remind us of the yard opening soon."

In the second week of January, 13 inmates were skin-searched—stripped, their clothes examined, their buttocks parted and searched for concealed weapons. The guards found no weapons and allowed them into the yard. No guards went with them, but Guard O. G. Miller, known to be an expert marksman, was stationed in a tower 13 feet over the yard, armed with at least one loaded carbine.

Predictably, black and white inmates began to fight in the yard. Without a warning the guard in the tower fired four shots. Three blacks—Alvin Miller, Cleveland Edwards, and W. L. Nolen—were fatally wounded, and one white was shot in the groin. At least one of the blacks remained alive and moving. His friends wanted to get him to the prison hospital as fast as they could.

"I looked at the tower guard," one of them later explained, "and he was aiming the gun toward me and I thought then that he meant to kill me too, so I moved from the wall as he fired and went over to stand over inmate X, all the while looking the guard in the gun tower in the face. He aimed the gun at me again and I just froze and waited for him to fire, but he held his fire. After I saw he was not going to fire I pointed to where inmate X lay, with two other black inmates bending over him, and started to walk to him very slowly. The inmate I had played handball with suggested that I take inmate X to the hospital so I kneeled so inmate X could be placed on my shoulder, then started to walk toward the door through which we had entered the yard, and the tower guard pointed the gun at me and shook his head. I stopped and begged him for approximately ten minutes to let me take X to the hospital but all he did was shake his head. Then I started forward with tears in my eyes, expecting to be shot down every second. The tower guard told me, 'That's far enough.' Then another guard gave me permission to bring X off the yard and I was ordered to lay him on the floor in the officer's area and go to my cell."

By the time this drama was completed, the wounded man was dead.

Why were these three black men shot? W. L. Nolen had been known throughout the prison as a tough man who had maintained his identity and his pride. Cleveland Edwards, in jail for the political crime of assaulting a police officer, had also been a visible black leader. Alvin Miller had been neither militant nor a leader, but he closely resembled the ranking Black Panther in Soledad, Earl Satcher, who was also in the exercise yard at the time of the shooting. Nolen had known that he was marked for death. He had told his

father so during a recent visit. The father had tried to see the warden in order to arrange protection for his son, but the warden had been "too busy" to see him. Miller also had had a premonition of death, perhaps because of the taunting he had received from whites about the opening of the yard. One week before it opened, he wrote a farewell letter to his mother.

In a civil rights suit filed in Federal Court against prison officials Cletus Fitzharris, Superintendent; William Black, Deputy Superintendent; Clement Swagerty, Associate Warden; and O. G. Miller, Guard, attorney Melvin Belli states that "O. G. Miller maliciously shot and killed W. L. Nolen, Alvin Miller and Cleveland Edwards, because of his general hatred of persons of African descent and because of his particular hatred of one of the decedents, W. L. Nolen, who had struck O. G. Miller during a previous altercation between the two...."

"[Miller] knew that the possibility of serious bodily injury or death from the engaging in fisticuffs was minimal and that his shooting at the decedents' vital parts would almost certainly cause their death or serious bodily injury; yet he made the deliberate choice to shoot."

The suit further charges that prison officials "fostered" extreme racial tension in the prison by maintaining rigid segregation of the races; that they knew O. G. Miller to be prejudiced against blacks; that they did not arrange for prompt treatment of the injured prisoners and so they are responsible for the deaths.

After these killings, the already tense atmosphere at Soledad became explosive. When the Monterey County Grand Jury held hearings at the prison to decide if charges should be filed against O. G. Miller, no blacks who had been in the yard were permitted to testify, although some whites were. As they were being walked over to appear before the Grand Jury, they were reminded by guards, "Remember, there was a warning shot."

**S**HORTLY AFTER THE PRISON radio broadcast to the inmates at Soledad that Officer O. G. Miller had been exonerated of the murder of the three black inmates, a white guard named John V. Mills was found dying in "Y" wing. He had been beaten and thrown from a third floor tier down into the television room 30 feet below.

