National United Committee to Free
(Angela Davis and) All Political Prisoners

2085 Sutter
Suite 209
San Francisco 94115
(415) 922-5800
Luncheon in San Jose in Support of Angela Davis

The "luncheon" was held in a Black middle class home in a white middle class neighborhood. The women present reflected many class backgrounds. There were working class, middle class, welfare mothers, and students who participated in the luncheon.

The early part of the luncheon involved small group discussions around Angela's case, and organizational affiliations. It was during this time, that everyone spent discussing many present day political problems.

Once everyone had eaten, a panel discussion led by Fania Jordan took place. Fania spoke about the incarceration of her sister, pointing to the reality that it could have been anyone of us in Angela's place. Margaret Burnam, one of Angela's lawyers, gave a detailed up to date report of the case. Then the discussion was focused on a sister who questioned why hadn't there been any Black Women's Org. who took a position on Angela's case? A consensus was arrived at to begin to write such a paper to be signed by Black Women's Organizations in the San Jose and Bay Areas.

During the discussion an ideological struggle began to develop regarding one's priorities. (family versus the struggle). The question wasn't resolved because Fania then focused on the purpose of the luncheon. At this point, Fania raised the question concerning sponsors for the May 20 Rally AGAINST WAR, RACISM AND REPRESSION. She pointed to the importance of Third World People supporting the rally. Fania also stressed that this will be the last rally in San Jose before Angela's trial ends. There seems to be speculation that the trial will be over the first weeks of June.

There was positive feelings throughout the room that something was accomplished. The TWWA distributed the Jan. issue of the paper and made contacts with womens organizations in Palo Alto.
Rhetoric Vs. Reality

Angela Davis tells why black people should not be deceived by words

BY ANGELA DAVIS

OFTEN we tend to ignore the immense power of language over our ability to perceive what is happening around us. We should all be aware that there exists an official language whose sole function is to deceive—to distort rather than reflect reality. People are trained to relate to the words of that language, rather than the realities hidden behind them. Daily we are bombarded through the media with terms like “Vietnam,” “criminals” and “violence,” all designed to call forth automatic, unthinking responses.

Though increasing numbers of people are awakening to the truth, the word “Vietnam” is supposed to stimulate huge surges of patriotic sentiment—not visions of mass murders commissioned by the U. S. government. “Criminals” are not policemen who practice their racist-inspired sadism on Black people nor generals directing genocidal operations in Indochina. They are rather presented as anonymous ghetto inhabitants who, if [Pres. Richard M.] Nixon had his way, would all be buried away in dungeons. And “violence” is a few windows broken, a few rocks thrown during people’s demonstrations, or else the secret plans of small, fanatic sects. But what of the $80 billion industry of military violence and the ruthless police violence raging in Black communities? What of the unequivocal violence of a Black child’s life eroded, destroyed by starvation?

Indeed, until recently, the mere mention of “Vietnam” would generate such automatic responses that it was believed they could discredit me in the eyes of the public. For what other reason would I have been counted among the “Ten Most Wanted” criminals of this country on the basis of papers which could not even properly allege that I had committed a crime? For what conceivable reason could California authorities resort to a massive military escort when I was extradited from New York to Marin County? At the New Jersey Air Force Base, why were the guards surrounding the National Guard Plane pointing their weapons directly at me as I approached?

Large numbers of Black people have expressed surprise that I, a Black woman, should have chosen to become a Communist. When Muhammad Speaks staff members asked men and women in Harlem to submit questions they would like to see me answer, the most frequent question involved my commitment to communism.

I am a Communist because I am convinced that the centuries-old sufferings of Black people cannot be alleviated under the present social arrangement. Capitalism is based on the ownership of the gigantic economic apparatus, on which the life of the nation depends, by a small minority of privileged men. The wealth of the nation is concentrated in the hands of fewer than 500 corporations, among them General Motors, Ford, General Electric, U. S. Steel, the Standard Oil Companies, Bank of America, Chase-Manhattan Bank. But where lies the origin of their stupendous fortunes? Their wealth has been created by millions of work-
While teaching philosophy at U.C.L.A., Prof. Davis became a supporter of the Soledad Brothers. Picketing with her (above) is Jonathan Jackson. Below, she is arrested, by FBI agents in connection with shootout.

awakening to the truth, the word *vietnam* is supposed to stimulate huge surges of patriotic sentiment—not visions of mass murders commissioned by the U. S. government. "Criminals" are not policemen who practice their racist-inspired sadism on Black people nor generals directing genocidal operations in Indochina. They are rather presented as anonymous ghetto inhabitants who, if [Pres. Richard M.] Nixon had his way, would all be buried away in dungeons. And "violence" is a few windows broken, a few rocks thrown during people's demonstrations, or else the secret plans of small, fanatic sects. But what of the $80 billion industry of military violence and the ruthless police violence raging in Black communities? What of the unequivocal violence of a Black child's life eroded, destroyed by starvation?

