

CHAPTER 14

POVERTY IS THE GREATEST VIOLENCE

Mahatma Gandhi

The Riot in the Miami Ghettos. The killing of Arthur McDuffy in Miami by local cops created tension in the ghettos of the Black community. To pacify the Black community, the State Attorney's office filed criminal charges against the police officers for the assassination of McDuffy. Circuit County Judge Leonord Nesbitt presided over the trial, and Hank Adorno and George Yoss were the acting prosecutors, hungry for publicity. They were a team of judicial clowns. The trial was granted a change of *venue* to Tampa, where Judge Nesbitt provided devious instructions to the state jury to acquit the police officers of the violation of excessive use of force. The acquittal caused another riot in Liberty City. Under heavy political pressure from the now well-organized Black communities in the United States and feeling embarrassed by the incident, the Federal Government filed charges against all the police officers for violation of civil rights. During the preliminary proceedings the court received telephone calls, made apparently by police officers, issuing a warning that a bomb would detonate inside the courthouse.

Of course, the legal proceedings were canceled because of the potential violence that the local trial might generate in the Black community as well as the police officers who were discontented with the criminal charges against their co-workers. Eventually, the circuit judge granted the petition filed by the defense for a change of *venue* to Atlanta, Georgia. Subsequently, the case continued to seek jurisdiction in Texas, where the police officers were acquitted. Texas was noted as the most lenient state in the union in dealing with criminal cases against White police officers. For her accomplishment, President

Reagan, appointed her as U.S. Judge of the Southern District of Florida.

In the past, the Latin community had a traditional alliance with the Black community, which was considered a minority suffering perennial racial and social discrimination by a White elite running local government. During local elections the Latin community supported the Black community. A female Jew, born in Germany, and now living in Dade County, succeeded in obtaining enough signatures to introduce in the local elections a petition to ban Dade County's bilingual policy. This policy consisted of a small budget for printing and posting information of local law in English and Spanish in public buildings, hospitals and the Miami International Airport for visiting Latin-American tourists. This bilingual project also paid for a micro-staff of Spanish interpreters working around the clock in the emergency facility at the Jackson Memorial Hospital. This time the Black community, who had been discriminated against for centuries, joined the White community in voting in favor of banning bilingual law.

When Miami's Mayor Ferre in a political dispute fired a Black administrator, the Black community showed their displeasure against Ferre by electing Xavier Suarez, a flamboyant Cuban attorney, as the mayor. Ferre was the first Miami mayor providing the Black American with opportunity of employment. During Ferre's administration it was the first time that Blacks and Latins had a voice in City Hall.

The Mariel Exodus. In 1980, a large exodus took place when the Cuban Government removed police protection around the Peruvian Embassy. A crowd of 10,000 persons seeking political asylum invaded the Peruvian Embassy. Napoleon Villaboa, a Bay of Pigs veteran, advised Fidel Castro to allow a massive immigration through the Mariel port, similar to a previous exodus through the Camarioca port, where Cuban exiles living in the United States went out in small boats and picked up their relatives in Cuba. Without the support of the Cuban exile community, the Carter administration had no option but to allow the massive number of immigrants to come in hundreds of small boats

to Key West. Months later some of the boats were confiscated by the U.S. Government; fishermen living in South Florida were the most affected because they made a living with their boats.

Consequently, over 120,000 persons arrived in the United States. Less than ten percent of the new refugees were criminal elements. The majority of the newcomers adjusted to the lifestyle in the United States. In the past most economic immigrants and political dissidents consisted of workers, intellectuals, professionals, businessmen and students; this time it was different. The Mariel exodus consisted mostly of lower class people. Therefore, Fidel Castro took the opportunity to send lumps, common criminals and mental patients. When Federal and State authorities noticed the arrival of criminal and mental patients, they kept over 3,000 of them in an Atlanta penitentiary, releasing only a few of them to the custody of family and friends. The City of Miami, unprepared to deal with this massive exodus, created a temporary shelter with large military tents under the I-95 expressway, near Miami's downtown area to house them. The shelter became known as "Tent City." A new wave of crime struck South Florida as well as other cities around the nation housing the new immigrants known as "Marielitos."

The arrival of the Marielitos didn't help the already overcrowded prison system and its courts in South Florida. The Marielitos, became known for their outrageous and senseless crimes. In Miami a Marielito killed a young girl at a Burger King when the girl refused to give him away her purse containing \$20. Another killed an old lady in Arkansas who provided him room and board. The Marielitos became notorious for rip-offs in social drug dealing. Loyalty and honesty were not ingredients of their quality. Routinely they shot their best friends from behind. Their reputation caused the courts to become overcrowded and tougher in sentencing. Meanwhile, the Cuban-Americans immediately retaliated, and every week the police found several Marielito bodies floating in the Calle Ocho's canal, or dumped in Homestead crop fields.

I organized a summer festival for Project Freedom 78 and about 100 persons came to the event, paying \$5. We had a Cuban buffet of roast pork with soda and beer. Maurice Ferre came and was a very sociable person, enjoying his role as Mayor of Miami. Local TV cameramen came. This was the last official function of Project Freedom 78. The project was a challenge and during that time, I was able to assist some prisoners and families with their legal cases.

One of my CETA secretaries was a charming blond girl named Gladys. She was Cuban-born and had lived in Spain for several years with her family, till they were able to get a visa to travel to the United States. Gladys spoke Spanish, dragging the “z” in her funny pronunciation. After a few months, I began to date Gladys. We played tennis and went to the movies. My office became a training center for secretaries. Gladys was a hard working girl, and months later she found a job at the Victoria Hospital.

Unable to obtain a government grant to finance the prison project and with the decreasing private donations by friends, I began to look in another direction for a job. For almost two years, I did my best to keep Project Freedom alive. Most people came only when in a crisis to ask for help, such as facing criminal charges with the court and a potential conviction and incarceration. I was able to help a few of them in different ways, including their release on parole. My problem was that I had very limited resources. I had exhausted all avenues to finance the project with the federal and local government. Facing economic problems, I got a job at the Talisman Sugar Mill, located 60 miles northwest of Miami. It was a nightmare: a two-hour drive every day, working 12 hour shifts, seven days a week, with no days off.

The Talisman Sugar Mill employed hundreds of Haitians and other immigrant workers from the Caribbean islands. The immigrants went on strike, requesting more money and better work conditions. The Talisman administration, led by Cuban-Americans replaced the immigrant workers with machines, using Australian cane cutters. Later these

machines were modified and upgraded, collecting the cane from the ground, throwing it in on a conveyor to the trailers pulling two large wagons that carried 40 tons of cane to the mill to be processed into brown sugar. The cane sugar mill industry was subsidized by the federal government who bought raw sugar at cheaper price from Santo Domingo and other nations. Cuba was formerly the major exporter of raw sugar, but after Castro came to power, Washington declared a total embargo.

A few months later I was able to get a minimum-wage job in Neighbor's Restaurant Warehouse in a Black neighborhood of Liberty City. As a regular policy the restaurants provided the police patrolling the neighborhood with free dinner and coffee to get better protection.

I was informed that my state appeal had been denied and Judge Wells issued an order revoking my bond and a few weeks later ordered my arrest. In my mind, returning to prison, was returning to human corruption. The state conviction had been achieved by the Feds and State Attorney's Office in circumstances that violated the fundamental principles of justice and equity. I was facing a super-Mafia, the mighty United States of America, and the inferior and perennially corrupt State of Florida.

As a fugitive, I stayed a few months in Boca Raton with new acquaintances, Harry Marsh, his charming wife Barbara, and their five-year-old daughter. Harry was a former optometrist who had been convicted a few years before at Fort Lauderdale for smuggling pot from the Bahamas. Later, I would learn that he twice pleaded guilty on criminal charges and become a government witness. Like most people, Harry liked dealing social drug because the substantial wealth that it generated, but of course, he didn't like to serve time.

Harry was serving a probation term with the federal government. Persons in the underworld have an intensive social life, therefore, Harry and Barbara often held barbecue parties with champagne by the pool. Barbara routinely went on shopping sprees to

exclusive stores for summer mink and fancy dresses. I enjoyed driving her white Corvette. She often prepared gourmet dinners. My favorite dinner was sauted mushrooms with garlic and steamy white rice. They had excellent taste for good dinner wine.

Months later, I met Bush and his young, blond wife, Kathy. They were refugees from a rural town in West Virginia. Bush was making monthly trips with Harry to the Bahamas and smuggling pot. Frequently, I visited a local racquet club to which Harry and Barbara provided me access. Tennis was one of my favorite sports and I often played matches with Harry. Every morning, I ran three miles around the neighborhood. During the weekend, we went to have dinner at the Banana Boat, a fancy restaurant with a gorgeous view of the waterway. Being away from Miami, I was feeling more relaxed, but good times don't last long.

Later I met Faith Flax, a legal secretary working at a law firm in downtown Miami. She was also involved part-time in the social drug business. Her pipe dream was to save enough money, retire, buy a condo and a franchise. Recently, Faith's apartment had been burglarized. So, she was happy when I asked her to allow me to stay with her for a few months.

I was having a good time, but concluded that I should move out of Florida. The FBI had assumed jurisdiction over my case and I wanted to keep a fair distance from the Feds. The last time they kidnapped me from the South Pole. Several months later, I was travelling with Bush and his wife Kathy to their hometown in West Virginia. I noticed that the local folks were addicted to valium. High-grade marijuana and cocaine were not available. We were welcomed in this rural town, becoming the suppliers of social drugs.

I was planning to stay, living in West Virginia, but one day my destiny changed when Bush told me that he was returning to Miami. Harry had called him for another trip to the Bahamas, and Bush invited me to join him. Two days later we were in Boca Raton at Bush's apartment.

In Boca Raton, a wife of a U.S. Custom's agent was having an affair with Bush, and she informed him that U.S. Customs were investigating Harry Marsh on alleged charges of smuggling pot. Hours later, we met Harry and told him was under investigation by U.S. Customs and advised him to lay low till the heat was off, but he didn't listen. Harry had been fooling the U.S. Coast Guard, the DEA and U.S. Customs for a long time, and thought he might get away deceiving them by painting his boat with another color.

Harry was the owner of a shop selling western clothes and a vegetable outlet store that barely covered his monthly expenditure of \$5,000 in mortgage, electricity, food and other expenses. I joined them, believing that I might be of some help. The trip might provide me with some tips about smuggling pot from the Bahamas. I had secret codes of radio frequencies to monitor the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and the DEA. The trip was a cardinal mistake, because Harry was in a rush toward a collision with law enforcement.

The next day I was introduced to another acquaintance who was coming with us and who was interested in investing money in the drug business. His name was Rosenberg. Early in the morning, at the public marina, we parked the trailer of his 25-footer. While we were pulling out of the marina, I saw a Coast Guard station wagon cruising around and looking at the parked trailers. Worried, I told Harry that leaving his trailer at the deserted marina was not a good idea since bad weather was in progress and there were few trailers in the parking lot. "It seems suspicious," I said. "Don't worry about it, I've always parked it here," was his reply.

The boat developed some engine problems and we had to go to a nearby marina for repairs. Two hours later we headed out on the choppy Atlantic Ocean, facing impressive seven-foot waves. The trip was a nightmare. We had to remain standing and holding on, to avoid injury. With two outboard engines, boats splashed from wave to wave. At sunset tired and exhausted, we saw the first island. Besides the bad weather the

boat was overloaded. Harry had loaded the boat with several radios, TV and groceries for the man that was going to sell the pot to him. He explained, the Black Bahamian would give him a good deal. Under Bahamian law all these items were contraband. So we were smuggling both ways: Harry didn't plan to check in with Bahamian Customs. Bad weather caused a long delay on our trip and therefore, we were short on gas. With no other option, we headed for the island's protected harbor. At the small marina we observed several Black Bahamian guards toting rifles. After docking we took a cold shower and remained aboard. Having contraband on the boat, we gave up the idea of getting gas and decided to flee early in the morning from the island and take our chances at being shot by the guards.

At sunrise Harry started the engines and moving slowly through the channel minutes later, he applied full power--the boat dashed away from the island. We felt relieved of not being shot. Harry set his compass on northeast, bound toward an isolated key with which he was familiar. Afterward, we spotted a large key with several yachts anchored. Upon arrival, we began to look for gas. The problem was that the yachts and most of the sailboats used diesel fuel. We saw a sailboat with a powerful radio antenna and Harry decided to ask them for assistance. We met a friendly couple and after explaining our problem they radioed a friend who was willing to bring us enough gas. The charge was \$5 per gallon--money was not a problem.

While waiting for the gas, we chatted with the couple, retirees who owned an old sailboat who were enjoying a healthy life and eating a lot of fresh fish. The advantage of living in a sailboat was they didn't have to worry about paying property taxes, and cutting grass on weekends. They traveled once a month to West Palm Beach for supplies. The couple cruised from island to island, meeting new friends and trading with local fisherman, who provided them with the catch of the day. They very kindly prepared lunch for us. A few hours later a power boat appeared at the horizon and sped toward us. We got more fuel and Harry paid with crisp one-hundred-dollar bills. We said good-bye and

thanked the couple for their hospitality.

At sunset we arrived at our destination, a chain of Bahamian islands. We docked at an old fishing boat near shore. Minutes later a Black Bahamian named Louis came in a small boat. He was the supplier of pot and told Harry they got nothing and we would have to wait. Next day, we had to go with Louis to the airport to check in with local Customs to get our tourist visas.

We stopped for a lobster dinner and relaxed. We heard a twin Beach plane overhead and were told the aircraft was a DEA plane patrolling the coast, looking for smugglers. I assumed they were totally blind. The DEA had a station nearby with a balloon and a radar to monitor smuggling planes making drops of drugs. We went back to our boat and I remained meditating most of the time with my leg crossed looking to the vast blue ocean.

While I was meditating, certain events were going on. Harry called a man at Palm Beach and ordered him to pick up the trailer at the marina. The man took Harry's trailer and drove it to his house. Next day Harry called a second time and ordered the man to leave the trailer at the West Palm Beach Marina. On his way to the marina the man noticed he was under surveillance and returned to his house; but the DEA remained at the marina waiting for us.

On Saturday, Louis came with his boat full of pot. Two planes had dropped bales of marijuana and Louis took the leftovers. We hid the dope under the floor in different compartments. Harry wanted to leave early the next morning and I advised him to stay for a couple of days more in the Bahamas. I was worried about the warning that Harry was under investigation by U.S. Customs. If that was a fact, and there was a surveillance, they might get tired of waiting for us. Again, Harry declined to accept my advice.

Sunday morning the powerful twin-engine boat cruised the Bahamas water western bound. With the weather slightly improved, we navigated in favor of the current,

making the trip in ten hours, instead of the twenty hour with bad weather. We reached the West Palm Beach Coast at 3 p.m. At the marina Harry noticed that nobody was waiting for us. Harry and Bush decided to make a telephone call while I remained inside the cabin. Rosenberg was on the deck. Minutes later, a young girl walked over and asked him if we caught any fish. She was told no. On the deck, we had several empty plastic gas containers visible, we had used during the long trip. She left, and Rosenberg decided to go to the bathroom. I became nervous, feeling something was wrong--too much silence and delays. I went up on the deck, looking for Harry, Bush and Rosenberg. Suddenly, Bush came storming onto the boat and told me we were under surveillance. "They're behind a Jeep with a walkie-talkie," he said breathlessly. He started the engines while I released the ropes from the dock. A fast boat intercepted us. Bush obeyed the order and docked the boat, while trying to convince me it was a routine inspection. "Calm down. It's a routine inspection," he kept saying. Half a dozen DEA agents boarded and minutes later found the pot. The agents cuffed us using plastic straps. This was another new technic developed by the waves of daily arrest and increasing number of arrestees. My wrists soon became painful and swollen. The young innocent girl, who minutes before had asked about our catch, was a DEA agent. During our trip to jail the DEA agents discussed how they were recruited to work with the Task Force in Florida. We were taken into custody to the Palm Beach jail for interrogation. There, Rosenberg told the DEA agents I was a fugitive and minutes later I was taken into a small room for questioning. I denied the charges.

One of my most painful moments was when I was allowed to make a telephone call. I told my family not to worry, that I had been arrested at Palm Beach and I was going to be transferred to the North Miami Detention Center. I knew that with my pending state sentence of forty years, I would be a long time behind bars. I would try to get bond posted and flee.

The North Miami Detention Center was leased to the Federal government to house

federal prisoners. We were fingerprinted and photographed and assigned to different dormitories. I recognized most of the guards who had previously worked at the Dade County Jail and had been extremely violent with the prisoners. Now, they were overweight and more relaxed. Although I had a thick beard and long hair, I remained inside my cell to avoid being identified.

Next day, I was escorted to have additional fingerprints taken. This time the officer used special laminated sheets. I knew Rosenberg had snitched on me and they were trying to find out my identity. I was in deep trouble. On Monday morning we were transported to Fort Lauderdale for a bond hearing. An FBI agent in the courtroom identified me.

Harry managed to escape from the raid by the DEA at the marina, but not for long. Days later he surrendered with his attorney. During a bond hearing, Harry, Bush and Rosenberg were released under \$15,000 bond while I was taken back to the North Miami Detention Center. A bondsman came and posted a \$15,000 bond, but I was not released. I lost the \$3,000 premium and was the only one who remained incarcerated. I called Rosenblatt and Clay, my previous Public Defender Attorneys, who were now in private practice. Clay refused to see me. I had committed the sin of being caught dealing social drugs. But Rosenblatt came to see me.

Days later during a hearing for appointment of legal counsel the U.S. Magistrate appointed a federal public defender to represent me. I didn't see any purpose to add any debt to my family hiring a private attorney. Whatever the outcome of this federal trial, I would have to serve a long sentence in state prison. Furthermore, there was too much evidence against me. My co-defendants, Bush and Harry already became government witness and were saying twenty pounds of pot belong to me. But Faith mounted pressure on me to obtain a better defense attorney. Days later Rosenblatt came and told me very professionally he was the best attorney in town , explaining with great deal of detail he

would file several pre-trial motions. Under pressure by Faith few days later, I dismissed the appointed public defender. In order to provide me with legal representation, Rosenblatt compelled to sign a contract for the \$7,500 for legal fees.

Afterward, I called Rosenblatt and asked about the pre-trial motions he told me was going to file with the court. Rosenblatt told me he decided to “wait and see.” I got mad with him saying, “You are doing the same thing the public defender was going to do.” Apparently, Rosenblatt had become devious in the relationship with his clients, there was not professional ethic. And the man that informed the DEA I was a fugitive, didn't receive any benefits for his contribution for my capture. He faced criminal charges with me.

My arrest raised a great conflict for the entire Latin community that only sponsored impeccable patriots. Therefore, the Cuban exiles took the opportunity to divorce from me, and again, I was alone.

I was surprised when a Deputy Sheriff came to Miami to transfer me to Okaloosa County. Auxiliary Judge Wells wanted to be sure I was under state custody. Also, there was the possibility the State Attorney's Office might file additional charges of “failing to surrender.” The trip to Okaloosa was a long journey in an old police cruiser. The Okaloosa County Jail had changed a lot since my double trial and conviction in 1977. This time I was housed in an overcrowded cell with another three Marielito lumpens charged with “breaking and entering, and assault with fire arms.”

We had a black and white TV and daily we watched the news about the Falkland Island war between England and Argentina. Although the United States joined England, the CIA through Panama provided Argentina with French made missiles. The CIA was concerned that the British was too much to chew for the Argentines. And the Russian took the opportunity to join Argentina providing intelligent data to them. The rest was history.

The best defense was a good offense, therefore, proceeding **pro se** I wrote a

motion to the Circuit Court requesting a speedy trial--if there was any charged pending against me. I knew most Circuit Judges declined to participate in the conspiracy for my double prosecution organized by the FBI.

Meanwhile, observing flagrant constitutional violations of prisoners' rights, I filed a civil action alleging serious overcrowding conditions. Months later, the Northern District of Florida would dismiss the complaint for lack of jurisdiction.

A couple of months after my arrival, the Okaloosa Circuit Court issued an order defining my legal status, and with the absent of any additional charge, I was transferred in a van with a group of prisoners to Lake Butler Reception and Medical Center. I was assigned to work in the kitchen washing pots and pans.

I wrote a letter to Rosenblatt informing him that I was presently at Lake Butler. A week later I received a letter from Rosenblatt saying that the U.S. Marshals had come to Lake Butler to transfer me back to Miami and prison officials said I was not in their custody. Subsequently, he told the U.S. Magistrate in Fort Lauderdale I was in Lake Butler under state custody. The problem was the U.S. Marshals had me in a Writ of Testificandum under Otero, and the state had me listed under Hernandez. Apparently the U.S. Magistrate got angry and warned prison officials to produce me "pronto" or face the consequences.

Afterward, two U.S. Marshals assumed legal custody and took me to Miami. I was housed in the Miami Metropolitan Correctional Center where the environment had changed in the last few years. MCC was housing a substantial number of Black detainees charged with petty criminal violations. The senseless war against drugs had implemented new priorities. Previously, the Federal Government had never wasted time filing charges in petty criminal violations, allowing the state to take over jurisdiction of those cases.

Most Blacks had formed gangs to monopolize the use of the coin telephone and victimized other prisoners. I had to fight with a Black jitterbug for the privilege of using

the telephone. All the prisoners were ordered to remain in their cells, while we were fighting in the hallway. At the end of the struggle the other prisoner was taken to the clinic for medical attention, where a medical technician gave him several stitches in his chin. I was escorted to the isolation cell and released a week later. The Black prisoner was sent back to Washington D.C. A week later I had another fight with a Marielito for the use of the telephone. Of this incident the guards never became aware. After those two fights, prisoners no longer messed with me. Most inmates were happy and willing to give me a few minutes of their time for a telephone call. Most Latin prisoners knew who I was and made every effort to protect me and provide information on what was going on in jail. Frequently, they consulted with me on their legal cases, and often I referred a criminal attorney to represent them. These people had the money to pay the professional fees and most of them were interested in the integrity of the lawyer.