Deputy Superintendent William Black stated, "We believe that the death of Officer Mills was reprisal for the death of the three black inmates." And, as if to balance some score being kept, prison officials proceeded to find three black suspects who, they said, had killed Mills. The accused were Fleeta Drumgo, 23; John W. Clutchette, 24; and George L. Jackson, 28. Tall and bespectacled, Jackson handles himself well. He is serving a one-year-to-life sentence for robbery and has done ten years. Although the median sentence for that crime is two-and-a-half years, the California Adult Authority has yet to set his parole date. Like the three black inmates murdered in January, he is known throughout the prison as a black who has held onto his identity, who has refused to lower his eyes and accept indignities. Jackson was not politically aware when he entered prison, but during the past ten years he has read extensively and has understood from his prison experiences what has hap-



pened to black people in America. Jackson is a writer.

His father has worked hard all his life, often holding down two jobs so that his family would have enough. He preached the traditional virtues to his children, as well as faith in the American way.

George Jackson and his mother are light-skinned. His younger brother is very light and has reddish hair. When Jackson was 15, he remembers being brought before a judge after he had piled up the family car. The judge told him that he could go far if he would behave. "Look at your little brother," said the judge, "how cute and nice he is. And your mother is a nice-looking woman. You know that families like this go farther than the real dark families and the real black people." Later George said to his mother, "Somehow I wish he'd have gone on and sent me to jail rather than say that to me." That was Jackson's first experience with "justice."

Jackson's route to Soledad is a familiar trail for blacks. Poor young black men from the ghetto in their first brush with the law are tarred with a record they would never have if they were middle-class or white. Later on they get into suspicious circumstances and are arrested on heavier charges. They plead guilty because they can't establish innocence and already have a record; they don't get the light sentence they were given to expect, and end up in prison for long stretches.

Prison is a metaphor for the larger society, and some of the most powerful and articulate black leaders have come up through prison systems—Eldridge Cleaver and Malcolm X, for example. Perhaps because the prison system forces definite choices upon black men, they have to define themselves very clearly. Jackson got into trouble while he was first at Soledad because in the television room he would not sit in the back section unofficially "reserved" for blacks. A fight broke out and authorities punished Jackson by sending him to San Quentin, where he spent two years isolated in the maximum security section.

Jackson, Drumgo and Clutchette maintain that they were nowhere near the third tier of "Y" wing when John Mills was killed, and that they are innocent. Clutchette, who was imprisoned for burglary, had already been given a parole date and was to be home on April 28. Drumgo was scheduled to appear before the Adult Authority in April and had an excellent chance of getting a release date.

Of the three inmates accused of assaulting and murdering the guard, Jackson is in a particularly strange legal situation. Because he is serving a one-year-to-life indeterminate sentence, he is considered a "lifer," and his case falls under California Penal Code Section 4500, which provides a mandatory death sentence for any lifer convicted of assaulting a non-inmate who dies within a year. So if Jackson is convicted he must be sent to the gas chamber.

**A**FTER THE MURDER OF the guard, all the inmates in "Y" wing were locked up and questioned for many days by guards, prison officials and the district attorney. From the beginning a terrible teamwork began to operate against the three who had been selected as victims. No defense attorneys were present at the questioning. Prison officials never notified the families of the suspects that their sons were in trouble. Jackson, for

instance, had been in court twice before his mother ever heard of his situation. John Clutchette's mother was told that her son did not need a lawyer and that she need not attend his arraignment. "Your son will advise you by mail," she was told by Lieutenant Leflores of the prison staff. However, she scurried to legislators, the NAACP and other organizations, and was able to find an attorney, Floyd Silliman of Salinas, who would help her son. Clutchette, anxious after days of questioning and solitary confinement, prepared a list of witnesses who could testify to his innocence. He attempted to give this list to his mother, breaking a prison rule which forbids giving written material to anyone but an attorney—at the time, he had no attorney. The list was discovered and taken away from him; the inmates whose names were written were transferred to other prisons. Mrs. Inez Williams, mother of Fleeta Drumgo, heard about the guard's death on the radio and phoned the prison to see whether her son was in any way involved. Prison officials assured her that the investigation was "routine" and that she had no need for worry. "The prison gets the parents' consent for having a tooth pulled, and informs the parents of other things," she said, but she was never told her son was accused of murder.

State officials dealing with this case have been passionate in their desire to keep records secret. The Adult Authority will not let George Jackson's lawyers know how they decided his status. Prison officials won't let the lawyers see all of Jackson's files or look at any of their records about the killing of the three blacks. The State of California, as both custodian and prosecutor of the three, holds control of the witnesses and the evidence. In the person of Judge Gordon Campbell, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Monterey County, it is also sitting in judgment.

