

*If They Come  
in the Morning*

**VOICES OF RESISTANCE**

*Angela Y. Davis*

**Ruchell Magee, the Soledad Brothers  
and Other Political Prisoners**

*With a Foreword by Julian Bond*



VERSO

London • New York

This edition published by Verso 2016  
First published by The Third Press 1971  
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The publisher would like to acknowledge the following publications where these essays appeared before being collected in this volume:  
“An Open Letter to Angela Y. Davis” (James Baldwin), *New York Review of Books*, January 7, 1971; “The Soledad Brothers: How a Prison Picks Its Victims” (Eve Pell), *Ramparts*, August 1970; “The Soledad Brothers: An Appeal” (Angela Y. Davis), *Black Scholar*, April 1971, and *People’s World*, April 24, 1971; “A Political Biography of Angela Y. Davis,” National United Committee to Free Angela Y. Davis, New York, November 1970; “Angela Y. Davis Speaks from Prison,” *Muhammad Speaks*, December 1970, and *Guardian*, December 26, 1970; “Angela Davis: Black Soldier” (Robert Chrisman), *Black Scholar*, November 1970; “Letters to Jonathan Jackson” (George Jackson), *Soledad Brother*, Bantam Books, New York 1970; “Ruchell Magee” (Robert Kaufman), *People’s World*, July 10, 1971

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**Verso**

UK: 6 Meard Street, London W1F 0EG  
US: 20 Jay Street, Suite 1010, Brooklyn, NY 11201  
[versobooks.com](http://versobooks.com)

Verso is the imprint of New Left Books ISBN-13: 978-1-78478-769-1  
ISBN-13: 978-1-78478-770-7 (US EBK) ISBN-13: 978-1-78478-771-4 (UK EBK) **British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data** A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data** A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress Printed in the US by Maple Press

# Statement to the Court

*by Angela Y. Davis*

As a preface to my brief remarks I now declare publicly before the court, before the people of this country that I am innocent of all charges which have been leveled against me by the State of California. I am innocent and therefore maintain that my presence in this courtroom today is unrelated to any criminal act.

I stand before this court as a target of a political frame-up which far from pointing to my culpability, implicates the State of California as an agent of political repression. Indeed the State reveals its own role by introducing as evidence against me my participation in the struggles of my people—Black people—against the many injustices of society. Specifically my involvement with the “Soledad Brothers Defense Committee.” The American people have been led to believe that such involvement is constitutionally protected.

In order to insure that these political questions are not obscured, I feel compelled to play an active role in my own defense as the defendant, as a Black woman and as a Communist. It is my duty to assist all those directly

involved in the proceedings as well as the people of this State and the American people in general to thoroughly comprehend the substantive issues at stake in my case. These have to do with my political beliefs, affiliations and my day-to-day efforts to fight all the conditions which have economically and politically paralyzed Black America.

No one can better represent my political beliefs and activities than I. A system of justice which virtually condemns to silence the one person who stands to lose most would seem to be self-defeating.

It is particularly crucial to Black people to combat this contradiction inherent in the judicial system, for we have accumulated a wealth of historical experience which confirms our belief that the scales of American justice are out of balance.

In order to enhance the possibility of being granted a fair trial, of which at present I am extremely doubtful, it is imperative that I be allowed to represent myself. I might add that my request is not without legal precedent.

If this court denies our motion to include me as co-counsel in this case it will be aligning itself with the forces of racism and reaction which threaten to push this country into the throes of fascism and the many people who have become increasingly disillusioned with the court system in this country will have a further reason to solidify their contention that it is no longer possible to get a fair trial in America.

MARIN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

*January 5, 1971*