



From behind the wall

by Larry Baker #35021
O.S.P. Correspondent

There comes a "special evening" once a year, when men wearing skins of blackness cannot afford to think thoughts such as selfishness, hate and hardship. Men who have been incarcerated by the State of Oregon and are always under the watchful eyes of guards, cameras and gun towers.

Neither can these men allow their minds to become clouded with prejudiced memories of the inflictions over the years received by their families and "roots": as their voices softly sing such songs as, "Come All Ye Faithful," instead of "We Shall Overcome." Where such lyrics as "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas, just like the ones I used to know," become more important than just words...but a reality.

Nor can they afford to spoil the beautiful, priceless picture that has taken many hands, of many different colors, to paint - in order to capture the slightest reflection of - a child's simple smile.

This prison reporter will not attempt to re-write this Christmas story, or even how it was first created - only that such an event did occur, commencing at 6:45 p.m. on December 16, 1977.

No, it would not be fair to those inmates, such as the O.S.P. Black Culture Club President, his Business Manager, Project Director, Joe Brown, and many others, who spent many hours feverishly working throughout prior months to bring this night of "joy to the world" to fifteen lucky youngsters ranging between five and eleven years of age.

It would be impossible for this Correspondent to recapture the sincerity given in the opening speech by Mrs. Susan Forkner, who was called upon at the last moment to replace the guest speaker.

It is hard to relate the emotional message John Akin gave, as his lovely wife sat in the audience reminiscing about similar moments when he spoke to his own children with such gentleness.

Nor could enough words of praise be found to thank those who also contributed with toys, bikes, food and money. Or to the prisoners and their Black Santa Claus, played by Harold Hemmick, who brought laughter to the fifteen children of all colors and selected by the Oregon Human Resources Division.

This wasn't newsworthy enough for coverage by many of the local newspaper

ers and TV stations (who had been invited) - or would such news destroy the stereo-typed public image of the convicted Black criminal - of how to take but never give. This Reporter knows fifteen smiling children who will debate such a subject, along with a handful of prison officials and staff. Each and every human being in that room gave something of themselves, be it in the manner of a gift, a speech, applause, or just being in attendance. It would be very hard to forget the night of December 16th as the clock struck 9:00 p.m. and "Jingle Bells" was played as signal for the close of the evenings festivities.

If this beautiful O.S.P. Black Culture Club's "Operation Love" Christmas story is to be, then may it be written throughout the coming year many times. By those who were responsible in placing priceless smiles on those children's lips, as their eyes showed happiness and repeated over and over, "Thank You." Children who have yet to gain such meanings of selfishness, hate, fear and prejudice. May their "special moments" on Christmas be an everyday affair.

And then again, who knows? Maybe this full and complete Christmas story "Operation Love '77" will never be written by anyone. How many people want to actually believe or read the hands of thieves had once touched the hearts of children inside the walls of a prison? Or better yet, that the Christ Child gave birth in a manger in a little town called Bethlehem?

Billy Whitmire #39007

On the night of December 22nd the walls of the Oregon State Penitentiary's visiting room felt, saw and tasted the many heartfelt expressions from inmates, prison officials, staff members and their wives. The savoring of the yearly Christmas Program came to a close, after many weeks of devoted practice from the inmates at O.S.P.

It all became possible because of Mrs. Raymond Helseth - through her faith, patience, professional guidance, and especially through her love for people.

Miriam Helseth, the wife of the devoted Protestant Chaplain at O.S.P., had spent many hours arranging the Christmas Program.

The music that was chosen for this night of unity ranged from "Silent Night" to "Little Baby Boy." The many solos and the choir brought forth the message that Christ, our Savior, was born and brought to those who were present a celebration in the true spirit of Christmas.

Chaplain Raymond Helseth gave the greetings and invocation. Chaplain Helseth participated in the bass section of the choir and spent many hours practicing with the choir. "His efforts were of great help," was the response of many of the inmates.

Especially moving were the solos sung by a Black Christian Brother, Deone Washington; Ed Bradshaw was the pianist. Under the conduction of Mrs. Helseth they set a mood of total silence within the room. And true to the old saying, "Silence has the loudest voice," the audience, myself included, received one of the most powerful Christmas messages ever put forth in song "Behind These Walls."

Harold Knudsen, an inmate of highly skilled professional musical talents, played both the organ and piano, at the same time - Knudsen voiced his feelings of music communication to the soul of man, "One of the greatest forms of communication there is," he said.

