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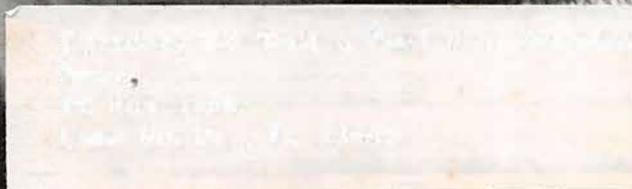
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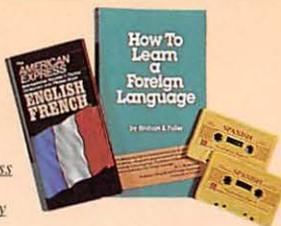
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THE ECONOMICS OF IMPRISONMENT

by Richard Stratton

We used to say that if you stood on the beach in South Florida back in the early '80s and the wind was just right, blowing in off the Gulf, you could hear Colombian sailors cry out from the decks of pot-laden freighters as they steamed north: *A job in UNICOR; a pair of Reeboks; and a bottom bunk.*

When I was at the federal prison at Petersburg, Virginia in the mid-'80s, we sat in the chow hall one morning and watched a slightly deranged prisoner climb the huge water tower in the middle of the compound. He roosted there for the better part of a day, issuing but a single demand: He wanted a job in UNICOR.

UNICOR, mysterious acronym for the Federal Prison Industries, Inc., is a "wholly owned, self-supporting government corporation" that maintains and operates factories at all of the federal correctional institutions around the country. There were two UNICOR plants at Petersburg: a printing plant where they manufactured government publications and a cable factory where prisoners made complicated power cables for such government operations as NASA. At other federal prisons where I served time, UNICOR workers made furniture, clothes, signs and a variety of other products—all supposedly sold by contracts to various government agencies.

There were long wait lists for jobs in UNICOR. I remember one Colombian who wept when he learned he was to be released from

prison and sent back to his homeland. His UNICOR wages, around \$200 per month, were the most money he'd ever made. After buying some essentials like shampoo and Ben and Jerry's ice cream at the prison commissary, he had enough left over each month to send money home to support his wife and six kids. He told me he was considering committing a new crime while in custody so he could stay in prison and keep his coveted UNICOR job.

Illegal aliens comprise 28% of the federal prison population; many of them never set foot in America before being arrested. A large number of these "criminal aliens," as the feds call them, work in UNICOR factories.

Base wage at UNICOR when I was in prison was 22 cents an hour. With increases for tenure and performance—Supergrade, as it was called—pay could reach more than a dollar an hour. I knew men who worked 80-plus hours a week and made three or four hundred a month. They did their shopping at the company store—the prison-run commissary. They spent the limit (\$100 per month) on junk food and soda, sneakers, fruit

and nuts, deodorant and coffee; they bought cigarettes and rolls of coins to use as currency on the prison black market. The government extracted payment from prison wages for whatever fines or court costs the convict owed. Conscientious convicts sent the rest home to their wives and families or deposited it in bank accounts. Others spent it on drugs, or they gambled it away or used it to buy black market goods and services, including sex. Most of the money made by prisoners working in UNICOR and in other prison jobs stayed in the system.

What many tax-paying Americans don't realize is that all able-bodied prisoners are required to work—one could say forced to work since, if you refuse, you are sent to the hole and locked down 23 hours a day. Prisoners also must pay for just about everything beyond the basic necessities. They feed you slop in the chow hall and give you a bunk, but if you want a grapefruit or cigarettes, shampoo or Ben and Jerry's, you've got to buy them from the commissary, often at prices above what you would pay on the street. The same is true in the state system. Prisoners work.

Increasingly, the products made in state prison factories are sold to private companies. Prisoners earn money. They spend most of that money within the system.

With a million and a half people locked up in this country, we're talking about a lot of money changing hands behind prison walls.

Imprisonment in America is big

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photo by Chris Cozzone

PRISON LIFE

January 1995

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Story by Kim Wozencraft.
Photo by Wayne Maser.



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JUICE

by

Chris Cozzone
Editorial Executioner

"This magazine is considered a security risk . . ."

"This copy of *Prison Life* magazine contains very graphic accounts . . . it would incite more unrest."

"This publication incites, aids or abets criminal activity and violence against others."

—from various DOC "Decision on Withholding" forms we received.

Every day we get calls or letters from white and bluebellies tellin' us how we suck. "This magazine is garbage! You guys oughta be burned at the stake!" Whatever. We listen to and read these responses with patience, sometimes asking the angryhead what was so offensive. Sometimes it's the language, other times it's that we're making "heroes" outta "criminals." Most of the time, it's that we're providing a voice for the cons of America.

By doing so, we increase the juice of those behind bars. And by pumpin' juice, maybe they fear we'll get too powerful.

Well, we're not about anarchy or inciting riots, so you can call off the goon squad. We're about increasing the word, tellin' America wassup with life behind bars. We're about change in a peaceful manner. We're about reality.

If we show prison life as hell, it's only because that's what it is. If we say "fuck, shit, damn, motherfucka" in our articles, it's only because that's part of the prison lingo. If we run stories on riots, on administrative corruption, on rape or killings or rapping, it's only because the prison system is flooded with the shit. If prison officials don't wanna face reality, they oughta be working somewhere else. At least they have a choice.

Prisoners don't. And if the system is bendin' them over, or if they're being swept under the rug, there ought to be a place for them to have their say, a place for them to share ideas and even swap thoughts on self-empowerment.

That's where we come in.

The C.O.'s and officials out there who are closed-minded can make our

lives hell by throwing your asses in the Hole and by blacklisting our mag. (Ever stop to think how bad it is for business to run the stories we do?) But we ain't gonna stop and neither should you.

It's time to come together. It isn't gonna be easy, but it'll be worth it.

This month's issue of *Prison Life* proves my point.

What happens when cons work together to expose the bullshit? Flip to page 50: "Busted! Corruption at Unicor." Federal prisoners Joe Mohwish, Duane Olson and Donald Sargeant were sick of getting bucked by the system. Read how they, together with PLM, are exposing some heavy shit the feds are getting away with.

Our cover story provides another example of a con fulla juice. "Fighting Back: The Prison Education of Karen White," written by Kim Wozencraft, shows the life of one tough woman who served 18 calendars in the joint. At Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York, she was the juice behind nearly every program that exists there today.

Karen White's not the only woman with might in this issue. We

also feature Julie Stewart of FAMM, who's fighting the fucked-up mandatory minimum laws in Washington.

And then there's Jackie DiNorscio—The Clown-Prince of Crime. Jackie's a stand-up guy and a stand-up comic who helped defeat the government's most vicious mob attack in history.

Speaking of stand-up, we are not above recognizing those on the other side of the bars who rack up to such standards. Meet Lt. Alan August of East Jersey State Prison. If the system had more cops like him, there might be a chance at rehabilitation (huh? wha's that mean?).

Our celly of the month is King Buck from Jefferson City Correctional Center. Although he was thrown in the Hole for it, this guy had the balls to write us about what's going down in Missouri.

Speaking of 'nads, skip ahead to "Old Max," by J.C. Amberchele, this month's fiction selection. "Underground," by J.B. Springs III, is a true account of a con on the lam livin' beneath the streets. Crimejacker, our naive ex-government whipping boy, returns for another dose of prison reality. Of course, you'll find Bubba, who's still sorta pissed off that he's not on our cover yet. If you can't stomach Bubba, then forget the Humor department. I haven't been able to eat since.

We're introducing "In-House Counsel," by jailhouse lawyer Larry Fassler. In every issue, he'll be writing on important legal topics. He invites you to send him questions.

And for those of you with beefs with us, we now got a fall guy: Steve Rogove, circulation manager. He'll straighten out any mess you might have getting your mag.

As always, *Prison Life* encourages you to send your fitness questions to Iron Pile; news items to Block Beat; letters to Mail Call; recipes to In-Cell Cooking, etc. Also, we're always looking for good guest editorials, regular-sized articles and pieces for every other department. If you got an idea, run it by us. Remember, this is *your* mag, *your* voice.

PL



photo by Sarah Willkie

Voice of the Convict

(continued from page 3)

business. The latest crime bill calls for almost nine billion in taxpayers' money for new prison construction. Taxpayers will also spend an additional \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year per prisoner (between 20 and 30 billion bucks) to support men and women who actually support themselves and spend billions yearly, most of which goes back to the government. Looking solely at the bottom line, this is a curious state of affairs.

There's an old axiom among investigators: Follow the money. If you want to understand how a company works, how a conspiracy operates, even how people live their lives, follow the money. Where does all the money that is earned and spent by prisoners within the system go? Who profits? Where do the tax dollars go that are supposed to be used to support prisoners who, in fact, earn their own keep? And why are taxpayers being made to bear this economic burden when private companies are getting into the prison business to capitalize on America's booming prison industry? How is it that prisoner-made consumer products are being sold directly to private sector companies when our government bans importation of foreign prisoner-made goods?

Something is very wrong here. Americans are being lied to by their government. Surprise, surprise. And, as usual, the taxpayer is the sucker getting mugged in this transaction.

In case you didn't know, there's a lot of prisoner-bashing going on in this election season. Politicians rail about "country club" prisons where prisoners lounge around all day watching color TV and plotting new crimes. You would have to be media unconscious and fit for jury duty on the O.J. Simpson case not to have heard the frantic campaign slogans promising tough new laws, and the sensational stories of ex-con murderers and sex criminals who get out only to commit more crime. Politicians, always on the look-out for fall guys for their own failed policies, shout for longer sentences and harsher prison conditions.

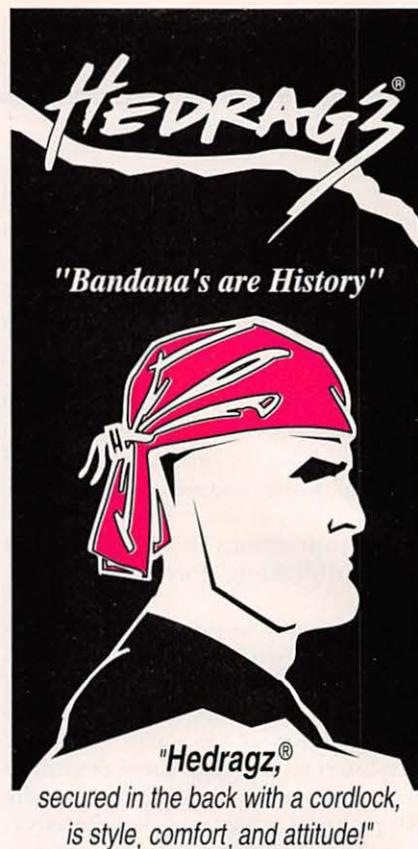
Washington has rescinded Pell grants for prisoners. Prison administrators, bowing to political pressure, have moved to take away other rehabilitative and recreational outlets despite the fact that these programs are the only proven antidotes to

recidivism. In a kind of Congressional legislating frenzy, politicians running for re-election were tripping over each other in the rush to pass ill-conceived, short-sighted measures motivated more by a quest for the fear vote than by real concern over crime in America.

And let's not forget the economics. In a faltering economy stifled by government waste and overregulation, the prison business is one of America's few remaining growth industries. Someone is making large profits, or you can be sure corporations like Wackenhut, a spooky security firm that went public earlier this year, would not be anxious to get into the prison business.

What you won't hear, unless you pay attention to the few voices questioning the American gulag bonanza, is the truth about the imprisonment explosion in America. The U.S. already imprisons the largest percentage of its population and gives out the most time of any industrialized, supposedly democratic nation in the world. Violent offenders make up a small portion of our prison population. Between 1980 and 1992, only 16 percent of new court commitments to state prison were for violent offenses; 84 percent were for drug crimes and property offenses. In the federal system the number of violent criminals is even smaller. For every ex-con who gets out and commits some heinous crime, thousands are released and get jobs, pay taxes, live decent lives.

The truth is that crime and punishment in America is all about money. Americans need to stop listening to the crap spewing from the mouths of lying politicians and dutifully reported by a co-opted, corporate mass media. Taxpayers need to start paying attention to what the government is doing with all the money it bleeds from workers' paychecks. The real threat from crime in America does not come from the streets; it comes from the government. If Americans want to take a bite out of crime, they should demand an end to the massive fraud being perpetrated upon them by their elected officials.



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Richard Stratton

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Chris Cozzone

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

Kim Wozencraft

MANAGING EDITOR

Jennifer Wynn

ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR

Karen Cantrell

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: BEHIND BARS

Reginald Alexander, J.C. Amberchele,
A. Jali Bottom, Thomas Falater,
Larry Fassler, Eric V. Reid, Shep,
Jon Marc Taylor

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: FREEWORLD

Harris Breiman, Mike Hogan

ART/PHOTO DIRECTOR

Chris Cozzone

STAFF ARTISTS

Rob Sula, Marty Voelker, Steve Lashley

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS: BEHIND BARS

Lee Carlson, Joseph Hernandez

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS: FREEWORLD

Stephen Conway,
Deni Jarvis, Mike Montoya

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Patrick Finan, Manual Machuca,
Wayne Maser, Sarah Willkie

PUBLISHER

Richard Stratton

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Steve Rogove

OPERATIONS ASSISTANTS

Myron Hamilton, Jimmie Youngerman

PRISON LIFE EDITORIAL OFFICE

505 Eighth Avenue, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10018
Tel: (212)967-9760
Fax: (212)967-7101

REGIONAL SALES OFFICES

Robert Rowbotham
Canadian Managing Director
253 College St., Suite 444
Toronto, ONT M5T1R5
Tel: (416) 536-5641
Fax: (416) 536-7687

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Scott Osman, President

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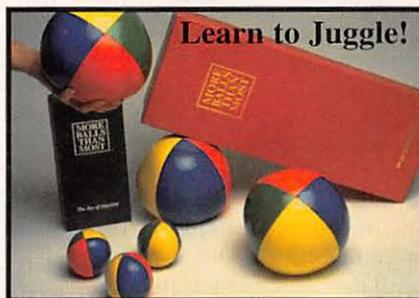
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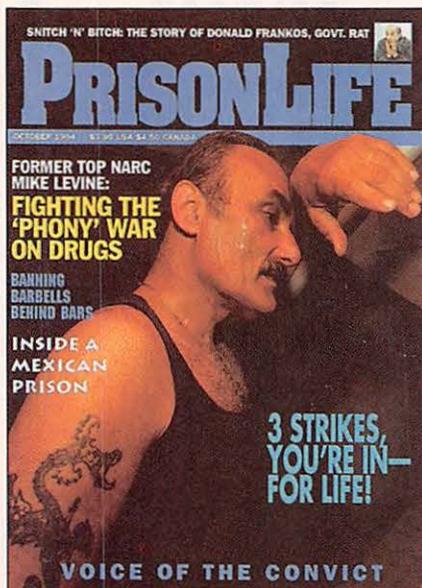
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LAUD & LOATHING FOR LEVINE

I read your October issue. Not bad! The Mike Levine story was the most interesting. As a Vietnam Vet, down 15 years on a triple life, drug-related, it was a real eye-opener. Too bad Make Wallace didn't air this story on "60 Minutes" instead of the slanted story he did on the "soft life" in California prisons. We were portrayed like Club Med—free room and board, medical and dental, and all we do is lift weights, watch color TV, lay around getting sun tans, living care-free lives. It enrages the public, thinking they are paying for our so-called "good life."

They failed to mention we're locked in our cages, with roommates not of our choice, hard beds and puke for meals. We're required to work full-time jobs that pay little. Prices on canteen and collect phone calls are inflated 15%, which pays for all our weights and recreation, plus the perks the cops get. Our dental and medical care is also not free. We pay \$5.00 for a sick call visit. Our doctors are mostly quacks who can't find employment anywhere else. When we're seemingly taking it easy on the yard, it's on our own time, off from our full-time jobs. We drink polluted water that's full of silk screen chemicals and raw sewage (our own water supply), while the cops are told to bring their own drinking water to work. We are under gun coverage all the time, and men are shot for fist fights. For lifers in Max, it's this hum-

drum routine to look forward to year after year.

I resented the slanted portrayal "60 Minutes" did. I feel like DEA agent Michael Levine, who exposed the truth on Reagan, Bush and Ollie North when no one wanted to listen. Prisons are big money to a lot of "big" people in California.

Guy E. Williams
Tehachapi, CA

I certainly agree that the "drug war" is a corrupt and misguided effort; however, Mike Levine is an inappropriate spokesperson. He is merely a fanatical zealot who is now prosecuting the DEA with the same conniving, deceptive, mean-spirited aggression that he employed to wrongfully imprison countless victims. Mike Levine is the kind of person who will completely change his viewpoint and just as fanatically pursue ideas completely opposed to what he originally embraced.

We need to cool the passions and demagoguery and address the drug policy in our nation with reason. If thinking, reasonable men studied our national drug policy, they would be forced to conclude that penal laws are far more destructive than drugs. Our national drug policy needs to focus on root causes and education. The medical profession should address drug abuse issues. The cops, lawyers and judges have sure made a mess of things.

Jerry D. Patchen
Attorney at Law

WHY WASTE SPACE ON RATS?

I really enjoy PL magazine, but I can't see givin' up seven pages to a broken down, lying rat fuck like "the Greek" (Donald Frankos). Men like Joe Sully and Herby Sperling are inspirations to the convict. Men like them are true legends. They deserve seven pages. Not no punk, freehole like the Greek.

You still got a few good men left behind these walls. These are the men who should be voicing their opinions. These young guns comin' in might get a little insight about being a man from them. All we have in here is our word and our dignity, and them two things will carry you far

in life. Your mag is enjoyable but keep it real. In time your mag will have an impact on the penal system, but what kind of impact it will have will depend on you and your staff and what you're gonna print or not.

Mikey "the boxer" Liguori
Southport Correctional Facility

TSK, TSK

Please remove my name from your mailing list.

When I first received the magazine, I thought it might be good, because I work with inmates on Sundays and Tuesdays each week. I was really surprised and disappointed at the language in the magazine. Yes, I know worse than that goes on, but why add to it?

Pastor Marcos
Three Rivers, TX

LUCASVILLE: PROS & CONS

Just wanted to write and thank you and all the bros and sisters at PL for publishing my narrative, "11 Days Under Siege" in your October issue.

As I write this, I'm sitting in the Hole—not a by-product of the narrative. It seems one of the guards thought I said "Fuck You" when he demanded we all roll in. Swears he heard me say it, so...No big deal. I needed the time to catch up on some letters. Enough on that.

I was thinking maybe your team could put together a piece about the serious changes that need to take place inside the joint to prevent sieges. One of the primary causes of the Luke riot was forced interracial celling. I'm talking about "forced." If two people of diverse cultures want to cell with each other, then cool. If they don't, then why would the prisoncrats try to force them to? Perhaps it's because they need and want the different cultures to be at odds. The authorities would rather have us fighting among ourselves than combining our thoughts and strengths.

Let's be realistic! The prison system is already integrated and the prisoncrat knows full well that different religious and cultural beliefs do not get along very well inside the wire. Shit, they don't outside the wire either! It takes a complete idiot to think that racial harmony can exist within the prison system, and that all

it needs is a forceful disciplinarian to bring it all home.

Unfortunately, Luke was a prison with one of those complete idiots at the helm. He created many policies designed to keep tension high among the different ethnic groups, but he keyed on the white and black brothers. Of course, he and his administration will be added to the evergrowing list of disciplinarians who tried to tear a new ass in a "beast" whose will they thought they had crushed, only to discover the beast had retained its strength, its will and all of its teeth, which it promptly used to chew each of them a brand new ass.

During the Luke siege, whites and blacks united and became a very powerful voice that was heard nationwide. They had been pushed, beaten, locked down, lied to and denied this or that until they looked at each other and said, "This is being done to each of us by an entity that hates us. We need to lay our hatred to the side and focus four eyes on the true enemy instead of two."

Of course, Luke prisoners caused violence and bloodshed, but only after suffering much of the same themselves.

What I advocate is exposing the real deal, bros. Look deeply for the true motive, expose it, and work together to remove it.

Paul Mulryan
Mansfield Correctional Facility

I am profoundly disappointed in your post-riot article on Lucasville. I guess I was assuming your follow-up would contribute some positive ideas and even more knowledge of what goes on here rather than the well-written "story" fictionalized by a prisoner. I gave the mag to several prisoners who were there during the riot, and I can assure you even they are disgusted with the article.

For one, this guy [Mulryan] was only writing what he heard because he was more a victim than anything else, and two, since he was over there, he should be convict enough to keep his mouth shut! Even the small details he gave out might lead the police in someone's direction.

We as convicts aren't looking for good "stories" but facts

exposed to the public in ways society will understand our dilemmas and our reasons for action. Does society wish to read well-written drama from fakes, or does it want the truth?

Michael Lee Wood
Lucasville, Ohio

HOLD YOUR HEAD UP

I picked up the October issue of *Prison Life*, the first time I ever seen it. I think it's excellent. I read it completely, and there are a lot of things I would like to get off my chest.

I would like to comment on your Mail Call. It was good to see the narrow-minded views of some of the 50,000 members of the American Correctional Association, although I don't see myself as a criminal parasite, and I certainly don't see any prosecutors or judges as knights in shining armor. I do see the great injustice some people have to endure, and after being handcuffed and beaten down, and thrown into a dark hole and fed balls of food that you have to feel around to eat, and all the other little games some of the C.O.'s play to make you grow bitter, you might ask me what the first thing I

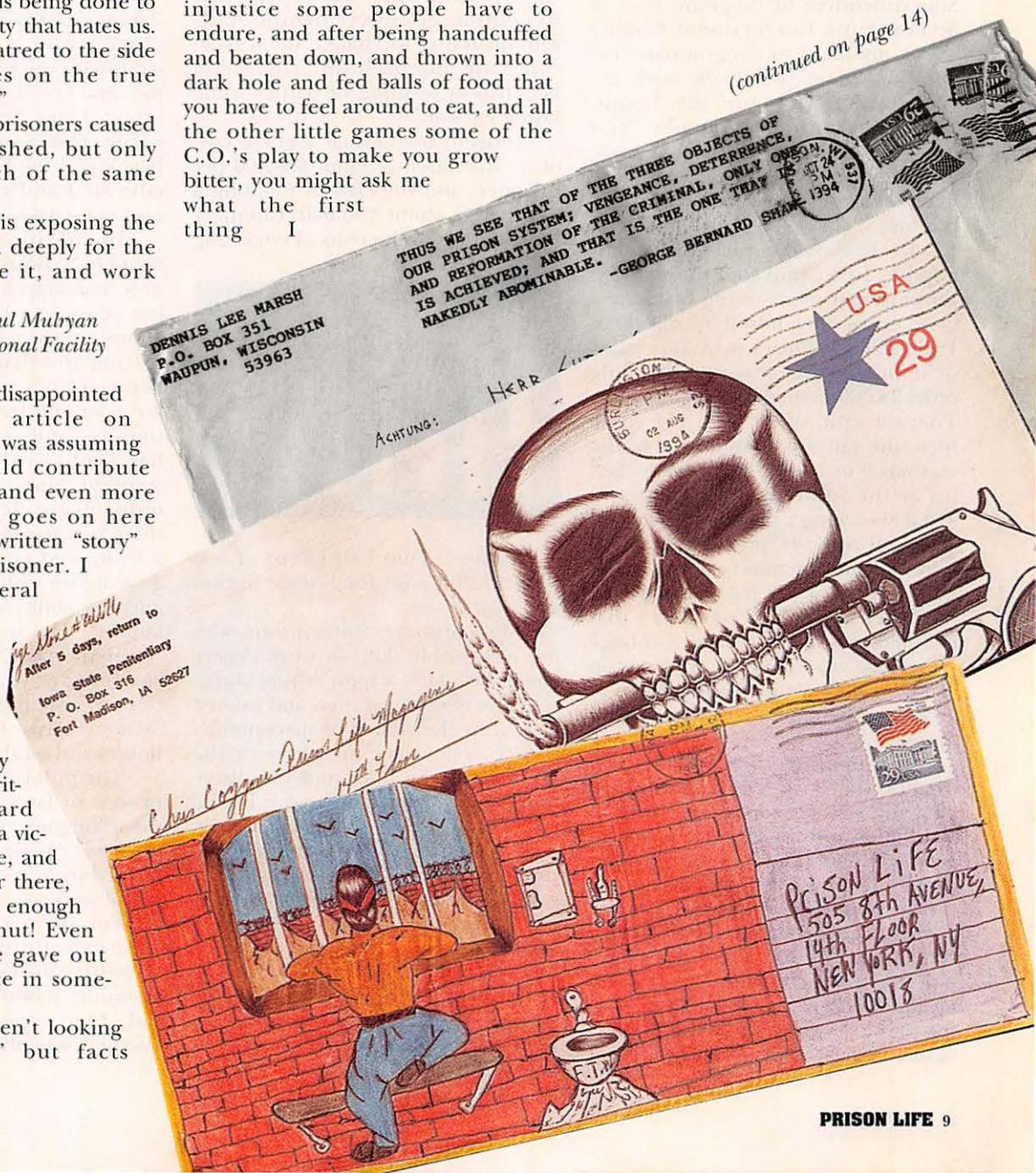
would do upon release.

Well, to some people it wouldn't be too exciting. I just want to spend a day with my kids, maybe go to the park and have a picnic lunch or see a movie, feel the hugs and hear "I love you" from someone who really cares. I just can't stand all the hatred that pours out of the articles that these high-honcho probation officers, prison officials and wardens want to demonstrate.

I have never had a gun or drug charge, and I would have beat this one if the prosecutor played fair. I just want to say to all the other people doing time: "Hold your head up and never give up, that's right, I said *people!*"

Robert Lambert
Oxford, WI

(continued on page 14)



HIGHER EDUCATION IN PRISON

Education and Gun Towers

by A. Jalil Bottom
Shawangunk C.F.

On June 4, 1994, with a frown on my face, I slowly moved through the procession line to be conferred two degrees, a bachelor of science in psychology and a bachelor of arts in sociology from SUNY-New Paltz. When the Dept. Superintendent of Programs here at Shawangunk Correctional Facility shook my hand to congratulate me, he said, "Smile, you finally made it." His statement made me laugh. "Whatever I made," I thought, "may take years before I can actually apply, and for many other prisoners, there may never be a chance to stand in this line."

These thoughts ran through my mind as I contemplated the statistics showing that more young black men go to prison than enroll in college. In 1990, 2,280,000 black men were jailed or imprisoned at some point, while only 23,000 earned a college degree. That's a ratio of 99 to 1. For white men, the ratio of prisoners to graduates was 6 to 1, with 2,412,000 locked up at the same time in 1990 and 413,000 earning a bachelor's degree.

Until recently, prison and education were not mutually exclusive. But now that the newly passed crime bill has taken away the Pell Grants that enabled prisoners to earn a college education, the concept that prison can be a place for men and women to grow into better human beings died as well.

The majority of those who espouse the "lock 'em up and throw away the key" concept believe only in retribution with no reformation. This is unfortunate. Today, America incarcerates nearly 1.5 million citizens, and the growing trend to imprison rather than to seek alternatives to prison reflect a collective, societal assumption that no one behind bars is worth saving or is capable of changing. For the most part, the public does not recognize that 90% of all prisoners will

one day be paroled and return to their communities. (As of this writing, there are more than three million people on parole and/or probation.) It is difficult to believe that the public advocates releasing men and women from prison without having had the opportunity for rehabilitation.

Referring to the withdrawal of Pell Grants for the incarcerated, former Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, Warren Burger, stated:

"We must accept the reality that to confine offenders behind walls without trying to change them is an expensive approach with short-term benefits—a winning of battles while losing the war."

Indeed, the annual average cost of incarceration is about \$25,000 per prisoner, and the cost of building a new cell is about \$90,000. Compare these figures to the costs of educating



a prisoner: One Pell Grant of less than \$1,300 paid for books, tuition and related fees.

Most prisoners enter prison with few marketable skills or work experience; 75% lack a high school diploma. The majority of men and women caught in the snares of the criminal justice system are members of the underclass, the poor and the disenfranchised. Many of them are locked out of mainstream society from birth, born as they are into poverty with little chance to rise out of it. Either prison or early death becomes their lot in life.

Meanwhile, countless studies show that education and job training reduce recidivism and lead many ex-offenders to gainful employment. Hence, the Pell Grants were an

invaluable service to the public because they ensured that those prisoners who wanted to change had an opportunity to do so. Pell Grants served to break the cycle of crime because they provided ex-cons the best chance to live in society without having to victimize other citizens for their own survival.

In fact, the U.S. Labor and Commerce Departments recently issued a joint report on the nation's work force that found that there is a "large, growing population for whom illegal activity is more attractive than legitimate work" due to the abysmal job market. Commenting on the report, Labor Secretary Robert Reich warned that "a society divided between have's and the have-not's or the well-educated and the poorly-educated cannot be stable over time."

In addition, the Alternative Schools Network, a private organization that supports schools and learning centers in Chicago, compiled a comprehensive report in 1990 illustrating the disastrous correlation between high school dropouts "who are poor and have limited job opportunities" and the violent crime that has a substantial segment of society terrified. Since 1973, the income of dropouts has declined 37%, "leaving them very few legitimate ways to earn a living and very little hope of ever growing up with a decent paying job and the ability to marry and raise a family." The report also aptly states: "Over the last 25 years the U.S. has spent more than \$800 billion for police, courts and prisons to stop crime. Yet we feel less safe in our homes and on the job than ever."

The problem is, then, not too few prisons or laws that are too soft, but the willingness to create and fund the necessary programs that can train and educate at-risk youth for meaningful work.

For six years I was prohibited from attending college. Prison administrators claimed that my attending school would be a security risk. One superintendent told my lawyer I was already too intelligent

and didn't need to go to college. It took a lawsuit and a transfer to another prison before I was able to embark on the journey of higher education. I was transferred to three different prisons before graduating.

When thinking about the dynamics of education and prison, specifically the obstacles in the path of the prisoner seeking knowledge, I appreciate that much more the efforts of those prisoners who had the tenacity to earn a college degree behind bars. It certainly wasn't easy. Now, it's virtually impossible.

A. Jilil Bottom is a political prisoner and former member of the Black Panther Party/Black Liberation Army. He has been in prison for nearly 23 years, and has earned bachelor degrees in sociology and psychology. He is presently held captive at Shawangunk Correctional Facility in Wallkill, N.Y. #12589.

The Crime of Education

by Jon Marc Taylor
Jefferson City C.F.

On April 19, 1994 I "celebrated" my anniversary. On that day I had been locked up for 14 years. I had survived and even grown stronger in the crucible of the keep (as good as any reason to celebrate), but after watching NBC's "Dateline" that evening, I feared I had outlived the best chance any ex-con has of making it once he hits the bricks again.

The "Dateline" segment was reporting on legislation to bar prisoners from receiving Pell Grants. With growing dismay, I watched the piece unfold, only to realize the producers had apparently based their story on the highly biased newspaper series from last October's Pottstown, PA, *Mercury*. Perhaps I should not have been surprised at such distortion. After all, this was a story about crime and punishment, and it was covered by the same media that had increased its reporting of violent crime by 300% in the previous year, while per capita violent crime had actually reached its lowest level since 1973.

From the beginning, the story cited inflammatory numbers without any context, provided no humanistic comparison between imprisoned stu-



Illustration by Stephen Conway

dents and traditional ones, and only vaguely hinted at the positive outcome that prison college programs provide society, all the while suggesting that a crime of education was occurring at the expense of Joe and Jane College. Such sloppy reporting has all too sadly become not the exception but rather the rule among news coverage on criminal justice issues.

In the first few minutes of the segment, for example, we learn that 27,000 prisoner-students received some \$35 million worth of Pell Grants. What we were not told was that 4.3 million grants totaling \$6.3 billion were awarded the same year, or about one-half of one percent of all Pell Grants went to prisoners. Nor were the numbers placed in the context that over one-quarter of the nation's 14 million college students received these (implied) scarce grants, thus making the Pell Grant program numerically and financially by far the single largest grant pro-

gram in the nation.

The audience was also told that half of those who apply for these grants are denied assistance, and because of prisoners' lack of income the need-based formula unfairly awards them funding over more deserving students. What was not explained was that those turned away generally came from families with incomes above the Congressionally set \$42,000 limit, while 70% of all grants were given to students from families with incomes below the \$15,000 threshold. Additionally, the comparative figures of the average prisoner wage of 56 cents an hour, and that 71% of the country's convicts earned less than \$15,000 the year prior to their incarceration, was not provided for perspective. Under such circumstances, prisoners cannot "work their way" through school, and surviving on the street near or even below the poverty line, they would have qualified for the same educa-

(continued on next page)

Guest Editorials

(continued from previous page)

tional assistance anyway.

In what I felt was the most glaring omission of the segment, nothing about reduced recidivism rates as a result of education was mentioned. Since the '70s, numerous studies have shown that recidivism is far less likely among educated prisoners. In 1993, the Federal Bureau of Prisons reported a 40% recidivism rate for all federal parolees while among college graduates the rate was only 5%.

Prisoners themselves know well the value of an education, even if they haven't availed themselves or been able to avail themselves of the opportunity. A prisoner-student study revealed that 96% believed a person's behavior can change for the better through proper education, and most said they would prefer a better education program over a better recreational facility. Nine out of ten disagreed that prison is the same with or without education, and an overwhelming majority believed that without education, incarceration only increases their anger, frustration and aggression. Finally, over 80% of the cons wished they had had the same opportunity before incarceration, and education in the joint had provided them with what was missing in their lives.

Considering the cost of \$25,000 a year to incarcerate an offender, the billions spent on cell construction and a national recidivism rate of 50 to 70%, the return on investment that society receives for educating prisoners strikes me as economically sound. The average prison college graduate earns a skill-related associate's degree at a cost of \$3,000. This is a little over 10% of the cost of just one year of imprisonment. The savings related to increased peace of mind and quality of life, as well as the costs that society incurs when just one offender breaks the cycle of criminalization, victimization and reincarceration, the return on investment of the relatively inexpensive Pell Grants was phenomenal!

The day after the "Dateline" segment, the House overwhelmingly voted to expel prisoners from the Pell Grant program. The Senate had done the same the previous November. Both sponsors of the legislation said they were not against prisoners earning college educations, but that Pell Grants were an inappropriate way to finance them. Yet nowhere in the \$30 billion crime bill is there a penny to replace prisoner Pell Grant financing. Without Pell Grant access or some substitute funding, the chance for a prisoner to earn a degree will essentially no longer exist in America.

Thus, ironically and perhaps hyp-

ocritically in crime bills that are supposed to fight crime, the most effective anti-recidivism (i.e. anti-crime) measure has been discounted. States already spend less than 5% of their correctional budgets on all forms of offender treatment, including education. With the "truth in sentencing" provisions in the crime bill, which will result in explosive prison growth, the possibility that states will be able to finance education beyond their current paltry contributions has been extinguished. And more poorly educated, untrained offenders will be released back into society.

We had the chance to pay for rehabilitation; now it looks like we'll have to pay much more later.

This essay is an expanded version of an Op-Ed piece published in *The New York Times* by Jon Marc Taylor in August, 1994. It was subsequently read by Senator Paul Simon into the *Congressional Record-Senate* during the debate over Pell Grants for prisoners.

Jon Marc Taylor, a prisoner in Missouri, won a Robert F. Kennedy journalism award last year. He has received numerous other writing awards and has been published in newspapers, magazines, journals and books.

"The recidivism rate for federal parolees is 40%; among college graduates the rate is only 5%."

Prison Life Mission Statement on Education

Only the most determined prisoners, those who become obsessed with getting some sort of training or education while they are incarcerated, have any hope for transcending their environment and changing their lives. The number one cause of crime in America is illiteracy. If you can't read or write, your chances of finding a job are slim. If you're poor and from the inner city, then crime and criminal activity—particularly the illegal drug trade—offer almost the only job opportunities around.

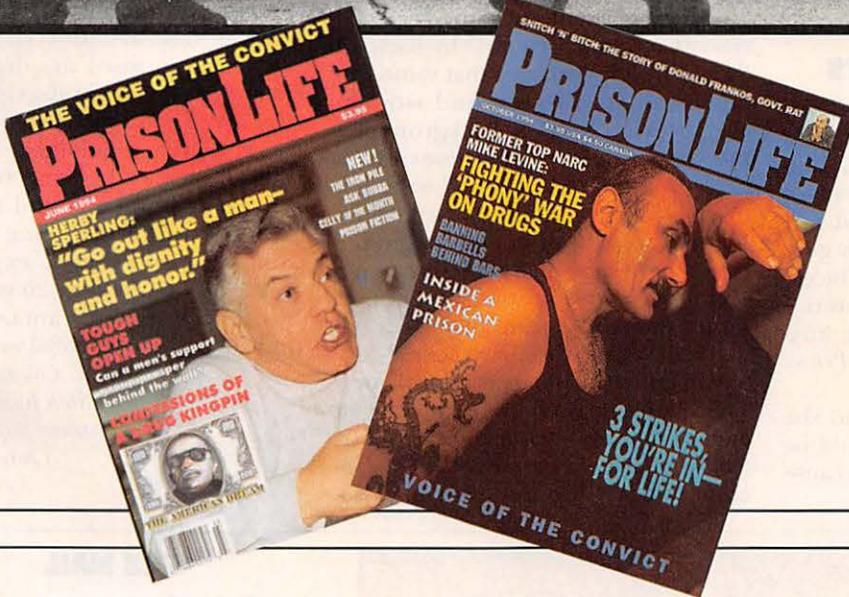
It's that simple. Men and women with no education and no money are much more apt to commit crimes than those with even a high school diploma and a weekly pay check. They are likely to spend the money they do make by committing crimes on drugs and alcohol to ease the pain of their wretched lives. Once those people go to prison and add the stigma of ex-con to their resume, their chances for becoming employed, law-abiding, tax-paying citizens are drastically reduced.

If Americans really want to do something about crime in this country, then we must transform our prisons and jails into centers for

learning and restoration, colleges and vocational training schools instead of human warehouses and breeding grounds for crime and violence.

The editors of *Prison Life* magazine are committed to helping prisoners make constructive changes in their lives through education and creative expression. The purpose of this magazine is to educate prisoners and the public, to stimulate thought and positive action and to give America's incarcerated a forum where they can voice their concerns, their ideas and their hopes.

ARRESTING JOURNALISM



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(continued from page 9)

PAPA PRAISE

I received the October issue and spent the weekend reading all of it. From "Common Ground" to "Prison Uprisings" to "The Metamorphosis of Michael Levine" to "Are You an Inmate or a Convict?" (I've quizzed several fellow cons already) are all well-written, informative pieces with stories that need to be told. Touche!

My favorite article was "Portrait of an Artist Behind Bars." Besides the content and the compelling story told, you made a fine effort in catching the more ephemeral intangibles of the struggle individuals in the keep experience. Throughout the piece, I kept nodding my head as I identified with experiences, emotions and even bureaucratically maddening actions like the withheld ribbon (my MA diploma was withheld and then lost by the IN-DOC). Good work in personalizing one man's struggle that exemplifies all of our efforts to express and find our humanity so twisted by life and repressed by the system that entombs us.

Jon Marc Taylor
Jefferson City, MO

GOOD FOR THE WIFEYS

I've been in M.C.C. New York for about four months now. It's my first bid. I was never really into reading due to comprehension problems. I could read a whole page and not remember a thing, until my celly gave me a copy of your magazine. Once I picked it up I couldn't put it down. I never really enjoyed reading anything, but I enjoyed reading *Prison Life*.

I told the wify about it and she loved the idea. I thought it would be great for both of us to read because

the wifeys really have a misconception about prison life. My wife doesn't have the slightest idea what goes on in here, but by reading your magazine, it puts her at ease, and she has a more positive attitude about prison. She's not so worried anymore.

Since I've discovered PL, I've passed it on. Two of my cellies want to subscribe. Two thumbs up for *Prison Life* magazine.

IF JESUS WERE HERE . . .

I am reading my second issue of *Prison Life* and would like to respond to the James A. Summerlin letter headed "Eye for an Eye." Mr. Summerlin was very critical of your magazine and stated that he found the material "offensive." In the middle of his castigation of your product, he states that he is a probation/parole officer and a Christian. That caught my attention.

I am a director of a rural probation department in Texas. I am also a Christian because I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. The material in your magazine does have an initial shock value that many would find offensive. However, if a person takes the time to read the material objectively, he/she will find great depth of feeling and sincerity.

I was particularly moved when I read "Common Ground" by Richard Stratton. His revelation that value can be found in all men and women regardless of race or background is the very essence of what Jesus Christ came to Earth to teach us. I wish that more officers within this system could learn to look at offenders as unique creations of God and guide them to a vision of what they can become, rather than sentencing them to a life marked by what they have been.

If Jesus Christ were here in person, I know he would want to visit you and those who are incarcerated. His "self-righteous" contemporaries criticized him harshly and often for asso-

ciating with social outcasts.

After reading the October issue, I am convinced that the primary goal of your magazine is to encourage readers to develop a positive vision of themselves and their future. If the words of wisdom in *Proverbs* are true, then you are working toward the goal the whole system should adopt. Your intent is further established by reviewing the advertisers. More than 70% of the advertisements in the October issue were for education, health or legal assistance. I see this as a very positive endorsement.

I am going to continue to read your magazine and encourage my staff to read it because I find it to be of interest and value.

I salute your effort to express how prison life really is and how prisoners feel about issues in criminal justice. Maybe what offends Mr. Summerlin, and other detractors, more than the vulgarity is the brutal honesty your contributors expound. From my point of view, your contributors are either smarter or more honest than the leaders in the field of criminal justice. I say this because many of your articles tend to expose what I feel is the key issue in criminal justice today: Crime is big business for the government and our present system does more to promote criminal behavior than to correct it.

I have enclosed this department's check for a one-year subscription. I will read it and make it available to my probation officers. I hope that it will help them better understand the people they are working with and for. Also, I am glad you're providing prisoners with the opportunity to express their creativeness. After over 20 years in this business, I am still amazed at the tremendous raw potential we lock up.

Bill A. Coleman, Director
286th Judicial District
Community Supervision &
Corrections Dept.
Levelland, TX

FAN MAIL

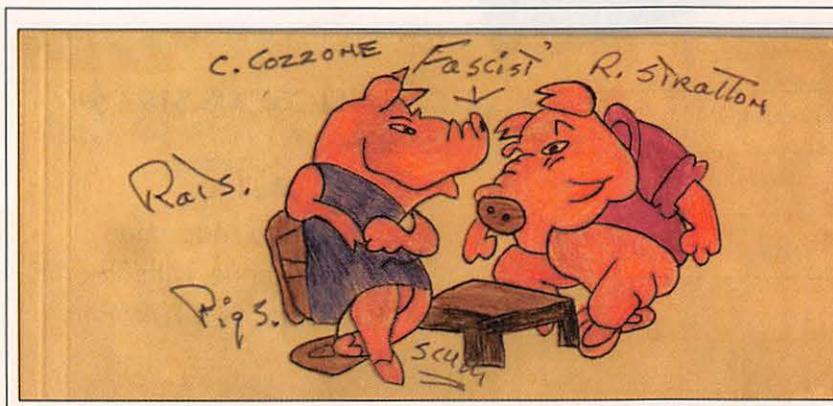
Fascists!

This is what I think of what you are! Just Rat Pigs! And all connected with you.

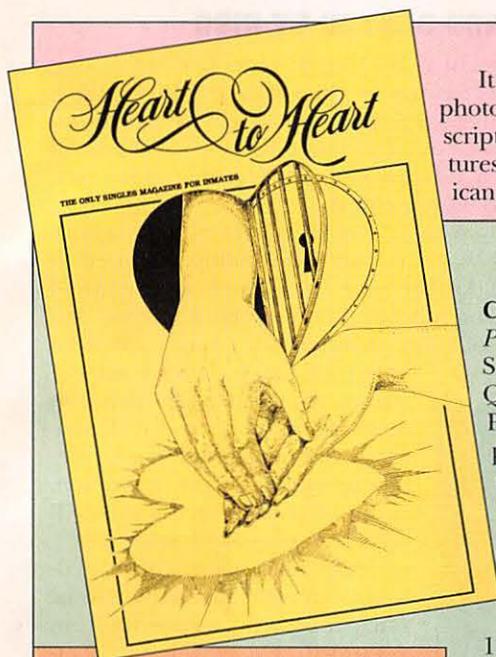
R. Joe Kidd
Folsom Prison, 18 years in

Uh, thanks Mr. Kidd. That's quite a nice picture you drew for us. Did you draw it all yourself?

—the so-called Fascist-Rat-Pigs



Callouts



HEART TO HEART

It's the only singles magazine for prisoners: For \$15, you can run an ad with a photo. For "camera shy guys," it's only \$5. For customers outside prison walls, a subscription to *Heart to Heart* will run you \$15/year. The Troy, MI-based quarterly features prisoners from around the country looking for pen pals, friendship or a significant others. For information, contact: *Heart to Heart*, Box 1858, Troy, MI 48099.

SERVICES FOR PRISONERS

California

Prison Law Office Contact: Donald Specter, General Delivery, San Quentin, CA 94964. (214) 457-9144. Provides direct legal assistance for problems encountered by CA prisoners, excluding attacks on criminal convictions. Focus is on conditions of confinement.

New York

South Forty Corporation, 500 8th Ave. Suite 1203, New York, NY 10018. (212) 563-2288. NY's only agency devoted exclusively to helping ex-offenders find jobs. Career Development Program provides direct job placement for those with

marketable skills, subsidized on-the-job training and work experience for those not yet ready for competitive employment. Counselors are available to guide ex-offenders through the reintegration period. All services are free of charge.

Texas

OPEN, INC.—Offender Preparation and Education Network, Inc. Contact Ned Rollo, Executive Director, P.O. Box 566025, Dallas, TX 75356-6025. (214) 271-1971. Develops educational materials for offenders, their families and criminal justice agencies. Goal is to help offenders make a successful return to society. Materials available for purchase cover issues from employment to release preparation. Write for price list.

BUILDING CARS BEHIND BARS

After a four-day riot in '68, Oregon State Prison decided to act on prisoners' requests for something other than run-of-the-mill programs. Officials challenged prisoners to come up with worthwhile projects to prove that they could accept responsibility. Since then, the Highwallers, the only professional prison racing team in the U.S., has built and maintained two racing cars, one for a dirt track and one for asphalt. Although the drivers and the pit crew are always freeworders, the cons do all the bodywork and repairs on the cars, sometimes working 14 hours a day during racing season.

No public money goes into the team. Individuals donate \$20 a year to have their names painted on the car's side, and occasional prize money makes up the rest of the team's lean budget. Automotive suppliers, from Goodyear Tire to top names in the auto business, contribute some parts. Their motto is: "We strive to survive." And, as one con noted, "There's nothing better than sending our cars out to run against high-dollar teams and kicking their butts!"



FOSTER CARE HANDBOOK

Parents: Protect your legal rights and carry out your responsibilities with the Foster Care Handbook for Incarcerated Parents. Written by mothers at NY's Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, with help from family law experts, it discusses laws, regulations and policies; visiting rights; voluntary and court-ordered placement of children in foster care; parents' legal rights and alternatives to foster care. Also includes sample letters to caseworkers, attorneys and Family Court. Suggested donation: \$10. Contact Children's Center, P.O. Box 803, Bedford Hills, NY 10507.

PAÑO ART HITS SMITHSONIAN

Rudy Padilla of the Hourglass Gallery in Albuquerque, NM recently submitted 14 paños to the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institute. The paño collection will be part of a traveling exhibit of Paño Arte to begin in 1995.

Paño, or handkerchief, art is principally done by Southwest Chicano prisoners using limited materials, such as ballpoint pens and homemade dyes.

For more info, contact Rudy Padilla at the Hourglass Gallery, 1021 Isleta Blvd SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105.



Block Beat

NEW STATS

The number of people in America's prisons topped one million for the first time, according to a recent report from the Justice Department. On June 30, 1994, there were 1,012,851 men and women in state and federal prisons. The country's prison population grew by nearly 40,000 prisoners in the first six months of this year, equivalent to 1,500 new prisoners a week. This figure does not include prisoners in local jails. The last time they were counted, 445,000 people were in local jails.

