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# **Free Angela and All Political Prisoners**

By Shola Lynch

In San Rafael, California,  
north of San Francisco,  
a judge and three other persons  
were shot to death today  
in an attempt  
by a group of convicts to escape.  
There are still a great many loose ends  
and a great deal of speculation  
about what happened here.  
Investigators will now try to determine  
if there was a conspiracy of some kind  
that involved, perhaps, more persons  
than those who actually  
participated in the bloody event.  
Today, it turned out that two of the guns  
used in the courtroom  
were bought by Angela Davis.  
She was the teacher fired from the  
University of California at Los Angeles,  
after she said, yes, she was a communist.  
I grew up in Birmingham, Alabama.  
I think we all realized that this was not  
the way things were supposed to be.  
And my mother used to say that.  
My father had guns in the house.  
And we all knew that when they came out,  
generally, it was in response to some threat.  
As much as I wanted to see change happen,  
I left the South precisely at the moment  
when radical change  
was about to take place.  
I discovered a new program  
to bring black students from  
the segregated South to the North.  
So, I didn't get to directly experience,  
you know, all of the protests in Birmingham.  
I attended Elisabeth Irwin High School  
in New York  
and went to Brandeis. There were  
very few black students there.  
And then, of course,  
I ended up studying in Germany  
when these new developments  
in the black movement happened,

the emergence of the Black Panther Party.  
And my feeling was that, "I wanna be there.  
"This is earth-shaking. This is change.  
I wanna be a part of that."  
Revolution is about thinking about  
things in a radically different way.  
And, I think, given the history of America,  
the idea that black people  
should be equal, and really equal,  
was a revolutionary thing.  
In America, black people are treated  
very much as the Vietnamese people.  
And the police, they are not to...  
In our community,  
are not to promote our welfare,  
or our security and our safety.  
But they are there to contain us,  
to brutalize us and murder us.  
Do you know what Black Power means?  
Black Power means dignity.  
The fact is that some of our fellow  
citizens have turned against our society  
and turned against our government.  
People, perhaps, that you do not see,  
people that, perhaps,  
you do not come in contact with,  
and the fact you can't get a job. Only  
40% of the men that live in the ghetto  
have jobs that pay more than \$60 a week.  
How can you support a family?  
How can you bring up children in dignity?  
The Panthers,  
if you look at their 10-point program,  
it's about jobs, it's about education,  
it's about equality.  
And the point that everyone remembers  
is the self-defense.  
The Panthers, they not only had guns,  
they wanted you to know they had guns.  
Exhibit A was when they burst into  
a session of the state legislature.  
The Black Panther Party for Self Defense  
calls upon the American  
people in general,

and the black people in particular,  
to take careful note  
of the racist California legislature  
which is now considering legislation  
aimed at keeping the black people  
disarmed and powerless  
at the very same time racist police  
agencies throughout the country  
are intensifying the terror, brutality,  
murder and repression of black people.  
All of these police were summoned,  
and what they found  
was, indeed,  
the Panthers were not breaking any law.  
I saw the photograph of the  
Black Panther Party in some newspaper  
when I was studying in Germany.  
And again, I had this sense,  
"The world is changing.  
"My world is changing,  
and I do want to be a part of this. "  
And I decided that I would go back.  
I would go back  
and I decided to go to San Diego,  
which was where Marcuse was.  
Herbert Marcuse was  
an amazing philosopher.  
The important message I got from him  
was that knowledge  
can help to transform the world.  
That knowledge does not exist  
in a dimension of its own,  
but rather it can be active,  
it can be practical.  
Angela Davis is possibly  
the most intelligent person  
that I have ever been around,  
when it comes to studying  
classical German philosophy.  
She had been a very, very  
good student at Brandeis,  
and she had gone to Germany  
to the Frankfurt School.  
She became, you know, part of

an international intellectual community.  
Her intellectual engagement,  
as the most important thing in her life,  
was clearly mapped out at that point.  
She smoked Gauloises, chain-smoked  
them, was very European.  
And she came out of that heavy  
intellectual atmosphere rise in San Diego  
that was just the beginnings  
of the Black Panthers,  
the wake of the riots, and so on.  
So, she wasn't really wired into that  
and hadn't had a lot of  
personal experience, I think, with it.  
When I had attempted  
to become involved in  
political organizations in San Diego,  
I had not had very much success.  
Some people thought I was an agent.  
You know, who was this black woman  
who's coming from Europe  
and wanting to know  
what's going on in the community?  
But I realized that I needed a collective.  
I needed people to engage with.  
I needed to...  
I didn't see myself accomplishing  
anything important as an individual.  
Said I wanted freedom  
Freedom!  
Black is beautiful  
Angela Davis wanted to be a part  
of the Black Power movement.  
I was the section leader  
of the Black Panther Party.  
And I asked Angela  
to participate in the educational  
that I was conducting on Marxism  
to my cadre.  
That was the extent of her involvement.  
I had gotten involved, very briefly,  
with the Black Panther Party,  
Black Student Non-Violent  
Coordinating Committee,

the black student organization  
on my campus,  
but I did not like the nationalism,  
I did not like the male supremacy,  
I did not like the fact that women were  
expected to take a back seat  
and, literally, to sit at the feet of the men.  
So it was really refreshing to meet  
someone like Franklin Alexander  
and Franklin's wife, Kendra.  
I think, basically, what we're doing is  
we're saying that this system  
is rotten at its core,  
while we fight for the immediate needs  
of the people, constantly and continually.  
Better housing, you know,  
the end of police brutality.  
Stopping the depression level of  
unemployment in the black community.  
And while we continue  
to do those kinds of things,  
we do know, in fact, that this  
system itself creates those conditions.  
The changing of those conditions  
basically means establishing  
a socialist society.  
The Che Lumumba Club was  
an open Communist Party club.  
And the purpose of it was  
to allow the Communist Party  
to openly operate  
inside the Black Power movement.  
I don't know whether I would've joined  
the Communist Party at that time,  
had not the Che Lumumba Club existed.  
You know, Che Guevara, Patrice Lumumba,  
sort of symbolic of the global revolution  
you know, very specifically Third World  
people, people of color.  
And that was  
what really drew me into the party.  
We have to talk about being radical.  
And radical means, etymologically,  
you know, to get things at their root.

It's very interesting. The white people  
have been called radicals for a long time.  
And black people have been called  
militants, you know?  
As if black people can't be radicals, too.  
But if we don't fight now,  
we'll never be able to put into practice  
that slogan  
which, I think, crystallizes  
what we've been talking about,  
and that is all the power to the people.  
I was invited to apply  
for this position at UCLA.  
They needed someone  
who was trained in continental philosophy  
and who could teach Marxism.  
I decided to accept the job.  
There had been an article  
written by a man who had joined  
the Communist Party,  
but, actually, he was an FBI agent.  
And then after that,  
a well-known reactionary reporter  
in Northern California  
wrote a scathing article about me.  
And that's when all hell broke loose.  
Yesterday was the first day  
of the fall term at UCLA,  
and philosophy professor, Angela Davis,  
was on her way to teach her first class  
amid controversy,  
for Miss Davis admitted that she is  
a member of the Communist Party.  
And the regents who run the university  
decided, because of that,  
she should not be allowed to teach.  
For UCLA, it has  
become the crisis of the year.  
I had known Angela as a child.  
I went down there,  
and I hadn't seen her in years,  
as we went different ways.  
And I went down there  
and I asked her, you know,