Indeed, until recently, the mere mention of the word "black" carried connotations of savagery and evil. (To a considerable extent this holds true among whites even today.)

The list of such terms is virtually limitless, but I would like to dwell for the moment on one of the more glaring examples—the word "communism." This concept has been distorted by an assortment of myths, perversions and sheer untruths. Communism is officially portrayed as the total loss of freedom, individuality, initiative and creativity. Communists are therefore depicted as the epitome of the enemy—the enemy of America's most precious principles and ideals, the archfiend of democracy.

To believe the propaganda, Black Communists are even more dangerous. As Black people, even setting aside their commitment to communism, they already pose a threat to the status quo. Historically, all except the most establishment-affirming struggles of Black people have been characterized as somehow injurious to the nation's well-being. Hence, to be both Black and a Communist is an unholy and intolerable combination. I can discover no other explanation for the officially sanctioned propaganda drive to thoroughly

press the Issue that a Black woman who has chosen to become a Communist. When *Muhammad Speaks* staff members asked men and women in Harlem to submit questions they would like to see me answer, the most frequent question involved my commitment to communism.

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The economic system, and thus the society, functions in accordance with the irrational drive for profit. The masses of people, through their work, are mere tools for the realization of profits which are swallowed up by that circle of corporations. This is what exploitation is all about: When people work, they take home in wages far less than the value of what they have actually produced.

For Black people, this exploitation has always been more intense, more devastating, more deadly. We have always been compelled to take the most ignoble and lowest-paying jobs. And the capitalists have fostered racism among the masses of white people in order better to exploit us. Their exploitation of white workers is also thereby facilitated, for white workers, in their racist posture, ignore their real enemies.

America has grown affluent with the decisive contribution of our blood and our toil. But the fruits of our labor have seldom reverted back to us. In return for our work, we
Angela Davis  
Continued

have received destitution and terror and have been consistently prevented from seizing control over the circumstances of our lives.

Under capitalism, Black people have been, and are, predestined to be manipulated, broken and dehumanized, or, if we decline to accept our status as scapegoats, neutralized, nullified or destroyed. These are the alternatives the system has in store for us. In the words of our great Black scholar, poet and leader, W.E.B. DuBois, "capitalism cannot reform itself; it is doomed to self-destruction. No universal selfishness can bring social good to all. Communism—the effort to give all men what they need—and to ask of them the best they can contribute—this is the only way of human life." [Quoted from Emma Gelders Stern, *His Was The Voice, The Life of W.E.B. DuBois*, Crowell-Collier Press, N.Y., 1971, p. 211]. These phrases are taken from DuBois' letter of application in 1961 to join the Communist Party.

Capitalism cannot reform itself. Black people more than any should understand the truth of this statement. Not too many months have passed since a Black man named James Johnson—indeed it could have been any Black man or woman—was fired from his job in one of Detroit's auto plants. His subsequent reinstatement, achieved by union pressure, was soon eclipsed by the order to transfer him with a severe pay cut to an area of the plant where he would be forced to strenuously labor in an intolerable 120° heat. He continued to protest, but was even more ferociously pursued and plagued by white foremen and white management. First they attempted, like the slave-breaker, the slave-driver, the slave-master, to manipulate, break and dehumanize him.

But Bro. Johnson continued to protest and eventually they fired him again. This time he was escorted out of the plant under armed guard; they were trying to destroy him. The same day, Bro. Johnson returned, arms in hand. Soon afterwards, two foremen and a job-setter lay dead. The brother was recently acquitted by reason of insanity—an insanity inherently bound up with conditions in the plant.

Surely there is enough wealth in this country for every man, woman and child to be entirely free from material need. Enormous technological advances have rendered irrational the drudgery Bro. Johnson, like countless other Blacks, was forced to perform. Unemployment is unnecessary if only because the 48-hour week is not indispensable. In any truly human society, the first item on the agenda should be to insure that all the people's most pressing needs are met—not to insure that profits for the few persist.

Black people can never be truly free—economically, socially, politically—until the entire fabric of this society is first dissolved, then transformed and restructured in harmony with our needs, our interests, our dreams. We should have learned from the vicissitudes of our experience that as long as the capitalist arrangement prevails with its
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When it appeared that Black people might not only be instinctively aware of the futility of capitalism, but might also be ready and willing to move against it, a myth was forged—the myth of Black Capitalism. All the talk about Black Capitalism remains unmistakably a ploy to divert Black people’s attention from the human benefits and advantages we might hope to gain from socialism and ultimately from communism. Besides, any truly collective endeavor had to be smashed.