A small old man with a shiny bald head, Campbell sits high in his chair overlooking the court, his face often blank and preoccupied. At pre-trial hearings in March, April and May, he seemed like a Monterey version of Judge Julius Hoffman. At one hearing, the first to be packed with supporters and friends of the three defendants, he told the spectators that they probably would not like a visit from the bailiff and that they should sit quietly and not act as if they were "at a barbecue table or the local pool hall."

Campbell sometimes did the District Attorney's work for him; sometimes he even consulted him. He denied nearly all the motions made by the defense. In one instance, when the defense had asked to have a copy of the Manual for Correctional Officers at the prison, Campbell said to the D.A., "I presume you object to that." The D.A. nodded. "Motion denied," said Campbell, and the defense could not have the manual.

As soon as better-known Bay Area attorneys entered the case in late February, the judge issued an order forbidding them or the prosecution from making any statements to the press about matters relevant to the case. The attorneys were barred from the prison, unable to see the site of the murder until it had been remodeled, unable to interview witnesses. The prosecution, which had had unlimited access to the prison from the very start, refused to divulge the names of witnesses or their whereabouts until forced to do so by a court order obtained many weeks later.

None of the accused has been convicted of violent crimes





Left: John Clutchette, George Jackson and Fleeta Drumgo at Monterey County Courthouse. Right: Fleeta Drumgo

or of crimes against persons. Yet they have been chained and shackled whenever they speak with visitors or attorneys; they are chained and shackled even in the courtroom itself. Chains encircle their waists and hang between their legs; cuffs bind their ankles, which are chained together, and their wrists, which are chained to the waist chains. Padlocks swing as they move. In court when friends greet them with raised fists, the three lift up their fists slightly above their waists—as far as their chains allow.

In February, when the earliest court appearances took place, families and friends of the prisoners were not present. The prisoners were driven to the courthouse from prison and were marched in chains across the sidewalk through the main entrance to the courthouse while passersby hooted at them. Since that time the case has received some

publicity and has attracted a concerned and sympathetic following. Now the three are driven in a station wagon which has had special screens constructed to fit over the windows so that neither people nor cameras can intrude; they are driven directly into the basement garage of the courthouse and hustled upstairs through corridors where the public cannot go. Thus the men, who spend their other hours in solitary confinement, cannot even glimpse the crowd of their well-wishers.

People are beginning to find out who the Soledad Brothers are, and they're learning a little about what California prisons are like. But bitter winds of repression are blowing once again inside Monterey County, and it is likely that the three men will be on Max Row for a long time to come.



*George Jackson is one of the Soledad Brothers.*

*The following excerpts are from writings he has done in prison which chronicle his political and intellectual development.*

DOWN HERE WE HEAR relaxed, matter-of-fact conversations centering around how best and in what order to "kill all the nation's niggers." It's not the fact that they consider killing me that upsets me; they've been "killing all the niggers" for nearly half a millenium now, but I am still alive, I might be the most resilient dead man in the universe. The upsetting thing is that in their plans they never take into consideration the fact that I am going to resist. Do they honestly believe that shit, is what I ask myself. They do. That's what they think of us, that they have beaten and conditioned all the defense and attack reflexes out of us. That the region of the mind that stores the principles upon which men base their rationale to resist, is missing in us. Don't they talk of concentration camps? Don't they state that it couldn't happen in the U.S. because the fascists here are "nice" fascists—not because it's impossible to incarcerate 30 million resisters, but because they are humane imperialists, enlightened fascists.

Well, they've made a terrible mistake. I recall the day I was born, the first day of my generation. It was during the second (and most destructive) capitalist World War for colonial privilege, early on a rainy Wednesday morning, late September, Chicago. It happened to me in a little fold-into-the-wall bed in a little half-flat on Racine and Lake; Dr. Rogers attended. The "L" train that rattled by within 15 feet of our front windows (the only two windows) screamed in at me like the Banshee, portentous of pain and death; threatening and imminent. The first motion that my eyes focused on was this pink hand swinging in a wide arc in the general direction of my Black ass. I stopped that hand, the left downward block, and countered the right needle finger to the eye—I was born with my defense-attack reflexes well developed.