The number of prisoners has soared in comparison with the nation's population over two decades, the survey said. In June, there were 373 people in prison for every 100,000 U.S. residents—a record. In 1980, 139 people were incarcerated for every 100,000 residents.

The increase in prisoners has made the U.S. second in the world, behind Russia, when it comes to incarceration rates. Counting people both in prisons and those awaiting trial or serving short sentences for misdemeanors in local jails, the U.S. has an incarceration rate more than 4 times that of Canada, more than 5 times that of England and Wales, and 14 times that of Japan.

Incarceration rates in the U.S. are higher than in many countries because of the higher rates of violent crime here, experts said.

The New York Times

LESS THAN LETHAL WEAPONS

A joint Department of Justice and Pentagon committee is considering manufacturing the following "less than lethal" weapons:

- *Sticky Foam, used in guns fueled by pressurized nitrogen. The foam from the guns would "glue" disruptive prisoners to floor or wall without injury.
- *High-power electromagnetic generators that interfere with brain waves and alter behavior.
- *Low-energy lasers that can cause temporary blindness.
- *Flickering or alternating lights that can confuse or sicken perpetrators.
- *Giant nets, fired from a gun, which immobilize people or vehicles with adhesive or electric shock.

David Boyd, head of the National Institute of Justice, a research division of the Justice Department, says that the push to develop such weapons as these stem from the Rodney King episode.

Christian Science Monitor
From: Aaron Collins, CA State Prison

GANGS BUSTED BY RICO

The Government is turning to federal racketeering laws to attack street gangs in cities nationwide. In 1994, the Government indicted members of about two dozen gangs around the country using RICO, the Federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, enacted in 1970 to fight the mob.

RICO has proven to be a more potent weapon against entrenched gangs than the state laws traditionally used to fight street crime. Unlike state laws, which are designed mostly for addressing individual crimes, the RICO law permits prosecution of gang members for being part of an enterprise that commits a series of crimes. A racketeering conviction involving murder carries a life sentence without parole. Under the new federal anti-crime legislation, some of those convictions will carry a possible death sentence.

Also unlike state courts, federal courts permit wide use of uncorroborated testimony from accomplices, which is often essential in proving a criminal conspiracy. And prosecutors say it's easier to have a defendant held in prison without bail before a trial in the federal system than in the state system.

The New York Times

POP PREFERS PRISON

A 94-year-old man has gotten his wish: He's heading back to prison. Wesley "Pop" Honeywood was sentenced to seven years. He pleaded guilty to armed assault and possession of a firearm by a felon for pointing an unloaded gun at a man who warned him not to eat the grapes growing in the man's yard.

After Honeywood does three years, the judge said, he should be released to serve four years under

house arrest. To Honeywood, that beat the alternative—a nursing home.

"If I go to jail, I may be out in a couple of years," Honeywood explained. "If I go to a nursing home, I may be there the rest of my life."

Associated Press

MONTANA

A Montana prison official caused an uproar by taking three women prisoners out to dinner at a seafood restaurant in Billings, Montana, as a reward for good behavior. One of the women was serving a life sentence for murdering her husband. Hundreds of people called state offices, demanding the ouster of the official, Mickey Gamble, who said he used his own money to pay for the dinner.

Gamble, ultimately, bowed to pressure and resigned.

Reuters



A Cellblock at the Santa Fe Pen in New Mexico.

Photo by Manual Machuca.

FORGIVE & FORGET

The Rev. Walter Everett has forgiven the man who killed his son seven years ago. He also helped him get out of prison early. And in November '94, he officiated at the man's wedding.

"I had known people whose loved ones had been murdered, and years afterward, they still seemed consumed by the anger and hatred. I didn't want that to happen to me," said Everett.

Everett's own 34-year marriage of ended after he forgave Michael Carlucci for shooting his son to death in Bridgeport, CT in 1987.

Carlucci feels redeemed by Everett's compassion. But like others, he doesn't fully understand how the pastor could forgive him. "I have a 13-year-old daughter and if anybody hurt her, I'd probably feel like I have to hurt him," Carlucci said.

Less than a month into his sentence for manslaughter, Carlucci got his first letter from Everett.

"He told me that he had forgiven me for the love of God," Carlucci said. "Tears were coming down my face. It made me feel like I wanted to live again."

After months of exchanging letters, Everett visited Carlucci. Before he left, the men embraced, and cried.

After Carlucci served his time, Everett testified for him at his parole hearing. At a party sponsored by a recovery program for drug addicts, he met his future wife. Before proposing to her last Christmas, Carlucci asked his friend to officiate at the wedding.

"I wouldn't have it any other way," Carlucci said. "He's my best friend."

Associated Press

PLEASE KNOCK!

A convict's cell is his castle, a German court has ruled. The court says prison guards must knock and wait to be invited into a convict's cell at the Giessen prison, north of Frankfurt. Guards can only enter a cell without knocking in an emergency, such as if they suspect the prisoner is trying to escape through the window, according to the ruling.

The order came after a prisoner complained that guards had barged into his cell unannounced. The court says prisoners have a right to privacy and that life behind bars must resemble general living conditions. What a concept.

*Sun Magazine
From: Lakeland Pen
Coldwater, MI*

RIKERS ISLAND: HANGING BY THE STRINGS

To close the city budget gap, NYC Mayor Rudolph Giuliani plans to make life even worse for Rikers prisoners. Rikers is the world's largest penal colony—home to 20,000 cons and 8,000 C.O.'s. The mayor wants to cut 900 officers and civilian workers. In the jail for sentenced felons (C-76), he plans to eliminate all social services, including drug treatment, all counseling and the entire programs department. Worse yet, he'll reduce the Grievance Board staff from 27 to 2, rendering it virtually useless. Prisoners' pay will be cut; it's dead smack winter and they're talking about closing the gym. N.Y. DOC also plans to wipe out The Board of Corrections, the DOC watchdog.

Ninety-two percent of Rikers prisoners are black and Latino. Seven out of ten have done time before. Eight out of 10 are substance abusers. One in five are HIV positive. Here you have the most diseased and hard-core cons in the city, yet the mayor plans to axe all rehabilitative programs, social services and the Grievance Board, things that 43 Attica rioters died for. If the mayor's plan goes through in 1995, by February the headlines will read "Attica All Over."

When the riot breaks out, it'll be the same old song: minorities killing minorities. So to the predominantly black and Latino C.O.'s here, we say "Watch out—nobody gives two shits about you either."

The criminals today are worse than the cowboys of Tombstone who preyed on Western settlers. These are some crazy motha-fuckas! If the mayor sets if off, Attica will look like a scrimmage compared to the war about to take place here.

*—Mickeni Caldwell & Steven Taylor
Rikers Island*

ANOTHER CASE OF JUST-US

Last year, numerous prisoners filed small claims actions for personal property that was damaged or destroyed during the April 1993 riot at S.O.C.F. Lucasville, Ohio. The prisoners said officials' actions precipitated the riot: They knew or should have known a riot was imminent, and they failed to take measures to maintain security.

After an influx of such claims, Court of Claims Judge Russel Leach announced that all prisoner claims arising from the rebellion were without merit, and prison officials would not be held responsible. All such suits

were then dismissed.

Shortly after, several prison guards and their families filed suits in the Court of Claims alleging that prison officials were at fault for the riot, that they knew or should have known that a riot was imminent and took no steps to prevent it. Guards and their spouses are seeking an unspecified amount of damages. Judge Leach has been silent.

Prison Legal News

FROM ONE CAN TO ANOTHER

A 47-year-old Michigan man was sentenced to 90 days in jail and three months' probation for secretly videotaping people who used his bathroom.

Gary G. Newman pleaded no contest to five of six charges of eavesdropping with an electronic device. Huron County Prosecutor Leslie A. Hagan said the videotaping occurred at Newman's antique shop for about 10 years.

Officials confiscated about 30 videotapes, which they said will be destroyed, after the sheriff's department received a complaint.

Saginaw News

From: Bob Weess

Charles E. Egeler Correctional Facility

ARIZONA CONS WIN MEDICAL CASE

A district court judge ruled in favor of Arizona state prisoners, who filed a DOC-wide class action suit alleging inadequate medical and dental treatment. Extensive injunctive relief was ordered.

In this decision, the court set forth the legal standard to be used in reviewing prisoners' 8th amendment claims regarding the adequacy of medical care. The court notes that the denial, delay or intentional interference with medical care shows deliberate indifference by prison officials. While courts may consider expert opinions in order to determine constitutional requirements for medical care, such opinions do not establish constitutional minimums. Prison officials can be held liable for failing to implement a proper mental health care program or failing to adequately train or supervise their subordinates in medical care positions. See: Case v. Lewis, 834 F. Sup 1477 (D AZ 1993).

Prison Legal News

Insider Outlook



JEFFERSON CITY: ON THE VERGE OF A RACE RIOT

Conditions here at the Jefferson City Correctional Center in Missouri have worsened. It seems that Superintendent Michael Goose is trying every ploy imaginable to kick off a racial riot between white and black prisoners. This place could suddenly erupt in blood and war.

There are a zillion different things Goose has done to create this atmosphere of turmoil and confusion. He must be stopped before he has a chance to put the final pieces in play.

Just last month, Goose had nine white prisoners locked in Ad Seg because they refused to sit in a specific area in the dining room that was predominantly black. The prisoners had a legit reason for not wanting to sit at those particular tables: they know how possessive some prisoners are about seating arrangements, and they merely wished to avoid a confrontation. As a result of their refusal to comply, they were cited for trying to overthrow the administration and inciting a riot.

Another trick employed by Goose to break down the moral fabric between races is what's been deemed musical chairs. Goose has begun transferring all the influential black prisoners out of JCCC to Potosi and other institutions. Meanwhile, he's had a great number of influential white prisoners shipped to JCCC from those same places, which have a whiter population. This concentration of influential white prisoners thrown randomly into the population at JCCC has set the stage for a racial explosion.

The trick is this: While the major-

ity of prisoners at JCCC are young and black, there is now a larger number of older white prisoners than there are older black prisoners. This was not done by chance or accident but was a carefully orchestrated move on Goose's part to create an atmosphere of racial dominance and complexities.

Furthermore, the greater majority of upscale prison jobs are all occupied by the white inmate population. Most black prisoners are confined to in-cell status, with limited movement and recreation.

Goose has created an intolerable atmosphere for black and white prisoners. A lot of these prisoners are finally starting to take notice of his actions and are anxious to see these problems corrected.

Riots are real. They take lives on both sides of the fence. Some lives are totally destroyed, if not lost, by them—all because citizens fail to hear the wake-up call prisoners shout during the preliminary stages.

Ronald Davis Bey, a.k.a. King Buck
Jefferson City Correctional Center, MO

VATOS CON RESPETO

Because I grew up in prison, I know a lot about this world. Now if I could learn about a way to turn time back and start my life over, I would never make the same mistakes that got me into this joke of a place. I say 'joke' 'cause that's all that it's about. *El Piñito* talks about *respeto* and to me that is not seen.

About the time I was convicted (1978) it was our No. 1 rule that no rats could be in general population. Now the *vato* sitting next to you is a rat, a coward, a stool pigeon—it's all the same. Now they're using this *rata* as confidential informants and the good "*firme vatos*" are getting locked down. All this is happening in the New Mexico Prison System. It's a no-win game here.

You can't win because day in, day out they make their own rules. Again, I see no *respeto*. You want to talk about gangs? Again, we go back to *respeto*. At the time I came into the system, there was respect. You could do something that needed to get done and get away with it. Now, with all the new so-called *firme vatos* coming into the system, you can't get away with nothing.

Another thing is that it's not just one on one: now it's two, three or four or five on one. And they say it's *respeto*?

I believe a good *firme vato* should not let others make decisions for him; he should stand for own beliefs. *¿Que no? ¿Simón que sí?* That's *respeto* to me!

I'm not in a gang but I get *respeto* from a lot of *vatos*. Why? Because I stand for what I believe in and everyone who don't respect that isn't *firme* to me. And believe me, I let it be known. I'm not the baddest *vato* around 'cause I got my ass kicked a few times, but I can say

this: Stand for your beliefs and you'll be respected for it.

Another thing: don't lose your *familia* and your *respeto* for letting others make your decisions. Stand *firme*. *Bueno vatos* you stay strong, both heart and mind.

*Siempre con respeto
por vida,
Joe Surule
#28306
Santa Fe Pen*



FROM SUGAR TO SHIT

I've spent 20 years in and out of prisons. Hell, I gave the Southern Ohio Correctional Facility almost all my '80s. But when I came out to California for a break, I caught a case and wound up in the California Medical Facility in Vacaville. Three "doctors" told me I had a mental problem.

I've never been in a mental hospital or psych ward in my entire life, and I sure can't understand this joint. There are transsexuals prancing around with tits bigger than some women on the street. The medical department gives these cretins shots and pills to enhance their female parts. All over the system, statewide, inmates resort to anything to get here, even fake hanging themselves or slashing their wrists.

Here, snitches have been given a new title: confidential source. Out of 3,200 inmates, there are about 100 convicts—we're a dying breed. And I

have been trapped in this romper room, this nasty, faggot-infested gutter. But I shall be leaving soon. I beat a cretin with a lock in a sock and they told me I was much too violent to stay here. So much the better!

I hope to be sent to a place where I can finish my time and maybe finally learn something. But not in Vacaville. I don't know why this hole was dug, but someone should throw the dirt back in.

Picture an adult being constantly treated like a 6-year-old by an asshole who went to school for 20 years and couldn't get a decent job on the street but he has the answers to all your problems. From sugar to shit.

Leroy Arrington
Vacaville, CA

THE "WHY ME?" PEN

On C-76 at Rikers Island, you'll find a 12x15, iron-mesh cage painted bubble-gum pink. Open 24-7, the "Why Me?" Pen keeps prisoners for minor disciplinary infractions up to 12 hours.

They call it modified medium, segregative isolation. And in various behavior modification studies, it's supposed to work as a means of eliminating unwanted or undesirable behavior, sort of like shock treatment without the electricity. The pink paint is supposed to have a calming effect. To the DOC, the "Why Me?" pen is a safe, lawful form of punishment.

A C.O. who was asked his opinion of the "Why Me?" pen had this typical prisoncrat response: "Why me? Why not?"

K.D. Hawkins
Rikers Island



VANILLA GORILLA: ONE FIRED-UP CON

I don't know why the American people are crying about crime. Shit, this motherfucking country was founded on criminal activity.

That's right—every vicious crime you can imagine was inflicted upon Indians in the government's quest to steal their land. This same government abducted Africans and put them in chains; those who rebelled in the name of dignity were killed. To make matters worse, the government tries to teach kids that Christopher Columbus discovered America. Shit, the only thing Columbus discovered were innocent people he could inflict terror upon.

And who the fuck is Santa Claus? Is he the epitome of the government's child molester? Do you realize that if you rearrange the letters in Santa, you get Satan? Motherfucking right you will.

The American government has only gotten more sophisticated. They keep talking about locking motherfuckers up, yet they legalize 180 proof whisky to be sold to 18 to 21-year-old kids. They legalize gambling, nicotine and in some states, prostitution. They themselves are the biggest drug dealers.

They do all this, yet still have the audacity to incarcerate a motherfucker for growing marijuana, Mother Nature's plant, a plant that has been on the face of the earth since the beginning of time.

The government is ruthless because while it makes sure drugs flood our streets, it incarcerates small-time drug users who commit petty crimes so it can make even more money off them in corrections. These petty users are whores who don't bring in enough dope/tax money to their government pimps. They're worth more in prisons.

If the government can fuck over society, then so can I. I'm not in prison for a crime. I'm in prison because I let a motherfucker put handcuffs on me. But soon I will be paroling to a Tech Nine . . . because I'm tired of standing in a welfare line.

The Vanilla Gorilla, George Toth

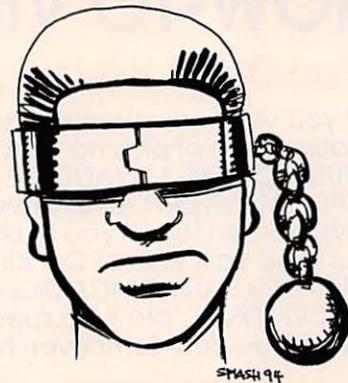
ISOLATED MIND

Sitting in the small confines of my cube, my mind runs wild. Some thoughts are positive but most, I admit, are not. Every time a positive thought enters my mind, I am con-

fronted by cold reality.

I'm like a dog chained to the backyard fence, left out in the cold waiting for his master to bring him food. Once I had a dog I treated in this fashion. I never realized I had been so neglectful of my friend. Now, in the belly of this beast, the only friend I have is a sharp piece of steel.

At times, I feel vexed because I've been ducking bullets all my damn life. Growing up as a ghetto bastard was rough. Even when I was running around the 'hood seeking knowledge, I was still a prisoner—a prisoner of my own mind. I didn't know how to escape. My environment dictated violence and because of that, I was violent, thinking it was the only way to obtain respect. My mentor was experi-



ence—the streets and these penitentiaries taught me to be strong for only the strong survived. I will continue to survive until I'm cut in half by an Uzi or locked up for life . . .

Damn, I'm hurting deep down inside. Seeing what's happening and not being able to act hurts. I guess my cries will go unanswered. An open mouth that just won't get fed. Brothers like myself are constantly ridiculed or labeled as hate teachers or troublemakers. Of all people, brothers who are for growth and development should be supported and protected.

The isolated mind is a great wanderer.

William Battle X
Altona Correctional Facility, New York

I DID SAY "EXCUSE ME"

I received a written conduct violation for insulting behavior here in Western Missouri Correctional Center. It read:

On the above date, at approximately 6:30 a.m., this reporting officer Sherry A. Callum requested a frisk search on inmate Carroll Jourdan #173008. As this report-

(continued on page 21)

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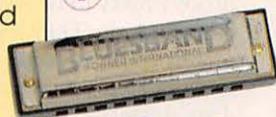
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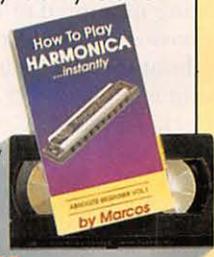
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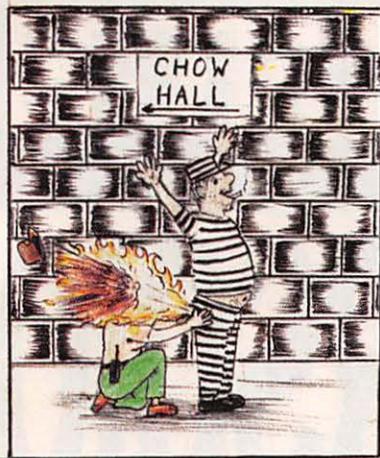
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Insider Outlook

(continued from page 19)



"Excuse Me Officer"

ing officer was frisking his leg, the inmate Carroll Jourdan started in this reporting officer's face. (This places inmate in violation of rule #21, Insultive Behavior.)

My interviewer stated in the report: *Inmate interviewed in the presence of Reporting Officer. Inmate states: "She was finished shaking me down when the incident occurred. I did say 'excuse me' to the officer."*

I received five days' cell restriction and the infraction was placed in my "inmate file."

Carroll Jourdan

Western Missouri Correctional Center

BEWARE THE YOUNG BUCKS

My name is Ricardo, age 31, and I'm doing a 3 to 7-year sentence at Graterford State Prison in Pennsylvania. We have a problem here with younger inmates. We call them "young bucks" or "young guns." They are juveniles who have been certified as adults, or younger inmates 18 to 22 years of age. They cause the whole jail to be locked down for days or weeks at a time, while every cell is shaken down. Phone calls, visits and court dates are missed because of their stabbings and fights. They disrupt our whole bit and we all get punished for the acts of a few young bucks.

Ricardo B.

Graterford State Prison, PA

VIOLATING PAROLE

I don't know what the hell is going on but I have a pretty good idea. The parole board in Georgia is repudiating all inmates it feels can't meet society's requirements. In other

words, they are telling us that they don't give a damn if we're good in prison; they will be the ones to determine whether or not we can get out.

We, the prisoners of Georgia, are in prison for breaking laws but who will take disciplinary action against the parole board when it does wrong against us? They plan to eradicate, eliminate and terminate the Georgia inmates, white and black, from society.

For example, a man might have 20 years for a crime. After he has completed seven years, with no write-ups, the parole board will send him a letter saying that for NO reason at all are we going off the guidelines and we want you to do seven *more* years.

When does this stop? It doesn't. Because once you have completed the seven years, they'll send another letter rejecting you, and then another, until you have completed the entire sentence. Now if you think *that's* erratic, what about the poor inmates with life sentences?

Pressure will bust a pipe but when evil pressure is applied to the lives of helpless people who don't deserve such an injustice, they will rise up, even unto death, and take action against the oppressor until they receive justice, freedom and equality.

Wa-Laikum-Salaam

Brother Jamie Kenmont Kerreem

GA State Prison

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN WELL

When parents lose control over their children, more and more prisons must be built. Therefore, parents: teach your children well, and discipline them with love and compassion. If you don't, your own head will be lowered in shame.

For many years I have been a prisoner, and I've wanted to help others. But beyond these walls, there's only one type of rehabilitation: self-rehabilitation. And so I've educated myself. Change comes only when individuals truly desire to change.

When the prison gates slam shut behind you, don't think you'll lose your humanity, or that your mind will become closed to ideas. If anything, the needs for identity and self-respect become even more compelling in this dehumanizing environment.

There will always be those who'll look down on the prisoner as something evil. It's this fear and failure to accept or recognize a prisoner's humanity that make prisons what

they are. People need to find out what prisons are all about, and to see that this type of punishment has failed. Today's approach to "corrections" has shown only negative results. The actions of those behind bars may be temporarily stopped by punishment, but the *thinking* is not corrected. In fact, the thinking in prison worsens.

Letters and visits from the outside are the most effective way to help a prisoner change. In other words, love, having a friend or someone who cares. It took the experience of prison to really open my eyes to see what life is all about. Now I know that you can never fail if you have God on your side. We're *all* in prison until we can find freedom within ourselves. If we are able to make this a better world, then is it not all of our responsibility to pitch in?

Cheyenne Valentino Yakima
Johnson Correctional Institution,
Georgia

PL



YO!

SEND YOUR STORIES AND BEEFS TO INSIDER OUTLOOK

CLOWN PRINCE

JACKIE DINORSICIO

OF CRIME

BY JENNIFER WYNN

Hero. Mobster. Maniac. The clown-prince of crime... Jackie "Fat Jack" DiNorscio has been called everything but rat. The man's reputation, as long as his sentence, stems from his role in the largest mob trial ever.

Of all the wild stories to emerge from the war on organized crime, none is quite so extraordinary as the U.S. government's 1986 prosecution of the notorious Lucchese crime family, the mob reputed to "own" New Jersey. The Feds called it the most ambitious legal attack ever mounted against underworld figures: its 65-page indictment, capping a ten-year investigation, would have wiped out an entire organization, from capo to street soldier. Lasting nearly two years, *The United States of America v. Anthony Accetturo et al.*, was the longest Mafia trial in American history. Yet it took the jury less than two days to render its verdict: not guilty, on all counts.

The crushing blow to the government was dealt by a man with a 6th-grade education, a man who, despite his ignorance of the law, became his

own attorney, a man with a terrific sense of humor who had the guts, and the savvy, to use it in the courtroom. In so doing, he transformed the courtroom into a theater of the absurd, an arena in which the judge would shout, "Order in the court! I didn't hear the punchline!"

Today, nearly a decade after his shining days in the Newark, N.J. courthouse, Jackie DiNorscio is poised to deal another blow to the government. This time, if successful, it will bring him home.

Jackie is being held at F.C.I. Fairton, NJ. He's serving 8 1/2 years of a 30-year bid for cocaine trafficking. Had Jackie not told government prosecutors to go fuck themselves when they asked for information on Lucchese crime boss Anthony Accetturo in 1986, he wouldn't be in the can today. The Feds promised to drop the drug trafficking charge and protect Jackie for the rest of his life if he'd snitch. But he didn't, so the drug charge stayed, and two days later, Jackie was brought up on racketeering charges and called as a defen-

dant in the *U.S. v. Anthony Accetturo* case.

Today, Jackie is looking to have the 1986 drug conviction overturned. He recently filed a motion for a retrial that took him five years to write, but the 140-page document, containing incredibly damaging evidence against the government, was returned to him for revision and shortening.

"I told 'em from the beginning I was ignorant in the law," DiNorscio says. "I mean, they got their lawyers, paralegals and secretaries to help 'em. All I got is one junkie, two burglars and bank robber."

Jackie's motion for a retrial is based on a number of government screw-ups, the most blatant of which is a violation of the Brady law. Brady requires prosecutors to give the defense any information about government witnesses that can be used to impeach them. What Jackie is trying to show is that his 30-year sentence is based on testimony from witnesses the government knew were liars, drug addicts and people who wanted revenge on DiNorscio—like his cousin, Joey Alonzo.



photos by Chris Cozzone

For several years in the early '80s, Jackie and Joey had been partners in a gem-selling company in Florida. When Jackie decided to sell the business—due to new laws he believed would sink it—Alonzo felt betrayed and thought Jackie was trying to cut him out. Alonzo's heroin and cocaine addictions only made him more paranoid. In February 1985, he paid Jackie a visit.

"There I was, sleeping," recalls DiNorscio, "when I felt something in my jaw. I thought I cracked it. Then I felt something on my back, but I'm still half asleep, and I think it's bed bugs. But it was Joey shootin' me with his silencer. So I jump up out of bed, I was like an animal, and I see Joe, and I says, 'Joe, whaddaya shootin' me for? You're my cousin. I love you, Joey.' I put my hand up as he's tryin' to shoot me in the face and he gets me in the wrist. I says to myself, 'What a rat bastard.'

"So what does he do? He runs to the Feds and starts tellin' on everybody. Now, you see, the Feds had been tryin' for 14 years to bust up this mob and they ain't gettin' no place, ain't gettin' no stool pigeons.

And sure enough this rat bastard cousin of mine wants to become one. But he didn't know nothin'. How could he? He was a fuckin' junkie."

Six months later, DiNorscio, Jerry "the Jew" Cohen, Manuel Monteiro and Gerald DeLuca were arrested. "They built the case on the testimony of Joey Alonzo, who spent the money the government gave him

"The judge shouted, 'Order in the court! I didn't hear the punchline!'"

to buy drugs, a guy who testified before the grand jury when he was high," says Jackie.

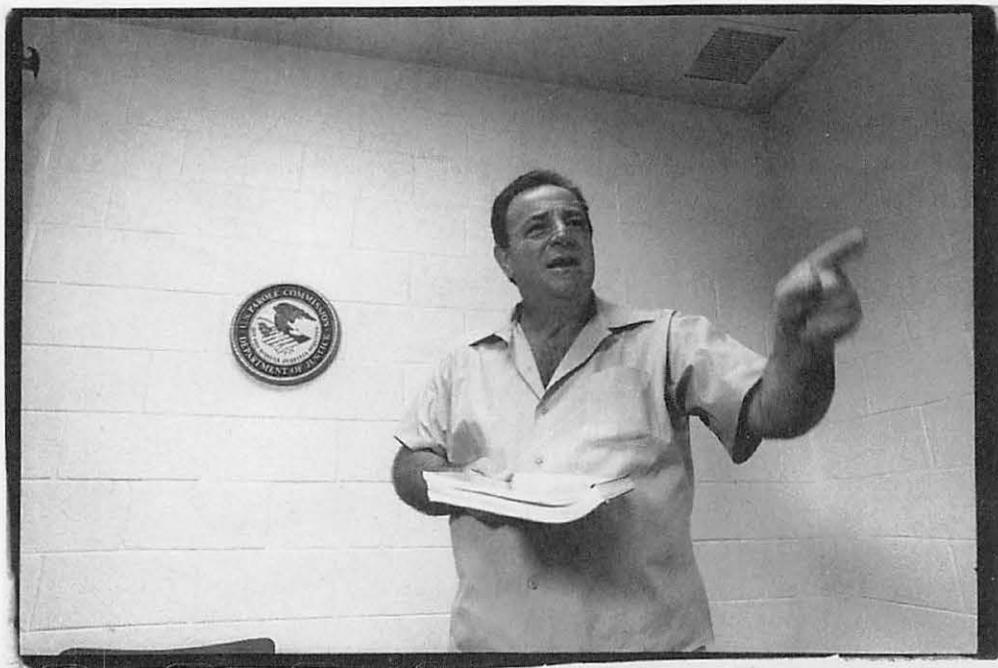
DiNorscio paid his \$200,000 bail and was released. Then, just nine months later, the Feds slapped him with another charge—continuing criminal enterprise (CCE). "They said I went out and sold drugs to fur-

ther the organization, which wasn't true. So they pulled my bail and tried me in 89 days. I was convicted and sentenced to 30 years."

The judge in this trial was Maryanne Trump-Barry (Donald Trump's sister). According to DiNorscio, Trump-Barry failed to notice that DiNorscio was physically unfit to stand trial. Suffering from sleep apnea, a rare respiratory disorder, DiNorscio was unable to stay awake during his trial. "I woke up and I had thirty years," he recalls.

At the Accetturo trial, presiding U.S. District Judge Harold A. Ackerman immediately understood that something was wrong with Jackie, who was sleeping through entire days. "This man is fighting for his life, yet he can't stay awake," said Ackerman, and promptly ordered an examination. Indeed, it was the government's own medical examiner who diagnosed Jackie's disorder, declared him unfit to stand trial and gave him a device to alleviate the problem.

And when they did, they "woke a sleeping giant," as DiNorscio is fond of saying.



dant in the Accetturo case and Jackie's long-time pal. Caravaggio notes that this was the mid '80s, and the anti-drug fever was at an all-time high. The government knew the case would be much stronger if it included drug charges.

The government never expected Jackie to go to trial. Why would he when he risked spending the rest of his life in prison?

"We told them to do what was best for them," says Caravaggio. "But Jackie felt responsible, and he knew that if he got out of the case at that time, everyone else would get hurt. So they told the government 'no deal.' That's the type of men they are.

The first thing Jackie decided to do was represent himself. In a fit of rage, he fired his lawyer, who fled from the judge's chamber and in the process broke his fingers in the door. In a shouting match with Jackie over payment, he said Jackie had "inconvenienced" his firm, even though Jackie had paid him over a quarter of a million dollars in legal fees. "I gave them all my jewelry, my cars, everything. And now he says this to me. I went crazy. 'You won't have to worry about being inconvenienced anymore,' I told him. 'Because I'm gonna kill you, motherfucker.'

"The judge asked me what I said to him. So I said, 'I told him to go fuck himself, judge. I'm the new attorney. I wanna go *pro se*.' The judge started hollering, saying I can't defend myself. So I said, 'Judge, did you make the Sixth Amendment? The law says I have the right to defend myself and I choose to go *pro se* today.'"

"'Didn't anyone tell you, Mr. DiNorscio, that a man who represents himself has a fool for a client?'"

"'No, Judge, I never heard that.'"

"'Well don't you realize you have to have some legal training? Do you have any?'"

"'Yeah, Judge,' Jackie said, 'I've been in jail all my life.'"

And that was that.

In the *U.S. v. Anthony Accetturo et al.* trial, "et al." referred to 21 defendants, including Jackie. The defendants were all men Jackie grew up

with, men who were on trial simply because they were linked to him.

"I felt responsible for those boys," Jackie says. "If it wasn't for my '86 drug conviction, there wouldn't have been a trial."

For the Accetturo trial, the government was relying on RICO, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act. The RICO law, enacted in 1970, gave sweeping new powers to government prosecutors, enabling them to hold top leaders of organized crime responsible for the actions of their underlings.

The Feds were hoping Jackie would cop a plea, and that his 30-year sentence had softened him up for such a deal. If he agreed to plea bargain, they told him, they'd run the time for the new charge concurrent with the sentence he was already doing, thereby keeping his total time at 30 years. But if he decided to go to trial and lost, he'd be looking at another 40 years in the can, meaning he'd die in prison.

"They wanted Jackie and Jerry [Cohen] to plead guilty to the drug charges so the jury would be left with an impression of guilt," says Robert "Bucky" Caravaggio, another defen-



If it were anyone else in this business today, they would've taken the government's offer. Not Jackie."

"I couldn't do it," says Jackie. "They were asking me to lie against these boys, and they offered to drop my charges if I flipped. But I wouldn't do it. Never."

Jackie believed that if he could get the jury to warm up to him, only then would he and the other defendants have a chance. The role of court jester came naturally.

"Jackie added a touch of human-

ity to a group of individuals who appeared, to the jury, silent and immutable," says powerhouse lawyer Michael Critchley, the lead defense attorney in the trial. "When Jackie spoke, he not only spoke for himself but for the other defendants. He came across as likeable, which contradicted the image the government was trying to portray of him."

While Jackie was able to humanize himself and the other defendants to the jury, he also managed to reveal the government's deception. The prosecutors began to look more like the crooks. "They came across as cold, coercive and nasty," notes Caravaggio.

After making his opening statement, announcing that he was *pro se* and thanking the jury for its patience, DiNorscio put on a black fedora. Then he turned to the jury. "The reason I'm wearing this hat is to make me look like a gangster," he said,

then pointed to the prosecution table, where U.S. Justice Department Attorney Grady O'Malley sat beside the rest of the prosecution team: Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Braunreuther, U.S. Justice Department prosecutor Barbara Miller

head and whipped off the hat. "It's not even my hat," he said. "And I'm not a gangster. I'm a gagster."

"Actually, after hearing all the attorneys and the lawyers for the past couple of days, I'm what you call a relief." He paused until the jury finished laughing. "Now I want to thank Mr. Critchley for telling me what the sign under the judge's desk means. (The sign was Latin for "Justice for All".) I thought it meant 'No Smoking in the Courtroom.'"

At that point, the jury, spectators, attorneys and defendants were laughing out loud. Without missing a beat, DiNorscio continued.

"To get serious for a moment," he said, and then began recounting the sums of money that lawyers tabulated had been paid to one of the informants. "Eighty-four thousand dollars for '86. It's now '87. That's well over one hundred and fifty thousand you paid your informants."

He turned to prosecutor Joseph Braunreuther and asked: "Mr. Braunreuther—you need another guy?"

When the laughter subsided, Jackie continued. "Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for your presence here today and throughout the trial and I ask you for your patience. As you can see, I'm no lawyer. I only have a sixth-grade education. I'm not sophisticated in the laws, but I have learned as a layman. I read the RICO law. And I can tell you that it would be more appropriate for the men involved in the Iran scandal deal for selling arms to the Contras. They

should be indicted, not me."

And so began what attorney Mike Critchley describes as the "most bizarre trial" he has ever experienced. Every time Jackie addressed the jury, Critchley recalls, he had to bite his tongue to stop from laughing. "I tried to maintain a demeanor of discipline and professionalism, but when Jackie got up, it was impossible, not only for me but for the prosecutors and the judge."

"What I had to do was make a comedy out of it," Jackie explains. "It was the only way we could beat them."

Before he finished his opening remarks, Jackie told one more joke. It began as a response to the government's depiction of him as an extravagant, swashbuckling drug dealer.

"Extravagant?" Jackie began, "Let me tell you about my wife. Once she asked me for twenty dollars for a rump roast. I took her in front of our full-length mirror and pulled out a twenty dollar bill. 'The twenty dollars in the mirror is yours,' I told her. 'This one is mine.'

"The next day, there was meat from one end of the table to the other. I asked my wife where she got it. She lead me to the mirror and lifted her dress. 'That's yours, in the mirror,' she said, and pointed to her crotch. 'This one belongs to the butcher.'"

As the jury convulsed, DiNorscio said, "I hope I didn't embarrass anybody. I'm just trying to show you I'm not a gangster. I'm a gagster."

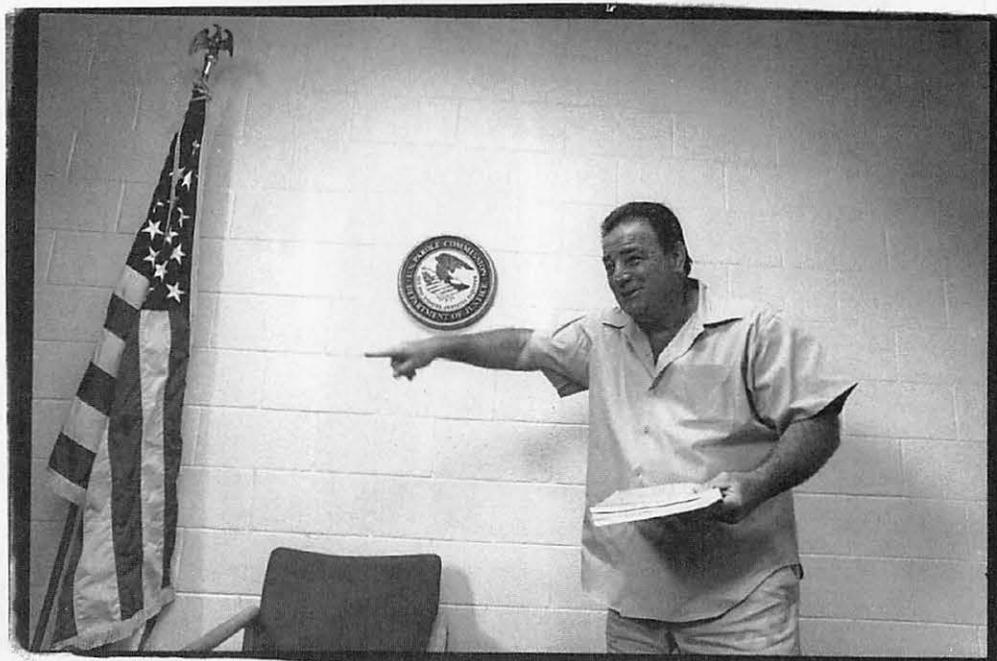
Prosecutor O'Malley was disgust-



and FBI agent Dennis Marchalonis.

"That's what they want you to think I am. That's what they want me to be."

There was a murmur in the courtroom. No one seemed quite certain what was happening. Some of the jurors began to realize that DiNorscio was making a joke. They laughed. Jackie paused, and then pointed to his



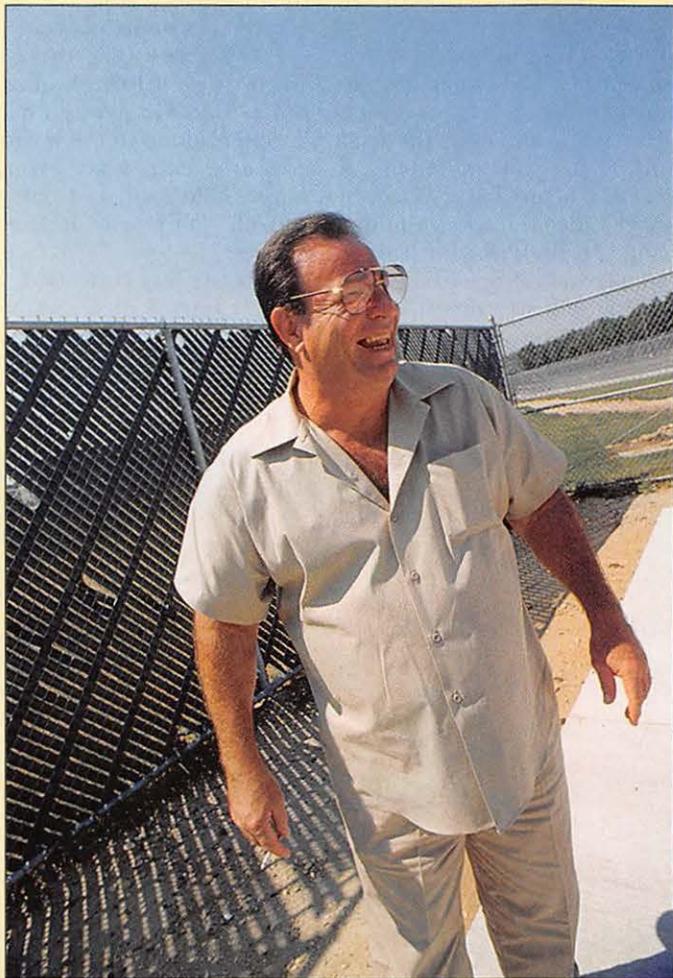
MAKING MOVIES

HBO featured Jackie DiNorscio in its 1993 documentary, *Mob Stories*, produced and directed by Marc Levin. Mixed in with stories titled "Revenge" and "Betrayal", DiNorscio's segment, "Loyalty," was the only one that evoked admiration rather than horror.

Jackie's performance in the Accetturo trial has also caught the eye of Joe Isgro, executive producer of the movie *Hoffa*. Isgro recently approached Jackie about making a movie based on his role in the trial. "From what I know about it, I'm fascinated by the case," says Isgro, "Especially Jackie's representing himself—his self defense was brilliant."

Whether or not Jackie wins his appeal and walks out of Fairton next year, Isgro is pursuing the movie, he said, and Jackie is offering him exclusive rights.

"My interest is to show people that they can do it for themselves, that they gotta do it for themselves," Jackie says. "Any person can go into the law library and learn. If people did their work, there wouldn't so many rats."



ed; he feared the effect Jackie's sense of humor would have on the jury, and he was infuriated that Ackerman was letting him get away with his antics. He turned to his partner. "What an asshole," he said, referring to the judge. The judge heard him and, according to Jackie, had this to say:

"Mr. O'Malley, I heard what you said. When Jackie DiNorscio said he wanted to represent himself, I told him that a man who represents himself has a fool for a client. If you think he's making a fool of himself, that's your business. I'm telling you now, fight hard, but fight fair."

Jackie jumped in. "Judge Ackerman, I thank the court for taking my side in this matter. And if it's any concern to Mr. O'Malley, I'm since divorced and I'm now a vegetarian." From that day on, Jackie knew he had the jury.

Even at the outset of the trial, it was clear the government had scraped the bottom of the barrel when it came to finding informants. Most were confessed murderers, drug addicts and dealers. Jackie knew this, and he used his "ignorance in the law" to showcase the unsavory details of the informants' lives.

"Jackie was tremendous for us," says codefendant Caravaggio. "He didn't know the law; he wasn't a lawyer. So he could get more in. If he violated proper courtroom conduct, what was the judge gonna do? Find him in contempt of court? He already had 30 years."

When the government's star witness—Jackie's cousin, Joey Alonzo—took the stand, Jackie waved his hand at Judge Ackerman. "Judge?" he asked. "Is it possible I could arrest Mr. Alonzo on a civil matter? Make a citizen's arrest? See, he violated my civil rights. He tried to kill me."

Jackie caused the jury to question not only the validity of government's case, but the judgment of the prosecutors. He dispelled the jury's myth that the government represented the honest, fair enforcers of law and justice. "The" government might not be "their" government at all.

"I was in shock at some of the things the government tried to do," says Caravaggio. "All they had was a glorified gambling case. In the end, the jury knew there was more wrong done on the part of the government than on ours."

Jackie demonstrated this in his cross-examination of informant Raymond Pinto, Jr., a convicted drug dealer.

"Now here's a man who was caught with a key of coke, and there's a warrant out for his arrest," Jackie says. "Before I began, I said, 'Is the court aware that this man has a warrant out for his arrest?' The judge said, 'Haven't I told you, Mr. DiNorscio, you can't arrest anybody in this courtroom?'"

"Judge," I told him, "it's not my duty to arrest him. It's the court's." So Ackerman goes, "Mr. DiNorscio, I'll tell you again. We're not arresting him. Now ask questions!"

"Okay. Then I ask for a mistrial!"

"And I deny your motion for a mistrial!"

"So I say, 'Hmmm. Then how 'bout a cup of coffee and a ham sandwich?'"

Midway through the trial, Judge Ackerman discovered that the prosecution had committed a Brady violation with informant Robert Fisher. The material Ackerman stumbled upon revealed that Fisher had testified before a magistrate with a head full of cocaine, qualudes and alcohol. He also admitted that much of what he said were lies. Despite the defense's repeated requests to the prosecution to turn over this material, O'Malley stalled.

Judge Ackerman stopped the trial for three days to determine whether a motion for a mistrial was in order. But because the case had already gone on for a year—six months longer than the jurors were told it would last—the judge settled for impeaching Fisher.

It's that decision that Jackie DiNorscio is hoping will be his ticket home. DiNorscio has compiled nearly a hundred pages of transcript that show Judge Ackerman's recognition of the Brady violation. Clearly, if the defense had been aware of the impeaching evidence against Robert Fisher in the first trial, the one in which Jackie was sentenced to thirty years, DiNorscio wouldn't be in the can today, and the government wouldn't have had the foundation for the second trial.

"It's a very substantial argument he's making," says Critchley. "And he did it all on his own. Jackie's got a strong chance of winning this not only because of his argument's merit, but because he doesn't give up."

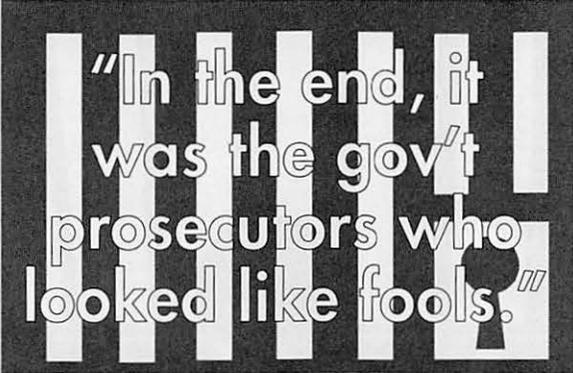
"I am what I am and I did what I

did," says Jackie, "But at least I played fair. The prosecutors never did."

Jackie's summation, like his performance throughout the trial, took jurors on an emotional roller coaster ride.

"I'm a little nervous," he said, picking up the microphone and tapping it. "One, two, three, four. That's not the counts I'm involved in. I'm just warming up."

"God bless you," he told the jurors. "What endurance! Remember they told you the trial would take six months? It was six months ago that I became a court jester. See, I knew it was gonna be 18 months before they were through, and I didn't want you to be mad at me at the end of the trial..."



"In the end, it was the gov't prosecutors who looked like fools."

"Most people don't really like fat people. But ladies and gentlemen, at least you can see my feet. I can't."

Then Jackie got serious. "I am accused of being a drug dealer and taking over an organized crime group. I don't know how I could have. I've been in jail since '72. I got out in '79, just in time to go back from '81 to '83. I done my time ladies and gentlemen."

He brought up his father, Dominick DiNorscio, whom the prosecutors were fond of snidely referring to as a boss of the Philadelphia Bruno family. "They always mention my father in the courtroom," Jackie said, "But that man gave me the best advice in my life: 'He who takes what isn't his sooner or later winds up in prison.'"

DiNorscio picked up his handwritten speech from the podium and waved it in front of the jury. In a dramatic gesture he ripped the pages in half and threw them into a wastebasket. "Believe me," he said, pointing to the torn speech, "this is a waste of time."

He looked around the courtroom.

"See these men?" he said, his voice cracking with emotion. "I know every one of their families and their kids. They got something to go home to. I know I made a lot of jokes about my wife in this courtroom, but I'd give it all up right now for her to be at my side."

At that point, several female jurors began to cry.

"Don't feel bad, ladies," Jackie said. "I done it to myself."

Jackie took a deep breath and gained his composure. "If you feel like the government got to you and everyone is guilty, would you let these men go home and find me guilty instead? Because if it wasn't for me, there would be no trial."

He addressed the jury for the final time.

"I don't have nothing further to say, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much."

In the end, it was the government prosecutors who looked like fools. It had taken two years for O'Malley and the prosecution team to present their case, but less than two days for the jury to render its verdict: Not guilty, on all counts. Unlike the other defendants, who were hugging their wives and children and leaving the courthouse for a massive celebration, Jackie, the

man who was largely responsible for the stunning victory, stood alone. Unlike the others who were going home, Jackie was going back to jail.

As he walked into the M.C.C. in New York, DiNorscio was greeted with banners and applause from the prisoners. As far away as Fort Leavenworth, Kansas—throughout the federal prison system—spontaneous applause erupted when the news was announced. M.C.C. cons went wild. "They gave me a standing ovation for 25 minutes," Jackie recalls. "It felt so good. Not so much the applause, but the fact that all those boys got off, and that's all I cared about, seeing them get home."