The apologists for Black Capitalism are determined to render Black people oblivious to the reality that the most significant portion of this country’s wealth rests with a small group of corporations and that, absent a revolution, there it will remain. Even the most assiduous and most fortunate Black capitalists can never make substantial inroads into the top ranks of the ruling class. That Rev. Leon Sullivan was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of General Motors does not contradict this. He wields no decisive power; his appointment was clearly a further measure of pacification.

As a Communist, I feel that it is incumbent upon us to reject Black Capitalism, but not because it is an impossible fiction to be embraced were it at all feasible. Capitalism, no matter what color, runs counter to the interests of humanity and rationality. It is an irrational system of exploitation. It bestows upon an elite the privileges of organized, systematized robbery of the products of people’s daily travail. Unem-
structures are many: the military, the police, the court system, the penal system.

We want to build a world free of racism and legally-sanctioned robbery and murder. A world without war. A world where women are no longer repressed. A world where health does not cost money, where education is open to all, where all, young and old, can freely and fully develop all their individual talents and capacities. A world where the people have truly seized control over the affairs of their lives.

As a Communist, it was these principles and ideals of changing and rebuilding which were far more important to me than the prospect of returning home in 1 after studying at the Sorbonne in Paris, Miss Davis (left) joins her sister, Mrs. Fania Davis Jordan, and brothers, Reginald (L.) and Benjamin, for photograph during family reunion. Above, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. Frank Davis, enjoy meal in their Birmingham home with the Rev. Jesse Jackson of Chicago. He went to city for a Free Angela rally.

had to be conducted around political repression in the prisons, I could have been correctly accused of the utmost hypocrisy.

During this period, I was bombarded with advice to stick to the single issue of academic freedom: restricting my utterances to a defense of the right of any qualified individual to teach, unhampered by tests of a political nature, I would surely win ample support to counter Reagan’s [California Gov. Ronald] plans to fire me. Even reactionary academicians would be compelled to concede, however reluctantly, the formal principle of academic freedom.

Notwithstanding these words from the wise, I elected to assume, or at least to approximate, the posture which I felt most closely befitted a revolutionary. And while it is true that some professors and students withdrew their support, many were now struck by the similarity between my case and the vicious predicament in which the Soledad Brothers were enmeshed. Needless to say, Black people in general instinctively grasped the affinity and generally were prepared to fight on both fronts.

All three of the Soledad Brothers had been convicted of property crimes: Fleeta Drumgo and John Clutchette of second-degree burglary, incurring sentences of six months to 15 years; George Jackson of second-degree robbery, sentenced to an incredible one year-to-life. Brother Drumgo has already done three and one-half years, Brother Clutchette almost five years. Brother Jackson, arrested at the age of 18, has spent 11 years in numerous maximum security prisons in California. As has happened with so many Black prisoners, they were initiated into the Black liberation struggle and achieved political maturity during the course of their lives in prison. Soledad Brother, George Jackson’s stunning book of letters from captivity—contraband for California prisoners, is an eloquent testimony of the flowering of a revolutionary in opposition to, and despite, the infinite restraints and the savage brutality meted out to men and women in prison.

In the wake of an unprovoked assassination of three militant Blacks in January 1970, a guard at Soledad Prison was killed. Bros. Jackson, Drumgo and Clutchette were selected to do penance. They are presently awaiting trial for murder, when their real offense has been their remarkable contributions to the creation of anti-establishment consciousness in California prisons—among Blacks, but also among Chicanos and whites.

In speaking and organizing around the defense of the Soledad Brothers, I became more thoroughly acquainted with the complex, oppressive fabric of prison life as well as the contemporary political function of the penal system.

Most whites take the existence of prisons for granted—the vast majority of them never anticipate ever being locked up. Until recently even Blacks, most of whom can expect at some time to encounter the reality of imprisonment directly or through a member of the family, have tended to accept prisons, however demeaning and however contradictory, as unavoidable. We had to wait for our brothers and sisters.
Returning home in 1944 after studying at the Sorbonne in Paris, Miss Davis (left) joins her sister, Mrs. Fania Davis Jordan, and brothers, Reginald (I.) and Benjamin, for photograph during family reunion. Above, her parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. Frank Davis, enjoy meal in their Birmingham home with the Rev. Jesse Jackson of Chicago. He went to city for a Free Angela rally.

losing a job at UCLA last year. In face of the swelling repression of my brothers and sisters who were defending these ideals, I could not assume a stance of silence. Ericka Huggins and Bobby Seale would have to stand trial for their lives because they had been unyielding in their efforts to forge liberating actions for Black people. And there were innumerable other instances of frame-ups and similar political reprisals.

