

LACK OF COMMUNICATION
BREEDS DISTRUST AND FEAR

While associating with "only" those whom you identify and are compatible with in and of itself is not necessarily a negative thing. Unfortunately, disassociation, lack of communication between two separates, breeds distrust and distrust breeds fear, fear being an element of hatred.

As evident of that hatred is the history of Arizona's Prison Race Riots, California and that list encompasses all fifty states and; the lock downs thereafter.

No, I am necessarily advocating that the races "get along", merely that they in a congenial fashion associate with each other; although I don't realistically see how they can avoid it in this prison close society. What I am advocating: Prisoners need not in a blind, futile, mindless act, attempt to destroy each other, simply because of the color of their skin.

Elimination or minimizing of Race Riots/Riots period are not only in the best interest of the guards, but every prisoner who has a genuine life and a future; hopefully outside of the Iron Curtains.

I am simply not convinced that this is just the way things are in Arizona/California and that my midwestern logic is just misplaced and arrogant based. Prisoner not unlike all others are thinking, feeling individuals and not, wild animals, mindless brutes, like cattle, following each other off of a cliff. The prison population should not jeopardize their lives or security insanely engaged in a counterproductive(RIOTS), because of the actions of a few and many instances, the provocation of one. I have no problem with two yahoos, mixing it up letting off a little steam/testirone; but what I inexorably object to is an entire prison yard pf human being senselessly charging into each other attempting to hurt, maim or kill each other; not unlike two armies on a battle field.

Prisoner life as we all know or can easily imagine is sheer hell, existing, unbearable; inhumane and beyond the pale of human decency.; and for anyone to deliberately make this toturous hell worst is rape of the intelligents. A tranquil, unlocked down prison is a feather in the cap of the warden and; a powerful bargaining tool. A tool that be used in negotiating additional priviligis and opportunities; for thos reasonable individuals who have found themselves in this most unfortunate predicament.

A COMMANDING PERFORMANCE

At about 1400 hundred hours on 6-24-95, death overcame the life of a black prisoner known to me only by the name of "Peanut". While playing basket in a tournament game/s/ in what had to be the hottest day of the year in Arizona; Peanut suffered what was initially, unofficially and later erroneously called a massive heartattack. It was later reported that Peanut suffered a heat stroke. After word reached the yard that Peanut had died, having passed on on the basketball court; black prisoners began to congregate in large numbers.

It appeared as if blacks were grouping up for a riot; anxious whites and messican were hanging out of their windows and doors watching with tense faces; then I noticed three high ranking prison guards as my two students and I approached. We were told that "WE"(the entire group of blacks assembled) would be allowed to remain on the yard during count(of which was fifteen minutes away) and be allowed to view the body before the corner took Peanut away.

While there was low-level murmuring that the guards & medical staff had let Peanut lay on the burning ground in the one hundred plus heat, providing negligent and grossly inadequate medical treatment; albeit the majority of the group seemed to be calm.

In my entire tenure as a captive of this racist government; P.O.W, Political Prisoner; never have I witnesses such empathy and compassion demonstrated by jailer/prison guards over the death of a black prisoner; or for that matter of any other race.

Obviously, the guards/slavekeepers feared a riot. The Chaplain came along and attempted to get this large group(close to 80% black) to interact with him, to say something to either release any anger or tension or to expose the group of blacks intent.

After the first hour of standing under the blazing Arizona sun, the solemn mood of the men began to turn restless and irritable as could well be expected, a potential for violence. I recalled as a child hearing older blacks accused whites(doctors and nurses) of deliberately allowing a black person in their care to unnecessarily die; due to their racist attitudes; gross negligents and malpractice.

When the body was being brought out, the chaplain was saying whatever it is, religious people say when they walk in front of a procession carrying a dead body. When one prisoner stopped the procession along with about half of the guys and began to kneel down and praying out loud; the chaplain visibly caught off guard, stopped talking, watched and listened and so did the rest of the group and the other guards. After the praying was over and the body was put in the corner's little van car; the chaplain advised "US" that the warden has authorized a special service at the chapel. As the Chaplain's Clerk, I went along to open up the chapel. More than a few prisoner had something to say; I spoke a few philosophical words; but I was well aware that this group of tearful guys wanted spiritual comfort and not my rational, unephatic, unyielding, cold words of truth
AMAZING, EVEN IN PRION AMONG HARDENED, ABANDONED; THE ADVENT OF DEATH IS STILL A COMMANDING PERFORMANCE.