

Within / Without

BY Wilbert White

The following poem was written on August 29th while I was confined to the sick room at the Department of Corrections at Maury, North Carolina. The title is "Within/Without." The poem describes the atmosphere of the room at the time I wrote it. From listening to the Brothers rap to each other, I could tell that their minds were in a state of worry even though they cracked a joke and laughed occasionally. The poem also expresses my emotions at that particular time. Not only my emotions, but the emotions of the Brothers are here too.

Not many people may understand this poem unless they understand that a "third eye" does exist in every human being.

This "third eye" which I speak of is the "mental eye" or the "mind." But then you might ask: How can you see without a pupil? To see doesn't necessarily mean to see visibly ONLY. But it means to understand. That's what the third eye is for; to see not just the surface of people but to see within them. I have not quite overcome the uneasy feeling that I usually get when I'm among strangers. But from listening to these Brothers rap, the uneasy feeling has a tendency to fade away because I find that these strangers and I have something in common.

"Within/Without"

Confined within
 Confined without
 Within a cell
 Without a shout
 Of "what's happening brother"
 What's happening sister.
 And with a clean head
 No mind twister.

Confined within
 Confined without
 Within the mind
 There is no doubt
 A worried state
 The depressive kind
 That twist the thoughts
 And plays on the mind.

Confined within
 Confined without
 Within the walls of repression
 Without a name
 Without a profession
 Within the mind
 Is deep depression
 Without a life
 Except that of oppression.

Within the cell is joking
 And laughter
 Within the mind there
 is no happiness.
 Without a teacher no lesson
 is taught
 Without the mind
 There is no thought.

Within the face
 There is expression.
 And with a tear
 But without trace.
 Within the face
 Within the heart
 There is a tear
 That will not part.

Within a thought
 Within the mind
 Within the face
 A tear is shed,
 Visible yet invisible.
 Visible only to the th-

ird eye of man
 The invisible eye
 The mental eye.

Brother stranger,
 You're not a complete stranger.
 Stranger only
 In the visible sense.
 But I see you within
 The third eye,
 The mental eye.

Without this mental eye,
 Brother,
 You are blind
 With the two that
 Are visible.
 Within this invisible eye,
 Nothing is without;
 Without a reason
 Without a thought
 Without an action.

Use your third eye
 And Reason
 And Think
 And Act!!!
 And Reason
 And Think
 And Act!!!

They Took My Name

The following article was written on Tuesday September 5, 1972. The title is "They Took My Name and Gave Me a New." It took me a few days to get used to being called by my new name. I got into a little argument one day with one of the guards about this name they gave me. But that didn't do any good. I'm still answering to their name and not my own. I don't know what gave them the audacity to change my name. If any name is to be changed, it's the name "Department of Corrections." You'll see what I mean when you read this article.

"THEY TOOK MY NAME AND GAVE ME A NEW"

You know, it's really a shame how the people at Central Prison mess over the names of inmates. Believe it or not, my nickname and my middle name have been combined to give me a new last name. My actual last name is now my middle name.

Let me explain this. The name that was given to me at birth was Wilbur Lee White. During high school and the years I've spent in college, my friends all called me TIP. Now TIP and my actual middle name, White, is now my middle name. Oh, yea, not to forget that my first name is now WILBERT instead of WILBUR. Now my new full name is Wilbert White Tiplee. Isn't that a big change? It's a big mess-up, too. Where in the hell did the name "Department of Corrections" come from? Seems to me it should be Department of Changing.

Now I am really getting to see how law enforcers work their repre-

ssive tactics. First, they give you the crimes to commit; set you up to committing them; bust you; claim your life; send you to their Department of Corrections; change your name a little; then classify you as Grade "A" slave, "B" slave or "C" slave. It's really "legalized slavery."

We learn in geometry that the "whole" is not greater than the sum of its parts. This is true when speaking of geometric figures. But when we are speaking of people, human beings, this law cannot be applied. But you know, I'm inclined to believe that racist white Amerikkka and authoritative people use this law when speaking of us prisoners; Black prisoners in particular. It is not true that the mind is a part of the human "Whole?" Well, then, this means that the human whole is greater than the sum of its physical parts. It seems that authoritative people fail to see that we oppressed people have a "mind" too. Just because they confine us in cages doesn't mean that they have the human whole. They have only the custody of the physical whole.

I guess they're still working on capturing the minds of prisoners. That is something they'll never do. They can lock up the human body, but they can never lock up the human mind.

Who or What?