"Me? I'm used to this," he says, pointing to the concrete walls at F.C.I. Fairton. "I miss the street just like anybody, but if I done wrong, I've danced and I've paid the fiddler. I done my time. Now it's time to go home."

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let the time
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M.B.A. { }

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Other { }

(Specify) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

CRIMEJACKER

#94233449



OH GOD!
HE'S GOING
TO KILL ME!



WHEN HE'S PROBABLY
KILLED A DOZEN

FILTHY KILLER GOT
OFF EASY-- THEY
CALL THAT JUSTICE?



WELL, WELL...

IF IT AIN'T THE
"CRIMEJACKER."

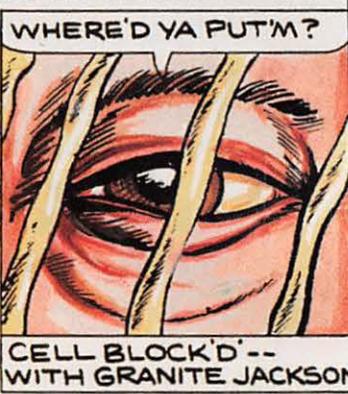


LOOK AT YOU-- SHIT!
COWERING LIKE A
BITCH!

WAIT... PLEASE,
JUST--



"Y'ALL AIN'T"
SHIT!"



WHERE'D YA PUT'M?

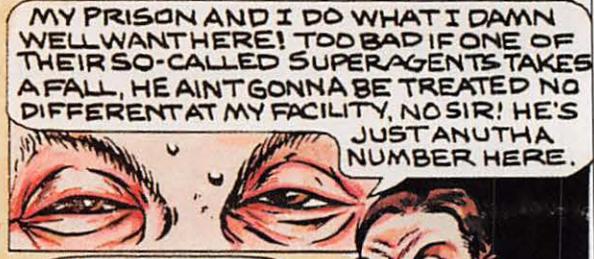
CELL BLOCK D'--
WITH GRANITE JACKSON



HAW!
THE FEDS SAID
GO EASY ON HIM.



AD SEG-- BAH! THIS
AIN'T ONE OF THEM
PANSYASS COUNTRY
CLUB FACILITIES.
THIS IS GODDAMN
STONEKILL--



MY PRISON AND I DO WHAT I DAMN
WELL WANT HERE! TOO BAD IF ONE OF
THEIR SO-CALLED SUPERAGENTS TAKES
A FALL, HE AIN'T GONNA BE TREATED NO
DIFFERENT AT MY FACILITY, NO SIR! HE'S
JUST ANUTHA
NUMBER HERE.



LET ME GO ROUGH'M UP
A BIT-- THROW HIM IN THE
HOLE FOR DISORDERLY
CONDUCT OR SOMETHING.



NO SIRREE --
AND GODDAMN...

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I
TOLD YOU NOT TO SIT ON MY
DESK! YOU MAY BE DATING
MY DAUGHTER BUT GODDAMN
IT ALL TO HELL, GET OFF MY
DESK! ... LET POLITAN SIT
IN GENERAL POPULATION
FOR A WHILE...

LET THE OTHER
PRISONERS TEAR HIM
A NEW ASSHOLE.



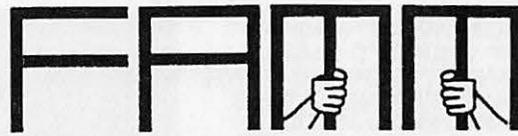
THEN WE MOVE IN
FOR THE KILL!



THAT'S THE PLAN, BOY.

NOW PICK UP
THAT CHICKEN
BONE! YOU'RE
GETTING MY OFFICE MESSY.

SOME LAWS WERE MEANT TO BE CHANGED.

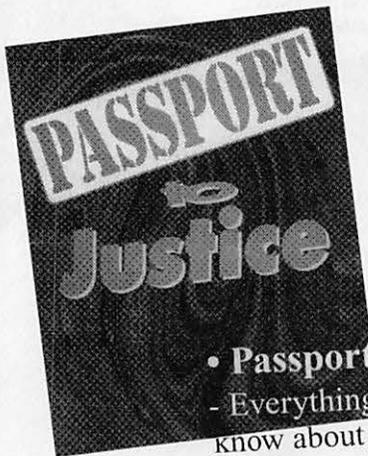


Families Against Mandatory Minimums

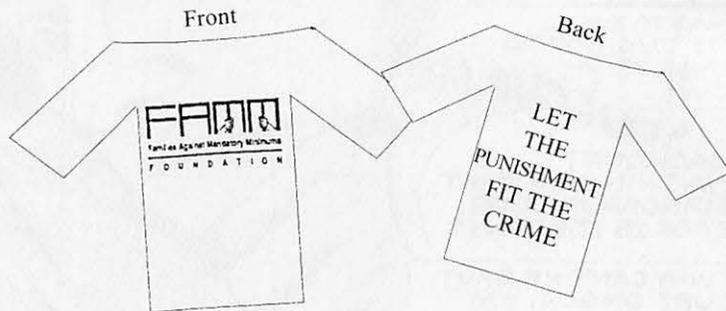
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Get the Facts. Change the law!

THE LIEUTENANT CALLED BUBBA



Story & Photos by Chris Cozzone

Lifer Armani Shakur spent seven years in solitary, at Trenton State and at East Jersey State Prison, not caring about jack shit. Then he met Lieutenant Alan August, who turned out to be the only person who would listen to him. August would visit the young lifer in solitary. Then one day he went to the administration and talked to them about giving Armani another chance. Surprisingly, they did.

Today, Armani, part of the Lifer's Group, is a different man.

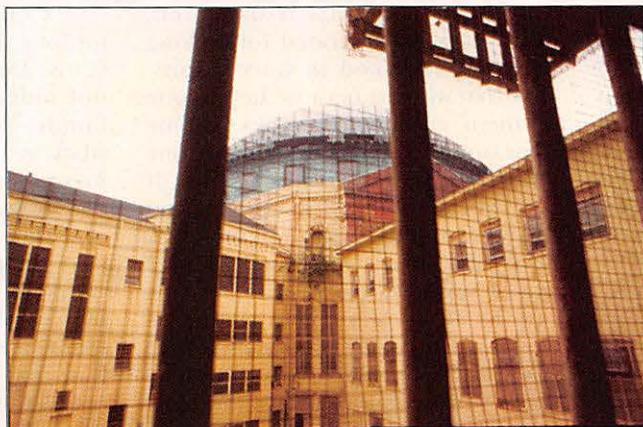
Calvin Bass has a similar story. At 14, he was sentenced to 35 years to life for murder. Calvin will not be eligible for parole until he is nearly 50. At the time of sentencing, the judge told Calvin he was "unrehabilitative." For the first five years of his incarceration, Calvin, deprived of any hope, was a troublemaker. Then he got involved in the Lifer's Group and he, too, met Lt. August, who gave the kid hope. Today, at 25, Calvin has learned to deal with his

stiff sentence, and like other members of the Lifer's Group, he has dedicated his time behind bars to helping juveniles learn from his mistakes.

There's no shortage of praise for 46-year-old Alan August at East Jersey State Prison in Rahway, NJ. In fact, there's so much of it that if he isn't careful, before he retires next March, the prisoners and C.O.'s are gonna dip his ass in bronze and stick him up on the dome this state pen is known for. The man's as much an institution as the institution itself.

Alan August, known to all as "Augie," and to many prisoners as "Lt. Bubba," has put in 25 calendars at Rahway. For his first eight years, he worked as a C.O. Then he got involved with the Lifer's Group and their Juvenile Awareness Program. In 1976, acting as liaison for the prisoners, he supervised the Scared Straight program.

Scared Straight was the first in-yo'-face program to emerge from a prison. It became so successful that



As seen from inside, the brass dome of East Jersey State Prison.

officials in Washington, D.C., Tennessee, Idaho, New York, West Virginia, Delaware and even Norway asked Lt. August for help in starting similar programs. Augie has also become one of the leading lecturers on juvenile crime.

For the Scared Straight program, Augie would bring wacked-out juveniles into Rahway to meet cons, who'd verbally assault them with the hardcore truth of prison life. The intention was to scare some sense into the kids and hope they didn't repeat the prisoners' mistakes.

"There's no bullshit with Scared Straight," says Augie. "We tell 'em what they need to know. Like about drugs. We tell 'em, yeah, there are drugs in prison. Drugs are in all prisons. They get in by visitors, by workers, by dirty cops . . . and the price? Triple in here. Now, if you had a program where just staff talked to kids, you'd hear, 'No, no, they're no drugs here.' Bullshit."

Whatever it took to shove some sense down a punk-kid's throat, the cons of Scared Straight and Lt. August did it. "You come in here, kid," one con might say, "and your ass is mine, 'cause you gonna be my bitch. You hear me?" Or, "I'm gonna die in here. You wanna do the same?" No subject is taboo: rape, shanks, drugs, dissin' and dyin'.

After 17 years of Scared Straight and working with prisoners with the common goal of helping kids, August said he started to change on a personal level.

"When I first came here, I had an ego problem," says the former Golden Gloves champion. "I was a tough guy. I was like a lot of 21-year-olds who come here even now, wanting power and control over other people." August had wanted to be a State Trooper but he was too short; back then, there was a height requirement and 5'7" didn't cut it. "Then one day, I saw an ad in the paper for a corrections officer. I didn't even know what it was. Back then, they used to hire you off the street."

Augie became the youngest officer at Rahway. "I was the odd one out. Everybody else was in their 30s and up, just a bunch of old people. And the prison? Forget it. Prisoners had to have military haircuts and walk between the yellow lines. Mail

was censored, solitary confinement with bread and water was in, and they used to have band music playing when prisoners went to work."

Augie played along for several years, until he became Sergeant. Then, with the start of Scared Straight, he began to see a purpose to his profession. "When you work in a prison setting," he says, "the inmates have an image to keep. The officers do, too." That line started to blur for August. "I started spending so much time with the inmates that after awhile, I let the image go. And so did they. We started to know each other real good."



East Jersey State Prison's Lifer's Group: (above) the original group, which formed in 1975, and (below) the most recent.



"We were a little skeptical about him at first," admits Willie Allen, who's been incarcerated for as long as Augie's worked in Corrections. "But that was just because he was one of 'them' entering our ranks. As time went on, he showed he was just one of the fellas. He taught us that if you're straight-up with a guy, if you treat a man like a man, you're gonna be treated like a man back. That's why he was so successful."

"He's always given a fuck," explains Chris DeLuise, chairman of the Lifer's Group. "He's people—that's why we've given him the nickname, 'Lt. Bubba.'"

Another reason why Augie

believes he has succeeded in connecting with the cons is because of his street background. He grew up in the rough part of Elizabeth, NJ. "I was always a tough guy," he says. "Remember 'Happy Days'? The Fonz? That was me—the leather jacket, Vaseline in the hair, y'know. I did a lot of bad things. I just never got caught and I got out in time. These guys didn't. Many of the inmates I work with and most of the kids that come to Scared Straight are the ones who won't get out in time."

Over the years, Augie has developed some very unusual relationships with prisoners. These bonds have generated hundreds of stories and incidents.

Like the time one of the prisoners (who was in for murder) pulled Augie out of a cellblock fire; it was the same con who'd tried to stab him several years earlier.

Or the time he was attacked by an inmate with a wooden club, knocked out cold and hospitalized. Where did the majority of get-well cards come from? Yep: prisoners.

Or even the time Augie stepped into the ring with Tony Ayalla, a prisoner at Rahway who at one time was ranked No.1 junior middleweight boxer in the world. "Augie got his ass kicked," laughs one of the Lifers. The bout was a fundraiser for a promo gig in order to help save a little girl in need of an operation.

"There's a lot of stories," says Augie. "But that's what happens when you get attached."

Not all stories come from Augie, though. The cons got a few of their own.

"I talked Augie's nephew into joining the service," laughs "Crazy Chris" DeLuise, who has grown close not only to August but to the Lt.'s family. "The kid ended up getting stuck in the Gulf War. And Augie—he says to me, 'If my nephew dies, you die.' It was pretty funny."

"And whenever Augie brings kids in to the program," continues the 59-year-old con, "he tells them that they're gonna meet a 70-year-old hitman—me, of course. I keep telling him that if he says that, I'm gonna tell all the kids that he's gay or something. Yeah, we got comedy between us."



Lt. August jokes around with Henry Condit and "Crazy Chris" DeLuise of the Lifer's Group.

"One time this kid was gonna jump on him," relates Willie Allen. "So ol' Lt. Bubba came to see me. 'Willie, whatsa matter wit' this kid?' 'Whatsa matter, Augie? Scared of this kid?' I asked him. Augie was hollerin' and screamin' at this kid. He had everybody up there crackin' up. He don't know this," Allen laughs, "but we used to sic kids on him. 'See that guy over there with that suit on?' we'd say. 'He thinks he can kick your butt, man. Go over there and start some shit with him, refuse to do what he tells you to do.' And Augie and this kid would get into it and we'd just sit back and laugh our asses off."

Although the special relationship Augie has with the Lifers has been positive for those involved, some outsiders have criticized Augie's ways.

"A lot of C.O.'s would call him a fuckin' liberal," says Anthony Lorraine, another Lifer who's known Augie for over a decade. "Some have called him soft. But if being soft means caring about us, then yeah, he's been soft. I think they just perceive him as soft because he's worked so closely with us."

Patrick Arvonio, the Superintendent of East Jersey State Prison,

agrees. "Nobody says he's too soft out loud, but you pick up information around here. Sure, some people think he's acted on behalf of inmates when they thought he shouldn't, but that isn't the case. If some guy gets busted who should've gotten busted, Augie deals with him. In this business, there are gonna be times when you go to bat for an inmate because you think he's right. And Augie's done that. Some of that other stuff with staff is just jealousy."

"If being soft means caring, then yeah, he's soft."

"The guys who've looked down on Augie are dinosaurs," says Lt. Al Harris, who says Augie broke him into the business 18 years ago. "These turnkeys and headbusters are leftovers from the '50s and '60s. You deal with everyone here as individuals, and with respect. That's what

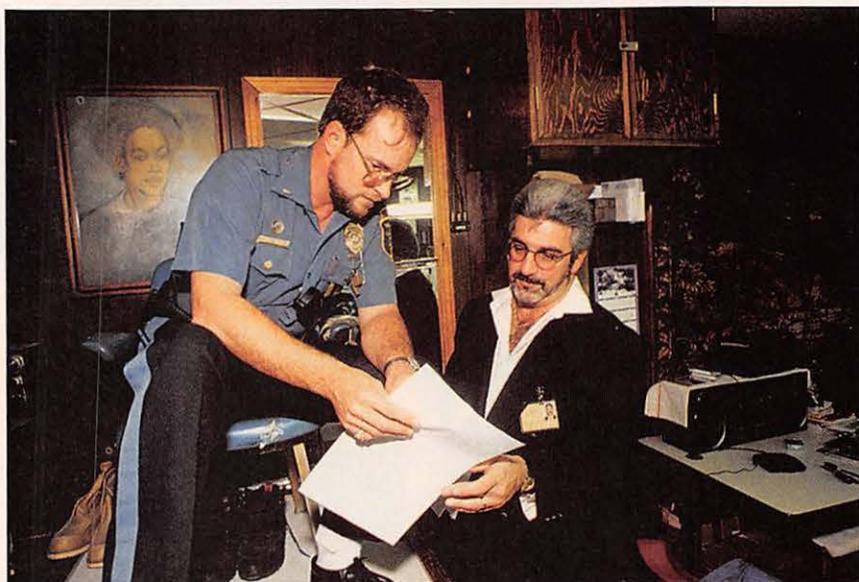
Augie's taught me."

"I'm not a bleeding-heart liberal," says Augie. "But I think prisons should be reserved for the real jerks and idiots. Some things work here, some things don't. I act accordingly. But too soft? I may be liberal one way, but I'm hard in other ways. Ever hear those inmate sob stories? Some of 'em blame everybody but themselves. I can't stand that shit. There are certain types of inmates who deserve to be locked up."

"On the other hand, if you treat prisoners like shit, and take away programs and recreation . . . That's not right. It just means trouble. If a prisoner has done something that warrants punishment, you put him in the prison's prison: Ad Seg. But you don't start taking things away like weights and programs for the hell of it."

The cons of the Lifer's Group can also attest to Augie's hard side.

"He ain't all peaches and cream," says Henry Condit, president of the Lifer's Group. "We get in arguments. I cuss him out, he cusses us out. He gets pissed off, slams the door. But if he's wrong, and vice versa, there are always apologies. It's a human thing with us and Augie."



Lt. Al Harris raps biz with Augie.

For Lt. August, this "human thing" really hit home about two years ago. Lt. August started losing his balance; sometimes his legs would give out. Members of the Lifer's Group would help him to his feet, teasing Augie that maybe he'd had too much to drink the night before. When he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, the prisoners stopped making fun of him. "Even if I asked the inmates to imitate me,"

says Augie, "because it made me laugh, they wouldn't do it. It was then that I realized our unusual relationship was not a front, but real."

Multiple Sclerosis has made it hard for Augie to maintain the hectic schedule he's kept up for 18 years, so last year, he announced his retirement.

The Lifer's Group gave him an appreciation dinner. "We knew he likes old Motown tunes," says Condit, who sings in a group with several other

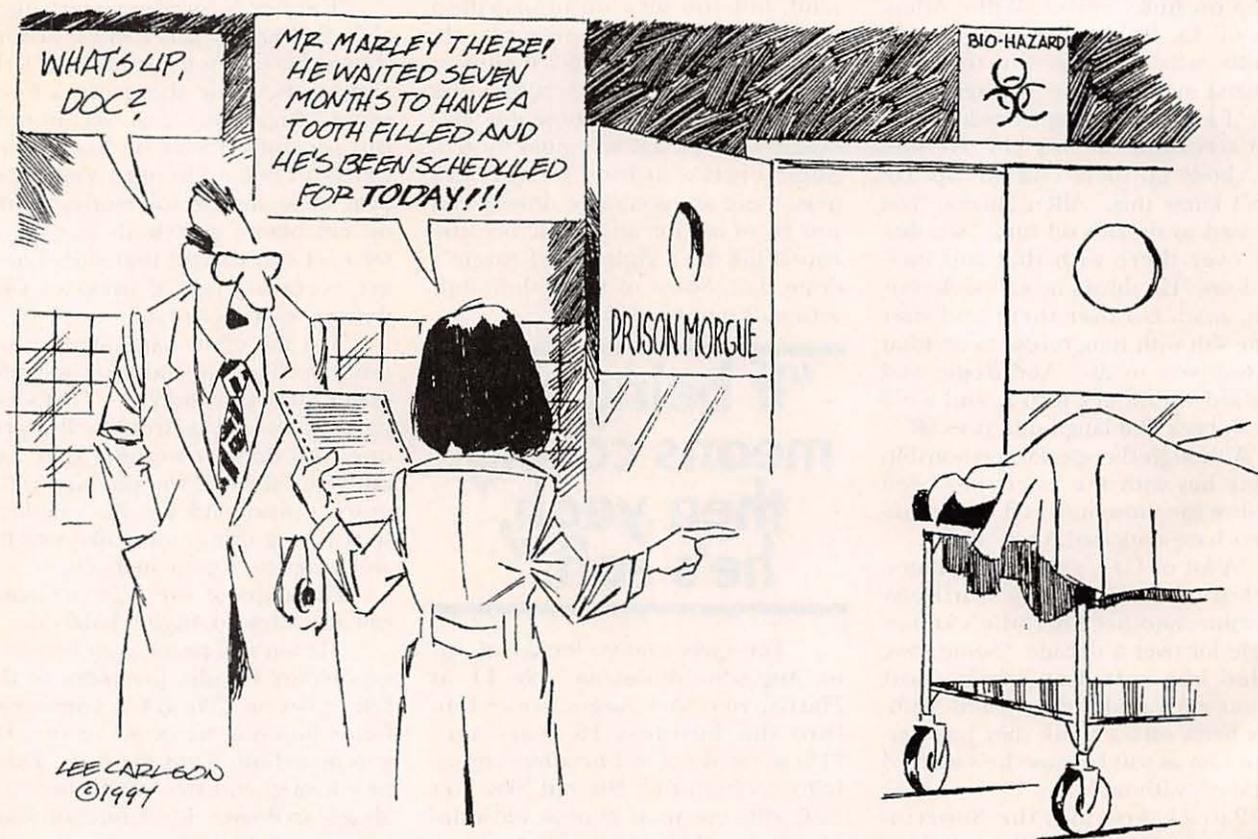
Lifers. "So we sang a medley of his favorite hits at the dinner. There we were singing and I look down at him and Augie's sitting in the front row crying. I'm like, 'damn'—he almost messed me up when I seen him."

Although M.S. hinders Augie, he doesn't plan to sit on his butt after his retirement. The man has plans: a book, movie projects and, of course, a continuation of the work he's done with Juvenile Awareness. Augie will keep working to help kids stay out of prison; he's even talked to some of the Lifers about incorporating them into his project, once they're out.

Some of the prisoners are convinced that Lt. Bubba will get bored and return to Corrections. Some would like to see him as an administrator, or, better yet, a superintendent. But that's all up to Lt. Bubba, who's still unsure what's next for him.

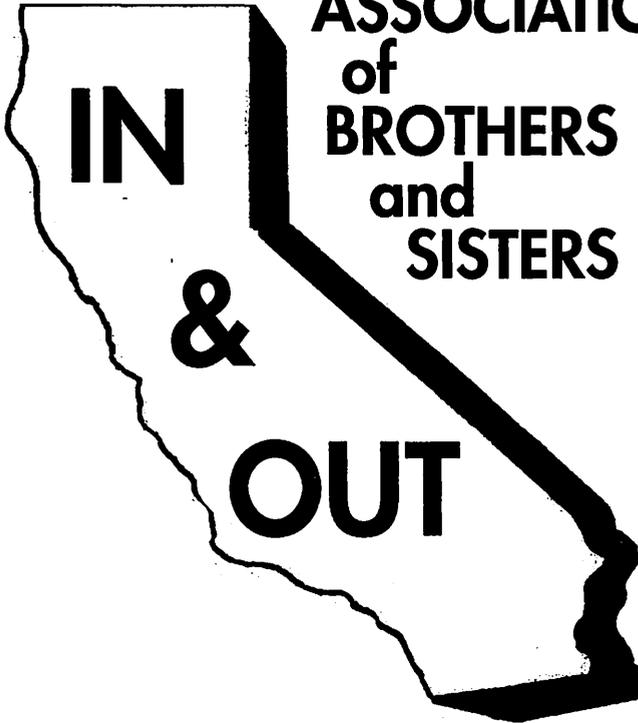
"One thing is for sure," says Willie Allen. "When he's gone, he's definitely gonna be missed."

PL



LEE CARLSSON
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FAMMM

PUTTING A HUMAN FACE ON MANDATORY MINIMUMS



We should all have sisters like Julie Stewart. When her brother, Jeff, got busted for growing pot and sentenced to a mandatory minimum term of five years, Julie, in her words, "went crazy." She launched a one-woman campaign to change laws she calls "stupid" and "un-American."

That was five years ago. Today Julie is the president of Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM), a Washington, D.C.-based organization some 27,000 strong. FAMM is directly responsible for one of the few sane provisions included in the horrendous, politically fraught Omnibus Crime Bill of 1994. The "Limitation on Applicability of Mandatory Minimum Penalties," otherwise known as the "safety-valve," represents a hard-won if partial victory for those Americans who still believe that the punishment should fit the crime.

Julie is a smart, articulate, attractive woman who looks like Jerry Brown's old flame, Linda Ronstadt. She credits the success of FAMM's efforts to appearances, "putting a human face on the law," and to looking and acting professional and businesslike instead of coming on like some radical freak. Her strategy includes "attacking at both the grassroots level, getting to the public, as well as at the legislative level here in Washington or in state capitals." It's a combination that works.

"I'm firmly convinced now that for any cause, you need a victim," Julie tells me when I visit her at FAMM's professional and businesslike offices across from the FBI Building on Pennsylvania Avenue. "You need to visually display the victim and that's what we've done and I think we've done it really successfully."

You also need to appeal to a wide range of the political spectrum. One of FAMM's most important contributions to the fight for rational sentencing practices has been to alert conservative politicians to the dangers inherent in mandatory sentencing, which strips away all judicial discretion from the sentencing phase of a criminal proceeding and places unconstitutionally broad powers in the hands of prosecutors.

"I think you have to play the game by the rules of the establishment," Julie answers when I ask how her organization has been able to make the kind of political inroads it has in Washington. "And those rules are: look conservative, act conservative, find conservative support, which is what we have done."

The youngest of four kids, Julie was a tomboy who loved to romp around with her best buddy, her older brother Jeff, and ride horses and motorcycles on the family wheat farm in Washington state. By 1990, when Jeff got arrested, Julie had moved to D.C. where she worked in public relations for the CATO Institute, a libertarian think tank.

"Jeff was growing marijuana with two friends in a house that he owned but didn't live in. The guys who lived in the house showed the neighbors what they were doing, like fools, and the neighbors turned them in to the police and got a thousand dollar reward. The two guys who were living in the house turned Jeff in as the kingpin. They both had prior felony convictions, but they got probation because they turned Jeff in. Jeff took the fall for everybody. He got five years for 375 marijuana plants. I was appalled. I thought this was stupid. This was not justice. I think that as much as I was sorry that Jeff was going to prison, the thing that pissed me off was that the judge had no discretion. The guy had been on the bench for 25 years and at Jeff's sentencing he said, 'There's nothing I can do. I have to give you this sentence.'"

Julie began asking people around the Capitol exactly what mandatory minimum sentencing was all about. She quickly learned an important political lesson: Most Congressmen don't understand the laws they pass and they have no idea how those laws translate into practical, human terms once they are enacted. *Mandatory minimums, three strikes you're out, get tough on criminals*—these are political slogans that become laws with no consideration for real social consequences beyond winning votes from an equally unenlightened electorate.

So Julie decided it was time to educate the public and the legislators in order to show them exactly who their ill-conceived laws were affecting. In July of 1991, she left CATO and founded FAMM.

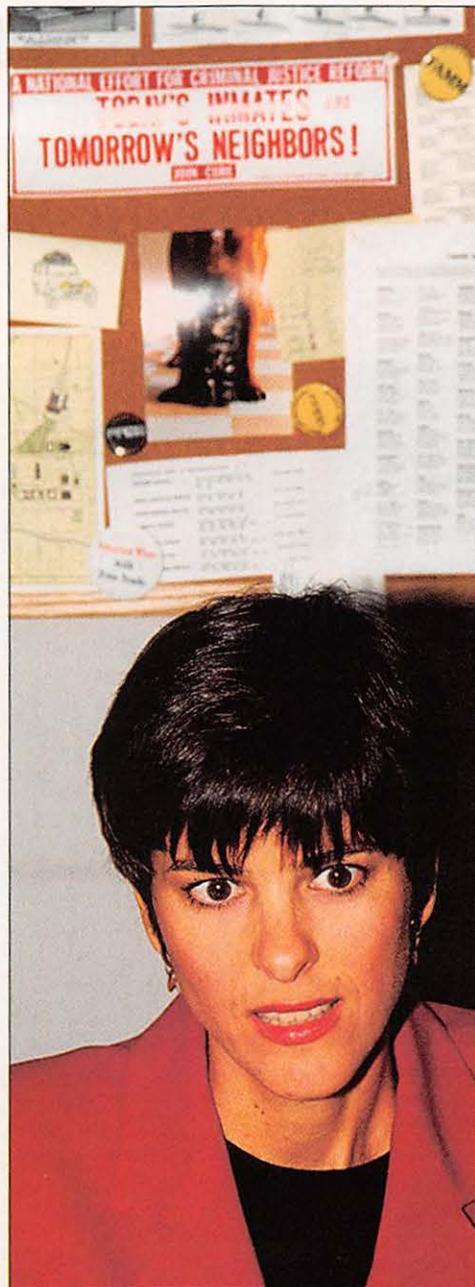
"Go meet with your legislator," she urges FAMM members, most of

whom are, like Julie, rudely awakened relatives of drug war prisoners. "Take a picture of your loved one with you. Explain in five minutes or less why he or she is in prison and why it's wrong."

The FAMM strategy is clearly effective. In a little over three years, FAMM has accomplished more than all the other sentencing reform groups combined. Though Julie recognizes that the bureaucratic behemoth that is our federal government takes a long time to respond, she credits her members with a vital yet bittersweet victory for those opposed to mandatory minimum sentences.

"The 'safety-valve' that's in the crime bill is directly the result of our efforts. I know that because I hear it from people on the Hill. People who have been there for 15 years are saying that the letters coming into Congressmen's offices, the telephone calls and the faxes are registering. Nobody was talking about the issue of mandatory minimums prior to FAMM coming up. No one knew about it. The members of Congress didn't even know it existed, or if they did it was like, 'Eh, they're just inmates, nobodies.' But now we've been able to attach a human face to the issue, whether it's the mother or the wife or sister or whomever, it's a real constituent, a real person that they have to answer to. So even though we haven't succeeded in eliminating mandatory sentencing, we've made it an issue the members of Congress can't ignore anymore."

The safety-valve provision allows a sentencing court to depart from mandatory minimums for certain first-time, non-violent drug offenders. The judge can use the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and lower a sentence to reflect the defendant's minor role and acceptance of responsibility or other mitigating factors. The bitter taste left by FAMM's victory comes from the fact that the provision was not made retroactive. FAMM members fought hard to have retroactivity included with the safety-valve, but it was removed from the bill after a fierce lobbying effort by a new organization called the National Association of Assistant U.S. Attorney's (NAAUSA). In the excellent, informative "FAMM-gram" newsletter Julie publishes she notes: "They did this lobbying on taxpayer time from their federal offices." Julie's brother Jeff and the loved-ones of

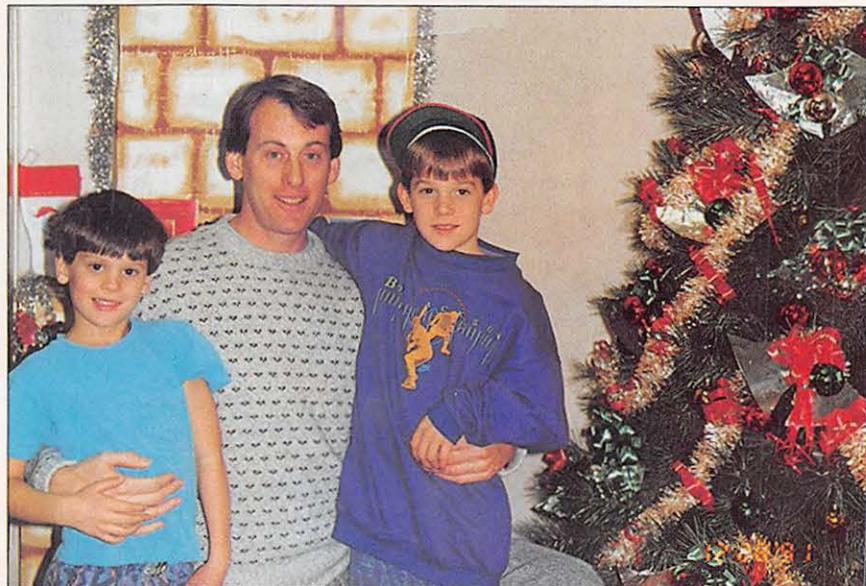


FAMM members who are now serving mandatory minimums won't benefit from the new law as it is written. Still, Julie sees this "seemingly innocuous" provision as the beginning of the end for mandatory minimum sentences.

"Most of the time I feel very positive about what I'm doing," Julie replies when I ask how she feels about the results FAMM is getting in Washington. "I feel that we are making slow but steady progress forward. There are times when I don't feel like that because this is such an uphill battle and you get tired climbing a mountain and you want to rest. Like when we lost retroactivity of the safety-valve in the crime bill, I was really demoralized for a while. It really took the wind out of me." Her dark eyes sparkle and she smiles. "But the thing that has always continued to motivate me is anger. Anger that the system is so screwed up that it allows people to rot in prison for five or ten or twenty years for a non-violent crime."

What upsets Julie most about mandatory minimums is that they remove all discretion from sentencing judges. "That's

*(Left) Julie Stewart
(Below) Jeff Stewart, Julie's brother,
with his nephews Ross and Ravn
Whittington.
(Next page) A FAMM protest in
Indianapolis against mandatory
sentencing.*



Prison Fiction

OLD MAX

by J.C. Amberchele

There are hills all around, jagged hills, and the wall, and above the wall and the hills, the clean white dome of sky, so clean you can almost feel it, smooth beyond measure, silky hot. Where the dome ends at the horizon, it is all snaggle-toothed hills, so that everything above resembles the inside of an egg, broken in half, and if you roll your head back and gaze toward the sun, straight, straight up, squinting, sweat burning your eyes, you can feel yourself float, rise on a wave of heat and then soar above the wall and the hills, higher and higher.

Alex Pitts, leaning on his shovel and with his face to the sky, feels his neck pop, and at that very instant hears Crummage, that pig, shouting from the far side of the field. "Pitts! Hey, Pitts! We ain't got time for bird watching"! Pitts, you dummy!"—on and on while Alex pulls his handkerchief from his pocket and wipes his face, wipes the sweat and—if he didn't know better, if this had been another life—wipes what could have been tears from his cheeks. He opens his eyes and sees what he always sees.

Years ago, they had convicts build the wall, cut the stone from the hill behind the prison, brick by brick; what used to be a rocky bluff covered with sage and pine is now a vertical scar three hundred feet high, the entire side of it down to the fences nearby. The rest is in the wall—30 feet tall and half a mile long, thick enough to walk on.

"You getting' a tan, Pitts? You on the beach?"

Crummage has crossed the ditch and come up behind Alex, laughing even though nothing is funny. "Get your ass in gear, boy."

The ditch is part of a new irrigation project for the town. The old sluice has run west to east through the prison compound for years—now they want a spillway to the south, past

the clinic and death row, under the wall and through the park out front. There are six inmates to dig it with picks and shovels, ten hours a day, seven days a week, another hundred yards before they bring in the cement trucks. Alex knows he is on the crew for a reason—he is big and strong and they figure he is dumb enough to do what he's told.

"If you're sick, Pitts, get a pass from the clinic."

Crummage, smiling broadly, throws out a hand in the direction of the buildings a football field away.

Alex has the choice. He can drop his shovel and head for the clinic—men have keeled over in this heat, and there are always lawsuits pending against the State. But a trip to the clinic means two days' lay-in, no gym or yard privileges, too many questions from a suspicious nurse who couldn't give a damn if you lived or died. Alex has this choice, and one other—he can swing the shovel, turn his back to Crummage and do his job, dig for his lousy meals and what little freedom he can eke out of a day.

"Pitts, you got a problem?"

Alex looks up at him. Crummage is the day-shift labor foreman, pushing sixty and close to retirement. He is as thick and wrinkled as a tree stump, and where his eyes should be there are tiny holes covered by cheap, wire-rimmed sunglasses he never removes. His mouth is loose, mocking.

"Because if you do, Pitts, we can take care of it. Just you and me, son."

He steps in front of Alex, hands still on his hips, now with his chin up, close. Alex can smell his breath. The old man's brow is dry, not a drop of sweat, and Alex hates him for this; he could kill this man with one punch, bust his overripe head before the guard in the tower could shoot. Crummage is unarmed. He is fat and sloppy and Alex has seen a thousand like him, having grown up in state homes and detention centers, hating the guards with a fire in his chest he could barely control, hating them the

way he hated his father who beat him with fists when he was a child, punished him for crying, and later, when the tears dried forever, punished him for talking, for saying "I'm sorry," for saying anything at all, until Alex quit that also—and all the while he wanted to kill the man, silently, never saying a word—just kill him and walk away.

Crummage must sense it because he drops his hands and shakes his head. Alex knows what Crummage thinks—that a man who cannot talk is stupid; that a man who is silent is blind and deaf as well. But Crummage knows that Alex can feel. He knows because he taunts Alex, because he pushes him to the edge and then a little beyond, almost enough, before he backs off and shakes his head.

Alex stabs at the side of the ditch, gets a foot on the shovel and buries it to the handle. The dirt is sandy in places, wet and heavy in others. There are rocks, chunks of shale by the thousands, and the digging is uneven, fitful. The sun scorches the back of his neck, boils the sweat on his shirt. Yesterday he felt his knees give out, and today it is his feet—an ache he can't quite place, all over in his thick, state-issue brogans. But his back and shoulders are strong, and he can count on his arms, his arms will be the last to go.

A hundred years ago, they bought this land and built a prison on it, put up a schoolhouse and scratched out a yard and then built the wall, tore down some buildings and put up new ones, renovated everything and changed the name when the Feds sued, but basically it's the same. Except the old convicts are gone. There are new facilities now, windowless pods scattered out on the plains: modern, low-slung affairs with high-tech fences; prefabs and modulars resembling hunkers by day and spacecraft at night. They are filled with youngsters, gangs of kids with crazy hairdo's and city faces, mouths full of chatter that Alex cannot listen to. And now Old Max is reserved for the ill and

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REMARKS:
SHIPPMENT TERMS ARE NET 30 DAYS. DELIVERY WILL BEGIN 180 DAYS AFTER RECEIVING PER AND 200 PER MONTH UNTIL COMPLETION OF CONTRACT.

FACTORY INFORMATION ONLY (ENCLOSURE)
 COPY CUSTOMER'S REQUEST
 PRODUCTION COPIES
 COMPLETE DATA PACKAGE
 25-TIE-SHOTS GREENS
 10-TIE-SHOTS GREENS
 TESTING COSTS GREENS

RECEIVED
NOV 17 1992
UNICOR
THE OXFORD, VI 53952
Hosbey
49311

ORDER SHALL BE AWARDED TO, AND 3 COPIES SENT TO THE FOLLOWING:
FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES, INC.
CABLE FACTORY
FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION
OXFORD, MN 53952
CAGE 53753

PLEASE SEND A COURTESY COPY OF THE ORDER TO:
UNICOR, ELECTRONICS, PLASTICS AND OPTICS DIVISION
220 FIRST ST. N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20534

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CALL BOB DAVIS
ON 202-508-8442/8443 OR AUTOVON 205-1205

VERY TRULY YOURS,
CHARLES WANKING
COST AND SCHEDULING MANAGER

EXHIBIT NUMBER 1031

(far left) A Unit Cost Estimate from the UNICOR plant at F.C.I. Oxford, WI, to Jaco Electronics of New York.
(middle left) An order acknowledgment to Jaco.
(left) A quotation from UNICOR to Tamsco Manufacturing for an order over \$2 million.

the Sports Europa evidence. The government has no idea the rest of our arsenal of evidence exists. We've been holding back but now we get to blast them all before a Grand Jury. With incontrovertible, staggering documented evidence like this, there's absolutely no way UNICOR can cover their tracks."

And CV 294-011 isn't the only legal action against UNICOR. In November, 1994, Postconviction Consultants, Inc. of Georgia, under Truman Buckles, filed a complaint against Federal Prison Industries, Inc. Representing a coalition of businesses UNICOR has crushed, the suit, similar to Mohwish, Olson and Sargeant's, charges UNICOR with deprivation of civil rights and conspiratorial acts committed in violation of R.I.C.O.

For years, federal prisoners have bitched and moaned about the illegal activities of UNICOR, all to no avail. Who is going to believe a bunch of convicts? Certainly not the government. According to Joe Krovisky, a spokesman for the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney General's Office would not say whether an investigation has ever been launched into the allegations against UNICOR, but only that "nothing has ever been publicly disclosed."

"They've taken advantage of us for years," Joe Mohwish says, "only because they've been able to. If it was a RICO action against John Gotti or Herby Spering, the feds would immediately investigate, even grant immunity to admitted serial murderers like Sammy "the Bull" Gravano to testify before a Grand Jury. But what happens when the feds are caught red-handed breaking the law? They try to cover it up. The obvious question to Attorney General Reno should be, Why won't or can't you enforce the law? After all, Olson, Sargeant and myself are just American citizens trying to expose a massive scam and report a crime! This case is a serious can of worms.

"And when we go before the Grand Jury," Mohwish exclaims, "we'll be making history."

registered. Mohwish and Olson requested a court order to redesignate Sargeant to F.C.I. Jesup via the U.S. Marshal's Service. They further requested that once the transfer was completed, the U.S. Marshall's Office would keep the three of them in safe custody until the resolution of their case. Instead, they sent Mohwish to Sargeant at F.C.I. Tallahassee. Olson was kept at F.C.I. Jesup.

"They knew I was financing it," says Mohwish. "And by now, they knew they couldn't scare or intimidate us. So they did the next best thing: stall us. For four months, they were successful in obstructing justice."

But by August, Mohwish and Co. were ready to roll. The casework on CV 294-011 was resumed.

At about the time Sargeant joined the team, the UNICOR plant at F.C.I. Jesup was apparently continuing its venture to sell products illegally to the private sector. Additional documents captured by Mohwish, Olson and Sargeant reveal an attempt to solicit T-shirts sales to Mason & Hanger-Silas Mason Co., Inc., a private company in Middleton, Iowa. The memo, addressed to Silas Mason's plant manager, Donald Duke, documented the products UNICOR could provide. A price list and set of samples was also sent to Duke.

Mohwish also received six prisoner-liberated documents from the

UNICOR plant at F.C.I. Oxford, Wisconsin. The papers, all estimates, cost sheets and purchase orders, were addressed to six different companies—all in the private sector. The breakdown:

- ✓ 4000 tail lights for Cummins Military Systems of Augusta, GA—\$41,960.
- ✓ 22 cable assemblies for Jaco Electronics, Inc. of Happaugue, NY—\$17,163.30.
- ✓ 3333 wiring harnesses for Tamsco Manufacturing Division of Polson, MT—\$2,391,794.13.
- ✓ 40 cable assemblies for Lasmer Industries, Inc. of Kerryville, TX—\$4,113.60.
- ✓ 111 cable assemblies for Electronics & Space Corporation of St. Louis, MO—\$3,192.36.
- ✓ 184 cable assemblies for Minowitz Manufacturing Co. of Roseville, MI—\$7,452.00.

The transactions total nearly \$2.5 million.

Even before Mohwish, Olson and Sargeant could incorporate the new, bullet-proof evidence into their case, they received a shock. Based on the documents already provided to the court—i.e. papers proving UNICOR had done business with Sports Europa—the UNICOR Three were granted a motion to take their evidence before a Grand Jury.

"I was ecstatic," says Mohwish. "The court has only been provided

UNICOR
Federal Prison Industries, Inc.

UNIT COST ESTIMATE

PPH Form 77 Rev. July 82

Location: OXFORD
Product: CABLE

Estimate No.:
Date: 07/14/93

Buyer's Model: 6150-00-255-8332
Factory: CABLE

Buyer's Model: CABLE ASSEMBLY
Last Unit Estimate No.:
Buyer's Model: CABLE ASSEMBLY
Date: 06/11/93 W.O. or Inquiry No.: 302274
Spec. No.: 72289 100 to RHD Estimated unit cost: 515.97 Per: 473.00
Buyer's Model: 72289-100 to JACO Actual unit cost: 519.97 Job No.:
Weight Net: Shipping: No. per Customer: JACO
Country of Origin: EA Address: HAUPPAUGE NV 11788
Order No.: 95492 Order Date: 02-AUG-93

Buyer's Model	BUYER'S MATERIALS Description	Quantity	Unit	Actual	Est.	Actual
CBL-1024	72289-4/6-4/12	100.000		1.90		190.00
CTR-1686	MB90556C32412P	200.63		200.63		200.63
CTR-1687	MB90557C32412B	181.07		181.07		181.07
PAC-0018	PACKING MATERIAL AS REQUIRED	20.00		20.00		20.00
SLU-0290	MC3003/5-112-4 RPH1 RNF 100	0.750		6.00		4.50
TST-0001	TESTING AS REQUIRED RED CONTRACT		AS REQ	2.00		2.00
				598.20		
DIRECT MATERIAL 100.00				1.90		190.00
DIRECT LABOR 200.63				200.63		200.63
OVERHEAD Rate % of Base				181.07		181.07
TOTAL MANUFACTURING COST				373.60		373.60
UNITS WOULD BE # 531.17 EACH.						

NOTE: QUOTING REVISION # A . SHIP 280 DAYS AND PAYMENT TERMS ARE NET 30 DAYS.
PRICE FOR AN ALTERNATE QUANTITY OF 100 UNITS WOULD BE \$ 531.17 EACH.

303032

U.S. Department of Justice
UNICOR
Federal Prison Industries, Inc.

19-SEP-93

ORDER ACKNOWLEDGMENT

W.O. 64898

JACO
ATTN: MR. KEN MOLL
145 OSER AVENUE
HAUPPAUGE, NY 11788

This number should appear on all papers relating to this order.

Your Order No. 95492 Dated: 02-AUG-93

is hereby acknowledged.

Shipment will be made from factory at: OXFORD, WISCONSIN

Shipment will be made about: 29-JAN-94

Remarks:

Any necessary correspondence concerning this order should be directed to this office making reference to our W.O. number appearing in the box above.

TERRY CARD, FACTORY MANAGER

PPH Form 88 October 1, 1988

THE CIVIL CASE:

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Cable Systems Inc. et al,
Plaintiff,

v.

**Federal Prison Industries, Inc.
(UNICOR),
et. al.
Defendants**

COUNT ONE: Deliberate deprivation of civil rights by parties acting under the color or contour of federal laws.

COUNT TWO: For redress of constitutional rights secured by the U.S. Constitution.

COUNT THREE: For redress for conspiratorial acts committed in violation of Civil Racketeering and Corrupt Organizations Act.

Representing a coalition of businesses UNICOR has crushed, Postconviction Consultants, Inc., under Truman Buckles, filed this civil complaint on November 8, 1994 against UNICOR.

Postconviction Consultants, Inc. was formed in October of 1992 by Truman Buckles, an experienced prison litigation specialist. Postconviction Consultants, Inc. offers legal services to state and federal prisoners. For the past five years, the firm has concentrated on prison litigation, emphasizing federal sentencing guidelines.

would be thrown on a bus and be put on Diesel Therapy for six months and if I persisted on doing my legal work, he would have my 'ass locked up in the Hole.' He also stated that he would have my room ransacked and my stuff confiscated.

"I was very uneasy, to say the least," Mohwish admits. "I began to fear that this was just the beginning of retaliatory acts taken against me and my personal property, and that my legal materials would be destroyed."

Mohwish was also ordered by F.C.I.'s Health and Safety Officer, Lt. Commander Johnnie Williams, never to have another piece of registered mail sent to him. "This is a direct order," Williams yelled at Mohwish.

In April, Olson was presented with a letter, clearly marked as legal mail, from his unit officer. The letter, the officer explained to Olson, had been mistakenly opened by the warden's secretary. Meanwhile, Mohwish and Olson began filing for time extensions on their case because they were cut off from Sargeant. On May 23, still unable to communicate with their co-plaintiff, Mohwish asked his Unit Case Manager, Mr. Milton, to be permitted a non-monitored, legal telephone call to Sergeant at F.C.I. Tallahassee. Milton said he'd consider it. An hour later, he told Mohwish he had been ordered by the institution's paralegal, Mr. Dedman, not to allow Mohwish any phone calls to Sargeant.

Outgoing mail from Mohwish and Olson to Sargeant, albeit certified, started disappearing. Legal mail sent to Sargeant never reached its destination, despite being

A month later, Assistant United States Attorney Melissa Mundell of Georgia, representing UNICOR and its defendants, filed a Motion to Dismiss. The grounds stated: "lack of subject matter of jurisdiction; lack of standing; insufficiency of service of process; failure to exhaust administrative remedies; failure to state a constitutional violation; and failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted."

"Their dismissal," says Mohwish, "consisted of 81 pages of frivolous, inapplicable, misleading and unnecessary pleadings that did not address the issues. For instance, Mundell stated 'failure to exhaust administrative remedies.' Why would we need to file an administrative remedy in order to report felony violations of criminal law committed by corrupt officials of the U.S. government? That would be their job."

By now, the prisoner/whistleblowers realized they would get little, if any, help from free world authorities. They turned to other sources of assistance—this time, from their side of the bars. By establishing a network of federal prisoners from institutions around the country, Mohwish and Olson would, in time, uncover even more damaging evidence against UNICOR and the Department of Justice. But first, they recruited fellow prisoner Donald Sargeant. It was time for the federal prisoners to play hardball.