My wallet with \$150 cash plus the false identifications was stolen by DEA agents. I told Rosenblatt to inquire about my money. He asked the Assistant U.S. Attorney about my wallet and the money. A week later Rosenblatt told me to forget about it; otherwise, they might file additional charges related to my drug activities in West Virginia. It was pure blackmail.

One day I was taken to trial in Palm Beach by U.S. Marshals. I was housed at the Palm Beach jail, one of those terrifying old county jails. For a couple of days, I slept on the floor till a bunk was available. Most prisoners were Blacks. I met a Marielito who helped me to become familiar with the place and the prisoners.

The trial was presided over by U.S. District Judge Kehoe. A jury was selected, mostly senior citizens. I had little hope, Harry and Bush became government witnesses. The DEA had found 300 pounds of high-grade marijuana. According to the testimony of Harry and Bush, twenty pounds belonged to me. Like them, I was charged with smuggling and distribution facing two-three years sentences. Concerned of going to prison,

Rosenberg spent a lot of money hiring two private attorneys.

The Assistant U.S. Attorney presented her case, describing our trip to West Virginia and later to the Bahamas where we got the marijuana, and finally our trip to smuggle the pot into the United States. Some of the jury members, bored by the proceeding took a cat nap. The jury found Rosenberg guilty on both counts and I was found guilty on one count of smuggling. They dropped the count of distributing, considering the small amount of pot. I was taken back to Miami-MCC. Weeks later, Rosenblatt filed a motion to dismiss the charges alleging that my right to a speedy trial had been violated, because the trial was held 60 days after the arraignment.

For Christmas we had a turkey dinner. Prisoners were allowed to receive a package containing food. During visits, everybody was in high spirits. By December, I was paged to report at R and D. I was not allowed to get my tennis shoes or my own clothing. Two U.S. Marshals took me to Fort Lauderdale for sentencing. To our surprise, U.S. District Judge Norman Roettger was presiding over the court. I was angry because I was not allowed to wear my own civilian clothes to appear in court. I was wearing oversized pants and a t-shirt, so, when the U.S. Marshal came to my cell, I took off my sandals and went barefoot; this shocked everybody. Rosenblatt in panic, requested the court to postpone the sentencing date. The judge philosophically said that it was probably out of my control, appearing without wearing my own clothes and shoes, adding that it wouldn't affect the sentencing proceedings. Judge Roettger had a reputation for being heavy on sentencing. Rosenblatt kept arguing about conditions of my sentence and his motion for violation of a speedy trial that had been denied by the court. Harry and Bob were granted with an extension of time which caused my violation to a speedy trial. Rosenblatt notified the court that he had intended to appeal to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta based on that violation.

Judge Roettger wore a hearing aid and had difficulty hearing me. An attractive

female attorney helped me to communicate with him. We asked the court to allow me to serve my state and federal time concurrently in a federal prison. The federal prosecutor objected, alleging it was illegal. Judge Roettger issued an order sentencing me to a maximum of three years, my federal time to run concurrently with my state sentence and that I should remain under the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. A report within 90 days was to be provided to the court on whether or not I should serve time in the custody of the bureau. The sentencing proceeding was over. I thanked Rosenblatt for a good job, said good-bye, and was escorted by the U.S. Marshall back to my cell.

At five o'clock, the U.S. Marshall came over to handcuff all the prisoners. I was penalized, because I dared to appear in the courtroom barefoot. I was leg-shackled and handcuffed with a chain to my waist, causing me to walk very slowly to the van in the parking lot. That was the goal of the government--to slow me down.

Back at Miami-MCC, I noticed that my cell-mate, a Marielito who had been released had vandalized all my personal property. What really got me angry was he stole my new \$100 New Balance running shoes. Right away, I filed a complaint with the institution reporting the theft and asking for compensation. I was just exhausting administrative remedies asking to the Warden and later the Federal Bureau of Prisons to pay for my stolen personal property. My complaints were denied.

Several months later, I filed a small complaint against the Miami-MCC and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, petitioning the Southern District of Florida in Miami to issue an order against the defendant to pay for the stolen properties. After two years of litigation and spending \$60 on photocopies and mailing stamps, the court ruled in my favor and the Assistant U.S. Attorney sent me a check from the U.S. Treasury Department for \$100. It was more a satisfaction, than the petty amount involved.

Observing the abuse of the prison staffs with inmates, I filed a civil action against the Miami MCC based on four issues. Two of them were destroying the BP-9 complaint

forms filled out by prisoners to solve grievances, and the implementation of “conjugal visits in the federal system of prison.” For that reason, I was no longer welcome at Miami-MCC. A prisoner can never challenge the prison system without experiencing retaliation.

At the end of January, I was included in a bus trip to another federal prison, Talladega Correctional Institution. We stayed at Tallahassee Correctional Institution overnight as transit inmates. Tallahassee was a nightmare: a long process to be fingerprinted and photographed; a long six hours waiting on benches to be processed; an insipid cold dinner heated in a microwave; rationed toilet paper; a facility monitored by closed circuit cameras and very few guards.

On a snowy day we arrived at Talladega Correctional. I was taken with half a dozen prisoners to the main office of Receiving and Delivery to be processed. We were identified through prison records, fingerprinted, strip-searched, went through anal cavity and sexual area inspections and then handcuffed with a chain around our waist. Prisoners were placed in two holding cells while the drivers checked each individual record of the new arrivals with a guard on duty behind a formica desk.

Talladega Correctional was another recently built institution housing some 600 inmates. It had originally built for juveniles, but with the increasing prison population, the Bureau of Prisons turned it into an adult center. Alabama had endless numbers of riots and civil action suits in violation of fundamental civil rights.

The prison had a “monitor movement” in the yard. Every hour the prisoners had ten minutes to walk from one building to another, using a special pass from the guards at their dormitory. Saturday and Sunday were the only days prisoners were able to move freely outside the yard from sunrise to sunset. At random the guards would frisk any inmate walking around the yard yelling, “Take everything out of your pocket, spread-eagle and give me your pass.” The officer searched for contraband. Like all prisons, every kind of social drugs was available to the prison population. The government failed to

control those outside the fence as well as those behind the fence. During the Carter Administration the issue of human rights was a priority and during the Reagan Administration fighting Communists became an obsession. Thanks to Ronald Reagan, prison guards acted arbitrarily and arrogantly. Again, intimidation and physical force were routinely enforced in prisons.

In the prison system, I went from one surprise to another. Minutes later, I met Revuelta. I had no idea that Revuelta was serving time in federal prison. The last time I met him was in a fancy Mafia-owned discotheque in Miami Beach. Revuelta worked at the laundry where I was provided with the khaki prison uniform, linen, and an army jacket.

Days later Revuelta introduced me to an influential leader of the Italian Mafia who was serving a long sentence for murder. While serving his sentence in an Atlanta penitentiary the God father was charged with ordering another assassination attempt against another gang member. Revuelta had known him from Havana. I often walked around the yard with the old man, having pleasant conversations. When I told him I was filing a civil action against the Federal Bureau of Prisons concerning prison conditions at Miami-MCC, he laughed and said, "That's like talking to a stone wall. You won't go anywhere." He was right. At one time he was involved in Cuba with casino gambling. After Castro took over, the American Mafia, as well as other Americans living in Cuba fled the island for the United States. For a few years, Cuba was a paradise for the Mafia and they loved it.

The next time, I met the old man in the yard, he told me about the years he had spent in the Atlanta penitentiary, where a decade before prisoners rioted in protest of the food. The Feds took care of that problem. The food in Atlanta became the best in the prison system. Most of the recent inmate's complaints were related to excess use of force. I enjoyed talking to him. He was like most Mafia members I met--lovely people with great

sense of family values.

I was assigned to a dormitory in a two-man cell. Most Latin prisoners welcomed me. Revuelta made things easier for me, ordering some of them to take care of me. Immediately, a prisoner came with a bag of groceries and junk food. They were watching I wouldn't get into any kind of problem. In the next few days I went to the orientation class. It would take two weeks to get my personal belongings packed in two carton boxes and my money from Miami-MCC to Talladega. Although prison officials didn't recognize my status as political prisoner, most prisoners did. I met a couple of Canadian inmates, who alleged to be political prisoners fighting for the independence of Quebec.

After working a few days in the kitchen, washing dishes and cleaning the dining hall, I was assigned to work at the main office, typing in the bookkeeping department. Another prisoner helped me get the job. I worked with a charming old woman and my relationship with other civilians was great. In state prisons, prisoners were treated worse than slaves; that was the reason for trying to serve my time in a federal prison. The benefit at the state system was that prisoners were awarded with more gain-time. But most state prisons are depressive, lack of funds made the state sloppy in operating and maintaining the prison system. Also, prisoners are more vulnerable and exposed to physical violence.

Two weeks later when my personal files arrived, I was transferred back to the kitchen without explanation. Later, I was told that with my background as an expert in explosives, the Warden became concerned about his personal safety. With the assistance of other inmates, I was able to get another job typing at the athletic departments earning \$25 per month. I loved this job, because in the afternoon I was able to play tennis, my favorite game; also I was able to meet a lot of good players. The institution had four tennis courts and four racquetball courts and each building had four TV rooms, two for local programs, and the other two for movie channels. The main library was inadequate. And once more at night, I began taking college courses in social science. I filed for a

government loan. My experience in prison could be described as living with the enemy.

Often, I met Revuelta in the prison yard and we talked about old times at the Fountainblue Apartments. Revuelta told me his story. A few years ago, he smuggled a ship of marijuana through Texas and years later one of the participants turned State's witness. Criminal charges were filed in Federal Court and he was convicted, based on the testimony of his former partner. The cops had no other evidence. Under the Rico Act of Racketeering, Revuelta was sentenced to 40 years and spent a fortune on appeals with attorneys who promised he would soon be free. His relationship with his wife had deteriorated and he had no other resource or hope to see freedom again.

I almost enjoyed serving time in the federal prison. The environment was more relaxed. I was able to play tennis every day. I met great tennis players. I like to serve my three years federal time running concurrently with my 30-year state sentence, but the Federal Bureau of prisons and prosecutors didn't agree.

Hope is the parent of faith. At the end of March I was paged by the loud speaker to report to R&D, where a guard ordered me to pack my belongings. Two friendly Marshals drove me to Lake Butler Reception and Medical Center. On the way, the Marshals got lost, and had to ask local folks how to get to Lake Butler. Lake Butler Medical Center was equivalent to a modern day concentration camp. The untutored guard became mad when I signed my name as Otero, instead of my committed name of Hernandez. This issue will bring me some problems in the future. I was promptly escorted to the Lieutenant's office. After an argument and some verbal threats, I explained the officer that the FBI was aware of my legal name. I went back with the guard and was allowed to sign the identification card as "Otero."

After the methodical strip search and inspection of ass and genitals, I was placed in the notorious K-Wing, where newcomers remained locked up 24 hours every day for a week. Any petty problem with the guards might bring serious consequences. I was told

about two Black prisoners who were recently killed in the stairway; the stairway was known as the graveyard. The guards reported the prisoners had fallen down the stairway. At night, we often heard prisoners yelling and crying. While I had no idea what happened to them, all the inmates got the message.

One day, I was ordered by a redneck guard to shave my beard with soap and a used razor blade. It was painful. Next day I was escorted with two other prisoners from the cell block to the barber shop, where illiterate, petty criminals, mowed my hair. After a week, I was released from the K-Wing and worked in the kitchen five days a week. I enjoyed being busy and meditated a lot. Routinely, guards terrorized prisoners, shouting and dragging them to the K-Wing for an uncertain “accident” that would warrant medical attention. Doctors and nurses were all part of this conspiracy.

One day, while walking around the yard, three prisoners jumped the fence in clear daylight. A guard became aware that something was going on when he noticed that the prison population was standing in front of his tower, looking outside the fence. Then, looking around he observed the prisoners fleeing and fired several warning shots with his shot gun, but the prisoners already had reached the pine trees and bushes two hundred yards away. Guards driving patrol trucks and toting shot guns chased them with leashed dogs. Hours later the escapees were captured and locked in isolation cells and given only bread and water. Prisoners who attempted to escape were routinely abused by ruthless guards.

Three months later, I was taken on a bus trip. After having a silence breakfast with other prisoners, we were transported in a bus southbound, stopping at several institutions. We all were handcuffed and leg-shackled. About 3 p.m. the old bus arrived to Avon Park Correctional Institution, where I was assigned. It was the usual long trip and I was tired.

After being processed, I was assigned to Dormitory B, to a two-man cell. Hours later, I met Tom Overtown. He was a young fellow with a long robbery record in

Okaloosa County and was serving a life sentence for three petty armed robberies. Initially, I requested to be assigned to the Athletic Department picking up trash in the yard, with the idea of having plenty of time for my daily exercise, the library and meditation. Months later I enrolled in a Horticulture class. Every day the civilian teacher came over to the fence to pick up a group of students. The Horticulture Department was a facility with a wooden house as its main building, two greenhouses and a couple of plots to plant vegetables. The prison environment was dull and I enjoyed working with plants because they were colorful and full of energy.

Avon Park was considered one of the best State Correctional Institutions. The food was fair, with milk twice a day, movies twice a week and a large yard; most guards were generally polite. The Black population was kept at 40 percent to avoid fights and other disciplinary problems. The Black labeled the institution: "White Boy Prison."

The civilians in charge of the Horticulture class was the former Police Chief of Avon Park, who was retired and owned a horticulture business in town. In the garden, I meditated with my attention focused on a colorful rose. I knew that I would remain incarcerated for several years. And those were long years as I very seldom had visits from my family.

A few months later, two U.S. Marshals took me in a van going to South Florida for a preliminary hearing related to my civil action filed against Miami-MCC. I was temporarily housed at the North Miami Detention Center, used as a screen center for federal prisoners and detainees. Days later, I was transferred to Miami-MCC.

One morning, I was taken to a federal court, presided over by the Honorable U.S. Magistrate Peter Nimkoff. Magistrate Nimkoff was considered by federal prosecutors and FBI agents as a liberal, who often was willing to post bond on defendants charged with criminal offenses related to social drugs, having a potential to flee the country to avoid prosecution. Unlike other traditional federal judges, Magistrate Nimkoff did not agree

with all the facts presented by federal prosecutors and FBI agents. Nimkoff noticed discrepancies in the federal cases presented by the U.S. Attorney office.

Lady Dragon. Maria Arista-Volsky was a Cuban economic immigrant who had arrived in the U.S. with her parents several decades before. Taking advantage of the political exodus, they were immediately granted a political refugee status allowing Maria and her family to live and work in the United States. Therefore, thanks to those men who had formed Brigade 2506, as well as many other fighters, life in the United States was easier for other Cubans to become residents and U.S. citizens, including the Volsky's. Arista- Volsky attended Ohio University and became Assistant U.S. Attorney in Miami. During my preliminary hearings, this bombshell brunette flirted with me through obvious body language.

Arista-Volsky was another entrepreneur like Yoss and Adorno, seeking better opportunities and self-improvement in the vast ocean of jurisprudence. She was assigned to my case because she was a Cuban-American, familiar with the Cuban culture and because she spoke Spanish.

Petty law breeds the greatest crime. During the hearings Magistrate Nimkoff accepted my complaint on the issue of violation of Due Process of Law, filing a BP-9 seeking grievances against the institution. My petition for implementing conjugal visits in the federal prison system was denied as being pornographic and scandalous material. The U.S. Attorney in Miami succeeded in promoting homosexuality in their prisons.

I complained to the court about lack of access to an adequate law library. The Magistrate issued an order to allow me to visit the main law library. The Warden then closed down the law library for the entire prison population while I was using the facility for a few hours everyday. The Warden attempted to blame me for having the prison population restricted from using the law library, complaining that I was a “high risk” prisoner with a violent record.

At first, inmates in the general population stayed away from me. I explained that I was trying to improve prison conditions and the Warden in a devious manner was trying to circumvent the court's order and create a confrontation with other prisoners by closing down the main law library. Then, they became more cooperative and friendly. Arista-Volsky also objected my status serving time in state prison and insisted that for lack of jurisdiction, the complaint should be dismissed. Magistrate Nimkoff said that I was also a federal prisoner convicted of a federal offense in a federal court and accordingly, the court held legal jurisdiction over the civil action.

My legal assistant was Brother Love, a hippie. Meeting Brother Love for the first time was a scary experience. Brother Love seemed like a monk who had come from the mountains after 40 years in isolation: tall, long hair, a massive beard, decayed teeth and sloppy dress. In my conversations, I found him to be a very bright person who sometimes walked an illogical path of insanity.

I had seen Brother Love a few years back on a TV news report. He was the president of a church where the followers advocated the right to smoke marijuana as part of their religious belief. The church owned a mansion on one of Miami Beach's exclusive islands. In another TV news interview, I saw Brother Love with his attractive blond wife and his six-year-old son smoking a big joint. At this point, all Brother Love's problems began. The church was involved in the smuggling of marijuana from Jamaica, causing his eventual arrest, trial and conviction. Sometimes, I consulted him on legal issues and to check my spelling.

In the aftermath of his trial Brother Love was found guilty and during the sentencing kept shouting at the judge that he loved to smoke pot, while U.S. Marshals dragged him out of the courtroom. The judge finally sentenced the pot-head hippie to 15 years. Brother Love was lucky the judge had not awarded him with several consecutive life sentences for his honesty. Probably, Brother Love went to history as the most ardent

supporter to smoke pot.

The court allowed me to remain at the Miami-MCC to continue legal proceeding, but Arista-Volsky objected on behalf of the Warden and requested my immediate transfer. She alleged that I was a dangerous inmate requiring special attention, thus needing more guards to watch me. Arista-Volsky told the court I was a convicted terrorist. She cited my frequent fights in jail with other prisoners, trying to retain my few petty privileges. During the Bay of Pigs invasion my violent attitude was a blessing; now it was a sin. From freedom fighter to terrorist. American society was in a constant contradiction. I was labeled as a violent man. Unofficially the prosecutor and the Warden sought the support of a senior federal judge to have me transferred to Avon Park till further hearings. The government was a labyrinth of bureaucratic red tape and the U.S. Attorney and the Warden knew their way around.

Preparing for a legal war, the U.S. Attorney assigned to the case their best expert on civil action, who wrote an intensive Memorandum of Law in support of their petition. The Memorandum of Law looked like telephone book. It took me several days to check all the cited cases and respond to this document. The civil action expert a year later would be appointed by President Reagan as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida.

I was immediately taken by bus to the Seminole Correctional Facility near Orlando. This facility was used by the Federal Government to house temporary federal prisoners and detainees facing criminal charges in the Middle District of Orlando Federal Court.

During two days living at that county jail, I noticed they were infringing on the fundamental constitutional rights of the prisoners. Generally, the federal detainees and prisoners never filed a compliant in Federal Court, because they were untutored or afraid of retaliation by the Sheriff.

On November 1, 1983, I filed a civil action complaint as *pro-se*, alleging that: 1)

the inmates and detainees did not receive the minimum five hours of exercise a week according to the law; 2) plaintiffs were committed to cells with the light turned off 24 hours per day; 3) plaintiffs were banned from adequate access to a law library; 4) some detainees and prisoners were compelled to sleep on the floor; and 5) plaintiffs were not provided natural sugar with their meals, but instead, were compelled to consume saccharin “that the Surgeon General has determined that cause cancer.”

I gave the Correctional Officer my handwritten complaint to obtain photocopies. The Sheriff took the opportunity to read my complaint, and immediately I was escorted to his office. He gave me a lecture on how well he was running his jail. He showed me a Certificate of Recognition given him by The Prison and Jail Association for performance. I told the Sheriff that his jail was infringing on the fundamental constitutional rights of the prisoners and I disagreed with that Certificate of Recognition. The Sheriff became angry, warning he might lock me up in isolation to protect me from other prisoners. I was familiar with this trick by prison officials and informed the Sheriff if I was locked up in solitary, I would increase monetary compensation from \$250,000 to one million dollars for mental anguish and humiliation. The next day, U.S. Marshals drove me back to Avon Park Correctional Institution.

The U.S. Middle District Court was not the best judiciary forum in Florida for a *pro-se* civil action against state officials. Weeks later the Clerk of the Court returned my written complaint and ordered me to use the form-questionnaire under Title 42, U.S.C., Section 1983. On February 15, 1984, I filled out the form-questionnaire, attaching as evidence a report about “saccharin,” as a cause of a cancer. In my complaint I stated: “Prison administration should not impose restrictions purely to suit the convenience of the institution, **Rohem vs. Malcolm**, 371 F. Supp., at 607; and American Correctional Association, page 543.”

On March 8, 1984, the U.S. District Court dismissed the case without serving the

civil action complaint *Sua Sponte* as frivolous and for failure to state a claim in which relief could be granted. I filed a Motion for Reconsideration that the District Court answered denying the motion. On August 2, 1984, I filed for appeal with the U.S. District Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit of Atlanta, **Otero vs. Sheriff of Seminole Correctional Facility, Federal Bureau of Prisons**, et. al., Case No. 84-157-Civ-Orl.11.

In my appeal I stated:

The District Court failed to grant the customary leniency and wider latitude to prisoners according to **Haine vs. Kerner**. It has long settled that a complaint should not be dismissed for failure to state a claim, unless Plaintiff failed to state facts in support of his claim. Therefore the District Court dismissed the complaint premature ... The Courts cannot close their judicial eyes to prison conditions which represent a grave and immediate threat to health or physical well being, **Campbell vs. Beto**, 460 F.2d 765 (5th Cir. 1972). Jail officials failed to provide prisoners with a decent environment within the jail walls ... It is well established that prisoners do not lose all their constitutional rights under the Due Process and the Equal Protection Clauses which follow them to prison, **Cooper vs. Pate**, 378 U.S. 546, 84 Ct. 1733. Inmates have the right to protect themselves from physical and mental punishment, **Jackson vs. Bishop**, 404 F.2nd 571 (8th Cir. 1968). And the right to reasonable physical exercise is fundamental for prisoners, **Rohem vs. Malcolm**, 371 F. Sup. 594 (S.D. N.Y. 1974).