While fighting for the right of a Communist—a Black woman Communist—to teach at UCLA, I encountered a case with striking parallels to my own, only infinitely more sinister, far more deadly. The events in that case had also unfolded in one of the key institutions which form the groundwork of the society. I was battling on the relatively safe terrain of the universities—industries designed to generate proficient architects and advocates of the status quo. Black men, however, were battling on the exceedingly perilous terrain of the prisons—coercive structures designed primarily to punish and erode individuals who have been victims of the selfsame status quo upheld by the universities.

My job was in jeopardy because I had attempted in my small way and as a member of the Communist Party to defend the rights, interests and visions of my people. But in Soledad Prison, there were three Black men, one an avowed Marxist-Leninist, all three vehement exponents of Black liberation, whose very lives were in jeopardy as a consequence of their principled political stand. Had I continued to wage my own struggle without exposing the threads which tied it to the fight which

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Not only were crowds of Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans being snatched away from their organizing activities in ghettos and barrios and sequestered in jails and prisons. Vast numbers of Third World prisoners—from the beginning scapegoats, easy prey for racist police, victims of national oppression—were abruptly awakening to the realities of oppression and consequently were rapidly embracing the ideal of revolutionary change. This is Bro. George Jackson’s assessment: “There are still some Blacks who consider themselves criminals—but not many . . . With the time and incentive that these brothers have to read, study and think, you will find no class or category more aware, more embittered, desperate or dedicated to the ultimate remedy—revolution.”[George Jackson, Soledad Brother, Bantam Books, N. Y., 1970, p. 31.]

Ruchell Magee, my co-defendant, is an outstanding example of the brothers to whom George Jackson refers. Accused of the rape of a white woman at the age of 16 (as Emmett Till was lynched because his eyes happened to fall upon a white woman), he remained imprisoned in Louisiana for eight years. Free for seven months, he was arrested again in Los Angeles, this time following an incident involving a $10 purchase of marijuana. In the wake of an argument with the seller, the latter called the police, accusing Bro. Magee of robbery and kidnapping. Life imprisonment was the penalty he received.

Again in prison, he taught himself to read with the aid of a legal dictionary and the Constitution. Eventually he became a renowned
Marin County Jail, located in northern California near San Francisco, is institution in which Miss Davis has been confined since Dec. 22, 1970, when she was extradited from New York City, where she was arrested with David Pindoecker. The State of California has charged that weapons owned by Miss Davis were used in a shootout resulting in the deaths of Jonathan Jackson, two prisoners and a judge in courtyard of building above a year ago. She is awaiting trial on charges of kidnap, murder and conspiracy.

Angela Davis Continued

prison lawyer, fighting his own case as well as assisting others with their legal problems by preparing writs and giving much-needed legal advice. Without any professional aid, he managed to have his own conviction overturned. But when he insisted on defending himself in a second trial (as he is doing in the present case), they forced a court-appointed attorney upon him, brutalized him in court when he protested, and at last convicted him again. This time he was sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole.

But Bro. Magee now understood the forces operating against him. He understood the realities of racism. He knew that his own experiences with the courts and prisons were not an accident, not a freakish aberration—they were the norm. The practical extension of this recognition was to stand up for the rights of his fellow captives, which he did with remarkable consistency and forcefulness. When San Quentin guards tear gassed Fred Billingslea to death in his cell, Bro. Magee was in the forefront of the movement to vindicate him.

Shortly after I was arrested last October, Bro. Magee immediately filed papers with the New York court revealing the illegality of the charges against me. As he has publicly stated, officials have approached him on a number of occasions offering him a deal in return for perjured testimony against me. He has been resolute and principled in his refusals.

Ruchell Magee is a radiant example of the new man who is emerging in prisons throughout the nation. His bid for freedom on August 7, 1970—together with James McClain, William Christmas and Jonathan Jackson who assisted them—must be respected. We respect Nat Turner’s liberation efforts, Denmark Vesey’s and Gabriel Prosser’s. We respect the innumerable armed efforts of abolitionists—both Black and white—to rescue fugitive slaves about to be returned to captivity. We must respect Ruchell Magee’s endeavor to free himself, as also the to-life. The one-to-life sentence George Jackson received after being convicted at the age of 18 for a robbery involving $70 has already been mentioned. Before he was charged with the murder of a prison guard last year, he had already served ten years. Certainly those ten years cannot be construed as normal punishment—middle-class white executives who embezzle thousands of dollars rarely serve more than a few months, a few years at the most, that is, if they go to prison at all. It would be likewise absurd to interpret that decade wrested from his life as “deterrence of other criminal behavior” or “public protection” for that matter. Finally, ten years of one’s life—the prime of life—is utterly inconsistent with the notion of rehabilitation. All these things, after all, are supposed to comprise the prison’s institutional goals—punishment, deterrence, public protection and rehabilitation.