Donald Sargeant, 39, doing 183 months since 1990 for narcotics distribution and possession of unregistered firearms, was studying the law to fight his own case when he was approached by Mohwish and Olson. Sargeant, who already had a major beef with the Feds, was eager to help.

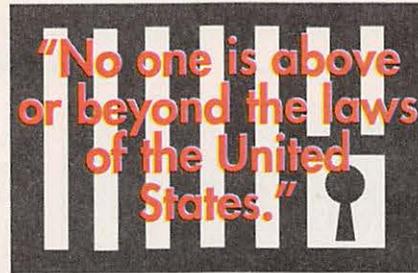
Sargeant's complaints against UNICOR dated back to 1989 when they allegedly forced him to work for the factory at M.C.C. Miami. "I told them no," he says, "because it was illegal to force me to work before I had my trial. Besides, I needed time to prepare for my upcoming case. They threatened me with the Hole and no visits with my family. I had no choice."

Sargeant started learning about UNICOR's Miami operation. During his stay at M.C.C. Miami, Sargeant observed and heard B.O.P. staff members threaten to harm prisoners who attempted to exercise their rights not to work at UNICOR's factory. He also claims to have observed an ongoing pattern used by the Bureau of Prisons in Miami to keep

all prisoners deaf, dumb and blind to the illegal actions taking place.

"New prisoners would be thrown into the hole," explains Sargeant. "That way, they'd be at a disadvantage when the officials would offer them jobs at UNICOR as a way to get out."

Prisoners start at 23 cents an hour when first beginning work at UNICOR. After they are there for a while, the pay grade will increase to over \$1. "But very seldom did any prisoner climb the pay grade," explains Sargeant, now a jailhouse lawyer. "When the time for a raise came, the prisoner was either transferred to non-UNICOR job in the prison or transferred to another institution. Prisoners coming from other federal facilities with UNICOR experience would be denied work at Miami's UNICOR because they wouldn't be able to start at the pathetically low wages."



Sargeant gathered other affidavits from prisoners at M.C.C. Miami complaining of UNICOR's wrongdoing and hiring practices. For instance, a prisoner is supposed to have an 8th grade education in order to work for UNICOR. "But there are Latino inmates in there now," reads an affidavit from Mark Lavallee, a prisoner at M.C.C. Miami, "who can't read or write English or Spanish."

"No one," says Donald Sargeant, "is above or beyond the laws of the United States. All laws must apply to all or apply to none. This is the very heart of our action against UNICOR: CV 294-11." Sargeant says this Action is a new theory and has never been tested before the Court before. "But this avenue," Sargeant adds, "isn't so much a new one as it is a revivification of the right, power and authority all U.S. citizens possess. The mistake everyone has made in addressing this lawsuit has been to treat it as a typical prisoner lawsuit, a civil lawsuit, when in reality it is not a law suit at all but a criminal action. It is on the law and on common sense."

The three muckrakers joined forces to fight UNICOR in April,

1994. Just a few days after Sargeant filed a motion to join CV 294-011, and while he was in possession of most of the case materials, he was ordered by B.O.P. officials at Jesup to pack up for an unexpected transfer to F.C.I. Tallahassee, Florida. As all federal prisoners know, sudden and unnecessary transfers from one institution to another, known as "diesel therapy," are often used to separate a writ-writing prisoner from his personal property and legal papers for weeks or even months. Such inaccessibility to files in the UNICOR case, as well as to Sargeant's personal case, was a devastating blow. Sargeant spoke to several staff members at Jesup, asking for a delay so he could complete legal paperwork and keep disruption to a minimum, but he was denied.

Once Sargeant arrived at F.C.I. Tallahassee, he was placed not into the general population but into the Detention Center. There, he was informed that he could not obtain any of his property, including his legal materials, as long as he remained in the Detention Center, which would be 3 to 6 weeks. The Detention Center is the lockdown unit at F.C.I. Tallahassee. Prisoners are confined to a single unit. Sargeant was precluded from doing any legal work, as well as from seeing his family.

The sudden transfer was not the beginning of what the UNICOR Three call "retaliatory acts" from the Feds. Early in February of '94, Duane Olson came back from lunch to discover that several of his legal files had been taken. Olson went to find the C.O. in charge of his block, Officer Ward, to inform him. Ward explained he hadn't been ripped off, and not to be alarmed. "I know you would like me to tell you what went down," Ward said, "but I can't do that for you. You need to see Lt. Wilson about it."

Olson went to see Wilson, who returned the materials. "It was a mistake," he replied.

Later that month, Mohwish, after presenting a cop-out (an "Inmate Request to Staff Member" form) to the Food Service manager, was ordered to the Lieutenant's office. When he arrived, he was confronted by several B.O.P. officers, as well as Lt. Matthew Arnold.

"Arnold accused me of being a 'writ writer,'" says Mohwish. "Then he told me that he would not put up with my filing paper work and if I continued, I would be in a lot of trouble. The more he talked, the louder and angrier he became. He said I

A CALL TO ACTION

by Donald Sargeant

I've been fighting the Man's system for five years now and I've always tried to help others on the inside do the same. I've paid the price for going against the flow of the system by being thrown on the ol' B.O.P. bus and shipped around, away from my family. That's just one of the aggravations I've had to put up with.

You already know that it's almost impossible to fight the Feds and their bullshit. But it makes me so damn angry seeing them get away with all the crimes they're committing and then calling us criminals, telling the world that we deserve the 5, 10, 20, 50 or 100 years in prison because we're drug dealers.

What's the real reason for this nightmare called the Drug War? The real need for our imprisonment? UNICOR, money and greed.

"No shit," you're probably saying. Well, why aren't you doing anything to stop it? Maybe it's because you don't know how. Well, now WE can fight the system and we can WIN.

I've discovered that the best way to fight back is not by suing. I've seen thousands of suits filed by prisoners against the Man and the System, and these suits have lost. Ninety-nine percent of these cases lose because the Courts rule that the Man or the System have immunity, or they acted

within the scope of their authority.

But look at the other side. They make hundreds of laws and rules that they use against us and they win. Their laws, their victories.

Now they've forgotten to cover their own asses. And now we can use their laws to put their asses in prison.

I have drafted and filed my first Action to the U.S. District Court in Brunswick, Georgia. The case number is CV294-011, started by Joe Mohwish and Duane Olson, and it's filed against the D.O.J., B.O.P., and UNICOR.

Sure, we've had to put up with their petty acts of retaliation, but what they didn't expect was that we wouldn't stop. And we had others on the outside who help us, and now, we are back again.

What the Action does is allow you to utilize your rights, powers and authority as a U.S. Citizen. Everyone who gives a damn about themselves or their families must get involved and help out in this lawsuit. The Action-CV 294-011-is solid in the Court. The beauty of it is this: They cannot defeat it unless they defeat, or change, their own laws.

For all you nonviolent offenders: Look into UNICOR. That's where you'll find the real reason you're in prison. It's a government owned and operated slave factory that needs nonviolent offenders to run the damn thing. You can't get violent psychopaths to sew T-shirts, make mattresses, sheets and all that in one

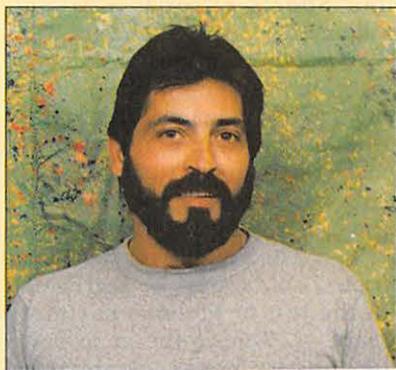
of these UNICOR factories. The Feds don't want dangerous people threatening their operation.

Think about it. Look around you: How many prisoners are killers or charged with crimes of violence?

UNICOR has broken the law, and now it's trying to cover its tracks. Why has it lobbied Congress for a brand new bill asking to exempt prisoners from minimum wage laws and asking Congress to allow UNICOR to sell prison-made goods to the public? If it hasn't been breaking the law in the past, why does it need Congress to pass a bill allowing it to do what it has already been doing?

If you have any information that will help the cause concerning criminal acts committed by these people or institutions, send us the information. If you want to know more about this, write to me and ask.

D. Sargeant
C/O Box 920474
Norcross, GA 30092



Nothing else was heard about the inquiry for months. Still, Mohwish and company didn't stop. They sent registered letters to Slattery's superior, U.S. Attorney Pete Strong of Columbia; to the Assistant Attorney General in Washington; and to three members of the U.S. House of Representatives—only one of whom, Newt Gingrich, responded. Gingrich informed Mohwish that Attorney General Janet Reno had been notified of the allegations. Finally, Mohwish put Reno on notice that previous letters to the DOJ had gone unanswered, and on November 2, 1993, Mohwish and Olson requested that Reno begin a formal investigation.

"We had no idea it would be this difficult to report a crime," one letter from Mohwish stated.

On December 27, 1993, Bureau of Prisons Assistant Director/General Counsel Wallace Cheney sent a letter to Mohwish saying that the allega-

tions against UNICOR were referred to the Office of the Inspector General for investigation. On January 5, 1994, U.S. Congressman Jack Kingston sent Mohwish a letter confirming that a B.O.P. internal affairs investigation had been initiated.

A week later, John Moxley, Sr., Special Agent for the Inspector General's Office, Brunswick Division, appeared unannounced at Jesup to speak with Mohwish. After a five-minute exchange, Moxley left with a complete set of evidentiary materials. Then—nothing. Mohwish wrote to Moxley but received no response and all letters sent to Moxley at the Brunswick office were returned "unclaimed." By the end of March, Mohwish and company were notified that Moxley had retired and the Brunswick office had closed permanently. "If you want to send more evidence," the letter read, "send it to this post office box."

Around the same time, Representative Gingrich notified Mohwish that the allegations of criminal misconduct had been upgraded from a B.O.P. Internal Affairs matter into a preliminary investigation conducted by the Justice Department and the Office of the Inspector General.

But Mohwish and Olson were tired of waiting for results. They decided it was time to take action against UNICOR themselves. They filed a criminal action suit, CV 294-011, against UNICOR, the Bureau of Prisons, the United States Department of Justice and 17 defendants including former B.O.P. director Quinlan, UNICOR attorney Kirschbaum, the current B.O.P. director, Kathleen Hawk and Sports Europa. Their filings, categorized as a writ of Mandamus, called for the defendants to take action and put a stop to the illegal activities of UNICOR.

Response came quicker this time.

Mohwish and Olson more suspicious. "We engaged outside resources and began an intensive field investigation into UNICOR activities," Mohwish continues. "And after our inquiry was completed, the results produced new evidence of UNICOR's involvement in the commission of Interstate Felony Criminal Violations of Federal Anti-Racketeering laws—RICO. "From our internal and external investigators," Mohwish explains, "we acquired overwhelming and indisputable evidence that UNICOR and its management is involved in a criminal conspiracy to commit felony violations of RICO."

Under Federal law, UNICOR is prohibited from selling anything to the private sector. During their in-house investigation, Mohwish and Olson managed to obtain documentary evidence that the UNICOR factory at F.C.I. Jesup was manufacturing and selling T-shirts to a company called Sports Europa, a Miami, Florida mail order and telemarketing sales catalog company. An inter-office memo written by John Woltjen, acting factory manager of the UNICOR plant in Jesup reads: "We will soon begin manufacturing PFU T-shirts as a subcontractor for Sports Europa beginning the first week in March . . . The supplies for the Sports Europa T-shirts must be segregated from the rest of the manufacturing material . . . Due to the importance of this project, please ask any questions as they arise."

Mohwish and Olson also secured factory work orders, purchase orders, T-shirt labels and a Sports Europa catalog featuring the T-shirts. "Genuine U.S. Army 'Physical Fitness Uniform' T-Shirts . . . for just \$5," ran the ad in the catalog for the UNICOR-manufactured shirts.

Mohwish and Olson wanted to know whether the UNICOR factory in Jesup was acting on its own, or whether the Department of Justice was actually behind the criminal scheme. When further documentation was obtained, the two had their answer: Both the Department of Defense and the Department of Justice were in on it. The proof came in the form of a notice issued by the D.O.D. confirming the order and shipment of T-shirts (to be shipped and billed directly to the D.O.D.), and D.O.J.-issued factory work orders to manufacture the T-shirts. Sports Europa, furnishing UNICOR with fabric, would purchase 132,000

Army-style T-shirts over the next four weeks for \$1.10 per item. (Ed Narajno, the president of Sports Europa, did not return our calls.)

Mohwish says UNICOR used government documents and disguised the T-shirt deal as a sale of their manufactured products to the Defense Department. "We have U.S. Government documents proving this sham: a D.O.D. manufacture/sales transaction was financed for UNICOR and the private sector business Sports Europa by a loan from the Small Business Administration in Marietta, Georgia."

Despite the documentary proof and relentless letters to officials, Mohwish and Olson's complaints went unheeded. In April, 1993, Mohwish and Olson enlisted the law firm Kneece, Kneece and Brown of Columbia, South Carolina to help pursue their case against UNICOR. All evidence was turned over to William Kneece for evaluation and validation. After deeming the materials both "substantial and overwhelming," Kneece concluded the criminal activity of UNICOR should be reported and the evidence should be turned over to the U.S. Department of Justice for further investigation and prosecution.

The next month, everything was handed over to Assistant U.S. Attorney David Slattery of the U.S. Justice Department in Columbia. Later that month, A.U.S.A. Slattery was granted permission to present this criminal evidence to the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. "It was understood by all," says Duane Olson, "that Mr. Slattery would hand carry the books of evidence to Washington on Tuesday, May 31, 1993." In early June, Kneece confirmed that the documents had been delivered to Washington.

"Slattery believes," said Kneece to his clients at the time, "there are very drastic violations of federal law going on and he is now working with the D.C. people."

Over the next few months, both Mohwish and Olson as well as Kneece sent a series of letters to Slattery to determine the status of their inquiry. Finally, at the end of August, during a phone conversation with Slattery, it was confirmed to Duane Olson that "It (UNICOR) is being looked into." Slattery also promised to send a letter updating them on the situation.

"The plaintiffs were led to believe that the U.S. Department of Justice had, at the very least, confirmed wrongdoing and that an investigation would be forthcoming," says Kneece.

WHEN GOVERNMENT IS CRIMINAL

How do upstanding American citizens, let alone lowly convicts, take the government to court when they are convinced federal officials are conducting an illegal enterprise under the guise of official business? Ordinarily, one would do exactly what the UNICOR Three did: report the alleged crimes to the proper authorities (cops or government lawyers) and expect justice to be carried out. But, as we've seen time and time again, when the government is guilty of criminal wrongdoing, they are reluctant to investigate and prosecute themselves.

What Mohwish, Olson and Sargeant have done is unique. After presenting their evidence to an Assistant United States Attorney and to the Attorney General, and receiving no results, they took their case directly to federal court by filing a Writ of Mandamus to compel the authorities to do their jobs and present the evidence before a grand jury. Further, basing their case on Title 18, subsection 3332: Powers and duties (of the grand jury), which stipulate that the evidence of wrongdoing may be brought to the attention of the grand jury "by the court" or by an attorney representing the United States, they appealed directly to the judge to order that a grand jury be presented with evidence of criminal wrongdoing on the part of UNICOR officials, thereby bypassing the U.S. Attorney's office. With the Court's dramatic ruling that a grand jury consider their evidence, the UNICOR Three have instituted an unprecedented criminal action by prisoners against officials of the U. S. Government. We can hear the chant resounding from UNICOR slave labor factories around the nation: **THREE CHEERS FOR THE UNICOR THREE!**

—Richard Stratton

SPORT EUROPA
7871 N.W. 15th STREET
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33128
PHONE: IN DADE (305) 477-4341
TOLL FREE: 1-800-827-7031
FAX 1 (305) 477-1899

No. 0189
Date 2/22/93

To UNICOR
Address 120 1st. Street N. W.
City Washington State DC Zip 20534

Ship Via Origin
Routing
Date Required 2/29/93
Terms Net 30
Ordered For

Ship To TRANSPORTATION OFFICER
Address DEFENSE DEPOT
City Memphis State TN Zip 38114-5292

QUANTITY	UNIT	PRICE	TOTAL
120,000	PPU T-shirts	1.10	132,000.00
	Out, Sew, Turned, package boxes, Paletism and screen print. To meet specification MIL-T-44214A (E) required by Contract DIA100-92-C-0429		
	32,000	3/12/93	8415-01-234-4426
	32,000	3/19/93	JCSZR
	32,000	3/26/93	
	24,000	6/29/93	7/4/93

SPORT EUROPA, INC. will provide fabric, garment labels, collar fabric, boxes and plastic bags.
Contract DIA100-92-C-0429.
Modification # E00003.

Location of Plant, Inspection and shipping points: UNICOR, P.O. Jesup, 1310 West Cherry St., 31543

IMPORTANT: OUR ORDER NUMBER MUST APPEAR ON ALL INVOICES, PACKAGES, ETC. PLEASE NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SHIP COMPLETE ORDER BY DATE SPECIFIED.

UNICOR Federal Prison Industries, Inc. UNIT COST ESTIMATE

Location: UNICOR-JESUP, GA. Date: 11/03/92

Item: T-SHIRT W/ARMY LOGO (PPU) Factory: TEXTILE

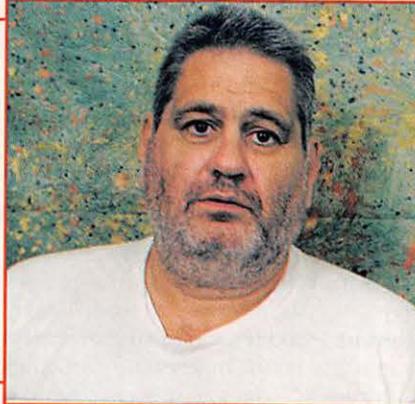
Style or Model: CREW NECK/SHORT SLEEVE
Size: SMALL
Spec. No.: MIL-T-44214 A
Dist. No.:
Weight No.:
Cont. are: R. Each; C. Pair; D. Doz; O. Case; Q.

Part No.	DESCRIPTION	Size	Quantity	Price	Mount Cost
FAB-1078	KNITTED CLOTH/POLY COTTON	20"	1.17	1.70	\$ 1.989
FAB-1084	REIN. KNIT CLOTH	2 1/2"	.032/LB.	4.36	.1400
PAC-1637	BOX/LINE, FIBERBOARD 24x16x12		.0109	1.17	.0128
TYE-0788	TAPE, SHOULDER 32" x 1"		1.10	.0202	.0222
PAC-1644	BAGS, POLYETHYLENE 810x1125"		1.05	.0144	.0151
PAL-0002	PALLET		.0005	9.95	.0050

Supplemental Information: DIRECT MATERIAL COST \$ 2,184
DIRECT LABOR \$172/HR. x 1.92 per hr. .16
OVERHEAD Base \$50. x a hour .16 .88
TOTAL MANUFACTURING COST \$ 3,224.11
RECOMMENDED MINIMUM SELLING PRICE \$ 3.80
COMPARABLE COMMERCIAL PRICE \$ 4.49

REMARKS:

(top left) A purchase order to Sports Europa for 132,000 T-shirts.
(top right) a unit cost estimate to Sports Europa—\$3.22 per T-shirt as compared to the commercial price of \$4.49
(bottom left) A memo from the acting factory manager at UNICOR/F.C.I. Jesup to all staff on the Sports Europa project.
(bottom right) The UNICOR job application freely uses the word "employee," "employer," and "employment."
(Center) Joe Mohwish



"The civil and criminal violations by UNICOR are egregious, blatantly arrogant and in contempt of Congressional intent."

UNICOR - MEMPHIS
Federal Prison Industries, Inc.
Federal Correctional Institution
Memphis, TN 38104

DATE: February 12, 1993

REPLY TO: John Woltz, Acting Factory Manager

ATTN OF: John Woltz, Acting Factory Manager

SUBJECT: Subcontracting T-shirts for Sport Europa

TO: All Staff

We will soon begin manufacturing PPU T-shirts as a subcontractor for Sport Europa beginning the first week in March. It will be critical that all departments work together to ensure that accountability of material and necessary documentation for receiving and shipping is maintained properly. Sport Europa will supply us with everything excluding thread and labor. Materials received from Sport Europa must be segregated in the warehouse and on the production floor to maintain proper accountability. Receiving reports, requisitions, and cutting room documentation must be maintained accurately. Roddy Springer, Plant Controller, needs to obtain a separate fabric number in SYMIX for the receipt of this material per Atlanta business office. The material should be received as a "Government Furnished Material" and must be segregated from other in house T-shirt materials. I will notify you of any further developments. Due to the importance of this project please ask any questions as they arise.

JW/ab

UNICOR JOB APPLICATION CCF-8132.5 07-10-87

Part A (to be completed by inmate)

Name: LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE INITIAL Fed Reg #
Age LAST NAME Sentence FIRST NAME Projected Release Date
Unit Team Housing Unit Case Manager

Personal History:
Education: Grades Completed: Graduated High School: yes no Please list below significant educational courses or programs which you have completed beyond the High School level:
Are you enrolled in ANY Educational Programs at this Institution? Please describe this program or list the classes you attend:
Are you programmed to Vocational Training? If so, what is your entry date:
Do you have any physical handicaps? If so, please describe them:
Employment History: Please list below all Institution/Unicor employment beginning with the last or present job assignment:
Institution/Location Work/Job Assignment Last Pay Grade Date of beginning this assignment to end/transfer
Where you previously employed by UNICOR? Were you employed by UNICOR at the time of your transfer to this Institution? What was the nature of your transfer? Briefly describe and pre-incarceration job skills that you believe will help you with UNICOR:
Civilian Employment: Position/Title/Company Name Kind of Work Performed Date of beginning employment to date of end of employment
Position you are currently applying for: DO you presently have SAFETY SHOES? Yes No ECF Q/C UBO (circle one)
a) If I am hired by UNICOR Federal Prison Industries, I will abide by all SAFETY REGULATIONS, including the wearing of SAFETY SHOES, and, in areas where they are required, SAFETY GLASSES as is required by UNICOR and Bureau of Prisons Policy. I have read and filled out the above application, including a) above and make application for employment.
Inmate Applicant's Signature Federal Registry Number Date
Part B (to be completed by the Applicant's Unit team) The information supplied by the above inmate has been checked and his prior UNICOR employment verified (if applicable). In addition, the above inmate has been advised of the policy of UNICOR to employ inmates in such a manner as to give them equal opportunity to acquire knowledge and job skills in trades or occupations which will provide them with a means of earning a livelihood upon release in accordance with the UNICOR Industrial Policy and Program. The above referenced inmate has been examined for "Medical Restrictions" by the Hospital Staff and the results of this examination have been listed on the reverse side of this application.

Is UNICOR exempt from Federal legislation pertaining to the payment of minimum hourly wages?

Attorney Kirschbaum replied 30 days later. With regard to employing illegal aliens, he wrote, "Title 18 USC 4122 (b) (1) does not predicate inmate work on the basis of inmate citizenship. It provides in part that the 'board of directors shall provide employment for the greatest number of those inmates in the U.S. penal and correctional institutions who are eligible for work as is reasonably possible.'"

Kiger was not satisfied with Kirschbaum's response, saying that the issues were not properly addressed. He believed they were "without standing, merit or adequate case law."

"Kirschbaum's attempt to address the validity of UNICOR's employment of illegal aliens," says Mohwish, "is both futile and weak. His reference to Title 18 to justify UNICOR's position does not apply to UNICOR at all but rather addresses the mandatory employment of all inmates incarcerated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons and concerns the daily operations of the prison itself, not the half-billion dollar manufacturing prison called UNICOR. Furthermore, Kirschbaum completely disregarded the civil rights violations with respect to U.S. citizens being denied employment in lieu of illegal aliens."

In response to the question of whether UNICOR is exempt from minimum wage laws, Kirschbaum stated that Title 18 authorizes the Attorney General to establish rules and regulations governing the payment of compensation to industry-working inmates.

"The term pay, Kirschbaum wrote, 'actually means a gratuity rather than wage, in relation to the non-taxability of UNICOR inmate pay. According to the IRS, the [relationship between] inmates and Federal Prison Industries, Inc. arises from the incarceration of the inmates on one hand and from the legal duty of the Corporation to provide rehabilitative labor on the other. It is not the legal relationship of employer and employee. . . . Accordingly, the prison inmates performing services for Federal Prison Industries, Inc. . . . are not its employees for purposes of the Collection of Income Tax at Source on Wages (IRS ruling 75-325). In addition, several cases have held that inmates are not prison employees and cannot benefit from the provisions of the FLSA."

Kirschbaum goes on to quote *Amos v. U.S.*, 1987, in which the Supreme Court held that "inmates are technically and realistically not employees. Inmates are not free to set their wages through negotiation or bargaining; they may not form unions or strike; and they may not quit work. Their service in vocational programs and their right to compensation is solely by legislative grace, primarily for their own benefit and rehabilitation."

Therefore, Kirschbaum concludes, Federal Prison Industries is not in violation of any rulings. Kirschbaum failed to mention *Hale v. Arizona*, a 1992 landmark case concerning the Fair Labor Standards Act. In *Hale*, the Court of Appeals determined that the FLSA does apply to prisoners who are working in a prison industry. Whether an employment relationship exists under the FLSA depends on the "economic reality" of the employment situation. To decide whether such a situation exists, the economic reality test looks to four factors: Whether the alleged employer (1) had the power to hire and fire employees, (2) supervised and controlled work schedules or conditions of employment, (3) determined method of payment and (4) maintained employment cards. UNICOR meets all four criteria.

"Kirschbaum's attempt to escape the wage issue was wrong," says Mohwish. "Suddenly referring to wages as gratuity is not in keeping with the hundreds of pages of evidence which refers to the UNICOR/Inmate relationship as employer/employee, as well as the dozens of references throughout their literature to such terms as 'bonus', 'fired', 'wage,' etc. without a single appearance of the word 'gratuity.' In the first 87 pages of UNICOR's 'Report to Congress on Study Findings and Recommendations' of August 1991, we see the words 'employee', 'employer', 'employ' and 'employment' 115 times."

On January 1, 1993, Mohwish and Olson drafted "Letters of Intent" and posted registered copies to the 11 officers and directors of UNICOR in Washington, D.C. Although the letters failed to produce any sort of response from Washington, the prison officials at F.C.I. Jesup began harassing the whistleblowers.

"One simply cannot draft such a letter and mail it from where we are without disciplinary action by the Bureau of Prisons," says Mohwish.

The harassment only made

ADMISSION TO WRONGDOING?

Was it a case of coincidence or is UNICOR trying to cover its tracks?

Several months after Mohwish and Olson had their attorney send UNICOR's in-house counsel, Ira Kirschbaum, questions pertaining to what they saw as UNICOR's criminal enterprise, two bills were submitted to Congress by Representatives Wolf and Reid.

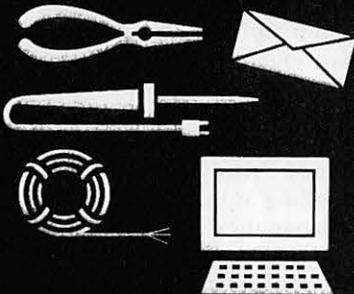
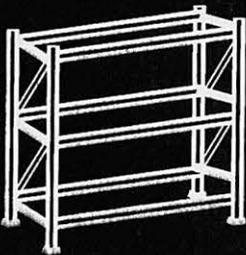
H.R. 703, submitted January 27, 1993, and cited as the "Prison Inmate Training and Rehabilitation Act of 1993" proposes "To provide for pilot programs conducted by Federal Prison Industries to test the feasibility of meeting the need for increased employment of Federal prisoners by producing items, for the private market, in conjunction with private United States firms, that would otherwise be produced by foreign labor."

The bill states exemption from Title 18, USC: "Decisions to produce new products not subject to industry involvement procedures," and "Contracts may be awarded by Federal Prison Industries under this section without using competitive procedures otherwise required by law." In other words, UNICOR would have the go-ahead to openly do business with the private sector, the consequences of which could be catastrophic to small government contracting businesses.

Senate bill 1115, submitted June 16, 1993, would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 "To ensure that minimum wage requirements do not apply to inmates with respect to work done for the incarcerating entity, and for other purposes." It would amend the term "employee" to mean "any inmate of a penal or correctional institution of the Federal Government, District of Columbia, or a State or political subdivision of a State."

If Senate bill 1115 passed, the amendments would be retroactive: "amendments made by this section shall apply as if enacted on the date of enactment of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938."

"These two bills," says Mohwish, "clearly demonstrate the lengths the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Prisons will go to to ensure their racketeering operations will continue."



tions, will see 30 new prison factories by 1998 and 4,800 new prisoner jobs by the year 2000.

Under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), an "alien" is any person who is not a citizen or natural of the United States. Section 274A of the Act says it is illegal for an individual or organization to hire an alien or to continue the knowing employment of such. Federal Prison Industries, Inc. is the largest known employer of illegal aliens in the country. Though the exact number of illegals working in prison factories is not known, roughly 28%, or 4,500 of the federal prisoners employed by UNICOR are illegal aliens. When *Prison Life* asked the Bureau of Prisons for an exact count of the illegal aliens working for UNICOR, we were told the BOP "doesn't keep track" of these statistics.

Why not? The information can be obtained easily enough. For every prisoner, the B.O.P. is required to have a B.P. 15 Custody Classification Form, which clearly identifies the prisoner as either a natural-born or an alien. For each UNICOR worker, a B.P. 15 form showing his status exists. The B.O.P. has the information; it's apparently choosing to ignore it.

At present, no federal laws or regulations exempt UNICOR from the Immigration and Nationality Act. The penalty for employing illegal aliens is \$3,000 per employee and up to six months imprisonment, according to the INA. Lying about such employment can mean imprisonment for up to five years, a fine, or both. Let's see, for the Justice Department, that would be 4,500 x \$3,000 = 1,350,000 bucks, not to mention the time behind bars.

"This is nothing new," says Joe Mohwish. "We've known for years that UNICOR has employed illegal aliens. To get what it wants, the Department of Justice has deemed it necessary to consider itself above the law it pretends to uphold. But illegal aliens are nothing compared to the criminal enterprise UNICOR is running."

In July, 1992, Joe Mohwish and Duane Olson submitted requests for employment at the UNICOR plant located within the Federal Correctional Institution in Jesup, Georgia. Both men met and exceeded all requirements for UNICOR employment: length of sentence, court-imposed fines that would be repaid from wages, and financial

need. Olson was searching for a way to support his quadriplegic son; Mohwish's family needed financial help. But both prisoners were told there were no openings and denied employment.

Mohwish and Olson wanted to know why they, natural-born citizens and federal prisoners in need, would be turned down when they knew for a fact that the UNICOR plant at F.C.I. Jesup employed illegal aliens.

"UNICOR Jesup employed some 200 to 300 illegal aliens," says Mohwish. "Thus began our investigation into UNICOR hiring practices, and eventually all other phases of operations practiced by Federal Prison Industries, Inc."

Mohwish, 47, is currently serving a 20-year sentence for drug conspiracy, money laundering and tax evasion. Before his arrest and conviction, Joe owned a window manufacturing company in Lexington, Kentucky. Mohwish says that because he didn't plead guilty, voluntarily forfeit his assets and cooperate with the Feds by ratting on others, he was put on the Federal "shit list." Sixty-eight-year-old Duane Olson was sentenced to 27 years in 1991 for possession with intent to distribute cocaine. He also felt he was put on the Fed's shitlist for refusing to cooperate and become a stool pigeon.

"Whether we're criminals or not is beside the point," says Mohwish. "What we have discovered boggles the mind. The civil and criminal violations of local, state and federal laws by UNICOR nationwide are egregious, blatantly arrogant and in contempt of Congressional intent."

Besides the hiring of illegal aliens, Mohwish and Olson questioned whether UNICOR was in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). According to FLSA, a company must pay its employees a minimum wage of at least \$4.25 per hour. Although setting the minimum standard is one purpose of FLSA, another equally important purpose is to eliminate unfair competition.

Mohwish and Olson arranged a meeting with attorney William Kiger of West Virginia to evaluate the evidence against UNICOR. Kiger confirmed its authenticity and sent registered letters to Ira Kirschbaum, in-house counsel for UNICOR, and J. Michael Quinlan, then director of the Bureau of Prisons. The letter asked two questions: Is UNICOR exempt from federal legislation prohibiting the employment of illegal aliens? and,

ED! T UNICOR



from different UNICOR factories proving illegal sales transactions to privately-owned businesses.

On October 13, 1994, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Georgia, Brunswick Division, granted approval for Mohwish, Olson and Sargeant to present the evidence in their case, CV 294-011, before a Grand Jury.

UNICOR exists under the Department of Justice as an incorporated entity of the District of Columbia. The \$500 million-per-year company operates on a nonappropriated fund basis. Federal Prison Industries, Inc. operates 86 factories in 48 federal prisons around the country. Prisoners in these factories behind walls make everything from clothing and furniture, stainless steel counters and signs to electronic wiring and cables, all supposedly for different agencies of the government. Business has been so good that UNICOR's sales now approach half a billion dollars a year, putting UNICOR ahead of Chrysler Corporation as one of the country's top 50 suppliers to the federal government.

But then, there's no reason why UNICOR shouldn't be a hugely successful company. Consider these business advantages. The 16,200 federal prisoners UNICOR employs receive standard inmate pay: a whopping 23 cents to \$1.15 per hour. And, since UNICOR is government-owned, it pays no federal or state taxes, no workman's compensation or Social Security tax. There are no license fees or permit fees. UNICOR has direct access to surplus industrial

plant equipment and raw materials from other federal agencies, and it can borrow directly from the Treasury at below prime rate. UNICOR's overhead compared to that of privately-run companies and corporations is practically nil.

To make matters easier for UNICOR, the government has given it priority supplier status. That means that any federal agency needing a product or service provided by UNICOR must go to UNICOR first. If UNICOR can't satisfy the order, the agency in need of product cannot solicit bids from the private sector until it receives a waiver from UNICOR. While not illegal, this special status has earned UNICOR a bad rap with competing private companies. For businesses dealing extensively if not exclusively with the government, UNICOR's governmental "super preference," its lack of overhead and its burgeoning growth have proven devastating.

For example, by consistently coming in with lower bids, the UNICOR factory in Memphis, TN, brought about the demise of Hiltronics Corporation, a 21-year-old family-owned company that made audio cable for the Navy and Marine Corps. Thomas W. Raftery Inc., a drapery manufacturer in Hartford, CT, saw its government sales topple from \$1.5 million to \$750,000 after UNICOR began bidding on government drapery. New Jersey's Centercore, a manufacturer of office furniture for the government, had to cut a third of its work force due to competition from UNICOR. And Cable Systems, Inc. of Boston, MA, shrunk its work force from 180 to 45. The list of private companies ruined

by UNICOR goes on and on.

"Small business is lobbying for a change," says Leslie Aubin, legislative representative for the Washington-based National Federation of Independent Business. "It's a noble cause. We're just asking for a level playing field. Smaller businesses can't compete with UNICOR. What company can afford to underbid UNICOR, which pays its inmates 35 cents an hour?"

Outraged federal contractors have petitioned Congress to keep the Federal Prison Industries from taking more than their fair share. The Coalition for Government Procurement claims UNICOR has forced numerous private companies out of business and eliminated more than 2,000 private sector jobs. UNICOR's impairment of private sector businesses has also resulted in the formation of the Prison Industries Reform Alliance. Currently, 1,000 companies and labor unions subscribe to the four-year-old organization.

"We're very concerned about the impact UNICOR is making on private business," says its director, Sue Perry. "And so our organization is looking at working with UNICOR to change their direction."

So far, Perry says, UNICOR hasn't been very cooperative. "They seem to have their own agenda, regardless of our attempts."

According to UNICOR propaganda, making money and expanding government-owned industry is merely a by-product of UNICOR's true mission: rehabilitation. Nat Gordon, a spokesman for UNICOR, says that UNICOR was originally formed, and still exists, "primarily as a work program to keep inmates busy."

That "work program," according to current Bureau of Prisons' projec-

FEDERAL MANDATORY DRUG SENTENCES

Type of Drug	5-year sentence, no parole	10-year sentence, no parole
LSD	1 gram	10 grams
MARIJUANA	100 plants or 100 kilos	1000 plants or 1000 kilos
CRACK COCAINE	5 grams	50 grams
POWDER COCAINE	500 grams	5 kilos
HEROIN	100 grams	1 kilo
METHAMPHETAMINE	10 grams	100 grams
PCP	10 grams	100 grams

why FAMM opposes mandatory minimums for all crimes, not just non-violent crimes but any crime, because the basic principle of the justice system we have honored for over 200 years in this country is that judges are impartial mediators in this adversarial procedure and they are there to make the distinctions between what is really important and what's not important, how involved is the defendant and what was his or her role and all that stuff so that the judge can determine what an appropriate sentence is. That's been completely stripped from the sentencing process under mandatory minimums."

It would seem then that judges

would be the first to rally behind FAMM's efforts to repeal mandatory minimums. "Yesterday a judge testified at a hearing before the District of Columbia government, Judge Harold Green, who is a Superior Court judge here, and he was great. He was really eloquent. I think that there are some judges who understand what the problem is and who support us but they're wimps in the long run and don't want to say anything to upset the status quo, which is confusing to me because at the federal level they've got their jobs for life so what do they have to lose?"

Julie's brother Jeff is due to be released from prison in late 1994.

She plans to surprise her friends and fellow FAMM members by introducing Jeff when she chairs a panel on mandatory minimums at the Eighth International Conference on Drug Policy Reform. Julie's efforts may not have succeeded in reducing the amount of time her brother had to spend in prison, but she is not done. Many other human faces will light up because of FAMM's work. "I will argue 'til the day I die that the members of Congress, who never have laid eyes on my brother or any other people who we hear from, should not be the ones to make the decisions about what sentences are appropriate for these defendants. They don't know them, they don't know their cases, they don't know their involvement or their role in the offense. They should not be making the decision as to what sentence they get. To me, that is a bastardization of the American justice system."

For more information on FAMM, contact the FAMM Foundation, 1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 200 South, Washington, D.C. 20004.

PL



FIGHTING BACK:

The Prison Education of Karen M. White

by
**Kim
Wozencraft**

"She was tired of ducking into the woods when cars passed, tired of lying in ditches alongside the roads, alone and afraid the police would find her and return her to the institution."

—*Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes, Cold Concrete*,
a novel in progress by Karen M. White

Ask Karen White what it feels like after eighteen years. In May, 1976, after an eight-week trial, she was convicted of murder and sent to prison. She's been out since last January.

We're sitting at a lunchtime table at *L'Acajou*, a restaurant in Manhattan's Flatiron district, chosen because it's only a few doors down from The Fortune Society offices, where Karen works as the Editor-in-Chief of the *Fortune News*. Fortune is a not-for-profit organization that helps ex-prisoners get jobs and works to change the criminal justice system.

Karen doesn't even blink when she walks in and finds me nursing my three-month-old son in a small booth at the back of the restaurant. "He's adorable," she smiles, her brown eyes alight with the warmth that so many women feel toward the world's babies.

We order lunch, and I ask her, "What does it feel like. . . Freedom after eighteen years in prison?"

"It goes back and forth," she says. She hesitates, and then speaks candidly. "I live with a lot of fear because I feel like I have one foot in and one out. Not because I'm doing anything wrong, but because of how the system is. You can be walking down the street and you see a police car go by and you think to yourself, 'My God, they



Photo by Wayne Muser

could just stop, and for any given reason say, 'You're going back in,' and it's such a scary feeling. . . You're doing everything right, you're not violating any laws, but they've instilled this fear. Having lived through the experiences I've had, having seen how the system is run, I

know how destructive and degrading it is. How inhumane. It's definitely not a positive thing, what they try to instill in you."

I cannot imagine it. Eighteen years. I did but a pittance compared to this woman. Yet I remember the same feeling, just after I was released,

an intense awareness of the power of the State. The worry that someone would knock on the door and say, "We made a mistake. You have to come back." It took three or four years before it went away. My jail dreams are now random and occasional. Karen's, I think, must be immediate and sometimes overwhelming. I ask her how she wound up in prison.

"I was a prostitute. I got into that because I was a runaway. My mother had placed me in St. Anne's Institute, a girl's school, after her second husband raped me. My mother couldn't accept what had happened. On one level she believed me, but she couldn't afford to let herself believe what had happened. She needed this guy's salary. I've seen it happen many times. Women go with a guy because they need his money to put food on the table and they put up with the way he is so they can take care of their children. I suffered terribly behind that. But I understand why it went on."

"I didn't do anything wrong. Why are you blaming me, mom?"

— *Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes, Cold Concrete*

"I ran away from the institute. I met a guy, call him Rick. I was with him for awhile. He was more or less paying my way through life, and one day he said to me, 'Hey, you know, you're going to have to bring some money into this family.' I couldn't really get a legitimate job. I was a runaway. I was thirteen years old. Rick said if I tried to get a legitimate job they would track me down and send me back to the convent. I was a kid, you know, I believed he had my best interests at heart. He was about 12 or 15 years older than I was. He said, 'Look, I'm going to set this up for you, and tell you how to do it.' So I got into prostitution.

"Unbeknownst to me, he was on parole. He was involved in things I had no idea about. Robbing people, that kind of thing. I traveled with him, and I should have picked up on what he was doing, but I was so into my own problems, I just wasn't seeing things. He kept moving us around, all over the state, and I didn't pick up on it. Then he got arrested and put in jail for a robbery. I was left in a strange town with no family there. I

knew nobody. By that time I was strung out on heroin.

"Then I found out I was pregnant. I called my mother and said, 'Look Mom, it was a bad idea to run away, but I want to come home now.' She hung up on me.

"That was when Larry stepped into my life,

"They're so scared, it's out of ignorance, out of not knowing. Most people accept what the mass media tells them about how people are convicted and what goes on in prison, and it's all so false. I think it's important to educate the public about what really goes on."

and took over Rick's role. He kept me involved in prostitution. He also beat me. I lost the baby because he beat me.

"During this time I was dancing in a club, a place called the Body Shop, a real sleazy joint. There was this guy, call him John, who kept telling me that he wanted me to go out with him. And I didn't want to. He was very young, and he drove a motorcycle, and he was talked about by the other women. The word was, 'Don't go with him, he's no good, he's into creepy stuff, and stay away.' So one night, I was dancing at the club, and he came over and ordered me a drink. When somebody ordered you a drink, you were more or less obliged to sit with them. He asked me for a date and I told him no, that I already had another date. After my dance routine I left work and took a cab home. When I got there, he was sitting on the front steps, with his motorcycle parked on my landlord's lawn. I got very upset and asked him to please leave. He said he wanted to be with me. I was exhausted; I said no. He insisted, and finally I said okay, just get the motorcycle off the lawn and go around the back way.

"I let him in the back door and everything was going fine. Then he handed me his wallet and said, 'Here. I trust you with this.' It took me a back. Usually they just handed you the money and that was that."

Karen would learn at trial that John's blood alcohol was well over the intoxication level and that he'd been out drinking since about five that afternoon.

"It turned out that the word on

him was right," she continues. "He was into anal sex and violence. We got into a major physical brawl. Larry heard my screams and came in. The two of them got into a struggle and Larry was saying, 'Help me, give me something, I can't deal with this guy, he's too big.' I was afraid of Larry and I was afraid of John and I was afraid of the situation, and so I did. I went in the kitchen and got a pot and handed it to Larry, and he hit John with it, and then I pulled out a bed slat that was sticking out from under the bed and Larry began hitting John with that.

I retrieved John's wallet and gave it to him and begged him to leave. But he called Larry a nigger and it got worse. John was a big guy, two hundred and something pounds, and he really out-powered Larry. I was so frightened of Larry, I did what he said, kind of like an automaton."

So Karen handed Larry household items that Larry used to beat up the drunken, enraged customer, and when the guy died, Karen was charged with murder in the second degree and robbery.

Why robbery?

"They just needed a motive, actually," she says. "There was no proof of that. But I guess by my saying that he handed me his wallet, within the framework of the prostitute/client relationship, that was enough for them to claim robbery. I gave him the money back but the authorities claimed that he didn't have his wallet."

"When I hear it said today that there should be leniency for people who are involved in crimes of passion, and that if they're on alcohol and drugs there should be leniency in sentencing because it's like a sickness, an illness, I agree. I think that's very true. I wasn't able to think logically. I was too young and drugged-up to understand the consequences of my actions or the lack of them. It didn't occur to me to run or to get help.

"Battered Woman Syndrome wasn't even a known thing then, you're talking 1976. It took me a long time to understand my role, to realize my guilt in the thing. I was essentially an accomplice under force. But I was there, and I let John into my apartment.

"The jury considered me more than an accessory because I was a



Karen, age 5, and her mother.

prostitute and I let John in," Karen says. "I was essentially convicted from the moment I walked in the courtroom. Here I was, a white girl with a black man, addicted to drugs. I was alone, had no family there, I was the outsider. To them I was trash. Looking back, I can see how that community felt. John was one of their own. But some things weren't brought out at trial. No one bothered to ask why he was out there doing what he was doing."

The head nun from St. Anne's Institute testified as a character witness for Karen, and so did the principal, and the social worker and the psychologist.

The jury found her guilty. The minimum was fifteen years, the maximum, twenty-five. The judge gave her twenty, the same sentence Larry received. According to Karen, the judge didn't want to give her the maximum, but feared the community would find the minimum unacceptable, and so gave her a medium term.

"It's funny," she says. "I didn't know at the time what that judge was thinking about. Years later I wrote a very personal letter to him, and I told him everything that I had done in the meantime and how I felt about things. And he wrote a letter back that really surprised me, saying that he never wanted to sentence me, that he felt I was a victim, and that he believes in his heart that if I hadn't been involved with Larry this situation never would have happened. That just threw me for a loop. I never would have guessed that he felt that way at the trial."

She spent over a year in Utica County Jail, before, during and after the trial. There, she withdrew cold

turkey from heroin. After sentencing, she was transferred to Bedford Hills, the New York State women's prison in Westchester County.

Before the murder charge, Karen had never been arrested. "Not even for so much as jaywalking," as she puts it. "All of a sudden I found myself in a criminal situation, in a violent situation. I had been treated violently myself all those many years. Maybe prison to a point was appropriate, if combined with treatment. But keeping me locked up for two decades was excessive. There was a point a long time ago when they could have let me out and I would have been a law-abiding, contributing citizen. I don't see the point in keeping people in prison who don't need to be there."

We're learning now that many, if not most, of the women who are locked up for so-called crimes of violence are there because they were defending themselves against violent, abusive spouses or boyfriends. Most women don't act out whatever violent impulses they might have. They kill only when they're desperate — they're fighting for their lives. But when they do kill, no matter how compelling the circumstances, it scares judges and juries senseless. Women are supposed to nurture, to heal, to care and love and, evidently, put up with a shitload of abuse from cowards who beat them. In America, four million women a year are beaten by those who "love" them. When they fight back, watch out for the wrath of the judge. Karen's case was even worse than that of the homemaker whose life aspiration is to raise a family. She was living outside the generally accepted social limits. She was a

prostitute. "You know," she says, "because we're women, we are supposed to stay in our place. We're not supposed to be out there on the streets, we're supposed to be good girls, stay within boundaries."

"Kristina stood near the back of the long line, hair matted, clothes unironed, waiting to receive the highest dose she could get: one hundred milligrams of Thorazine. The thick liquid numbed her brain, kept wandering thoughts subdued, and let her sleep. Her eyes could no longer stare at the razor-lined fence outside her window."

— Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes, Cold Concrete

Though she had over a year in at the Utica County Jail, Karen found herself petrified the day she entered Bedford Hills. "I was just a kid," she recalls, "I didn't know what to expect. I turned eighteen in the jail, so I was going on nineteen, but I was still a child in so many ways. There were no kids there then, they were all older women. It was rare for a teenager to go inside during those years."

As is often the case, the new girl was approached first by a prisoner who was a bit of an outcast. "She was a very large woman, Susan, and people kind of rejected her.

"I winged it," Karen says. "I stayed very isolated, I was afraid to trust. It took me years to accept the fact that I was not going anywhere and that prison was pretty much gonna be my home for awhile, whether I liked it or not.