The following article was written Friday, September 14, 1972; one day after I was transferred from Raleigh's Central Prison to the Department of Corrections at Creswell, North Carolina. I had just begun to serve a three- to five-year sentence for my first criminal offense of distributing heroin. Repression, racism and prejudicism is "wide open" at correctional institutions; as they are ridiculously called. Correction is unheard of at correctional institutions. Think they rehabilitate prisoners? Nah. Read this and see what I mean.

Who Or What Is To Be Corrected At Correctional Institutions

The question I often ask myself, is "Who or what is being corrected?" Are prisoners to be corrected or are the attitudes of prisoners to be corrected? If prisoners are to be corrected, the authorities can stop their efforts of trying to correct them, if they're making any efforts. How can "humans" be corrected? Not even the "attitudes" of humans can be corrected. Attitudes can only be changed. If the auth-

orities think that they can change the attitudes of prisoners toward society, they can get that thought out of their minds. This statement may be a little confusing to persons who are not familiar with what goes on at correctional institutions such as prison units, mental hospitals, etc. Nevertheless, I shall attempt to explain what I mean.

There are exactly five (5) whites here in this cell block now and approximately 35 Blacks. There is no doubt in my mind that these Blacks have been given unjust sentences. I say this because I have rapped with some of them and the time they received for the little ten-cent crimes they committed is definitely unjust punishment. Some of them, like myself, had no previous criminal records. One of the whites that I rapped to was convicted for the same crime that I was convicted of and received a shorter sentence. This is what our prejudiced, racist, judges call "justice." This is enough to give any prisoner a "set negative attitude" against the authorities at these so-called "correctional institutions." I know damn well they don't think they can change those attitudes.

I was under the impression that "correctional institutions" and "rehabilitation centers" were set up to rehabilitate prisoners and/or mental patients. How can they change attitudes or rehabilitate prisoners when they don't know the "reason" for them committing the crime? Authorities "think" they know because other persons have committed the same crimes, so they take for granted that the next person who commits this crime, committed it for the same reason. Therefore, they say he should be sent to prison and treated the same way as the previous person was.

From what I have seen, correctional institutions can do nothing for me or for anyone else. There is nothing here that can prepare us for a better future life. What future is there in a bush axe or a shovel? Maybe they don't have any intentions of rehabilitating us anyway. It seems to me that they only sent us here to decrease over population in society and so white Amerikkka can keep in practice their repressive tactics.

Prisoners are sent to Central Prison in Raleigh, North Carolina for the purpose of classification. At CP (Central Prison), prisoners are given physical examinations and written tests such as I.Q. and aptitude tests. But when they are classified, the written tests aren't used. They only

look at the physical report. If the physical report shows good health, then the prisoners qualify to be a "legal slave." They use the written tests ratings only to talk about your mental capacities and other capabilities. JUST TALK. They tell you that job assignments will be based on those capabilities. They also tell you that they will TRY to assign you to a job that correlates with your occupation. All that is bull ----. There are men here with such occupations as carpentry, mechanics, construction workers, brick masons, etc. But all of them are swinging bush axes or pushin' shovels. They call this fitting them into their occupations? If people only knew how prisoners are being deprived of their "human rights." If they think the crimes we committed are disgraceful to humanity or to society, they should see how prison authorities mess over human beings. Prisoners ARE HUMAN you know. Authorities don't seem to think of us as human beings, but we are. We are as human as they are.

Maybe I should mention something about educational facilities. Here at Creswell's Department of Corrections, THERE ARE NONE. There isn't anything here that pertains to educational media. Unfortunately, I have not completed my college education. But even though I won't be able to complete it for a while, I still want to read and study and learn things that will be beneficial to me once I'm free again. One thing I can say about the inmates here is that they are quite skillful in arts and crafts. This is the only thing that is educational to me in particular. You see, I'm an art major or was an art major, and these guys have skills in crafts that I do not have. I can definitely learn some of those skills from them. Other than that, educational facilities are nowhere to be found here. Oh, yea, there is a book rack just outside the cell block that has approximately forty-five (45) books. It's a collection of mostly fiction, kid stories and westerns. Now, what would be big, grown, rusty men look like reading a damn kid story or even a western book.

Today (September 15) an inmate, who is obviously mentally disturbed, walked outside an open gate and onto the highway, was shot at by one of the guards. The guard that shot either knew that the inmate is mentally disturbed (so missed purposely) or he just can't shoot straight anyway. The inmate kept walking. Three of the guards then got into a van wagon and went after him and brought him back. Other inmates had told the guards that he was mentally disturbed, so no brutality was performed to

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