It's going to be "Kill me if you can," fool, not "Kill me if you please."

But let them make their plans on the supposition, "like slave, like son." I'm not going for it though, and they've made my defense easier. A cop gives the keys to a group of right-wing cons; they're going to open our cells—one at a time—all over the building. They don't want to escape or deal with the men who hold them here, they can solve their problems only if they kill all of us—think about that—these guys live a few cells from me. None of them have ever lived, most are state-raised in institutions like this one, they have nothing coming, nothing at all, they have nothing at stake in this order of things. In defending right-wing ideals and the status quo they're saying in effect that 99 years and a dark day in prison is their idea of fun; most are in and out, and mostly in, all of their life. The periods that they pass on the outside are considered "runs"; simply stated, they consider the periods spent in the joint more natural, more in keeping with their tastes. Well, I understand their condition, and I know how they got that way, and I could honestly sympathize with them if they were not so wrong, so stupid, as to let the pigs use them—sounds like Germany of the '30s and '40s to me. It's the same on the outside there; the pigs who murdered Fred Hampton—I'll venture to say

that there's not one piece of stock, not one bond, owned by anyone in any of their families. They organize marches around the country, marches and demonstrations in support of total, immediate destruction of Vietnam, and afterward no one is able to pick up the tab.

The fascists, it seems, have a standard M.O. for dealing with the lower classes. Actually, oppressive power throughout history has used it; they turn a man against himself—think of all the innocent things that make us feel good, but that make some of us also feel guilty, think here of how the people of the lower classes weigh themselves against the men who rule. Consider the con, going through the courts on a capital offense, who supports capital punishment. I swear I heard something just like that today. Look how long Hershey ran the Selective Military Bureau. Blacks embrace capitalism, the most unnatural and outstanding example of man against himself that history can offer; after the Civil War, when the form of slavery changed from chattel to economic slavery, when we were thrown onto the labor market to compete, at a disadvantage, with poor whites, and *ever since that time*, our principal enemy must be isolated and identified as "Capitalism."

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MY FATHER IS IN HIS FORTIES today; 35 years ago he was living through his most formative years. He was a child of the "great" Depression. I want you to notice for later reference that I emphasize and differentiate "great" Depression. There were many more international, national and regional depressions during the period in history relevant to this comment. . . .

My father developed his character, conventions, convictions, his traits, his life style, out of a situation that began with his mother running out. She left him and his oldest brother on the corner of one of the canyons in East St. Louis; they raised themselves—in the streets, on a farm somewhere in Louisiana, in CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] camps. My father had no formal education at all (he taught himself the essentials later on). Alone, in the most hostile jungle on earth, ruled over by the King of Beasts, a rabid beast, long gone mad, and in the first throes of a bloody and protracted death. Alone, in the most savage moment in history, without arms, and burdened by a Black face that he's been hiding ever since.

I love this Brother, my father, and when I use the word "love" in these comments I am not making an attempt at rhetoric. I am attempting to express a refulgent, unrestrained emanation from the deepest, most durable region of my soul, an unshakable thing that I have never questioned. But no one can come through the ordeal of being, when he did, without suffering the penalty of psychosis; it was the price of survival. I would venture that there are no healthy Brothers of his generation, *none at all*.

He has reached the prime of life without ever showing in my presence (or anywhere, to my knowledge) an overt manifestation of *real* sensitivity, affection or sentiment.



He has lived his entire life in a state of shock. Nothing can touch him now; his calm is complete, his immunity to pain is total. When I can fix his eyes—which is not often, since when they aren't closed they are shaded—but when I can fix them, staring back at me is the expressionless mask of the Zombie.

But he must have loved us, of this I am certain. Part of the credo of the neo-slave, the latter-day slave, who is free to move from place to place if he can come by the means, is to shuffle away from any situation that becomes too difficult. But he stayed with us, worked 16 hours a day, after which he would eat, bathe and sleep—period. He has never owned more than two pair of shoes in his life and in the time I was living with him never more than one suit, never took a drink, never went to a nightclub, expressed no feelings about such things, and never once reminded any of us, or so it seemed, never expected any notice of the fact that he was giving us all of the life force that the monster-machine had left to him. The part the machine seized, that death of the spirit visited upon him by a world he never influenced, was mourned by us, and most certainly by me, but no one ever made a real effort to give him solace; how do you console a man who is unapproachable?