"When I first hit there it was strictly punishment. They still had that farm mentality, from when Bedford Hills was the 'Westchester Farm for Girls' or something like that. You worked on the farm and you worked every day. There was no therapy. There were no programs, period. It was strictly work, work, work. Six o'clock every morning, until the wee hours of the night — slave labor. The guards were all women, and were very matronly. Back in the '70s, there were very strict rules: lines for everything, no speaking when you're not supposed to, and all of that. It was run like a very tight ship.

"I couldn't accept where I was and I didn't believe I was worth anything. All of those things go with being locked up in the garbage pit of the world, as it's referred to, you know. I thought everybody wanted something from me that I couldn't

give. I spent my first few years totally oblivious. I couldn't accept where I was, what happened, that I was alone. I couldn't believe that I was going to be there for twenty years. But it wasn't illicit drugs as much as it was their prison drugs, you know their Thorazine. You stand in long lines for medication and then you don't worry about where you are."

"Approaching the intersection of numerous heavy steel gates, Kristina stood under the flickering fluorescent light bulbs set in wire cages on the ceiling and waited for a key to turn the lock. Five in the morning, sleep still in her eyes, she walked through dark lobbies past stony-faced female guards and waited for yet another gate to be unlocked before she entered the brightly lit kitchen."

— *Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes, Cold Concrete*

Karen was three years into her sentence before she began the monumental task of facing the pain. Back when she'd first come in, Susan had introduced her to a woman named Maria Sobal, who ran the South Forty program, for self-motivated individuals. "It was designed to make you independent," Karen recalls. "Now South Forty has expanded to outside the prisons. They help ex-offenders in New York find jobs."

Karen was younger than most of the women locked in Bedford Hills. "At that time, I was considered the baby on campus," she says. "Today, it's a common thing. There are more seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds going in now. Then, it was unusual."

"So I started learning from the other women, listening to their stories. That's what really opened my world for me. There were so many women who had been through that kind of pain and abuse. I wasn't alone." Though it took a long time for Karen to get into the program, she credits her awakening to the determination of Maria Sobal.

"She allowed me to be me," Karen says, "and she took me under her wing. It was in her program that I first began to heal, accept, and it was also there that I read my first issue of *Fortune News*. When I picked up that paper and saw that there were other people going through similar situations, even if they were mostly men, and I started reading about the legal system, I began allowing myself to see that the world was much bigger than just my own. I began to find that hope,

change and self-forgiveness were possibilities."

"Back in '77, there were no fences at Bedford Hills. And as we got into the '80s, the authorities seemed open to the development of programs." Karen took to heart the adage, "Don't serve the time, let the time serve you." She began work on her Associates Degree through Albany University.

"I began living again," she says. "Regardless of where I was, I was alive. I sought out therapy for myself. I dealt with who I was and what I had been through. I created my days myself. I set up my own schedules, my own goals, my own deadlines. And I met them. I became self-motivated. Even though I was in 'their' environment, I made it my own."

"I looked around for the first time and took in what would be my 'home' for the next seventeen years. I saw only unused, untapped talent, intelligence and energy hidden behind the masks of frozen feminine faces. I was one of them. I decided then and there that there would be no middle ground for me. I would no longer be the victim, the dependent. I would no longer work with what I should have been, but rather with what I could yet become."

— *Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes, Cold Concrete*

While inside, Karen discovered a passion—and a talent—for writing. She kept journals, wrote poems, painted, tutored, edited a prison college paper and prison newspapers, and wrote volumes of letters—to friends, supporters, family and editors of community newspapers. "It took me a long time to admit to myself that I had any talent, and that it could save me. I had time to realize my mistakes, to realize that I could spend my life in a positive way, helping others. And when that happened, it was like, okay, I'm free."

Not everyone was motivated to change. "I saw women who were so cracked-out, so burned-out, they needed instruction just to get through the day. Each generation has to deal with different problems. I remember my generation, going through heroin and cocaine. And now it's crack. I've never seen a drug like crack, what it can do. It takes their hearts and minds. Mothers throw their babies in garbage cans.

"School was so much a part of me. Growing, learning, wanting to know more, it was ingrained in me. I couldn't foresee a future without more books, more knowledge."

"But at least half," Karen says, "are changing their lives in spite of prison. It's a shame, they could be doing so much more out here."

In the late '70s and early '80s, Karen began working to make changes within the walls. "I was instrumental in some way," she recalls, "in bringing about every program that exists there today. It's helping the women who are in there. None of that existed. I think between myself and Luz Santana, we left whatever programs are there now, and left them in good hands so they're carried forward. Everything we did was self-initiated and prisoner-made. That's how they referred to it, 'This is a prisoner-made program,' or a 'prisoner-developed program.' The programs were so valuable that the state assumed them as their own. Before, there weren't any. I get a really good feeling about that. And Luz is out now too. She received clemency after serving eight years for killing her abusive stepfather."

"And it was because so many of us had experienced abuse in some form or fashion, we decided to just reach out. We wrote letters to all the legislators, to Albany, we had our families involved in it. It culminated in a hearing inside the prison gymnasium in 1985. I was the editor of the *Bedford Chronicle*, the prison paper, and I was sitting in the audience taking notes, thinking, 'This is so powerful because women are coming together and sharing their experiences and exposing themselves, at risk, and bonding together.' It was something most people didn't think women could do. Many women testified to the legislators about their experiences, and it was just so moving, I mean, you could almost see the tears in these legislators' eyes. It was very powerful. The legislators realized that something had to change, and what developed out of that was the Domestic Violence Task Force in Albany. The governor appointed key persons to go inside the prisons and to develop legislation for leniency in the laws, which of course is still going on. Change comes very slowly."



Karen and her sister Vicki.

"Mr. P lifts a three-seated, metal-armed couch over his head and fires it like a projectile into a row of women gathered to watch the beating he's giving a one-hundred-and-two pound woman because he didn't like the song she was singing.

"You fuckin' niggers should all be shipped back to Africa! Lynching is too good for you!" he screams, muscles bulging, sweat pouring from his massive forehead. The door is locked and he's the only officer on the tier with sixty women, he has the key. Most of the women stand idly by, half covering their eyes with their hands so as not to see what might yet come; others shout at him, 'Leave her alone! Leave her alone!'"

— Warm Hearts, Hot Flashes,
Cold Concrete

"After the hearings," Karen says, "I was in contact with Louise Thompson, one of my clemency supporters, and she was a member of the National Organization for Women (NOW) New York City chapter. She put a seed in my head, said, 'You know, Karen, if you really wanted to you could have a chapter in here.' And I said, 'Oh, Louise, you're crazy, there's no way they're gonna let us do that, you know, no way. It's radical, it's considered extreme, and they'll never let us.' But she kept talking to me and encouraging me, giving me more names and more num-

bers to contact, and eventually I started meeting all these people. They would visit, and we discussed how we would develop it. I submitted it as a program proposal through the volunteer coordinator in the prison, and we sent it up to Albany and it came back approved because we had so many signatures on the petition. That's just another example of doing things with others. You can't do it alone. I think that's when my life started to change, when I realized that it's through interconnectedness with others and their experience that change comes about. It doesn't happen alone. And no one's alone in their experiences."

Karen worked a variety of jobs while locked up, everything from mopping floors to working in Grievance to tutoring to working in the Graphic and Commercial Arts department, where, she says, "We made in-house pamphlets, booklets and signs for the institution. Most of the signs said 'No' something. No walking.' 'No talking.' 'No smoking.' 'No' whatever. We used to laugh about it."

In 1983, she received her Associates degree through the Albany Regents External Degree Program, which was largely correspondence. In '85 she earned her B.S. through the Mercy College Program.

"School was so much a part of me. Growing, learning, wanting to know more, it was ingrained in me. I couldn't foresee a future without more

books, more knowledge. I had heard that there were only two programs in the whole United States, one in Ohio and the other in Vermont, that offered graduate programs for prisoners. A fellow prisoner, Luz Camacho, had contacted them also, unbeknownst to me. She's also out now, she also got clemency, she was in for drug muling and, you know, I'm just so glad some of the people got out of there. She had a little daughter at the time, so it makes all the difference in the world. She went through so much hell.

Anyway, Luz ended up telling me about Dr. Margaret White—no relation, by the way—and I contacted her and she came for a visit and I told her what I wanted to do, and she told me how much it would cost, and I got my family involved. They were like, 'Karen, if this is what you want to do, we'll help you in any way we can,' and I felt great. I had to find a mentor who had a doctorate in English or Literature. Through the librarian at the prison, I met a woman, Dr. Jerilyn Fischer, who said, 'I know the right person for you.' She gave me this person's number and I contacted her and she came in. We became one big happy family. We had meetings every month, I gave presentations, it was very concentrated. It was very, very intense tutoring. I created two journals, did my thesis, which was titled, "Confronting Marginality: Empowering Women through Writing and Literature in a Prison College Program." It was a study of literature and writing in the Mercy College prison program. At that time I was one of the head tutors there and that's how I did the work with the students. I learned from them and they learned from me. We did good work, and I got my Master of Arts in Literature and Writing Pedagogy.

"Now, they've eliminated Pell grants. I know of a woman who's still in and has been going to college and by next January, that's it. No more college program. That's so frightening. They've just ended the most vital program that exists inside the prisons. It's going to show, it's going to take its toll. It's frightening."

Karen was locked up long enough to see the fluctuations, the changes in attitude and public opinion, often driven by politicians looking for scary rhetoric, that swing the penal pendulum from punishment to rehabilitation and back to punishment again.

"As we entered the eighties," she says, "things started to get a little more humane. But I have to say they

got right back to the punishment aspect. At Bedford, it coincided with the Brinks robbery, in '86 or '87. Kathy [Boudin] and Judy [Clark] came to the prison. Kathy had twenty years, Judy had a seventy-five-year-to-life sentence. Three fences went up back to back. It was a whole different mentality. Nobody wanted to hear anything about programs. They started phasing them out. One by one they let teachers go. A lot of the programs were run by community volunteers, and they [the authorities] began to be fearful of the volunteers and their motives. They saw the volunteers as being bleeding-heart liberals and God knows they didn't want them to help anyone escape or anything like that. So things started really getting tight, and everyone suffered for it.

"Most of the women I was locked up with were good people, people who made mistakes when they were put in certain situations. They didn't see any other way to make things work. They made mistakes. It doesn't mean that they're not redeemable. I mean, society may judge me to a certain point, but that doesn't mean that there's not a human being here. The way things seem to me right now, it's as though once you're convicted of a crime, society is saying to you, 'We're never going to let you forget this.' You aren't allowed to put it behind you and move on. The system right now defies everything that America is supposed to be about: giving people a second chance."

After a three-part series on Karen appeared in the *New York Daily News* in 1980, guidelines were waived and she was allowed to appear before the clemency board before serving two-thirds of her sentence. "They denied me nevertheless. I was denied, not just that once, but five times. When you're denied, you have to wait another year before you can put in again, and the process itself takes almost a year, so every two years I put in because that was an avenue that was open to me, until I realized that I didn't have the political clout it would take to get clemency."

Karen recalls that there was a lot of anger when Jean Harris, the well-heeled matron convicted of murdering the Scarsdale Diet doctor, got clemency. "We felt there were so many others who were more deserving. Also, we saw how she manipulated the media as well as the people

within the prison so that she could get the support that she did. But I think also we were glad to see that finally one clemency was given to one woman after so many had been given to men. There's definitely an imbalance there."

My three-month-old son chooses this moment to express himself. He begins crying, and I soothe him, ask what's wrong. Karen, expertly interpreting the baby's cries, says, "I can't take my nap, it's too noisy in here." I put him to my breast and he begins nursing happily, no longer aware of his surroundings.

In the cliché-ridden stories about prison written by those who've not been there, there's usually some talk about "that first breath of free air." When I first got out, I felt like I was hitting a wall. You know, you walk out from being confined within prison walls and hit another kind of wall, a hard high wall of self-righteousness erected by a vengeful society. Karen met it, too.

"I was living with my sister when I first got out," she says. "In order to go shopping we had to take a car service. I took a car service, and at one point there were some guys working in a field beside the road, and the driver says, 'Oh, they're

"There's no way you can deny eighteen years of hell."

probably a chain gang. I don't believe in it. They should be behind a fence. Look at our society...' and he went on and on. I wanted so badly to say to him, 'Do I look like I just got out of jail?'

"That is the typical attitude out there. They're so scared, it's out of ignorance, out of not knowing. Most people accept what the mass media tells them about how people are convicted and what goes on in prison, and it's all so false. I think it's important to educate the public about what really goes on."

That's one reason she works for the Fortune Society. "Having been inside," she says, "I know how vital it is that there are people on the outside willing to speak out to try to make needed changes in the system. Being able to

do that is essential to my well-being right now."

What was it like to emerge into a whole new world after 19 years inside?

"The thing that frightened me was having been away in a society of women, without men. I remember standing on a train platform, on my way to report for parole, and I saw a man I thought was hiding behind a pole. For awhile, I just thought every man I saw was a rapist. It took awhile to get used to functioning in a society that was both male and female."

Karen's sister Vicki had died in a motorcycle accident at the age of twenty-two, while Karen was still inside. One of the first things Karen wanted to do when she was released was visit her sister's grave. That was on the personal level. On a societal level, she says, "I wanted to work. I wanted to be a part of the community, to earn my way, to give back." All the work she'd done on herself in prison began paying off on the outside. When I ask if she is bitter about the things that happened to her, if she has hard feelings toward any of the people who took advantage of her, she says she's over it. "If I had continued on that track," she says, "I would never have been able to get where I am today. I would have been blinded, totally blinded. It's too time-consuming to be ugly

Visiting with her sister Cheryl (left) at Bedford.



“Most of the women I was locked up with were good people, people who made mistakes when they were put in certain situations. They didn’t see any other way to make things work. They made mistakes. It doesn’t mean that they’re not redeemable.”

and negative and bitter. You have to learn to let it go. For the most part, I feel sorry for men who are violent towards women. They think it’s expected of them. I’ve felt how angry and violent they could be, and that was very germane to my situation. I don’t mean to absolve people of responsibility for their actions. Everyone is on their own journey, and we are each at a different point in our development, but at a certain level, it is a matter of individual responsibility. So, I feel sorry for them, I just hope they reach a point where they’re able to look at their behavior and their lives and come out of it with a realization that acting that way doesn’t lead to anything but destruction.”

Friendships formed in dire circumstances tend to be intense, and they tend to last. I found getting out a lot more frightening than going in. When it was time, at long last, for Karen to walk out the front gates, she was walking away from the only relationships she had formed as a mature adult. The stony hand of justice had grabbed her when she was but a kid and locked her away, and now that same hand would toss her back out into the world as an adult. Prison was her world until just a few months ago. What of friendship?

“You don’t find it out here unless you really seek it out. It can be very

lonely for women out here if you don’t have your own network of support and friends who you know you can reach out to. But there are a lot of women’s groups and I’m part of a lot of them and that’s what keeps me feeling connected. And that’s how I prefer to be, you know, connected and bonded to others. I don’t ever want to be isolated again. Sometimes I hesitate about revealing my past. I’m trying to start my life over again, and to do that in a community that I’ve never lived in before. I’ve made new friends and I know new people. Even though I have a whole separate crew of people who know me and my experiences and love me regardless, I don’t want any more questions. That’s why I was afraid to do this article. I was wavering back and forth because I don’t want people to point fingers anymore and say, ‘Oh, she’s the one,’ and ‘There she goes.’ But then there’s that other part of me that says, ‘So what?’ I did it. I paid for it. There’s nothing you can say to crucify me any further. It doesn’t matter. I’m out here, and you can be afraid of me if you want, but that’s your problem, not mine. It’s been a struggle during these eight months that I’ve been out here to decide whether I was going to let people know or whether I was going to keep it a big dark secret that was all in the past. But there’s no way you can deny eighteen years of hell. There’s no way. And as much as I want to do that, I can’t. It’s too much a part of me.”

I look down at my son, who has fallen asleep. None of us in this life are innocent beyond infancy. It seems to me that life, chance, circumstance, whatever you want to call it, dealt Karen a particularly cruel hand in her youth. I wonder how she is coming to terms with the rage and anger that are part of the prison experience, how she’s coming to terms with a vengeful society.

“No people are more vengeful than those inside the prisons,” she says, “the ones wearing those blue uniforms, calling themselves guards, or, I’m sorry, correctional officers, they have that label. No longer prisons or penitentiaries, it’s correctional facilities. What are they correcting? They’re not. And people coming out have to remember that no one can correct you or correct your direction in life. Only you can do that. And if you can survive prison, and you obviously have if you’re walking out with your sanity, that’s what gets me through every day. I can smile and say, ‘I corrected me. I corrected my outlook and my thinking and I got back on track because I wanted to, and I had to for me, not for anyone else.’ No one can make you go to a program, and no one can make you go to therapy. Only you can get the help that you need and deal with the anger and the rage and the pain and all those things that are the root, that lead to whatever reason you are in there. So, I look at that every day, and I’m proud of that. No one can take that away from me, like no one can take my education from me. That’s what keeps me as strong as I am and helps me to go on. So that would be my advice, to those who are getting short, getting out soon. Remember that: You did it. No one else did it for you.”

PL

**A NEW
PRISON LIFE
COLUMN:**

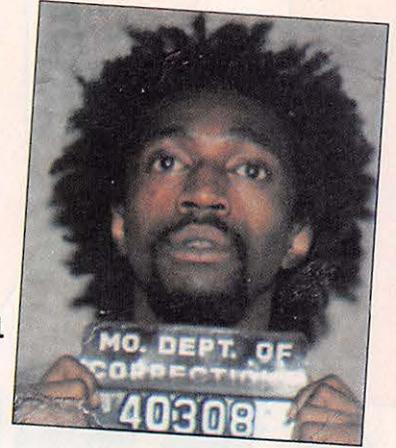
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Cellmate of the Month

Rap Sheet

Name: Ronald Davis Bey, a.k.a. King Buck
Age: 37
Birthplace: Fort Riley, Kansas
Conviction: Armed Robbery-2 counts
Sentence: 30 years
Time Served: 14 years
Ambitions: To see that prisoners' rights and treatment reflect dignified, human standards.



"Islam Greetings! My name is Ronald Davis Bey, but most everybody inside these walls knows me by King Buck..." So went King Buck's first letter to *Prison Life*, in which he described the wretched conditions and racial tension brewing at Jefferson City Correctional Center in Missouri. Since we received similar warnings from other prisoners at JCCC, we thought the least we could do to help was to publish the letter in our June issue. (See this issue's Insider Outlook for more of King Buck's writing).

Not long after the issue was mailed, we got another scribe from King Buck. "They threw me in the hole for my letter that you printed," he said. "But don't worry about it—I'm going to continue my fight until society knows what's going on here."

We knew we had a Cellmate of the Month. Here was a guy who was thrown into solitary, suffered all kinds of abuse; but he was still willing to stand up for what he believed in—to hell with the consequences.

Soon after, we got another letter from our man:

"As you recall, I was placed in Administration Segregation in May after your magazine ran my letter about the racism here. I was released from the Hole about a month later, but a week after that, I was placed back in Ad Seg per orders from Superintendent Groose. I was never given any reason but every other prisoner knew what was going on: plain old harassment. I'm getting punished every day for my political views.

"Personally," King Buck continued, "I'm not as concerned about myself as I am about seeing any innocent lives lost, injured or destroyed, even though I'm being dogged out pretty bad with the loss of all my privileges and constant confinement. I believe it's a worthy cause. This is the real deal news."

And it's this "real deal news" of prison life that has motivated King Buck to keep a journal during the 14 years he's been incarcerated.

The journal, which King Buck hopes to get published, depicts prisoner abuse, guard brutality and the "evil corruption" behind the prison administration.

It's titled "Super Max: King Buck's

King Buck on Racism

My name is Ronald Davis Bey, but most everybody inside these walls know me by King Buck. I'm a three-time loser and I've been down 13 calendars on this last go-round and I'll probably be pushing up daisies before too long 'cause I'm considered a big mouth — incorrigible prisoner — whatever that is. I want to address the toughest issue

Deal Project."

"Early on during my incarceration," King Buck says, "I got tired of seeing all the bullshit. Everything around here has always been so counterproductive to the real needs and objectives prisoners have."

If King Buck had it his way, Jefferson City would be a House of Support, where guards and prisoners, white shirts and society, could come to work out their differences peacefully.

"What would I change here if I could implement my Deal Project?" King Buck asks. "The game-running schemes taking place between guards and inmates, the cruel, unchecked abuse of administrative power, guards giving prisoners knives to stab each other, the high racial tension, the need for young, white inmates to

seek protective custody in order to escape drug smuggling, rip-off artists and homosexual gatherings, the psychotropic, mind-altering drugs many inmates are given as a substitute for therapy treatment, and the confinement to strip-cells many of the mentally disturbed are forced to endure."

Although many would scoff at such high aims, especially coming from a "mere prisoner," King Buck has already taken the first step: self-empowerment.

"Most men and women in prison who are slight of willpower go under and remain down under their oppressive state of servitude all the days of their life. Convicts call these hopelessly lost people 'those with broken spirits.' But my spirit is alive and thriving. I refuse to let myself get saddened by the loss of my freedom even though I am surrounded by the constant madness."

Although the Missouri DOC would beg to differ, King Buck continues to live his life setting positive examples for other prisoners. He has proven that the convicted felon is not limited in his capacity for growth, self-worth and achievement.

If King Buck made it back to General Population by press time, he certainly won't be there when you're reading this. You can be sure the white shirts will retaliate. But he knows the score, and he's ready for it. Just take his last message to heart:

"I hope whatever efforts I have made to enlighten the public and other prisoners here have not been in vain."

—Chris Cozzone

BUST CORRUPTION A

BY CHRIS COZZONE

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
BRUNSWICK DIVISION**

Duane R. Olson,)
 Joe Mohwish,)
 Donald B. Sargeant,)
 Plaintiffs,)
 v.).....CV 294-011
 Federal Prison Industries, Inc.)
 (UNICOR),)
 et. al.)
 Defendants)

COUNT ONE: Knowingly employing illegal aliens, in violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

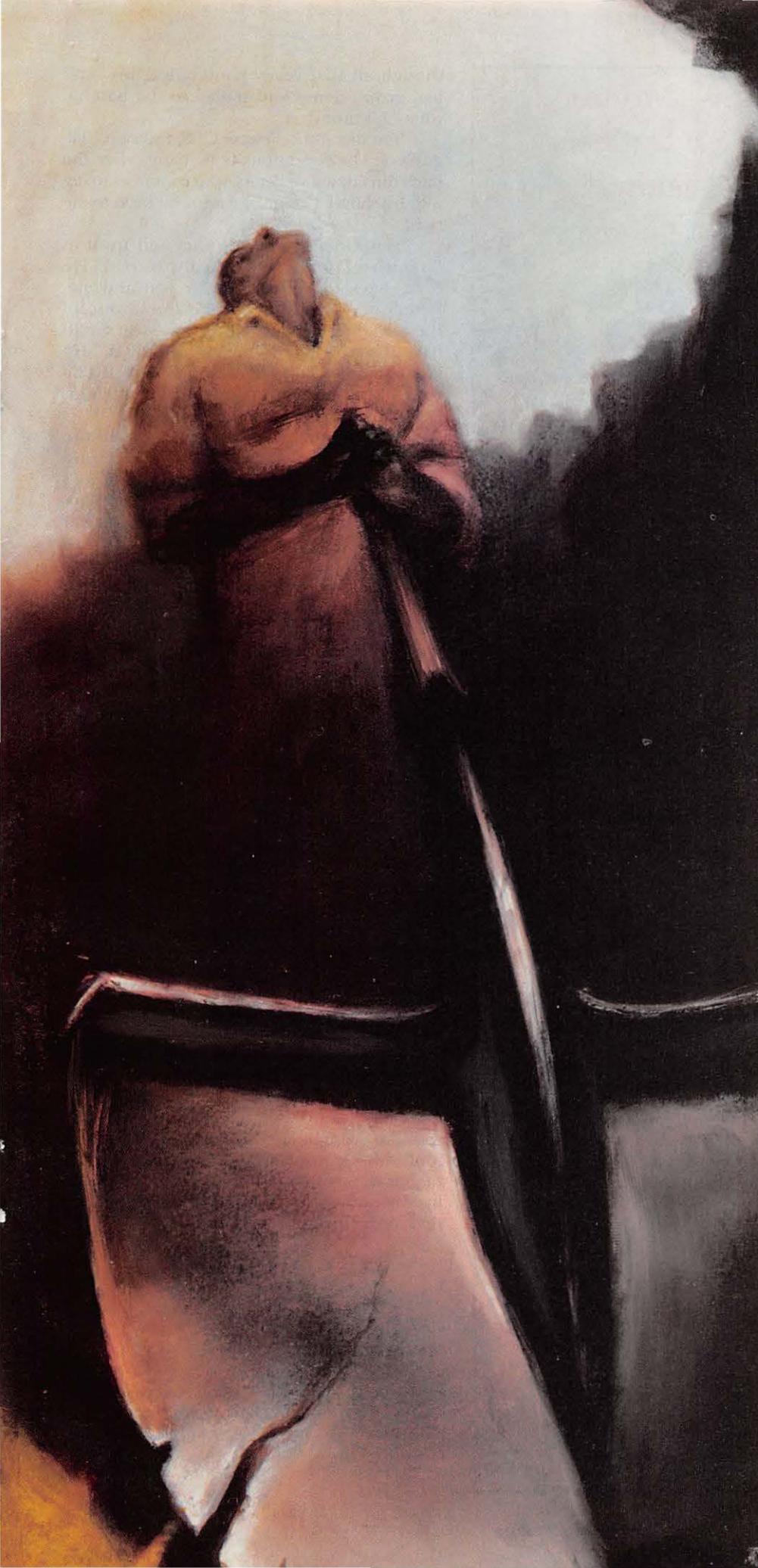
COUNT TWO: Breaching federal labor laws by hiring prisoners and failure to pay minimum wage, in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

COUNT THREE: Selling prisoner-made products to private sector companies, in violation of Federal laws.

Knowingly employing illegal aliens? Violating federal labor laws? Sounds like one of those criminal enterprises the Feds would love to sink their teeth into—that is, if the government weren't so busy running the racket themselves.

The culprit is none other than the Department of Justice's Federal Prison Industries, Inc., known as UNICOR. The men who have uncovered these alleged criminal activities are federal prisoners Joe Mohwish, Duane Olson and Don Sargeant. They have filed a unique criminal complaint against the federal government that could, if they are successful, turn the Department of Justice upon itself and make it the laughing stock of our get-tough-on-crime politics.

Not only have Mohwish, et al. filed charges against UNICOR for employing illegal aliens and for its unfair and illegal labor practices, but, most damning of all, the three prisoners have managed to uncover documentary evidence proving that UNICOR is selling prisoner-manufactured merchandise to the private sector. Working with a network of federal prisoners, the trio has accumulated volumes of physical evidence such as purchase orders, memos, cost summaries and other documents



the aged, the nuts and cripples, men who can't walk or can't talk. Some who do not belong in prison and some, like Alex, who do.

There are a few cons left over from the days when it was one prison in one place, back when Alex first came here, cons they keep around to do the heavy work—Alex and Lincoln, Gomez and Lafayette, Stansky and Peters—the inside labor gang. Peters is a little guy, slender but tough, old enough that he has ended up here. Everywhere he's been he's screwed up, and now they are either offering him a final chance, or they have put him here as a way of getting rid of him. Peters' gaunt, pocked face is dominated by large doe-like eyes you try not to look at. Part of his nose is missing, a crude notch gouged out of his nostril, which lends him a damaged, lopsided look worse than if he had lazy eye. Alex tolerates him, but Peters fancies him-

"A lifetime in the Hole—they'll slowly kill him. This is how it is. This is how it will always be."

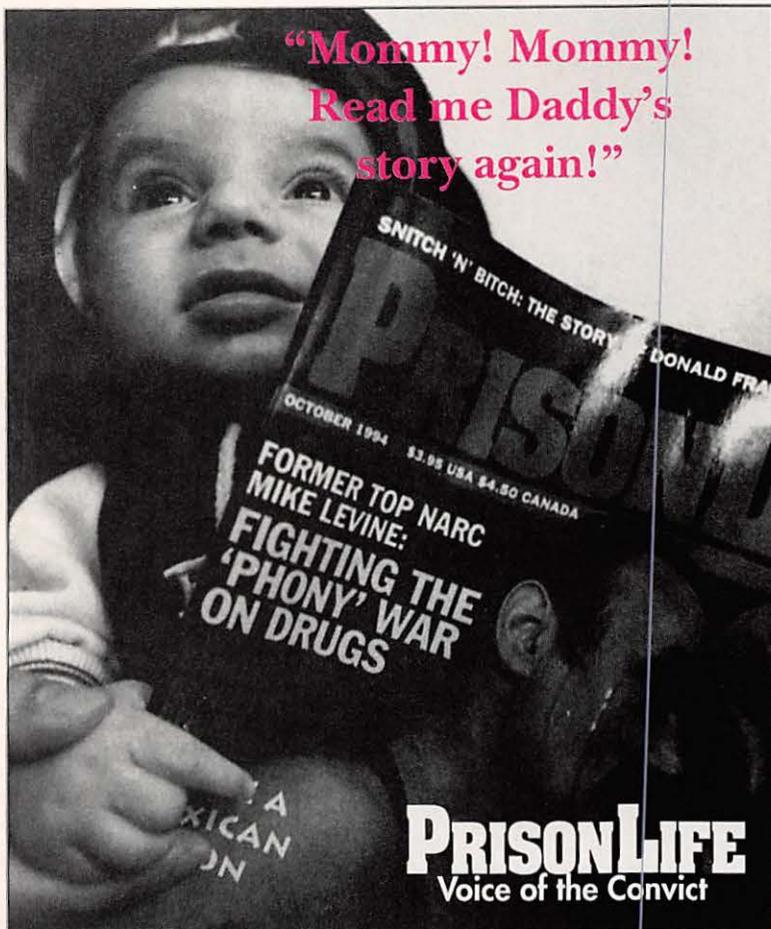
self a con man; he is sly and quick, and Alex is wary of him.

Now Crummage has crossed back to the other side of the ditch, and Alex watches as he approaches Peters. The others are there, Oscar Lincoln, Gomez and Lafayette, Big Stansky, but Crummage is a comedian and he picks his straight men carefully—Alex because he can't talk, and Peters because he's six inches shorter and half Crummage's weight.

"Peters, when all this is done, what say you and me go fishin'?" Crummage grins and winks at no one in particular.

"Right here in this ditch you dug, bet there'll be some nice trout." He hooks his thumbs in his belt and stands in front of Peters, who is partway in the ditch. Crummage is neckless; his jaw juts forward and his head slopes upward to a point, as

(continued on next page)



**“Mommy! Mommy!
Read me Daddy’s
story again!”**

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though all that really mattered in his skull had grown dense and settled to the bottom, where his mouth is.

“You like trout, Peters? I’ll bet you do.” He guffaws. His pendulous belly hangs over the ditch directly above Peters, who continues to dig with his shovel. Crummage twists his head to the right.

“Hey Gomez, what do they call trout in Spanish? *Trucha*, right? Yeah, *trucha*.” He turns back to Peters. “Maybe you and me, Peters, we could have some *trucha* one of these nights. Or put it this way—you could have the *trucha*, and me, I’ll supply it.” He laughs loudly, then wheezes. “Peters, you a little old for me, but you ain’t that bad. ‘Specially when you bend over like that.”

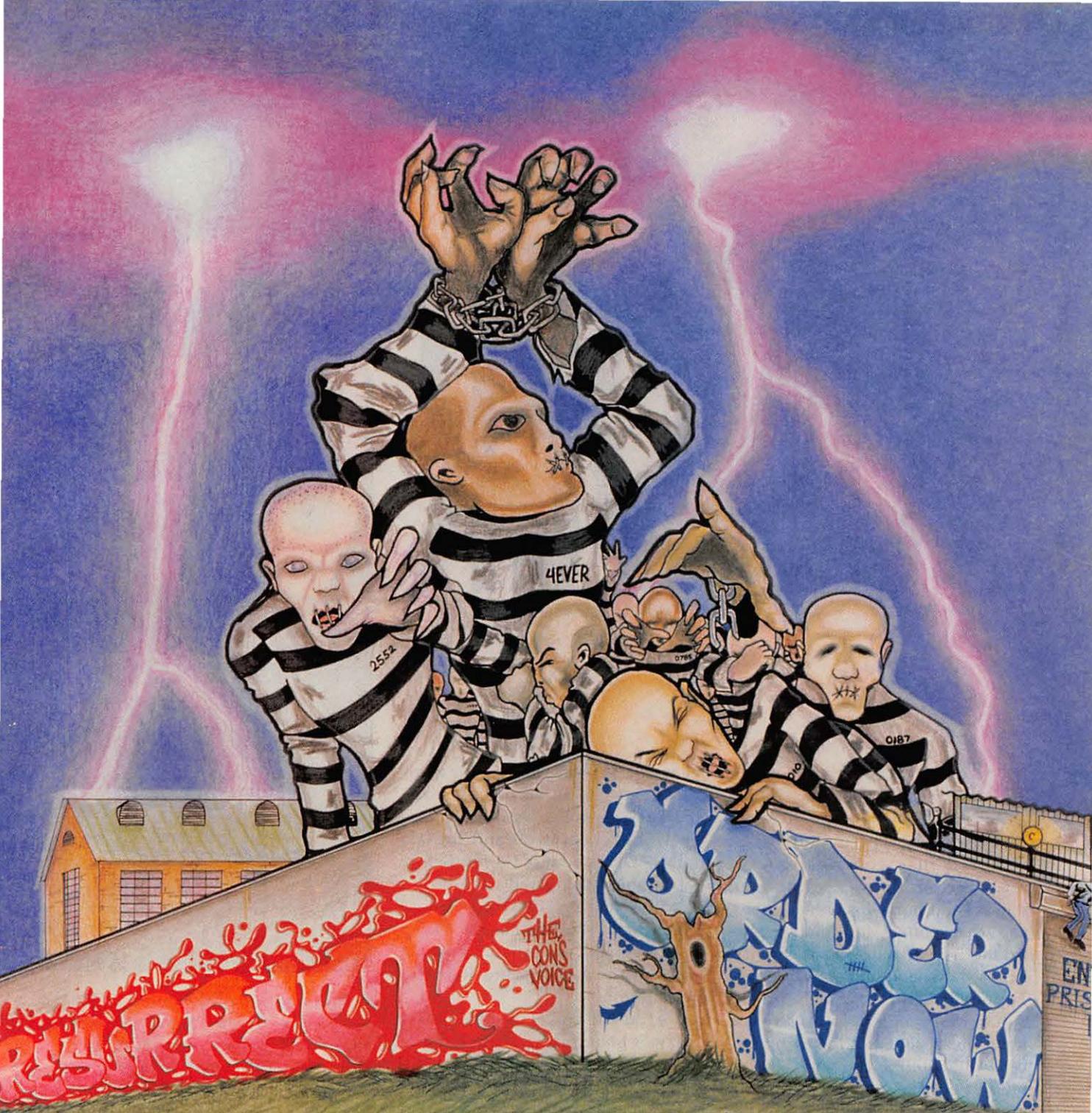
It happens fast, almost too fast for Alex to see. The shovel falls away from Peters’ hand and immediately he is up under Crummage’s gut—just there, attached to Crummage, lips tight and eyes like coal, arm and shoulder and entire upper body pushing into Crummage’s abdomen. Suddenly Crummage wheels around and stumbles, picks himself up and stumbles again. His glasses hang from one ear and his tiny eyes are now huge and amazed. He is running, holding his stomach and bellowing, and Alex sees the guard emerge from the tower with a rifle. Peters, holding a dull gray shank in his hand, the end of it shiny with Crummage’s blood, casually sits down on the bank of the ditch, drops the knife in the dirt and kicks it aside.

Security arrives—more than twenty Blueshirts round the corner of the nearest cellhouse and spring for the field. Crummage has collapsed fifty yards from the ditch, and the guard in the tower is shouting for Alex and the others to drop their picks and shovels and keep their hands where he can see them; Peters sits elbows on knees, head lowered, perfectly still. They’ll kill him, Alex thinks. He’ll spend a lifetime in the Hole where they’ll slowly kill him. This is how it is. This is how it will always be.

There is a trace of blue in the afternoon sky, but mostly it is white hot, the sun baking the air to a ceramic hardness. Alex tilts his head back until his face is nearly horizontal with the ground. He can relax this way, block it all out, float for a minute in his eyes. But then it occurs to him that there are no cracks in this dome, that nothing lives in this sky, that birds could never fly here.

PL

About the Illustrator (next page): Joseph Hernandez is doin’ time at Green Haven Correctional Facility in New York.



PRISON LIFE



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UNDER

GRO

During 1989 and 1990, between 68,000 and 70,000 homeless people lived in New York City. These statistics are reported in a combination of records from the Census Bureau, shelters and homeless organizations, and from spotters who count in public facilities: the Port Authority, Pennsylvania Station, Grand Central Terminal, Central Park, Tompkins Square Park and various ferry stations. If you went with the high number, you'd still be short by 3,000 to 5,000 people. It may be hard to accept that professionals could be off by such a large number, but I know this to be a fact. Don't get me wrong, they did their jobs as best they could. The problem was, they couldn't possibly count what they couldn't see.

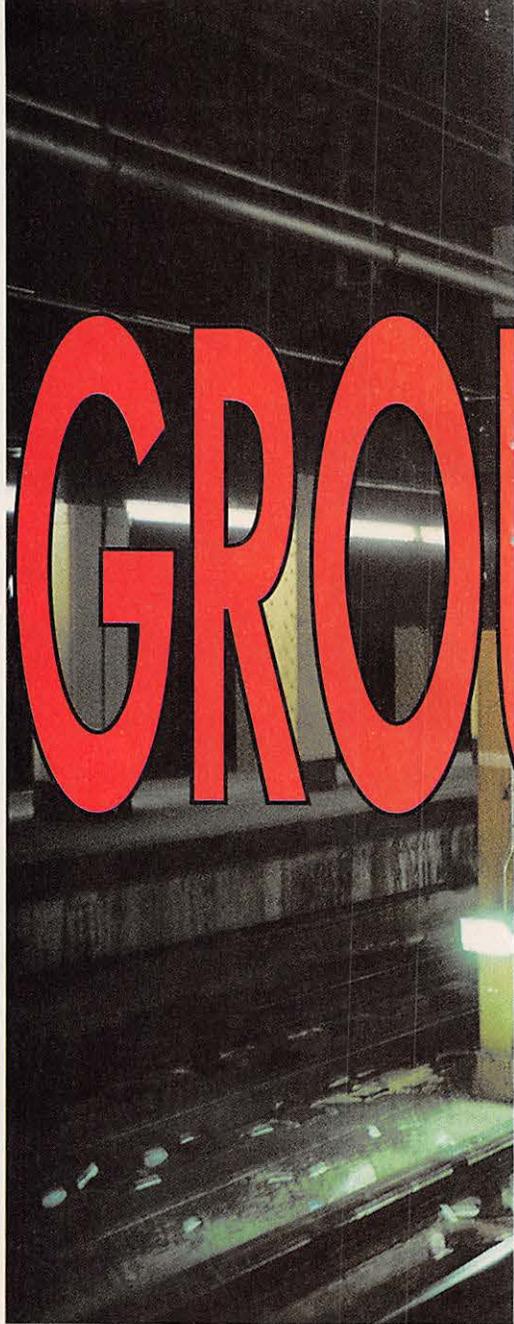
In the summer of 1989, after more than five hours of running and hiding from law enforcement officers and volunteers, I finally made good on my escape. Dead tired, I staggered off the New Jersey Transit train and found my way upstairs into New York's Penn Station. After eight

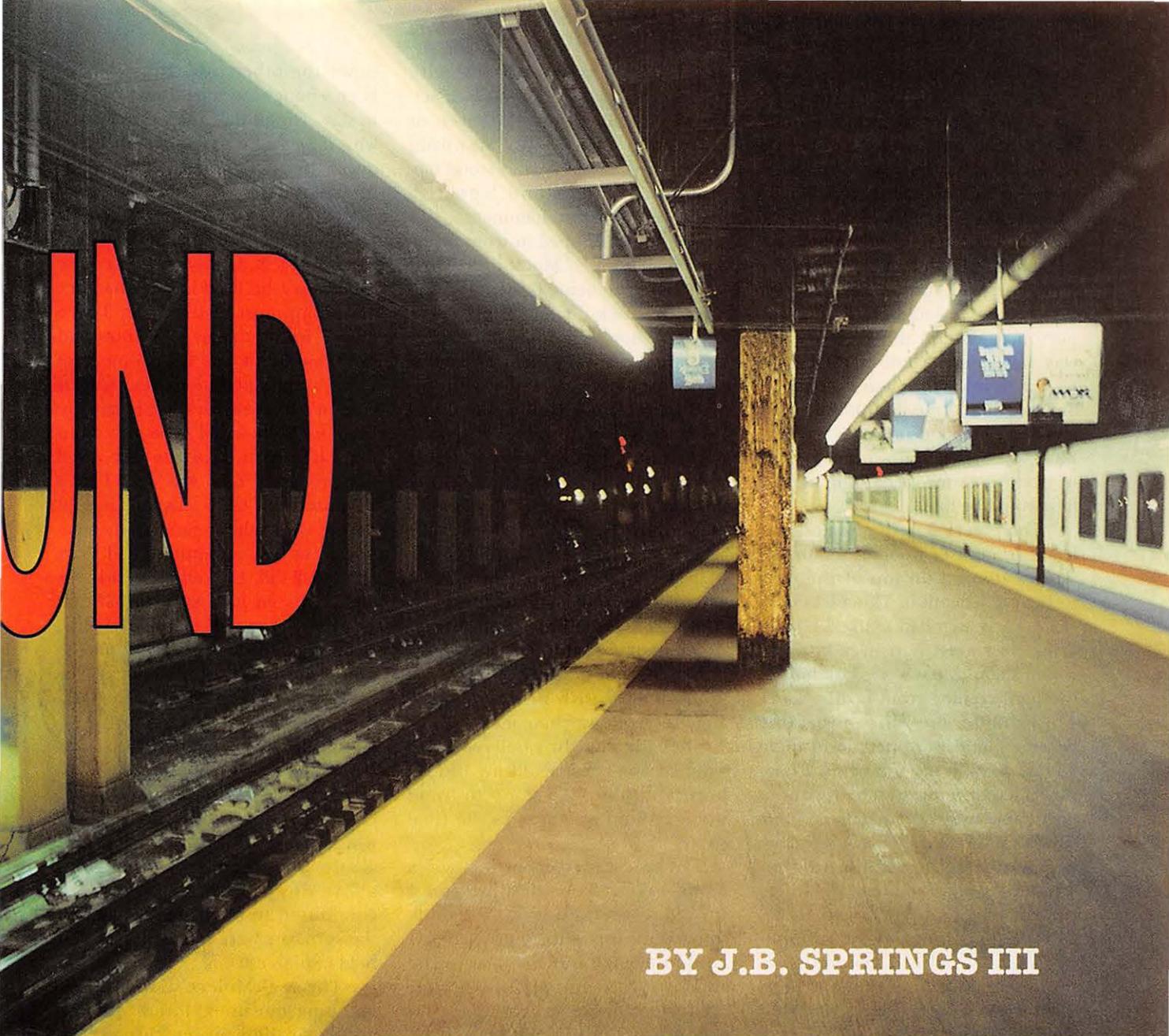
years of prison food, I blew my remaining \$41 in an orgy of pizza, hot dogs, chocolate sundaes, banana splits, Gyros, pretzels and Buffalo wings. The tiredness I'd felt before was nothing compared to the way I felt after eating. I walked around Penn Station until I couldn't keep my eyes open, and then I found a spot on the Long Island Railroad level to rest.

A far-off voice shouting "Get away!" brought me back from dreamland, and I found myself sitting on the floor of Penn Station. Ten feet away and directly in front of me were three elderly women. Two of them had laundry carts filled with personal belongings; the third held a piece of three-quarter inch pipe wrapped with electrical tape; it had a wicked-looking elbow at its end. The pipe was a serious piece of weaponry, and the way she wielded it said she knew how to use it.

"Get out of there!" the woman with the pipe said, and I assumed that I'd accidentally taken their sleeping place. I opened my mouth to apologize when a voice from

beside me said, "Move out of the way!" I looked slowly toward the area where the voice came from and found myself facing a man who could have been 20 or 40 beneath a huge growth of beard. He was huddled beside me in the smallest ball a 140-pound man could curl into, and he held a stainless steel razor. I was mad—after spending years in prison, I'd allowed someone from the street to sneak up on me. At the same time, I considered the damage he could do to me before I could do to him. I glanced back and forth between him and the women, but my eyes stayed on the razor. I watched the women back out of the opening of the cul-de-sac, and then the man was up and running. The





UNDER

BY J.B. SPRINGS III

woman with the pipe shook her head pathetically as I stood up.

"You're a pretty good-sized guy," she said, "but you ain't street smart. You better go settle things at home." Without another word, they turned and headed in the opposite direction of the guy with the razor.

That was my introduction to Penn Station. At that moment, I promised myself I would never again lay my head where someone could sneak up on me so easily. I stayed awake the rest of the night. In the morning, I met Amtrak Billy, who would teach me the tunnels beneath and behind Penn Station. A few hours later, I met Sandman. My first Mole Man.

During the 17 months I was out-

side the New Jersey prison system, I spent eight months living beneath Penn Station, Grand Central Terminal, Riverside Drive on the Upper West Side, and in shacktowns and boat basins along 12th Ave. In those places, I saw and met people who have never been counted and will never be seen, unless it's by accident. But, of everywhere I'd lived, the most memorable of the times I spent homeless were the days under Grand Central Terminal.

"You saved my life. Trust me now," Sandman said to me, digging into his retrieved duffel bag and pulling out a machete. He held it out. I took it and held it in my hand loosely, like he'd told me, waiting until he'd strapped his own blade

on. I followed him down the access stairwell and into one of the lower-level tunnels beneath Grand Central. Holding a machete loosely was supposed to mean it was just there, like a tool, with no threat intended. We walked for maybe 20 minutes, and then we had to climb some overhead pipes and crawl through a man-made hole into a ventilation shaft. After maybe 30 feet, Sandman put a hand against my shoulder for me to stop at the sound of a woman's voice. He responded with what I would learn later was a daily exchanged code. The voice bid him to come forward. Tapping me, he moved to the end of the shaft, grabbed an overhead pipe and pulled himself out. He hung until he

stopped swinging, then he dropped. I moved to the end of the opening and looked into the fire-illuminated face of the woman whose voice I'd heard. She was sitting on an overturned crate perched on top of a 10-foot stepladder. She held an axe, and there was a machete, much like the one Sandman had given me, in a sheath attached to her belt and tied to her knee. It wouldn't take but one person to defend the entrance the way it was situated, and gender would have nothing to do with it. She nodded at me. Still holding the machete, I pulled myself out of the hole and dropped down onto a pile of mattresses into what I imagined hell would be like.

There were dozens of shacks and lean-to's built of wooden scraps, tin and cardboard on top of the platform and beneath it. The tracks were clear. Each area had marked boundaries, and most had fires burning within them. A few were dark but for the light coming from nearby spots. They made me uncomfortable because there were people in them and all I could see were eyes. I have never liked being watched without being able to see the watchers. I didn't like it then, but I was too deep beneath Grand Central to find my way out without Sandman, so I did as he whispered and ignored them. Climbing up one side of an enormous pile of railroad ties and down the other, I found myself in the heart of the thriving community that Sandman called home.

There were maybe 60 to 70 people standing, sitting or moving around. Most looked normal, save their smutty and raggedy appearance, but there was a scattering of obvious loonies. The loonies stood around smiling at me and doing the street version of the Thorazine-shuffle.

A huge fire burned in the center of the area, as black smoke from the oily timbers rose and gathered against the tunnel roof. I remember wondering why the smoke wasn't choking everybody to death.

