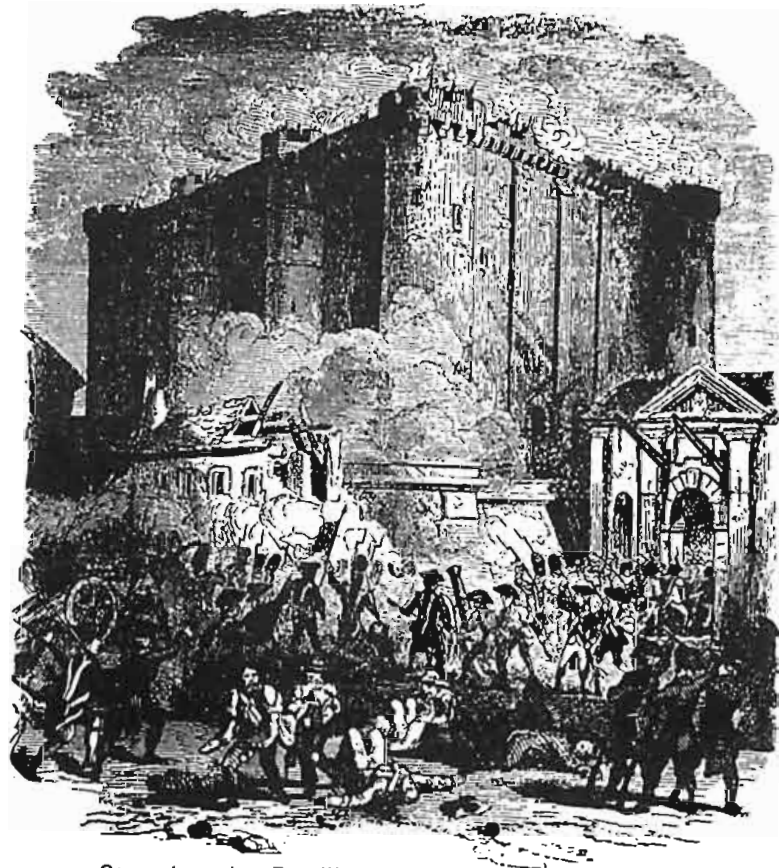


San Quentin was closed to all visitors for five days after Jackson's death. Since its "re-opening" severe restrictions have been placed on attorney-client communications. Lawyers have been forced to wait up to five hours for visits which have been officially cut to 30 minutes. Visits with Adjustment Center inmates take place in the two condemned row rooms. Prisoners are often so tightly chained that they are in terrible pain throughout the interview. They can't sign papers and can't write notes to avoid the guards who sit only a few feet away listening to the conversation.

On October 1, a Marin County grand jury handed down indictments against six Black and Brown inmates—Fleeta Drumgo, David Johnson,

Hugo Pinell, Johnny Larry Spain, Luis Talamantez, Willie Tate and attorney Steve Bingham. It charges them with five counts of murder, one count of conspiracy to escape, one count of conspiracy to possess firearms and one count of conspiracy to kidnap. Additionally, the inmates are charged with assault and attempted murder of prison guards. The weapon named in the indictment is a 9mm automatic pistol.

Three members of the grand jury walked out of the grand jury sessions, and one of them has since resigned. Another had this to say of the indictment: "What this grand jury does isn't justice but vengeance. This grand jury reflects society, which it represents, which is suffering from racism paranoia and economic bias."



Storming the Bastille

In April of 1970 George Jackson wrote:

any fool who falls in here and can sign his name might shoot me tomorrow from a position 30 feet above my head with an automatic rifle! He could be dead drunk. It could really be an accident (a million to one it won't be, however) but he'll be protected still. He won't even miss a day's wages.

Soledad Brother



GEORGE JACKSON

And, of George Jackson—the following message from the Seventh of August Movement—from his cellmates, comrades, students and followers. The brother who sent the message knew George Jackson for ten years, inside the prisons.

THIS MESSAGE IS FROM THE SEVENTH OF AUGUST MOVEMENT. IT HAS NO NAMES ON IT, BECAUSE THEY ARE ALL STILL PRISONERS IN CALIFORNIA'S MAXIMUM SECURITY INSTITUTIONS. THEY ARE THE CELLMATES, THE COMRADES, THE STUDENTS AND THE FOLLOWERS OF GEORGE LESTER JACKSON, THE BROTHER WHO SENT THE MESSAGE KNEW COMRADE GEORGE FOR TEN YEARS, INSIDE THE PRISONS.

