

Behind the Wall

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Seldom will you find a group of convicts willing to say, "thank you," to a Superintendent of a state prison. This is especially noteworthy since only a few weeks ago those same prisoners were confined to their cells for a period of six days with the loss of their privileges, recreation and hot meals. Lord only knows how many of them made dolls resembling Hoyt C. Cupp, Superintendent of O.S.P., and stuck them with needles and pins while playing the "Voodoo" game. Oh! Wow, I can still taste those damn stale sandwiches.

What separates the men from the boys in an institution is the fact that they can publicly acknowledge something good that someone else has done for them. So if "The Man" has a thank you coming, then he is entitled to it, right up front.

Hoyt C. Cupp recently announced that O.S.P. had been given full institutional sanction to a "special interest class" that two years ago was only an inmate's dream.

Time and time again Cupp has warned the residents of this institution that if he ever received even the slightest hint of an "inmate council" being formed, even if it was in the middle of the night, he would jump right out of his warm bed, pajamas and all, and come running down here with one purpose in mind. "Everybody is going to the 'Hole'." Wow! That's not a dream, that's a nightmare.

What type of a "special interest" class did Cupp sanction? It is called *The Class of Legal Processes*.

Thirty inmates, whose responsibility it is to govern themselves, set up their own curriculum designed to learn the basis of civil, state and federal law. The inmate students also have the privilege to invite anyone to their sessions knowledgeable in those fields as a guest lecturer or participant.

"It wasn't until I started attending these sessions and learned how and why some laws were created by our legislators," says Clifton Wash. "That I actually began to gain respect for them, as well as for what those laws stood for."

Who teaches and lectures at these sessions for the class? Check this out. Attorneys, judges, law professors, legislators and etc.

"Heck, I had my own sentencing judge come in and lecture on the sen-



State Representative Jane Cease, and Kathy Pete of Willamette Law School talk to inmate students of the Class of Legal Processes.

tencing procedures of the court," said David Crawford.

Many of the inmates in the class have been through the criminal justice system many times and will readily admit they still don't know what went on in the courtroom before they were sentenced.

"Man, that ain't nothing," interrupted Pete Gongales. "We've even had the state's prosecutor in my trial come to class and lecture on legal courtroom procedures."

Convicted prisoners being lectured to by judges and district attorneys inside a prison? Makes one question if Keesey's Academy Award winning film, "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" was filmed where? Oh, well! Right city, but wrong street.

The Class of Legal Processes goes into its third year of operation this month and its maximum capacity has increased from ten to thirty students since it originated in March 1979. The classes' popularity has spread throughout the prison population. There are over 100 inmates on a waiting list.

The success of the class cannot be measured by the inmates alone. In cooperation with prison officials, many valuable people have helped tie this success together and it now func-

tions in official capacity with statewide coordinators.

Northern Oregon area, Judge Robert E. Jones, Multnomah County Circuit Court. Southern Oregon area, Dixie Hannon, Ashland, Oregon, (wife of State Senator Lenn Hannon). Eastern Oregon area, Judge Walt I. Edmonds, Deschutes County Circuit Court. Western Oregon area, Andy Bugas, Astoria, Oregon, (son of State Representative Theodore T. Bugas). Oregon's Legislative area, Shirley Mead, Salem, Oregon. Together these individuals have contributed endless hours volunteering service to help build the class.

"I have never been in an environment with so many top officials, from this state, where you can get to know them as human beings and respect their viewpoints from where they stand. Every Wednesday night I personally look forward to these sessions. I think they're neat," stated Donald Duffy.

Recently the inmate students had as their guest Phyllis Burke, a law student attending Northwestern Law School. Ms. Burke who has been involved with prison out-of-state educational programs around the country and at present is attempt-

ing to obtain a law degree; wants to pass the Oregon Bar Association and practice law in this state, mentioned, "This is the first time I have ever heard of this type of a class being established inside of a prison's walls."

What effects have the class sessions had upon the prison? Since the first class, about 200 inmates have participated in them and only nine have been known to receive any type of disciplinary infractions while they were students. The class also teaches the inmate to use the legal procedures if having problems with guards or staff when they feel there is no other course of action open.

As one guard pointed out, "now days it's almost getting to the point where we (guards) have to learn all the civil rights status before we can write a disciplinary report that will stand up in court on these guys. Sometimes I have to go home and practice the 'quick-draws' with my pencil to write a man up (disciplinary report), because if I don't draw fast enough, I can get hit with a grievance report from the inmate."

H.C. Cupp respects this type of action between inmates and staff in resolving their problems, if there is no more room for discussing their grievances. Learning how to handle their frustrations through legal channels, instead of violence, is the most healthful lesson a person can learn in life," says Superintendent Cupp. Cupp has awarded his institution with over \$20,000 in new law books and materials last year and he expects them to be used.

"Unless everything is done in a voluntary nature the class will not accept it," says the inmate class coordinator. "Receiving funds or writing a grant for assistance would take the needed human element out of the sessions. I really respect these elective, civil and professional individuals who can drop to this level of society to help a person understand what different laws mean and stand for. Some day it will once again be a way of life for more than 95% of us upon release."