The next thing I knew, a man named Mook and his inner circle were standing around us. They didn't gather, they were just there, and it was creepy. I'd never seen Mook before, but Sandman's description

of a hunchbacked six-footer with dreadlocks to his rear was perfect. He was unarmed, but the seven or eight men and women standing around him weren't. They stood tapping their thighs and legs with machetes, pipes and hammers.

Sandman stepped in front of me and explained to Mook how I had kept him from being beaten to death by some crack dealers a few weeks back and how we'd hung out together off and on since then. There was never a change of expression on Mook's face, until Sandman told him I'd escaped from a prison in Jersey. And then it was so brief, I almost missed it. Watching me, Mook motioned with his head for one of his people. Whispering in his ear, he sent him off and over the pile of railroad ties. I looked at Sandman, who shrugged his thin shoulders and lit a smoke. After taking a couple of drags, he passed it to me. We waited maybe 10 minutes, but it seemed a much longer with nobody talking and everybody watching me.

I really couldn't believe I was where I was because all my life I'd been a hustler. To stoop to living underground was next to the final straw.

"Who escaped from Jersey?" a voice asked from behind and I turned to see who it was. A dude stood at the top of the railroad ties. I couldn't make out his face in the shadows. The guy who'd gone off after Mook spoke to him, made his way down the pile and squatted down. Knowing the speaker had to be talking to me, I said I had escaped from prison. The next questions and directions came fast: Where was I from? Where exactly did I escape from? How much time had I done? Had I ever been to the Annandale Reformatory? Who ran the dairy at Annandale? After I had sufficiently answered their questions, I was asked my real name. I'd given the answers to every question, but I refused to give up my name, and I told him and Mook so. Whispering to Sandman, I reminded him of his promise to take me back to the surface if I decided I didn't want to be there.

"He's straight by me!" Sandman yelled, and it was echoed by the guy on the pile before he disappeared

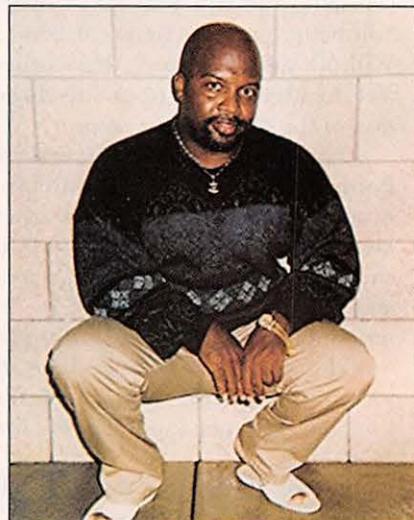
down the other side. It must have been enough because I was allowed to stay. To this day, I still don't know who it was who asked me all those questions. All I know is he lived right under my nose.

I lived beneath Grand Central for almost two months before I got tired and left. It wasn't the people; everybody who lived in our quadrant got along most of the time. There were a few problems every now and then, but Mook and his people kept things running relatively smoothly. It couldn't happen like that in prison, because inside we all seem to want to do 'our' thing and the key word beneath New York was 'us'. That's because each of us was an integral part of each other's survival. If someone from our community had trouble, we all did, and our area had over 200 people in it. Less than half that number ever went above. I did, because I became a 'surfacer' for the time I was there, like Sandman. For some reason, I just couldn't see locking myself up underground after going through so much to get away from prison. Surfacers ventured above ground and collected food, clothing, aluminum and copper, which were sold to buy drugs and alcohol, or to entice women from above down, for those who were committed to darkness. In return, the surfacers were watched over and held in high esteem.

The real Molers stayed below, mapping out unexplored territory and basically keeping things running. I remember two Molers find-

(continued on page 69)

J.B. Springs III, doin' time at Trenton in NJ.



Mo' on Moles

"If you want to know more about mole people," Springs told *Prison Life*, "go to Grand Central and find a guy named Sergeant Henry."

Sergeant Henry, now Lieutenant Henry, is one of the coolest cops you'd ever want to meet, especially if you were living underground. "The mole people have been very good to me," he says. "They were responsible for my promotion."

Several years ago, Lt. Henry ventured under Grand Central and volunteered to coax an entire community from their cocoons. "My goal was to very humanely and compassionately get them to leave."

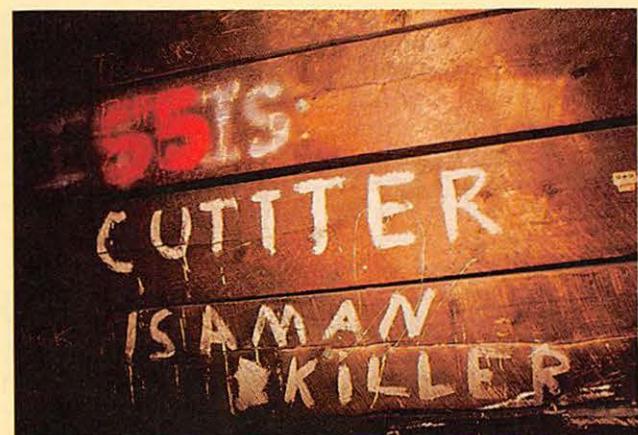
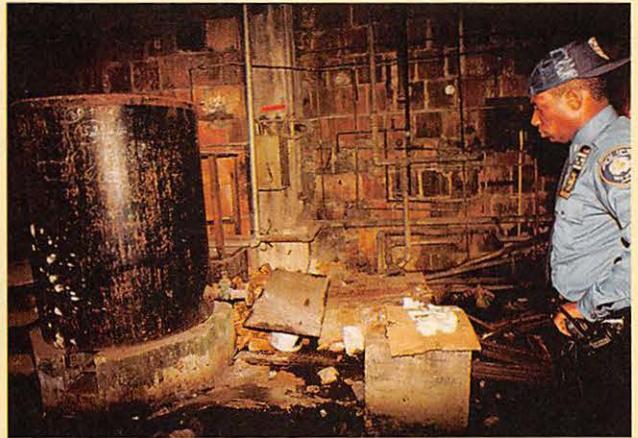
Most either didn't realize or didn't care that they were living in conditions unfit for human habitation. "In my opinion, it's worse than jail," says Henry.

At the height of the mole movement, over 50 people lived under Grand Central alone. Many were living knee-deep in trash, with feces from rodents and humans scattered about. But it was warm all year round, and water was easily obtainable.

Henry bent over to pick up a cap from a shampoo bottle. "Under this pipe was a makeshift shower." On his rounds, he'd occasionally be treated to the sight of naked mole people bathing beneath the pipes.

Henry used granola bars and a team of social workers to persuade the mole people to leave. "I would basically talk them to death," he says. "I'd tell them it was dangerous, unsanitary and if they didn't get their act together today, they never would." He'd hook them up with agencies for the homeless, drug rehabs and, if they had skills, with jobs. "The problem was that so many were either illiterate or socially dysfunctional. I guess that's what brought them down here," he notes. Some, like Springs, were cons on the lam.

After the mole people were "displaced," as Henry describes it, New York City spent over four million dollars on wire fences and concrete walls to seal off the area for good. But on the day of our tour, there was talk of mole sightings among the transit cops. "Just because it's under control now doesn't mean it's permanent," says Lt. Henry. "We need to continually seek these people out and help them find homes and jobs. It just isn't right for humans to live this way."



(From Top to Bottom) 1. Lt. Henry points out the water storage container where the underground dwellers bathed. 2. Beyond the grill, an "apartment" where, according to Henry, "a bunch of gay guys lived." 3. The "Do Not Enter" sign at 31st & 11 Ave. marks the entrance to another underground habitat. 4. Graffiti deep below Grand Central Station.

In-House Counsel

by Larry Fassler,
Jailhouse Lawyer

Throughout 1988 and 1989, I could be found in the law library at F.C.I. Phoenix almost every day, at almost any hour. Another jailhouse lawyer, whom I'll call "Ron," was in the library almost as often as I was. One day just before Christmas '89, Ron and I were the only ones in the library. I noticed he was sitting at a table staring absentmindedly into space, so I asked him what he was working on.

Ron told me he had filed a habeas corpus, and that it had been denied. Next he had filed an appeal, which had also been denied. He was now working on a Motion for Rehearing, but he knew how rare it is to win a rehearing, and the frustration was tearing him (and those two-by-fours) apart.

Finally, Ron went into a long, angry monologue about how impossible it was to get justice out of the Ninth Circuit, and about how blatantly the judges were ignoring the facts of his case. I understood those feelings, so I just listened without saying much. After Ron finished talking, I asked him to let me read his pleadings.

He handed them over, and I spent another hour reading his writ and his appeals, but when I had finished, I couldn't understand what his issue was. I could tell it had to do with his parole violation, but beyond this it was unclear. So I asked him to explain. After thirty minutes of additional questions, I finally realized that Ron had an issue going to the fairness of parole violation hearings. Ron

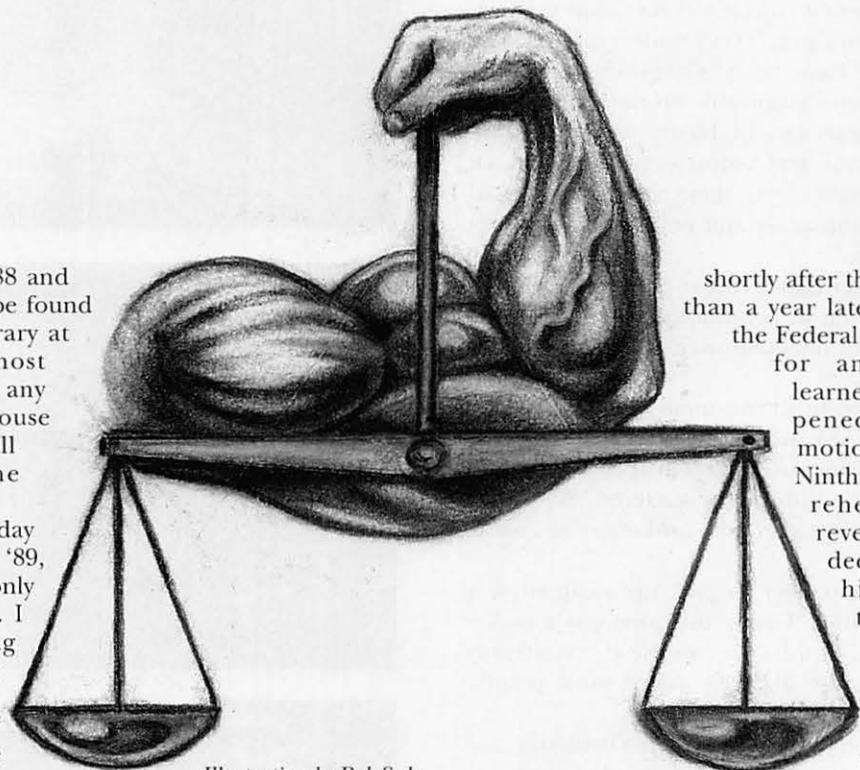


Illustration by Rob Sula

felt that his rights had been violated because the Parole Commission had shipped him off to prison before giving him a hearing. When the Commission did hold his hearing, it was far away from home and he couldn't produce witnesses for his defense.

Once I grasped the concept, I agreed with Ron that he had a valid issue. I sat down at a typewriter and in less than twenty minutes produced a short argument that explained Ron's issue in plain, simple words, language even a judge could understand.

I handed my version to Ron and asked, "Is this what you mean?" Ron said it was, so I suggested that he tear up the 15-page Motion for Rehearing, which he had written, and simply submit a short motion using my wording. I explained that if I could not understand what he had written, he should not expect a judge to. After all, they're only human. Ron agreed, and he rewrote the motion using my simple two-page explanation of the issue.

I was transferred from Phoenix

shortly after this incident. More than a year later, while reading the Federal Reporter looking for another case, I learned what had happened with Ron's motion. He won! The Ninth Circuit granted a rehearing and reversed its original decision. It vacated his parole violation, thus granting him relief.

The point of this column is to emphasize the importance of writing clearly when you do your own legal work. If the judge cannot understand you, you don't have a chance. No judge is going to accept an argument he can't follow. Ron spent two years and many hundreds of hours working his case to death, but he had never presented it in a simple and straightforward manner. Finally, when the argument was presented in plain, simple language, the judges reversed themselves and Ron won.

I know how difficult it is to write motions and appeals for yourself. Keeping out the anger is sometimes impossible. Realizing that others don't know your case as well as you do, and that they need to have things spelled out for them, is also difficult. Both are crucial to success.

My favorite way of dealing with this problem is to write my pleadings as early as I can, and then to "lose" them for a while. I'll put them in a box under my bunk, or deep in the back of my locker, and try to forget them for a week or two. Then I take them out and read them afresh, and invariably I will see things to change and correct. The key is to put the

document out of your mind long enough to forget what you wrote. Otherwise, you will see it with the same mindset that you had when you wrote.

Another useful strategy is to show it to your friends. Pick literate friends, though not somebody with whom you always discuss your case. After reading it they will probably tell you how good it is, and that you should win. This is not good enough. Ask them to tell you what your argument is, and why they think you should win. If they can't, then the chances are the judges won't be able to either. Don't be misled into believing you have to use long words and Latin phrases to impress judges. You don't. You simply have to be understood. And if your buddy can understand what you are trying to say, odds are a judge will also.

Finally, don't worry too much about using a lot of case law. What you want to do is to find and use a few good cases, particularly cases that are very similar to yours, and ideally cases that rule within your judicial district. Case citations, just for the sake of citations, will turn a reader off. If a judge or judge's clerk checks one or two of your citations and finds that those cases don't fit the facts of your case, he is not going to bother checking the rest. Be very careful about the case law you use, and use it sparingly. It is much more important to state your case, and the reasons you think you deserve relief, in a simple and understandable manner. If you convince the judge that you were treated unfairly, the judge himself will usually provide case law to support your claim for relief.

Send your questions and legal concerns to In-House Counsel, c/o Prison Life, 505 8th Avenue, New York, NY 10018.

PL

UnderGround

(continued from page 66)

ing a rotted leather purse with almost \$4 in it. Because everything we did was a community effort, they brought it to the counting table. Doesn't sound like much, but I noticed the coins were ancient. With approval, I took them to a coin dealer and got close to a \$1,000 for them.

I'd always heard about Mole people, but I'd never really believed in them. Even living among them I didn't, until I snuck a set of floodlights down and hooked them up to a car battery. That was the night I learned how much damage lights can cause to people who've been living for years in the dark. I mean, the firelight didn't bother them the least bit, but white light could and did temporarily blind some of them.

Like I said, it wasn't the people under the terminal who made me leave. I just got tired of the hide-and-seek games I had to play with Sergeant Henry and his crew of Transit cops to get in and out of there. I had at least three run-ins with Transit, but nothing really serious, and that was probably because of my size and the way I moved. If nothing else, prison teaches you how to avoid stumbling blocks. But others weren't so lucky. I found myself starting to look at the transit cops and hate them the same way I used to hate the bastard prison guards who would come in after a bad night or weekend and stick it to anybody who got in their way. I knew one guy who was chased down and beaten by seven Transit cops, 25 feet below the pipes. He wore the mother of all ass-whoopings that day, and when he got out of the hospital, he was a walking vegetable. His only offense had been to run long enough for one of the Transit cops to take a fall and cut his hand on something sharp. I remember the cop repeating, "Make us chase you, huh?" and "Make us get dirty, huh?" as they beat him senseless. It was insane. The Transit cop who had fallen was not only half-drunk, but in case he wasn't he took time out from the beating to take a swig from the bottle tucked inside his winter coat and

pass it around. Killing isn't what I do, but at the time I wished I'd had an M-16.

I probably would have stayed longer than two months, but once when I was wandering through some tunnels and crawl-ways, I got lost for three days. When I finally found the surface again, I was where I started out: Penn Station. There's a connection between Grand Central and Penn Station, and even though I'd spent weeks hunting for it, I never found it again. I believe in fate, so I began picking people and taking them down to the dry, warm subterranean world beneath Penn Station to live. Being a good talker, I managed to hustle a number of businesses into giving me leftovers in exchange for keeping the order and their areas clean.

Before I lived the life, I could never understand how anybody could live on the street or in public buildings. I was one of the people who would say they'd rather go to jail than live on the street.

I no longer have that attitude. What I do have from living around and under New York is a better understanding of a very human condition. Too much pride can be as dangerous as having none. Too much pride is what wouldn't allow me to live on the streets, preferring jail instead. That same pride wouldn't allow me to take a job paying minimum wage, but it failed me by allowing me to work at state-issued jobs for a whole lot less than minimum wage. I take pride in whatever I do, but the 'too much' is dead and gone, and I don't even miss it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: *John B. Springs III, a 20-year-plus veteran of the correctional system, is a multi-published author whose credits include five books (Kansas, a bestseller; Holloway House Publishing Co.) and numerous pieces of fiction and nonfiction. He is now working on a book titled "AROUND AND UNDER NEW YORK: HOMELESS", from which some of the above has been taken.*

PL

TRAINING IN THE HOLE

by Sebastian Ventimiglia

Given that the general public is bitchin' about how prisoners should have zero access to weights, one con had this to say: "Hey man, what the hell we supposed to do if our joint ain't got no weights? Shit, a lot of good your damn Iron Pile does us . . ."

Damn straight. So why not highlight a couple routines tailored for the prisoner without access to equipment or better yet, for the prisoner stuck in the Hole? With the threat to make weights extinct, it seemed even more important to feature equipment-less exercise routines in Iron Pile.

Two prisoners were way ahead of me on this: Sebastian Ventimiglia of NY and Willie Wisely out on the Coast. Both submitted the two articles before you.

So with that, quit wastin' time and get up off your ass—no more excuses!

Chris Cozzone, Fitness Editor

From Attica to Sing Sing, for the last 18 years, I've been living the prison nightmare. Doing time, however, goes from bad to worse in the Hole, a single-occupancy roach motel. Separated from the general population, not only are you locked down 23-plus hours a day, but you also have to contend with small food rations, shit fights and sometimes, sadistic guards provoking you and playing mind games. The object of their game is to drive you buck-wild so they can justify the senseless beatings.

The strong manage to triumph over it all. Despite the odds, you eventually adapt to the circumstances, repressing thoughts of the isolation, the inhumane conditions and the cruel punishments. Once you learn to deal with the psychological and emotional strain, it's time to get busy. With a positive mental attitude, you can make this time count, solitary or not.

Forget the Iron Pile—barbells and dumbbells—and the makeshift running track your joint may or may not have. It's time to convert that Special Housing Unit into a training ground fit for Bruce Lee.

IN THE HOLE EXERCISE ROUTINE

Meditation

Prime the mind for a few minutes before you begin the routine. Motivate yourself and think about the muscles you plan to train.

Warm-Up

■ Full Body Joint Rotations (neck, wrists, elbows, shoulders, waist, hips, knees and ankles)—slowly rotate each joint. This will prepare your body for the higher-tension exercise to come.

■ Dynamic Tension—slowly contract the muscles you plan to train, breathing deeply.

Cardiovascular Training

Your cardiovascular training must fulfill three minimum requirements: Intensity, Duration and Frequency.

■ Intensity

Exercises must be performed vigorously enough to reach a continuous yet comfortable level of intensity, a range within your Target Heart Rate Zone (THRZ). The range of safe-yet-sufficient heart rate to achieve during exercise is between 65 and 85% of your Maximum Pulse Rate (MPR). This can be figured out

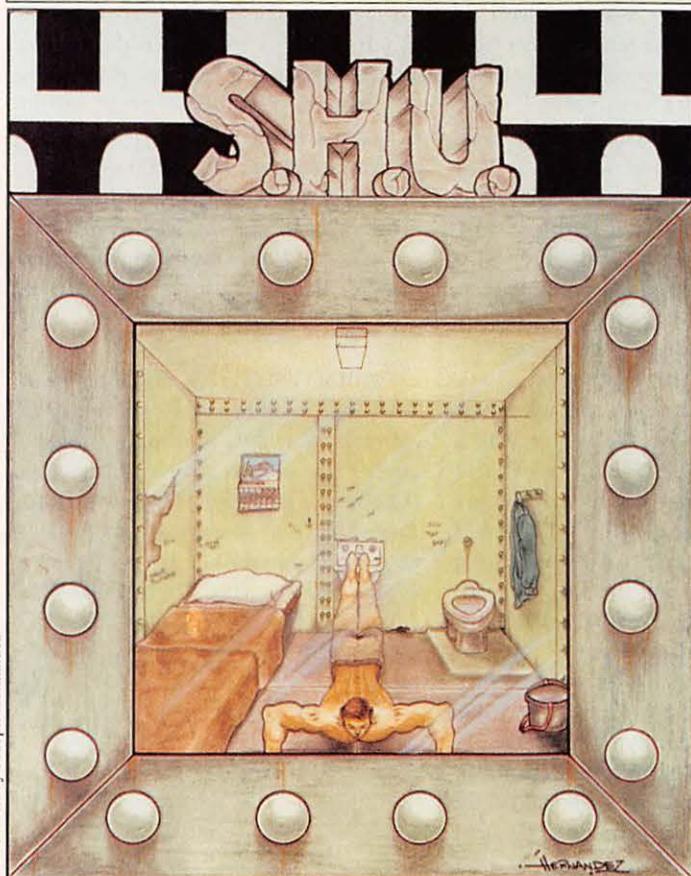


Illustration by Joseph Hernandez

Poetry From Prison

ESCAPING CORRECTIONS

Mira
 fled
 Grants
 with
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 flesh
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 traces
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 her
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Larry Boggan
 Western New Mexico C.F.

LETTERS

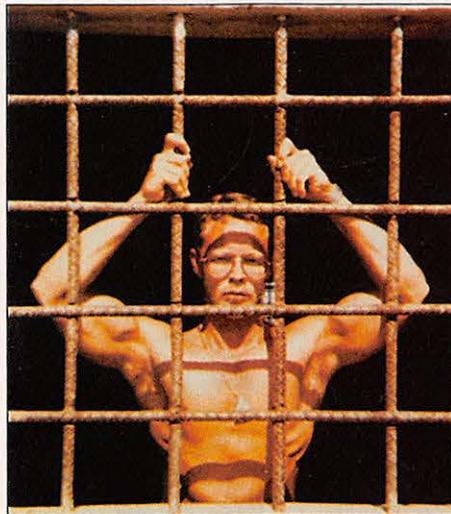
It's raining in the suburbs
 it's raining here
 beyond the fence.
 Angel's tears
 drip down dirty windows
 a good day
 to write a letter.
 Letters to poets
 outlaws
 and strangers.
 Letters filled with
 thoughtfulness
 when the distance
 between us
 makes it too far to whisper.

James Allorto
 Terminal Island, CA

PRISONER

Stalking you with my eyes
 Feeling what you must have
 Once felt all over in your
 Deepest being driven to the
 Height of power consumed
 In raw blood liquid urgency
 Slipping bodies clutching
 On the oil of love's
 Consummation gone up in fire
 A bed of white ash embers
 Dying in midday heat
 Stolen by night thieves
 Brittled to the cold wind
 Swirling dust swept to
 My empty window barred.
 I remember now and then
 Someone far distant in
 Time and my love
 The seasons move on
 Without you.

Nancy McGovern, ex-con
 Phoenix, AZ



"Everyone thinks this photo is pretty cool, even poetic," says Randolph Baggett of the Union Correctional Institution in Raiford, FL. "But just do me one favor: Don't use it in regards to punks or some shit like that."

WHAT AN OLD GUY I DONE TIME WITH SAID

I wish I had a dollar
 I wish I had some wine
 I wish I had my woman
 But all I got is time.

Clayton Phillips
 Colorado State Prison, Canon City

SOME SURVIVE

Met him my first summer
 in a clean tenement room
 that didn't spin
 in a halfway house
 on South Broadway
 in a crumbling brick part
 of town by the river.
 Mouth clamped shut
 below take-no-shit eyes
 he walked in, been lifting
 weights, stiff and quick
 5'9", 165-pound guy,
 cuffs folded back on forearms
 "He just got out...
 Possession, I think."
 At first he talked,
 when he talked,
 like he was holding his
 breath,
 in short sentences
 barely moving his lips:
 "You working? When's wake-
 up? Later, man."

When he found out
 I'd been caged, too,
 he loosened up a bit,
 then a lot.
 The stiff mask relaxed into
 an open, impish face.
 Just another tough guy
 with the soul of a child.
 He was life to be around then,
 bopping in and out
 of the room we shared
 with Big George
 and what was left of Zippy
 cracking jokes in rapping
 prison jive,
 Blond kid playing blues guitar
 on the deck outside—
 a kind of nineties beatnik
 growing a pale goatee,
 bewildered in the big world
 but hopeful, too,
 feeling a trickle of new life
 by the river.

Somewhere beyond cracked
 linoleum and lumpy walls
 he saw a world of freedom
 and music, a neighbor
 of the world
 I saw of freedom and words.
 But the girl he was hung up
 on,
 who I took him to see one
 night

away from us. Their memory of us will become fuzzy, and although we are alive and well, in their hearts we'll be dead. Children who never know their fathers will never fully know themselves.

We understand that your love belongs to another—that was your choice—but don't make that choice for our children. They have a moral right to decide if we're worthy of their love. We have committed no crimes against them, and our love for them has not waned. Although you have taken them out of our lives, you can never erase them from our hearts. It is because of them that we will never give up. We know that one day our children will need us to help keep them from repeating our mistakes and falling victim to a world that is rapidly declining.

We are their fathers and no amount of time or distance can change that.

The pictures we have of them are old and faded, yet they are our most valued possessions. Behind these walls they are our only friends.

There is so much talk about fathers who abandon their children, but what about women who purposely keep those children away from their

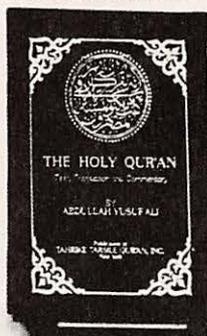
loving fathers? A man may be a gangster on the streets, but at home with his child he is a lamb.

We have made mistakes and are now paying the piper. Imagine how you would feel if someone took your child from you and you never saw that child again? That is what you have done to us, only we don't have to imagine. Most of us never knew our fathers, and we vowed that our children would never be unfortunate enough to say the same. Ladies, we love our children, so if you don't stay in touch for us, please do it for them.

PL

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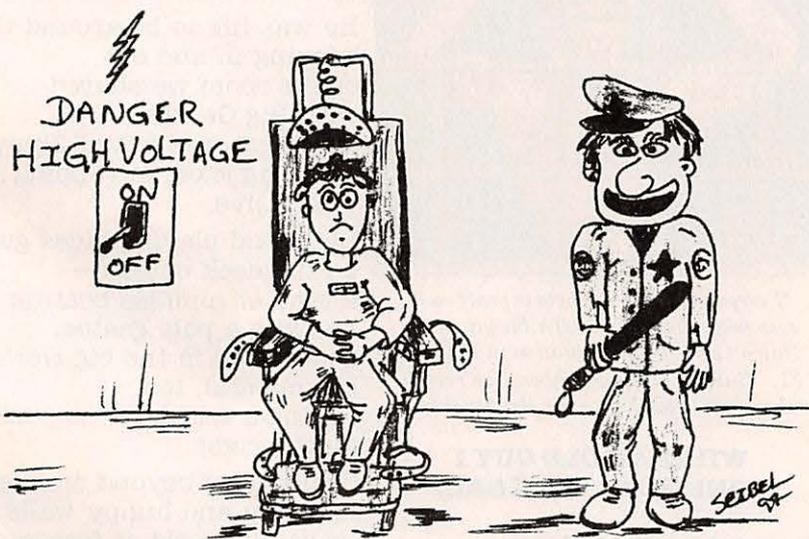


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Family Matters

A Letter to Our Ladies

A message to all the ladies who have a child by a man behind bars

by

Reg "CA\$H" Alexander
Georgia State Prison



Illustration by Rob Sula

Dear Ladies:

It has been a while since we've written to you and even longer since we've heard from you. We pray that God has kept you and our children safe and well. As for us, we are staying strong, trying to be a rock and weather the storm. We were reluctant to write this letter because like all the others we've written to you, we feel that our words won't change your actions or, better said, inactions.

At first, we were heartbroken when you turned your back on us and left us in prison alone, unloved and never thought of. The heartbreak turned into bitterness and anger, bordering on hate. But as the years went by we slowly came to understand and

accept that you did not put us in prison and you don't owe us your life in waiting. Gradually, every man who's serving a long bid begins to accept that his beloved woman will go on with her life and he won't be a part of it. It's a slow, bitter acceptance but it eases over time.

Some of us loved you so much that we would have died protecting your honor. Part of the reason that we're in prison today is because we wanted to provide you and our children with the best in life. That is not a valid excuse for our crimes, but it is how we felt at the time. Sometimes we took you for granted and may have neglected or mistreated you. Try to understand that it was all part of

our struggle to make it out of "nowhere" and to be a man in your eyes. Deep down in your heart you have to know that we loved you. If we would have become kings, you would have shared the throne.

But we didn't become kings. We're in prison being punished for our mistakes, staring at concrete walls and steel bars everyday of the week. Month after month and year after year. We came behind these walls believing that you would be our bridge over troubled waters, but nothing in our lives has been farther from the truth. We do not speak these words to condemn you or to put you down. You are the mother of our children and—win, lose or draw—we'll always care for you. We have accepted losing you and it's possible you could justify why you haven't even remained our friend. Maybe you can even explain why you've shown us no gratitude for the many good things we've done for you over the years. But, ladies, nothing in this world can excuse or justify why you haven't shared our children with us.

We have lost our freedom, houses, cars and every other thing we once valued. We have lost your love, but whatever happened to the friendship that our relationship was supposed to have created? As you can see, we have accepted each and every loss like men, because somehow we can justify them. But we cannot justify your not letting us see our children.

We're not asking for a penny of your money or a drop of your love, although we remember giving you both. We only ask one thing: Allow us to know our children!

The last time we saw them, they were too small to understand why Daddy wasn't there anymore. Now they are growing up, and with every year that passes they'll grow further

and I facilitate each meeting on a volunteer basis. A computer call-out list is made and the prisoners are released from their cells when our arrival is announced. At any given meeting, anywhere from eight to 18 men participate. A code of honor among those present commits each man to confidentiality and mutual respect. After handshakes and hello's, our meetings begin with several minutes of silence and slow breathing to quiet the mind. One of us will then invite all present to come together on common ground with a sense of brotherhood and solidarity. Then a member will speak words of prayer, asking for the grace of the Divine Spirit to guide our time together. We sit in a circle to symbolize equality of power and the desire to experience true community. One man assumes the task of calling upon others to speak. Each person is recognized and given an opportunity to share without interruption. Only when all have spoken does cross-talk or conversation between us begin. The goal is to listen receptively and to share honestly. Both support and challenge are welcomed. Within this atmosphere, a diversity of viewpoints is often expressed, and resentment, naturally, can flare. We believe it is a sign of a mature man to have the emotional depth, intellectual discipline and physical control to let such conflicts be creatively experienced rather than destructively or violently expressed.

The issues raised in the Council are wide-ranging and vary from session to session. We have examined the meaning of masculinity by exploring the King, the Warrior, the Magician and the Lover—basic archetypes that exist in every man's psychology. We have spoken about the spiritual journey as a foundation for sanity, the necessity of ongoing education, the importance and power of family, the inner work involved in preparing for parole and release, the economics and politics of racism and social injustice, and the importance of mentoring and community service. We also explore remorse about the past. Each man brings a unique perspective. Each participant assumes responsibility for his input, leadership and outreach to others. We initiate specific tasks, projects and goals as determined by collective vision and inspiration. Our Council seeks to be open to the tremendous diversity of age, race, religious, ethnic, ideological and other orientations among the men in the prison. Our only prereq-

uisite is that each man brings an open mind and a sincere desire to effect positive change. While feelings of grief and sorrow are important to express, these sessions are not intended as opportunities to whine, complain or indulge in a stance of victimization. Rather, they are opportunities to enter an oasis where personal renewal is possible and where positive actions can emerge.

For example, members of our Council have committed themselves to mentoring younger inmates; they have helped raise funds for Rwandan relief; they have worked to promote "Good Time" legislation in New York State; they have taught African and Latino studies classes; they have worked as facilitators in Alternatives to Violence workshops, Innovative Therapeutic Process workshops, Pre-Release and Literacy programs. They have helped other inmates in the Law Library, have served as mediators in disputes, have been actively involved in the Christian and Muslim communities and have contacted the media with offers to produce public service announcements to help break the cycle of violence and give something back to society.

When our sessions come to a close, we stand together in a circle and join hands. Final thoughts, visions, hopes and prayers are expressed, and we become silent one last time. We imagine the energy among us going out to other inmates in the facility and beyond the walls into the world. As we part, we know we will carry each other in our hearts until we meet again. We call ourselves the Fellowship of the King of Hearts to symbolize our commitment to providing service and positive leadership and to serving as just and compassionate role models for other men.

The poet Roethke wrote: "What is madness but nobility of soul at odds with circumstance." These men have survived the madness in the belly of the beast. They are using prison as a positive rite of passage by aspiring to the noble side of human nature and by bringing gold out of the ashes of incarceration.

We invite you to join our efforts. If you are an administrator or a counselor in a correctional facility, consider starting such a program or being open to men who want to start one on their own. If you are a prisoner, approach your administration with such a proposal and take responsibility to help organize a Council along the lines suggested here. Remember

that each Council will have its own unique style and personality and will take time and patience to develop. If volunteer facilitators are needed, contact local human service organizations and ask them for help. You can also recruit volunteers through existing programs within your facility that have outside sponsoring organizations. Finally, we are in the process of creating materials for Prison Council development and are available to provide consultation and assistance. Let us work together in this quest for healing, community and justice. Let us work together to free the imprisoned soul!

For further information, contact OASIS, The National Prison Council Project, P.O. Box 31, Woodstock, NY 12498.



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STARTING A SUPPORT GROUP

By Harris Breiman

The prison experience is one of isolation and emptiness, fear and mistrust, violence and chaos—an assault upon the soul. What can you do while incarcerated to keep your sanity, to develop your creativity, to not only survive but to realize your human potential and prepare for your return to society?

Over the past three years we have developed a Men's Prison Council at the Shawangunk Correctional Facility, a New York State maximum security prison. Our Prison Council, which we've named the Fellowship of the King of Hearts, can be a successful model that any prison open to rehabilitative programs can use.

What exactly is a Prison Council and how does it work? The Prison Council at Shawangunk is a forum that addresses universal issues and concerns: the desire to heal personal wounds and overcome emotional trauma, the struggle to build communities where a sense of meaning and purpose can be shared, and the need to create a world where peace and justice reign. These concerns have motivated people throughout history to form groups or councils where ideas, wisdom and experience can be shared, support can be offered and decisions to bring creative action out in the world can be made. Twelve-step support groups help individuals on the difficult road from addiction to recovery. Group therapy provides a collective setting in which members work through psychological pain and distress. Both indigenous tribal cul-

tures and modern religious communities provide ritual, mythology and inspired teachings to help one appreciate the sacredness of life and to reconnect with the Earth and the Divine Spirit. Our Prison Council draws upon each of these pathways to personal healing and empowerment.

We focus on questions of masculine development, accountability and responsibility. Incarcerated men often experience heightened tendencies common to all men in our culture, tendencies to become frozen into macho armor, emotional isolation

as redeemed men and creative contributors to our culture, there must be a shift of perspective in the way prisons function. The Prison Council can be one element in transforming incarceration into a positive rite of passage by supporting psychological healing and spiritual growth. These men then become positive role models and mentors to those who are both inside and outside the "Wall." Members of our Council have encouraged other prisoners to begin or continue their academic studies, to resist negative peer pressure, to participate in therapeutic and vocational programs and to grow in self-awareness and understanding. They challenge others to become the kind of men who command rather than demand respect . . . the kind of men who empower others rather than abuse them.

How does our Council operate? First, all participation is voluntary. The idea to form a council was spread by word-of-

mouth from counselors and directors of existing programs to the general population. Interested prisoners were invited to a presentation I developed. A core group of men formed, and these men invited others to participate. Today, all new recruits are screened by the group, and consensus on the prospective member's character and trustworthiness must be reached before he can join.

The Council meets every other week for approximately two hours, and my colleague, Onaje Benjamin,



The Men's Prison Council group at Shawangunk Correctional Facility.

and numbness, cut-throat competition, and desperate attempts at domination. If we add to this the stress of growing up in broken families in urban war zones, and the trauma of being targets of racism, poverty and social injustice, there is great potential for chaos and criminal behavior. If the prison experience focuses exclusively on punishment and incarceration, this deadly cycle is perpetuated and the result will continue to be escalating levels of violence in our streets. If prisoners are ever to return

and he is told nothing. When the guards return to gather trays, the man is told to cuff up. "We're taking your mattress," they say. The crime: fishing a magazine from his neighbor the night before. He refuses. His mattress is the only softness in the harsh starkness of his cell. There has been no hearing, no due process, no appeal. A half hour later a sergeant confronts him with the same demand. Again he refuses. His dignity, frail and threatened, remains intact.

Lunch time comes and he is not fed. At dinner, another sack lunch is rudely dropped through his wicket. After trays are collected, a guard passes his cell. Frantically, the guard cries into the radio, "He's sharpening a spoon! He's sharpening a spoon!" Lies. (We are given small, brittle, plastic picnic spoons with our trays and they must be returned; besides, he has not received a tray that day.) More guards arrive. Again he is told to cuff up. Again he refuses, trying to retain a shred of self-respect.

Two hours pass. The tension in the air is palpable. Most of us have been through this before so we know what is coming. The talk is excited. "Are you gonna fight 'em?" "If ya don't go hard, you're a weak punk!" "What are ya gonna do?"

"If they come in force, I'm cuffing up," he says. "I didn't come here to get hurt."

"Ya weak punk!"

The sudden absence of the hum tells you the recirculated air has been shut off; your hand confirms the now dead vent. A press of the button shows the water is also off. Towels are dipped into toilets for meager protection when the gas comes. Sweat begins to ooze in the heating air.

POP! The loud electronic lock of the pod door thunders in the strained quiet. A guard is pulling a long accordion-like flex-pipe, stretching it from the outside rec door to the door of the pod. Another guard places a high-velocity fan on the mouth of the pipe. The air will be directed outdoors when the tear gas explodes in his cell. Everyone watches. You can sense the silent ones among the hushed voices, those who have never seen this before.

Minutes grind away like hours.

Suddenly they come in; 10, no 12, no 13, in helmeted, flak-jacketed riot gear, some with shields and batons, each with a gas pouch on his belt, gas-masked animosity on his face. At the rear of the group is a sergeant, not dressed for battle; nei-

ther is the guard beside him who wields the camcorder. "What's it gonna be, asshole?"

The man backs to his door, surrendering his wrists to the wicket. He is cuffed and told to step further into the cell. The door slides electronically to the side and the front troops of the phalanx rush in to slam the man to the floor. There is no spoon. The man is then carried by four goons, each holding a leg or elbow, to the middle of the pod where each of us witness the man slammed to the floor, face down, a knee planted in the back of his neck. "This isn't necessary," he pleads.

"You pieces of shit are fucking out of line!"

"It won't be fun when the rabbit gets the gun!"

"I'll find you!"

The screams of angry, frightened men add to the confusion and violent mood. The man is picked up by the hair and a baton entwined through his elbow. He is carried away, to another pod, another cell.

There has been no gas. This time. But the rage burns within and will not evaporate like CS tears; it will live and smolder when the majority of us one day return home, a bit less sane. The violence we witness and suffer will come with us, thinly veiled, but ever present. Because of these abuses, some of us will kill; others will inflict pain; the cycle of violence will rotate. The avoidable reality is that our victims will be those who are either close to us or near where we live. It could be you, good citizen.

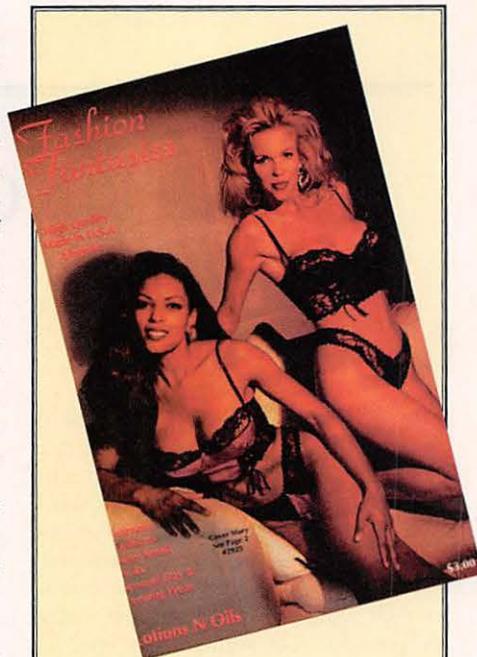
Some of us may be able to overcome the hate, divert the violence, save ourselves. A few lucky ones. But it will not be thanks to the animals that you, America, assign as our keepers.

It's a toss of life's dice.

My friend is losing his grip on sanity, and he is not alone.

Shep is locked up at Washington State Penitentiary. Although he has been notified that his article was accepted, Shep won't be able to enjoy seeing his piece in print because the officials at Washington State Pen have prohibited him from receiving Prison Life Magazine, due to its content.

PL



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CONTROL UNIT MADNESS

by Shep
Washington State Penitentiary

It's a warm spring day. I'm sitting in my cell in general population waiting to go outside and walk the yard when I think about my friend in the control unit, isolated from the rest of the prison. He won't be going to the yard, or any place outside. He hasn't been able to go out for over four years.

I got a letter from him yesterday. We've exchanged letters for the last couple of years, one of the few privileges allowed by the administration. Each message I receive displays a grip on reality ever more tenuous. I cannot reach out and shake his hand or clap him on the shoulder in an effort to chip away at the effect of inhumane treatment.

My letters to him are a poor substitute: The humanity leaches through the porous envelope; the camaraderie evaporates into black type on harsh white paper. I can only write, and hope that the next time he gets locked into the shower stall he doesn't request a disposable razor like the one he tore apart with his teeth to slice his healthy flesh.

My friend is not alone. The torment he suffers is the same as that suffered by every other man in the control unit. I know. I spent five months there myself.

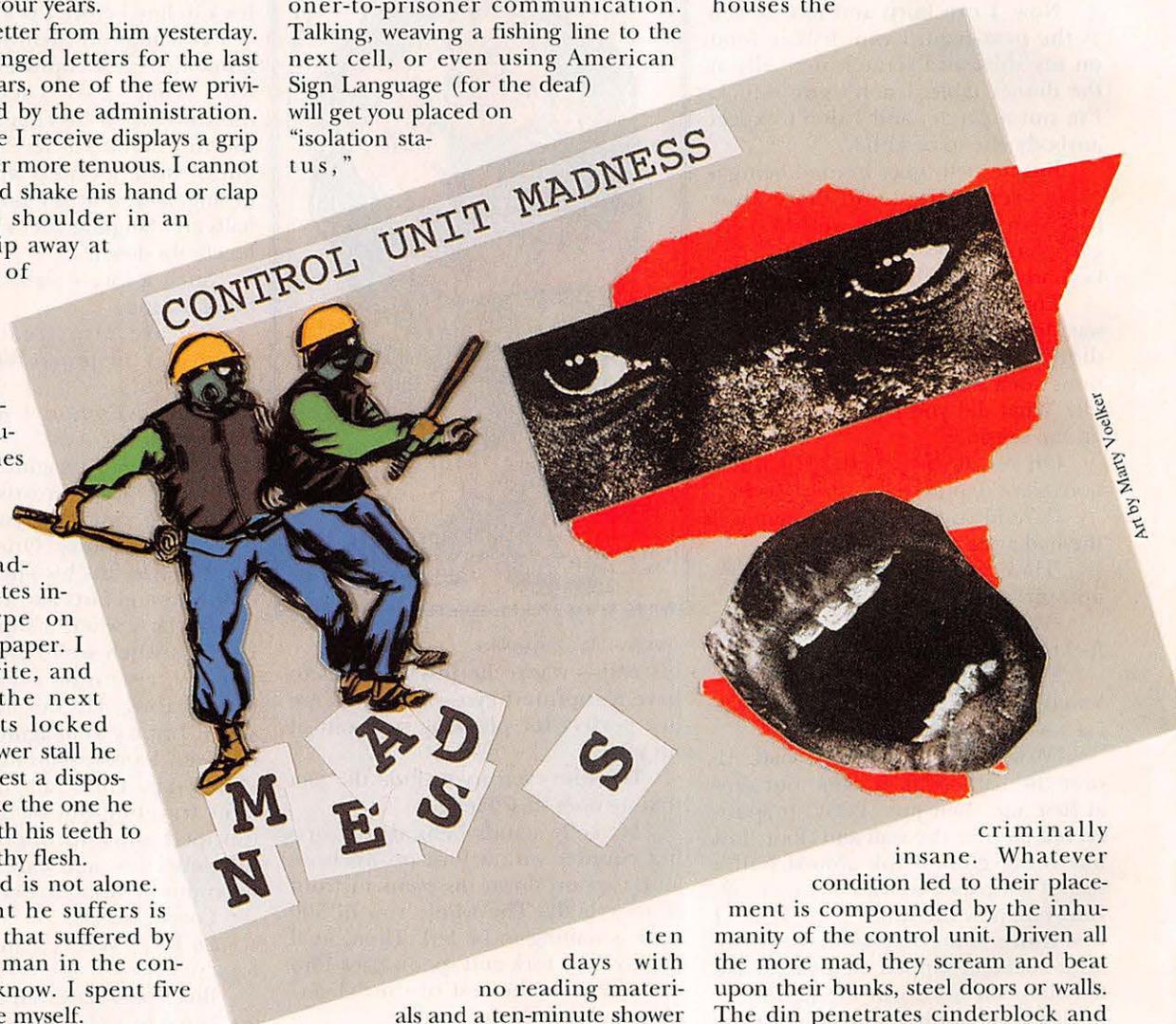
The elongated, oval control unit is a modern, electronic cinderblock-steel-plexiglass dungeon of 96 cells divided into 12-cell pods. The steel door has a hinged wicket for access to food, and it's just high enough so that a man can back into the door to have his hands manacled. You never leave the cell without your hands cuffed behind your back,

often at the end of a leash.

Twenty-three hours of every day are spent inside the cell. One hour is allowed for recreation in an empty, enclosed area. The loneliness is exacerbated by the rule prohibiting prisoner-to-prisoner communication. Talking, weaving a fishing line to the next cell, or even using American Sign Language (for the deaf) will get you placed on "isolation status,"

to the job are given free reign. The outrages they perpetrate are supported to the hilt by those above them in the hierarchy. The caged men, treated like animals, are more likely to become just that.

Some of your neighbors are transplants from the third floor—the prison hospital that houses the



Art by Mary Volker

ten days with no reading materials and a ten-minute shower in a stall behind a barred gate.

Isolation is the punishment for any perceived misconduct, a status assigned at the whim of a guard for behavior that may be real, imagined or created. The guards who work in the control unit are trained to see their wards as vile and dangerous, deserving no dignity. Whatever personal quirks or animosities they may have brought

criminally insane. Whatever condition led to their placement is compounded by the inhumanity of the control unit. Driven all the more mad, they scream and beat upon their bunks, steel doors or walls. The din penetrates cinderblock and cement alike. Some of them collect garbage from meals; others smear feces on their cell walls. The condition remains until the guards must forcibly remove the man to clean the cell. The noise and stench drive sanity away from those nearby.

On a day like any other, it is breakfast. One man is given a sack lunch rather than the meager tray,

MY CELLY

by Thomas Falater
F.C.C. Florence, CO

I am writing to you in sheer desperation. My cellmate is a filthy slob. My cellmate is a twisted, psychotic, perverted, disgusting, smelly, farting, belching, nose-picking, abject creep and I can't take it anymore.

Now, I can burp and fart as well as the next man. I can dribble food on my shirt and scratch my balls at the dinner table. I don't give a fuck. I'm not a prude, and I don't expect anybody else to be either.

But my celly goes beyond being a mere cretin. He could drive away Mexican cockroaches and make a gang-bang porn queen blush. He's beyond filthy. He's abnormal.

The first time I met him I knew I was dealing with one sick puppy. He didn't ask me normal prison questions such as: "How long are you in for? What did you do? Have a family on the outside?"

Oh no, not my celly. His questions were depraved.

"Would you lick a girl's vagina if she had a yeast infection?"

