

## From behind the wall

by Charles Williams

Too often, we see headlines in the newspapers declaring that crime rates are on the up-swing across this nation. Well, if one measures that declaration by the vast and overwhelming number of new commitments arriving here at O.S.P. then multiply by 50 the final analysis must be a definite yes!

Usually we are given the views of those people designated as experts in the field of corrections and the ever elusive rehabilitations divisions and though these people are sometimes thought of as being liberals, the fact is, they are conditioned to think in 'real terms. Let me say now that this article is not merely a deprecating assault on the many thousands of people working in the field of corrections, as obviously, there is a demand for re-socialization programs for the men and women presently incarcerated in this nation's prisons. And equally as important is the many young people who are on the verge of entering into a life of crime.

To simply have available, vocational training programs without the outside contacts to plug these new

trainees into means virtually nothing but a waste of tax dollars...it's like knowing how to cook without food. For many ex-felons, their total bank roll consist of the small dole, or if you wish, discharge or parole allocation. The former being \$100.00 and \$50.00 for the latter. Now if we are to truly be realistic about this, just how far and how much can be done with either of these sums the way prices keep going up? Remember too, that you are dealing with people who are in essence being re-born, people looking for a place in a new lifestyle and they do indeed need more than "Good Intentions", because as their cash becomes less, the old feelings begin to return with additional confused insecurity.

But wait, let's go back. Now we are at the beginning. (Trial & Conviction) Our brother has just received twenty years from the honorable judge Do-right. Now the judge, recognizing that this man has a drug problem, informs that brother that while serving time, he can learn a trade, as well as receive counseling for his fight with drugs. The brother comes

to prison, learns a trade, earns his G.E.D. certificate but there is no help for the war against mighty "Herion". No relation is formed between his need to "understand", and/or "reason" for his habit.

Men take antihuse so that they can participate in the work/school release program. For drug users, well they must give periodic urine samples for testing and with that, they are expected to stop using. Now I ask you, is that real? I'm inclined to believe that it is only idealistic, and for those who have tried to give up smoking, multiply that urge to smoke by 1000, and you might come close to understanding the plight of a herion addict.

Let's now look at another side of those incarcerated. Incarceration does not, per se, remove innate emotions and needs, and though prisons are over-filled, it is a very lonely and unreal life. There is no love in prisons, nor is there any gentleness or real concern. Most people in prison are concerned only with the loved ones they left outside and their eventual release. Prison is a place where you are forced to turn off the

faucets of human emotions, because too often kindness is taken for weakness. No, there is no love in prisons, and it's been proven that all humans, need love or some form, from someone in order to survive. What I'm trying to say here is: Contact with loved ones and people that can relate is extremely important.

Corrections & Rehabilitation people cannot just generalize a plan to apply to prisoners, because they are dealing with individuals. So the programs must be tailored to fit. Granted, the methods of dealing with law-breakers has come a considerable long way from the old method. However, there is still room for more improvements and it's becoming more and more obvious, that the people presently holding these jobs as correctional staff, do not have the answers. Since we are dealing with the Black Prisoner, we must concentrate upon his situation.

Blackmen are returned to prison from work release programs because of personality differences with the white staff supervisors and because a Blackman is known not to particularly

care for whites, he is marked as a trouble-maker. He is then certain to be returned for; driving a car, taking a drink, things that the white inmates are seldom returned for. Very seldom is a Blackman returned to this institution for committing a new crime, on the other hand, whites are often returned for committing crimes against others while on the program and in many cases these men are not held long, and in some cases they are given paroles.

Have you ever wondered why there are no Black people working in the work and school release houses throughout this state? Well it's something that you should look into because as long as Blacks are excluded from employment in these areas, there will never be any real representation for Blackmen in prison. Every one that a Black man is supposed to deal with on any of these programs is white, and how does it sound going to another white man, to tell him that his brother is indeed doing you wrong. Hell, that's like telling Jessie James that Frank James just robbed you.

It is our hope to get the active involvement of all agencies and the Black Community. Without help and assistance from our own, we are destined to be

## Mills receives award

John A. Mills, retiring president of the Urban League of Portland, will be given the Levy Award at the organization's annual dinner meeting Friday, April 18th. Also receiving awards for service to the Urban League will be H.J. Belton Hamilton and James Lee, both of whom have completed twenty-five years of helping the organization in various capacities. The dinner will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Hotel at 7:30 p.m., with a social hour preceding the dinner and dancing to live music following. Cost is \$10.00 per person.

California Assemblyman Willie A. Brown, Jr. of San Francisco will address the meeting on the subject, "Now Is The Time."

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## BEC Comments

We demand the Justice Dept. in Wash., D.C. order the FBI to investigate the murders of Rickie Charles Johnson 17, Charles Menefee, Kenny Allen, and Joe Hopkins, the four Black men who have been killed by the Portland Police Dept. within the last six months.

## BOYCOTT RADIO CAB CO.!!

- Because of the role that Radio Cab Co. played in the murder of 17 year old Rickie Charles Johnson
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#### QUESTIONS UNANSWERED BY THE INQUEST

During the inquest why did Assistant Attorney General John Moore refuse to ask 25 questions submitted to him by the Johnson's family lawyer?

- Why did Sanford shoot into the street at Homer Zachery?  
Sanford said he shot Rickie Johnson in the back of the head because his life was in danger. How can a man running down the street also endanger you life?
- Why was Homer physically abused by three officers?
- Why was Rickie Johnson struck in the middle of the back of the head unless he was running from the police officer?
- Why was Rickie Johnson's unloaded gun found ten feet from his body (behind him) unless he dropped it or threw it down and ran?
- Why do the police use racist and filthy language when dealing with Black people?

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**ANDY PASZOWSKI**, a Physics Major, says he chose Linfield over several other private schools. "I'm glad to get away from a large city. People around here are friendly."



**VICKIE BENTZ**, a Chemistry Major, says she is a person, not a number, at Linfield. "In the smaller classes I get to know the material better and it makes studying easier."