The one thing which is lacking in the officially acknowledged aims of the penal system is political repression. That decade out of George Jackson’s life spent in captivity was a retaliatory measure exercised by prison officials and the California Parole Board. They found his revolutionary political views to be objectionable and repulsive. True, they are part of the establishment he is committed to overturn and transform. So finally they contrived the path toward his total extinction. Convicted of the present charge, or even of assault, the gas chamber will be mandatory. (Under California Penal Code 4500, an inmate convicted of assault on a non-inmate is automatically sent to death.)

Political repression in the prisons—the spectrum of its concrete manifestations is infinite. Politically active prisoners are often isolated from the main population. (In my four and one-half months in Marin County Jail, I have been effectively kept in solitary confinement. Only three or four times have I spoken to other prisoners and these occasions were accidental; the sisters happened to be passing in the corridor.) An enormous amount of reading material is banned. Contact with the outside is extremely limited (every attempt Ruchell Magee, James
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It would be difficult to grasp the full meaning of our ancestors' heroic insurrections during the era of slavery without knowledge of the barbarous conditions under which they suffered. Equally impossible is an understanding of the insurrectionary events of August 7, 1970 without taking heed of the all-pervasiveness and intensity of prison brutality: the intrinsic structure of coercion, the redoubling effects of racism and the ever-increasing political reprisals directed toward outspoken advocates of social transformation.

At San Quentin prison where Fred Billingslea was murdered, where Ruchell Magee and the Soledad Brothers are incarcerated, where there is a strong chapter of the Black Panther Party as well as a revolutionary organization of Chicanos, Warden Louis S. Nelson has publicly threatened the captive population en masse. In an interview published in a San Francisco daily, he issued the following warning: "... if the prisoners of California become known as schools for violent revolution (read relevant political education), the Adult Authority would be remiss in their duty not to keep the inmates longer." [San Francisco Chronicle, May 2, 1971]. He is not projecting a future method of political retaliation, but rather one which has already been well-tested.

The overwhelming majority of California's convicted felons (half of whom are non-white) receive indeterminate sentences. The most extreme instance of the indeterminate sentence is the term of one-year-

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There is, of course, the entire range of corporal punishment: strip cells, unprovoked attacks by guards, murder masquerading as "justifiable homicide" and bribes which often lead white prisoners to murder Black militants. Recently, two white Soledad prisoners submitted
The Radicalization Of Angela Davis

Name: Angela Yvonne Davis
Date of Birth: January 26, 1944
Hometown: Birmingham, Ala.
Present Address: Jail Section, Marin County Courthouse

Angela Davis is shown, above, as a 10-year-old Girl Scout in Birmingham, Ala., the place from whence, she says, "my political involvement stems."

When she was a student at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1963-64, Angela Davis spent many evenings in the cafés-tabacs of the Boulevard St. Michel chain-smoking the Gauloise cigarettes she had learned to like and talking with the Algerian students who people the quartier. These dark-skinned North Africans liked to talk to Angela. She was young and attractive, her French was excellent, and she knew Algerian like and talking with the Algerian students who people the quartier. Their stories of the callousness of French officials, the coldbloodedness of the gendarmerie—made her recall Birmingham, Alabama, her hometown.

Algeria: explosifs plastiques placed under the stairwell of an apartment building. Thirteen sleeping children are among the dead.

Birmingham: a dynamite bomb placed inside a church. Four black girls at Sunday School are killed.

Often during her year of study in Paris Angela saw things that reminded her of home. The police constantly harassed Algerians and seemed delighted at every opportunity to slam their truncheons across Algerian heads. Angela had known Birmingham and the South very well.

Education: Attended elementary school and Parker High School in Birmingham; graduate (with honors), Elisabeth Irwin High School, New York City; graduate (French literature major, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.; student of French literature and philosophy, the Sorbonne, Paris, France; graduate student of philosophy, the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany; graduate student (for master's degree in philosophy), the University of California at San Diego; doctoral student (for Ph.D. in philosophy), the University of California at San Diego. Currently completing dissertation for Ph.D. degree.

