

SAN QUENTIN SIX

Courts Take Over Where George Jackson's Murderers Left Off

During the bloody episode at San Quentin on August 21 when George Jackson was murdered by the authorities, 3 guards and 2 white trusty prisoners also died. The brutality of the guards during the following week reeked of revenge for the deaths of "their own". They stripped and beat the prisoners in the Adjustment Center, they burned them with cigarettes, cut out bunches of their hair including genital hair and eyebrows and threatened that they would "never get out alive". Meanwhile the prison authorities isolated out 6 of the more politically vocal black prisoners, including Fleeta Drumgo, and worked up charges against them with the District Attorney that were so complex that each defendant had 6 or more capital charges against him. Four members of the Grand Jury that approved the charges walked out in protest against the vengeful and devious form they took.

Since then the brothers have been trying to find attorneys who will defend them on a political level to combat the racism and bias of the courts. Their defence committee in the Bay Area has

been trying to raise money for this purpose but the situation is grim. Political repression in the California courts has been especially high in the past two years with the trials of the Soledad Brothers, the Soledad 7, Los Siete, the Price brothers, Huey Newton, David Hilliard and others. Most radical lawyers have run themselves into debt and some, like John Clutchette's lawyer Floyd Silliman, have been penalised by the legal profession for defending black political clients. Floyd was thrown out of his law partnership just after George Jackson was killed. Charles Garry is willing to take on Johnny Spain, the brother who supposedly ran into the prison yard with George, but his law firm won't let him take on any more free cases.

Meanwhile the brothers are trying to prepare their own cases. They are determined to fight the charges because even though they personally have little prospect of freedom, or a fair trial, they are determined not to lie down in the face of racism and brutality - whatever the odds against them might be. They were in San Quentin AC when George was

killed and the only way they can publicise what really happened is appearing on public trial and refusing public defenders as mouth pieces.

Inevitably the judge at their pre-trial hearings has refused to appoint the attorneys of the brothers' choice and, somewhat perversely, will not even allow the court appointed attorneys who want to quit the case to do so.

The state has made it quite clear that it considers this an important prosecution. A press release dated April 6th announced that \$200,000 has been budgeted for the brothers' prosecution. Three of the brothers have been "temporarily" removed to other prisons - Folsom, Vacaville and Soledad, obviously a tactic to divide the defendants and attempt to play one against the other.

But it will take much more than these ploys by the state to break their solidarity and determination to win.

Their defence movement is being mobilised by Friends of the San Quentin Adjustment Center (PO Box 5160, San Francisco 94101) and funds are being raised by Friends of Soledad.



LUIS TALAMANTES

DAVID JOHNSON



FLEETA DRUMGO

WILLIE TATE



HUGO PINELL

JOHN LARRY SPAIN

"The moral and spiritual support of the people gives me the strength to carry on the struggle, even though I am confined to a concrete module I still resist. I have taken a position which I will not compromise, Revolution is the only way to liberate my homeland, the storm has broken.

"Comrade, every act which appears as a defeat is but a motivational spark for us, we have found something greater than the fear of death to drive us on. Our victory is inevitable. Fascism will be under a continuous assault until it is reduced to nothing more than a passage in the history books. Our dilemma epitomizes what all the oppressed will face if we allow Fascism to go unchecked."

David Johnson to a Sister in London

SAN QUENTIN 6 FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Luis Talamantes A 28 year old Latino from Los Angeles, Talamantes was convicted in 1965 on robbery charges and sentenced to two 5-to-life sentences (under California's notorious Indeterminate Sentence law). Talamantes was sent to San Quentin's Adjustment Center seventeen months ago as a result of a fight between four Latino prisoners. Well known to Quentin authorities as a leader in the struggle to end racial tensions between black and brown prisoners, he was the only one of the four charged - and he was charged with assaulting an inmate, conviction on which carries a mandatory death sentence. Like each of his five brothers now under indictment, Talamantes says that his experiences in prison have educated him about the causes of racism and oppression which afflict American society.

David Johnson A 23 year old black man from San Diego, Johnson has been very active in protesting the inhuman conditions under which San Quentin Adjustment Center prisoners must live. Johnson was the first prisoner to file a complaint against San Quentin authorities in the death of Fred Billingslea, a black prisoner tear-gassed and beaten to death in May 1970. This original complaint and the supporting affidavits signed by many prisoner witnesses marked the beginning of organized protests against brutality of San Quentin guards. As a legal tactic, the filing forced the courts to take judicial notice of the "disciplinary" methods used in San Quentin - facts embarrassing to Quentin officials and hard to hide once exposed in the courtroom. Understanding the importance of this legal precedent, Quentin authorities have singled out most of the Billingslea affidavit signers for special prosecution. David Johnson is but one example.

Willie Tate This black prisoners was one of the first to sign the Billingslea affidavit. He has played a leading role in many internal San Quentin protests about conditions in maximum security wings in the Adjustment Center. Tate was put in the AC in April 1969 for allegedly stabbing another inmate. Although others were supposedly involved in the incident, only he was persecuted although he was not actually charged with an offence and consequently was never tried to determine innocence or guilt. Willie Tate is known inside as a "very outspoken brother".

Fleeta Drumgo Fleeta is one of the two Soledad Brothers who survived the August 21 incident in which George Jackson was murdered. He was sentenced to 1-to-15 years in 1965 for alleged possession of stolen property. He worked very hard at Soledad to end the racial tension between inmates and was well known to the authorities as a political activist; he was consequently charged with murdering a guard in January 1970. He and John Clutchette were found innocent of all charges on March 27th this year. This new series of indictments simply proves the determination of the authorities to 'get' him.

Hugo Pinell A 27 year old Latino born in Nicaragua, Pinell was sent to Soledad in 1965 on an alleged rape charge. He has been switched back and forth between the Adjustment Center at Folsom, San Quentin and Soledad prisons during the past years for his activity in leading protests, work stoppages and strikes around conditions inside the prisons. Pinell concentrated his efforts at Soledad in particular on the problem of reducing the racial tensions between the prisoners. Officials have charged him with assaulting guards (under section 4500 of the Penal Code) on more than one occasion in order to silence this brother. As lawyers, doctors and inmates testified in the days following the August 21 incident, he was subjected to extraordinarily savage beatings after George Jackson's murder.

John Larry Spain Brother Spain was sent up to Soledad in 1965 at age 17 on an alleged murder conviction. He worked with Hugo Pinell and others - very successfully - to end the divisive racial strife encouraged by the Soledad administrators. Because of his work he spent a lot of time in and out of the hole (solitary confinement in strip cells) at Soledad. He was put in the Adjustment Center at San Quentin in November 1970 for possession of "inflammatory literature". The piece of contraband for which he has been confined in the AC for nearly one year was his diary, in which he described his life at Soledad and San Quentin.



**GEORGE
JACKSON
WAS
ASSASSINATED
august 21 1971**

**STOP
HIS
MURDERERS**