Almost a year later the Court of Appeals ruled in my favor, but I was too mentally exhausted to continue the claim. Now, I expected that the District Court might dismiss the case for lack of jurisdiction because I was not committed any longer to that jail. State prosecutors were experts at seeking loopholes to get a case dismissed in court. Nevertheless, I caused a crisis between the Sheriff from Seminole Correctional Facility and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. After my brief visit to that jail, the Sheriff was having

second thoughts about having federal prisoners and detainees housed at his facility and filing civil action complaints against him.

In Miami Arista-Volsky portrayed herself as a victim and complained in a private conversation to my legal counsel, Robert Rosenblatt, about my civil action complaint against the county jail in Orlando and the problem I had created to the Bureau of Prisons. To them, I was a bad boy.

CHAPTER 15

THE ELECTION OF 1980

The election campaign of 1980 was hard-fought. Reagan warned of the nation's military weakness and stressed Carter's failure to solve the nation's economic problems. He reminded voters of the ever-rising rates of inflation and unemployment, and spoke of the current recession as the Carter depression. If elected, Reagan promised to cut spending in government, cut taxes and stimulate business. Meanwhile Carter reminded the people of his foreign achievements, claiming that no American soldiers had died in battle. He spoke of improved relations with China and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. In November, Reagan won a sweeping victory. The Republicans won the Senate for the first time since 1952 and Democrats kept control of the House.

President Ronald Reagan entered office with widespread support from the public. His warm, winning, relaxed good nature and his reputation for managing personal differences added a nice touch to his administration. Immediately, Reagan moved to balance the budget in order to reduce the inflation rate; he accomplished this unsavory task at the expense of social programs, affecting mostly the poor. This policy would be responsible for future riots. During the Reagan Administration the richer became richer and the poor became the poorest ever in modern America.

Reagan soon made it clear he would oppose Soviet expansion everywhere at the risk of confrontation, warning about the military intervention of the Soviets in Poland. In that country the Catholic Church very skillfully diffused the crisis and returned Poland to democracy. Reagan removed the embargo on agricultural exports to the Soviet Union that

Carter had ordered. In El Salvador, Reagan moved from warning to action, increasing military aids to the government. Critics feared that it might become another Vietnam. With Reagan's policy any possibility of a renewal detente seemed dim.¹

The Grenada Invasion. Grenada, a tiny island in the Caribbean with a population of 110,000, produced about a third of the world's annual consumption of nutmeg. The island had become an obsession for President Reagan, William Casey, Director of the CIA, and his National Security Cabinet (NSC), led by Admiral John Poindexter and Lt. Col. Oliver North. Maurice Bishop, a young, charismatic Marxist was building a 9,000-foot jet runway. Cuba was assisting and the Soviets had been granted permission to use it. On October 19, 1983, Bishop was executed in a domestic dispute of leadership by the military. To legitimize the invasion, the United States stated that Cuba was involved in the coup d'etat against Bishop, that American students were in danger of being taken hostage and Grenada was being turned into an important Soviet-Cuban base.

Though the U.S. had not broken diplomatic relations with revolutionary Grenada, Washington had never accredited any ambassador to the Bishop government. During the crisis the State Department favored negotiations, while the hard-liners, led by the Defense Department, the CIA and the National Security Council, advocated military intervention. The hard-liners alleged that the Soviets were planning to use Grenada, with its deep-water-port and its new runway, as a staging island for Soviet nuclear missiles on submarines or aircrafts.

The CIA and the Pentagon were the major sponsors of the invasion. They were concerned that Castro was using the airport to ferry troops to Angola, and giving the Soviets a valuable harbor convenient to Western oil lanes.

The Administration needed more legitimacy. The 9,000-foot runway, the artificial

¹Todd-Curti, 775-95.

fear for the 1,000 Americans and the absence of a government did not quite justify a full-scale invasion.

The solution surfaced the next day--Friday, October 21. In Barbados, a meeting was in progress with a group called the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The CIA informally sent word to them that the U.S. would be willing to invade Grenada upon their request, offering money and an economic aid package as "bribes." The OECS decided to comply with the United State's suggestion of invasion, requesting U.S. assistance in order to restore democracy in Grenada.

After the invasion, CIA records showed that a \$100,000 bribe was provided to the Government of Prime Minister Eugenia Charles. And the U.S. provided funds to build a 30-mile, \$10 million road on Dominica.

The historical meeting adjudicated by the seven Caribbean nations was in violation of Article Six of a 1981 treaty, which stated that "all such decisions shall require an affirmative vote of all Member States present and voting at the meeting." The Grenada Government was never notified by other Member States about the meeting or the outcome.

The Caribbean had been for centuries a domain of the British; therefore, it was in their best interest to read Washington's mind. The Reagan Administration in a deliberate manner misled the British, saying they did not consider an invasion in Grenada. At the last minute, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher learned that Reagan had signed the order of invasion. Despite two telephone conversations with President Reagan, the British Prime Minister was unable to get the invasion plans canceled.

In the political confusion that followed the invasion, Reagan won domestic battles, with the final goal of being re-elected. Most U.S. citizens were convinced that the invasion was right and justified. While Reagan was winning at home, he was losing

abroad.

Havana. On November 13, 1983, Fidel Castro addressed the crisis of Grenada, saying that Washington was lying. U.S. Officials and students of the medical school in Grenada had been provided with full assurance they could leave the country. On October 22, Castro told the Reagan Administration that Cuba was willing to cooperate in solving any difficulty, and problems could be settled without violence or intervention.

While no U.S. civilians were killed in Grenada before the invasion, the murder of four American nuns in El Salvador under the regime of President Jose Napoleon Duarte, for instance, and the deaths at the hands of El Salvador's military of tens of thousands of Salvadoreans, brought no move from the Reagan Administration to topple El Salvador's Government.

On October 25, 1983, the U.S. military force, plus several hundred token soldiers from other Caribbean nations requesting intervention began the operations and landing. It was clear that those who ordered a blackout of the news had in mind the fact that the war in Vietnam had been a public relations failure for Washington. That war was lost in great part because of the activities of journalists and TV reporters who brought the horrors of the campaign into the homes of millions of U.S. citizens. The military brass liked the example of the British Government, who had been more secretive during the Falkland War and its strict control of reporting from the scene of battle. Nevertheless, in Grenada very few news reporters were able to witness the actual action of the invasion. U.S. troops encountered stiff resistance. U.S. Intelligence operations had not warned them of anti-aircraft weapons. Three U.S. helicopters were shot down. In all, nineteen U.S. servicemen were killed and another 115 wounded. In error, U.S. jets bombed a mental

hospital, killing and wounding over 40 patients.²

Grenada's invasion had been easy and quickly helped Secretary of State Schultz to bolster his position at the White House. Schultz argued forcefully for all-out support for the Muslim-dominated resistance movement in Afghanistan and persuaded Reagan to provide the deadly anti-aircraft stinger missiles to the freedom fighters. He persuaded a reluctant President to dump Ferdinand Marcos and allow a democratic process to transfer power in the Philippines. With Chilean Dictator Augusto Pinochet, Schultz was less successful, because the General was a strong anti-communist.

Afghanistan was largely a CIA operation, as well as the war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Schultz tried to follow a double-track policy of negotiation with Managua while the Iran-Contra war weakened the government. While Schultz was willing to deal with the Sandinistas to get the Russians and the Cubans out of Nicaragua, Casey and the NSC staff would settle for nothing less than getting the Sandinistas out as well.

The first six years of the Reagan Administration were dominated by an ideological obsession with Communism and third-world radicalism that caused a trillion dollar military buildup that contributed heavily to our financial crisis.³

Avon Park. I was surprised when in an orientation class, prison officials advised the prisoners to engage in homosexual relations in a discreet manner. It seemed like they had accepted homosexuality as a reality.

At Avon Park those prisoners who received no income from family or friends, sold their blood for \$5 per pint every Friday at a blood bank, operated by the Florida

²Bob Woodward, *Veil: The Secret War of the CIA*, (New York: 1987, Simon/Schuster), 287-91; Hugh O'Schaughnessy, *Grenada*, (New York: Dodd Mead, 1984; 172-77, 216-22, 234-35.

³*The New York Review*, August 23, 1994; Associate Press, August, 1993.

Department of Corrections. The blood was subsequently sold to Asian and European countries by prison officials for \$25 per pint. Prisoners were allowed to sell a maximum of two pints per week.

One day I went to have breakfast and while walking in the food line, I had a petty argument with a Black prisoner named Green. The Black prisoner abandoned his serving position in the kitchen, came into the dining hall and assaulted me. We exchanged a few punches. The White officer did nothing to intervene or stop the fight; minutes later two Black officers came over from the kitchen. We were taken to "jail." The Black prisoner was released and I was kept locked up. A disciplinary report was issued against me. The Black officer maliciously stated in the report that I started the fight by throwing hot food in the face of inmate Green. Being locked up and finding eye witnesses was an impossible task in prison. In a brief disciplinary hearing, I was found guilty and sentenced to 15 days in jail. Some of my friends went to see the Lieutenant in my behalf and the next day I was released, serving only one week in an isolation cell. Mark Miller, who was working as a legal clerk, advised me not to get involved appealing the DR because it was a waste of time.

Reading the *Miami Herald*, I learned that my brother, Orlando, had fled Cuba in a seventeen-foot pleasure boat in bad weather with two other men. One of them was washed into the ocean. My brother and his companion were rescued by a U.S. destroyer. He was incarcerated at the Miami-MCC. My family in Miami vouched for him with the Immigration and Naturalization Department and a few days later he was released.

My brother was a Captain, pilot of a passenger twin engine Russian-made jet flying locally in Cuba and Jamaica. Because of his well-paying job he was able to shop at the free duty store in Kingston. Once Orlando was approaching Santiago de Cuba. The airport was engulfed in clouds and surrounded by the rugged mountains and he did a stunt

act, diving and hitting the runway with several G-forces. The Russian jet broke in two. An old woman was killed and other persons were seriously injured, including my brother.

An investigation of the accident, conducted by a Russian expert, concluded that my brother was responsible for the accident. After a year of painful recuperation he was allowed to return to work, but only at the Havana International Airport and only as part of the ground crew. A high-ranking Communist told him that he would never again fly another jet. Afterward, Orlando came to Miami to visit his mother. During those years only senior citizens were allowed to visit relatives living in the United States. His visit to Miami caused surprise and certain comments within the family and inner friend circles. The Latin community was paranoid about Castro spies.

At the time of his visit, I was released under a \$150,000 bond. I met Orlando on several occasions, advising him to stay in Miami. With the embargo enforced by the United States, the economic situation in Cuba was rapidly deteriorating. He declined to remain in Miami, explaining he had a wife and two children. In Latin culture, family unity was generally sacred.

When Orlando returned to Cuba, the Cuban Communist Government began actively working to file criminal charges against him. They cited that he had a counter-revolutionary brother living in the United States and that his accident was malicious and part of a conspiracy to cause damage to government property. Sensing a long incarceration, my brother and two other men fled Cuba in a power boat.

One Friday morning a Marielito tied two prison-made knives to his hands and chased another Cuban inmate, stabbing him several times. Prisoners in panic ran away from the incident. Several guards took the aggressive Marielito into custody and placed him in confinement. Several days later he was transferred to the East Unit Penitentiary, one of the worst prisons in the State of Florida, well-known nationwide. Right away, a

victim was taken to an outside hospital in serious condition, but he survived the attack. After the vicious fight, two trustees washed the spilled blood off the pavement and the prison continued its daily routine.

I believe that the law should be enforced with equity. Therefore, in Avon Park I spent a good deal of time at the law library where I initiated my civil actions in Federal Court. On May 28, 1985, I filed my first two petitions for the issue of a Writ of Mandamus requesting the U.S. District Court to compel the Assistant U.S. Attorney in Miami to file criminal charges against Miami officers who searched the house of Rodolfo Gallo confiscating 26 kilos of pure cocaine and \$1,311,000. The Miami detectives embezzled \$400,000. Afterward, Paul Pollack, representing the defendant Rodolfo Gallo, received \$300,000 and three kilos of pure cocaine as legal fees and payment to bribe the late Chief Circuit Judge Baker for expediting the return of the \$900,000 confiscated by the Narco detectives. In a motion to produce documents, I requested the FBI and the Miami Police Department to produce a copy of the personal diary of Rafael Blanco, who was found dead with a female companion in his condominium at the Chapter Club, 600 N.E. 36 St., Miami, Florida. In Blanco's diary there was a description of Pollack's surreptitious dealing with the Senior Circuit Court Judge's Baker and Morphonio, related to fixing criminal cases. Once I spoke to Grayston Lynch, the CIA agent in charge of the failed Bay of Pigs operation, and he told me that some state judges were taking bribes. I was always amused how well informed the agency was.

The other petition for the issue of a Writ of Mandamus was filed against the Honorable Circuit Judge Helen Gable Morphonio for fixing criminal cases and receiving bribes. I contested that there was a conspiracy to violate the law. (Cases No. 85-2093-Civ-Kehoe, Case No. 2526 Civ-Kehoe, and Case No. 2527.)

On July 14, 1986, the U.S. District Judge James W. Kehoe ruled "that the

Petitioner had failed to state a cause for which relief may be granted and the court had no subject matter jurisdiction over the action as presently alleged.” The case was dismissed without prejudice, allowing me to refile another complaint with proper allegation of jurisdiction.

Eventually Judge Kehoe dismissed a motion for reconsideration and I appealed the case to the Eleventh Circuit Court in Atlanta, (Case Nos. 87-5543 and 86-2586). In the appeal brief I stated:

A Plaintiff may challenge a public interest in which Congress has recognized the need for review of administrative action and Plaintiff is significantly involved to have a standing to represent the public. The complaint in the nature of Mandamus is an issue of public interest and he has a protected interest of Life and Liberty the District Court erred when they dismissed the complaint *Sua sponte* without hearing and without requiring responsive pleading from Appellee. A petition for redress of grievances is protected by the First Amendment. Corruption of public officials is an issue of public interest.

The Appellant argues that the discretionary authority of the United States Attorney is not absolute. The Appellant filed a complaint requesting to summon a grand jury in good faith and there is sufficient probable cause elements to believe that criminal offenses have been committed. In **Nixon vs. Sirica**, 487 F.2d 700 (D.C. 1972), the Court used Writ of Mandamus 1651 during a grand jury investigation related to Watergate. In this case the Appellant contends that there was a conspiracy to violate the law. “The conspiracy is the agreement to act with an illegal purpose, **United States vs. Delucca**, 630 F.2d 294 (5th Cir. 1980).” In **Lopez vs. Vandewater**, 620 F.2d 1229 (7th Cir. 1980), is a conspiracy between a Judge and others to illegally convict him.

This case was later dismissed by the Appeals Court. While in Caracas, Luis Posada Carriles, the former DISIP agent involved in blowing up a Cubana DC-8 jet, was arrested with Doctor Orlando Bosch in 1976, as suspects in masterminding the plot. Subsequently in 1982, Posada and Hernan Ricardo escaped from San Carlos military prison in Caracas seeking asylum in the Chilean Embassy, but the Pinochet Government handed them back to the Venezuelans. The Cuban exiles were shocked with the Chilean government. In August, 1985, Posada escaped from San Juan Morro Jail by bribing the Warden with \$28,600 for his freedom. Four years later, Posada surfaced in El Salvador, managing the operation of Oliver North's secret Contra supply network and fighting the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua. In 1986, Posada joined a secret, parallel security force of Guatemalan President Vinicio Cerezo, and in 1990 was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt, recovered and then vanished.

In Avon Park I met Mark Miller, a young fellow that was an electrician during the daytime, and at nights and weekends he sold social drugs. Miller had a flamboyant lifestyle for many years. One day everything went wrong when his two unfriendly drug suppliers came to collect their money, and apparently, both of them were high as a raccoon. At this point, violence is commonly enforced by any party. One of them talked about raping his wife. Miller took a revolver from under the sofa, killing one man; the other was able to escape by flying through a window while Miller was frantically shooting at him.

Miller called the cops, alleging self-defense inside his house with a visible threat to his family. The cops ignored his explanation because they were aware of Miller's dealings with social drugs. For years local cops were unable to catch red-handed the sleek Miller in his dealing of drugs. Instead of filing criminal manslaughter charges, appropriate under such circumstances, with the maximum of only a five-year sentence, the cops

instead filed charges of first degree murder. Miller was immediately arrested and incarcerated. The legal system became a labyrinth without any possible hope of freedom for him. Mark Miller was sentenced to life in prison without parole. Prison life didn't make Miller any better.

Miller began to work as a law clerk assisting prisoners with their cases in court. Miller frequently assisted me with my new civil action litigations against the government to improve prison conditions. Without hope of being released on parole, Miller began to experiment with all kinds of drugs, including the powerful "heroin." The drug was often stolen from the clinic and sometimes smuggled into the prison. He met another inmate named Steve McDonald who introduced him to this fascinating, risky and endless world of addiction.

After one year working as a law clerk at the law library, Miller was making good money. He was able to pay his appeal attorney and support his wife, who started visiting him. Money was an important factor in maintaining an amicable relationship. Like any other inmate, Mark was happy having his wife visiting him from time to time. Otherwise, she had the freedom to do whatever she wished in her personal life. Infidelity becomes part of the incarceration imposed by the government; and nothing is done to promote family solidarity.

Tom Overtown was another inmate without hope of becoming free in the future. He had a long record of breaking-and-entering and assault-with-a-firearm. Overtown's parents came to visit him only about every two years. Overtown wrote to a girl named Sonia in California, having gotten her name from an ad in a magazine. Once a month she would accept his collect calls and chat for a few minutes. Talking to free people was mental therapy for some prisoners.

In Avon Park I also met a few celebrity inmates. One was a Jewish investor, who

earned several million dollars skimming land from investors in Florida. When the scheme was discovered by the State of Florida, he was arrested. Later he jumped bond, seeking refuge in Canada, where he was kidnaped by a bounty hunter paid by the bond company. He was sentenced to 35 years. The Canadian Government filed a protest with the State Department. Under pressure from Washington, the State of Florida released him under a symbolic 35-year probation term.

Euthanasia. The other celebrity was a retired Miami engineer named Roswell Gilbert. He shot his wife who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease and osteoporosis, thrusting the issue of euthanasia into national consciousness. In most European nations, doctors provide patients suffering terminal and painful chronic diseases with the option of euthanasia, a painless death, but in the U.S. it is illegal. The State of Florida filed charges against, found him guilty of first degree murder and he was sentenced to 25 years. The inmates affectionately called him "Pa." While serving his prison term he suffered several heart attacks. Governor Graham initially denied him a pardon based on humanitarian reasons, but the press and the public opinion was in favor of his release. After several years of legal maneuvering, in 1990, Governor Bob Martinez granted clemency; it was a politically wise decision. Years later, Gilbert died at the age of 85 in Baltimore, Maryland.

I served the first five years in prison without any major problems. Later, my mental and physical health broke down and I became a regular clinic patient, where the doctor prescribed me sleeping pills, 75-milligram Seconal. After six months on this potent drug, the doctor refused to prescribe more and transferred my case to the psychiatrist, Dr. Verde, a Filipino. In my lengthy visits to see Dr. Verde, I learned that the "suicide rate" at the prison was high. Almost every week several cases of suicides were reported. To make it more difficult, the Department of Corrections implemented regulations restricting the use of prescribed drugs. Now, most drugs were given in liquid instead of pills.

At Avon Park, Mark Miller, Tom Overtown and many other prisoners agreed that at least 70 percent of the population was engaged in “homosexual relationship.” Some prisoners had no hope of returning to freedom while others would return only after serving long sentences. The majority of the prison population participated in “homosexual relationships,” replacing heterosexual relationships they had enjoyed before being incarcerated. For all those men, intimate relationships of being touched and loved meant a lot. Without a heterosexual environment some prisoners became bisexual. Politicians and judges were solely responsible for the quality of prison life.

AIDS. One day while reading the prison bulletin, I learned of a prisoner housed in a minimum security compound who was diagnosed as dying of pneumonia. The doctors later reported that the death of the prisoner was caused by AIDS. It was the first time I heard the mention of AIDS. After learning about AIDS’ strong relationship to homosexuality and the prison environment, it was easy to conclude that the environment of the prison population was a paradise for breeding the AIDS virus.

I began to investigate. The inmate who died of AIDS was previously in a work-release program, but was charged with violating his probation by prison officials and was brought back to Avon Park to finish serving his prison term. I also learned that he had homosexual relations with some prisoners before being hospitalized. Thus, I realized that the spreading of the lethal AIDS within the prison population was a stark reality.

When the blood bank was closed down, it caused an economy problems to Department of Corrections as well as the prison population.

In the United States, Asia and Europe, massive testing had shown that some of the blood was contaminated with the lethal AIDS virus. Because of the high rate of homosexual conduct in the prison system and the subsequent link to the AIDS virus, most prisoner's blood could no longer be used by the general public. The Florida Department of

Corrections was finally unable to continue making a profit from sale of inmate's blood.

