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Behind the wall

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by Donald Danford #32323

There is a hunger strike going on in the segregation unit. It's about the conditions there.

Prisoners are kept awake by a steel gate banging on a steel post — steel bouncing on steel at 11:30 p.m. (or 1:30 a.m. and so on all night) a few feet from a prisoner's head. Sometimes prisoners are kept awake by the tapping of a guard's cowboy boots on the smooth cement at 12:30 a.m. Or the guards might decide to put out the metal breakfast bowls on the metal table at 4:00 a.m. and do it so that the sound of each bowl hitting the table can be heard at the opposite end of the building. There are a couple of dozen other ways the guards keep prisoners awake or wake them if they choose. A complete list would be a study in abnormal behavior.

It may be hard to imagine a group of guards purposely going out of their way to hassle sleeping or almost sleeping prisoners. But it is not hard for the hundreds who go to the S&I unit (Security and Isolation) each year. Guards may be a lot of things, but they are not complete morons: they know when they are banging a gate at two in the morning and they know the results of banging that gate.

Noise at night is a common thing, both in the S&I building and the main cell blocks. But since S&I has the acoustics of an echo chamber, it is often noisier on one fifteen man tier in S&I than on one side of a 400 man cell block.

The guard's noise at night is one of the several techniques that have been hammered out over the years as to what constitutes acceptable behavior toward prisoners. Food handling by guards in the S&I unit who have grime on their hands, and stacking the bottom of one tray square on another tray full of food are two more techniques. Allowing the food to get cold and serving it mixed with dirt and hair is yet another example of acceptable behavior by guards.

Guards get away with actions that would not be accepted in a civilized atmosphere, and they get away with it consistently because there are not any checks to stop them. And this is what the food strike is all about: the quality of the staff working the S&I unit. Upgrade the quality of that staff and hopefully the new staff will not only know that a lot of noise keeps prisoners awake (as the present staff does), but also they will not make it.

There are hundreds of goals that could be accomplished if prisoners were allowed to sleep at night, and this one "right", i.e., allowing a prisoner the chance to sleep, would be a step toward meaningful prison reform.



A Chicano inmate chats with an O.S.P. guard.

by Art Chavez #36385

I think one would be surprised at the amount of conflicts that could be avoided if we would learn to show some respect for one another. I MEAN ALL OF US, Staff as well as inmates, White, Black, Chicano or whatever our color or origin . . . may be.

Regardless of what a man has done or what position he is in within these walls, he deserves some respect, in order to receive respect. We must learn to give respect.

Many times a guard would get more cooperation if he would lower the tone in his voice just a little, and the same goes for the inmates when needing cooperation from the prison staff. Many times the way we talk to a person can make all the difference in the world.

We have to realize that tension exists in this penal institution. This tension is felt by the guards as well as the inmates. The presence of tension can create short fuses, short fuses ignite and explode fast.

And to the guards: You don't have to relinquish any authority or become a 'push-over' by addressing an inmate in a decent, but yet a formal voice. The same can apply to we who wear blue dungarees with prison numbers on them. The guards and the administration don't want to be 'fronted-off' by an inmate who is subordinate. It doesn't make you any less a man to answer someone in a 'cool' and normal voice.

A man will be recognized as a man, whether he is in O.S.P. or out on the streets. It all depends on the way one carries himself. We don't have to wake up each morning trying to prove our manhood, unless we are uncertain of it. (Ladies, when I use the word 'Man and Manhood', I use it in a general term, referring to both sexes.)

Most frequently we have the Inmates vs. Inmates conflicts, we should be more than willing to be respectful to one another, because

we share the same fate each day, regardless who we are. We may receive disrespect from the guards and feel reluctant to respond, because of the futility of our position, but on the other hand if disrespect comes from another inmate we may do him some great bodily harm. This is not necessary, if we just learn to respect one another.