Profession: Previously employed as acting assistant professor of philosophy, the University of California at Los Angeles.

Politics: Communist

Relatives: Father, B. Frank Davis, former schoolteacher, presently a service station operator in Birmingham; mother, Mrs. Sally E. Davis, public schoolteacher in Birmingham; sister, Mrs. Fania Davis Jordan, graduate of Swarthmore College, graduate student at University of California at San Diego, national coordinator of National United Committee to Free Angela Davis, Berkeley, Cal.; brother, Benjamin Davis, graduate of Brown University.

As a student at the Institute of Social Research at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, Miss Davis studied the work of philosophers Kant, Hegel and Adorno. In 1968, Angela returned to the United States to resume study with Prof. Marcuse who had moved from Brandeis to the University of California at San Diego. It was there that she completed work on her master's degree in philosophy and, within one year, completed all the requirements for a Ph.D. All that was required was for her to write her dissertation, "Kant's Theory of Force."

Angela has not completed that dissertation. Shortly after she began her studies at San Diego she began earnestly to follow the implications of the philosophical thought with which she was dealing. Being merely an academic made her restless. She had to confront the problem of getting to the heart of one's experiences in one's society and making decisions about one's role in the furtherance of that society. Angela had come to believe that the United States is a thoroughly racist, oppressive society; that it is the very nature of American capitalism to force black people to "ek out an existence at the very lowest level of society," and that, therefore, the American capitalist system must be replaced by
WHEN she was a student at the Sorbonne in Paris in 1963-64, Angela Davis spent many evenings in the cafés-tabacs of the Boulevard St. Michel chain-smoking the Gauloise cigarettes she had learned to like and talking with the Algerian students who people the quartier. These dark-skinned North Africans liked to talk to Angela. She was young and attractive, her French was excellent, and she knew Algerian history and many details of the revolutionary struggle going on in Algeria against the French colonial regime. From the Algerians, Angela wanted first-hand accounts of the difficulty of life under colonialism.

What the Algerians told Angela—stories of the callousness of French officials, the coldbloodedness of the gendarmerie—made her recall Birmingham, Alabama, her hometown.

**Algiers:** explosifs plastiques placed under the stairwell of an apartment building. Thirteen sleeping children are among the dead.

**Birmingham:** a dynamite bomb placed inside a church. Four black girls at Sunday School are killed.

Often during her year of study in Paris Angela saw things that reminded her of home. The police constantly harassed Algerians and seemed delighted at every opportunity to slam their truncheons across Algerian heads. Angela had known Birmingham and the South very well, had marched and picketed to protest racism. She had seen and felt the rage of whites and knew that what she saw in Paris was well, had marched and picketed to protest racism. She had seen and felt the rage of whites and knew that what she saw in Paris was.

In the fall of 1969 an FBI undercover agent on the UCLA campus fingered her as a Communist. The University of California Board of Regents demanded a response from Prof. Davis and she replied: “Yes, I am a Communist. And I will not take the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination because my political beliefs do not incriminate me; they incriminate the Nixons, Agnews and Reagans.”

Angela had already accepted Marxism-Leninism as a philosophy—as the philosophy for herself. Now she began working with the Che-Lumumba Club, an all-black collective of the Party. Marque Neal Jr., a leader of the club, explains: “We are a part of the Communist Party, but a very special and activist black part based on the idea that it takes black people to organize black people.”

In California, Angela began finding her way into the politics of black militance. At UCSD she helped found the Black Students Council and worked with the San Diego Black Conference, a group dominated by Ron Karenga’s US organization. She moved to Los Angeles and began meeting with groups organized around various community issues—unemployment, police brutality, etc.—and worked on a day-to-day basis with the Black Panther Party until she returned to San Diego to teach. Back in Los Angeles, it was the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee with which she worked until it disbanded, and then she joined the Communist Party of Southern California. Actually, Angela had accepted Marxism-Leninism as a philosophy as the philosophy for herself. Now she began working with the Che-Lumumba Club, an all-black collective of the Party. Marque Neal Jr., a leader of the club, explains: “We are a part of the Communist Party, but a very special and activist black part based on the idea that it takes black people to organize black people.”