A decade later the sale of this tainted blood would have a dramatic impact worldwide. Blood, like everything in Germany, was supposed to be safe. European doctors discovered that hemophiliacs had received the HIV virus from transfusions. To reassure the public, after October, 1985, all blood products were screened for HIV. In November, 1993, Germany's Health Ministry asked millions of people, anyone who had been operated on since 1980, to have AIDS tests. The German Government acknowledged that a German blood-supply company failed to properly screen two-thirds of the blood sent to 60 hospitals and clinics over the past decade. Doctors insisted that only a million patients were at risk. The German Government acknowledged that over 377 cases of infection through transfusion had been reported. In the United States, thousands of cases were reported where patients, who had received blood transfusions, contracted the HIV virus. All these facts motivated me to file a civil action in court requesting authorities to implement an adequate policy in the prison system to protect the prison population as well as the general public.⁴

To support my petition for implementing conjugal visits in federal prisons, I wrote to several universities in New York, Illinois, Massachusetts and California. All the doctors and psychiatrists were very helpful. In this detective work I was able to get a clinical reports of "when mother went to prison," explaining the devastating experience of women and their children facing the justice system. The report described the emotional impact on the children and how they go underground. Parents described their experience of serving time to their children, as going to "college." Some of them didn't inquire about the bars and the guards. In one of my motions supporting conjugal visits I wrote, "Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum

⁴*U.S. News & World Report*, November 15, 1993.

of opportunity.” A psychiatrist working in the federal prisons admitted that homosexuality is rampant during incarceration. I learned that only seven states had instituted conjugal visits in the United States.

The most intellectual states were New York, Chicago, Massachusetts and California. In my motion for implementing conjugal visits, I attached some of the studies, including one titled, “When Parents Go to Prison, Those Who are Left Behind, and The Mother and Children.” The Federal Court dismissed my motions, stating that although I had done extensive research, the court didn't have the time to read all my motions.

I attempted to tell the judges that in the same way the court enforced the law, they had the same obligation to protect innocent victims--the prisoner's spouse and children. Learning criminal law was a new dimension for me and I discovered it was an endless labyrinth seeking remedies for relief. The right timing and some luck would help to win a case, but the law is generally designed to control the population and perpetuate capitalistic values. Equality and justice for all are empty words.

Prison environment is quite restrictive. To receive cassette tapes for meditation and mental therapy, I had to see the chaplain, who authorized a special package permit. I also requested authorization for a cassette player, but was denied. I solved the problem by using Miller's cassette player that he got before the regulation was enforced banning cassette players.

Now the Department of Corrections prohibited the Florida prison population from receiving Christmas packages containing food. This new regulation was implemented because of an incident in Raiford Penitentiary where a guard tasted a homemade cake loaded with reefer; he experienced quite a trip!

Tears of Joy and Sorrow. January ended with a cruel tragedy that shocked the world. I was reading in my cell when Tom Overtown came over excitedly saying the

shuttle blew up in space while taking off. "You're bullshitting me!" was my reply. "No, I'm serious. Come to the TV room," replied Overtown. I went into the overcrowded TV room and we watched a replay of the space shuttle lifting off from Cape Canaveral and seconds later blowing to pieces. At the Chow Hall prisoners ate in silence in a kind of memorial for those fallen heroes. After lunch I went to the law library to finish a petition for a Writ of Mandamus related to the lethal AIDS virus. I would never file this petition while at Avon Park.

Since my incarceration I had not received a visit from my family. Knowing that my incarceration would be long, I asked them to send me money instead of coming to see me. A visit to Avon Park took a full day for anyone coming from South Florida. I remained isolated from the community and only kept in touch with my legal counsels, Bob Rosenblatt and Paul Morris who were in charge of my appeal.

I was having problems in seeing Dr. Verde to obtain my regular prescription of Seconal, so I got some sleeping pills from another prisoner to whom I explained my problem of insomnia. A week later guards searching my cell found some of the sleeping pills. I refused to tell him who gave me the pills, therefore, I received another DR. At the disciplinary hearing I was placed on 30 days probation.

Noticing problems with my vision, I went to see the eye doctor who prescribed me eye glasses. By this time my nerves were almost out of control. I was addicted on the medication provided by the doctor and smoking pot for stress reduction.

The evening news reported that the CIA mined a Nicaraguan port, blowing up a freight vessel. The Sandinista Government filed a complaint with the International Court against the United States, who ignored the ruling.

I had a telephone conversation with Rosenblatt concerning my Federal appeal in the West Palm Beach case. Bob appealed the case, based on violation of the 60-day

speedy trial law. The Eleventh Court of Appeals denied our petition. At that moment, I had a pending federal sentence of three years from my arrest at West Palm Beach that might run concurrent or consecutive with my state sentence. I could do nothing till the expiration of my state sentence.

I was transferred to Dormitory B. A few days later I went to see my Classification Officer. Every year inmates were interviewed by their assigned Classification Officer about progress and adjustment to life in the institution. He told me I was doing excellently, with my expected date of release in 2010. I was getting the maximum gain-time of 20 days per month. With no hope of getting out of this corrupt environment, I again started flirting with the idea of committing suicide. I was getting tired of living with uneducated petty criminals who often fought to the death, for a couple of dollars.

One night I took several pills and settled on my upper bunk ready for a ride to an unknown dimension. At midnight a powerful force kicked me out of my bunk, hitting a metal table and then the floor. A few cups, spoons and a portable radio flew into the air and fell to the floor, causing a lot of noise.

Drugged and breathless, lying on the floor, in slow motion, I tried to get up. I was trying to figure out, how I got into that fucking mess! Suddenly, a guard opened the door, asking what was going on. With great effort, I said that I had fallen from my upper bunk. The guard kept looking at me with curiosity, asking if I was doing okay. With extraordinary effort I answered that I was fine. I gripped the lower bunk, trying to get up, while my terrified cell mate looked at me with his eyes bulging out of their sockets, speechless, holding his blanket up to his neck. The guard sensed something was wrong and continued to stand at the door observing me. With great effort, I finally managed to get up off the floor. Knowing I could never climb into my upper bunk, I walked outside into the empty hallway to take a sip of cold water at the fountain. I was drowsy, barely

keeping my eyes open. When I came back, to my dismay, the officer was still standing at the cell door. According to regulation, prisoners have to be lying on their bunks. I attempted to climb into my upper bunk at that critical moment, I fainted.

I awakened lying on a bunk, with no idea of where I was. In slow-motion sequence, I realized this was a prison, then recalled every detail of my life. I peeked through a small screened window, seeing a hallway, rows of cells and prisoners walking by. I noticed that the cell door was unlocked and discovered that after checking my personal possessions, that my former roommate had stolen my coffee and sugar. This cell was frequently used for housing inmates in transit and locking up prisoners for disciplinary problems. Nobody said anything as to why I had been confined in the holding cell. During the next few weeks guards and inmates behaved like nothing had happened. Without reprimand from my peers, it was easy for me to deal with another unsuccessful suicide attempt. I had planned everything to the last detail, smuggling and hiding the sleeping pills for over a year. But something went wrong that night when a powerful force threw me out of my bunk, attracting the attention of the guard.

Days later, I reported back to the Horticulture class and the instructor greeted me with a smile. I continued my routine without any question or explanation. A few weeks later I was at the canteen shopping, when a Black inmate told me that a few days ago a guard had brought me to the clinic in a wheelchair, where he worked at night. He said I was tied up with a sheet and my eyes were reddish. I couldn't remember being in a wheelchair or the trip to the clinic.

I was transferred to another cell with another prisoner. Days later he moved out, and Shariff, an Egyptian, moved into the cell. The first two weeks, I loaned him money and shared my food with him. I always tried to keep a friendly relationship with my roommate.

Shariff, a prisoner incarcerated for domestic problems, was a chemist who became addicted to alcohol. He frequently shot at his neighbors, as well as his wife, till he was arrested. Shariff worked late at night on his chemistry project. I explained to him that at night I wanted the light turned off. He had moved to my cell because he had other friends nearby. I knew a desperate fight was coming at any time and it wouldn't be an easy one, because Shariff was a very solid 200-pound man.

Crisis Refines Life. For the first time since my incarceration, my brother came to visit me from Miami. Although I wanted to avoid any problem with Shariff, it didn't work the way I planned it. The Control Room called for 12 p.m. count, and all the prisoners walked to their respective dormitories. Upon returning to my dormitory, I knew I was in trouble. I had requested transfer to another cell because I was not getting along with my cell mate. It was denied. During the noon count the dreaded fight broke out. Shariff knocked me down and I knocked him down. With a punch he broke my cheek and I began to bleed. During the struggle I kicked him and bit him anywhere I could. There were no fight rules with a big gorilla. The prisoners enjoyed the fight, but I did not. I threw hot water on Shariff, but missed when inmate Johnson intervened.

The guard finally came over and noticing I was bleeding, escorted me to the clinic for medical attention. We were escorted to the Lieutenant's office, where he noticed that Shariff had been mauled, but failed to mention my face injury. As usual, I was locked up.

I had to take off all my clothes for the routine strip search. "Show your hands. Shake your hair. Open your mouth. Lift your balls. Turn around. Bend over and spread your ass," were the orders. I asked for a solitary cell, but the officer showed me his record, saying, "I have a full house. I'm going to put you with Garcia. The guard escorted me to cell number four. I recognized Francisco Garcia. He was a young homosexual who had been hanging around with a Puerto Rican. Every other day inmates were allowed to go to

a small fenced yard to walk and take a little sun for an hour, but were not allowed to talk to other prisoners on the general compound walking nearby. On the way back to our cells, all prisoners were strip-searched and anal-cavity inspected for contraband. I never again went to the yard so as to avoid the strip search and body cavity inspection; it was a ritual of humiliation. Prisoners were allowed to take a quick shower and shave with a used razor blade within five minutes. But without deodorant and bath soap, I had a terrible body odor. A trustee came by distributing forms to request magazines and books from the library. We couldn't have pens, pencils, cigarettes or matches, only our uniforms. Fortunately, I was allowed to bring some of my legal papers to respond to a court order on a pending civil action case against Miami-MCC.

A few days later during the disciplinary hearing, presided over by my Classification Officer Albritton, Sergeant Thomas and another Classification Officer found me guilty of the charges based on the testimony of inmate Johnson, who stated that he observed me during the fight throwing hot water on Shariff. Therefore, the important issue was not that Shariff had assaulted me, but that I tried to throw hot water on him.

The three Classification Officers had their minds made up. The disciplinary team never inquired about who started the fight and why Shariff was allowed to move into my cell. They found me guilty and sentenced me to 30 days in confinement. Days later, most of the prisoners serving time at the jail were released into the general population, serving half of their sentence.

At least three times, I suffered attacks of claustrophobia, becoming short of breath and became dizzy. I called the guard and explained that I was not feeling well. A Medical Technician (MT) came five minutes later and took my blood pressure who found it was high. Minutes later he brought me some medication to help me sleep.

Some guards were worried about me, since I didn't eat for a few days. Next day I

had a surprise visit from Dr. Verde. I looked terrible with a black eye and a swollen lip. We talked for a few minutes and I explained to Dr. Verde that the day of my appointment with him, I had a fight with another inmate in the chow hall. I explained about my problem with insomnia and excess stress and he prescribed me more Seconal.

By Tuesday, I ate some vegetables and drank some milk. I was meditating and praying most of the time. The first week in the isolation cell was difficult. The MT brought me one red pill in the morning and two pills at night.

Today, more prisoners were released to the general population and Garcia moved into another cell and I moved to the bottom bunk. I later learned from Sal, a friendly and easy-going Black trustee who brought the food to the block-cell, that Shariff, after a couple of days in confinement was released.

My Classification Officer Albritton informed me that I would be transferred to another institution because of my problems with Shariff. The next Friday, Garcia and another prisoner were released into the general compound. I kept doing 30 minutes of daily exercise. At noon the guards brought in a mentally disturbed inmate, nicknamed "MT". He had been convicted three times of burning the garbage at the local post office and under the Rico Act was sentenced to 30 years of incarceration. MT was spitting and calling faggot to the guard who was kidding with him. He was placed in a cell next to me, number three. John cried for a few minutes, then calmed down.

In the evening, the MT apologized for being late, explaining that he had to take care of two inmates from minimum security with heart attacks. At the clinic the minimum security prison was known as "the graveyard." Guards didn't bother to watch them. If any of them escaped, they would die within two hundred yards of the prison, which was surrounded by a swamp and infested with all kinds of snakes.

Dr. Verde came to see me, and later guards handcuffed and escorted to the

psychologist who wanted to ask me if I was planning to commit suicide. Prison officials often ask stupid questions. I remained silent. Next day I felt nauseous and dizzy. I called the guards but nobody showed up. Later I asked the guard to call Dr. Verde. At 8 p.m. the MT came on his rounds of distributing medication. I explained, I was feeling breathless. Minutes later he brought me two antacid pills and walked away; that was it. I remained alone in my silent cell. Faith was the only thing that kept me going.

Totally isolated from the prison population, I sought sanctuary in hours of meditation. My total isolation would become a transcendental spiritual experience.

Meditation was an intellectual process that reflected a search for light, wisdom and knowledge. To reach nirvana fasting is necessary to purify the body. Every day I read yoga books, that way keeping my sanity. Ordinary meditation creates a spiritual development and opens the doors of the mind. Enjoyment leads ultimately to disease. Will power means freedom. We have to become unattached from outside environments. We have no enemies, we have no friends; all of them are our teachers. I find in yoga the peace and wisdom not found in any other religions philosophy.

With the monotonous color of the walls, I watched for hours colorful magazines. At night, during my deep meditation, the tan walls became a dark blue, representing my spiritual level. I enjoyed that intense state of spiritual development. I experienced nirvana. I reached the conclusion that I was a lucky person to be in the proper environment for my spiritual development. What we rate as terrible experiences on this earth may be good in another spiritual dimension. The prison environment actually enhanced my spiritual growth.

On a Friday Sal came over at 6:30 a.m. with breakfast. For the first time in two weeks I ate prunes and drank milk and coffee. I remained meditating in my bunk. The superintendent and his assistant Mr. Ham toured the cell block. I complained to them that

I had been sick for over a week and had been denied medical care. They told me they would take care of the matter. Hours later, a female MT became upset because I had complained to the superintendent. Around 11 a.m. Sal showed up with the lunch wagon, but I didn't eat.

I often talked to John who expressed himself very intelligently about most subjects and didn't seem mentally disturbed. We became good friends. John talked about his family, jobs and friends. The law clerks in Avon Park were working on his appeal and I hoped that John would win his case.

I had a more serious problem. I could hear music and Spanish broadcasting apparently coming from the ceiling. At first, I thought someone had a radio or tape recording. I asked Sal if he heard a radio broadcast, but he said he did not hear any sound. Being a mental patient, I was afraid of asking other people and getting into more problems. I decided to ask John if he heard any music or a radio broadcast, but he denied hearing any music. If Dr. Verde learned that I was hearing music in my cell, he would reward me with a straight jacket and more heavy drugs, easily concluding I was another lunatic. I assumed that my fast had made my senses become extremely sensitive, but Dr. Verde wouldn't accept that logical explanation.

I continued fasting. I had filed several requests to see the doctor, who had been ignoring me. I began receiving old magazines and books from the library. Sal provided me with a clean sheet and pillow case. The next day John was notified by his Classification Officer that he was going to be released to the general population after the meal. I said good-bye to him. He left with a manila envelope and a pillowcase over his shoulder full of personal items.

At Avon and Brevard, I had experienced different people, many situations and much pain. Often, while lying on my bunk, I thought of the parade of people: Mark, Tom,

Bob, Garcia, the Jewish investor and the Miami engineer. Shariff the Egyptian had almost killed me, while Dr. Verde, the prison psychiatrist had helped me to cope with the corrupt prison environment. Tom, Mark and John had been good friends while others had caused me serious problems.

Other happenings behind bars were quite rewarding. Working on civil litigation had led to my dabbling in criminal law, which I found quite fascinating. My work and studies at Horticulture had brought much satisfaction and faith, because it was a place for meditation, a place to dream about the future.

The pain, in the form of both physical and mental illness, bored me. Conducting my fast was difficult, and yet a most rewarding spiritual experience, because it allowed me to communicate with that universal ocean of wisdom--God. Fasting was also became a weapon to fight for individual rights. So, walking through this narrow and rugged path taught me a lot of hard-earned lessons. My prison experience was promoting my spiritual growth. That's what life is about.

CHAPTER 16

LOVE AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS ARE FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS OF A HUMAN BEING

Rolando Otero

Brevard Correctional Institution. On March 28, at 8:00 A.M., a sergeant came to my cell and ordered me to get dressed. “Do you know where I'm going?” I asked. “You're traveling today, and I think you're going to like it,” he said. “Sure I'll love it,” I responded. I got dressed, placed several personal belongings in a pillow case and collected my legal papers. I met three other prisoners who were coming on the trip. We were taken to the hallway. I met inmate R. Johnson who had testified against me, saying that during the fight I threw hot water at Shariff. Johnson explained he had to testify against me because the parole board was going to review his case. He wished me luck. I had not idea why Johnson got involved in this case; he was well-educated and courteous.

We placed our personal belongings in a van and the guards handcuffed us. Officer's McVinity and German escorted us on the trip. The guards were very polite. After reviewing all our personal records, and identifying each prisoner by a photograph, they informed us that we were going to Brevard Correctional.

Our individual faith in freedom nourished our hopes and dreams. The van drove on Highway 27 and onto expressway 528 eastbound, passing Orlando. We saw charming women driving by, raising our spirits. Some civilians reacted with surprise when they passed a van full of handcuffed inmates. Prisoners love to see civilians because it means freedom; to us they represent everything we dream of.

While the van cruised along the highway, the prisoners talked about their cases. Two recited how they fought with the local cops and the SWAT team in a dramatic getaway. When asked, I told them that I was a political prisoner, charged with possession of explosive devices without a license. One of them smiled and said, "Those sons'-a-bitches expected you to request a license for blowing up their ass?" and we laughed. The conversation turned to the bloody Vietnam War. Then we talked about how to get reeferers in prison and sell them to make some money. Marijuana was credited with relaxing the high stress level among the prison population.

At Brevard, a Sergeant searched all our belongings and confiscated what he considered contraband. I lost a wooden box, given to me by an inmate at Avon Park, and three nylon running shorts. We were assigned to an open dormitory and advised to keep in storage most of our property, because in the dormitory it would be stolen by other prisoners. "In six weeks you'll be moved into two-man cells with air-conditioning where you'll feel more secure," said the sergeant.

I was allowed to make a telephone call and called my daughter, telling her I was a Brevard Correctional. We were provided with a metal locker to hold our few belongings.

The pre-fabricated dormitory was an open facility with metal bunks and a large shower room. Most of the prison population were Black jitterbugs. I was told that this prison was built under federal standards for juveniles, and later was converted to an adult facility. Each building had a movie channel; the prison was not as restricted as Avon Park, where it required a full uniform to visit any administrative facility. After settling myself in the dormitory, I asked for a special emergency pass to see the doctor. A Puerto Rican guard gave me a pass for the clinic. I had to go to the Commanding Officer to obtain another pass. I was warned that if the doctor thought I was wasting his time, I would get another DR.

At the clinic, a civilian employee took my pass, while I recited all my symptoms of nausea and dizziness from my prolonged fast of nearly two weeks. The MT poured a thick yellow liquid into a tiny paper cup and I drank it in one shot. He signed the pass, circling "emergency." I returned my pass to the guard and went back to my new dormitory. I went for a walk in the green yard, where several prisoners were mowing the grass. I walked for a full hour. The breeze was quite stiff; birds and seagulls were flying around. A perimeter road surrounded the compound with a white truck patrolling the outside. From the yard I was able to see two guard houses. A bit later, the loud speaker called the prison population to return to their dormitory for count. I didn't eat for the next week, drinking only coffee and tea.

After fasting, I went to the chow line for mixed coleslaw and ice cream. It was my first taste of food in three weeks. In the last few weeks I suffered a serious problem of constipation, having a slow and extremely painful bowel. The extended isolation left mental and physical scars. I spent time writing to Rosenblatt and Paul Morris, informing them I had been transferred to Brevard. Days later, I received a letter from Morris, saying that Federal Court was actively entertaining my state appeal based on five issues, one being the Double Jeopardy Clause. I complained of being subjected to a double trial. In my appeal to the Florida Supreme Court, the State of Florida stated that the "Double Jeopardy Clause was a fictitious protection." (**Otero vs. State of Florida**, 397 2d. 770). My case was entertained by Magistrate Anderson Everestt in Tallahassee. I was concerned about the outcome of the case in the Northern District because U.S. Magistrate Everestt was an extremely conservative judicial administrator. I was worried about running into a judicial merry-go-round. My suspicious about Everestt eventually would become a reality. My attorneys kept complaining that nothing had been easy during this legal labyrinth.

One day, I spoke to Red, one of the prisoners transferred in the van with us. He

told me that a prisoner working at the hospital at Avon Park succeeded in his suicide attempt.

On the news, U.S. war planes bombed Libyan missile sites and sunk a couple of Libyan war ships. In the last decade the Arabs had shown no talent in the complex and sophisticated art of warfare. On the TV, I watched Al Pacino in "Scarface" till 4 a.m. This was the only institution that allowed inmates to watch TV late at night.

Saturday morning, I missed breakfast to go on sick call. The MT gave me the same yellow syrup and a laxative. Again, I went to the clinic reporting to the MT on duty. I was told to join another twenty inmates in an overcrowded room. Minutes later the MT, an overweight middle-aged woman identified as Miss Well, asked me a series of questions about my health problems.

A few hours later another MT named W. Feliciano, directed me to follow him into another small room full of equipment for a physical evaluation. Feliciano took my blood pressure and temperature, asked several questions, ordered to take off my shirt and lie on a stainless steel table to examine my stomach. He examined my eyes, directing me to read a chart with letters of different sizes posted on the wall. He ordered to hold out my shaking hands and said, "You've got terrible eyesight. That's your problem. Your dizziness and nausea are caused by your nerves." I explained to him that I had been wearing glasses for the last two years. "I know I got bad nerves," I said. "I'm going to refer you to see Dr. Torres, the psychiatrist," he advised. Looking at my medical record Feliciano noticed I had been a patient of Dr. Verde, the psychiatrist at Avon Park. He also noticed my two attempted suicides, but said nothing about them. I asked him to give me with some medication to control my excess stress and insomnia. Feliciano gave me a tiny envelope containing a dozen antacid pills.

