



Behind the Walls

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

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I am an inmate at the Oregon State Penitentiary. Being from Eastern Oregon, I am very aware of how very little the average person there know about the corrections branch of government in Oregon.

I was born in Nyssa. I attended school and grew up in the Vale area, and I was employed in Ontario as a Service Technician for Ontario Photocopy Equipment Company. So I guess you could say I'm native to the area.

The State of is the largest employer in the state and corrections is one of the largest divisions within this body and therefore takes a large percent of your tax dollar. So it is only right that you might wonder how this money is spent. I cannot give you an itemized list of expenditures, but I can tell you about one small program here at the prison that is funded by your tax dollars, and has really helped me see the light at the end of the tunnel, so to speak. I am speaking about the electronics vocational training program

here, in which I am currently enrolled.

Our instructor is Mr. Don Rea. He is a competent and personable man who takes his job seriously. The class room is equipped to handle ten students. The class is taught so that each inmate can progress at his own rate of learning. To qualify for the class you must have good reading comprehension and a knowledge of basic arithmetic. Also you must be within two years of your release date. It usually takes from 12 to 14 months to complete the class.

Can we find jobs after completion of the class? Yes, in fact, the class cannot turn out men fast enough to meet the demand for their skills. Besides employment, the class gives many of us something else we never had when we came here. A sense of self worth.

What would I be doing if I wasn't in the program? Like many other inmates, I would probably be walking the Red Desert feeling sorry for myself. The Red Desert is a name the old cons use to describe

the red cinder track which runs around the prison yard. It's kind of an inside joke here to speak about the lost souls who wander the Red Desert.

At the present time there is a new V.T. building being constructed adjacent to the old one and is slated for completion about September of this year. This new building will almost double the current opportunities as far as vocational training is concerned. In my opinion, this is money well spent.

One of the more positive things about the V.T. programs is that they allow our V.T. instructors to go out into the community one day each month to help in job placement for their students and also to keep current with the latest techniques in their respective fields.

I'm sure you have all heard many negative things about prisons. While many of these are undoubtedly true, there are many positive things a man can do here in order to rehabilitate himself. I feel that the V.T. programs offered here are of major importance in contributing to rehabilitation.

Message from the Superintendent

By Hoyt C. Cupp
Superintendent
Oregon State Penitentiary

As you are no doubt aware, the Employee Bargaining Unit has given us notification of their intent for all non-security staff, (e.g., Counselors, Stewards, Maintenance, Clerical, etc.) to go out on strike effective Monday, June 16, 1980. This will, in some instances, cause some inconvenience for inmates and remaining staff. Nevertheless, I am committed to continuing to run the institution as normally as possible during this period.

During the period of the strike, all

lines and activities will run as normal, with the exception of:

- Education Department.
- The ABE Program will be closed.
- College Program operation will depend on how many professors come to work.
- Vocational Training Program will be closed.
- The Industries swing shift will be closed.
- Inmates assigned to swing shift will be provided jobs during the regular day shift.
- Physical Plant assignments will be curtailed. Selected inmates normally assigned to the Physical Plant

will be "on call" should Physical Plant management staff need their services.

It is not my desire that inmate pay be entirely terminated as a result of the strike. To offset pay loss, inmates not working due to suspended operations will continue to earn pay up to the first 5 days of the strike. Good times will continue to be accrued without interruption throughout the duration of the employee work stoppage.

Counseling Services will be provided. Please confine requests for counseling services to urgent needs. Interview Requests will be screened for that purpose.

Cell Talk

By Asmar Abdul Seifullah
(aka Joe West # 40404)

By Malik Ahmad Sabr Ali
(aka Alvin H. Canell 33512)

We have written, we have asked, we have appealed to you in every way possible for us, but the response has been a silent one. I would now like to ask you a couple questions but your answers should be directed to the honesty of your heart and the truthfulness of your mind.

What would be the effect on you if you were 1) accused by a white so-called victim of a crime that really never took place like they say it did. 2) Arrested by a sea of white police. 3) Jailed by white jailers. 4) Prosecuted by a white prosecutor. 5) Sent to a racist prison; racist by its very conception and design. 8) Dehumanized by white guards?