Mrs. Winnie Coombs, from McMinnville, Oregon, a guest and friend of the Helseths', was deeply touched by the communication and related, "This is one of the most exciting evenings I've ever spent. Simply beautiful."

This of course was the purpose of the evening; and with great success.

The inmates at O.S.P. have seen the need for communication between themselves and prison officials. In past years this has been a problem in many institutions and it is through this type of program that the barriers between the two "societies" can be bridged.

Especially moving is the knowledge that Warden Hoyt C. Cupp is aware of the inmates desire to relate and work with him to "bridge this gap of non-communication." Mr. Cupp voiced his insight into the two-fold purpose of this joyous night. He was extremely sensitive to the humane and giving of ones self.

Mr. J.C. Kenny, Assistant Superintendent at O.S.P., voiced his opinion of the evening as, "a tremendous performance,"



Inmates prepare for Christmas Party. Deone Washington, George Nulph, Richard Bradbury, Mark Garrison [with guitar], and Ed Bradshaw [at piano]

and wished the evening could have been open to the public.

Mrs. Whitley, wife of Prison Captain Earl Whitley, expressed her enjoyment of the beautiful evening. Many of the inmates and correction officers were asked to give their views of this December night - many felt that not only through the Christmas program, but through other holiday programs the inmates could give of themselves in a way that could be beneficial to all. Not only "Behind the Walls" but in society upon an individual release.

Prisons need to be an accepted part of something humane, and such programs as these have given the men a beautiful chance to begin the destruction of the "communications barrier" between the two "societies."

The evening was brought to a close by O.S.P.'s Catholic Chaplain, Father Mike Spauer. Father Spauer closed with scripture from Isaiah 61:1-2:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; Because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the captives, and the opening of prisons to

them that are bound.

"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the Day of Vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn."

And truly this is what Christ's Birthday, Christmas, is all about, for He has done just this from the day of His birth.

I would personally like to extend my thanks and deep appreciation to all those who made it possible for this evening to be such a great success. To the men who devoted many hours of practice for this evening.

And a special thanks to Mrs. Raymond Helseth for making it all possible - for her love and devotion to such a worthy cause.

I feel in my heart that all 71 of the people who witnessed this Program walked away with a greater love and respect for each other, for Jesus, the total reason above all reasons why this event happened. May God, our Father, receive glory for ever more.

Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year to all of you.

OCTOBER 26 - DECEMBER 24

OR

60 DAYS IN THE HOLE

Depressed? You could say that I have now entered a stage of irreversible depression of idiosyncrasies necessitated in the soundless rhapsody of life - like

Strains of noteless melodies filtering through Corridors of my mind in a continuance flow, No nonsense, non-stop as the heart thump, thump/ping, like the tick tock tick/ing of a clock - wanting, needing to stop - but can't -

A butt laying in the corner thrown in a fit of frustration in attempts to understand elements of these surroundings, like a child's toy top I spin a wooden ashtray on the cement floor of my cage and listen to the drip, drip, drip/ping of a leaking faucet - While asking the dreadful question - am I dead, am I really dead? And if So, then in here the dying are very much alive -

As alive as Joe; that's the name I gave to a cockroach crawling down the wall in my cage last night just before sending him or here to where ever dead cockroaches go; and Jeff next door just sent his lunch down the john searching for Joe.

While back and forth, back and forth - pacing, a symphony, the eternal dilemma of loud words converging within the core of my brain, seeking union with the tongue and lips, and...conversation is really a poor means of existence in here - so I'll just be silent without, making noise within - reach/ing.

by Julius D. Snowden #38013

OSU engineers study dam sites

Oregon State University engineers have been enlisted by the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration to help tap the hydroelectric power potential of streams so small that they were largely ignored until the present energy crisis.

Coastal streams are seen as particular possibilities for such small hydroelectric plant developments in Oregon.

With a new \$61,180 grant from ERDA, three OSU electrical engineers will help study the "Cost of Controls for Small Hydroelectric Plants" during the next year.

The envisioned plants would be so small that they would be instrument controlled, says Pieter A. Frick, project leader. "For such small site hydroelectric plants, the presence of an operator could not be financially justified," he explained.

The small plants have big combined potential though, says Frick, "plus some big technological problems that need solving before the plants can become a reality."