On Tuesday morning I went to the control room to get some photocopies, meeting

a charming and polite young girl who provided me the photocopies. She had remarkably gorgeous legs and body shape. It was great talking to a beautiful woman.

One night a Black jitterbug had a fight with a White gay. The Black inmate badly beat up the homosexual prisoner. During the fight, a crowd of prisoners witnessed the scene in silence and delight. The Black kept hitting the White till blood poured from his mouth. Everybody was pleased and the crowd agreed to stop the fight. This time I was a witness, instead of an active participant or the victim. The guard never noticed the brawl. Next day the gay was transferred to another dormitory.

When I got back to the dormitory I learned that some inmate had broken into my metal locker while the prisoners were out.

Later in the week I went to the chow hall for vegetables, apple pie and milk, only my second taste of food since my arrival at Brevard. I noticed that the tables and floor were filthy with leftovers and dirty trays left all over by inmates. The food was not that bad. For dinner I had a fresh salad and milk. I planned to work at in kitchen or the bakery. I was tired of collecting garbage at the yard. The institution had a Horticulture shop with three small shade houses, but there was nothing to learn here after several years working at the Horticulture Department at Avon Park.

I had an appointment with Dr. Torres at the clinic. Torres was dressed in an elegant two-piece tan suit, seated in a swivel chair. He asked about my problem. By his accent, I concluded that he was a Cuban. As policy, the Department of Corrections hired professional immigrants trying to validate their professions in Florida. Dr. Torres was arrogant and pissed off with me because I came a few minutes late to his appointment. I explained to him that I was in an Orientation Program meeting and the guard did not allow me to leave till it concluded. He kept reading my long medical record while I spoke; finally ordering to make another appointment with his secretary. That was the end of the

meeting. Without medication, smoking pot was my only relaxation.

During the weekend most leisure activities were in the yard, where inmates gambled at poker. Often, guards came over and frisked them, searching for money, marijuana and other contraband. Other gay prisoners sunned in bikinis. I often wondered how homosexuals were able to smuggle in nylon shorts and other cosmetics? At first, I was surprised to see gays with make-up, dressed in custom-made, body-tight uniforms. Brevard had different regulations.

The evening news reported that President Marcos and his wife were forced by the United States to flee the Philippines and seek political asylum in Hawaii, where U.S. Custom and Immigration Officers searched their luggage and confiscated their bank accounts. Subsequently, the former dictator was banned from traveling abroad. Marcos' regime became unstable and the U.S. Government decided to dump him in disgrace, like Batista, Somoza and the Shah of Iran. Corazon Aquino, wife of a slain political leader, became the new president with the blessing of the United States Government.

The U.S. fleet sunk a couple of Libyan patrol boats and bombed SAM missile bases in Libya with sophisticated B-11 jets. Several Embassy personnel and civilian employees were killed in the raid authorized by President Reagan; also Khadaffy's daughter died in the bombing. This incident would generate more violence.

The artificial civil war in Nicaragua was at a stalemate. In Honduras, the U.S. Government stationed U.S. troops for military exercises and provided the Nicaraguan Contras with weapons and supplies. The CIA also set up several bases for the Contras operating from Honduras by crossing the Nicaraguan border. In charge of the supply network, using the Ilopango Air Base in El Salvador, was Luis Posada Carriles under the name of Ramon Medina and another Cuban veteran of Bay of Pigs and CIA Agent Felix Rodriguez. They created the worst crisis of the Reagan Administration. The U.S.

Congress had banned U.S. officials from providing such aid. The program was overseen by Oliver North from the President's Executive Office. On October 5, 1986, a twin-engine turbo-prop cargo plane, leased by Southern Air in Miami and owned by the CIA, was shot down with a missile by a Sandinista gunners, killing both pilots and capturing the American supply dropping officer, Eugene Hasenfus. Later Hasenfus identified Posada and Rodriguez as CIA agents.

Next day, I went to orientation class at the visiting park. A tall, fat sergeant, named Komo spoke for two hours. He confessed his frustration at serving as a baby sitter for juveniles. "The happiest day of my life will be when I ship 500 juveniles back to another institution or to the street," he stated. Komo also warned the prisoners to avoid smoking reefers inside the dormitory, dealing with dope and getting involved in rape. "If you're going to smoke marijuana, go to the yard and don't get caught," he said. In a taunting tone, he added, "Stay ten feet away from the razor blade fence around the perimeter. Don't come and tell me you were catching a fucking spider. Even if you got a tarantula, I'm going to lock your ass in jail for a month. If you're caught going through the dining hall twice, you'll be penalized. You should report to your assigned work area on time or I'll lock your ass in confinement," stated Komo. He was a mean guy who had never met happiness.

When Sergeant Komo finished his lecture, a counselor in psychology distributed information about the lethal and contagious AIDS disease. The information advised prisoners to practice celibacy and avoid using social drugs; this was the pipe dream of prison officials. There was no such thing as celibacy. Prison officials never could understand that prisoners came from society where they had learned heterosexual values, and having an intimate relationship was normal. Inmates had several appealing options: their night dreams, masturbation and homosexuality. The officials never recognized that

love and intimate relationships were fundamental needs of a human being.

I received notice of an appointment with my Classification Officer, Colburn. Later in the afternoon I chatted with him and he seemed to be a good person. Colburn said that I had a good record for being incarcerated for so long.

One day, after breakfast I went to an orientation meeting of the Pride Industries. Prisoners were informed of the body and auto repair shops, and upholstery provided services to state and federal agencies. These were the major trades and vocational programs provided to prisoners. Pride Industry was a multi-million-dollar business, profiting by use of almost-free prison labor. Inmates received 10 cents per hour.

After lunch I went to see Dr. Kim, another Vietnamese immigrant. He was impeccably dressed in a white gown and acted in a ceremonial manner. Again, I recited my health problems. Dr. Kim conducted a basic medical examination and ordered a blood test. Weeks later, Dr. Kim told me my health problems were related to emotional problems and recommended that I see Dr. Torres, who already had refused to see me. The clinic was a real merry-go-round.

In the afternoon it rained like cats and dogs. I read at the library and then went to the Classification for a job assignment. As usual the small waiting room was packed with prisoners waiting to see the Classification Officer. I heard other prisoners saying that confinement was packed with prisoners who refused to work. They talked about their criminal cases and dealing social drugs. I was the last inmate to be called. The Classification Officer informed me I should receive a call-out soon to report for work.

Today I filed several motions with the Eleventh Court of Appeals in Atlanta related to the case against Miami-MCC, where Magistrate Nimkoff dismissed the case when I introduced my alleged status as a political prisoner. The Assistant U.S. Attorney Arista-Volsky was the first to bring the issue into court, petitioning to introduce my prison

record in State Court for the Miami bombing.

I received \$18 from my inmate account at Avon Park. Immediately, I went to the canteen and bought some groceries. Later in the afternoon I went to the yard and ran three laps. I still was experiencing nausea and problems with my appetite.

Friday, after the 6 p.m. count, the gun squad stormed into the dormitory, ordered a prisoner to pack all his belongings and handcuffed him. The prisoner placed his belongings in a carton. They dragged him to the cell block. Most of the juvenile offenders grew up in ghettos and were emotionally disturbed. In our dormitory we had a seventeen-year-old deaf-mute, who had been in prison since he was twelve years old, convicted of first degree murder.

In the dormitory the prisoners were allowed to hang their towels and uniforms on strings tied to their bunks. The dormitory was filthy, even though it was cleaned twice a day.

On Sunday at 6 a.m. I was awakened by the guard on duty to report to the dining hall for work. I was disappointed. I wanted to work at the main kitchen instead of the dining hall where there were constant problems with prisoners asking for more food. The food was brought in large thermal containers from the main kitchen. This was the only Florida institution where the main kitchen and warehouse were built apart. In case of a riot, prisoners would run out of food.

In the dining hall inmates reporting to work were allowed to eat their meals first. I ate only a bowl of rice cereal and milk. When finished, I was assigned to stack metal trays at the food line from the dishwasher. Several guards monitored the operation of serving the food and looked for prisoners eating twice or stealing food. When the prison compound finished eating, we cleaned the dining hall. I was to report for work at breakfast, lunch and dinner. At dinner I was awarded with chocolate ice cream for doing a

good job mopping the floor.

Next day, I went to the main kitchen and spoke to the sergeant, asking if there was an opening in the kitchen preparing salads. The sergeant said there wasn't an opening, but inmates working in the kitchen didn't last long.

Early Tuesday morning the guard wakened me for work. At the dining hall the sergeant assigned me to the food line serving food. "One piece of pork chop per inmate," he warned me. I often got into arguments with prisoners who complained about the rationed food. One Black prisoner bitched about it: "Give me another one, Chico," he said. "Ask the sergeant," I responded. "Chico, you're a mother-fucker son-of-a-bitch," said the prisoner, pissed off. After serving the food, we cleaned the floor and dumped silverware and salt and pepper containers into the garbage. The State Government spent a lot of money replacing silverware and other articles in the prison system. When finished I was told to do double shifts at the main kitchen and wash pots and pans. I didn't mind. I wanted to keep busy.

The main kitchen was an excellent facility, well-equipped with huge stainless steel cooking tanks, grill, bakery ovens and several cold boxes and freezers. Most officers were polite and treated inmates with respect. I washed pots and pans with other prisoners. The guards were delighted with our job and rewarded each of us with two bananas. It was a beautiful day and I went back to my dormitory for a hot shower and rest.

Like any prison, inmate's major income was from social drugs and selling food stolen from the main kitchen and dining hall. Yeast was a good commodity as prisoners used it for making prison wine known as "buck" and selling at \$1 per cup.

Justice and the Capitalism System. As we conventionally know it, is accumulative ideas and practices that formed as the capitalistic society developed. It is a mystery, however, justice is a social norm that is a directive for guiding human action.

Criminal law is administered by and for the State. The courts are an essential part of this political structure. The kinds of criminal cases where state prosecutors are influenced, are mostly in selective interpretations of the law, generally favoring the plutocrats or the government.

The prison system is both a political symbol and a device to control threats to the social and economic order outside the prison. The prison is an intensified form of social legal control that pervades the whole social and economic order; the defense of the State is that it must control and manipulate disruptive elements within society. In the United States the prisons and courts are inextricably linked to the political apparatus. Furthermore, the prison system is a political arm of the capitalistic state.

The most systematic and pervasive crimes are committed daily by those who sit in corporate and government offices. The victims are among the majority of the population that is the object of these actions. We all are victims of an exploitative, capitalistic society. A society with plutocrats who perpetuate themselves in power necessarily victimize a large portion of the population. Victimization is rooted in the systematic practices and ideologies of the capitalistic society in the United States.¹

The loudspeaker called my name to report to the main gate. I met a Black officer named, "Allen Lewis," an easy-going fellow. I was handcuffed to a chain around my waist and shackled. Officer Lewis drove me in his white van to a private eye doctor. The Department of Corrections had been awarded with hundreds of civil actions related to inadequate medical care and deaths of prisoners. Two weeks before I filed a request to be examined by the eye doctor. Since I was handcuffed and shackled, the patients looked to me in surprise; some smiled, while others showed concern about being near a dangerous inmate. I continued to have problems with my sight. The optometrist provided me with a

¹Quinney, 252-53, 306-07, 380-82.

new prescription of my eye glasses. According to books I had read at the library, a diet heavily loaded with chemically processed carbohydrate food could cause health problems. Sugar and coffee were the worst. My long-time consumption of sleeping pills and lack of harmony in the environment compounded my health problems related to a latent hypoglycemia and mental health. The trip was good, the closest I had gotten to civilization in a long time. When I got back to prison, I felt much better as the guard removed my handcuffs and leg shackles.

I went back to work in the main kitchen which was loaded with greasy dishes, dirty trays, pots and pans and other kitchen utensils.

At the canteen I bought coffee, toiletries and junk food. When I asked for sugar, the clerk told me they had none and I was advised to buy it from the inmates working in the main kitchen or dining hall. Next day, I stole white sugar from the main kitchen and smuggled it into my dormitory. Prison promotes illegal activities.

Billman was a wise ex-con, who daily made a living gambling and selling reefers. A couple of gays were always hanging around him, the mules, carrying the money and reefers in case of a surprise shakedown by guards. Billman made good money at poker games and was a very popular pimp. He trusted a few inmates, including myself. Billman was also dealing in pot and sometimes I bought reefers from him. The cannabis had a relaxing effect on my mental and physical health. It was my only addiction besides chocolate ice cream. I had an appointment with Dr. Torres, who prescribed more liquid valium for my insomnia.

April 18, 1986: My birthday was a sunny day, so I ran a couple of laps around the yard. In the afternoon I went to the law library to type several motions, responding to the U.S. Attorney's motion to dismiss and request the U.S. District Court to empanel a grand jury to investigate state criminal judges, a dozen police officers and a private attorney,

Paul Pollack, for participating in a conspiracy to violate the law.

At 7:00 P.M. the yard was closed and prisoners were ordered to return to the dormitory. At night some prisoners watched TV and some Blacks danced to their radio blasting with rock and soul music. Other prisoners played their eternal games of poker, trying to make a few bucks.

Next day I went to the dentist. After a few hours of waiting, I was called into the office where he performed an examination and took X-rays. Minutes later the dentist worked on one of my cavities.

Back at my work in the main kitchen I saw prisoners preparing a five-gallon plastic thermos of prison wine with yeast and fruit. They used ingredients that fermented rapidly. I didn't like to drink the prison wine because of its terrible side effects of nausea. Some prisoners went wild with the wine and for them, it was a lot of fun. They liked it because it was a cheaper way to get high. But for prison officials, buck spelled problems.

One Saturday was a nightmare for the sergeant on duty. He noticed that almost all the inmates working in the kitchen were drunk on buck. That day the prison population was lucky to eat dinner. Prisoners were dropping pans and trays with food on the floor. There were too many inmates to be locked up. The sergeant found a two-gallon jug filled with wine. "I've got a bunch of drunk mother fuckers," the unhappy sergeant remarked.

As mentioned earlier, Pride Industry was registered with the State of Florida as a non-profit organization to provide vocational skills to prisoners, training them in different trades. I had learned from prisoners working there that Pride Industry required experienced prisoners in the body shop, auto repairs and upholstery. The managers of Pride earned a basic salary of up to \$70,000, plus commission. The U.S. Postal Service was Pride's best customer. Inmates in executive positions working over 84 hours per week were able to earn up to \$35. Average pay was \$15 per week. The politicians, to placate

public opinion, provided a few million dollars to some victims of crime. Most of the profit was paid to private investors, and the rest went to the State of Florida in salaries paid to prisoners. The Department of Corrections kept 85% of the wages, and thus, the idea of rehabilitation is a myth.

Summer temperatures were in the 90s. The general compound remained open until 8 p.m. One morning at 4 a.m., I was awakened to work at the main kitchen preparing salads. I heard that a prisoner was found with contraband from the kitchen and was locked up. We left the building, meeting a group of inmates and were escorted by several guards to the main kitchen. I was introduced by the sergeant to another two co-workers. Kazu offered me an opportunity to learn how to prepare salad dressing. He bitched about Smith, who was in charge of the salad unit, saying he was a freak when using mayonnaise, often causing the kitchen to run out of mayonnaise.

We prepared sandwiches for the prisoners who worked for the Department of Transportation (DOT), mowing the grass and cleaning the expressway and roads. A co-worker named Robert gave us a soda, fruit pie and an orange, and advised us to stay in the area. Later we prepared the salads for the day, working on cases of lettuce and tomatoes. By 8 a.m. we finished our kitchen duty.

I had problems with Miss Season, a Puerto Rican female in charge of post office operations. She returned all my mail and ordered me to use my committed last name of "Hernandez," instead of "Otero." Upon arrival at Brevard I provided her with a copy of the order issued by Magistrate Nimkoff, recommending to federal prison officials to list me under "Rolando Otero" instead of "Rolando Hernandez," as I was improperly committed at a state prison. I filed a petition with Federal Court, naming as defendants federal authorities, including Wainwright, Director of the Florida Department of Corrections. State officials ignored the order because it was not issued from State Courts.

In the notorious Raiford Penitentiary my mail was returned to senders. I received mail only under Rolando Hernandez. At Avon Park, I provided prison officials with Magistrate Nimkoff's order and was allowed to receive my mail as Rolando Otero. Two letters addressed to the U.S. Attorney's Office, my attorneys and the FBI were returned. The institution limited access to my family, friends, attorneys and the courts.

Days later I received a "Motion to Dismiss," filed by the State Attorney's office in Tallahassee on behalf of Director Wainwright. I also received an order from Magistrate Everestt of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida, directing me to respond to Wainwright's motion to dismiss.

More prisoners were transferred to two-man cells in a dormitory. Our dormitory became almost empty and silent. When there was fog, guards became paranoid and escorted us to the main kitchen. When finished at 8 a.m., we were taken back to our dormitory.

One day with the gusty wind I was able to smell the Atlantic Ocean miles away. After walking in the yard for an hour, I went to the library to finish working on my motions, then went to the clinic to pick up my medication. On my way, I saw guards and prisoners looking up in the sky at the trace of smoke in space. At the clinic Feliciano told me a rocket from Cape Canaveral had exploded. Seemed like NASA was having a lot of problems, losing a \$57 million satellite.

On Wednesday a large group of new prisoners came to the dormitory. After the daily count of prisoners, I was able to make a call to my family for five minutes. Subsequently, a guard gave me a copy of a DR from Miss Season for sending my mail under my legal name of Otero, instead of Hernandez. Later, I was ordered to report for a DR hearing, where I pleaded not guilty to the charges. I explained to the sergeant the order issued by Magistrate Nimkoff, directing prison officials to list me as "Rolando

Otero.” But my explanation was not enough.

One night someone broke into my locker and stole my precious instant coffee, sugar, stamps, socks, sweat shirt, plus a couple of dollars. I reported it to the guard on duty, who stated that he could do nothing about it.

On Sunday I prepared the salad for 800 inmates and I was learning to make salad dressing. A fat Puerto Rican named Sardina was assigned to work with me and spent most of his time looking for food and eating.

Back to Jail. A few days later, I was paged to report to the office in regard to another DR given to me by Miss Season for using my legal name of Otero on my outgoing mail; I had no intention of stopping doing so. The compound was closed down earlier than usual and I asked another inmate named Kenneth Coley “what was going on.” An inmate that was confined in the cell-block had stabbed another prisoner, who probably would not make it. Coley told me all this with indifference while reading a cowboy novel.

In the afternoon I went to the Classification Building, where I met Classification Officer Colburn who was to preside at the disciplinary hearing. I provided him with a photocopy of the court order directing prison officials to list me as Rolando Otero. This information didn't seem to impress any of the three member team. They left me alone in the room while having a conference. Minutes later someone spoke to the State Attorney's Office in Tallahassee. They said that Federal Court had no jurisdiction over the Department of Corrections; that was not true. Federal Court is the superior court in the United States, but Federal Judges very seldom invoke that supreme authority. I was sentenced to 30 days in confinement and 15 days of gain time lost.

A sergeant handcuffed and escorted me to the clinic for a health check-up where the MT took my blood pressure and temperature. The MT gave me my medication. Then I was taken to the H-2 building where the guard removed the handcuffs and ordered me to

take everything out of my pockets. After being frisked, I was placed in a cell. Later an inmate brought me dinner but I didn't touch it. At 6 p.m. I was escorted to my cell to pick up all my belongings. When finished I was escorted to the K-Wing, where the inmate had been killed several days ago. I went through the humiliating procedure of strip search and anal cavity and genital inspection.

I had previously conducted some good research in trying to learn when authorities in the United States implemented the strip search and anal inspection procedure in the prison system. I was very impressed with what I found out. Before World War II, prisoners facing criminal charges were only frisked before being locked up. After World War II, the United States implemented in federal detention units and prisons what they had learned from the German Gestapo, the technique of strip search and anal cavity inspection. Eventually, state officials also implemented such denigrating methods in metropolitan areas, but most rural-area guards only frisked prisoners, conducting a pad search.

During WW II, the Nazis also used small units of heavily armed Gestapo commandos to arrest the political opposition, especially the Jews. This was another method the United States copied from the Nazis, using highly armed and specialized commando units in urban areas, identifying them as SWAT Teams. In America the SWAT Team was designed to fight their political and economic dissidents. We killed Hitler, but kept his ideas and goals. I believe that in the aftermath of this international political struggle, Russia would evolve toward a central left, while the United States, experiencing a parallel recession and political transition, would move from an extreme right to a center right. While godless Russia would become more democratic in the future, the religious United States transmuted into a police state. In this manner both nations might emerge at the center.

The guards assigned me to a cell with a young homosexual inmate as a cell mate. The gay, in an effort to establish conversation, explained how things were run in the cell block. I just listened without comment.

The gay, called Joan, told me how he transmuted from heterosexual to homosexual, explaining with a feminine voice how difficult it was for her to take two vaginal showers every day. Talking about her case, Joan said that she was trying to have sex with another prisoner, when the soda machine was broken into and someone stole \$138 and the guards filed charges against her. She told me how boring it was to be in a cell doing nothing. I became angry when all her conversations were related to homosexuality. Eventually we didn't get along. Two days later the gay requested a transfer to the next cell.

On Wednesday of that week, I was surprised when a guard escorted me to the office of Assistant Superintendent McKee. I was amused when I met him; he was an educated Black with a suave voice. McKee ordered the guard to remove the handcuffs and directed me to sit across from his desk. While writing some notes, he asked me to explain what happened. I told him of the mess I had been in with the committed name of Hernandez "when my legal name is Otero." Miss Season had told him that my letters were returned to me because they didn't have stamps. I denied the charge and told McKee that I was not interested in creating another conflict, but to maintain the interception and return of my legal and personal letters was in violation of my guaranteed constitutional rights under the First and Fifth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. Furthermore, I told him there was an order from the Federal Court directing prison officials to list me under "Rolando Otero." McKee told me he would let me know next day about any determination by the institution in this matter.

