Agape

What follows is an unedited copy of a letter received by Suzanne Belote of the Agape Center for the Study and Practice of Christian Nonviolence in Brockton, Massachusetts, from Death Row inmate, Billy Neal Moore, on the eve of the execution of his friend and brother in Christ Jerome Bowden, electrocuted by State decree on June 24, 1986:

Grace, Mercy and Peace be yours, Brayton and Teresa (the names of Suzanne's husband and infant daughter) in God's love and from The Lord Jesus Christ.

Dearest Beloved of Christ,

Suzanne, it's 9:15 and everyone is locked in their cells as the state moves in for the kill... Jerome Bowden, Brother in Christ and a true friend. We have spent many warm and tender hours together over the years and our hearts beat as one, being apart of that same life line of Jesus Christ... God to be praised! for the ugly hand of the state cannot touch that--no one can pluck Jerome from the Father's hand, not even Georgia.

Watching at the window with great difficulty because of the bars in front of my cell; the railing from the second floor walkway; a chain-link fence from the floor to the ceiling; then the window which is down so only the fine mesh screen, that dulls the vision toward the outside; last of all the stone facing squares of the prison that make small holes about 5 by 7 inch windows. But with all of this the state cannot hide the Highway patrol cars circling the prison like vultures waiting for the corpse.

Howard Thurmon once told his daughter's about the prejudice of the officials in Florida to keep blacks off the public playground; he told them that the whole state of Florida needs laws, police and the governor to just keep two little black girls from the swings and sliding boards--it took all of this for them to perfect their prejudice on two children; that's why they were special girls ... Jerome is very special, it takes all of the United States government to end his physical life--the Supreme Court, the State Supreme Court, the Parole Board, the Department of Corrections, the prison warden, the special prison squad, the Highway patrol, the forest rangers, and last of all, the fellow who gets paid to push the button--WOW! Isn't that special treatment? If the state would have been that concerned from the beginning, he surely would not be here today.

Things are so backwards these days and it's called Justice--for who? Surely not for Jerome, the victim, or the families. Why can't they see the problem is the lack of <u>true</u> help from those who claim to be for Justice... that's right, it's JUST US POOR!

Well Suzanne, tomorrow is another man, Son Fleming execution, then on July 2nd is the third, so may Georgia has it's flood gate open now? Its been said one a week until the new year.

Can you believe that all the good food has been save for this time?

(OVER)

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