if I could be of help and so forth.  
Her first lecture drew 2,000 students  
and was on the philosophy  
of Frederick Douglass.  
What was your reaction to the lecture?  
I think she is a superb lecturer.  
You can learn so much.  
As I infer from just what she said today,  
it was terrific.  
Well, I think she's trying to overthrow  
our system of government,  
and she admits that.  
And while I think it is bad to limit  
freedom of speech of any group,  
because it limits democracy,  
I think it is better  
to have a limited democracy  
that will last for a long, long time,  
than complete democracy,  
complete freedom,  
that lasts only for a brief period.  
If I were able to deliver that coherent,  
that beautiful  
and that intellectual a lecture  
on my first time,  
to how many thousands of people  
there were in that place,  
I'd feel like a superstar.  
The woman is an admitted member  
of the Communist Party.  
She also, in her letter to Chancellor Young,  
indicated that she felt  
that the only way we could bring about  
the social change that's necessary today  
is through violence and militancy.  
I don't think we need that on campus,  
and so I'm for getting rid of her.  
The regents seem intent  
on meting out punishments  
which concur with the fascist tendencies  
of the times.  
The sole reason they give  
for their intention to fire me  
is my membership in the Communist Party.



I became chancellor of UCLA in 1968.  
The main issue at stake was,  
I'll use a catchphrase, "academic freedom."  
I think that was my main concern,  
that while it was appropriate  
to make sure that a person was not  
misusing or abusing  
his or her appointment  
as a member of the faculty,  
that a person's political views  
should not be of concern  
with regard to his or her appointment.  
But my own personal opinion,  
and that's all it can be,  
I have no evidence otherwise,  
my own personal opinion is  
that this entire incident,  
starting with the hiring of Miss Davis,  
was a deliberate provocation.  
It's probably true,  
Reagan believed that she was dangerous.  
That she would use her bully-pulpit  
in the faculty  
to indoctrinate students, to try to  
win students over to communism,  
to try to engage in activities  
which would be harmful to the university.  
Part of the policy of Governor Reagan  
was really to do everything possible  
to repress the radical political movement  
as they saw it developing.  
The Anti-War Movement,  
Students for a Democratic Society,  
the emergence of the Black Panther Party.  
And Angela becomes a symbol of all  
of those movements at the same time.  
There was no precedent in my life  
for this kind of public exposure.  
And then, of course,  
there were all of the threats.  
You know, I was told to go back to Africa,  
then I was told to go back to Russia.  
And often times, I received  
letters saying that

I was gonna be dead by sundown.  
And so, my life completely changed.  
I bought my first gun  
because I really feared that  
I might be in a situation where  
either the police, or agents  
or other people would take my life.  
What they're doing to her  
is an exaggerated form  
of what happens every day  
to black people in this country.  
And they're saying  
to those communities through her  
that, you know, people have to  
straighten up and fly right  
and be good niggers, you know?  
I think the first thing we have to do  
is certainly make sure that we do have  
some unity in the black community,  
so that when a sister like that stands up,  
that they don't wipe her out as one person,  
that they have to wipe out  
more than one person.  
Being a revolutionary,  
some of it was just being young  
and being romantic and...  
I don't know that we had a real idea  
of, you know,  
how bloody a revolution could really be.  
I was involved  
in hundreds of peace marches,  
and, I mean, peace marches  
against the war in Vietnam  
that ended up with the  
police beating people up  
and tear gassing people.  
Malcolm X gets assassinated,  
you might expect that 'cause he was  
talking about the ballot or the bullet.  
But Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy.  
There was the beginnings of, on both sides,  
a sense that this isn't gonna  
be settled at the ballot box or in debates.  
This is gonna be war.

Los Angeles, four and a half years after the rebellion in Watts, 300 Los Angeles policemen are involved in a raging gun battle for nearly five hours. They are assaulting an office of the Black Panther Party, the most powerful militant black organization in the country. It is apparent that the undeclared war between the police and the Panthers has reached alarming proportions. Party members at 30 chapters across the country have stockpiled arsenals of automatic weapons, shotguns, pistols and homemade bombs. Vice President Agnew has called the Panthers, "A completely irresponsible, anarchistic group of criminals." FBI director Hoover has called them, "The greatest danger to the internal security of the country." Did you know that this was gonna happen? How was I to know the police were going to break into the Panther office

**at 4:**

They obviously didn't broadcast it. How did you hear about it? We got a call from someone who was inside, who said that the police had come and had attacked their office. And what do you plan to do? Do you plan to act as an intermediary or in any capacity like that? - I'll do anything I can. - Thank you. It was as if we were living in a state of war. In a state of siege. For us, during that period, the revolution was right around the corner, and we had to do everything we could

to usher it in.  
I'm representing the Che Lumumba Club  
of the Communist Party.  
There is a conspiracy in the land.  
It's a conspiracy to wipe out, to murder  
every single Black Panther in America  
and to wipe out  
the black community as a whole.  
Brothers and sisters, this is genocide.  
We have to call it by its name.  
This is genocide.  
Right on.  
This conspiracy  
to commit murder and genocide  
on our people forces us  
to exercise our constitutional right  
to bear arms  
and to use those arms to defend  
our community, our families and ourselves.  
Power to the people!  
The overwhelming majority  
of the faculty at UCLA  
would have supported the position,  
and did support the position I took.  
But the majority of the general population,  
who don't understand  
what academic freedom really is,  
had concerns about  
Angela Davis as a communist,  
Angela Davis as a black,  
Angela Davis as a woman,  
Angela Davis as an activist.  
You couldn't have  
put things together with anyone  
that would've been more  
problem-creating than with Angela Davis.  
Today, in a rare action,  
the Board of Regents voted 15-6  
to overrule the university and fire her.  
Governor Reagan voted with the majority.  
He said it wasn't  
because she's a communist,  
but rather because she is unprofessional.  
While the regents were voting, Miss

Davis was a few blocks away in a rally protesting the treatment of black prisoners in Soledad State Prison. She sees her dismissal as a case of political repression which she may or may not challenge. I'm gonna keep on struggling to free the Soledad Brothers and all political prisoners, because I think that what has happened to me is only a very tiny, minute example of what is happening to them. I suppose I just lost that job at UCLA as a result of my political opinions and activities. Some UCLA professors plan to raise money to pay her salary so she can continue to teach. The controversy is not over. I was still at UCLA defending my right to teach, and this case emerged involving three, then young, black men at Soledad Prison. All I could think about was the image of three black men walking into a silent courtroom in the city of Salinas with chains around their waists, chains under their crotch, their hands chained, while their only crime was having attempted to organize the human beings inside the Soledad Prison. They were the ones who were singled out to serve as examples to any and everyone in this country who dares stand up for the truth. So, what connected these three men, and what gave rise to the Soledad Brothers' case, is that a white guard was killed in Soledad by being thrown from an upper tier.