A recent report to President Carter from the Army Corps of Engineers indicated that 159 billion kilowatt hours of electrical power could be obtained annually from such installations in the United States, saving about 727,000 barrels of oil per day, Frick noted.

This is the equivalent of 843 Bonneville Dams.

The Corps of Engineers project identified hundreds of undammed streams that are potential candidates for small site hydroelectric power generation, according to Frick. Some new, secondary sites on rivers with existing dams could be considered also, he noted, if "the usual environmental and the unusual technological problems involved can be solved."

Large hydroelectric plants generally have "only relatively small variations in flow and head and have a human operator present to combat malfunctions and unusual circumstances," Frick said.

"With the small plants being eyed, there would be no human operator on duty and there would be large variations during the year in volume and head (pressure and drop)."

The OSU challenge is to develop more complete and accurate mathematical models for depicting the automatically-controlled operation of the small hydroelectric plants.

"The optimal control of multiple small site hydroelectric plants on the same river poses an extremely difficult problem and only partial solutions are expected in the one-year time frame of this project," Frick observed.

But he sees great potential for the small plants if the technological problems can be met through an intensive national research effort. The USSR and European countries are far ahead of the U.S. in such small site developments, Frick added. "We have tended to concentrate on major hydroelectric installations in the past but the energy shortage is forcing us to pursue other possibilities now."

In large generation plants, the capital cost of the electrical and control equipment constitutes "only a very small fraction of the total construction cost. The proportion would change dramatically for small plants," the engineer emphasized.

"In Oregon, the coastal streams tend to have maximum flow a month or two before the Columbia River," Frick pointed out. "That in itself is a strategically important factor in the overall energy supply outlook for the state and Northwest."

Some selected smaller streams in other parts of the state also could have developmental potential as well, he continued. "The U.S. Midwest is considered a prime area for such developments," he added.

Frick is an applied mathematician within the electrical engineering profession and will head the work on mathematical modeling that is a key in bringing the development of effective and efficient automatic controls. Working with him will be two other electrical engineering professors, G. Corwin Alexander and John F. Engle, whose specialties focus on electric power generation and transmission.

Several other U.S. universities and research agencies were awarded grants to work on other phases of the developmental program.



Over 100,000 patent applications are filed each year.

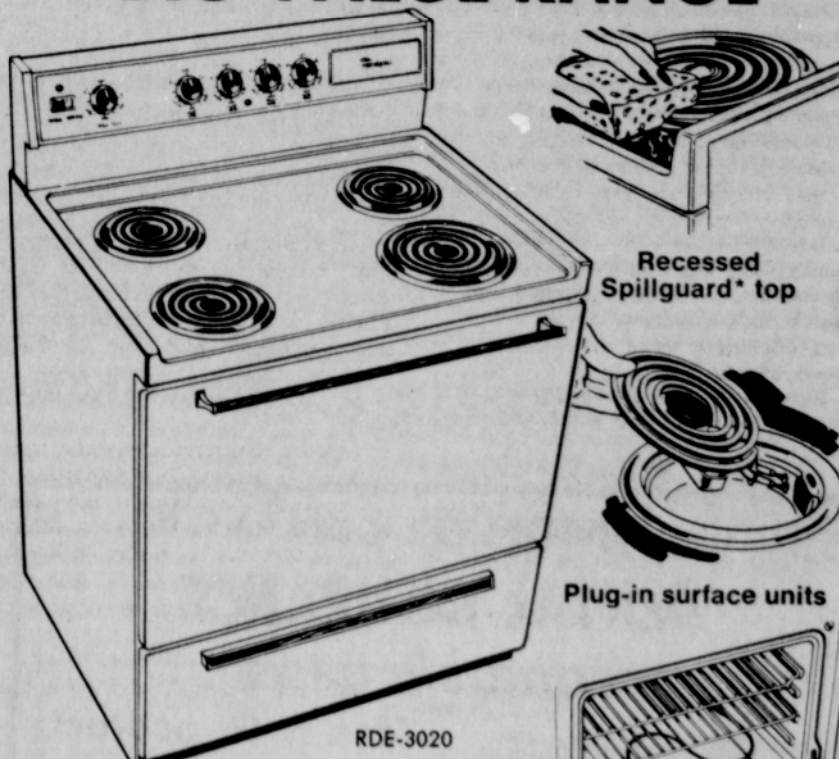
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