So this is what Hoyt C. Cupp is being thanked for — opening the doors of this prison so the residents can learn from the experts 'the way of life.'

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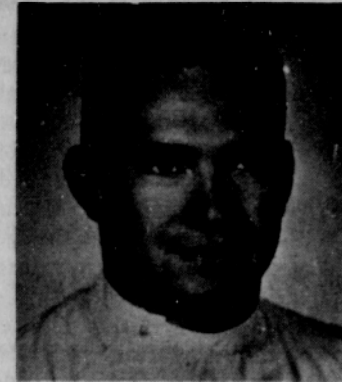
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A Cook's Tour of the Legislature

by State Senator Vern Cook

By the time you read this, the House Tax Plan, the alternative to Governor Atiyeh's program, has probably been passed by the Oregon House of Representatives and is on the way to the Senate for almost immediate consideration. The program definitely has broad and bi-partisan support.

We outlined the major proposal in our previous column: a 30% property tax refund of up to \$800 with similar renter rebate, the present homeowner and renter relief on top of that for those with income up to \$17,500, a rebate of income tax payments of about \$100 on the average, and an indexing in the income tax to reduce the effects of inflation.

The House plan would be entirely statutory without a need for a vote on a Constitutional amendment. Designed to cover the coming biennium, the first calendar year of operation (1979) would be covered by the law. The measure would be submitted to voters in the May 1980 primary election and if approved would become effective for the second calendar year (1980) and would then become a permanent program for the future, except the income tax indexing which would have to be renewed by the Legislature.

Also mandated would be a new method for submitting local govern-

ment tax levies, affecting all amounts in excess of the six percent limitation. After voter approval of an amount equal to the previous year's excess above the limitation, any additional amount could be submitted to the voters only three times.

Our Judiciary committee is continuing its review of Rules of Civil Procedure, which we expect to complete by month's end. Authorized by the '77 Legislature, the new rules will take effect 90 days after the session unless vetoed by the Legislature. They will have significant effects on all litigation.

Bills sought by the Support Enforcement Division of the Attorney General's office, involved with collecting child support from non-custodial parents, would strengthen the hand of the state. Utah, with the best U.S. collection record, receives only 11% of the amounts due, with Oregon at 8%, one of the Nation's leaders. The bill would require notice to the division of any decree modification, would make state and federal pensions subject to garnishment, and would extend the long-arm jurisdiction statute to get at out-of-state fathers of children born out of wedlock. Another bill contains a radical proposal to substitute administrative procedures for court procedures. This would limit the rights of individuals involved.

A very interesting bill has been the "Free Speech" Senate Bill 361 which

would open quasi-public areas. Volumes of letters have been received, and the committee is working on amendments to remove some objections yet retain the rights of the public to express freedom of speech in the public areas of shopping centers.

The committee has also been assigned SB 581 which would repeal the 55 mile an hour speed limit and return Oregon to the Basic Rule. The bill, introduced by Judiciary committee, will delve at considerable length into the truth or falsity of claims and charges for and against the bill, relating to lives saved, fuel conserved, and threatened energy shortages. We hope for at least a cleanup of the present law to remove the energy speed limit when the fuel shortage ends.

Considered at the request of the City of Portland is a bill to make life harder for pimps (procurers for prostitution). The testimony of prostitutes would be allowed without corroborating testimony, which is sometimes required where the witness is a participant in a crime, but which is not universally required. I will also propose making procurement of Class A instead of a Class C felony, thereby increasing the potential sentence. Portland City Commissioner Charles Jordan appeared in support. Although the bill won't eliminate prostitution it will surely discourage it.

At the next Legislative Report Breakfast on Saturday, March 31st, House Speaker Hardy Myers will be the special guest speaker. The breakfast, starting at 8:00 a.m., runs for two hours at the M&M Restaurant, 137 N. Main Avenue in downtown Gresham. The public is urged to attend. Senator Bill McCoy was the special guest on March 17th.

I always welcome opinions to help guide me in the Legislature, and the breakfasts are an effective way to convey them. Your letters and cards are likewise always welcome at my office. Write to me: Senator Vern Cook, S211, Capitol, Salem, Oregon 97310.

China, farmers luncheon topic

At a luncheon hosted by the Marion County Jane Jefferson Club, Congressman Les AuCoin will speak on "The People's Republic of China." At 1:30 and 3:30 issues workshops will take place in which grass roots Democrats and Democratic Legislators will discuss such issues as "The Rising Militancy of the American Farmer — Justified or Not?" and "What Features Do Democrats Wish to see Incorporated into a Legislative Plan?" Each work-

shop discussion will be led by a Legislator and a member of the Platform and Resolutions Committee of the Democratic Party of Oregon.

A banquet at Putman Center will continue the forum. Organizers have taken care to select buildings with a minimum of architectural barriers for the elderly and handicapped. Registration and the morning program will be held in the Collins Legal Center. All Democrats are urged to attend.

The House Of EXODUS

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MARCH 1979

On the Season of Spring:

Spring is nature's activity of renewed substance.

On Self-Control:

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over SELF.

Aristotle

On Self-Reliance:

The greatest thing in the world is to know how to be sufficient unto oneself.

Montaigne

On Reward:

The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.

Ralph Waldo Emerson