George Jackson, John Clutchette  
and Fleeta Drumgo  
were very prominent  
in the prison reform movement  
and were basically singled out  
and accused of killing this prison guard.  
These individuals,  
while they may have been incarcerated  
for crimes,  
now they have become persecuted  
because of their political belief.  
I hope the people on this campus realize...  
What Angela Davis does is  
become a primary spokesman  
for a quest to free political prisoners.  
We have to start fighting back.  
Those three brothers in Soledad Prison  
are fighting back.  
They'd all been convicted  
of relatively minor property crimes.  
One of them had been accused  
of stealing a television set.  
George had been accused of stealing \$70.  
He had been in solitary confinement  
for seven years.  
He'd been in prison for 11,  
and seven of those years  
had been in solitary confinement.  
Once he got into prison,  
he was a strong-willed,  
rebellious personality  
who continued to defy authorities.  
And then he also found his voice as a writer.  
And he studied and he became radicalized.  
And, I think, once he emerged  
as someone who could  
articulate revolutionary ideas,  
people gravitated to that kind of leadership.  
Look...  
One of the most important elements of  
guerrilla warfare is to maintain secrecy.  
I've killed nobody until, you know,  
it's been proven.  
And they'll never be able

to prove anything like that.  
Most people I knew  
thought George Jackson was a hero.  
The fact that he may have also been  
a criminal was glossed over.  
I first saw him  
at a hearing.  
We may have mouthed some words,  
but it was, of course, illegal to  
communicate with prisoners in the court.  
I was, you know, drawn by  
a kind of tenderness  
that I did not expect to find in prisoners.  
He was a beautiful writer,  
a powerful writer, passionate writer.  
And I eventually felt very much  
seduced by that.  
Brother George Jackson,  
one of the Soledad Brothers,  
has been in prison for 10 years  
since he was 18 years old  
on a second degree robbery charge.  
One of the things that we really have  
to talk about and come to grips with  
is this whole question of crime.  
What does it mean to be  
a criminal in this society?  
George had a younger brother, Jonathan,  
who was about 16, I think,  
when I first met him.  
He was an incredible writer,  
and wrote for his school newspaper,  
and wrote articles about his brother  
and the Soledad Brothers' case.  
I think he was totally devastated  
that his brother had been  
behind bars for 10 years.  
I came to realize that  
the Soledad Brothers Defense Committee  
was really a lifeline for him.  
He needed to have some hope  
that the person he most identified  
with in life  
was one day going to be free.

In San Rafael, California,  
north of San Francisco,  
a judge and three other persons  
were shot to death today  
in an attempt  
by a group of convicts to escape.  
Judge Harold Haley was hearing the case  
of a San Quentin inmate  
when an unidentified man armed  
with dynamite and an automatic weapon  
entered the courtroom.  
The defendant, along with  
two other inmates testifying for him,  
reportedly joined with the unidentified man  
in rounding up the judge, a deputy  
district attorney and three women jurors.  
When it was over, Judge Haley was dead,  
the deputy district attorney  
had been critically wounded in the back,  
one woman juror was wounded in the arm,  
two of the inmates were dead,  
as was the unidentified man.  
I could not deal with the fact that  
this young man,  
who was 17 at the time,  
that he ends up lying on the cold cement  
in a parking lot  
in one of the most wealthy counties  
in the country.  
The funeral for Superior Judge  
Harold Haley was a major civic event.  
The cortege escorted by a detail of  
60 police officers  
from cities all over the San Francisco Bay.  
Judge Haley, after all, was a prominent man.  
And his death deeply shocked  
and angered his peers.  
His kidnappers,  
they described as hoodlums,  
who called themselves revolutionaries.  
Across the Bay in Oakland, there was  
another funeral for Jonathan Jackson,  
the young Panther who was supposed to  
have staged the bloody kidnap attempt.



I, and my husband,  
we went to Jonathan's funeral.  
Everybody in their Sunday best,  
many people weeping.  
When they brought the casket out,  
and Mrs. Jackson followed,  
people holding her up  
and a handkerchief to her face.  
And it said to me, what he had done  
represented something.  
'Cause that was thousands  
and thousands of people  
out there in the street.  
Nobody organized that. People just came.  
While we were standing there,  
Franklin comes up, Franklin Alexander.  
We were standing in such a way  
that he was next to us,  
but looking straight,  
as though he wasn't talking to us.  
And he said, "Angela's been implicated."  
And he said, "She's gone underground."  
And he said, "I'm just, you know,  
letting you know. Okay?"  
We said, "Okay. "  
And then he disappeared into the crowd.  
Today, it turned out that two of the guns  
used in the courtroom  
were bought some time ago  
by Angela Davis.  
It was clear  
that that was not the time to make  
myself available to the police for arrest.  
Mr. Alexander, you say that  
you are the chairman  
of the Che Lumumba Club  
of the Communist Party?  
Miss Davis has identified herself  
as a member of that group.  
She is a member of that group.  
Is it the doctrine of that club  
to use guns for black liberation?  
It is the doctrine of the Communist Party  
that black people, that all people

have the right to defend themselves  
and their homes.

When asked by a reporter,

"What would you tell Angela Davis  
if you could speak with her today?",  
he smiled and said simply,

"I love you, baby."

"You wouldn't tell her to give herself up,"  
he was asked.

And he repeated, "I would tell her,  
'I love you, baby.' Nothing more."

The FBI has put black militant Angela Davis  
on its list of the 10 most wanted fugitives.

She's charged with murder in California,  
where authorities say

she bought weapons

for that San Rafael courtroom shootout.

Hoover put her on the top 10.

The key to the top 10,

she was a communist.

They were not his favorite people.

And if you were on the top 10,  
you're gonna get a lot of attention.

We were devastated, you know.

In our gut, we had to know

there was something wrong here,

that this could not possibly be anything  
Angela would be involved in.

Not the Angela we knew.

It couldn't be her.

Anyone involved in planning a violent  
operation like Jonathan Jackson's,  
that was on a need-to-know basis.

So, only certain people would know.

You would think that somebody

with an advanced degree,

particularly someone

who had a public profile,

would be the last person

who would want to use

those weapons in an illegal act.

On a truly common sense perspective,  
it doesn't make sense.

But on the other hand,

crazy shit happens.  
What is the evidence?  
The evidence is  
that Angela Davis purchased four guns.  
There was a provision in the penal code  
that anybody in this state could buy as  
many guns as he or she wanted to buy.  
And that's the law of the state of California.  
And because Governor Reagan  
wanted it that way,  
Angela Davis bought four guns.  
And why did she buy them?  
I don't know and you don't know.  
But it is reasonable to suppose  
that anybody who teaches  
at this institution and who speaks up  
for power to the people,  
who speaks up for  
the freedom of political prisoners,  
who speaks out on any issue  
receives every week...  
I receive every week, letters,  
and the theme and tone  
of those letters ranges from  
violent and vicious imprecations  
to outright threats of death.  
And for Angela Davis,  
whose prominence as a black woman  
and a communist, that mail came every day.  
And there were threats on her life.  
And she bought four guns.  
The FBI and the police descended  
on the black communities  
all over the country and began pulling in  
any young, tall, black woman  
with a space between her teeth.  
'Cause they just had  
this general description.  
We had her fingerprints and a photograph  
of a girl with a big afro.  
And every office gets  
a box full of those things.  
There were unmarked cars  
parked across the street.

