



jeffrey hart

Campus and prisons

Throughout the five days of the prisoner rebellion at Attica, a weird kind of double image kept imposing itself. These prisoners were civil criminals, sure enough, and there they were in a real prison—none more real and prison-like than grey and turreted Attica—and they were visibly surrounded by thousands of real guns which eventually would fire.

But the whole thing was uncannily reminiscent of the campus rebellions of the 60s, both in tactical detail and in rhetoric. Continually imposed upon the image of Attica was that of Berkeley, Columbia, Harvard.

The prisoners began by "seizing a building." Even as the student militants, they were alert to the central role of the media in these things: an event is real these days only if it occurs on the TV screen, and, therefore, a TV cameraman appeared at Cellblock D and spent more time inside it than anyone not connected with the prison.

Like the campus militants of the 60s, the prisoners had a list of demands, and, as in a

campus insurrection, they began with relatively practical reforms. These function as a come-on for the average type, but then the inmates deliberately escalated the demands to the point where they could not possibly be accepted by the authorities, the whole point being to provoke a "confrontation." (No, no, you wanted to tell the prisoners: Governor Rockefeller is not Grayson Kirk and Commissioner Oswald is not a dean!)

Knowing it to be impossible, the prisoner revolutionaries demanded the removal of legitimate state officials, and transportation for themselves to some "non-imperialist" nation like Cuba or Algeria.

As on the campus, protracted "negotiations" went on, around the clock, haggard officials emerging from time to time to speak for the benefit of the ever-present media. And, like the student militants, the prisoners demanded "total amnesty"—the point there being that the authorities themselves should bestow

legitimacy on the insurrection.

The tactics and the rationale were right out of the 60s. It was as if all those strident chic paperbacks in the campus bookstores had suddenly come to second birth at Attica.

The prisoners were actually living out the myth: America is a "fascist" and "imperialist" state; countries like Cuba and Algeria are "free"; the inmates—holdup men, muggers, pimps, narcotics pushers—are "political prisoners." By "negotiating" for the astonishing period of five days, and by letting the political militant, Bobby Seale, into the place, the authorities themselves did much to sustain these delusions.

The five days provided for a kind of alumni homecoming of 60s figures.

But, even as all this went forward, a chilling recognition entered. The dilettante revolutionism of the 60s, really a hothouse product of the campus, when transferred to the prison at Attica produced a withering hail of real bullets and a pile of too real corpses. (Distributed by King Features Syndicate)



arthur hoppe

On being afraid

(Ed. Note: Once in a while, Arthur Hoppe departs from his customary satirical writing to produce a column with a more directly personal, serious approach.)

It was a lovely summer day, white clouds scudding in a blue sky. Coming toward me on the sidewalk were two young men, one short and moustached, the other tall and wearing dark glasses. And I was afraid.

I felt the ugly fear rising in me while they were still half a block away—the ugly fear that becomes more familiar with each passing day. As always, the fear was impersonal. I had never seen either one of them before. Our lives had never touched.

I was afraid simply because they were young and poor and black.

They walked the way more and more young blacks from the ghettos seem to walk these days: with a certain cool defiance and (perhaps I imagine it) a secret pleasure in the knowledge of my fear.

And, make no mistake, I feared them. I fear all who are young and poor and black and walk that way. We were still 50 yards apart. I thought of crossing the street. The traffic was too heavy. I hated the fear that grew within me.

It wasn't always that way. I thought back on how it used to be. Was it only ten years ago?

Remember? We worked together then. We marched together then. We sang, "We Shall Overcome" together and listened to Martin Luther King together and talked together over endless cups of coffee of how the day would soon come when the color of a man's skin would no longer matter. That's how it was then—ten short years ago.

And now my stomach churned with fear.

Ten years ago we were slowly closing the gap. Remember? We were slowly getting civil rights laws passed. We were slowly integrating neighborhoods, slowly achieving equality of opportunity. All too slowly. And now the gap that was closing then has somehow widened into a fearsome chasm.

Now the militant young black leaders talk not of brotherhood and love, but of killing the pigs and offing the honkies. So pigs are being killed and honkies offed. Nor do they talk to us. No, we no longer work or march or sing or listen or talk together.

I like to think I understand a little of what these young blacks feel. Every man needs something from his fellows. And if he can win neither their love, their respect nor their admiration because the game is stacked against him, he will gladly settle for their fear.

As these two young blacks drew closer, I thought I understood something else. I thought I understood the fear a young black must have felt in the South when the Ku Klux Klan was riding high. And my black friends (they are all too few now) might well say there is a justice in my reaping what my fathers sowed. Maybe so.

They were close now. Suddenly, I realized that I not only hated my fear, I hated them for making me afraid, for making me less of a man. So now it is their turn to sow fear. But soon it will be their turn to reap hatred, for we come to hate what we fear. And then, it will be our turn to sow fear once again.

At that moment, I knew what I should do. I should look up into their eyes and smile—smile with the love and respect and admiration we human beings should have for each other.

I didn't. I didn't because I was afraid.

So we passed, I looking down, they...I don't know if they even looked at me. Perhaps. Perhaps not.

As always, once the immediate danger was gone, the immediate fear eased. But now, having thought back over the years that have passed, a new kind of fear grows within me. It is a fear for the years to come.

(Copyright Chronicle Publishing Co. 1971)

Guitar Lessons



STUDENTS:

8 week beginner guitar course

NOW JUST \$12.95

Chord Progressions

(Folk)

Five Finger Style

(Classic)

—Rent a guitar for these courses for as low as \$5 a month.

—Classes start soon so phone now for registration 432-4421



1140 'O' St.

432-4421

JAMES TAYLOR IN CONCERT



WED. OCT. 13 8:00 PM

PERSHING AUDITORIUM

\$4.00 \$5.00 \$6.00

Lunch Time Special!

15¢ Draws

11:00 AM-1:30 PM

Every Day!

Every Week!

The Royal Grove