At noon the same guards escorted me to the Classification Office for another DR

for violation of mail regulation and failing to use my committed name of "Hernandez." Two Classification Officers conducted the disciplinary hearing. As expected, they found me guilty of the charges and sentenced me to another ten days in confinement and 30 days of gain time lost. On my way to the cell-block I saw Bobby Weather, the law clerk, who told me he would help me. I asked him to file a case against the Department of Corrections in Federal Court, requesting my immediate release. It was encouraging when I met prisoners and they greeted me with respect and showed interest in my case. They knew I was not an angel.

On Thursday, Classification Officer Colburn came over in a rush and asked me for a copy of the court order; he wanted to take a photocopy for the record. I informed him that the law clerk, Bobby Weather had the document. Mr. Colburn said that he would get in touch with Weather.

On Saturday, I began to eat. At 9 p.m. I was taken with other prisoners to the gym. I felt relieved when the guards just frisked us before returning to our cells, no strip search and anal cavity inspection. On Monday morning a Black prisoner came to my cell and exchanged clean linens for the dirty ones, wearing surgical gloves to avoid contamination from AIDS. When making inventory of prisoners property, the guards always wore surgical gloves. There was no doubt that prison officials were in a panic about the lethal AIDS epidemic. State and Federal Governments informed the general public that AIDS was only contracted through sexual intercourse or an open wound. The Government was always at odds with what they said and what they were doing.

In the morning I was allowed to have a shower and took my sweet time under the stream of warm water. I requested the guard to allow me to visit the law library to type a motion with a deadline. He ignored my request, locking me up with two other prisoners, one sleeping on the floor. The cell block was packed with prisoners, half of them juveniles

refusing to report to work. It became embarrassing to use the toilet next to my bottom bunk. The lack of privacy and the odor were terrible.

One day I was lucky. The guard on duty called Bobby Weather who was living in the same building of the cell block. Weather came over and I gave him a handwritten draft of a motion to be typed and mailed to the Federal Court; it was my only hope. I already had smuggled out one motion, responding to the Motion to Dismiss filed by the State Attorney, saying that the problem of my illegally committed name caused my isolation in confinement and kept me incommunicado with the courts, attorneys, family and friends. State officials were pissed off. From the U.S. Attorney's office in Miami, they called the State Attorney's office in Tallahassee, asking about my isolation in Brevard. The State Attorney called Brevard and ordered them to apply pressure with me. Smuggling anything, including legal documents from prison was a violation of state law.

At night the guard notified me that the lieutenant had called, saying that the law clerk would be coming the next day to see me. I thanked the guard for the message. I had another two motions typed for Weather. In four more days was the deadline to reply. Later, the guard gave me a manila envelope containing legal papers of my case in the Northern District Court in Tallahassee in relation to my legal name of "Otero." A few years back, Miami's Federal Court had transferred the case for lack of jurisdiction to the Northern District, because I was convicted there. The fact was that the Southern District of Florida also had jurisdiction, because I was residing in Miami when the criminal charges were filed against me. Justice was an endless labyrinth. The Southern District was not interested in a confrontation with State officials. I was cruising through a never-ending labyrinth of Federal and State jurisprudence. The more I learned about the law, the more deceitfully I view justice.

I was surprised when I asked the guard on duty to allow me to make a telephone

call and granted my request. I called my family in Miami. Later, Weather brought my typed motion responding Defendant's Motion to Dismiss the complaint to be mailed to the Northern District of Florida.

Several legal letters to the court and my attorney were returned but I was not giving up. I had been locked up for over ten days, and I expected to collect more DRs and more jail time for violation of mail regulation. Days later, Sergeant Wiley brought me another disciplinary report to which I plead not guilty. When I asked the guard to sharpen my pencil he responded, "For what do you want that fucking pencil? For writing more fucking letters and getting more DRs!" He was right!

I continued to receive my medication at night. I was sleeping well and meditating every day. After dinner, inmate Weather spoke to the guard and he was allowed to bring me two legal manila envelopes, two yoga books and a dictionary. A few days later I requested a legal call and it was granted. I called Rosenblatt in Miami and spoke to Debby, his secretary. I asked her to tell Bob to inform the Federal Courts in Miami and Tallahassee that I was in confinement and unable to answer my legal mail on my three pending civil actions. I explained to her that I was serving a 40-day sentence in a confinement cell. A motion filed for default against the Department of Corrections was denied by Federal Court.

In the evening I met one of my co-workers from the main kitchen, a black Muslim named West. The institution provided West with one meal a day as part of his Muslim religious ritual. He said he was from Opa-Locka, a Black ghetto North of Miami, where Blacks had rioted against the police and vandalized local business. West explained he was locked up because while working in the main kitchen, a guard had searched him, touching his ass, and West protested. The guard locked up West and filed charges against him for disrespectful conduct to an officer. West was convicted and sentenced to 30 days

confinement. I was unable to get along with Black Muslims, because many of them were arrogant and unfriendly.

The gay, named Joan, who was in the next cell had been released to the general population. She was having an affair with another young inmate confined in the same cell. As prisoners were being released from the cell block, others checked in. Some prisoners checked themselves into confinement, seeking protection after being unable to pay football bets. Hours later, we were allowed to take a shower.

Wednesday morning Sergeant Wiley came over, handcuffed and escorted me to the Classification Building for another DR hearing related to violation of mail regulation. Sergeant Wiley didn't leash my hands in my back like other Guards. During the hearing I was found guilty, accumulating more time in jail.

I was surprised when the sergeant escorted me to the office of Mr. McKee, the Assistant Superintendent. We talked about the access to the courts, my attorneys, the law library, and about my legal name of "Otero." McKee was patient and understanding. He stated, "Why don't you use 'Hernandez' and avoid those DRs!" I answered him that, "I had been seeking legal remedies in State and Federal Courts for the last four years and felt frustrated. I had requested to be listed under my legal name as a matter of principle ... "You know those White boys in Tallahassee run things differently. What they're doing is illegal and I hope Federal Court will rule on the issue soon." It was a very pleasant meeting compared to the hearing with grumpy Mrs. Griffin. I finished another draft, petitioning the court to issue an Order of Restrain against Brevard and directing them to immediately release me from jail.

June, 1986. I learned from the MT that Dr. Torres had failed to renew my prescription and I began to experience insomnia. I became addicted to a legal drug that was the only thing that helped me keep my mental sanity. In the next few days several

legal letters were returned and more DRs were issued against me. I received a letter from Paul Morris with a copy of a Memorandum of Law, supporting my petition for appeal, which I liked very much. He emphasized an area of law that he had missed in his 50 page limited brief for appeal. I also received a letter from Rosenblatt with attached copies of letters addressed to Federal Courts, notifying them that I was in confinement. Sunday morning I received bad news when the sergeant awakened me to give me another DR written by Miss Season for violation of mail regulations. Monday noon brought good news. Colburn ordered me to pack all my property, as I was going to be released. In two minutes I got all my belongings packed in several boxes and a pillow case.

Returning to the general compound was a good experience. The great difference was that now some of the prisoners knew me and I was familiar with my artificial environment. The weather was hot and I enjoyed it. I walked around the yard, appreciating the extra freedom. I watched the seagulls gliding around the yard. During my walks some inmates met me with a warm hello. I discovered that the institution had installed a pay telephone outside the hallway of each building, making it easier to call outside. Before, there was only one pay telephone in the property room and calls were restricted. I was assigned to L-2 open dormitory where I met a lot of strange faces. Days later I was assigned as janitor in the main kitchen.

On Wednesday I was called to report to the Mayor's office to meet with two civilians. I assumed that one of them was a prison inspector and the other identified himself as the Mayor, who threatened to take the case to State Court and petition to take away all my gain time if I continued using my name of "Otero." He also warned me that I might be transferred to the East Unit, where prisoners were routinely raped and killed by other prisoners. I knew that the East Unit was a real jungle. I told them I realized that they were doing their duty, and I was doing mine. The prison inspector said, "We're not

bullshitting!” That was the end of the unpleasant meeting. It was the first time I had been directly intimidated by prison officials.

There had been a lot of changes since my isolation in the block-cell. The institution now required prisoners working in the dining hall and main kitchen to work six days, instead of the traditional five. In the kitchen, I noticed everything was filthy. Prisoners continued to steal food and make prison wine.

I had lost my extra uniforms while in jail, so I went to the laundry to get two more sets of blues. I had a telephone conversation with my brother Orlando, who told me that he was coming at Brevard to see me. In the morning I went to see Dr. Torres and at his office was advised by his secretary to sit in a row of white plastic chairs along the wall. While waiting, I observed a shirtless and barefoot Black inmate handcuffed and leashed by a young White guard waiting to see Dr. Torres. “Boy you got a big mouth,” the guard said to him.

I met Dr. Torres, who this time was very polite. I explained that I was a political prisoner serving time in State Prison because of problems with my illegal committed name of “Hernandez,” and that lately I had been serving 20 days in confinement. He prescribed me two muscle relaxants to catch some sleep and relieve my excessive stress. On my way to the dormitory I witnessed the gun squad dragging another Black jitterbug to jail.

On TV the prisoners were watching the French Open Tennis Championship. Christ Everestt and Martina Navratilokva were playing in the tournament for the silver cup. “That chic's a motherfucker,” said one of the prisoners, making reference to Martina. I was happy to see Christ win the French tournament with imperial grace, always a lady who knew how to lose and how to win. That's what life's all about.

During the weekend, I worked in the salad section. By now prisoners were

delighted with my salads and loved my salad dressing. I used to add a lot of chunks of cheese, mayonnaise and a little brown sugar. I learned that Smith was right: To prepare a good salad dressing, you have to add more mayonnaise. Like Smith, I became a mayonnaise freak and used it till I ran out.

Housing in the new dormitory L-2, I never forgot that someone had stolen my personal property at the dormitory for new prisoners. The same person was breaking into lockers at L-2. I had never requested or offered help to prison officials to solve a problem, but this case was exceptional. It was a kind of prisoners' ethic rules, to avoid seeking a prison officer's help. Anyway, I decided to explain the problem to Sergeant Garcia, a Mexican-American with a Pancho Villa mustache. During the 5 p.m. count, Sergeant Garcia came with another guard to L-2, walked directly to a Black prisoner named Jesse and ordered him to pack all his belongings. Jesse was handcuffed and taken to jail. Jesse was the petty burglar victimizing other prisoners. All the prisoners were relieved and happy observing inmate Jesse going to jail.

Writing my motions for hours with my legs bent, I injured my knee and I went to the sick-call. MT Feliciano gave me balm and a stretch bandage to put around my knee to help the muscle to go back to its original location.

Newcomers constantly arrived to fill the empty bunks. Again the dormitory became noisy. One Thursday, I was paged to report to H-2. When I arrived Sergeant Komo gave me a paper transferring me to a two-man cell. In H-252, a regular dormitory consisted of three stories of two-man cells. In the center of the building was the stairway and recreational room with a large glass door and partition dividing the hallway, public telephone and the main entrance.

Some Black prisoners were aggressive with newcomers, so I didn't mingle too much with the crowd. But it was great living in an air conditioned dormitory for the first

time. My new cell mate was a short, quiet Haitian. In South Florida, immigrant Haitians had been linked to AIDS, and I was a little concerned about that. Their native language was Creole, a mix of French, Spanish and African dialects. The Haitian kept listening to his radio the whole day on the same station. We spoke very seldom. It was like living in an empty cell. I knew several prisoners, including two Marielitos, whom I had already met at the law library. I typed a motion for a Marielito named Rubio. With the passage of time I eventually became part of the subculture.

In the *Miami Herald* read an article about Oliva Cantu, one of the drug Tzars in South Florida. He was a Brigade veteran. The FBI had subpoenaed Oliva to Miami to be questioned about the petition for a Writ of Mandamus to empanel a grand jury to investigate corruption within the Miami Police Department. In my motion I had stated that:

The District Court erred when it refused to assume original jurisdiction to entertain an issue of public interest ... a person or family might have a spiritual stake in First Amendment values sufficient to give standing to raise issues.... A Plaintiff may challenge public interests in which Congress recognized the need for review of administrative action and the Plaintiff is significantly involved to have standing to represent the public.... Plaintiff Otero has a protected interest of Life and Liberty that has been harmed by the double prosecution in State Court and he is promoting a government free of corruption.... A *pro se* complaint should not be dismissed too quickly for failure to state a technical cause of action.... Prisoners have a constitutional right of access to the Court.

Oliva Cantu had been transferred from Talladega Correctional Institution in Miami MCC and interrogated by the FBI in connection with my complaints in Federal Court against State officials for corruption. The complaint involved the late Chief Circuit Judge

Barker, Circuit Judge Morphonio, and legal counsel Paul Pollack, who was the bagman for the drug lords.

When Chief of the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Burger retired, there was some concern within the general public. His predecessor was Judge Rehnquist, who was a well-known advocate of conservative ideas. I was impressed by an interview with Justice Burger on TV. He seemed so polite, honest and suave-talking. The Reagan Administration was having opportunities to shape the U.S. Supreme Court and federal jurisprudence in the United States. Eventually, such surreptitious shaping would be catastrophic for the nation.

My brother came from Miami to visit me, and we met at the visiting park for two hours. Orlando was doing pretty well with his roofing company. Since visiting me in Brevard took him a whole Sunday in a round trip from Miami, I appreciated his visit.

I continued having pain in my knee and again went on sick-call. MT Feliciano give me a three-day lay-off from work. A week later I went to see Dr. Kim and explained the problem of my swollen knee. Dr. Kim said that I needed surgery and should go to Lake Butler. I was terrified of the thought of a whole day's trip, handcuffed and shackled in the bus. Even worse, I was more afraid of the doctors at Lake Butler, where 34 inmates had died on the operating table. There was an active investigation about the quality of medical care provided to the prison population. For this reason, the institutions were sending prisoners to private specialists. For prisoners, Lake Butler Reception and Medical Center was a nightmare of poor medical care and brutal guards. There was no record of how many inmates had been slain or injured. I told Dr. Kim very politely that maybe surgery was quite premature at this time. I felt relieved when he wrote me a pass for light duties in the main kitchen.

During the month of June, I went less often to the yard because of frequent rains.

With my swollen knee, jogging became more difficult. Late at night, prisoners were glued to the TV watching a pornographic movie with a couple having sex. "That motherfucker chic's sick," said a prisoner, as the attractive young female climbed on top of her male partner and began to swing her waist, reaching climax seconds later. Inmates were watching quite excited.

Monday, I met inmate Bobby Weather, who told me that he was fired from the library because he helped me too much while I was locked up in confinement. I felt sorry for him.

On the news, I was happy to note that President Reagan petitioned Speaker O'Neill to allow him to address the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House denied the President his request. Reagan wanted to ask for more money for the illegal war of the Nicaraguan Contra. The great communicator was losing his magic touch. In Congress very few politicians supported requesting more money for the Contra. Vice-President George Bush was interviewed by the press and expressed his support of Reagan's request.

During my time in Brevard Institution, from the cell block, to dormitories, my trips had been both difficult and rewarding. Troubles with my injured knee and poor eyesight, while worrisome, were secondary to the momentum of stress that continued to build within me, caused by the frustration of my determination in persisting to file motions, hoping to break through the facade of the courts, a facade considered to be justice of some sort.

Stress caused by Disciplinary Reports and hearings for mailing violations and a string of strange and often disturbing cell mates was accompanied by quite enjoyable moments: walks in the yard with only fresh air as my companion, the gliding of a seagull, the smell of the ocean, and most calming of all, the spirituality that was always with me--a spirituality that continued to grow even behind the ever-present prison bars through my

deep meditations.

CHAPTER 17

INSIDE THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

The Gulf War. On the evening news, the prolonged war between Iraq and Iran expanded in the Gulf, where both nations attacked large oil tankers. The major superpowers formed by the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany and Japan, were becoming concerned because an oil shortage might cause serious problems to their industrial production and to large investments around the world. The U.S. Navy sent several warships, including air carriers to the Gulf. Iran retaliated against the United States by mining the Gulf, causing damage to several commercial ships and a U.S. warship. The United States supported Iraq with logistics and provided weapons to undermine the Ayatollah regime in Iran. The U.S. protested, alleging that the mining of international waters was illegal and warranted retaliation against Iran. Interestingly, when the CIA mined Nicaraguan jurisdictional waters, the United States failed to obey a ruling issued by the International Court, declaring the act of mining Nicaraguan ports illegal.

My light duty pass signed by Dr. Kim was over and the next morning I went to prepare the salads. While I waited for other prisoners to show up for work, I spoke to a Black officer on duty, who used to be assigned to Belle Glades Correctional. He said that Belle Glades was pretty nice. He worked a lot of overtime hours and got a big pay check every week, but he got tired of the odor around Belle Glade caused by the excessive pollution from the mammoth sugar mills. The guard complained that he was never able to work overtime at Brevard. This particular morning Sergeant Kazu was like an old lady, bitching and threatening to lock up prisoners if they didn't do their assigned job. Recently,

Kazu had complained because I used too much red cabbage in preparing the salad. Next day I went on sick call to see MT Feliciano, explaining the problem of my swollen knee. He gave me another lay-in pass for five days.

Inmate Kenneth Cawley was picked up by two Texas detectives to face more charges of bank robberies pending against him. I helped him draft and type several motions and propositions to the Texas State Prosecutors to make a deal of a five-year sentence running concurrent with his Florida prison term. They had very little evidence to convict him. Again, I went to the law library to type a few motions requesting Federal Court to direct the Department of Corrections to list me as "Rolando Otero." My case was supported by photocopies of my Florida driver's license, voter registration and other identifications. I requested the court to issue also a preliminary injunction in my case. Magistrate Everestt was also reviewing my State appeals filed by Paul Morris in Tallahassee.

At the law library I met inmate Rubio, another Cuban Marielito who spoke fairly good English, unlike most Marielitos. Rubio said he had learned English at the Atlanta Penitentiary, where he spent over a year before being released to his family in Miami. Rubio also obtained his high school diploma while at Atlanta. After the Mariel exodus, Rubio was arrested and convicted for selling pot and cocaine around the college. Most of his criminal charges were related to breaking and entering (B&E), a crime for which Marielitos had a reputation. The Federal Government had transferred all the prisoners to other federal prisons, to be able to house each of the 4,000 Marielitos at Atlanta. The Feds were paying some county jails \$14,000 annually to house some of the 4,000 Marielitos, who had no family in the U.S. or who were pending deportation back to Cuba.

Marielitos who had been convicted several times of criminal offenses, after finishing serving their last prison term, were taken by U.S. Marshals to concentration

camps in Louisiana, Texas, and to other county jails for pending deportation to Cuba. Marielitos had no Constitutional rights because they were parolees. Rubio showed me a photo he had received from a Guatemalan woman interested in establishing a serious intimate relationship. In his letter Rubio stated how much he loved her.

Rubio asked me to help him with his criminal conviction and sentencing. I agreed preparing several motions, but I was deceived with the information he provided about his criminal case. He alleged that during sentencing the Circuit Judge in Dade County did not advise him that he might be deported to Cuba.

Half a dozen of my personal and legal letters had been returned to me, but most of my mail went through censorship. Days later, I was paged to report to Complex 1 for another DR for violation of mail regulation.

One evening, prisoners jumped the fence; two inmates were shots by guards and the other two offered no resistance. Mrs. Neal was a former library clerk from New York and was now retired and working for the Florida Department of Corrections. I went to the library almost every day. Neal demanded a pass, but the problem was that some guards disliked writing passes and most Black guards provided them only to Black prisoners.

I filed a DC-303 grievance form against Mrs. Neal with Assistant Superintendent McKee, stating that Federal Courts required a minimum of 32 hours per week access to the library. Mrs. Neal opened the main library and mini-law library less than 20 hours per week, which was in violation of prisoners' Constitutional rights. Every week, she closed down the library to have tea with her clerks. Of course Neal was pissed off because I had filed a DC-303 complaint against her and she became another of my adversaries in Brevard.

A week later Mrs. Neal checked my library record and noticed that I had loaned some books. She revoked my privilege of using the library alleging that I had not returned

those books. I explained that the alleged missing books already had been returned to the library. I knew the whole thing was done in a surreptitious manner because of my recent complaint about the library hours and the new requirement to have a pass to gain access to the facility. Also, I was restricted to use the electric typewriter for typing my legal motions to the courts. The “Freedom of Expression and Access to the Courts,” protected under the **First Amendment** of the U.S. Constitution, was symbolic in State Courts. The courts always had a problem enforcing the law and accepting the capricious, arbitrary and illegal conduct of prison officials.

Days after I drafted a motion for Rubio, he charged other prisoners for typing similar motions, copying the motion that I had drafted for him for Correction of Sentence. After that, I avoided doing any legal work for Marielitos.

Having so many days of lay-in, Sergeant Kazu became angry with me. I was taken to Howard, director of the main kitchen. I told Howard that I had a knee injury and could not work in the main kitchen; he agreed. After my resignation from the kitchen, I remained without assignment for four weeks in an administrative confusion between the prison staff and the computer. Later, I learned that Dr. Kim was leaving and Dr. Torres was taking over for him. Feliciano gave me an appointment to see Dr. Torres. Dr. Torres told me I had an appointment with an outside surgeon, Dr. Fritz, who was going to look at my knee. Dr. Torres said that Dr. Fritz was the best surgeon around West Palm Beach. Days later, I was paged to report to the front gate, where a young guard handcuffed me, crossing my hands to a chain at my waist. I felt like a mummy because this asshole wanted to be super-cop.