Some of the most powerful and influential people in history have been humble and soft spoken. Screaming and shouting or insulting remarks only reflects the same. If a person is respectful, he deserves the same. We are all from different backgrounds, educational, economical, political, social and racial. We have different likes, dislikes, personalities, and moral values. Some of us are free, some confined and some semi-free. But we all have one thing in common. We are all human beings.

If I can stand in the chow-line for ten minutes, why can't everyone do the same. If I didn't want to eat, I wouldn't be there. If I walk from the back of the line to the front I am being disrespectful to every man in that line.

Would it hurt to ask a person for the salt and pepper, instead of reaching over his tray for it? This type of incident may seem trivial but to men already denied some of the basic pleasures in life this is only adding insult to injury.

Let's treat the next person the way we would like to be treated and maybe we can lose that label of being an animal. Or do we prefer to be called 'Animals'? A man is a man, whether he is four or eight feet tall.

(NOTE: Chavez is an inmate at the Oregon State Penitentiary serving five years for burglary. Born January 4, 1945, Mexican-American descent. From Los Angeles, California, ninth grade education and he has no one to correspond or visit with here in the State of Oregon. Anyone wishing to do so please write, 'Chavez' #36385, 2605 State Street, Salem, Oregon 97310.)

Tuition Advance: New plan for school assistance

WASHINGTON — Senator Edward M. Kennedy has introduced legislation in the United States Senate to establish Boston University President John R. Silber's plan for a Tuition Advance Fund (TAF).

Kennedy declared that the bill "presents an admirable way of providing for college costs in a comprehensive fashion, and with a financing scheme that is equitable to other taxpayers as well." Kennedy is a co-sponsor of the legislation with U.S. Senator John Durkin (D-N.H.). The bill, S. 3044, is identical to the one introduced in the House of Representatives on April 20th by U.S. Representative Michael J. Harrington (D-Mass.).

The Senate and the House bills call upon the federal government to establish an education trust fund to advance to college sophomores, juniors and seniors the cost of tuition plus \$1,000 in education-related expenses, such as room and board, up to a maximum of \$5,000 annually. The advance would be repaid by the student through small yearly payroll withholding installments at the rate of two percent of adjusted gross income during his working lifetime, plus a fifty percent surcharge. Default would be precluded.

In an essay in the July issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, President Silber writes of "The Tuition Dilemma: A New Way to Pay the Bills."

"Something fundamental must be done — and done soon — if America is not to default on its national

commitment to equal educational opportunity," he writes. "Unless comprehensive steps are taken in the financing of higher education — steps comparable in scope to the Morrill Act of 1862 establishing land grant colleges, or the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 establishing the GI Bill — increasing numbers of academically qualified students will be denied access and choice in higher education simply because the costs will prove unmanageable."

In his essay, President Silber argues that the Moynihan-Packwood proposal for tuition tax credits "properly calls attention to these problems, but does not provide an adequate solution, for it leaves a major burden of financing higher education on the backs of the parents who, as a general rule, cannot find the resources to feed and clothe their children and to carry, in addition, the cost of their college education. In order to achieve authentic educational opportunity, we must introduce the old-fashioned American principle that the person who receives the benefit is the one who ought to pay for it.

"The other major proposal now before Congress comes from President Carter. The TAF is consistent with the President's statements on financing higher education, and is in no way at odds with his programs. The proposals made by President Carter and Representative William D. Ford (D-Mich.) would

provide more money for federal grants, loans and work-study aid. They would be an improvement over the present situation; but they do not promise the comprehensive solution to the problem that the TAF does."

President Silber estimates the probable cost of the TAF to be \$3.5-\$4.5 billion annually in current dollars and calls for it to be assessed "in light of the billions we spend each year on nonessentials: \$5 billion for candy and ice cream; \$17.4 billion on tobacco; \$37.8 billion for alcohol."