I knew then, this was the FBI  
and that we were under surveillance.  
So many hundreds  
of black women with big afros  
were stopped on suspicion  
of being Angela Davis.  
I decided that I did not  
want to flee the country.  
Because, certainly,  
if I had decided to travel to Cuba  
or some other country  
that would have given me asylum,  
and I probably could have gotten asylum  
from any number of countries,  
I would have been there  
for the rest of my life.  
I flew from Las Vegas to Chicago,  
where I managed to hook up  
with David Poindexter.  
David was the person  
who helped me for the remaining period.  
The search for Angela Davis  
has spread from Los Angeles,  
through the Bay Area, through Canada,  
to a series of raids  
in her hometown of Birmingham  
after a US district court judge  
issued the fugitive warrants  
and set bail at \$100,000.  
The attitude in the Bureau was,  
the only way you're gonna solve  
anything is to have an informant.  
And we used to think most of  
the Communist Party members are FBI.  
It was thoroughly, thoroughly infiltrated.  
A file was opened up in every office.  
Everybody had a file on her.  
I stayed at David's apartment,  
and then had to leave  
because he had gotten into  
an argument with one of his friends  
who lived in the building.  
And we were afraid  
that this person might reveal

that I was with him  
if the FBI ever questioned him.  
So we traveled to Miami,  
and I was holed up in Miami for  
what seemed like an eternity.  
I was pretty scared.  
At any moment, I felt  
I was on the verge of being caught.  
I had this fear with me all the time.  
I thought a lot about  
the people I had left behind,  
my family, of course.  
I worried about my mother.  
I worried about my siblings,  
I worried about my friends, my comrades.  
And every strange noise I heard  
I interpreted as, "The cops are coming."  
"The FBI is knocking on the door."  
And then the Alexander girl's name  
comes into it, and they talked to her.  
She wasn't helpful,  
but nor was she antagonistic.  
It was determined  
that she had been in Chicago  
with David Poindexter.  
And there is some stuff  
in there about David's woman,  
she was jealous.  
And she told us some things, that they were  
there and they headed to Florida.  
Once we identified the car,  
and Chicago did that,  
now we knew what we were looking for.  
Sooner or later, we're gonna find that car.  
And they located one place  
where the guy thought  
that they might have been here.  
But the girl didn't look like her.  
They questioned his mother  
who lived in Florida,  
which meant we had to leave Florida.  
They had vacated the apartment,  
and the agents went in there  
and they looked all around.

And in the cushions of the couch,  
they found an exposed roll of 35mm film,  
which becomes a big thing in this case.  
Now, they were all pictures of Angela,  
but she doesn't have an afro.  
She's got a little pixie cut.  
They had vacated the apartment,  
and they were traveling north.  
The best place to hide in this world  
is right over there,  
New York City.  
We were actually, very rapidly,  
running out of money.  
So we were staying at the Howard Johnson,  
because that was the only thing  
we could afford.  
And I actually had a palpable sense  
of the FBI closing in.  
So we, in New York, started  
a detailed search of everything.  
We did LaGuardia and JFK  
and all the commercial  
parking lots in Manhattan.  
Lo and behold, we got a call one morning  
and they said, "We found the car. "  
"Come on. Stop this nonsense now."  
"No, it's in the Howard Johnson's  
parking lot."  
We head out for Howard Johnson's,  
we talked to the guy behind the counter  
and we showed him the picture.  
He said, "Yeah, I checked them in. "  
This is like something  
Hollywood would write.  
Everything was falling into place.  
A couple of minutes later,  
we hear the elevator door open.  
And you could hear them  
walking down the hallway.  
I handcuffed her  
before she even turned around.  
She didn't react to it at all.  
She was a little  
taken back when I said,

"I got to lift your upper lip."  
And I said, "I'm looking for that gap."  
They snatched the wig off of my head.  
They kept repeating, over and over again,  
"Are you Angela Davis?  
Are you Angela Davis?"  
I did not say, "Yes, " I did not say, "No, "  
I didn't say anything at all.  
I only requested my telephone calls.  
Black revolutionary,  
Angela Davis,  
appeared without her  
distinctive afro hairdo,  
as she was arraigned in New York City  
today as a fugitive from justice.  
Secretary General, Secretary Kennedy  
and ladies and gentlemen,  
the purpose of my coming  
to the Department of Justice today  
in this great hall, is to sign  
the Organized Crime Bill.  
I think that the actions of the FBI  
in apprehending Angela Davis,  
a rather remarkable story again  
in the long history of remarkable stories  
of apprehensions by the FBI,  
is an indication that once  
the federal government,  
through the FBI, moves into an area,  
we shall see to it that those  
who engage in such terroristic acts  
are brought to justice.  
Free Angela Davis!  
No extradition!  
Free Angela Davis!  
No extradition!  
Free Angela Davis!  
And therefore, the whole question...  
People say, "Why didn't  
Angela Davis give herself up?"  
The question of getting a fair trial  
is a real difficult and serious  
problem for black Americans.  
And therefore, I think she has

certainly the right to try and pick  
the moment when  
she can get closest to a fair trial.  
The most important point  
that should be remembered  
is that Angela Davis  
has been publicly indicted by the FBI.  
She's been put on the 10 Most Wanted list.  
Her picture has been  
placed in all post offices,  
and this has given a license to racists...  
Ma'am, when she knew she was wanted,  
why didn't she turn herself in?  
Well, I don't know. Would you turn  
yourself over to a pack of wolves?  
I went to New York almost immediately.  
She was arrested on October 13th,  
and I think I flew out the next day.  
She was in the Women's  
House of Detention.  
She was exhausted and gaunt and very pale.  
But she was already focused on her defense  
and on what needed to be done.  
I was in solitary confinement  
after they had placed me in the ward  
for people with psychological disorders.  
I had been doing all of this work on prisons,  
I had been doing all this work  
to free political prisoners,  
but I hadn't really thought about what  
it meant to be a woman behind bars.  
Fania, when did you last see your sister?  
I saw her last night at around 8:00 or 9:00.  
You had a pretty bourgeois  
and comfortable childhood,  
and so did she, in Birmingham.  
Can you trace the development  
of someone from that kind of background  
into a revolutionary and Marxist person?  
I see in her life  
the makings of a revolutionary.  
I don't see in her life the makings  
of a personal tragedy,  
of a good girl gone wrong.



Her life in the South,  
her experience with  
white people in the North,  
all that to me would go into the makings  
of what she is now.  
And that is a revolutionary.  
And Angela's education  
is now being put into practice.  
And that's a raison d'etre for her education.  
We challenged extradition.  
We took this all the way up  
to the US Supreme Court.  
And so, when at about 2:00

**or 3:**

guards came to my cell  
informing me that my attorney  
wanted to speak to me about extradition,  
it made sense.  
But they had other plans.  
I ended up being pushed down on the floor,  
they got my hands handcuffed  
behind my back.  
And then took me outside  
and placed me in a car.  
I kept asking, "Where are we going?"  
No one would say anything.  
And this long caravan  
began to drive through  
the streets of New York.  
I was totally shocked to discover,  
in the middle of the night,  
this National Guard plane  
surrounded by soldiers.  
And I remember saying to myself  
"I had better be very careful,  
"because if I so much as stumble,  
"they will probably open fire on me  
and that will be the end."  
Angela Davis was arraigned  
in the same San Rafael civic center  
where last summer  
a district judge was killed  
in an aborted kidnap attempt.

Security precautions were extraordinary.  
Each spectator carefully  
searched for weapons.  
There has been one bomb explosion  
and innumerable bomb scares  
here in the months since  
the judge's murder.  
Miss Davis entered the courtroom,  
turned and gave  
a Black Power salute to the gallery  
composed mostly of newsmen,  
and sat down  
next to her two temporary lawyers.  
Judge E. Warren McGuire  
ordered a copy of the charge  
delivered to her  
and advised her of her rights  
to an attorney and to a jury trial.  
When the Attorney General arraigned me  
in California after the extradition,  
he indicated that he wanted  
the death penalty  
on each of the three charges.  
So he wanted the death penalty three times.  
That made me realize how serious they were.  
And again, it made me realize  
that it wasn't about me  
because, first of all,  
I couldn't be killed three times.  
It was about the construction  
of this imaginary enemy,  
and I was the embodiment of that enemy.  
- Angela must be free!  
- Now!  
- Angela must be free!  
- Now!  
We had a nice long visit with Angela.  
And she's in very high spirits.  
She's feeling good.  
Right on.  
She's feeling good because she knows  
that the movement to free all  
political prisoners is growing every day.  
That's what makes her feel good.

