

# Until Justice Rains Down

by Rodney J. Sumler

possible to prevent them from qualifying for anything that will help them and their families. It is just existing until you are set free. Blacks receive more administrative disciplinary transfers than whites. More white inmates received community custody than blacks and more whites receive community custody sooner than blacks. "I didn't go to BOP officials. They treat you like animals. I am a human being."

Inmates can ask for help with problems such as making a call home, asking for some BOP forms, or asking about making legal copies, but if you ask more than two BOP officials or the wrong one, you are a problem inmate who will be given a poor adjustment rating. Black inmates are an overwhelming portion of the GED programs, but there were very few black instructors. The director of education was white in the mid '90s. Only one black inmate had a job assignment in education and he worked in the library. The inmate staff consisted of four whites, two Hispanics and one Arab American and one Black.

Only white inmates have been allowed to teach special interest courses to inmates in the area of business, credit repair, resume preparation, investments, tax preparation, weight lifting, and automobile dealers. All but one of these (weight lifting) were taught by inmates who committed crimes in those areas. They were allowed to teach about what they did wrong. Black inmates are routinely denied an opportunity to conduct programs that will help other inmates.

Black politicians, leaders and the NAACP have fought for years to get blacks in meaningful positions within our penal systems.

Nearly all the blacks in the BOP who are the benefactors of that victory, have forgotten from whence they came. They act like they advanced solely on their own merits. They refuse to accept the fact that they are obligated to insure fair and equal treatment for blacks, not better but equal.

Federal Prison Camp Seymour Johnson is "NICK PICKIN VILLE." It is a VENUS FLY TRAP with all of its beauty on the outside looking in, but a prison sewer on the inside carrying wasted human lives to bitterness and hate. Just as the Venus Fly Trap devours life, this federal prison camp consumes the hopes, dreams and future of inmates. Seymour Johnson FPC has excellent facilities. But the warden in '93 and '94 with his "hands-off style of leadership" allowed it to become a sewer of a prison slave camp. It was better than some FPCs, but it was being operated like a NIT PICKIN - MINI MILITARY - BOYSCOUT CAMP. You cannot provide "just punishment" on the basis of lies, deceit, treachery and trickery. You must be JUST and DISCIPLINED if you expect to be successful in DISCIPLINING OTHERS.

There is a "cause and effect" relationship that exists between prison officials, inmates, future crimes in the community and recidivism. Black BOP officials can help to "slow crime down" and reclaim the neighborhoods where they were born, have roots and still VISIT TO SEE MAMA! We need to begin to treat each other right if we expect others to treat us right. BOP employees with a moral and spiritual force centered around how to handle people can make a difference in what former inmates do in the communities. Prison

officials should try LOVE and RESPECT, not ABUSE as they deal with inmates. If for no other reason, they should love inmates because inmates are the reason for their jobs.

Because of sometimes scarred opinions of black inmates, our wardens are influenced at times negatively with a "HACK'S MENTALITY" - "Us against them" and their position requires that they not act black in carrying out their responsibilities. We should all agree that "COLOR BLINDNESS" is our goal. As the great reggae artist Bob Marley of Jamaica observes, "until the color of man's skin is no longer of no greater consequence than the color of his eyes, there will be war." The Federal Bureau of Prison cannot get there by pretending that "RACE" and "COLOR" no longer matter, that they have magically declined in significance since the sixties. In a racist society, color symbolizes the inequality of power relations. The BOP is part of a racist society. Black inmates are getting a message that "white is right," black is bad and racial discrimination is desirable.

Until blacks in authority in the BOP recognize their blackness and use their authority to guarantee just treatment for black inmates, rivers of hurt, suffering and pain will continue to be inflicted on "black inmates - the new 1998 slaves." As long as there is good and evil, as long as God gives us a choice between right and wrong, there will be a need for prisons. But with our systems of education, welfare, and generations from all races disrespecting laws, the 1.7 million people incarcerated will continue to grow. The racism that inmates our system of justice will continue to enforce more laws that make criminals of black people in greater numbers.

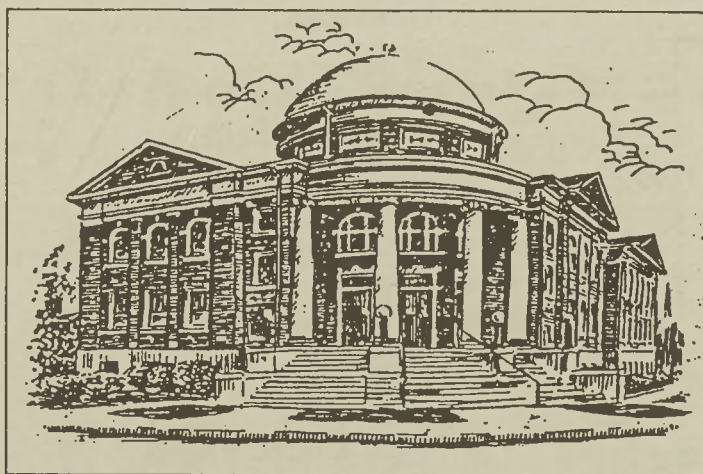
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***"The Lord your God hath given you rest, and hath  
given you this land." - Joshua 1:13b***

***"We Are In The Land"***