1. Would you say "this is justice?"
2. Would you plead for help?
3. Would you kill yourself?
4. Would you adjust?
5. Would you ignore the whole things?
6. None of the above....

What would be the effect on you if: You were sent to prison from a morally and financially bankrupt section of a very wealthy city, and you left behind loved ones and friends who haven't the means to provide for themselves, not from laziness, but from lack of jobs and lack of equal opportunity to acquire decent jobs?

1. Would you worry?
2. Would you be angry at the system?
3. Would you wish you could work her for \$1.00 a day to help at home?
4. Would you ignore it?
5. None of the above...

What would be the effect on you if: Once you got to prison you saw

All other activities such as Recreation Yard, Activities, Canteen, Visiting, etc... will continue as normal. To dispel any rumors, I see no need whatsoever to implement any kind of lockdown.

Again, it will be unfortunate if the employee work stoppage occurs. It will require extra tolerance and patience on the part of us all. Your cooperation is requested. You can be assured we will continue to do all we can to seek early resolution to this situation.

Children

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large particles takes place. Small children may at times swallow some of the ash. Evidence to date suggests that ingestion of ash is not a hazard to the health of children and adults.

Children should certainly be prevented from playing in areas where ash is deep on the ground or piled up, especially if they are likely to lie or roll in the ash. More frequent cleaning of home interior areas where children play will minimize the amount of indoor ash exposure in areas of heavy past or future ashfalls.

Since there is the potential for further ashfalls, it would be appropriate for families to obtain a mask for each member and to discuss their use.

A PERSONAL MOMENT
FOR THOSE WHO CARE

The airplane the Wright Brothers flew is little more than a distant cousin to the jet liners of today. The first radio is even farther than a distant cousin to modern day television. Improving on the original makes the object a part of many through their contributions. The only thing that offers perfection from the start is love. A perfect love cannot be improved.

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personnel who were less moral, less educated and less needy than the community from which you were stolen, "earn from \$1,000 to \$1,700 dollars a month" by telling grown men to "take off your hat, tuck your shirt in, cell in" and locking doors?

1. Would you say, "if my people could get jobs like this, we wouldn't be subjected to prison nearly as much as we are now?"

2. Would you despise the system for systematic racism?
3. Would you challenge the family affair here to provide our people jobs that would help meet the rise of inflation?
4. Would you ignore it?
5. None of the above....

What would you do if your wife and your babies drove fifty miles, used a tank of gas and three hours travel time to visit you and then, after they got here, were only allowed one hour visiting time because of lack of visiting space in the Oregon State Penitentiary, when it is designed to hold 1107 men, but the visiting room is only designed for 120 people?

1. Would you quietly submit to this cold treatment, when you've waited seven to fourteen days to see your family and have tolerated the bullshit of O.S.P., just trying to keep cool until your family could come and comfort you.
2. Would you ignore it and say "Ah, such is prison?"
3. Would you scream and shout?
4. Would you.....?
5. None of the above.

What would you do if you spoke out against the powers that be, and suddenly your mail stopped coming, but you knew your wife and family wrote everyday?

1. Would you accuse your people of not writing (breaking your own ties with the outside world)?

2. Would you accept it?
3. Would you question the mail room?
4. Would you ignore it?
5. None of the above....

We are under such conditions here and we don't know really what to do. We know that something could be done with your help! We wonder alot. We wonder why won't the urban League, the N.A.A.C.P., The Black United Front, in concert, or individually, sponsor workshops inside O.S.P., to find out what we need while we are here and after we leave here. This could grow into a national project. It could get federal funding to help both communities, i.e. the community in Portland and the second largest Black population politics, human and civil rights; it is very much needed.

We have anywhere from 400 to 500 Black men in the corrections system in Salem. Surely this number is large enough to cause concern to the leaders of our people. The whole world is concerned and in an uproar over 53 hostages in Iran; hostages that were somewhere they had no business being in the first place!