As long as we have people  
like you fighting to free Angela,  
-he'll be free. All power to the people.  
- Right on.  
Right on!  
Free Angela!  
Free Angela! Free Angela!  
Free Angela! Free Angela!  
Free Angela! Free Angela!  
- What do we want?  
- Freedom!  
- For who?  
- Angela!  
- When?  
- Now!  
We know that she is innocent,  
and the entire family,  
along with many other people,  
will be fighting for her freedom.  
We're not just sitting by letting this happen.  
We'd already formed  
a defense committee for Angela.  
We called ourselves, "The National  
United Committee to Free Angela Davis  
"and All Political Prisoners."  
She insisted on "All Political Prisoners."  
Free Angela and All Political Prisoners.  
We had connections and people  
in the Trade Union Movement  
and the churches, we were able to go  
and say, "Will you support a resolution  
"for Angela Davis to be released on bail?"  
And they might say yes or no,  
but they'd say,  
"Persuade us. Come in and talk to us."  
It was actually Henry Winston,  
who was National Chairman  
of the Communist Party,  
he said, "Campaign for bail. "  
I went like, looking at him,  
"What, are you nuts?  
"No way we campaign for bail."  
The President of the United States  
made a public statement

in which he congratulates  
the FBI on the capture  
of the "dangerous terrorist,"  
Angela Davis.  
That's a quote. "Dangerous terrorist."  
He was saying, "Campaign for bail."  
We'd say, "Campaign for bail?"  
President of the United States...  
He says, "Campaign for bail."  
That man was a genius.  
He was a tactical genius,  
because people would sign petitions for bail  
who may have thought she was guilty,  
but believed that she  
was entitled to a fair trial.  
Charlene Mitchell, who was the brain  
behind the whole  
National United Committee  
to Free Angela Davis.  
I didn't know the first thing about  
organizing movements, but Charlene did.  
All of our efforts and all of our energies  
had to be focused  
on getting her out of there.  
Politically, I saw this case as a bellwether.  
They are not going to kill her.  
They're not going to imprison her,  
we're going to free her.  
We're gonna win her freedom.  
I was in solitary confinement,  
some distance from where  
the majority of women were kept.  
It was lonely, very lonely.  
I read a lot. I wrote a lot.  
I followed the examples  
of other prisoners, such as George.  
I was able to create  
a certain sphere of freedom, you might say,  
within the context of that confinement.  
Well, I suppose as far as you're concerned,  
it's no surprise  
that you're in solitary confinement.  
And I'm wondering what kind of  
shock that has been to your sensibilities,

to your emotions?  
But see, I understood  
very well that the reason why  
the Marin County officials  
would not permit me to talk  
to any other woman in that jail  
was because they wanted to break me.  
They wanted me to respond in that way.  
They wanted me to feel  
the burden of the solitude,  
and I just had to make up my mind  
that I was not going to  
let it affect me that way.  
I think that what George Jackson said about  
life in prison is very appropriate here.  
He says that prison either breaks  
a person or makes the person stronger.  
And I would like to think  
that I have become stronger  
during this experience.  
My emotional relationship with George  
became far more intense  
when I was behind bars.  
Part of that passion  
consisted in  
our being able to imagine ourselves  
as comrades  
helping to usher in a new world.  
When she was in prison  
and when George was in prison,  
they had the opportunity to meet.  
We met for a period of time,  
we had discussions  
and the type of things that you discuss  
when you have a legal meeting.  
And then Angela and George had met  
separately to discuss things  
that only the two of them wanted  
to discuss with each other.  
It was a meeting that was  
really complicated and full of  
all kinds of emotions and feelings.  
She's been locked up.  
And if she's had the opportunity

to do some hugging and kissing, right on.  
That's my theory.  
Those were the years  
of the black revolution.  
Everybody wanted to organize.  
And your organization,  
the first thing of it was, it was black.  
Black teachers, black doctors,  
black lawyers.  
Black people who were professionals.  
Black people who had done  
everything that the system says,  
they were, now.  
I thought it was important strategically  
for a black attorney to be the public face  
of a political prisoner at trial.  
We wanted to present to the world  
the picture of African-American lawyers  
performing at a very high level  
on a worldwide stage.  
And you have to understand the workings  
of a racist judicial system,  
that the system  
is in control of the white people.  
And white people don't take any risks  
when it comes to black people.  
So, I don't think that  
you're gonna find a jury  
who's going to have the courage  
to do what's demanded of them.  
I don't know of any other  
cases in the last century  
that presented that degree of difficulty.  
Where the courthouse  
itself was a crime scene,  
and the judge, the prosecutor,  
the jurors and witnesses were all victims.  
A big issue at the beginning of the case  
was whether or not  
to sever the trials  
of Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee.  
So he is the surviving  
prisoner from August 7th.  
And he was being charged

with the same thing.  
First degree murder,  
first degree kidnapping  
and conspiracy to commit both.  
There were those who wanted me  
to be disassociated with Ruchell  
and felt that that was the best way  
to assert my innocence.  
I didn't want to disassociate myself.  
Ruchell argued it was like a slave rebellion.  
In a lot of ways, it probably was.  
It was, kind of this last ditch effort,  
some way to assert  
some control over one's life.  
We had a big debate because we said,  
"Look, Angela wasn't even there.  
"It's very prejudicial to her  
to have him tried together with her.  
"She never even met the man. "  
On the other hand,  
we didn't want to abandon Ruchell.  
Miss Davis' attorneys asked the judge  
to set her free on bail.  
But Magee objected,  
saying it would prejudice his own case.  
Apparently, defendants Davis and Magee  
are at odds on each other's  
defense tactics.  
The court denied bail,  
so both defendants  
were sent back to their cells  
until a new judge is appointed.  
That could take several weeks.  
None of the judges in Marin County  
were qualified,  
because Judge Haley was their colleague.  
So, the judicial council  
then had to select a judge  
to try the case.  
Will you ever find a judge who can give  
you a fair trial in your estimation?  
Well, we certainly  
have got to search for one.  
We are sort of like Diogenes,

looking for the honest man.  
We're looking for an honest judge.  
The next judge who was assigned  
was Judge Richard Arnason  
from Contra Costa County.  
And the first day he was on the bench,  
we reached the conclusion that this is  
the judge that should have this case.  
'Cause he had an air about him  
that he would be fair,  
he would make an effort to be fair,  
and that he would be in charge.  
I think that, perhaps,  
it would be much better to ask  
somebody who has seen me  
in the years I've been on the bench,  
what kind of a judge I am.  
Self-analysis has never been  
very productive for anybody,  
and I'm not going to do it now at this time.  
Defense attorneys today asked  
that the murder and kidnap indictments  
against Angela Davis be dismissed.  
"Because she's completely  
innocent of these charges  
"and she's locked into a proceeding  
that never gets started."  
The judge, the sixth  
to hear the pre-trial motions,  
had already been charged with prejudice  
by Miss Davis' co-defendant Ruchell Magee.  
The judge said he would proceed  
no further with the case  
until the prejudice challenge  
was ruled on by another judge.  
Finally, I realized that  
the case needed to be tried.  
It needed to be tried soon.  
And that was because  
the organizing was at its peak.  
And if we got involved  
in all of these other motions  
and motion for removal...  
It might be five years