Meanwhile, Miss Davis had accepted appointment as an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles—an appointment which would eventually make her an international cause célèbre. In the fall of 1969 an FBI undercover agent on the UCLA campus fingered her as a Communist. The University of California Board of Regents demanded a response from Prof. Davis and she replied: “Yes, I am a Communist. And I will not take the Fifth Amendment against self-incrimination because my political beliefs do not incriminate me; they incriminate the Nixons, Agnews and Reagans.”
Not very long ago, Edward C. Banfield, a professor of Urban Government at Harvard and the chairman of Nixon's task force on the Model Cities Program, published a book titled *The Unheavenly City: The Nature and Future of Our Urban Crisis*. In view of his influence in the Nixon administration, the genocidal thrust of his book and the program he outlines for the "lower classes" (read national minorities especially) must be taken seriously. Banfield's analysis and recommendations, particularly as they relate to coercive institutions, spell disaster for Black people.

The so-called urban crisis, he contends, must be considered in the last analysis as irresolvable. It is irresolvable because poverty and all the other degrading features of ghetto existence are a creation, not of larger objective social problems, but rather of the style of life and the psychology of ghetto inhabitants themselves. This is a characteristic passage from Banfield's book: "The poverty problem in its normal-class form consists of people ... whose only need to live decently is money; in its lower-class form it consists of people who would live in squalor and misery even if their incomes were doubled or tripled. The same is true with the other problems—slum housing, schools, crimes, rioting ..."  


So Banfield proposes a manifestly fascist program. (The program is on pages 245-246 of his book.) He advances the idea that those who fall under a "fixed standard" of poverty should be "encouraged" or "required" to live "in an institution or semi-institution." This definitely reeks of the concentration camp. Moreover, police control must be augmented and intensified; specifically, police must be permitted to "stop and frisk and to make misdemeanor arrests on probable cause." He makes allowances for preventive detention by expressing the need to "abridge an appropriate degree of freedom of those who in the opinion of the court are extremely likely to commit violent crimes."

This is only a fraction of his program, those elements which call for an enhancement of institution-related coercive control. It should be clear, not simply from Banfield's proposals, but from actual events as well, that unless a powerful countervactive movement is immediately behind bars, the tide of political awareness is rapidly approaching its peak. More extensive and more ruthless instances of political reprisals must be expected.

The targets of political repression in prisons will not be a small minority of seasoned revolutionaries, but, as it is increasingly becoming clear, the vast majority of the Black and Brown prison population. If whites join the struggle, they, too, will become victims. An obvious inference of official proclamations that greater police control is needed must be taken seriously. Banfield's analysis and recommendations, particularly as they relate to coercive institutions, spell disaster for Black people.

RADICALIZATION OF ANGELA DAVIS  
Continued

Immediately, the regents attempted to fire Prof. Davis for her political beliefs, but in a court test their action was ruled unconstitutional. Prof. Davis continued to teach, and not until the following year were the regents successful in barring her from her classroom. This time the charge was not Communism but one based on the "inflammatory speeches" she had made off-campus in behalf of the Soledad Brothers, three young black inmates of California's Soledad Prison—George Jackson, Fleeta Drumgo and John Wesley Clutchette—accused of killing a prison guard. (The case is discussed in Prof. Davis' article.)

Prof. Davis' concern for Jackson, Drumgo and Clutchette (she is a founder of the Los Angeles Soledad Committee) led to a friendship with George Jackson's 17-year-old brother, Jonathan. He was one of a number of young blacks who accompanied Prof. Davis to Soledad rallies and stood ready to defend her in case she was attacked. As a result of the UCLA case Prof. Davis received numerous threats on her life—threats which prompted her to buy several weapons with which to protect herself. The State of California now charges that these weapons were among those which Jonathan brought into a courtroom of the Marin County Civic Center on August 7, 1970 and handed to three black prisoners—James McClain, William Christmas and Ruchell Magee—who were participating in a trial. (McClain was being tried for his life on charges of assaults on a San Quentin Prison guard; Christmas and Magee were prisoner-witnesses.) Taking the judge, a district attorney and three jurors, the group attempted to escape in a rented van, but guards opened fire and four people were killed—young Jackson, McClain, Christmas and the judge.

Though she was not present during the escape attempt and shooting, Prof. Davis was charged with kidnap, murder and conspiracy because of her alleged ownership of weapons Jonathan Jackson used. Immediately, she became the object of an international manhunt by the FBI. She was placed on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted" list, and on October 13, 1970 was arrested in a New York City motel. With her was David R. Poindexter, a Chicagoan who later would be freed of a charge of harboring a wanted felon.

After efforts by Prof. Davis' attorneys failed to prevent her extradition to California, where she had been indicted on the kidnap, murder and conspiracy charges, she was taken from New York's Women's House of Detention early on the morning of Dec. 22, 1970, and was flown to California aboard a California Air National Guard plane. Since then she has been confined in the Marin County Jail awaiting trial.