The office of Dr. Fritz was decorated with gray wall paper with several pictures on the wall, all illuminated with low volt lights. Patients appeared to be from middle-class and upper-class families. I was ordered to sit in a chair by the guard wearing Ray Ban

sunglasses. An hour later the nurse called, "Hernandez," and I was escorted to see Dr. Fritz, a tall, gray-haired, soft-spoken man. He examined my knee and recommended I see an orthopedic surgeon. Dr. Fritz said that my problem was degenerate tissues and that only surgery would correct it and that physical therapy would not help. I was taken back to Brevard.

Next day I went to the Classification Building where I met Colburn, my Classification Officer, an old man, and a sergeant, for another DR for violation of mail regulation. This time Colburn was smiling and understanding about my collection of DRs. Colburn found me guilty of the charges and sentenced me, taking away another 30 days of gain time No jail time.

On Sunday, I was walking with another prisoner in the yard when a baby indigo snake flashed through my legs. She was beautiful. A lot of snakes were attracted to the flooded yard during the rainy season where they ate frogs.

Days later, Officer's Guint and Wilkerson took another prisoner and me to the orthopedic surgeon in Cocoa Beach. The doctor advised me to avoid surgery unless my knee became worse. I welcomed his advice.

August, 1986. I went to see Sergeant Komo requesting a transfer to another building, wanting to avoid some of the Marielitos. Komo assigned me to A-220. My new cell mate was Joe Delucci, who was serving a 60-year sentence related to a series of bank robberies along the East Coast from New Jersey to Florida. Joe had been robbing banks since he was 18 years old. His family was living in New Jersey, but he rarely had visits. The clinic provide him with 14 pills a day for a sinus problem. Twice a week, Joe took a bunch of those pills and got high for a few hours. Joe was working for Pride Industry and told me that Pride had an income of over \$3 million the last year.

Another prisoner jumped the fence, but a few days later guards brought him back.

His wife had snitched on him. My cell mate Joe was happy. He was seducing an eighteen-year-old prisoner named Billy, a slim blond with blue eyes. Joe said he would never be released, so now, homosexuality was acceptable for him. He added, "I used to hate gays before, but I'm willing to compromise my values."

I learned Dr. Torres had resigned, leaving the institution without a psychiatrist or a medical doctor. The institution charged Dr. Torres with a breach of security for buying some greeting cards for a few of his patient prisoners, causing the doctor to retaliate by resigning. Days later a psychiatrist from Tallahassee came to Brevard. It took him only ten minutes to become familiar with my medical file, several inches thick, listing all my failed suicide attempts. He prescribed me some medication and advised to do some relaxing exercises. He warned me that my medication would be suspended shortly. I became concerned, because legal drugs were keeping my sanity in balance. Eventually, prison officials narrowed my options to promote my mental health to daily meditation, physical exercise and smoking more pot.

The summer was hot. On my last lay-in, I was without work for four weeks till the institution noticed my unemployed status and assigned me to a job at the dining hall. The sergeant there ordered me to work at the dishwasher.

On the evening news, a report stated that a DEA agent named Victor Cortez was tortured and killed in Mexico. And Mrs. Reagan praised the action of a teenager who denounced her parents to the local police for using social drugs. The teen complained that her parents paid no attention to her. Mrs. Reagan described the action of the young girl as, "love to her parents." The teenager's parents were arrested and later released under bond. The incident expedited the parents divorce, and the girl was placed under the custody of the State Government, initiating an endless tour of foster homes. A year later, the court allowed her to live with her convicted father.

Inmate Figueroa brought into his cell a three-foot black Indigo snake. Figueroa told me that he already had received three DR's for having snakes inside his cell. Most guards hate snakes.

In my next progress report I met my Classification Officer Colburn, who was very friendly. He said that although I had a collection of DR's, I had a good record and praised my conduct.

Bobby Weather, the former law-clerk, was now working at the DOT, cleaning the expressway and roads. Weather was serving a 12-year sentence for second degree murder. While incarcerated he had a fight and stabbed another prisoner, adding another 10-year-consecutive-sentence to his previous sentence. Later, Weather was rewarded with another two years while working at the canteen where \$200 was found to be missing and he was charged with theft. Today was not his best nor brightest day. He was locked up in jail and interrogated about an allegation by a gay that he was smuggling "rock" into the prison. He denied the allegations. Weather's roommate shared the cocaine with the homosexual who snitched on them. Weather was four months away from freedom. A detective showed up to investigate the case. Days later Weather was released for lack of evidence. That week the prison population had no marijuana to smoke.

September, 1986. A team of prison inspectors came to tour Brevard. The institution was engaged in a general cleaning and prisoners were working more than usual. In the afternoon I went to jog in the flooded yard and while running saw a beautiful snake. I tried to catch her but she coiled. I watched the snake amazed few minutes while she ate a frog.

I was called to the clinic for a physical. Most prisoners were concerned about blood tests and possible contamination with the lethal AIDS. I felt relieved when the MT used a sterilized syringe. According to Feliciano my urine test revealed I was drinking too

little water. My blood pressure was perfect, 60/120 and my vision turned out to be poor. Months later I would learn in my medical research that my health problems were related to excess stress. Medical researchers claim there is a link between stress and blood sugar level. My mental health was bad. In another building a Black inmate stabbed a White boy seven times, alleging that after having sex for \$5, the White boy stole \$10 from his pants.

Monday was Labor Day. At 6 a.m. the guard awakened me to work in the dining hall. I had a shot of espresso coffee made with instant coffee. At lunch we had chicken and for dinner pizza. While working at the dishwasher, a mini-riot was sparked between Blacks and White gay prisoners, resulting in several prisoners being wounded. Almost all the participants were handcuffed and taken to the cell block. Immediately, all prisoners were ordered to return to their dormitory. Many prisoners were unable to eat and I was one of them. In the next few days, guards were more visible around the Administration Building and in the dormitories.

We had a religious group headed by Chaplain Ray from Texas that was visiting Brevard. I met one of the prisoners in the group who I had known from Raiford. We talked for a few minutes and he invited me to come to the Church and meet Jack the Surface, as well as other ex-convicts. That night during the show Chaplain Ray introduced himself. A young man and an attractive girl sang religious songs. The Church was packed. Very seldom did the Church have such large audiences to a religious group. All former prisoners told of their previous life before incarceration: snorting coke, smoking dope and drinking, explaining how they met each other. Jack Murphy and others were released from the East Unit and Raiford and were on a crusade to visit several prisons in Florida.

Next day I was off duty and I watched the U.S. Tennis Tournament. Joe was jealous because some Blacks were drunk and he thought they might fuck his young blond boy. I have no idea if Joe was unaware that Billy was a fuck boy.

I received a letter from Frank Salvati from **East and West** magazine. I have been receiving East and West magazine free for the last year. East and West advocated New Age principles and a Japanese vegetarian diet for better health. I often read advertisements by Harbin Hot Springs in Northern California. The New Age Community was constantly seeking new members and workers. The resort advertised itself as a clothes-optional community, promoting organic products. I always admired new social concepts in society. My dream was to visit Harbin Hot Springs in the future.

I had an argument with a Black for the privilege of watching a TV program. I was participating in a new program, "Guide for Better Living," by Professor Buisberg. The class was on group therapy and I was graded "outstanding." My six DRs for refusing to use my committed name of Hernandez took away some 220 days of gain-time.

A smiling Kenneth Cawley returned from Texas. The good news was that Texas agreed to five years, running concurrent with his Florida time. The bad news was that Cawley had an escape with a four year sentence pending in Michigan for another bank robbery running consecutively. My good friend Cawley had been assaulting banks and businesses all his life. I later learned he discussed his case only with his codefendant and me.

Joe was moving into another building with a drug group. He was very honest with Mr. Kay, a psychologist who was presiding at the drug rehabilitation program, saying "I smoke reefers and I love it." The group functioned like Alcoholic Anonymous. Kay knew that all the prisoners smoked reefers in the dormitory. Guards entered the dormitory only for count. Joe Delucci moved to Dormitory J and told me the place was a paradise for smoking pot and he had no intention to give up pot.

October, 1986. A Russian diplomat was framed by the FBI and arrested on charges of spying. Days later Mr. Daniloff, an American journalist, was arrested by the

KGB-Russian Secret Police. The U.S. and Russia reached an agreement to expel Daniloff from Russia to West Germany, while in New York, the Russian diplomat would be expelled from the United States traveling to Moscow. Right away, the Reagan Administration denied any swapping with the Russians.

The news reported that a C-123 was shot down in Nicaragua and two of the American crew died, William J. Copper and Wallace Blaine. The Sandinista Government alleged capturing the first American in Nicaragua, who confessed to be operating from San Salvador and Honduras. The turbo-prop was leased to Southern Air in Miami and linked to the CIA. Bernard Kalb, the USA voice on foreign policy, was the first casualty of the disinformation program related to Libya and Moammar Khadafy. Kalb resigned because of the credibility of the nation on the disinformation program. The Reagan Administration used the State Department office to leak a Secret Information Report to discredit the Nicaraguan Government and built Congressional support for President Reagan's Central American policy. In Ireland, the Super Powers were having a meeting. The press talked about the illegal war of the United States against Nicaragua.

After Joe left, I remained alone for a few days. I moved to the lower bunk, with a Medical-2 for a bad back, issued by the doctor. After inmate Smith was released from jail he moved to my cell. He was a known petty thief who had been in prison since he was ten years old.

I spent a lot of time in the law library and later usually went to the yard. One day I saw an inmate jump the fence. When he reached the woods, one of the guards on the outside post who noticed the escapee, fired several warning shots. Right away the compound was closed down. Hours later the prisoner was apprehended.

We had an excellent dinner of T-bone steak, salad, ice cream, butter and biscuit. After dinner we had a heavy rain. With the winter we have shorter days. And in the

compound the prisoners commenced to receive reefer smuggled from outside free society.

I didn't communicate too much with Smith. I told him that anything missing in this cell, he would be responsible for. I refused to listen to his prison bullshit. I asked for nothing and loaned nothing to him. When I was meditating, Smith kept observing me with curiosity. Often, he attempted to explain what he couldn't comprehend. In his closing argument he blamed his parents for whatever he had done in his life. Prisoners tried to work on elements of emotions and Smith was already institutionalized. Like many other teenagers in Brevard, they will live a life of never-ending crises.

The weather in October was fantastic. In the news the Superpower's talk collapsed. Daniloff confessed he was used by the CIA in an effort to establish contact with a potential intelligence source. His KGB interrogator had a letter from the CIA officer who introduced himself as a friend of Daniloff.

Early in the morning Smith had an argument with the guard on duty who came over to wake him up to report to work in the dining hall. This time the guard handcuffed Smith and took him away to jail. I was happy Smith was gone, and glad to be by myself for two days.

Days later I was surprised when Billy came to my cell with all his property to check in as my new roommate. My former cell mate Joe Delucci was in love with Billy, another teenager who had spent his last ten years incarcerated. When Billy was about ten years old, he was charged with homicide and convicted as an adult. Billy, like other petty thieves blamed his mother for what he did wrong. Billy spent a lot of money on reefers, played hard-ball and football and drank prison wine. Billy didn't practice celibacy, either. He was an intelligent young fellow who was in the wrong environment, assimilating negative values instituted by the State Government. He was truly institutionalized.

We had a party with a nickel of reefers, potato chips and coke. We laughed for a

while, forgetting the difficult time of our long incarcerations. Billy talked like an adult and his reasoning had no relation to his age. Days later Billy was on the telephone talking to his mother. “Mom, last month I received a disciplinary report for possession of two nickel bags of reefers!” “Are you still messing around with that stuff?” asked the mother trying to impose authority. Billy was a sweet-talking young man, who knew the ropes in prison.

Billy told me how he was selected by prison officials as a “model inmate” and a crew with a video camera filmed his interview. He was picked up to be interviewed because of his personal charm, suave talk and baby-face--a youth with blond hair and blue eyes. During the interview Jimmy explained how he had been rehabilitated by the State of Florida. He never mentioned gambling, smoking pot and his frequent homosexual orgies with other Black prisoners. Teenage prisoners had only two options: being raped or get a “daddy,” playing the female role in exchange for protection and a cup of coffee. Billy decided on the last option. He never talked about how other young prisoners were raped, physically assaulted, robbed and sometimes killed in a petty argument for a couple of dollars. So Billy, the innocent teenager, appeared on public television telling prison officials what they wanted to hear. And the audience was delighted with the program, concluding that the Department of Corrections was doing an excellent job.

I read a book titled *The Buddhism*, by E. Zurcher, who described the life of Buddha in detail. Buddha was a super-intelligent being who walked in the path of perfection. In his teachings, Buddha claimed that the actual work of salvation can only be done by the believer himself, walking the path of salvation alone. Emancipation is effected by understanding the nature of the process of causation and by the elimination of desire which forms the motive power behind this process. The noble truth of the Path leads to cessation of suffering. This path, called the Noble Eight Fold Path makes several

demands of the believer: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. I was unable to understand how monks were able to walk in meditation during their daily job assignments. The science of Buddhism is a difficult mystery to master and perhaps the only path to enlightenment. The disciple's career is divided into three phases: the practice of morality, mental concentration and the attainment of wisdom. The Buddhist way is primarily a mental discipline. We must repress sinful activities. Buddha does not speak directly about Nirvana, but points out the way to reach it. Usually our primary concern is to avoid suffering. Buddha reached total extinction at the age of 80. Like all great events in Buddha's life, this resolution was accompanied by an earthquake and rumbling of thunder.

Billy was in deep water one day when two guards frisked him at the electronic shop and found a \$50 bill in his pocket. He collected another DR. The guards didn't want to hurt Billy, so they just casually failed to file a disciplinary report within the seven working days and later the case was dismissed. And Brevard Correctional filed for certification and accreditation by the Correctional Association to qualify for federal grants and food programs. Prisoners were under constant pressure to clean up the institution to maintain Association standards.

November, 1986. Delucci got into trouble. On the last football game he bet \$100 and lost. Unable to pay the winner, he packed all his belongings and checked himself into jail for protection, losing his job and cell.

I went to see Dr. Met, a psychologist, to get my prescriptions refilled. The new psychiatrist had reduced my doses of 75 mm Senequan to 30 mm. In the evening I felt breathless. Early in the next morning I went to see the MT, who gave me a white and red pill. On my way to the dormitory I learned that some prisoners assigned to work with a

pass outside the gate failed to return. All guards were on call and some of them showed up in civilian clothes.

In the dining hall I worked stocking silverware. The guards found some strawberry jelly I had hidden behind the dishwasher and they dumped it in the garbage. In the evening I went to pick up my medicine and found that the psychiatrist had not refilled my medication. I continued to suffer from lack of breath and perennial insomnia.

Lunch the next day was a thrill: T-bone steak, baked potato, salad, dessert and milk. In the near future all these good meals would disappear from the state prison system.

Through massive shake-downs, incarcerations and transfers to other institutions, Brevard was able to slow down the smuggling of pot into the institution. At once, the production of “buck” increased. Now most prisoners were high on “buck” instead of pot, thus becoming more violent. For the prison administration social drugs became a Catch-22. And worse, like in other prisons, in Brevard prisoners were shooting heroin.

I have earned the confidence of Sergeant Gillis and other officers in the dining hall by working hard and being reliable. All prisoners like working at the dining hall and the main kitchen because they have access to more food. I told Billy that I got a new job in the Staff Dining Hall, and he said it was a sweet job. We decided to celebrate my new job with another party with two nickels of reefers, some potato chips and coke. About the incident where Billy was charged with homicide, he only said that “it happened a couple of houses from my family home.” He never said anything further and I never asked him about it. Billy was always trying to take advantage of my generosity, using my coffee and sugar and filling up his jumbo-size coffee cup. I stopped sharing my junk food. The tougher I acted, the more polite Billy became.

I spoke to Assistant Superintendent McKee about my situation of collecting disciplinary reports for using my legal name of “Otero” in my legal and personal

correspondence. I thought to negotiate the issue and ask Mr. Mckee to get me a transfer to Florida City Correctional Institution located in Homestead, closer to my family, friends and attorneys. He welcomed my suggestion to take Brevard Correctional off the hook and approved my transfer to Florida City.

It was in the Staff Dining Hall I learned that I was replacing Marshall, a White prisoner who was fired for making a pass at a Black female officer. What made the situation worse was that the female officer was the sister of Assistant Superintendent Mckee. Without delay, inmate Marshall was demoted and transferred to the inmate's dining hall.

What I didn't like about the job in the Staff Dining Hall was that it was too easy. The facility was quieter than the inmate dining hall and it was great to be in touch with educated civilians working in the prison, most of them middle-aged white, married and overweight. As usual, only a few of them knew how to dress well. The exception were two middle-aged, good-looking secretaries, with whom the entire compound was in love. Every day the two Madonnas were escorted by a guard down to the Classification Building where they worked; both were sophisticated and had good taste for dressing elegantly.

In the Staff Dining Hall the inmates had some privileges. We were allowed to fix our own breakfast and eat whatever we wanted. Prisoners were allowed to take one sandwich a day. Most prisoners sold the food to other prisoners. The daily routine was to walk to the main kitchen and bring a thermal wagon with the meals, serving the food to the Staff, and then clean the place. Three prisoners worked there: Roger took care of most of the cleaning and serving the trays; Irving organized the set-up, served the trays and cooked light meals; I worked at the food line serving trays and cleaning. We were allowed to watch a portable TV inside the canteen.

In the news, President Reagan explained to the American people about the crisis where CIA Director Casey and Oliver North swapped arms for hostages with Iran. From the sale of weapons, Oliver North used the profit of the transaction to finance the war of the Nicaraguan Contras who were fighting the Sandinistas.

December, 1986. One morning I was paged to report to Complex 2, where my room key was taken away and a guard ordered me to pick up all my personal belongings. I was kept in a holding cell with three other Black prisoners. At noon the white bus arrived, loaded with prisoners going southbound.

After being handcuffed and identified by a picture from our prison file, each prisoner identified himself with name and prison number. The bus windows were covered with bars. I was surprised that prisoners no longer had legs shackles while being transferred to another prison. I was carrying three cartons, loaded mostly with legal papers. During the trip I spoke with another Cuban prisoner. He was a veteran of Bay of Pigs, named Luis Martinez, alias "El Ruso." Our conversation turned to the 1960s clandestine operations against Cuba. Ruso said that after negotiation for medical equipment and drugs with Fidel Castro in 1962, the Brigade was released from prison and upon returning to Miami, he participated for a few years in clandestine operations against Castro. Ruso was arrested several times by local authorities in Miami. Years later, he became active in dealing social drugs and was arrested and convicted of a criminal offense. While committed at Belle Glades Correctional, he bribed a guard and escaped to Costa Rica. Later in San Jose, a bomb exploded in his car, causing serious injuries to his leg. He returned from Costa Rica to Miami to help a friend escape from Belle Glade. The guard who previously had accepted the bribe was no longer working at Glades, but accepted the \$25,000 bribe and double-crossed him. Two persons were arrested when caught delivering the money to the guard, and later El Ruso was arrested in New Jersey on

a fugitive warrant and extradited to Florida. El Ruso told me that while at Raiford Penitentiary, he received inadequate medical care for his leg. Prison officials were angry because of his successful escape from Belle Glade Institution a few years before and the arrangement of a second escape attempt with the same former guard.

Our conversation was interrupted when the bus arrived at Martin Correctional Institution, where we would stay overnight. Martin Correctional was another disciplinary prison like the East Unit and Raiford. The prison population was locked in their cells 24 hours a day. I had heard terrifying stories about this prison and its torture of prisoners. Prisoners were only allowed to visit the yard twice a week, the minimum requirement by court order. I saw a few prisoners picking up trash around the yard. Inmates were not allowed to talk. Even transit prisoners were scared of the potential for repression and brutality enforced at Martin, where guards were more aggressive. A redneck guard warned us, "No saying hello to any other inmate, or you'll stay in Martin for the next two years." We were housed in a cell for prisoners in transit, in a building with air-conditioning and a heater system. We were provided with linens, a towel and toothpaste. An hour later a trustee brought two plastic containers with our meal and two plastic cups of a red Kool-aid. Count was every two hours. We were compelled to sit on our bunks in silence. Prisoners talked in a whisper outside the hallway and moved only when guards ordered them.

After a lousy dinner warmed in a microwave, we talked for hours. El Ruso told me that when he was in Lake Butler Reception and Medical Center, a Black prisoner was killed in the K-Wing, where they kept prisoners incommunicado for weeks. A Cuban doctor certified that the Black prisoner had fallen from the stairway and killed himself. This story resembled how many others "accidents" were covered up.

El Ruso said that in Florida City everything would be easy for me, because he

knew everybody there. An inmate Ruso knew from another prison working as trustee came to our cell and offered Ruso some joints, but Ruso declined, afraid of the offer being a setup. He was concerned about getting in trouble and having to remain two years in Martin. Without a pillow, it took me an hour to fall asleep.

Early in the morning we were awakened and minutes later escorted to the dining hall single file and in total silence. After breakfast we were taken to the visiting park to be processed in vans and buses. Around 7:30 a.m. guards called each prisoner by name and assigned him to a particular vehicle. An inmate asked permission to go to the bathroom, but the guard denied it because the floor had been recently waxed. I had a lot of problems carrying my three boxes. I was lucky that another unknown prisoner helped me. I observed El Ruso walking into a van going to Florida City, while I was assigned into another van going southbound. It was the last time I saw El Ruso.

The van was packed with 14 prisoners. To make things worse, the guard drove like a race car champion. Some prisoners lit up cigarettes, making the air dense and polluted. Two hours later we arrive at Belle Glades Correctional Institution. I felt really relieved to get out of that fucking van.

Inside the Belly of the Beast. The officer opened the back door and called several prisoners, including me. I felt bitter, because Belle Glades had a terrible reputation as a violent and primitive prison. Assistant Superintendent Mr. McKee fell short in his promise to transfer me to Florida City in Homestead.

