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Behind the wall

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Poetry Editor

by Julius D. Snowden #38013

It was a special class as well as the men that participated. It consisted mainly of prisoners who, until recently, never really ever considered the consequences or the many ramifications surrounding the legal universities (the law) of this land. The topic of this meeting, this group, was just that — the law!

To further their basic and present knowledge as to the function of the law Circuit Court Judges from throughout Oregon were invited to sit in on this special Friday Night Law Class. Those who did accept were Judge Don Katberer, a juvenile court judge from Columbia County; and Judge Jerry Kabler from Douglas County; each gave his (added) thoughts as well as some pretty good advice and support, when needed.

It seems that the purpose of this special law class — which is generally coordinated by the "Behind the Wall" correspondent, Larry Baker — was to seek a solution or something in the general form of a solution in curtailing the recent influx of today's youths who are now entering prisons.

It is ironic how today's young, to some degree, consider the life of a convict, as in some areas, as the "in thing". But if some of those kids who desire his or her ultimate goal is

to see just how many rules can be broken, or, to break as many as they can — perhaps if it could have been possible for them to have sat in on this special class, I believe they would've been either surprised or impressed by what these prisoners felt. In describing their feelings concerning individual personal involvement with the law; there was a unanimous consent by the inmates and the outside guests that if a class of this caliber had existed earlier in their lives that their present residence and record would never stand as they do today. They, as some pointed out, would have become more familiar with the law and indeed ventured out into something more constructive, instead of the life they have thus far lead!

It was strongly felt that there must be a better way of introducing more interest for the law as well as respect for the law from today's youth. Which was to compile, pass and present experiences in a very blunt, factual and detailed booklet. A booklet describing what life is like to be confined behind bars, what a person has to go through here during incarceration and what the chances are upon release of ever forgetting they were ever in prison. Some of the participants even went as far, in a speculative manner, of suggesting that the crime troubled youth of Oregon's juvenile courts be allowed



a chance to come in to O.S.P. and meet and acquaint themselves with an inside view of the Corrections Division and some of the men who make up the ranks as inmates here. To see and choose for themselves if a life of "crime and prison" is what they truly and honestly want out of life! Because these same youth are but only a short hop, skip and jump from joining us behind these cold gray walls of O.S.P.

Even though the above mentioned suggestion could be a good alternative program for troubled youths today it's only one of a series of approaches to the problem of juvenile delinquency and also a workable one if ever given a chance to become an

actual reality.

During Friday nights rap session one prisoner further gave support, as well as Judge Kalberer, to this type of program by stating if an alternative program had been in effect at the time he had his first run in with the law he could have really benefited from it and would have definitely not been present at the meeting. This just goes to show you that if an alternative program of this nature was to ever become a living reality here in Oregon for troubled youth of tomorrow's Juvenile Court System, juvenile delinquency and crime would and could decrease. The problem with dealing with today's youth won't be such a problem at all.

Minority contractors honor Commerce Secretary

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Commerce Juanita M. Kreps was honored by the Board of Directors of the Minority Contractors Assistance Project, Inc. (MCAP) for her role in promoting minority business development.

Following the annual meeting of the MCAP Board in Washington, D.C., Secretary Kreps was presented with a plaque which cited her "steadfast, creative and energetic actions to stimulate successful minority contractor participation in the construction industry."

In presenting the award MCAP President Dickie S. Carter cited Secretary Kreps' "effective implementation of the Local Public Works Program, which made more than \$600 million in construction contracts available to some 8,000 minority contractors.

"The law required 10% minority

participation," Carter said, "and 15% was achieved. Furthermore, these contracts were made available at the hurry-up pace demanded by Congress and in the face of organized and very vocal opposition.

"We knew in advance that the Local Public Works Program would draw fire from those who don't like to share the action with minority contractors," Carter said, "and last year we honored Congressman Mitchell for his political leadership and daring in getting the program through Congress.

"It is appropriate that we now honor Secretary Kreps for her steadfast and forceful administration of this important program which made jobs and income available to minorities who in the past have been excluded from public construction."

Mr. Carter also noted that last year the Department's Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE)

assisted some 45,000 minority businesses and that the Interagency Council for Minority Business Enterprise has indicated that total federal procurement from minority firms is expected to exceed \$1.7 billion in fiscal 1978, a 50% increase over the preceding year.

A private nonprofit corporation, MCAP last year helped minority contractors across the nation with over \$100 million in construction, providing financial, technical and management assistance under a contract with OMBE.

Using loan funds made available by five life insurance companies — Metropolitan, Prudential, Equitable, New York Life and Aetna — MCAP guaranteed 47 loans, totaling about \$1.3 million and directly financing around \$10 million in construction contracts.

MCAP also obtained over \$15 million in surety bonding for

minority contractors last year, about half of which was underwritten by its new subsidiary company, MCAP Bonding and Insurance Agency, Inc. Operating under agreements with Aetna Casualty and Surety Company, Insurance Company of North America and Fidelity and Deposit Company of Maryland, the new MCAP agency has provided over \$8 million in bonding on 70 projects.

Computerized estimating, cost control, scheduling and project monitoring services were provided to minority contractors by MCAP on 85 projects totaling over \$14 million in construction.

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Leaders honored

The Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR) will honor two long-time civil rights leaders at its 29th Annual Meeting January 22nd-23rd at the Capital Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Andrew J. Biemiller, retiring director of the Department of Legislation, AFL-CIO and the Reverend Msgr. George G. Higgins, Secretary for Research, U.S. Catholic Conference, will receive the LCCR Hubert H. Humphrey Civil Rights Award. The awards for "Selfless and devoted service in the cause of equality" will be presented by Clarence M. Mitchell, LCCR Chairman.

Mercenaries

(Continued from Page 2 Column 6) said he quit because he "got tired of rifle-butting villagers in the mouth who were no more rebels than I was."

This story on mercenaries, though mostly depressing, ends on a somewhat encouraging note: as the fighting intensifies, the guerrillas steadily gaining the upper hand, some of the mercenaries realize the futility of their nefarious mission and have begun to desert. The shadow of Daniel Gearhart (who was executed in Angola in 1976 after being convicted of being a mercenary) hangs over all their heads like a nightmare that stubbornly refuses to go away even with the break of day. Our French deserter sums the situation up beautifully: "In comparison to what I had heard, I found the guerrillas' potential to fight to be very high, much better than we had been told. And I am sure that it is rising. After what I have seen, what with the combativeness of the guerrillas, I think the Rhodesians are done for."

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THE WINNER	Says let me do it for you.
THE LOSER	Says "that's not my job."
THE WINNER	Sees an answer for every problem.
THE LOSER	Sees a problem in every answer.
THE WINNER	Sees a green near every sand trap.
THE LOSER	Sees two or three sand traps near every green.
THE WINNER	Says it may be difficult but it's possible.
THE LOSER	Says "it may be possible but it's too difficult."

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