If we here, could get the concern, or 1/10th the concern that Amerika has for the hostages in Iran, we could get some instant straighten up in the Oregon criminal justice system and in Oregon State Penitentiary.

What would you be doing if you were here? Think about it cause it is not impossible for you to come. Oregon knows that the Black man has no one to come to his aid, so they do with him as they damn well please.

The House Of EXODUS Alcoholism Educational and Treatment Center

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FROM THE FRONT DOOR

BY TOM BOOTHE

From the front door, I was asked by a Minister (Preacher), from one of our local Churches here in Portland to publish my opinion of the Mt. St. Helens volcano. I felt that this request was a "Trick or Dare" confrontation. However, I decided to take the bite.

From the front door, I saw the Mt. St. Helens volcano as a clear act of geological **Patience, Power and Pressure**. I also saw the reaction of People demonstrated as **Patience, Powerless and Frustration**. I saw no change in the human attitude toward natural phenomenon.

When it is cold human beings seek to stay warm, and by and large they succeed, by their own discoveries, creations and patience.

When it is warm, human beings seek to stay cool, and by and large they succeed by their own discoveries, creations and patience.

When it rains or snows, human beings seek to stay dry, and by and large they succeed by their own discoveries, creations and patience.

When there are electric storms, tornados and hurricanes, human beings seek shelter and by their own instinct and logic by and large they are saved.

When there are earthquakes and tidal waves, human beings instinctively seek shelter and move from the path of the storm and by and large they succeed and are saved.

Historically, when and where there are natural powerful activities, and human beings are around, their instincts surface and makes a bid to survive.

Remember, that when the Mt. St. Helens volcano erupted there were those who heeded the warnings, both of the mountain and of those who predicted the possible impending dangers; and there were those who did not. Lets not forget that the forces of nature almost never acts without warning, but in all cases, without exception, there are those who heed the warnings; and there are those who do not.

The Mt. St. Helens volcano experience is as **Simple**, or, as **Complex** as any other natural phenomenon -- think about the simplicity or the complexity of a snow flake or a rain drop -- can anyone on earth truly know and measure the dimensions of **Powers, Pressures, and Patience** that it takes to bring just one snow flake or rain drop into reality.

When human beings experienced their first snow storm, they may have appeared as intrigued, frustrated and as helpless as we here now have felt toward the Mt. St. Helens volcano. When you think about it, the first snow storm was probably far more frightening to the people who experienced it, than, Mt. St. Helens is to us, I imagine the questions were the same: When it it going to stop? What is it doing now? Is it dangerous or toxic? What's causing it? How do I get rid of it? How will it effect our future? Why is it doing it at this time? Mt. St. Helens is our first direct experience with a mountain that **spews ash, dust and steam**, on an intermittence schedule.

From the front door, I concluded that the Mt. St. Helens volcano was just another one of nature's old **Professors** calling its class to order; and as in all classes, there are some **Students** who will learn, and there will be some who will not.

**Pacific
Power**

*Citizen
of the Week*

Ronnie Herndon is best known for his service as co-chairman of the Black United Front. Under his leadership the Black community has united as never before around the issue of education of black children. The recent successful boycott of the public schools demonstrated that the BUF does express the legitimate concerns of Black parents.

Herndon was born and raised in Coffeyville, Kansas, and came to Portland in 1968. He attended Reed College where he earned a degree in History in 1970. "The things I learned that are worthwhile were not learned at Reed College," Herndon says, adding that his college experience at Reed was anything but pleasant.

Soon after graduation he established the Black Education Center to provide for the academic, cultural and psychological needs of Black elementary age school children. The next year he founded Talking Drum Bookstore to provide the Black people of Portland easy access to information on their history and culture.

Herndon is director of the Albina Ministerial Alliance Child Development Center, a full day headstart program.

For many years Ronnie Herndon has been identified as a man who will contribute much to his community. Bright, articulate, dedicated, with strong convictions and strength of purpose, Herndon is an inspiration to young and old. Young people look up to him, older people love him. With pride we present him as our "Citizen of the Week."

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