before the trial took place,  
and I didn't want to do that.  
So I reluctantly  
decided that...  
Ruchell was intransigent  
on this idea of removal.  
There were Communist Parties  
everywhere in the world.  
And they launched campaigns,  
which very quickly  
mushroomed into much, much larger  
than themselves.  
There was enormous feeling  
for Angela everywhere in the world.  
I was traveling around the world.  
I was in Moscow. I think I was in Leningrad.  
Kiev. I was in Poland.  
I was in Czechoslovakia  
and a number of different cities in Italy.  
West Germany and East Germany.  
So I was on the front lines  
with all the people who were demanding  
the freedom for Angela Davis.  
These millions of people around  
the world would not allow my sister  
to be convicted,  
would not allow her to be executed.  
There were plays, and theater,  
music being written about Angela Davis.  
It just created this irresistible wave,  
this irresistible force.  
We want to tell that pharaoh in Washington  
to let Angela Davis go free.  
Nina Simone came and visited me  
for a long time.  
She came in with a balloon,  
which the jailers did not  
want to allow me to have,  
but I fought for that balloon  
because I love Nina Simone.  
I kept that balloon as long  
as it remained inflated.  
Children of East Germany  
wrote millions of letters to my sister.

The mailman arriving every day with  
a huge sack of mail on his back.  
Just addressed to,  
"Angela Davis, USA."  
This letter was written by a very,  
very young child, apparently.  
And it says very simply,  
"Dear Angela Davis,  
"My name is Sarah.  
I wish that you were free.  
"This is a picture of you  
when you will be free.  
"Love, Sarah."  
And on the other side,  
there's a picture that she's drawn.  
She says it's a picture of me.  
You see the smile on my face.  
I guess that's supposed to be  
symbolic of freedom.  
Bettina and I were in the jail  
with her in Marin.  
The prison guards came up  
and told us that we had to leave.  
And everything was locked down.  
There was no movement in the prison  
at all, not on the prison ground.  
As I was coming home, I heard on the radio  
there had been an outbreak at San Quentin,  
and George Jackson  
was believed to have escaped  
and had been shot in the process.  
And I felt that it was my responsibility  
to come back and tell Angela.  
And then it was Margaret and Howard  
who had told me that he had been killed.  
I didn't know the details.  
I had no idea what had happened,  
except that he had been killed.  
He had said that he expected  
that he would die in that way.  
He expected that he would probably  
be killed by the state.  
By guards, by police.  
I remember the scene in the cell

when I came back.  
She was just totally grief stricken.  
And inside that grief,  
again, I think true for Angela,  
but true for anybody,  
is rage, just enormous rage.  
Rage at the system that you couldn't stop.  
What should we do? What should we do?  
What should we do?  
And George's funeral which was enormous.  
And then picking ourselves up  
and saying, "We have to go on."  
San Jose, California,  
has changed over the last 20 years  
from a prosperous agricultural center  
to an urbanized extension  
of San Francisco.  
Roughly 85% of the people  
who live here are white.  
About 10% have Spanish surnames.  
And less than 2% are black.  
Over her objections,  
it is the site for the trial of Angela Davis.  
I knew nothing about  
San Jose, California,  
except the Dionne Warwick song.  
I came down and I thought  
that it was Birmingham, Alabama.  
The only thing was  
I didn't see any African Americans.  
The atmosphere, which often surrounds  
much publicized trials,  
is beginning to build.  
More than 300 newsmen  
have applied for credentials.  
Three-quarters of a million dollars  
has been spent on  
security and facilities for the news media.  
Fences for crowd control, reconstruction  
inside and outside the court building.  
The courtroom itself is small with only  
60 seats for spectators and newsmen.  
Closed circuit television will  
carry the proceedings to another building

with room for 150 more.  
Questions from both sides  
will only be answered  
as the evidence unfolds day by day  
in the California courtroom,  
and the trial,  
estimated to last six to nine months.  
Howard had been on the case from the start.  
I had a minimal role in the trial.  
I think I questioned one or two witnesses.  
I was there representing the party  
and keeping an eye on the politics.  
And I told them that  
I thought she would be convicted.  
I thought the crucial thing was getting  
a different approach to the defense.  
And that's what Leo brought to the case.  
Leo Branton,  
who was also African American,  
very dynamic fellow, and very  
well-known in the black community in LA.  
He understood his client,  
he understood the situation.  
I felt much more optimistic with him there.  
A trial lawyer  
must be somewhat of a showman.  
You are acting in front of a jury.  
You cannot be all actor, though.  
There must be substance  
to what you're doing.  
By being passionate about your cause,  
being intellectual  
and having prepared the case  
to the point where you can make the  
best possible presentation before a jury.  
So the stakes are, we have to win  
this case, and we have to win it now.  
You either win the case now,  
or you forget about it. It's over.  
I was charged with  
three crimes that carried the death penalty.  
I tried to avoid actually thinking about that.  
I tried to avoid thinking about what was,  
at that time, a gas chamber.

Anyone facing the death penalty  
was not allowed bail.  
But the trial judge previously stated  
that if it weren't for the death penalty,  
he would allow Angela Davis  
to have bail on appeal.  
You get pressure all the time.  
They'd say, "Kill her, kill her, kill her.  
You can do it."  
And I never let that bother me.  
I never told anybody about it.  
Today, the small green room  
at San Quentin is empty, unused.  
The California Supreme Court  
has outlawed the death penalty  
as "cruel" and "unusual" punishment.  
Immediately upon getting this news,  
I called Howard Moore  
on the phone, I said,  
"Call the judge and call  
the prosecuting attorney, and tell them  
"that you're gonna make a motion  
to free Angela Davis on bail."  
Aretha Franklin had said that she would  
put up any amount of money for bail.  
And so I was trying to reach her.  
I was trying to call Aretha, man.  
"We need money, honey.  
As much as you can give us. "  
Well, she was in the West Indies and  
it wasn't possible to make the transfer,  
and I had one other person who said  
that they would put up money for bail.  
A white farmer from Fresno, California,  
which is one of the most  
conservative areas in the state.  
His name was Rodger McAfee.  
And I said, "Will you do it?"  
And he said, "Yes.  
"I will put up my farm as collateral. "  
When Rodger McAfee goes out  
to feed the cows  
on his dairy farm near Fresno,  
he now carries an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle,

because he says his life and the lives  
of his wife and five children  
have been threatened.  
The threats began the day after McAfee  
put up some of his farmland  
as security for Angela Davis' bail bonds.  
Angela Davis has always promoted  
the path to the freedom of peoples.  
The freedom to speak out and...  
it's our American way of life.  
And when you have constant threats  
on your life and etcetera,  
that's not freedom. It just shows  
we haven't developed far enough yet.  
We're all outside  
the courtroom together waiting.  
And Howard comes out loping along,  
you know?  
Do some work, some typing.  
And we yell, "What happened?"  
I mean, we didn't know where he was going.  
I'm going to do some typing.  
The man has said he's going to do  
some typing and some work,  
and there are no more questions, all right?  
And he turned and he was crying.  
In a choked voice he said,  
"We got what we came for."  
After a tense day of  
closed door conferences,  
Judge Richard Arnason ruled  
Miss Davis should be freed from jail.  
It was the first legal fallout  
from the death penalty ruling.  
And the judge's decision  
did not please the prosecution.  
I think what he's going to do  
is contrary to law.  
Is this appealable? Can you appeal it?  
Well, I suppose we could seek some relief  
from the appellate court,  
but the time factor is so short that  
I don't think it would be worth the effort.  
Then we got to the bail bondsman's