"Have you ever put your tongue up a girl's asshole?"

"What about young stuff? Ever fucked a teeny-bopper?"

These questions are usually followed by vivid descriptions of his latest adventure.

"Wow! I just shot a huge load. All over the bathroom. It came out slow at first and then just...POW! It spurted out all over the wall and floor. Just like a big glob. Took almost half a roll of shitpaper to wipe my dick off. But you know the funny part? When I was done someone went into the same stall and slipped on my cum. He fell right on his ass in the middle of my load. He got it all over him. It was hilarious!"

That's the high point of his day.

When the prisoners aren't slipping on his semen, they're eating his snot and cyst juice.

No kidding.

He works in the kitchen dish-room.

He seems to think that spoons are for scratching the underside of

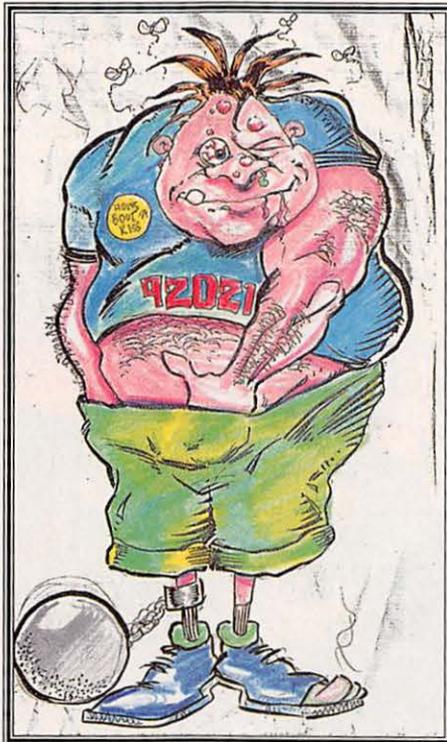


Illustration by Steve Lashley

his balls—where he just happens to have a ruptured cyst—and forks are just perfect for plucking snot out of his nose.

Does he even try to hide the fact that he does this? Hell no.

My celly stands behind the serving counter with a fork up his nose and a spoon down his pants in front of everybody. The whole row of 500 cons is waiting to be fed. Then, he'll just toss the fork and spoon back into the pile with the rest of the "clean" ones and mix them together.

One guy came up to him and complained.

"Why do we have to eat with those filthy utensils? Isn't prison hard enough? Why do you do this?"

My celly looked him right in the eye and said, "What do you think this is? Denny's? Look, inmate, just be grateful for the few morsels of slop you get."

"But this is terrible," the man protested.

"Terrible? You should have thought about that when you were selling phony oil wells to old ladies. Now, get your low-life inmate butt back in line before I pee in the soup."

You may be wondering how I know he has a ruptured cyst on his balls. That's easy. I see them every morning when he climbs down from the top bunk. He lets his balls spill out of his underwear and just seems to linger right at the point where his balls are dangling over my head when he climbs down.

Such a lovely sight first thing in the morning.

We are also treated to daily reports on the progress of his testicular growth.

"Hey everybody! Another cyst popped on my balls!"

As you may imagine, his farts are abnormal and disgusting. They are moist, lingering and smell like dead infectious clouds. One right after another. He lifts his pimple-laden ass in the air and farts like a wild pig.

He farts when it's quiet at night. He farts when we're all packed into the T.V. room; he even farts while we're eating. He doesn't care. The smell? Just try to imagine a water buffalo with leprosy crawling up his butt and dying. Then imagine the smell after traveling out of his pink little unwiped anus, through his field of dingleberries, and caressing against his ruptured testicular cysts.

Lovely, isn't it?

So far, I've been smelling them for a year.

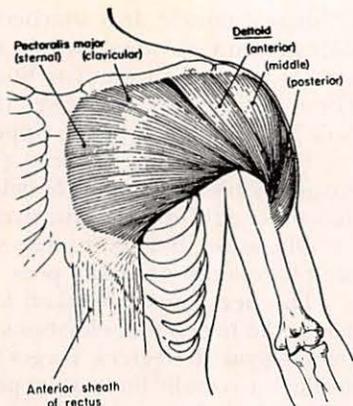
But I only have ten more days to go. Ten days to freedom.

Let this be a lesson for all the scam artists and drug dealers out there. Don't worry about the cops, judge or DEA agents.

Worry about the fact that there's an empty bunk available in Florence.

And it could be yours.

PL



Press and Dips are gonna have to do it for you, bro. Try alternating them (one set of presses, one set of dips, repeat, etc.) without rest. And if the weight stack gets too light, try doing your reps ultra-slow (goes for Dips, too). As long as you're pumpin' those reps (keep 'em between 8 and 20) to failure, you're hittin' intensity—that's what is gonna make those pecs grow.

'Course, that don't mean you're gonna see 'em all that well. They may be bigger than hell, but if you got them buried beneath fat, then nobody's gonna know. Since you ask about getting rid of love handles, I think this may be the case here.

Stop buying all that commissary crap and maybe do some aerobic work. Those "love handles" can't be worked 'cuz they're not actually muscles but a collection of bloated fat cells hanging out on your waist, making your life miserable. The muscle group underneath the fat is your obliques, and you can work them (twists, sidebends) 'til you're up for parole but it ain't gonna touch one bit of fat.

You can't turn fat into muscle or muscle into fat. Yes, cut your fat intake. And yes, crunches are best for your abs. Good luck!

Thanks for the info on the abs. I'm gonna start doing some serious crunches! However, I have a lot of pain in my lower back. I'd like to learn some exercises to strengthen it. Can you suggest some?

Cap
CA State Prison, Tehachapi, CA

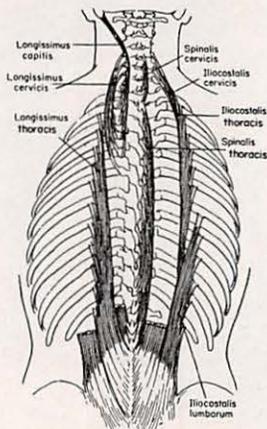
If your lower back is hurtin', you might want to get that checked out first. 'Course it could be that you're doing all kinds of shit the wrong way at the iron pile. Most people do neglect their "erector spinae" muscles (uh, the lower back), though.

The "lower back" is actually a group of muscles that originate in your lower back area but climb way up your spine, like ropes. They serve to stabilize your body and also to twist your trunk and hyperextend your spine. Hopefully, your iron pile will have a Hyperextension bench. They are the contractions that enable you to, with your body parallel to the floor, face down, extend your spine up and down. Most Universals have 'em, but if you can't find one, have someone hold you down on a table or bench while you slide up to the edge, face down. Hyperextensions can even be done on the floor (the "seal" exercise) although the range is limited.

Most guys you see doing Hyperextensions do them the wrong way, so don't pay 'em any attention. You'll notice that they start with their bodies bent at a 90 degree angle, then raise their spine parallel to the floor, then up to full hyperextension. Most of the movement is an unnecessary hip movement (which works the glutes and hamstrings) which doesn't primarily hit your spinal erectors.

To work your spinal erectors, start with your spine parallel to the ground. Then slowly extend upward until you can't go any farther. Do not bounce and jerk to gain extra ground here. If the range of motion seems limited or short, don't worry. That's only because it is a short motion. Your body was not meant to do more, so don't force it.

After you're doing these for a while, you can start holding onto weights for more resistance. Just make sure you don't start cheating. Trust me, you'll feel these mothers if you do 'em right. In no time, you'll have a lower back shaped like a Christmas Tree.



Send your questions to Prison Life Iron Pile, 505 8th Ave, 14th floor, NY, NY 10018.



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IRON PILE Q&A

by **Chris Cozzone, Fitness Editor**

Hey bro, what's up? Have a few q's. For one thing, I'm awaiting sentencing in Dupage County Jail. I've been down three prior times and I'm into weights. Only thing, though, is that I only have a Universal set to work with—no free weights. Second: I have a good-sized chest, but the bottoms need to get into shape. I know all about flat, incline and decline bench presses and what they work, but what exercise can I do that will work effectively on my bottom chest? Should I cut my fat intake?

Now, onto stomach. Are crunches the best thing for this muscle? What about something for the good ol' "love handles?"

Any help will be appreciated. That is, unless they decide to cut weights here. I've been down a few times and the weights have helped me considerably. It helps deal with the stress.

Daniel
Dupage County Jail

Daniel—

Sounds like you need to drop a few pounds, bro. If you're trying to develop just lower pecs, you might as well be trying to grow another row of abdominal plates. Let me explain.

The shape of any given muscle cannot be changed. However, you can change a muscle's appearance either by enlarging it or by reducing bodyfat to bring out definition. We're all stuck with the length and shape of our muscle bellies. That goes for your pecs, too.

It's impossible to work only part of your muscle. A muscle is like a rubberband anchored between two points—the origin and insertion. It can only shorten (contract) and lengthen. Without changing those "anchor points," working a portion of your muscle belly ain't gonna happen.

The pecs—pectoralis major—is

a Y-shaped muscle. It is attached at your sternum and your clavicle and inserts onto the humerus bone. The dual origin is what gives that "split" look on guys who are ripped.

The bottom line is: Some guys are gonna have fuller muscle bellies than other guys. It's a genetic thang.

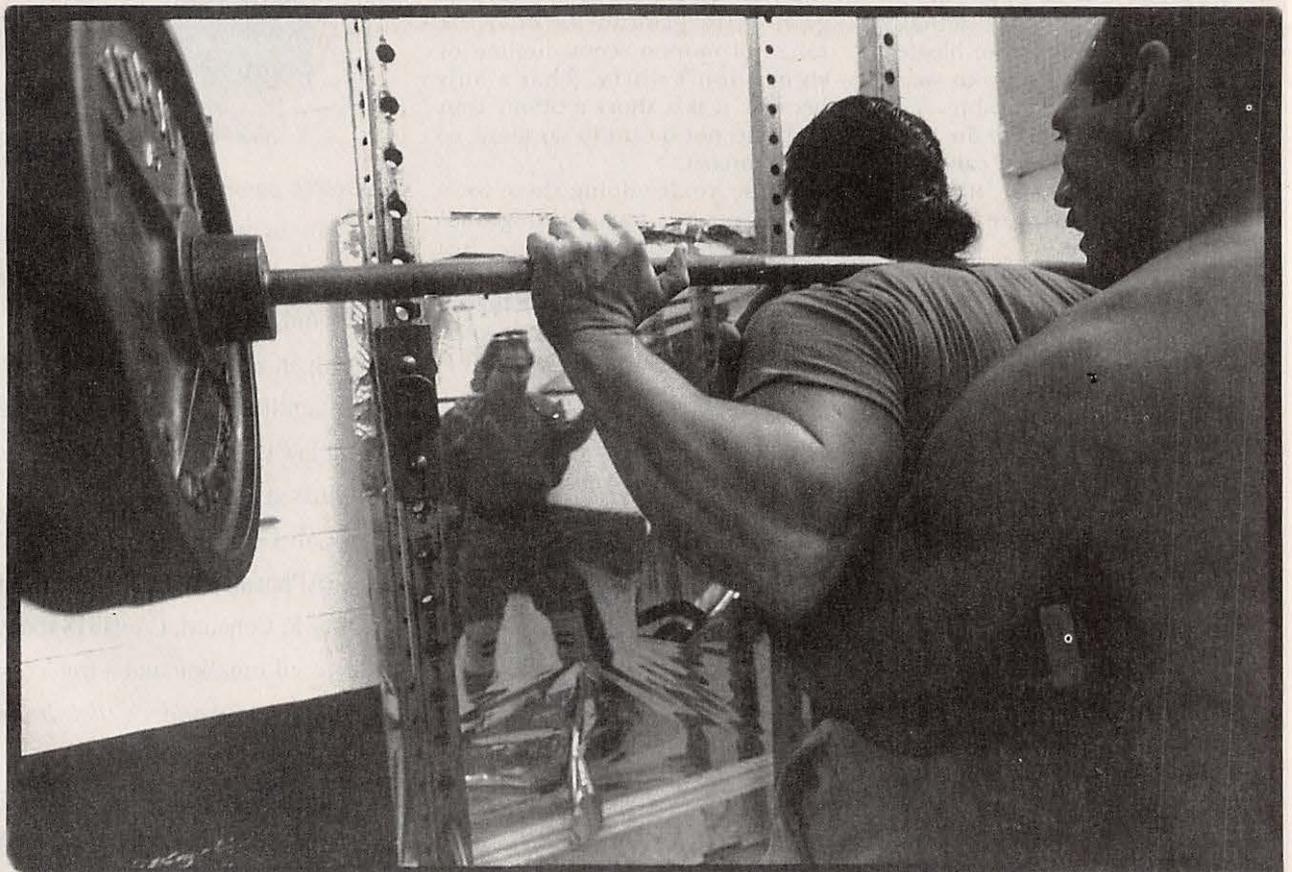
Of course, that don't mean you can't have some ass-kickin' pecs.

The pecs can be worked best from a flat bench with elevations no greater than 15 degrees. Forget the decline; it actually limits your pecs' range of motion and at the same time puts your inner shoulder muscles at risk. Forget high inclines, too: They'll hit your delts too hard. Stick to flat benches, maybe throw in some dips, too.

Now, you're Universal-bound?

That sucks. But all's not lost. Fortunately, muscles are stupid brainless things that only know a couple things: pain and intensity. Sure, free weights are better, because they allow you to move in ways your body was meant to move in. Machines lock your ass in and force you to move in ways that may or may not be in synch with your particular body's range of motion. It don't mean you can't get in some killer workouts, though.

It looks like the Flat Machine



- Half-Squat (wide but comfortable stance)
- Sissy Squat (hips out, on balls of feet, lean off wall for balance)
- Forward/Side Lunge (hands on hips)
- Toe Raise (on edge of thick books, go up on balls of feet)
- Leaning Toe Raise (angle off a wall)
- Single-Leg Toe Raise (progressive stage)

■ **Waist & Midsection (Abs/Lower Back/Obliques)**

- Alternated Knee Raise (standing, hands on hips)
- Trunk Twisters (hands locked behind head, twist torso; progress to elbow touching opposite raised knee)
- Side Bends (feet together, arms at side)
- Single/Double Bent-Knee Raise (lying on back, bring knee up to chest; progress to both knees)
- Crunches (lift torso, hands locked behind head; elbows go skyward)
- Twisted Crunches (alternate twisting to left and right)
- V Sit-Up (simultaneously lift torso/legs and touch toes in air)

■ **Upper Torso (Neck/Chest/Back/Shoulders)**

- Forward/Rear/Side Neck Flex (use hands for resistance, contract neck up/down/sideways)
- Push-Up (beginners rest lower body on knees for increased reps)
- "Close Diamond" Push-Up (thumbs, index fingers touch)
- Incline/Decline Push-Up (feet elevated; off bed or wall)
- Fingertip Push-Up (progressive stage)

- Handstand Push-Up (use wall to maintain balance)

- One-Arm Push-Up (place other arm behind back)
- Bentover Row (hand/knee flush on edge of chair/bed, lift bucket to chest)
- Upright Row (lift bucket to chin level with two hands)
- One/Two-Arm Shoulder Press (hand(s) under bucket, lift overhead)
- Forward/Side/Rear Shoulder Laterals (use heavy books or bucket)

■ **Arms (Biceps/Triceps/Forearms)**

- Hand-to-Hand Bicep Curl (use towel, simulate archer pulling back bow)
- One/Two-Arm Bicep Curl (use bucket, fill as needed)
- Tricep Dip (on 45° angle, push off sink)
- Half-Tricep Dip (grip edge of chair/bed from behind, rest heels on an elevated object, e.g. toilet)
- One/Two-Arm Tricep Extension (bucket behind back, push upward)
- Forearm Twirl (extend arms, twirl magazine to lower/wind up string attached to a heavy book)

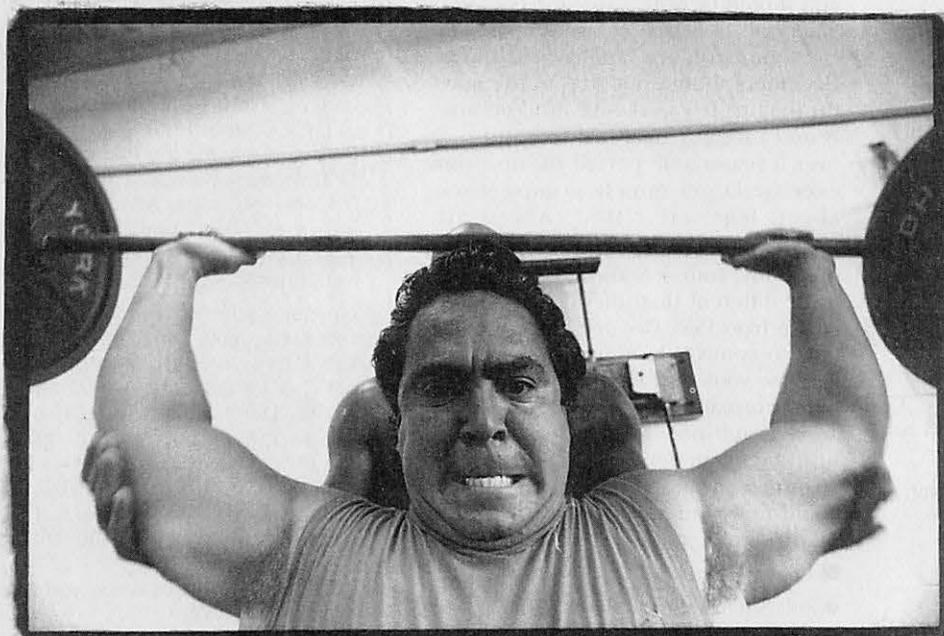
Stretching

■ All stretching should be done by static methods, i.e. slowly and gradually. Avoid fast-moving, bouncing stretching (ballistic). Never stretch a cold muscle! Stretch between and after exercises. Stretch to the point where you feel mild tension, then relax and hold the position for 10 to 20 seconds. As you progress, move a fraction of an inch with each position and hold for another 10 to 20 seconds.

Full Body Stretching

- Inner/Outer/Side Groin Stretch (spread legs, rotate from ball of foot to heel postures)
- Quad Stretch (elevate bent knee, grip and pull to chest)
- Jogger's Stretch (stand about two feet away from wall, keep feet flat on floor and lean forward, with hands on wall, to stretch Achilles Tendon)
- Forward Bend (seated or standing, feet together; touch toes)
- One-Leg Forward Bend (spread legs, touch opposite toes)
- Hurdler's Stretch (one knee bent behind on floor, lean toward opposite extended leg)
- Butterfly Stretch (seated, join bottom of feet together; lean forward, press knees to floor)
- Lower Back Stretch (on back, lift knees to chest)
- Lower Back Arch Stretch (on stomach, arch torso upward)
- Hamstring Stretch (on back, lift extended legs overhead)
- Straddle Stretch (seated, spread legs, lean toward floor)
- Side Bend Stretch (standing, feet together, arms overhead, bend torso sideways; repeat with legs spread)
- Pec/Bicep Stretch (grip bars from behind with arms spread wide, lean forward)
- Shoulder Stretch (on 45° angle, rest forearms flush against wall, lean forward)
- Shoulder Blade Stretch (fist on hip, grab elbow and pull)

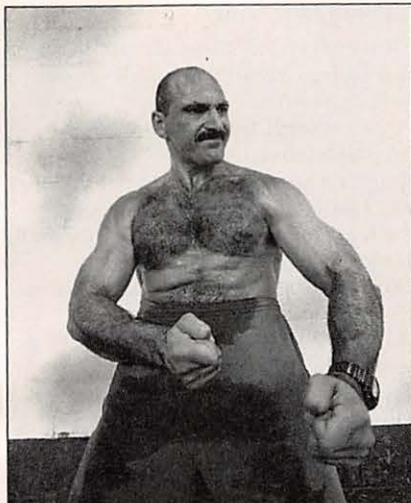
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photos by Chris Cozzone

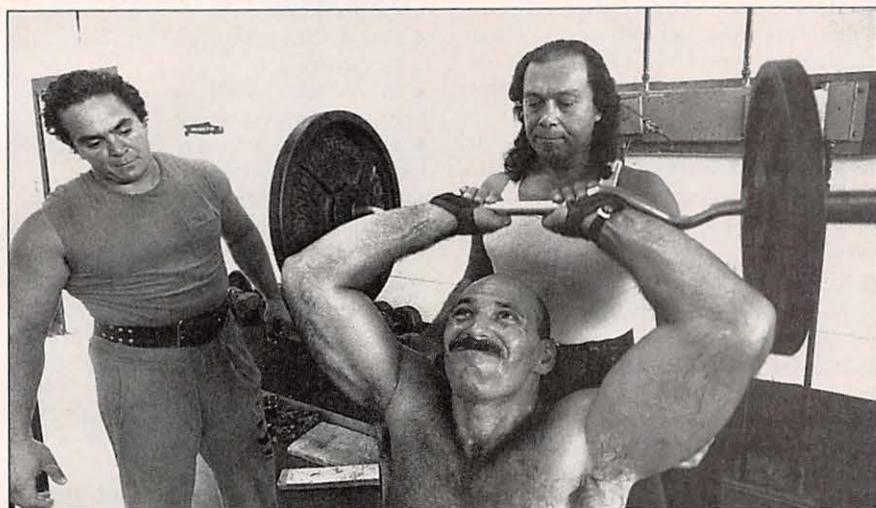
DOIN' REPS AT GREEN HAVEN

"Iron is a way of life at Green Haven," says Sebastian Ventimiglia. (Right) Ventimiglia spots Nicki DeMattis on squats. Since DeMattis has been at Green Haven, he's been able to pack on 40# of mass. (Left) DeMattis cranks out reps on Presses Behind Neck while Ventimiglia pushes him past failure. Although iron pumpers at Green Haven complain that the equipment sucks, they make do with what they got—it's not so much what you got to work with, but what you do with it that counts.



(Left) Sebastian Ventimiglia excelled in the martial arts before he got locked up. Now he spends his time at Green Haven Correctional Facility reading, writing and hitting the iron with his two workout partners, pictured below.

(Below) Most of the time, when Ventimiglia isn't in the Hole. You'll find him cranking out reps and sets at Green Haven's Iron Pile. Below, Ventimiglia's two partners, Nicki DeMattis (left) and Joseph Medina (behind) prod him on for extra reps on Tricep Extensions.



by subtracting your age from 220 (220 - Your Age = MPR). Multiply that number by .65 to find the *low* point of your THZ, and by .85 to find the *high* point of your THZ. (To measure your heart rate, place your first two fingers on the side of your throat, locate your pulse, and count the number of beats for six seconds. Add a zero to this number to figure out your pulse rate.)

■ Duration

Although beginners may not be able to go the distance at first, your goal is to exercise 15 to 50 minutes. Because it takes your body almost 15 minutes to really hit the aerobic phase, a cardiovascular workout of 30 minutes is recommended.

■ Frequency

Do your cardiovascular at least 3 to 4 times a week.

Take your pick from the following, or use a combination of them:

- Running in place
- Jumping Jacks
- Simulated Rope Jumping
- Forward/Side Scissor Skipping (hands on hips)

Muscular Strength Development

If properly conducted, this routine should last no more than a half-hour, and should be done three times a week. Start with only one or two sets of exercises until you are familiar with them. Beginners should not "rep to the max" for the first few workouts: Proceed slowly and carefully, increase sets and reps over a reasonable period of time, and exercise larger muscle groups (back, chest, legs, etc.) first. Above all, warmup the muscles you plan to work.

Obviously, your sets and reps are going to be different than they'd normally be at the Iron Pile. Because you won't be able to control the poundage, you can increase your reps to a high number (if you'd normally bench press 225 for 10 to 15 reps and now you have to do push-ups, then your reps might be well over 50) to reach the breaking point, or you could slow your speed down (try going ultra-slow and you'll see what I mean).

■ Legs/Buttocks

- Full Squat (shoulder-wide stance; use rolled up mattress on shoulders for progressive stage)

BURPEE MADNESS

Q: What the hell is a burpee?

A: It's a squat-thrust, consisting of a series of movements. Remember those bullshit exercises your gym teacher made you do? The following is your basic, four-count burpee:

1. Squat down, palms flat on the floor about shoulder-width, in front of your toes.
2. In one movement, thrust both legs back, fully extended so you're on your hands and the balls of your feet.
3. In one movement, return to the squat position.
4. Stand up.

Start out with four-counts and keep going until you become comfortable with the movements and are able to control your breathing. Always warm up first.

The most important thing to remember during a burpee routine is pace. If you go too fast, you'll run out of wind. Get into a rhythm and just keep going, step by step. It helps if you have music with a steady beat playing.

Beginning Routine

1. Warm up
2. Do sets of 10 to 20 four-count burpees for 20 minutes

Intermediate Routine

1. Warm up
2. Do 6 sets of 50, four-count burpees

Advanced Routine

1. Warm up
2. Do 45 minutes of burpees without stopping.

Once you get used to burpees, the four-counts won't be very challenging. You can increase the difficulty of your workouts, and the benefit, by adding counts. Here are some examples:

○ Six-Count Burpees

Do one push-up after step 2, then return to squat position.

○ Eight-Count Burpees

Do two push-ups instead of one.

○ Ten-Count Burpees

Do one push-up after step 2, return to squat position, thrust legs back again, do another push-up, return to squat position, etc.

To make your burpees even more interesting, you can throw in front snap kicks, upward or downward blocks, a jumping jack, or whatever you like. Don't be surprised if a few burpees leave you gasping for air. Keep at 'em, and soon you'll go from 10 to 20 four-counts to 300 six-counts an hour in eight weeks. Keep your lower back arched, and stiff, or you'll strain it.

Who needs weights when you have burpee madness?

—Willie Wisely
California State Pen, Tehachapi, CA

Tattoo of the Month

D.A. MAKSIMIK'S "NO GUARANTEES"

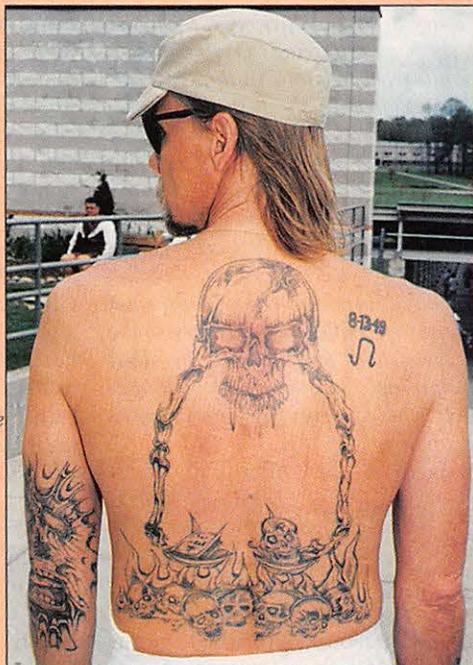
You know it's awful hard sometimes begin stuck inside this prison sentence. You go for days, weeks, months, stuck in one speed. Then something happens and you're somehow going backward, reliving all the years you've wasted and hating that past with a passion, wondering what it all means.

You're over 40 and you just don't know how many more years you got left—or will it all end here? So you take it day by day and make the best of it.

The free world? It's just as if you're dead because all you are is a memory. The system you're in? You don't exist unless your number pops up on the computer. And then it's still not you that's taken into consideration, it's the pile of papers in a folder the system goes by, making your life whatever they choose.

You fight hard but there's still no guarantees you'll be judged on who you are instead of what the paper reads. You talk and you're ignored. You ask and you're lied to. You complain and you're shipped to another prison. Truth is an endangered species, and if you tell it, you find it can do you more harm than good. So you search for that happy medium and lie by omission whenever you have to make that choice.

When you think you're past it all, you realize you're in a world of games, and that if you don't play right, you can lose—time, money, sanity and even your life. In the meantime, you play the game and keep the truth to yourself. Hopefully, one day you can sow the seeds of love...or take a course in justice. You'll do what needs to be done to free your self and your soul.



in my mangled truck,
was playing games with him
or so he said and thought.

"That fucking bitch.
What's the use?"

a morose imp
an angry, bitter elf.

"Don't let it get you down,
man. Keep cool bro...
work the program!"

We thirty in the house
turned our gargoyle faces
to him in love,
reassuring him
in hallways and the t.v. room
and on the front sidewalk.

But the guitar kept
turning to heroin
in his hands, and his fingers
wandered off on the strings
in search of needles.

"What's the word?"
was the word.

"He was out all night.
They're trying to decide
whether
to let him back in."

Then he was gone, after six
grass-grown weeks with us,
and other spooked orphans
of the drug night
came and went, and we
Didn't think too much
about him
in the balmy river August
until someone brought the
paper in
and passed it around
at breakfast.

Steven M. Thomas, ex-con
St. Louis, MO

D.A. Maksimik

State Correctional Institution, Bradford, PA

Books on the Block

<i>Soledad Brother</i> by George Jackson	\$19.95
<i>Prison Literature in America</i> by Bruce Franklin	\$12.95
<i>The Bad Guys' Quote Book</i> by Robert Singer	\$2.50
<i>Smack Goddess</i> by Richard Stratton	\$18.95

BACK ISSUES OF PRISON LIFE MAGAZINE:

January 1993	Charles Manson Cover	\$10
November 1993	John Gotti Cover	\$5
June 1994	Herby Spierling Cover	\$5
October 1994	Michael Levine Cover	\$5

Send check or money order, plus \$2.50 P&H to
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Ask Bubba

Bubba,

I'd like to say that you're an asshole. I get to check out your rag every once in a great while when someone in the dorm can score one. You have the fuckin' nerve to put that stupid ad ("Subscribe or I'll kick your ass") in the rag. Not all of us have Mommy and Daddy sending us money. Have a little respect for those of us who would like to have things but ain't got no funds.

I'm out of here. Before I go, let me ask you one thing. With the big money you're makin', why don't you do something about that fuckin' ugly mug of yours? They have surgeons who can even fix something as fucked up as you.

Respect?

*Corey
Tehachapi, CA*

I'm so fuckin' depressed. Yeah, Bubba's lower than a bull's balls in tall grass. It's these holidays, man. Another Christmas in the slam. I miss baby Bubba and my sweet little Bubbette.

She'll be seven this spring and her jailbird of a father—me—has spent exactly two Christmases with the little cutie. The old lady lives in a track-house in some gawdawful suburb of Philly. I'm way out here in I can't tell ya' where. Too many fans out there. I'm really sick of jailin', and that's the truth, my brothers and sisters. Yep, it's really gettin' to me, especially this time a year. I'd love to

wake up Christmas morning with the family and watch the kiddies open their presents. Instead, I'll be here in max playin' with my pud. Hey, I got no one to blame but myself, right?

Okay, Corey, I admit it. I am an asshole. But aren't we all assholes? I mean, that is one of the truly great things about life—we're all in this together. No one is exempt. Look around you. From Madonna to Newt Gingrich, we all have to squat down and take a crap. In prison or in the land of milk and honey, we're all assholes. There's another guy who calls himself Bubba who's an even bigger anus than I am. And he's sittin' in the White House.

Listen, Corey. I may be an asshole, but I'm not a deadbeat. I work for my keep. The boys in New York gimme a free sub and send half a yard to my commissary account for writin' this trash. Now if that ain't a scam. I'm sayin', all you freeholes:

Subscribe to this rag. Keep these fools in business so I can hold onto my gig. The next \$50 they send me I'm gonna buy my little Bubbas some Christmas presents.

Check Bubba,

I'm here in one of the most maximum security solitude places you could be at Pelican Bay state prison in California. My brothers, in this state we now have the "three-strikes" law in effect. I just got word that a brother accused of throwing a cup of water on a pig is looking at 25 years to life here in this state for assault. Another brother is looking at a life sentence

*just
for*

stealing a can of beer out the store and he's looking at all day. You all better pray to Allah or whoever you believe in that the "three strikes" law don't come to your state.

*Kareem X
Pelican Bay State Prison*

Check, Kareem X. I hear you, bro. All those faggot politicians screamin' about making prisons tougher: What do those fools know about prison?

What country clubs? You know who goes to country club prisons—if there are such places, I wouldn't know. Out of the 35 years I done in joints around this great nation, I ain't never seen one of those places—fuckin' politicians, rats and snitches, judges, white collar crooks who steal millions from little old ladies—you know, the real criminals. What about Ollie North? That lyin' sack of shit brought more dope into this country than half the guys on this tier put together. And where's he at? Never went to jail. Got to keep all his dope money. He almost became a Senator. I wish he had won. He belongs down there in D.C. with all the rest of the gangsters and thieves.

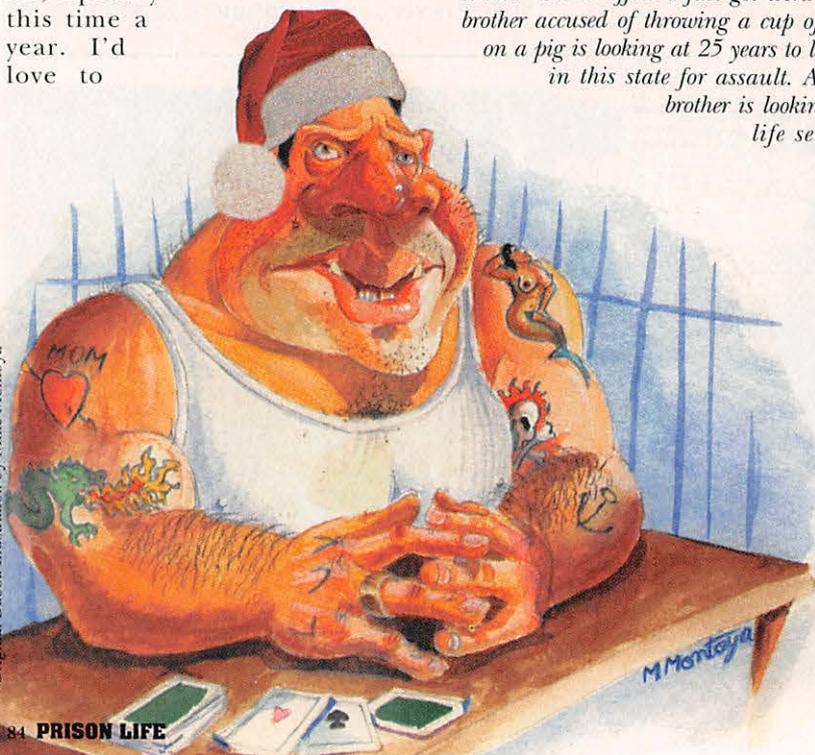
Look, Kareem X, you and me are comin' from the same space—behind bars. You know why they lock our asses up? 'Cause we refuse to play by their bullshit rules. They stack the odds against guys like us. They make up new rules to cover their asses.

And when one of them gets caught stealing from the suckers who voted them into office, they usually get off scott free. Meanwhile, niggers like us get fucked over time and time again. That's right, I said niggers.

One time I got thrown in the hole for fighting. After three days, they took all the guys in the hole out into a cage and let us breathe some fresh air for an hour. I was the only white guy in a group of about 20 guys. One of those dudes looked around, looked at me, looked at all the other brothers and said, "Man, they got enough niggers in here to make a Tarzan movie!" Now, does that make me Tarzan? No way. I'm a nigger, too. Love to all my brothers and sisters behind bars.

Merry fuckin' Christmas.

Original Bubba Illustration by Mike Montoya



In-Cell Cooking

Illustration by Steve Lashley



Chef's Special of the Month: Chili Mac Plus

1 box Macaroni & Cheese Dinner
1 tbsp. mayonnaise (or butter, if available)
1 chili season packet from Top Ramen Noodles
1 can boned chicken, roast beef or 1/2 cup
diced beef sausage

Boil macaroni in pot or large bowl with stingers according to package directions. While macaroni is boiling, add approximately 1/2 to 3/4 cup hot water to chili season, cheese packet, mayo and choice of meat, stirring well to dissolve cheese powder. When macaroni is done, drain water. Add the sauce to the macaroni and mix well. Season to taste with salt, pepper, garlic powder, etc.

J. Stewart
Central California Women's Facility

Mark's French Onion Soup

20 oz. cold water
8 tbsps. dehydrated onions
4 beef-flavored bullion cubes
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)

Boil water. Add dehydrated onions and bullion cubes. Boil for 10 to 15 minutes or until bullion cubes are completely dissolved. Add pepper and salt. Goes well with a piece of bread or toast (if available) and a slice of cheese for that real homemade effect. Makes one healthy 16 oz. serving of soup, or two 8 oz. servings if you want to share with your celly!

Mark Torrence
Calipatria State Prison

International Coffee

1 cup instant coffee
2 cups coffee creamer
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 cup sugar
2 cups powdered milk

Mix well. Add 2 to 3 teaspoons per cup of boiling water.

Michael LaFollette

For Dessert: Ice Cream Supreme

1 pint ice cream, slightly softened and divided in half
6 Duplex cookies (or any flavor)
1 "Little Debbie" brownie
2 tbsp. peanut butter
1 banana
1 half pint milk (if you can score one)

Crumble cookies in the bottom of a good-sized bowl. Spread one half of the ice cream over the cookie crumbs. Divide the brownie in half, cutting it lengthwise, being careful to leave the top half with the frosting in tact. Place the peanut butter on the bottom half of the brownie; place the top of the brownie on top of the peanut butter and put the stuffed brownie on top of the ice cream in the bowl.

Slice the banana and spread it around the brownie. Spread the remaining ice cream over the brownie and banana.

If you scored on the milk, pour one half of the carton on the cookie crumbs at the beginning, and the other half over the brownie/banana layer before putting the rest of the ice cream over that layer.

Lock yourself in, and enjoy.

Chef Al
S.P.S.M, Jackson, MI

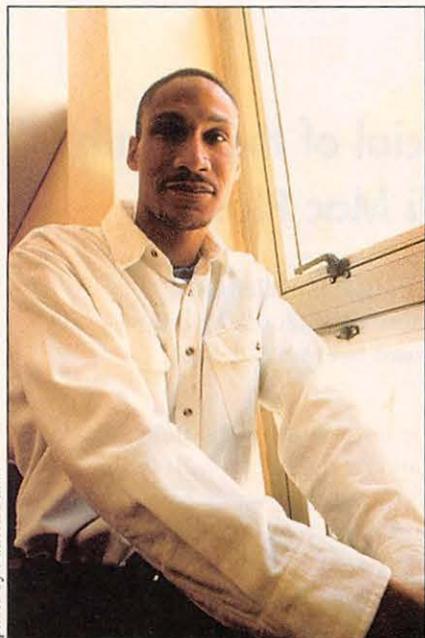


photo by Patrick Finnan

The Lie We Live

by Eric V. Reid

Attica Correctional Facility

Discovering that your entire life has been built upon well-constructed lies can be devastating. Some people discover the lies late in life and find it difficult to turn over a new leaf. There are those who eventually would say, "If I could do it all over again, I would do it so differently this time." This is true of many incarcerated African-Americans who are convinced that the language of violence and criminal activity is their only recourse to social inequality. Such misconceptions about life's options have lead untold numbers of African-Americans into an unending cycle of violence, death and life-long imprisonment.

Those most prone to living out a lie are those in pain and dismay over the life they feel compelled to live. For instance, the housewife with a bunch of children who has lost sight of her dreams may find escape through her soap opera stars. The disillusioned convict who hasn't come to terms with his failure as a career criminal will walk the prison yards sharing with his peers fabricated tales of adventures and capers amassing fortunes. The details are colored over to avoid the moral issue and personal justification for their choice of behavior. The practice of exaggerating becomes such a habit for many of us that our truthful experiences can barely be distinguished from the ones we fabricate. Such a practice provides an artificial and temporary sense of control.

An unwillingness to face one's own personal corruption and shortcomings is common among convicts. Of their own accord they selectively choose the path of least resistance. They shun the task of acquiring a decent education through commitment, dedication and hard work. As a direct consequence, they wander through life uneducated, unskilled, unemployed and unemployable. Because they avoid legitimate suffering and work, they generate dishonesty and self-deception. Yet in some twisted sense they see themselves as justified for their criminal behavior, which they frequently inflict on those just as poverty-stricken and powerless as themselves.

It is true that people are largely a product of their environment, but it is equally true that we are the product of our individual choices. The average convict made the choice to deviate from the norms of society because he bought into fantasies, commercialized delusions and culturally-transmitted lies. Some are plain old thieves.

Some convicts from our economically deprived communities see themselves as the modern-day Robin Hoods with the right to rob from the rich and give to the poor. They see themselves as victims of society, and as survivors who must provide for a family. But what transpires these days has very little to do with providing for a family or helping the poor. Several thousand incarcerated men have impregnated and abandoned numerous women, leaving them at the mercy of white America's dehumanizing welfare system. The Robin Hood philosophy is simply a smoke screen to hide irrational and irresponsible behavior from their conscience. Robin Hood, they never were. Anyone who oppresses, terrorizes, robs and extorts the poor, or takes the life of others for recreational purposes, cannot be classified as a Robin Hood.

The African-American convict, among many ethnic groups, is smothered in myths and lies he both defends and refuses to evaluate objectively. It is a lie that the white race is the sole cause of African-Americans every failure and the primary cause of the destruction of his communities. It is a lie that the white race prevents us from getting a decent education and developing a quality lifestyle. It is a lie that the white race is exclusively responsible for each African-American incarcerated today.

In every race there are devils and saints. Every man is responsible for his or her own choices in life. The lie is that someone owes the African-American something beyond what he is capable of acquiring himself. Because many African-Americans still believe that someone owes them something, they feel justified in using unethical and criminal means to acquire material success. The prison systems are filled with those who hold dear to them this concept of life. Yet in our prison system, where African-Americans dominate as an ethnic group, we violate our own established codes, rules and standards, just as crookedly and corruptly as whites do. We extort other African-Americans who are as equally oppressed and victimized by society as we are. The murdering of other African-Americans in prison isn't usually committed by whites but by other African-Americans. But we selectively focus on the white man as our worst enemy, when African-Americans are our own worst enemy.

Living out lies has had a cancerous impact on generations of African-Americans. Children, who are most susceptible to untruths espoused by their caretakers, desperately try to live up to the poisonous expectations we cultivated in their hearts. Today in our communities of color, we're experiencing the backlash from our own fabricated ideologies and coun-

terproductive culture of hatred. Our children cater to violence as a conditioned response we've taught them to believe is necessary for survival. We have only ourselves to blame when children turn against us with the philosophy of violence. The lies we live have destroyed countless African-Americans, and yet they remain a dominating influence in our prisons and communities of color. Our family structures have eroded, along with our ideals of trust, commitment, dignity and compassion. Our love has grown cold for one another due to fear and our faithful adherence to the lies we trust.

Though we live in a white-dominated power structure that often turns a deaf ear to the plight of minorities, we are nonetheless obligated as African-Americans to develop the moral fortitude to work through our difficult circumstances. There is no denying the corruption that exists in white America. It is their influence that facilitates the drug trade. It is their planes, trains and ships that funnel tons of drugs from abroad to our communities. It is they who facilitate the flow of automatic weapons into African-American communities. Their ethical indifference and conspiracy against African-Americans is no secret. Poverty, drug dependence and the alarmingly high mortality rate of minorities are orchestrated by the ruling class, but African-Americans cannot deny playing a major role in seeing this agenda through. African-Americans are used as tools to enslave themselves, to cripple and effectively destroy future generations of African-Americans. There are African-Americans who act as co-conspirators with those responsible for our degradation. The drug dealer is glamorized in our communities. We drive by and shoot our children and mothers in the back. We abandon our women and children to the mercy of social services, and we neglect to educate ourselves so we can compete with corporate America. America is capitalist country, and as long as communities of color provide markets for the circulation of genocidal agents, there will always be someone with a vested interest to oblige them with such products.

Many people were opposed to me writing this article due to its raw content. As an African-American, my contention is that we turn our heads far too often and refuse to candidly discuss the roots of the conditions in our communities. My repeated incar-

ceration is a product of the half-truth that I've been taught, that I've believed in and have patterned my life after. During my educational process at consortium college, I became aware of the lies that shroud my community. Anyone with eyes to see and a heart to understand the plight of African-Americans and remain a passive observer in watching our destruction is a co-conspirator in perpetrating the lies that destroy us.

PL

Are you a confined Moorish-American and active member of the Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc.?

For information regarding a potential class action lawsuit filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, captioned Dr. Haywood Williams-Bey, et al. v. Janet Reno, et al., Civil Action No. 2655 (EGS), filed on December 30, 1993, involving the free exercise of religion as an unalienable right under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C., Section 200bb.

Contact: Bro. Dr. Haywood-Williams-Bey, #20232-083, P.O.Box 3000, 1-B, White Deer, PA 17887.

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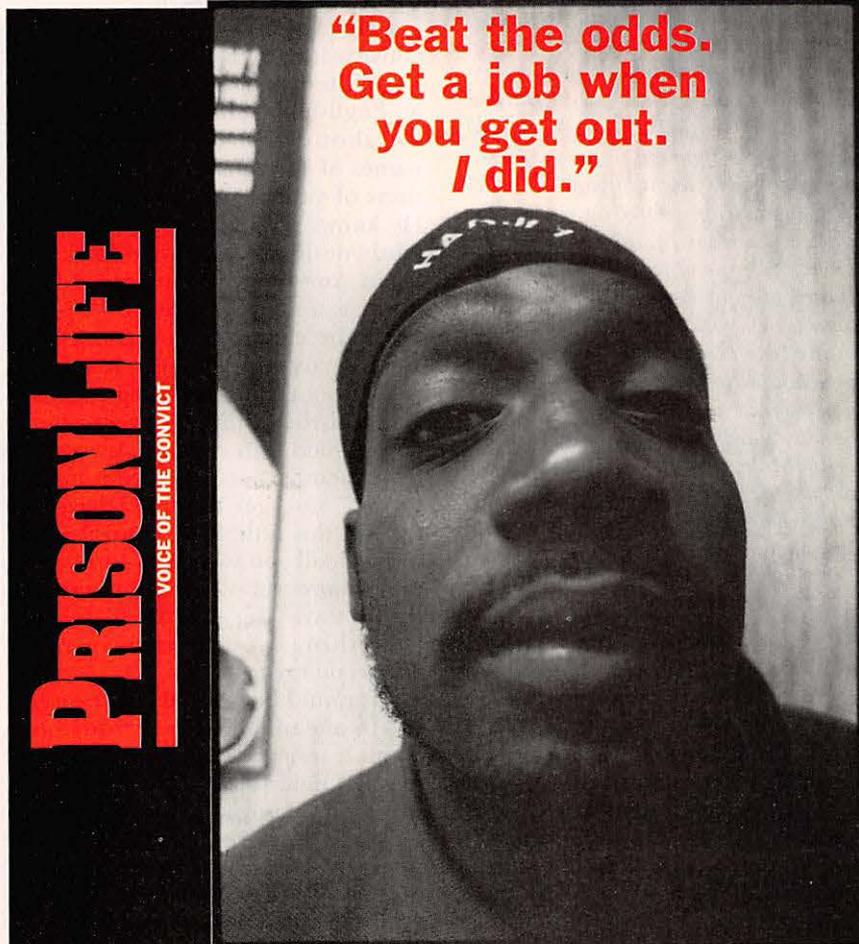
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PRISON LIFE
VOICE OF THE CONVICT

Prison Papers

Mutant Ninja Turtles Go to Prison



Green River Rising

by Tim Willocks

William Morrow & Co.

360 pp., \$23

Review by Richard Stratton

He reached over and sliced through the crook of DuBois' right elbow, severing the tendons that controlled the gun arm and piercing the brachial artery. DuBois bellowed and writhed, bucking his shoulder against the ground to free his head. Agry piled more weight through his knee. With a rooting, troweling motion he shoved the razor into the shiny jowls under the angle of DuBois' jaw. Blood started to spray from DuBois' lips and nostrils with each shout and the bucking of his body became more frantic. His head started to skid on the blood. Agry dug the razor in deeper, almost up to the handle, searching for the carotid buried in that bloated neck. As DuBois' head slipped free and he started to roll away, Agry's blade finally found what it was looking for.

Agry stepped back out of the way. Grauerholz gasped. "Awesome."