There are many of us assembled here today who knew our comrade, George Lester Jackson, directly or indirectly. But only those who really knew him can begin to imagine the egregious loss that fascist Amerika has once again bestowed upon us.

Speaking for myself and countless others whom society terms "convicts", he was many things. First and above all, he was a man. Not in the abstract sense of a man, but in the concrete sense; George was a leader, not in the abstract sense but in the concrete; George was a love, not in the context that we understand it, but in the remote ways that we wish it would be; George was and always will be with us, the members of the 7th of August Movement, the epitome of manhood.

George gave us our manhood, showed us our creed through his everyday actions and teachings. For many years George was forced, out of historical necessity, to carry the load of those comrades much weaker than he. He was a man who could not stand to see wrong perpetrated by the unjust upon helpless and defenseless people. This is one of the reasons why he was singled out to be murdered by California's Department of Corrections.

In the year 1961, when racism in the California penal institutions was at its zenith, countless blacks were dying at the hands of the neo-Nazis. It was George who taught us how to defend ourselves. It was George who founded the so-called "Capone Gang", which later came to be called the 7th of August Movement in honor of Jonathan Peter Jackson's seige of the Marin Civic Center.

George taught us that freedom came out of the barrel of a gun (but in our particular case, from the point of a knife) and since we were a minority, mostly uneducated, we had no politics, and very few of us could read or write. But George Jackson was a natural-born teacher. He taught us to read, he taught us to write, and our basic arithmetic; he taught us to form collectives within the prisons. George's mother, who was always at his side, used to send him money each and every month. There were many of us who had no families, consequently we had no funds. But through the collective it was possible for everyone to have something.

George taught us that we were black, and that all that really meant was our culture was different from the Europeans', and that we came from Africa and were descendants of kings.

He taught us that if we were to walk with our heads unlifted, in reality it would be one and the same as denying our heritage.

George explained that we were a minority. He taught us the mechanics of slavery, capitalism and imperialism on a level where we all could understand it. In this way it was possible for him to revolutionize the consciousness of countless blacks.

George taught that all people could live together. He constructed programs, starting in around 1966, which were composed of blacks, browns and whites. He attempted to use the marxist world outlook of historical and dialectical materialism to transcend racism. He pointed out to us the commonality of our circumstances and that the same pig that had a boot up a black's ass, just so happened to be the same identical fascist that had the same boot up this white guy's ass. This basic truism, along with hours and years of teaching, is the cause and the birth of the present prison movement.

George grew through the years. When we were cell-partners he would read as much as 16 hours a day. And he had a way with words and books, where he could take the most complex matters and break them down to the simplest form. George, unlike most university intellectuals, was outgoing and longed — sometimes demanded — to share a new-found truth. This is why he's a leader.

The Prison authorities started to witness something new among the prisoners: the kind of man who, despite a seventh-grade point average on his achievement tests when he entered prison, could use words and etymologies in a context to defend himself in disciplinary hearings; the kind of man who would finally object to working in the cotton mills, furniture factories and shoe shops for the meager sum of 3c an hour. George taught us how to organize strikes, he set out the guidelines for lists of demands, explaining to the prisoners that we were part of the working class and consequently we were entitled to at least a minimum wage.

Naturally the idea of prisoners running around talking about minimum wages, striking and disrupting Pat Brown's and then Ronald Reagan's slave wage system, just could not be tolerated. And it was at this point that George Lester Jackson was singled out to be murdered.

This is the creed of the 7th of August Movement:

Ulysses' Vow

If ever I should break my stride,
Or falter at my comrade's side,
This oath will kill me!
If ever my word should prove untrue,
Should I betray the many or you few,
This oath will kill me!
Should I be slow to make a stand,
Or show fear before the hangman,
This oath will kill me!
Should I misuse the people's trust,
Should I submit ever to greed or lust,
This oath will kill me!
Should I grow lax in discipline,
In times of strife, refuse my hand
This oath will surely kill me!

When Fidel Castro, who was later to lead the Cuban people to freedom, was captured by the Batista forces and brought to trial, he uttered a statement that went down in history, known as "History Will Absolve Me." In that speech to the fascist court, he spoke of the revolutionaries in the prisons; and we adopt his words as our own:

"We were never permitted to talk or remain in the same prisons; yet we were in full accord as to how to act. When men carry the same ideals in their hearts, nothing can keep them isolated, neither the walls of prisons nor the sod of cemeteries, for a single memory, a single spirit, a single idea, a single consciousness, a single dignity, will sustain them all."

From the 7th of August Movement