office. His name was Steve Sparacino.  
Everything closes at 5:00, right?  
We wanted to get her out that night.  
And he said, "Well, I don't know.  
Should I do this? Should I not do this?"  
And perhaps about four minutes to 5:00,  
and he said, "Okay. "  
I'm so happy, boy. I just...  
Kendra said to me, "Go tell Angela."  
When I'm processed through  
and I'm allowed into Angela's cell,  
Angela had on a black shawl.  
She was getting ready to leave.  
She stood absolutely still for a moment,  
and her body rippled.  
There was, like, this little ripple  
and then she walked out.  
Her release on bail transformed the trial  
because the presumption of innocence  
had been restored.  
She came into the courtroom  
as a free person,  
and it transformed everything  
about the trial.  
After 17 months of pre-trial activity  
and three weeks to pick a jury,  
the Angela Davis trial is ready  
to hear evidence.  
Prosecutor Albert Harris  
outlined a conspiracy  
which he promised to weave  
out of circumstantial evidence.  
A plan to take hostages  
from a California courthouse  
and use them to free San Quentin prisoners.  
His first motive was political.  
Angela Davis, a communist, a Black Panther,  
a member of the Che Lumumba Club,  
anxious to free the Soledad Brothers  
and other political prisoners,  
did this out of revolutionary fervor.  
And then he changed midstream.  
Harris said Miss Davis aided and abetted  
that escape attempt

driven by a passion for Soledad Brother  
George Jackson.

A passion, he said, that knew no bounds.  
When he got up and made this argument,  
it was so stunning.

I'm thinking, like, "Whoa!"

It was basically an argument that I was...

I was a person who had uncontrollable  
passion because I was a woman.

In the State's case,  
the primary motive charged  
was to free the Soledad Brothers.

Ironically, at the noon recess,  
word reached the courthouse.

They had been found, "Not guilty."

- Soledad Brothers got acquitted.

- They got acquitted.

Soledad Brothers were not guilty  
and they've received a just verdict.

Right on.

I thought of the idea of having Angela Davis  
to make the opening statement to the jury.

An opening statement in which she could  
tell all about herself all of who she was.

And she got to tell the jury that  
without being cross-examined.

No one has heard

Angela Davis say anything.

And so, suddenly in the courtroom,  
she had this moment.

And every eye in the courtroom is on her.

So the beginning of the trial  
was really Angela Davis.

I'm just gonna read to you.

"The trial's most dramatic development

"was the defense's opening statement  
delivered by the defendant herself.

"Miss Davis scoffed at the prosecution  
of her motive.

"The suggestion that

her love for Jackson

"had driven her to crime, she said,

"was utterly fantastic, utterly absurd.

"Clear evidence of male chauvinism."



I mean, nobody expected that.  
You know, here's the beginning of a trial  
that everyone thinks is black and white.  
And what is she bringing up  
in her opening statement,  
but male chauvinism. Quite interesting.  
Harris, in the early days,  
brought on a lot of witnesses  
to basically make the ground for his case.  
I was working in the darkroom,  
mixing fixer that day.  
And I heard on the police monitor  
that there was a...  
They called a code 33.  
Armed convicts with hostages at the  
Marin County Civic Center Hall of Justice.  
There was a shooting, there were  
witnesses, so-and-so saw so-and-so.  
I was across the archway  
from where they were exiting.  
And about that time somebody said,  
"Here they come."  
And there were a lot of exhibits.  
The stick, that gun.  
And the next thing I knew,  
I got a black man  
with a .357 Magnum  
aimed at my head saying,  
"Stand up, motherfucker,  
or I'll blow your brains out."  
Harris then continued  
for days and days and weeks,  
putting on exhibit, after exhibit,  
after exhibit.  
And witness, after witness, after witness.  
What I saw,  
I saw through the lens of a camera.  
My photographs were my testimony.  
I think he presented 104 witnesses  
to overwhelm the jury with  
what had happened on August 7th.  
It was David and Goliath, you know?  
And Angela was David.  
The trial, for Harris, it was a hugely

important assignment for him.  
Huge.  
He was the one  
who had to carry the government.  
Albert Harris was not  
a prosecuting attorney.  
All the prosecuting attorneys  
had been disqualified  
because one of the victims of the crime  
was a district attorney.  
And so the Attorney General  
took over as prosecutors.  
So we had the advantage of having  
better trial lawyers than they were.  
Leo Branton made an argument  
that was stunning.  
That some of the most  
unreliable testimony you'll ever hear  
is eyewitness testimony.  
Seated at the counsel table,  
in addition to Angela and the lawyers,  
was Kendra Alexander,  
who's a close friend of Angela's,  
and the head of the defense committee.  
One day, when he had  
this very hostile witness,  
the guy even called him bald-headed,  
and he was identifying Angela Davis as  
being the one and he saw her.  
They just kept egging this guy on.  
They said, "Can you identify her?"  
"Yes, that's her, right there."  
And he chose Kendra.  
It was an astounding moment.  
And it revealed Leo's brilliant lawyering.  
He set the guy up, that's really  
what he did. He set the guy up.  
You know these things,  
the cumulative effect on the jurors.  
But just the very idea  
of making that argument  
saying, "Eyewitness testimony is some  
of the most unreliable you'll ever get."  
That didn't

strike me right.  
But then when you see them  
cross-examine these people,  
and there are these people saying,  
"This is what I saw with my own eyes."  
It seemed to be so...  
Just tear their testimony up.  
Makes you really think about  
the eyewitness testimony, you know.  
The prosecutor, Mr. Harris,  
believed he had a case.  
And I think the most powerful item  
that he had  
were what were referred to as "the letters."  
Angela had written letters to George  
when he was still in Soledad Prison.  
Those letters which were, you know,  
very passionate and very emotional,  
and, you know, all about love,  
but struggle and revolution.  
It was all entangled.  
But he wanted to use this  
as the primary evidence of my guilt.  
The defense did not  
want these letters in there.  
And the prosecution wanted them in there,  
because they said,  
"You read these letters,  
you'll understand why she did this."  
Here's a quote, it's from Harris.  
"You will find, I think, from the letters,  
a willingness on the part of the defendant  
"to do whatever she felt had to be done  
to free George Jackson."  
It was as though the letters  
were meant to, in fact, say,  
"Look, I'll free you. And I'm so in love  
with you, I'll do anything for you."  
You know?  
Leo was incensed, okay.  
He was really incensed about  
putting in this diary,  
and particularly this part of the diary  
where Angela is

expressing herself in this way.

Now, Branton, he stood on his feet,  
and put his hand here, in his jacket,  
and this arm was way out in front,  
and he was just saying,

"These are not admissible."

So, we fought.

I mean, some of the heaviest fighting in  
the case was over editing this letter.

The judge comes in  
with his sweeping black robes,  
and he kind of steps up the steps,  
and he sits down.

The courtroom is very nervous  
and sitting forward,  
and no one's looking at anyone else.

Arnason takes the 18 pages,  
came back with three pages.

And so he read some of the letters in court.

"I, your wife, your comrade,  
who's supposed to love you,  
"fight with you, fight for you,  
"I'm supposed to rip off the chains.  
"I'm supposed to fight your enemies  
with my body,  
"but I am helpless, powerless.

"I contain a rage inside  
"as I re-experience this now,  
my pulse beats faster.