BY CHARLES L. SANDERS
affidavits in court affirming that guards had promised them paroles in return for murdering a number of specified Black militants.

In California prisons, but also throughout the country, the most extreme forms of racism have been fostered in order to deprive the captives of their one essential weapon—unity. Officials have had recourse to a variety of stratagems to keep Blacks, Chicanos and whites pitted against each other. Self-styled Nazi organizations, such as the Aryan Brotherhood at Soledad, have been permitted and frequently encouraged. At Soledad, favored whites have been allowed to plant crushed glass, cleanser, even feces and urine in Black prisoners’ meals. These callous forms of racism have been described in a report to the California State Legislature by the Legislature’s Black Caucus. In recent months, however, large numbers of Blacks, in harmony with politically-conscious Chicanos and whites, have undertaken to eliminate this internal hostility. The affidavits of the two white prisoners mentioned above are evidence of the prisoners’ struggle to combat racism. Not long ago, a series of strikes and other political actions in California’s prisons won the allegiance of Blacks, Chicanos and whites.

For those of us presently imprisoned, the need to expose and fight the prisons’ fascist schemes is simply a matter of survival. But it is critically important for all Black people to close ranks in defense of their imprisoned sisters and brothers. Clearly a factor of our national oppression is the easy accessibility of police and courts to our persons. Depending on the area, Black people comprise anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent of the nation’s prison population. And within this group behind bars, the tide of political awareness is rapidly approaching its peak. More extensive and more ruthless instances of political reprisals must be expected.

The targets of political repression in prisons will not be a small minority of seasoned revolutionaries, but, as it is increasingly becoming clear, the vast majority of the Black and Brown prison population. If whites join the struggle, they, too, will become victims. An obvious inference of official proclamations that greater police control is needed is that a sizable number of brothers and sisters, presently enjoying the relative freedom of the streets, will eventually find themselves behind bars.

Not very long ago, Edward C. Banfield, a professor of Urban Government at Harvard and the chairman of Nixon’s task force on the Model Cities Program, published a book titled The Unheavenly City: The Nature and Future of Our Urban Crisis. In view of his influence in the Nixon administration, the genocidal thrust of his book and the program he outlines for the “lower classes” (read national minorities especially) must be taken seriously. Banfield’s analysis and recommendations, particularly as they relate to coercive institutions, spell disaster for Black developed, greater and greater numbers of Blacks will be ensnared in jails, prisons and similar institutions. Once concentrated inside, opposition will be extremely dangerous—as indeed we can infer from the numerous attempts already to throttle prison activists. For not only have the Soledad Brothers been framed—there are the Soledad 3 (charges against them recently were dismissed for lack of evidence. Prosecution witnesses admitted on the stand that their testimony was perjured) and Hugo Pinell, also Black activists at Soledad who must stand trial for the murder of prison guards. (Recently the Soledad Brothers were physically attacked by prison guards in open court and the Soledad 3 were teargassed in their cells.) Luis Talamantez, a Chicano and admitted revolutionary at San Quentin, is about to stand trial for his life. His offense: involvement in a scuffle among prisoners. Were he not a known advocate of Chicano liberation, he would have received a minor, routine punishment, if any at all. These are only a few of the most outrageous cases in only two prisons in only one state. They must be multiplied at least a thousand-fold in order to ascertain a picture of what is happening in prisons today. As for what may happen tomorrow, the sign posts certainly are not lacking.

Brothers and sisters who can yet avail themselves of the relative flexibility and freedom of the streets must band together in defense of all their captive kin. There is an urgent need to open up a second front of the prison movement on the outside. This movement must become an integral part of the struggle for Black Liberation. The demand for the freedom of all political prisoners must be raised. Outside support for inside actions must be kindled. And pending Black Liberation and revolutionary change in the society as a whole, the demand should be advanced that prisons in their present form and with their present repressive functions be abolished.

May 1971, Marin County Jail.

RADICALIZATION OF ANGELA DAVIS

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Melanie spoke to the core group regarding her situation. Because of intensive work with the Venceremos Brigade, school, and also other personal crises, the group suggested that she take a month's leave of absence, during which time she can rest and recoup her strength. Members felt that overwork and pressure-to-the-point-of-panic are just as detrimental to group development as lack of commitment.

We felt that it is the group's responsibility to provide avenues by which over-taxed members can gather their resources, and return to the group armed for further struggle. Yet, it is each member's responsibility to gauge her own capacity given her situation, and to plan responsibilities according to priorities.

The important point for the group is to provide for sufficient trust among members so that, first, such personal needs may be shared without shame, and that, secondly, it may be expected by all that subsequent group and individual effectiveness shall be improved.