

# Letter from Prison

John Sinclair

1969

John Sinclair  
Southern Michigan State  
Prison Jackson, Michigan  
Dear Leni & Everybody:

My letter yesterday from the Wayne County jail should be disregarded in large part since I was transferred up here this morning. It's really good to get here at last—just like when you've been threatened with something for years and find out it ain't so bad after all.

The penitentiary, unlike the county dungeons, is a real prison and is run professionally and smoothly. I have to spend the 1<sup>st</sup> 30 or 45 days in "quarantine," while tests are run, etc. I live in a single cell by myself on a huge cellblock of individual cells. Each cell has a bed, a writing table, washstand and toilet stool. It's very clean, private, and quiet, like a room in a cheap old hotel.

The food is good & plentiful, we get to go outside (into "the yard") 2 or 3 times a day (after meals) and the rest of the time is spent taking tests (so I'm told) and in the cell. It's like a rest home for me—not anything like you might presume. It's really a relief after the Wayne County pigstye.

The greatest thing though—as usual—is the people. It's like being in a large youth camp, with all different kinds of youth around. There is a pretty large contingent of stomp down White Panther Party people here, and they're really happy to have me with them, which makes me very excited. Everyone seems to know about my case, and the sympathy is really overwhelming. It's really exciting for me, considering the circumstances.

Brothers have been giving me packs of cigarettes every time I turn around, a pad of writing paper and this pen, food, soap, books, newspapers, and keep asking me if there's anything I need or want and they'll bring it to me. Right on! It's really far out and not at all like I expected.

I'll probably get a set of headphones tomorrow night and then I'll be able to listen to Danny Carlisle every night and Rudnick & Frawley for an hour (12 to 1) on Sunday. There's been some talk along the grapevine that they're planning to send me to Marquette (!) when my quarantine is over, but I'd like to stay here if possible to be close to you all.

Other things: I was shaved clean today—no moustache—and look and feel like a plucked chicken. I can start growing my stash back when I leave quarantine, and I'll feel a lot better then. But the brothers still recognize me easily enough, and that's what counts above any personal vanity.

They are shipping my clothes and books home in a box—I couldn't keep my Red Book, but you can bring me one in a couple weeks and I should be able to get it. I'll pass it along to my brothers here.

Please get Ravitz to come see me SOON. I want to know what's going on. I read in the News today that the prosecutor is trying to get me 20–24, also, I was served the probation violation yesterday. Turn it over to Chuck immediately, OK? And try to get Kenny Cockrel to come see me if he can, just so I can rap to him about some matters.

Visiting hours are between 8 am and 8 pm Monday—Friday, 8–4 Saturday, none Sunday. Six members of immediate family can visit at once, 3 times a month. Lawyers and ministers visits don't count in the 3. Jesse should be able to visit as my minister if he brings his Church of Universal Life card with him.

Tell everyone to write me—address is John Sinclair, A123507, 4000 Cooper St., Jackson, Michigan 49201. I'm really upset not knowing what's going on at Headquarters with the band etc. Get me word immediately!

All Power to the People!

John



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