Dude! Novelist James Elroy is calling *Green River Rising* by Tim Willocks "maybe the best prison novel ever." But then, what does Elroy know? Or Willocks? Have either of them ever been in a prison? No matter. They've seen the movies. Willocks dedicates his novel to Joseph Roy Willocks, "who took me to the pictures and taught me how to show a manly bearing" and if you don't

believe him, just look at the cover of the book, which shows author Willocks looking mighty manly with long, flaming red hair and alabaster skin. We are told he "looks like an Archangel and writes like the devil." Joseph Willocks may have taught him to show a manly bearing, but his publicist must have thought it would sell more books if he looked like a homosexual.

Showing a manly bearing for the characters in Willocks' novel seems to have a lot to do with dick size. Just about all the characters in this book are obsessed with the relative size of their cocks. "He was longer than you," says Claudine, Agry's punk, when Agry asks him if his [Agry's] dick is as big as that of the black dude who's been bugging Claudine. "But only an inch." The author intrudes, "Only an inch. Fucking hell, man. Who wouldn't have killed his own mother or betrayed his best friend for an extra inch?"

Hey, c'mon. Everyone knows convicts love their mothers.

Write what you know. Willocks, an Englishman and a doctor, knows a lot about medicine, the medical names of body parts, and his descriptions of violence read like autopsies. He knows nothing about prison, certainly nothing about what life is like in an American penitentiary. This novel is a gross caricature of prison life. The characters are comic book superheros and villains. It's dumb, it's cartoonish, it's insulting to prisoners, and the writing is over-wrought and riddled with clichés. A woman is described as "looking like a million bucks," and, get this: "If I have to I will kill this little fuck. And if I have to I will kill you too. And I will kill as many more assholes as get themselves in my way. Because I will tell you something: you guys have really rained on my parade."

It would be laughable except that this is meant to be a serious book about a serious subject. I think. Or maybe I missed the point and it really is a comic book. I mean, manic depression is referred to as "The Arnold Schwarzenegger of mental disorders." Is that a casting hint? Alan J. Pakula and Warner Brothers

have picked up the film rights. But what do they know? When I asked Willocks' editor at William Morrow how they happened to be publishing a novel about a riot in an American prison written by an English doctor who had never done any time, he compared the book to Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. But Crane's novel of a young soldier during the Civil War has a universal psychological truth to it that Willocks never approaches. He's seen too many movies, too many bad Hollywood movies, and his book reads like the script for an episode of the *Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

The hero, Ray Klien, is a doctor and a karate expert doing a skid bid on trumped-up rape charges. He and his former old lady were into rough sex. "If rape means using sex to inflict pain and anger on another, then I raped her many times," Dr. Ray tells his new flame, Devlin, a beautiful lady psychologist who answers, with penetrating psychological insight, "Sometimes love and hate are very close."

Dr. Ray gets through the day by thinking of himself as a shotokan warrior, whatever that is. "He took a deep breath. He was the shotokan warrior. He was cool. At last, he really was." Yeah, right.

A race riot breaks out in the fictional Texas penitentiary. Dr. Ray saves the day and goes off to live happily ever after with Devlin, the piece of ass psychologist who happens to get trapped inside when the joint goes off. Devlin fucks Dr. Ray and throws a mercy fuck at Wilson, a black former boxing champ. Of course, when Dr. Ray finds out about Wilson, he's not upset, though he cannot rest until he knows: Is his dick bigger than mine?

Actually, the riot was planned by the warden, who's suffering from Arnold Schwarzenegger disease. There's a bad guy, Nev Agry. The warden takes Agry's punk, Claudine, away from Nev and sends her to live with the Blacks. So Agry decides he's going to kill all the Blacks, who, as everyone knows, have bigger dicks than white guys.

I'm not exaggerating. The novel

really is this puerile, this stupid. I had a hard time getting through it. I spent too much time in real prisons where dick size was not an issue, where the conflict was not between the races but between the keepers and the kept, and where showing a manly bearing meant treating one's fellow convicts with respect. Willocks doesn't get that, nor does he understand the essence of prison life, which is the loss of freedom. It's that simple and that profound. Willocks thinks it is about "a virulent nihilism born of prolonged and mindless suffering." It's not mindless at all. Prison life is the life of the mind.

What pisses me off is that American publishers take this crap seriously. They pay money for it and hype the shit out of it when there are some really good prison novels being written by men and women in American prisons who know what they are writing about. If you want to understand American prison literature, read Bruce Franklin's *The Criminal as Victim and Artist: Prison Literature in America*. Read Chester Himes, read Ed Bunker. But skip *Green River Rising*. Wait for the movie. I can hear the convicts in the TV room now. They are laughing.

Busted by the Feds

by Larry Fassler

Southwest Legal Services

\$29.95

Review by Michael Hogan

For someone charged with a serious drug offense, federal law and procedure can seem, in the words of Robert Frost, "too much like a pathless wood." Even if one has access to a law library, it is no easy task to determine exactly how much time one is facing or what one's defense strategy should be. Law books are written for prosecutors and defense attorneys, not for defendants.

Larry Fassler's *Busted* is a refreshing exception. Written in clear, concise language, it carefully outlines the options available for someone charged with a federal drug offense. Fassler, a gifted jailhouse lawyer, has clearly done his homework and his detailed knowledge of the in's and out's of the federal system reflects years of experience with the federal courts. He offers precise information regarding possible sentencing ranges for various amounts of drugs, shows how to use the federal sentencing

guidelines to determine the amount of time one is facing; and then gives practical advice on how to hire an attorney or plan a defense with an appointed attorney.

The pressure on public defenders and appointed counsel to plead their clients guilty is great. Excessive case loads inhibit the efforts of the former, and low appointment fees limit the latter. Often, they exaggerate the number of years a client is facing in order to convince him to plead guilty. Given this situation, the best way for such a defendant to protect himself is to study the sentencing guidelines and know precisely what he's up against. Then, even if he does decide to plead guilty, he will be able to make an intelligent plea bargain—not be pressured into a poor one because of ignorance or fear.

For those defendants who have the funds to hire their own attorneys, Fassler gives specific criteria for hir-



ing them, and the average costs of superior counsel to the merely competent. He explains in simple language what you are likely to get in terms of actual services for the money you pay.

Fassler has strong language for those attorneys in the business who are merely interested in collecting their fees and "shoveling" you into prison. These "dump truck" attorneys, as he colorfully calls them, can be spotted and weeded out with the practical tips in this manual.

Other issues such as bail pending trial, deportation, conditional pleas, treatment of women at sentencing, the probation report, and recovery of personal property after arrest, are discussed with specific examples and step-by-step instruction. The book, which is also available in Spanish, *Coma Defensor Sos Cargos Federales*, is a survival text for any defendant facing federal charges.

Most defense attorneys concur. In a recent review in the *Champion*, the publication of the National Association of Criminal Lawyers, attorney Alan Elfish wrote of Fassler's

book that "criminal defense lawyers will also benefit by reading it." He calls the version in Spanish a "god-send" for attorneys representing Hispanic defendants. I agree. As a teacher in Mexico for the past six years, I found the Spanish translation to be clear, precise and accessible to average reader.

Mr. Fassler never bogs the reader down in tedious circumlocutions, a fault of many law books. He presents questions commonly asked by a defendant facing federal charges (and many more one would not think to ask), then provides answers as well as down-to-earth examples. For instance, at every sentencing the judge asks the defendant if he has had a chance to read the probation report. Most lawyers simply answer "yes" on their client's behalf, even if that is not the case. Fassler advises the defendant to speak up and say no. "Don't be intimidated," he cautions. The law says one has a right to see this report ten days prior to sentencing or to object to incorrect statements. Failure to do so could result in an enhancement of sentence—extra years that the defendant will have to spend in a federal cell because he had neither the knowledge nor the gumption to speak up at the time.

Federal courts are intimidating. The case loads are so heavy that there is a tendency to move quickly over matters vital to the defendant. Fassler's suggestions about what is important, what one's rights are, when to speak out (as well as when to be silent), how to avoid rushing into decisions, or being intimidated to act against one's self-interest, are crucial ones.

Finally, this book provides practical tips on how to create a record and preserve matters for appeal, even if one pleads guilty, and how to get a good probation report while not admitting culpability, which would be damaging on a re-trial in the event of a successful appeal.

The greatest dangers facing a defendant charged with a federal drug offense are ignorance and fear. Both prosecutors and "dump truck" attorneys use these to make their own jobs easier. *Busted by the Feds* goes a long way in eliminating these dangers so that the defendant is able to confront the charges against him with assurance and full awareness. It is a clear path through what previously appeared to be a "pathless wood."

Pen Pals

NOTE: ADS IN PEN PALS ARE \$10/ISSUE. SUBSCRIBERS GET ONE AD FREE WITH SUBSCRIPTION. ALSO: ALL FEDERAL AND MANY STATE PRISONS PROHIBIT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN INMATES. ALL SUCH MAIL WILL NOT GO THROUGH.

SBM, God-fearing, cultural, 37, 5'10", br hair, 182#, br eyes, lt br complexion, college ed. Drug-free, non-drinker, non-smoker. Enjoys boxing, martial arts, weightlifting, art, poetry, jazz. Seeks friend from amongst the God-fearing. Steven Leonard Theus, #17970, Ely State Prison, POB 1989, Ely NV 89301-1989.

Oct 1994 *Prison Life* Cellmate of the Month. SW bro, 6', 185# bodybuilder, 44. Just one of the fellows looking for one of the gals. All letters & photos receive same. Kerry Lee, #27486, POB 639, Las Cruces, NM 88004-0639.

Bubba-type: 38, 6'4", 250#, bl eyes, br hair, tattoos, scars. Have been down for a while but will be out pre-2000. Hobbies: Karate, exercise, reading, & Indian culture. Female ex-cons welcome. Roy "Mountain" Whitehead, #944333 (B-208), O.C.I., 3189 Little Silver Road, Cooville, FL 32536-0578.

Creole/Blk Guy, Collee ed., attractive, poetic, & respectful. Seeking female friend, 25-40, to share photos/fun. Happy Letters, Eric Martin, P.O. Box 7500, B60373, A6-122, Crescent City, CA 95531.

Tall, lean, w/bl eyes. Capricorn with open mind & many interests. Age, gender, & shape not important as long as you have a heart & desire to write. Tom Butler, 46787-079, POB 9000, Seagoville, TX 75159.

A lonely man behind the bars of Angola would appreciate someone to correspond with. John GiGirolamo, DOC, #89764, Camp C Bear3, LA State Penitentiary, Angola, LA 70712.

Likes to read, write letters, listen to music, & study different religions. All replies answered. Robert Lewis 92B2916, Attica, NY 14011.

SMM, Latino Bro, 56, 140, br eyes, black hair; looking for a good friendship. Inner beauty a must. Any race, age. Armando Rodriguez, #224201, Box 38, East Lake, MI 49626.

BM, 23, 5'10", 175#. Seeks older woman who knows what she wants in a man! Kekeleto Dobosu, #219-715, POB 45699, Lucasville, OH 45699-0001.

Looking for a long term friendship to ease the loneliness. I'm 37, Afro-American who likes to read, write, & most of all, listen. Henry Fields, 92-A-5969, Box 480, Scotch Settlement Road, Gouverneur, NY 13642.

Hispanic, 39, seeks female to help write script for movies. Microchip Castro, B61713, 4B 2R 36, Box 3481, Corcoran CA 93212.

BM, 63, 255#, very sincere & open minded. Looking for woman who same, physical beauty doesn't matter. Preston Jones, 92A7741, 0-6-26, GMC/F, Box 51, Comstock, NY 12821.

*BF, 34, 155#, 5'7", br eyes, paper sack complexion. Interests: cooking, cleaning, jazz, & staying in shape. Knows how to spoil a man. Joyce Jones, #366003, Rt 4, Box 800 (Mountain View) Gatesville, TX 76528.

SBM, 37, 5'10", 155#. Attractive college grad, loving & compassionate. Seeking mature SWF for lasting relationship. Age doesn't matter. David Wade, #505226, Hughes Unit, Rt 2, Box 4400, Gatesville, TX 76597.

26 yr-old seeking females for possible marriage-no discriminations. Hobbies: poetry, studying in college, exercising, & traveling. Released in 2/21/95! Shamell A Ayatollah, #91A3196, Box 501, Wyoming CF, (SHU-A8), Attica, NY 14011-0501.

BM, 5'9", 46, 190#, Lt complex. Hobbies: weightlifting, writing, & reading. Prefer same nationality, 38-56, with a sense of humor & intelligence. Willie E. Moore, #439551, Ellis One Unit, Huntsville, TX 77343.

SWM, 61, 175#, easy-going, educated, & well-traveled. Can receive mail from other prisoners. David Upchurch, MSP Reg #59065, Unit#32/B-Bldg, Parchman, MS 38738.

BM, 27, 5'9", 195#. I love poetry rap. Like to hear from sweet, kind, down-to-earth female. Tracy Blake, #E96439, C.M.C. East, Box 8101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93409.

Italian, 30, 175#, with br hair & eyes, w/ mustache. Looking for a black, Latin, or oriental female to start a lasting relationship with. Out in mid-1995. Anthony DaMarta, #87A5775, FCF, Box 1245, Beacon, NY 12508.

On Death Row w/o family seeks caring persons. Mother died '93 w/ cancer. Enjoy reading, writing letters, poems, music. All letters answered. James E. Bigby, #997, Ellis One Unit, Huntsville, TX 77343.

WM, 33, 6'2", 220#, bl eyes & red hair. Looking to meet caring woman any age or race. would like to build meaningful & everlasting relationship. Mike Catlow, #93A1999, GHCF, Drawer B, Stormville, NY 12582-0010.

SWM, 28, blond hair, bl-gray eyes, in permanent lockdown. In dire need of correspondence, will answer all. Photos get photos. Johnny C. Smith, #645042, Wynne Unit, Rt 1, Box 1, Huntsville, TX 77349.

SWM, 25, college graduate. Seeks mature female for correspondence, friendship. Harry Horak, #525866, Wynne Unit, Huntsville, TX 77349.

SBM, 5'11", 180#, understanding, loving, & caring. Looking for same in female. Race, looks, size, unimportant. Timothy James, #403395, GCI, 500 Orange Avenue Circle, Belle Glade, FL 33430.

M, 27, 5'9", 165#, dark br eyes, black hair, med-brn complexion. Seeks female correspondents, 25-35, ethnicity not a factor. Not looking for money or packages. Cultivation is the key. Ahmed Pinkston, D-61708, Pelican SHU, Box 7500 (FD-09-121)/Crescent City, CA 95531.

Attica prisoner, 36, w/ nothing to hide. Not a child molester or con-man. Charged with self-defense murder I didn't commit. From Jamaica W.I.

Looking for sweet, understanding, fun-loving lady, age 18-55, 130-250#, D-Jahrubba Daley, #85-A-3422, Box 149, Attica, NY 14011.

SWM, 42, 5'8", 165#, brown hair and eyes, searching for a special someone to share my thoughts and feelings with. Are you that someone? Race & looks are unimportant. Mike Remington, #33384, M.C.C., Box 7, Mobely, MO 65270.

6'2", 198#, w/ various interests. Will answer all mail. Preston George Demouchette, #90331, Camp C: Jaguar-4 Re-Cell 9, LA State Pen., Angola, LA 70712.

*Can a woman of my complexion move in your direction? Looking for a lil affection, so let's make a connection. Later we'll worry about protection! 5'2", petite, 120#, will write all! Chauncey Nazareth, Box 6098, Virginia Beach, VA 23456.

*SBF, early 20s, 5'6", phat to death, like you would love it. Lt skin, br eyes, & as far as my character stands, witty w/ intellect. Searching for charming & respectable older man who doesn't play games. Kiki Swinson, Box 6098, Virginia Beach, VA 23456.

*Have you been taking it all in stride? Then it's time to take a walk on the wild side. Don't be shy-come on & let it glide! Age & race unimportant. Dorian L. Smith, Box 6098, Virginia Beach, VA 23456.

*Roses are red, Violets are blue, I'm looking forward to hearing from you. W/F 5'4", 132#, with exotic looks. I am a college graduate, Christian, who enjoys sports. Seeking male companionship. Write Ramanee-Michele Miller, #213992, Box 6098, Virginia Beach, VA 23456.

BM, 32, 5'10", 179#, 8 mo. left in prison. Seeking female of any nationality who wants to get into in-depth correspondence. Ray Slaughter, 603419, Rt 2, Box 4400, Gatesville, TX 76597.

White boy in distress. 5'9", 32, 170#, black hair & br eyes. In need of a tender touch. Blind, crippled, & crazy is OK. Will answer all. Charlie Hurt, #41069, JCCC, Box 900, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

SWM, 35, 5'11", 200#, br hair. Seeking SF, 25-35, for friendship or more. Interests: sports, animals, reading, music, & quiet times. Kevin Phillips, #101455, Oakhill C.I., Box 238, Oregon, WI 53575.

Arab, 22, looking for nice female. Age doesn't matter! Usama Farha, H61778, FI-2-1326, 480 Alta Rd, San Diego, CA 92179.

The Prince of Darkness, 30, 5'7", 180#, soon to be released, seeks Platonic friendship &/or relationship that will possibly blossom into something beautiful. Could it be you? Age, race, looks unimportant. Robert Doyle, #87T1137, Marcy CF, Box 3600, Marcy NY 13403-3600.

SWM, 39, proud Irish/Cherokee heritage. Seeks sincere lady for friendship &/or relationship. Parole early '96. Rick Elson, 238-721/5B149T, Box 4501, Lima, OH 45802.

WM, 41, 5'11", 180#, br hair & bl eyes. Seeking another seeker to fill those spaces to give/receive love & friendship. Been through hell to find you. Orrin Carr, B-70020, Box 705, LB 131, Soledad, CA 93960.

*WF widow, 40, doing too many yrs. Jesus is the Lord of my life. Will write all who write me. Sara Utrosina, #218362, 47500 Five Mile Road, Plymouth, MI 48170.

BM, 5'10", 190#, w/ 11 afro. I box like a champ! Looking for cute, serious, God-fearing female. Jerome Williams, #91-B-0175, Southport CF, Box 2000, Pine City, NY 14871.

Puerto Rican, 37, 5'8". Looking for a female also incarcerated. Luis Crespo, #92A0738, Oneida CF, 6100 School Road, Box 4580, Rome, NY 13440.

WM, 26, 6'4", 220#, on FL death row. Seeking open minded individuals. Age, race, & sex don't matter. Ronald W. Clark, #812974, U.C.I., A1-41-2055, Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083.

Br skin bro, 20, 6', handsome, muscular, humorous, smart. Play all sports, mainly boxing. No kids, never married. Seeking female, 25-45. Anthony Jones, #87A8647, G.M.C.F., Box 51, Comstock, NY 12821.

BM, 50, seeks life mate. Race & religion unimportant. Phillip T. Taylor, #81A5708, Box 1187, Alden, NY 14004.

BM, 24, 6', 200#, great body & personality. Looking for honest, caring female. Out in '96! Elderidge Hardley, #826426, Shawnee DOC, Box 300, Vienna, IL 62995.

WM, 28, artist, writer, stamp & cover collector. Seeks other stamp collectors & artists. David D. Smith, #109969, SFRC, Box 02-8538, Miami, FL 33102.

SWM, 29, intelligent, friendly but serious, open-minded but reserved, considerate & loyal. Want lady friend who might understand, wants to hear more and be heard herself. Darryl Messer, #179200, Box 45699, Lucasville, OH 45699-0001.

Italian, 25, 5'9", 168#. Needs friendship from mature female, any age. Photo available to all who write! Chris Troisi, Box 45699-256179 Lucasville, OH 45699.

M's, F's, he-she's or its, locked down or free, write me. I'm doin' hard time. Transsexuals, hermaphrodites, big, strong, handsome men or little, lonesome ladies, anyone anytime. All I ask is no religious nuts, please! Lew Abbenhaus, Box 5911-A.C-3, Sioux Falls, SD 57117-5911.

BM, 21, 5'8", 159#, blk hair, br eyes, Cancer, slim & handsome. Seeking attractive, fun-loving, humorous female full of fantasies to interact in relationship. Keith L. Adams, #181958, JCCC, Box 900, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Would like to write anyone as a friend & build from there. Must be open, honest & understanding. I'm into music, sports, outdoors, reading, movies, working out. I'm mixed blood, so race, looks, size & age don't matter to me! Dion Rendon, #89115, Box 7500-C11, Crescent City, CA 95532.

5'8", br hair, br eyes, 145#, Pre-op transsexual. Seeks other transsexual females & interested others. D. Dalton, C.C.F., RR 1, Charleston, ME 04422.

Active, SBM, 39, 5'11", sensitive, affectionate, caring & honest. Searching for fun loving, intelligent, charming & honest lady who enjoys quiet evenings. Age & race unimportant. James Mcgee, H70608, 2-10-114U, Alta Road, San Diego, CA 92179.

SBM, 30, seeking marriage-minded female who wants to settle down to share an honest life with like-minded male. Race, no factor. Michael Mordallo, 321805, Box 4400, Gatesville, TX 76597.

WM, 35, 6', 185#. Interests: boats, motorcycles, outdoors & rock music. Looking for serious relationship. Eric Johnson, #197086, 1807 Roxbury Road, Hagerstown, MD 21746.

WM, 30, gr eyes, br hair, 160#. Seeks lady friends, age unimportant. Tony Hall, #860779, Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46360.

Lonely WM, 34, 5'5", 145#, br hair, br eyes & bullet-proof. Seeks lasting & meaningful lonely, sincere lady. Jim Dunaway, 142945, Box 45699, Lucasville, OH 45699-0001.

WM, 39, br eyes, 170#. Seeks lady friend, age unimportant. Will answer all. Joe Roell, #6317, Box 41, Michigan City, IN 46360.

SWM, 6'3", 240#, br hair, lake bl eyes, ex-college football player & auto mechanic who's getting out soon. Looking for female friend, age unimportant. John Bennette, #40843, Box 1989, Ely NV 89301.

Ex-bank robber, SWM, 47, 5'8", br hair & eyes, 180#. Females only-write & more! Ray Minnick, #05221-067, USP, Box 1000, Leavenworth, KS 66048.

SWM, 50, 5'9", 170#, blu-gray eyes, never married & lonely. Seeking to share warmth with someone. Very open-minded but don't drink or smoke. Religious woman desired. Thomas Hobkins, #030677, ZCI, Mail #456, 2739 Gall Blvd, Zephyrhills, FL 33541.

BM, 32, 6'3", 210#. Seeks mature, caring, understanding & compassionate SWF. I want to have a meaningful friendship. Will answer all! K. Tyrone Spraggins, #426750, Box 4500, Tenn. Colony, TX 75886.

WDM looking for lady, 35-50. I'm 46, 5'9", 215#, br hair with some gray, beard & hazel eyes. Gary A Langley, #900795ICP-1, Westville Corr. Ctr., Box 473, Westville, IN 46391-0473.

BM, 39, 6', 200#. Speak 6 languages. Wants to correspond w/ beautiful, intelligent Afro-American guests unafraid to take rightful place in world. James Paradise Cox, 597492, Micheal Unit, Box 4500, Tenn. Colony, TX 75886.

Handsome BM, 35, 5'9", 170#, fun loving & caring. Would like to share special & delightful correspondence with lady. Age & race unimportant. Norman Goodloe, 22410, Westville Corr. Ctr., Box 473, Westville, IN 46391.

WM, br hair, bl eyes, 5'11". Looking to write female out there. Will answer all letters. Can't write other prisoners. Prefer picture, but not necessary. James McCallen, AP 9678, Box 245 Graterford, PA 19426.

Chicano male artist, 31, 5'9", 209#. Seeks single, high-spirited, intelligent woman w/ interest in cultural history & art. William Garcia, C22697, Box 7500, Crescent City, CA 95532.

SWM looking for friends to write & exchange thoughts w/. Interests: outdoors, motorcycles, & music. I am 35 doing a 25 year sentence. Robert Marshall, 1229462, 703 N. Main Street, Conilla, TX 78014.

SWM, 27, 6', 190#, intelligent, witty, & soon to be released. Looking for special lady to start life over with. Photos get photo. David John Silverman, MCTC-215529, 18800 Roxbury Rd, Hagerstown, MD 21746.

SWM, handsome, 43, 6'2", 200#, br hair, hazel eyes. Consultant, fundraiser, college grad Christian seeks sincere female, 20-30. I like travel, art, calligraphy, long walks, sharing talks. Less that a year to do. John German, 90T2075, CCF, Box 2002, Dannemora, NY 12929-2002.

SWM, needs letters from ladies in the free world. I'm 6', 200#, long, curly, blond hair, bl eyes, & fun. Jerry Spink, 904952, Box 30, Pendleton, IN 46060.

3,222 days left. WM, 37, held prisoner against my own will by feds. Reaching out for lady w/ patience. Age, looks, & religion unimportant. Personality a must. John Branham, 21364086, 3901 Klien Blvd, Lompoc, CA 93436.

M, 30, 5'6", wants lovely female, 20-50, race unimportant. Only humorous, positive, affectionate respond. James Hill, 164548, JCCC, Box 900, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

SWM, 33, blond hair, hazel eyes, 5'9", 145#. Seeks sincere woman. Mike Blrow, 173314, Box 900, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Please pep my spirit-I'm lonely! BM, 6', 31, 215#. Seeks sincere people, secure & loving. Any race, age, etc. Photo would be nice. Dwayne Williams, 089862 (A-114), GCI, 500 Orange Avenue Circle, Belle Glade, FL 33430.

*WF, I'm being released & would like to correspond with inmates. I'm 27, 5'4", 110#. Jackie Bayona, SW 18 Terrace, Miami, FL 33129.

SBM seeking challenging women no matter what flavor of race. I love them all but need only one. Write to me & let's kick it. John E. Ferguson, 015110, 43-21-21, Union C.I., Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083.

SWM, bodybuilder, 30, 5'10", 190#, blond hr, bl eyes. Looking for petite female to share my love for the Lord with. Pic for pic. 2 years 'til parole! John Spark Mueller, D-44602, 1-1-217L, RJD, 480 Alta Rd, San Diego, CA 92179.

Seeking large lady. I'm a SM, 40, 6'3", 225#, loving & compassionate. Honesty is what counts. Rayford Martin, 944190, Clallam By Corr. Ctr., 1830 Eagle Crest Way, Clallam Bay, WA 98326-9723.

Liberal, white-Indian male, 34, 5'7", 165#. Need a good woman to hang with me & become active in the struggle. D Johnson, B95524, Box 7500, D/10-105, Pelican Bay, Crescent City, CA 95531-7500.

Neatly trimmed beard, several tat's, SWM, 6'3", 185#, dk br hr, bl eyes, 38, Libra. Ex-biker looking for SWF or DWF for relationship. I love to party, dance, swim, camp out, travel, & ride Harleys. Mark Keith Sullivan, 58958, SMC1, U/10-A, Box 1419, Leaksville, MS 39451.

SWM, 36, 5'9", 150#, blond hair, green eyes. Seeking like minded persons with similar interests: movies, boating, sporting, & reading. Age, race, & age unimportant. Will answer all, inside & out. Greg Tittle, 186-928, Box 56, Lebanon, OH 45036.

SWM, 33, br hair, hzl eyes, 6', 190#. Looking for Christian woman who'd like to grow in the ministry & exalt Jesus. Rev. Troy E. Holt, 625235, Box 9000, Woodville, TX 75990.

Viking behind bars soon released. Seeks open minded female warrior interested in pistols, motorcycles and especially sex. "cause I've been here a long time. Good girls need not write. George Toth, 215978, State Farm, VA 23160.

Jamaican-English SM, 28, 6', 190#. Seeks open-minded female. Michael B. Day, 39382, Box 2500, Lincoln, NE 68542.

WM, 42, 5'8", br hair & eyes. Seeking friendship with lonely, honest, sincere female. Looks unimportant. Caged or not. Larry Martin, 456343, Ellis II, Huntsville, TX 77340.

WM, 41, 5'9", 190#, dark br eyes & black hair. no head games-good friends are hard to find. Paul Delmont Br, 204-556, Box 45699, K-19, Lucasville, OH 45699.

Chicano male, 41, lifer, 5'6", 185#. Looking for special lady. Possible marriage. Looks, age, & race unimportant! Herbert Diaz, C-86543, Box 4000, Solano II, gym #106, Vacaville, CA 95696-4000.

Arab male, 22. Looking for female. Any age & race no matter. Usama Farha, H61778, F1-2-1326, 480 Alta Rd, San Diego, CA 92179.

Any pen pal to write. I'm 36, br hair, bl eyes, 6', & 160#. Bradley LaForce, 178573, C1-115, Box 710, Keen Mountain, VA 24624.

Any pen pal to write. I'm 41, 5'8", 170#. Will Anderson, 180672, C1-114, Box 710, Keen Mountain, VA 24624.

Likes outdoors, hunting, fishing, bikes, boats, and quiet evenings. 43, 5'8", 185#, blond hair, bl eyes. Johnny LaForce, 097352, A1-106, Box 710, Keen Mountain, VA 24624.

SWM, good-looking. Seeks caring person who doesn't mind writing to a convict with a good sense of humor. Donald O'Brien, D15828, C1-2231, Box 921, Imperial, CA 92251-0921.

WM, 6'1", 175#, br hair, green eyes. Seeks lady friend 40 or older. Will answer all letters. Mark Stubblefield, 26188, Box 100, Jean, NV 89026.

DWM, 33, serving life w/o parole, seeks female Christian. Open, honest-seeking same. No prisoners. Paul Folsom, 129002, H-37, 100 Warrior Lane, Bessemer, AL 35023.

Locked down biker looking for righteous lady for honest, stimulating correspondence. Bl eyes, br hair, tattooed, 6'2", 225#. No bullshit tolerated. Cory Wood, 94B566, Elmira C.F., Box 500, Elmira, NY 14902-0500.

SWM, 35, 5'8", 165#. Any correspondence answered. David Vincent, 081907, Cross City Corr. Inst., Box 1500, MB 488, Cross City, FL 32628.

Hopelessly romantic Italian male, early 30's, on death row, but still very much alive. Seeking someone who will take the time to get to know me as a person. Carl Puiatti, 716927, UCI, Box 221(A-1), Raiford, FL 32083.

Young, Irish man looking for special lady. Phillip Wascom, 114975, J-Gator Unit, LA State Prison, Angola, LA 70712.

MD behind bars seeks a good woman of any age or race for friendship, love, & possible marriage. All letters answered. Ellis Chen, D95889, H-206, Box 2000, Vacaville, CA 95696.

BM, 42, 5'11", 164#. Seeks lovely female, 25-50-a friend as well as a lasting relationship. Will be released soon. Larry Williams, 023778, Mail Box E-65, Union C.I., Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083.

Huggable Teddy Bear. SBM, 28, 6', 200#, nice/clean. Enjoys long walks in park. Anthony Edwards, B 20595, 26000 N. Binton Ave., Dixon, IL 61021.

SBM, 28, I br eyes, 174#. Released 4/95. Seeking intelligent, honest, outgoing, & understanding female. Age, race, & location unimportant. Joseph L. Walker, 00181267, Box 500, Smyrna, DE 19977.

WM, 43, educated & affectionate. Wishes to correspond with female, 35-45. David McCoy, 164239, ARF Corr. Fac., Box 1888, Adrian, MI 49221.

POW-Victim of the system! WM, blond hair & bl eyes. Male/Female pen pals wanted. No bag please. Randolph Baggett, 093340, B24, Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083.

SBM, 41, 160#, 5'8", br eyes, black hair, emotionally sincere, attractive. Down 10 years seeking lovely female 25-40, sincere, loving, caring. No Cons! James Earl Williams, A-08018, Stateville Corr. Ctr., Box 112, Joliet, IL 60434-0112.

BM, 43, 5'10", 180#, Prof. long distance runner looking to open up communication with people on the outside. Like talking about social problems. Charles Jones, 83A5095, Mid-Orange, 900 Kings Highway, Warwick, NY 10990.

Searching for females. I'm 20, br hair, bl eyes, 5'11", & 170#. Doing 13 years. Jason Handley, 223990, DeBerry Special Needs Facility, 7575 cockrill Bldg, Ind. Rd., Nashville, TN 37243-0475.

SBM, 36, 5'8", 170#. Searching for honest, sincere female to become best friends w/. Race unimportant, age 25-50. Soon to be released. No games-tricks are for kids. Renauldo Shaw, 144125, 4713 West M-61, Standish, MI 48658.

SHM, 28, br hair/eyes, seeks compassionate, intelligent, & emotionally mature F's, any age, who like dancing, C&W music, trucks, & sharing innermost thoughts. David Medina, 446943, 3001 South Emily Road, Beeville, TX 78102.

I wanna be loved, like Tome Cruise look alike searching for Sarah, plain & tall. Not afraid to take a chance for true love. 31, 6'3", 210#, non-smoker/drinker, simple man. Samuel Golden, 093265, Box 221, I-2, Raiford, FL 32083-0221.

Death Row inmate, SBM, 24, 6'2", 205#. Enjoys reading, writing, & working out. Age, sex, or sexual orientation unimportant. Will answer all. Tony L. Hayes, 595233, Box 221-A1, Raiford, FL 32083.

Looking for something new & exciting in a relationship. Do you want to experience an entirely different treatment of love, communication, & intimacy? Soon to be released & on a quest for a woman. I'm 29, strong, bold, well-educated, understanding, caring, & faithful. Marvin Woods, 100737, Union C.I., Box 221, Raiford, FL 32083.

WM, 42, 5'9", seeks warm & sincere woman, age & looks unimportant. Be adventurous, write Michael LaFollette, 19069, Box A, Thomaston, ME 04861.

Lonely, incarcerated SWM/Poet, 32, seeks lonely pen pals. Joseph B. Socha, H03026, C-6281-X, CA Men's Colony, Box 8101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93409.

Aspiring freelance writer working on novel set in Boston. Would like someone who knows something about the area. Writing other inmates not prohibited. Jeremy Gore, 550942, Rt 2, Box 4400, Gatesville, TX 76597.

SWM, brn hair, grn eyes, college grad, seeks WF, age/looks unimportant. Sincerity a must. Non-Polaroid photos OK. Paul Veasey, 166397, FCC, 1012 W. Columbia, Farmington, MO 63640.

WGM, 25d, 5'8", 145#, br hair, bl eyes. Looking for a friend/possible relationship with right person. I'm educated, business-minded and love sports, music, chess, & romance. Will answer all. Dan Kramer, MCF-SCL, Box B, 158582, St Cloud, MN 56302-1000.

Afro-American Adonis, 25, 5'11", 170#, br eyes, mahogany complexion, smooth & relatively cool. Loves foreigners & would like to correspond with Vietnamese, Japanese, Chinese, Bombay Indian, Korean, Palestinian, & Hispanic. Write in your language to Claude Jones, 116289, Camp J Shark, 3-R-5, LA State Penn, Angola, LA 70712.

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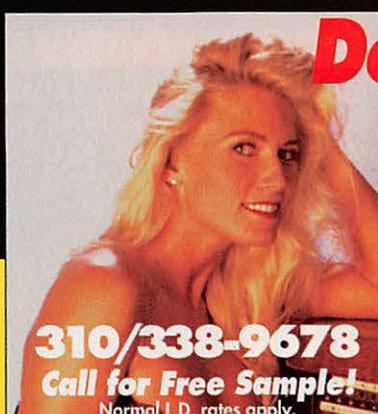
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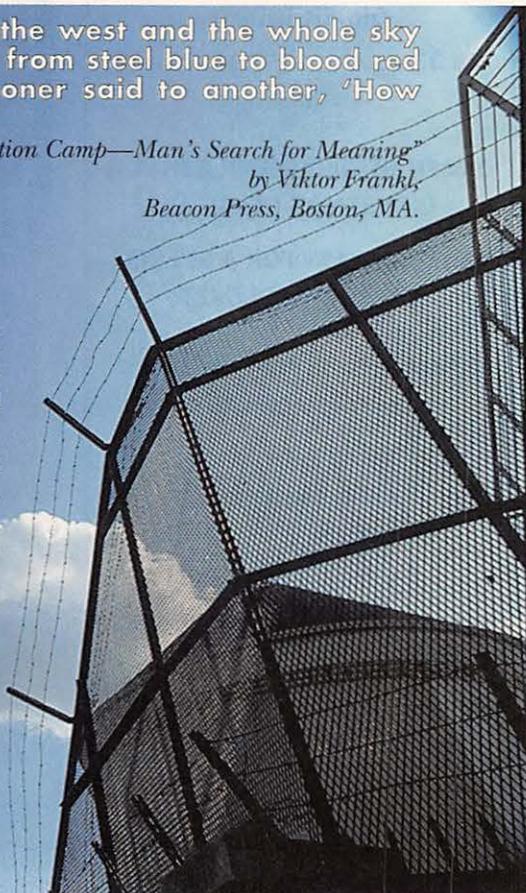
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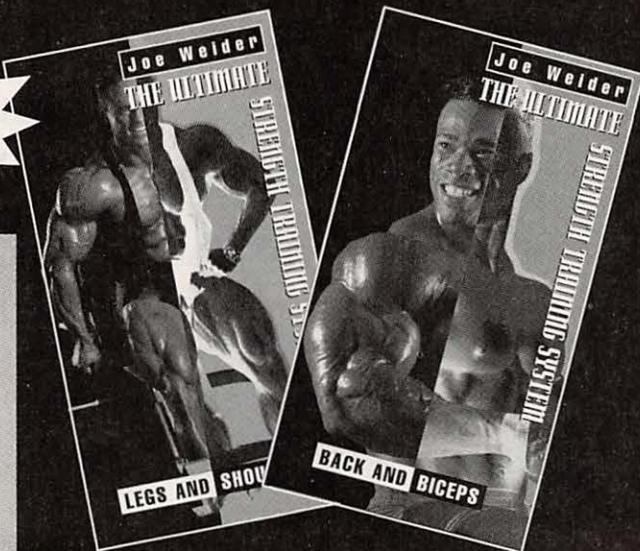
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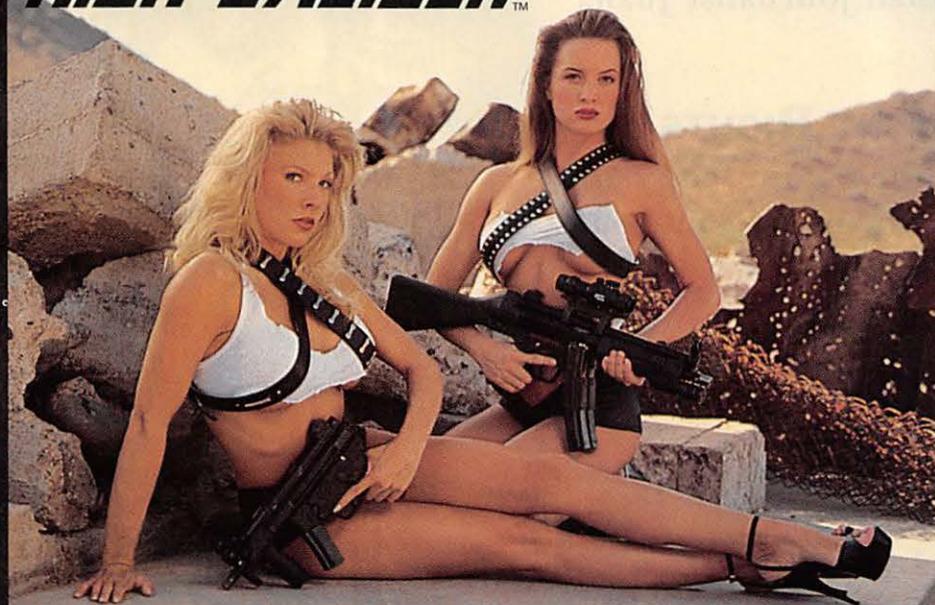
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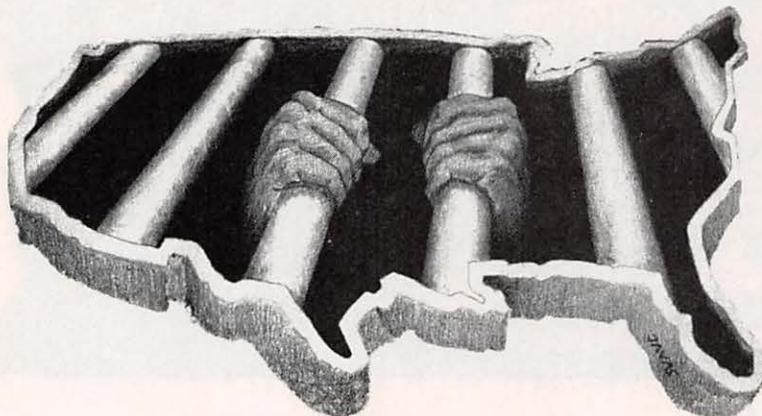
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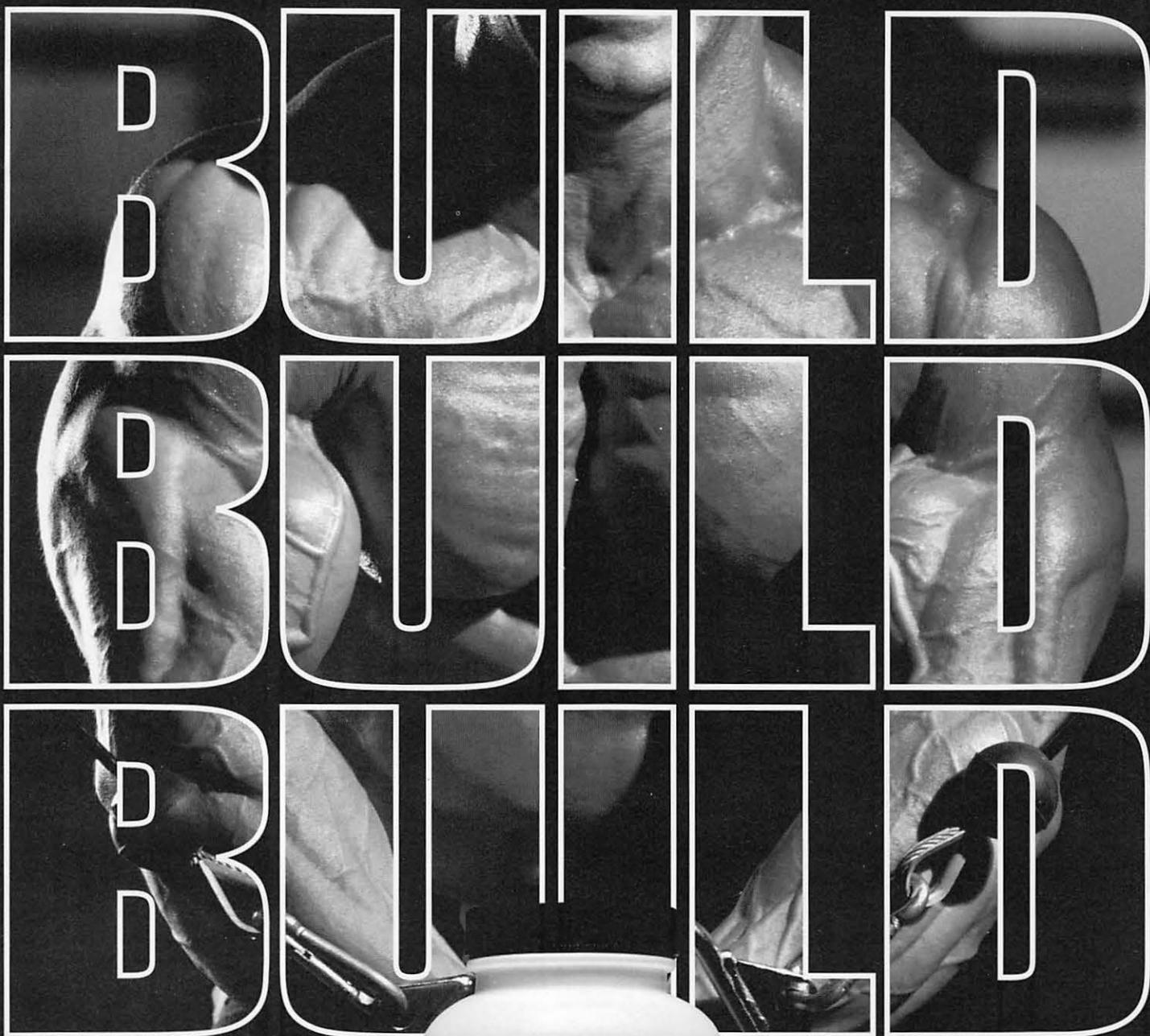


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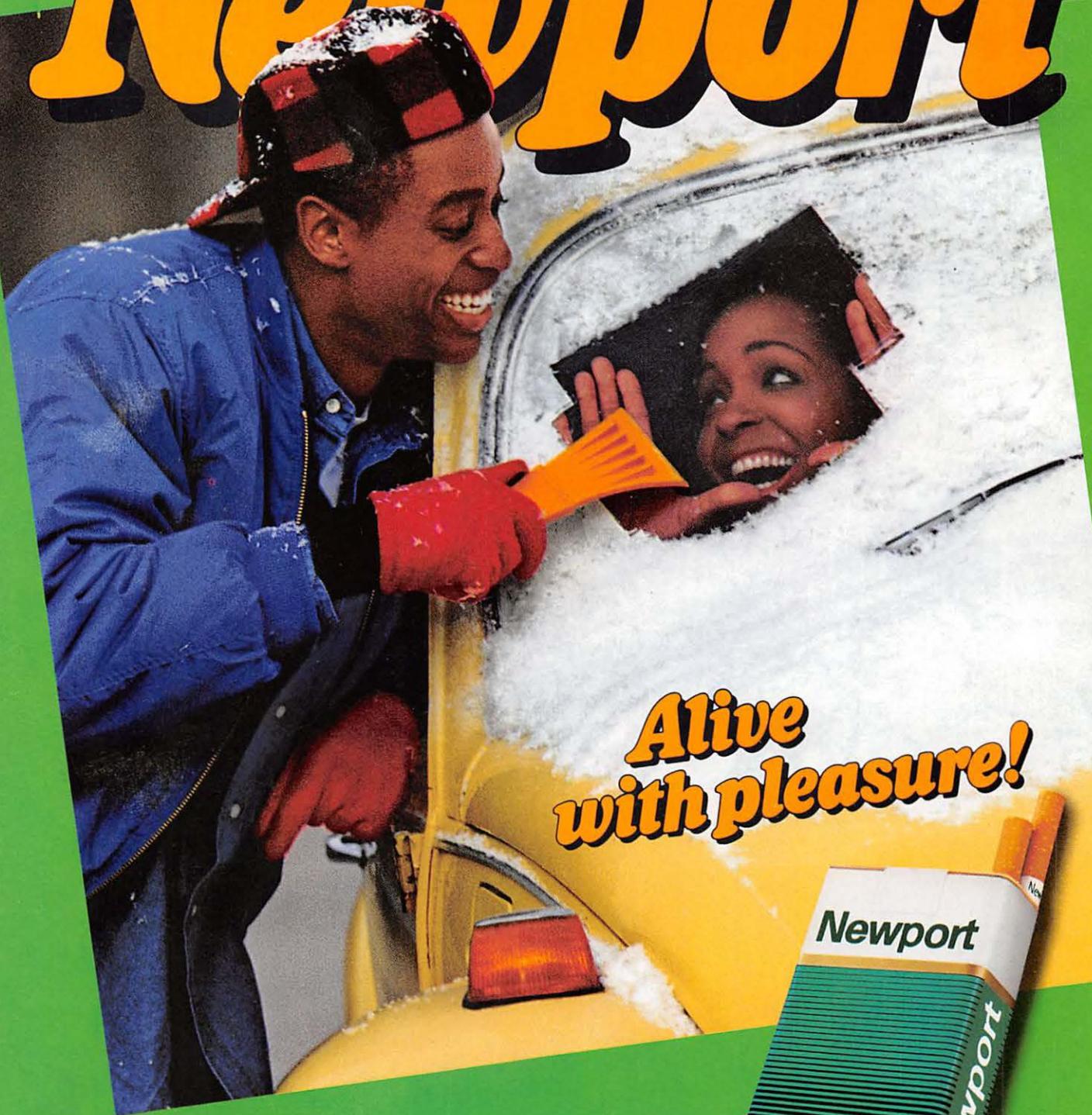
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