"I begin to breathe harder. And I see myself  
"tearing down this steel door,  
fighting my way to you,  
"ripping down your cell door  
and letting you go free.

"I feel as you do, so terribly is this love."

If I had been the prosecutor,  
I would try to put that in, too.

It was very painful  
to have my expressions  
of my deepest emotional feelings  
splashed across the newspaper as a  
result of having been revealed in court.

It was very difficult, yeah.

It was very difficult.

Doris Walker and Margaret Burnham  
had been in charge of our witnesses.  
They had a whole slew of people  
lined up to testify.  
And what we ultimately  
decided was that  
we should not appear to be defensive.  
And we should only have witnesses  
for very specific points  
that might be confusing to the jury.  
Just imagine.  
This judge is taken out of the courtroom  
with a shotgun  
and you have someone  
that buys these weapons,  
but what makes that fall apart is,  
why, if that was the plan,  
why would she use her own  
identification to purchase these weapons?  
Basically, your defense is, and I think  
Leo Branton said it just like this,  
"Angela Davis is not stupid.  
You know she's not stupid.  
"She had to be stupid to buy these guns,  
"knowing that we were going to know  
that she bought them  
"and they're going to be  
the weapons in this crime."  
Carefully, without emotion,  
the prosecutor  
wound up his case against Angela Davis.  
"She conspired to kidnap and murder, "  
he said,  
"because of a passionate desire  
"to free her lover,  
Soledad Brother George Jackson."  
Prosecutor Albert Harris  
showed the guns she bought.  
He reviewed the testimony of witnesses  
who saw her with a young man  
who later used those guns.  
"This case is all about death, injury  
and kidnapping," Harris said.  
"And Angela Davis is responsible."

"Assistant Attorney General Albert W. Harris  
"quietly turned from the wooden lectern  
in the middle of the courtroom  
"and walked a few steps to  
the prosecuting attorney's table.  
"He glanced down  
at a pile of papers on his desk,  
"and announced, undramatically,  
'The People rest their case.'"  
He did a magnificent job  
of taking all of these pieces,  
and pulling them all together  
and telling you what to think.  
I said...  
"I believe Angela's gone."  
Leo told me, "See, now, Howard,  
"you're gonna take the eyewitnesses.  
They're yours."  
So I emphasized  
the presumption of innocence,  
the question of reasonable doubt,  
and I attacked each one  
of the eyewitnesses.  
Then we paused and we set up the stage,  
and my brother, Leo, rose to the occasion.  
I knew that I had to prove  
that Angela's flight  
was not evidence of guilt.  
I said to the jury,  
"I want you to play a role with me.  
"For the next several minutes,  
I want you to think black.  
"I want you to be black.  
"Don't worry.  
"I'll let you return to being white  
when this is over.  
"If you're black,  
"you know that your fore parents were  
brought to this country as slaves.  
"And the United States  
Supreme Court ruled,  
"'There are no rights  
"that a black person has  
that a white man is bound to respect.'

"An intellectual like Angela Davis knew this.  
"She also knew that during the '60s,  
every time a black person raised his voice  
"in support of liberty and the freedom  
of the black man, he was assassinated.  
"And so if you know all of those things,  
"if you are Angela Davis,  
"or if you're black,  
"you don't wonder why she fled.  
"You only wonder why in the world  
did she allow herself to be caught?"  
Defense attorney, Leo Branton, said  
he did not know who the person was  
that the prosecution witnesses  
had identified as Angela Davis.  
But he said it wasn't his job to find out.  
"Angela Davis is no fool," he continued.  
"Why would she buy a gun  
to blow a judge's head off  
"and buy it in her own name?  
"The prosecution's theory is absurd."  
The jury will begin deliberating  
her guilt or innocence tomorrow.  
We were sitting on the lawn.  
Franklin came out  
and he said, "They've reached a verdict."  
And I was standing next to Mrs. Davis,  
Angela's mother.  
And she said to me, "I can't go in.  
"I just... I can't go in." She couldn't bear it.  
She wanted to be with her own thoughts,  
and she obviously didn't think  
she could maintain her composure.  
And it was Angela who reached out to her  
and said,  
"Mom, you've got to come."  
There was a way in which we were all  
kind of in our own silos.  
When we came into the courtroom  
with, you know, obviously, solidarity,  
but we were all also  
just steeling ourselves  
for whatever that jury was going to say.  
And the jury walks in,

and then Margaret falls apart completely.  
So, I'm in a situation where  
I'm having to help Margaret,  
and she kind of stretched her arms out.  
And then Franklin started crying.  
He was in the audience.  
And the judge says,  
"Have you reached a verdict?"  
And Mrs. Timothy said,  
"Yes, Your Honor, we have."  
The jury hands the jury slip to the clerk,  
and the clerk then hands it to the judge,  
and the judge then looks at it,  
and you look at the judge  
to see if he's happy or sad,  
or if he's giving away anything.  
And no judge ever does at that moment.  
The court clerk reads out the charge.  
"In the case of Angela Davis  
on the charge of first degree murder,  
"how does the jury find?"  
And she said, "Not guilty."  
And then they read the second one.  
"First degree kidnapping,  
how does the jury find?"  
"Not guilty."  
And then the clerk read out the next  
charge, which was the conspiracy,  
and that's the one  
we were most nervous about.  
I think I stopped breathing.  
Everybody was just sobbing.  
Angela reached over  
to touch her mother,  
who was sitting right behind her.  
And she said, "Not guilty."  
And there came the yell, "Power  
to the people! Power to the people!  
"Power to the people!"  
And then they started,  
"Power to the jury.  
"Power to the jury. Power to the jury."  
Today's verdict climaxed the trial  
which many have viewed



as a testing ground  
for the American judicial system.  
Supporters said political and racial bias  
would prevent a fair trial.  
But despite these claims,  
today in San Jose, an all-white jury  
acquitted Angela Davis.  
The simple truth obvious to all long ago  
was this,  
there never was a legal case against Angela.  
But the political necessity for such a trial  
was incontrovertible for the state.  
That is why it is so important  
that this state's conspiracy to get Angela  
was smashed.  
Just general reaction.  
Could you just take off and rap?  
I think you've been able to see  
from all of the celebrating  
that has already taken place here  
what my reaction is  
and the reaction  
of the members of my family.  
And all of the sisters and brothers who  
have been struggling for my freedom.  
This is the happiest day of my life.  
Throughout this country, people are  
becoming increasingly aware  
of the fact that whatever  
the government does,  
is not a priori the truth.  
And it's not only the struggle around  
political prisoners  
that has begun to change  
the climate in this country  
so that an acquittal like this could occur.  
But also the reaction to the war in Vietnam  
and the reaction to Nixon's  
economic policies.  
I think there's a lot more resistance now.  
And that means that we have to continue  
to build that resistance  
and allow it to mature.  
This was not something

that we could set aside  
and say, "This is over.  
Now let's get on with our lives."  
This was the way in which  
we were creating our lives.  
This is the way we were choosing  
to live our lives.  
Sisters and brothers,  
this is really a beautiful, beautiful moment.  
It would have been a little hard to imagine  
22 long months ago  
that tonight, thousands and thousands  
and thousands of people  
are here at Madison Square Garden  
celebrating a magnificent people's victory!  
I was so glad that  
that part of my life was over.  
At the same time, all of this energy  
that had been generated.  
We sat down to talk about  
how we could keep that structure in place  
and how we could go on  
in order to bring more victories  
to more people.  
That became the theme of my life.  
And here I am today.