Responding to a question July 10th on a Boston television show about how TAF "jibes with the mood of the country in terms of Proposition 13," President Silber said: "I think it jibes very well. One of the reasons why Americans are so burdened by taxes is that they are terribly burdened by the cost of educating their children. If one can take from the back of the parent the total cost of educating two or three children, and placed that burden gently on the shoulders of each student, and let him carry it and pay it off over a working lifetime, taxpayers in this country will feel instant relief. And they won't feel instant relief of \$250 or \$500 as under the tuition tax credit plan. Rather it would be relief of up to \$5,000 each year for three years of college education. Now when you take a burden of financing a college education of \$15,000 off the back of the middle class parent, he is going to feel great relief."

Thefts increases

There has been an increase in bicycle thefts in the St. Johns area due to bicycles being improperly secured or left in unlocked garages or open car ports.

Furthermore, owners of these bicycles have failed to properly engrave their bikes and have failed to copy down the serial number. This decreases the likelihood that the property will ever be returned to the rightful owner.

For information on how citizens can safeguard their property contact the CRIME PREVENTION UNIT/NORTH PRECINCT 248-5720.

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MEMBER OF UNITED CARCERS

Africa Blacks reject Sullivan Principles

(Continued from Page 1 Column 3) employing a total of 30,000 people which is a ridiculously small percentage of the total Black population — 0.16% to be exact. And, is that all that we want — integrated bathrooms, a few more pennies and a title? For the umpteenth time, NO!

We want our fair share of the pie. We want to be masters of our own destiny and not just a huge labor reservoir for the benefit of the Afrikaner. We are entitled to the right to live where we choose and not be subject to banishment to some back of beyond called a "homeland".

Thus the Principles, dreamed up by Sullivan who also happens to be a member of General Motors' Board of Directors (GM is very much involved in South Africa) are totally unacceptable since they pledge to work within, and to continue to

finance the existing system. The whole system has got to go. And now that South Africa has a law empowering it to take over any company it deems "essential to national security", GM, Firestone and any other foreign company can be forced to produce war material to crush any Black uprising. And their personnel would be "encouraged" to join the Volunteer Army.

So, the argument frequently voiced by businessmen about being in South Africa solely to do business and not engage in politics becomes as hollow as a Winchells donut. The moment you invest in South Africa, you are already inextricably involved in the politics because you are supplying the money that keeps the system afloat.

Equally hollow is the argument that foreign companies can do more harm than good by withdrawing because if they stay, they can force a relaxation of some apartheid policies. The recent crackdown on dissidents and the banning of almost all publications critical of apartheid indicate that the reverse is true. Foreign companies will merely toe the government line. The gap between Black and white earnings has climbed almost sixty percent since 1969.

South Africa's *Financial Mail*, their equivalent of *The Wall Street Journal*, in its article about the Principles, titled it a "damp squib" (a

firecracker that fizzles). It faulted the Principles for leaving out all mention of trade union rights: "The American business manifesto needs to be a lot further . . . and be followed up with determination. As a head on confrontation with apartheid, it is just not on."

Finally, a top secret memo from Mr. Bowdler, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa and printed in *Southern Africa* (published in North Carolina). Bowdler had conducted a poll to determine the acceptability of the Sullivan Principles. His conclusion was that the vast majority of the Africans rejected them out of hand, citing many of the reasons outlined above.

Donald Woods, speaking at the NAACP Convention two weeks ago when asked about the Principles merely asked:

"What would the Jews have said to American companies doing business in Nazi Germany under a code of principles for the employment of Jews?"

So, the message from Black South Africa is loud and clear: American companies out of South Africa NOW.

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Facts of Importance

VOLUME III

AUGUST 1978

SERIES I

Exodus completed its first certificate training course for its counselors on July 21, 1978. This training provides additional counseling skills to its staff, in order to serve its clientele more consistently.

A similar course will be scheduled for the community at large during the month of October. The course will center around communication linkages between substance abusers, spouse of substance abusers, children who are substance abusers, and parents of children who are substance abusers. This course will be taught at the grass-roots level.

Registration for this course will be published in our September column of the *Portland Observer*.

Our clients thank you for your continued support.

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