**H**E CAME TO VISIT ME when I was in San Quentin. He was in his forties then, too, an age in men when they have grown full. I had decided to reach for my father, to force him with my revolutionary dialectic to question some of the mental barricades he'd thrown up to protect his body from what was for him an undefinable and omnipresent enemy. An enemy that would starve his body, expose it to the elements, chain his body, jail it, club it, rip it, hang it, electrify it and poison gas it. I would have him understand that although he had saved his body he had done so at a terrible cost to his mind. I felt that if I could superimpose the explosive doctrine of self-determination through people's government and revolutionary culture upon what remained of his mind, draw him out into the real world, isolate and identify his real enemies, if I could hurl him through Fanon's revolutionary catharsis, I would be serving him, the people, the historical obligation.

San Q was in the riot season. It was early January 1967. The pigs had for the last three months been on a search-and-destroy foray into our cells. All times of the day or night our cells were being invaded by the goon squad: you wake up, take your licks, get skin-searched and wait on the tier, naked, while they mangle your few personal effects. This treatment, fear therapy, was not accorded to all, however—to some Chicanos in for dope, to some whites in for extortionate activities; but mostly, it came down on us. For general principles. Rehabilitational terror. Each new pig must go through a period of in-service training where he learns the Gestapo arts, the full range of anti-body tactics that he will be expected to use on the job. Part of this in-service training is a crash course in close-order combat, where the pigs are taught how to use club and sap, how to form and use the simpler karate hands, where to hit a man for the best (or worst, depending) effect.

The new pigs usually have to serve a period on the goon squad before they fall into their regular role on the animal

farm. They are always anxious to try their new skills—"to see if it really works"; we were always forced to do something to slow them down, to demonstrate that violence was a two-edged sword. The Brothers wanted to protest. The usual protest was to strike, a work stoppage, closing the sweatshops, where industrial products are worked up for \$.02 an hour. (Some people get \$.04 after they've been on the job for six months.) The outside interests who made the profits didn't dig strikes; that meant the captain didn't like them either, since it meant pressure on him from these free-enterprising politically connected...

On the occasion I wish to relate, my father had driven all night from LA alone; he had not slept more than a couple of hours in the last 48.

**W**E SHOOK HANDS and the dialectic began, him listening, me scorning the diabolical dog, capitalism. Didn't it raise pigs and murder Vietnamese? Didn't it glut some and starve most of us? Didn't it build housing projects that resemble prisons, and luxury hotels and apartments that resemble the Hanging Gardens, on the same street? Didn't it build a hospital and then a bomb? Didn't it erect a school and then open a whorehouse? Build an airplane to sell a tranquilizer tablet? For every church, didn't it construct a prison? For each new medical discovery, didn't it produce as a by-product ten new biological warfare agents? Didn't it aggrandize men like Hunt and Hughes, and dwarf you?

He said, "Yes, but what can we do? There's too many of the bastards." His eyes shaded over and his mind went into a total regression, a relapse back through time, space, pain, neglect, a thousand "dreams deferred," broken promises, forgotten ambitions; back through the hundreds of "renewed hopes shattered," to a time when he was young, roaming the Louisiana countryside for something to eat. He talked for ten minutes of things that were not in the present, people that I didn't know—"We'll have to take (something) back to Aunt Bell"—places that we had never seen together; he called me by his brother's name twice. I was so shocked I could only sit and blink; this was the guy who took nothing seriously, the level-headed, practical "Negro," work-a-day, never complain, cool, smooth, colored gentleman. They have driven him to the abyss of madness; just behind the white veneer waits the awesome, vindictive, Black madness. There are a lot of Blacks living in his generation, the one of the Great Depression, when it was no longer possible to maintain the Black self by serving. Even that had dried up; Blacks were beaten and killed for jobs like porter, bell-boy, stoker, pearl diver and bootblack. My clenched fist goes up for them; I forgive them, I understand. And if they will stop their collaboration with the fascist enemy, stop it now, and support our revolution, with just a nod, we'll forget and forgive you for casting us naked into a grim and deleterious world.

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*Contributions to the Soledad Brothers Defense Fund may be sent to P.O. Box 31306, San Francisco, Ca. 94131.*

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