While we were waiting to collect our personal belongings in the Property Room and to be processed by a sergeant, we observed a line of prisoners dressed in rags, their faces covered with handkerchiefs to protect themselves from the dust and cold weather. They were going to work in agricultural jobs with the DOT, cleaning highways and roads, earning a mere \$10 per week. In Glade, inmates lived in spartan conditions in dormitories

with leaking roofs and broken toilets. Homosexual orgies and rapes were common practices. Most prisoners were Black in this oldest prison in Florida. Belle Glades was ugly, filthy, stinking, with mammoth mosquitoes and roaming cats. Four large barracks were used as dormitories with communal showers and toilets. The library, dining hall, kitchen and clinic formed the compound. Routinely, Black prisoners masturbated while taking a shower. I really missed the minimum privacy at Brevard and Avon Park. Prisoners were required a pass to go to the library, church and clinic. For a White inmate, obtaining a pass was not easy. Black officers constantly discriminated against them.

I went to the Post Office and introduced myself as a new inmate and provided the clerk, Mrs. Robertson, with a photocopy of the Order issued by U.S. Magistrate Peter Nimkoff. The Order directed several defendants, including Wainwright, the Director of the Florida Department of Corrections, to list me as “Rolando Otero, instead of Rolando Hernandez.” In Belle Glades I had no problem receiving and mailing all my legal correspondence under my legal name of “Otero.”

The next day a mist of rain and cooler temperatures kept the prisoners out of the yard. I went to the laundry to pick up my linen, towel and blankets after being assigned to Dormitory A. Later, the blanket provided to me was stolen from my bunk by a petty thief.

Early one morning a guard raced to a bunk, where he found an inmate soaked in blood. He had cut his wrists. The guard used his walkie-talkie to call for help. Minutes later two paramedics took the dying prisoner to the clinic. At Glades, I met a lot of strange faces, including some prisoners spirited from Raiford, Avon Park and Brevard. During the first few months, I was concerned about the subhuman conditions and my personal security. One hopeful plus: The law library was well-stocked.

The City of Belle Glades had earned a reputation for becoming the AIDS capital of the world. Most Correctional Officers were uneducated Blacks who routinely

discriminated against White and Latin prisoners. While at Brevard and Avon Park the Black prisoners labeled the institution as “A White boy camp,” in Belle Glades the White prisoners nicknamed the prison as “Nigger boy camp.” I noticed that Black prisoners at Glade Correctional wore substantial gold chains, while at Brevard Correctional Institution, Black inmates sported gold teeth as a sign of social status.

I continued reading Eastern religious philosophy. “The noble path of the truth leads to the end of suffering. Eager to escape sorrow, men rush into sorrow. Both disillusion and enlightenment originate within the mind, and every fact arises from the activities of the mind. But the mind that creates its surroundings is never free from their shadow. A Zen student must walk alone at all times. Zen doctrine is not subject to sentiment. Love is unconditional.” It took me a decade to digest the meaning of those words. My mind became engaged in constant daily prayer. I seldom went to church, but constantly meditated, seeking wisdom. This incarceration had taught me valuable spiritual lessons.

I had a telephone conversation with Paul Morris about my State appeal. After four years on the dock, Magistrate Everest had not even reviewed my case. Now he ordered the State of Florida to provide him with a copy of the pre-trial record. For the next few days I was unassigned, so spent most of the time in the yard and the library. I notified the Court of my new address. During the orientation meeting, the Chaplain, a most interesting personality, said that those prisoners with minimum and medium security, whose families has passed away, might go to the funeral escorted by the local Sheriff. Prisoners had to pay up to \$1500 in advance for this extra security protection. There was no doubt that some privileges in the capitalistic society are based on social status.

The Classification Officer provided me with the opportunity to select my new job of working in a cane field, escorted by the gun squad, or in the kitchen. In the absence of a

more appealing option, I selected the kitchen. In the cane field, prisoners were paid ten cents an hour, just as in Pride Industry. One night a White prisoner was assaulted and robbed by four Black inmates while playing poker. When the White prisoner reported the incident to a Black guard about the assault and robbery, they locked him up in jail.

Between Black Correctional Officers and Black inmates, the only the difference was the uniform; both came from the same ghettos and held the same community values.

One morning I had a call-out for an appointment with Dr. Medina, the psychiatrist. Subsequently, I found out that he was another zealot Cuban-American who worshipped the right-wing philosophy. Medina loved Ronald Reagan, a Republican serving the capitalistic state. We chatted a lot about foreign policy, although we disagreed on many issues. I no longer worshipped the right-wing philosophy and could no longer relate to the “system.” I was becoming frightened by my constant transition. My time in prison was making me more rebellious against the establishment. After Watergate, I changed my voting registration from Republican to Democrat.

Dr. Medina considered my case special because I was a political prisoner. He told me about another political prisoner named Valentin Hernandez, who was recently transferred to Florida City. I learned that Valentin was having an affair with a nurse, whose husband was a Correctional Officer. One day Valentine was surprised by a transfer to Florida City.

I was concerned about the mosquito plague in Belle Glades and its relationship to the AIDS virus. According to Dr. Mark Whiteside, co-director of the institute for Tropical Medicine in Dade County, Florida, the mosquito was linked to the AIDS virus. To my relief, as well as other inmates, a year later laboratory tests revealed that mosquitoes could not transmit the AIDS virus to human beings.

For prisoners, Christmas meant money, a few packages, visits and telephone calls

from family and friends, and good meals. On Christmas day, I was awakened early in the morning by a guard to report to work in the main kitchen. A few days later, I was told that I was to work one day on and one off. During the evening count each inmate received the traditional \$5 from the State of Florida. Most prisoners used that money to buy pot, to gamble or for some groceries. I didn't like Christmas because it brought a lot of memories. During this festive month a few banquets were held by Alcoholic's Anonymous and other religious groups.

Next to my bunk lived Juan Gonzalez, charged with attempted first-degree murder and armed robbery. He was one of the Marielitos, who after arriving at Miami, initiated a career assaulting jewelry stores and dealing in social drugs. For Juan, like other Marielitos, freedom in Miami meant assaulting jewelry stores, snorting cocaine, smoking marijuana, having wild parties with young girls, and driving a new Cadillac. Gonzalez helped me a lot during my incarceration at Glades; he was the only Marielito that I ever trusted. He told me that Glades Correctional once had the best food in the prison system; now, the food was bad; prisoners used to sell all the pot and cocaine that they wanted and everybody had \$100 in their pocket; prisoners watched pornographic movies and guards were easily bribed. Gonzalez said that everything was fine till a gang of Blacks began to assault and rape other prisoners. A prisoner named La Marca and ten other inmates filed a civil action against the institution. In the aftermath, the Honorable U.S. Magistrate Peter Nimkoff awarded over \$100,000 to the prisoners and implemented certain regulations to improve the violent environment at Glades. A new superintendent was named, and many of the prisoners involved in physical violence and rapes were transferred to disciplinary prisons, the East Unit, Raiford and Martin Correctional.

While walking around the yard, Gonzalez explained to me that previously Glades had a dairy farm, a slaughter house and a cannery. Prisoners ate all the milk, meat and

vegetables that they wanted. Meat and other products were sold regularly by prison officials in a black market operation to local businesses. A few years ago the Department of Corrections closed down those facilities. Director Wainwright stated that it was cheaper for the Department of Corrections to buy milk, meat, and vegetables from private markets. The real reason was that purchasing from private firms provided opportunity to take “bribes.” **January, 1987.** The Department of Corrections was one of the most corrupt agencies within the State of Florida.

During this month we had cold temperatures and a lot of foggy days early in the morning. Some prisoners spent their time watching football games and other programs on TV while others played poker and smoked pot to relax the tension. Marijuana was more easily available at Glades than in other institutions. Frequently in the visiting park prisoners pitched a few ounces of pot over the fence, while on the other side another prisoner caught it and hid it into a secure place.

The need for close physical contact with another person is a need that remains with us throughout our lifetime. Touching can be an act of love, a way of communicating without words. And although we may crave the warmth of a human embrace, most opportunities for touching are and purity. The connection between people through touching is perhaps the most intimate of all human exchange.¹

The cold front eventually passed, and again the prison population was able to exercise and socialize daily in the yard. The new year started with a shakedown at the dormitories by the gun squad; any extra items were immediately confiscated and guards frisked prisoners at random. I continued having problems with having adequate access to the law library. Obtaining a pass became a difficult task every day; seems that was the purpose of this new regulation. Saturday was the only day I was allowed to use the

¹A. P. Kennedy, *A Guide to Sensual Enhancement*, 1986.

electric typewriter to type my motions.

The most shocking experience of Glades Correctional was the substantial lack of privacy in open dormitories, showers and toilets. I was surprised to observe prisoners having sexual relationships, covered only with a sheet or a blanket. This was one of the issues covered in **La Marca vs. State of Florida**, where Magistrate Nimkoff issued an order prohibiting such practice by prisoners. Still, hard-core Black prisoners routinely victimized, seduced or raped young white prisoners. On many occasions I saw Black Correctional Officers watching interracial sexual relationships without taking any appropriate action. Homosexuality was intensively practiced at Glades. A human being cannot adjust properly to celibacy. In Glades, celibacy was a myth, while in the free American society AIDS was spreading rapidly.

February, 1987. Another of my bunk mates was Boehm. This fellow was glued to the telephone calling his attractive fiancée. Boehm volunteered in the kitchen, trying to shorten his time with the gain time. Franco was doing the same. Prisoners received 20 days gain time per month if they continued working during incarceration. Boehm and Franco had an obsession about their day of release. Gonzalez had to serve another five years and then was to be deported to Cuba. Gonzalez knocked his brain out playing poker. Some prisoners accepted infidelity as a reality and were delighted if their wives kept the communication open and send money. Frequently, religious groups celebrated with banquets to encourage new membership. Food and favors are powerful weapons to the institution as well as some religious groups to increase the membership and manipulate the prisoners. At night inmates congregated around a bunk to pray, one acting as preacher giving a sermon.

I called my old friend, Faith Flax, who accepted my collect call and we chatted for a few minutes. I had stopped calling her a year ago when she became involved with a

jealous boyfriend. She worked as a legal secretary, making pretty good money. Faith told me that her last boyfriend stole money from her and so the relationship ended. She sounded more friendly this time. She told me that she was now living alone, had just a few friends, and was working hard at the office. Faith was considering buying a condominium in the area of Dade County. She told me that she would come to visit me soon.

On the news it was reported that the State of Texas had closed its doors to admitting more new inmates to be housed by the Department of Corrections. The State of Texas was one of the most brutal prison systems in the United States, compelling prisoners to work hard on farms. Texas also had a reputation for abusing and torturing prisoners, who lived under spartan and disgraceful conditions. Glades Correctional had a full house with more bunks being added to all dormitories. The overcrowding conditions created more violence within the prison population. Living conditions were primitive and would get worse in the near future.

A sergeant informed us that Glades Correctional had applied for membership in the American Correctional Association of Prisons, and the institution was to be inspected by a team. After being accepted as a member, Glades then would qualify for aid on a food program and other federal loans for educational programs.

I finished reading "The Best and the Brightest," by David Halberstam, an excellent book about the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations and their problems with the war in Vietnam. Halberstam related how the Viet Cong smashed the brutality and violence of the United States, explaining how the military outsmarted the civilians in their efforts for an unlimited war against the Viet Cong and North Vietnam.

Inmate Steward worked with me in the dining hall at the food line and sometimes wrapping silverware. He had terminal cancer and a date of release of 2010. Steward was a Vietnam veteran that got his terminal cancer from Agent Orange used by the United States

during the war. The State Court recently had granted his release based on humanitarian reasons within 90 days. I explained to him that working in the kitchen was hard on me since I suffered from sporadic pain in my back and that I had a medical 2. Steward advised me to see my Classification Officer, Mr. Shaffer, for a change of job. I went to see Shaffer, a short Black with a pot belly. I explained my problem to him. Shaffer granted me a transfer to job, assigning me to work as houseman in my dormitory. I was really happy to be out of the kitchen!

Initially, I did not get along with Shaffer. After an evaluation of the primitive conditions existing at Glades Correctional, I requested a transfer to Florida City. Shaffer said there was a two-year waiting list to that institution and that all Blacks and Latins living in Miami wanted to be committed to Florida City. A few months later I noticed that only Black prisoners were immediately transferred to another institution. Seems that White and Latin prisoners were considered second-class citizens. What pissed me off was that Black Americans had been complaining about race discrimination by White Anglos for centuries, and now they discriminated against other ethnic groups.

I received a free East and West magazine from Salvador Salvati with a quotation: "The pure natural virtues of love and freedom cannot be enjoyed without respect. True love is an expression of one's humanness. True freedom lies in the realization of one's harmony with universal law. Ni, Hua Ching."

Another cold front hit Glades, keeping the prison population inside the dormitory. It was boring watching the same faces and being confined in this cement micro-jungle. I went to the law library and I found that Mr. Jones, the Director had lost the key. He was embarrassed in reporting that he had lost the only key to the library. A few prisoner volunteers helped him to open the door. While Mr. Jones went for a cup of coffee at the canteen, the prisoners did the job. When Mr. Jones returned the main door was open.

The absence of minimum privacy and heterosexual relationships was causing prisoners irreparable mental and physical injuries. This month the Department of Corrections selected 650 prisoners to be release within few days.

Newcomers arrived every week. Friendship was as artificial as the environment. On Sunday my brother Orlando came to see me. We spoke about family affairs and his business of installing new roofs and red clay tiles imported from Venezuela. During the visit Franco introduced me to his parents. His mother was a sweet lady and his father shook hands like a Marine Sergeant. I had a nice visit.

The Library Director asked me about my case. I explained to him that my criminal charges were politically related. Then he asked me if I wanted to become a “law clerk” in the law library. I told him that I might be interested in that position. Becoming a law clerk would guarantee my access to the law library at any time. Mr. Jones noticed that I came every day to the law library. Jones read my motions to the courts and liked them. He informed me that I would be helping mostly Spanish-speaking prisoners and would be sent for a week of training and graduation at the South Florida Reception Center. Seems he had no idea that some of my civil actions were against the Department of Corrections and Glades.

Racism was still a tradition at Glades. In the dining hall the right line was used by White prisoners, left line was used mostly by Black prisoners. During lunch one day a Black prisoner assaulted a Marielito who showed his penis to a female Black officer in the dining hall. Days later while walking in the yard, I saw a Marielito masturbating in front of a female officer in the tower; she reported the incident to Control by walkie-talkie. A sergeant took the prisoner to jail. Such incidents happened very often at Glades.

Over the next week the institution was busy cleaning up the garbage. A few windows were repaired, walls and counters were fixed and painted, and guards' shoes

were shining. Several federal inspectors representing the American Association of Prisons and Jails toured Glades and I was told later that Glades passed the inspection.

So far, my expiration of sentence in 2010, seemed to be too far away. Because I failed to surrender and being convicted with another violation of the law, the Parole Board is reluctant to provide me with early release.

Another array of fellow-prisoners and cell mates passed through my life at Brevard and Glades in that year of 1986. As in my former incarcerations, my law library work, daily running and meditation helped me keep my sanity.

CHAPTER 18

LOVE AND INTELLIGENCE ARE RELATED TO FREEDOM AND THEY ARE THE MOST TANGIBLE AS WELL AS THE MOST CREATIVE THINGS IN THE WORLD. THE RELATIONSHIP OF LOVE AND DUTY IN A RECOGNIZED FAMILY UNIT IS AN INTEREST OF LIBERTY UNDER THE FIRST AND FIFTH AMENDMENTS.

March, 1987. Prison life remained the same: an old prisoner fainted and was taken to the clinic for medical attention; a gang of Black prisoners mugged a Cuban prisoner, looting his gold chain; a group of Cuban prisoners, led by Manzano, later got back the gold chain.

I filed a civil action with the Southern District of Florida, *Rolando Otero, vs. Richard Dugger, et al.*, Case No. 89-8591-Civ-Davis/Magistrate Sorrentino, citing the illegal spartan conditions where prisoners were incarcerated at Glades Correctional where unsanitary and overcrowded conditions prevailed. Glades Correctional was built for 549 prisoners; the prison population rose to 1300 prisoners while I was there.

I filed my civil action complaint as a political prisoner illegally incarcerated on behalf of present and future inmates, invoking original jurisdiction of the court, citing several Sections of the U.S. Codes and cases in support:

Prison officials infringed upon prisoner's *Eighth* and *Fourteenth* Amendments of the *Due Process* and *Equal Protection Rights*, which constitute

“cruel and unusual punishment when the prison population at Glades are subjected to live in barracks unfit for human habitation and threaten their physical and mental health,” **Gates vs. Collier**, 501 F.2d 1380 (5th Cir. 1980); and **Rhodes vs. Chapman**, 452 U.S. 337, 101 S.Ct. 2392. **La Marca vs. Turner**, was a civil action filed by a group of prisoners in Glades, who were raped and physically assaulted by other prisoners complaining about overcrowding conditions. Black prisoners were generally involved as the aggressors. The U.S. Honorable Magistrate Peter Nimkoff from the Southern District of Florida granted the relief sought by prisoners imposing certain conditions that were never met by prison officials. In **Costello vs. Wainwright**, 397 F. Supp. 31, & 33, (M.D. Fla. 1975), the District Court held: “...severe overcrowding endanger the very lives of the inmates because of its factor in the causation within the prison system ... The court has a duty to protect prisoners ... from unlawful and onerous treatment of a nature that, of itself, adds punitive measures to those legally meted out by the Court.” In **Ramos vs. Lamm**, 639 F.2d at 572 the Court concluded that “the lack of safety deprived prisoners of their Constitutional right to be reasonable protected from constant threat of violence and sexual assault. Homosexual orgies were practiced openly, and prisoners were routinely assaulted and raped. Over 60% of the prison population was homosexual. The Department of Corrections failed to provide the prisoners with a heterosexual environment. Love and intelligence were related to freedom, and they are the most concrete, as well as the most creative thing in the world. The relationship of love and duty in a recognized family unit is an interest of liberty entitled to constitutional protection and state intervention to terminate such relationships must be accompanied by procedures meeting requirements of the *Due Process Clause*.

[I listed a dozen prisoners who had been physically assaulted by other prisoners, including mentally disturbed inmates.]

“An inmate's right to be protected from constant threat of violence and sexual assault from other inmates does not require that he wait until he is actually assaulted before obtaining relief,” **Riley vs. Jeffes**, 777 F.2d at 147 (3rd Cir. 1985).

Prisoners are compelled to live in subhuman conditions at the warehouse at Glades. “The *Eighth Amendment* reflects the evolving standard of decency that mark progress of a mature society,” **Trop vs. Dullers**, 356 U.S. 101, 78 S.Ct. 590. In **Gates vs. Collier**, 501 F.2d 1301 (5th Cir. 1974), the Court held: “Thus the adequacy of conditions of confinement of prison, such as medical treatment, hygienic materials, and physical facilities is clearly subjected to *Eighth Amendment* scrutiny.”

The Syndrome of AIDS. AIDS was caused by a deadly virus that damages the body's immune system, leaving the victims susceptible to opportunistic infections and diseases. The total number of cases reported since June, 1981, by the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta was 60,583. Florida ranks behind New York and California in the number of cases reported, with a total of 4,226 cases. It took up to ten years for the virus to develop. In 1987, AIDS became the leading cause of death within the Florida prison population, behind murder, suicide and heart attacks. Homosexual prisoners with the AIDS virus are kept living in the general compound. By 1987, 65 prisoners had died of AIDS and 36 new cases were reported in 1986. The implementation of conjugal visits could have deterred the lethal AIDS virus within the prison population.

[I complained that after Key West, Belle Glades was well-known

internationally for having the highest number of cases of AIDS.]

“Prisoners are entitled to be protected from contagious disease,” **Degidio vs. Perpich**, 612 F. Supp. 1983 (D. Minn. 1985); and Chapter 33-19.003, F.D.C.

Prison officials deprived the prisoners of fundamental rights of Due Process in introducing witnesses in their behalf during disciplinary hearings, citing the case of inmate Antonio Menendez, one of the Plaintiffs. Menendez filed a civil action to improve prison conditions and later was subjected to a series of disciplinary actions. “Whenever substantial individual interests of prisoners are at stake, some assurances of elemental fairness are essential, “**King vs. Higging**, 702 F.2d 18 (first Cir. 1983.) I took the opportunity to cite the incident where I was compelled by a Black officer to sleep under an intense electric heater, causing mental and physical injuries. In **Procurier vs. Martinez**, 415 U.S. 396, 94 S.Ct. 1800, the U.S. Supreme Court held: “Capricious and arbitrary application of the prison regulations will not be tolerated.”

At Glades White prisoners are routinely victimized by Black prison officials who enforce racial discrimination against them. “The *Due Process* and *Equal Protection Clauses* prohibit racial discrimination, **Griffin vs. Breckenridge**, 403 U.S. 88, 91 S.Ct. 1790; and **Gates vs. Collier**, 349 F. Supp. at 887-893 (N.D. Miss. 1972).

The civil action was filed by Antonio Menendez, Jose A. Barro, Francisco Garcia, Gerald Hogwood, and myself. Recruiting prisoners to join the civil action was a difficult task, but I was able to accomplish it. Next day the prison population suffered food poisoning and most prisoners had diarrhea. At the clinic the MT provided me with Milk of Magnesia and a couple of pills. During this emergency doctors from the outside were brought in. The institution was scared of having some type of contagious disease.

One day, during my frequent legal research, looking for a legal ground to support my immediate release, I found a Federal law that was supposed to have protected me when I was kidnapped from Chile. Under Section 3192, it stated, "When a person is extradited from a foreign country, the President of the United States should protect him from harm." Therefore, the tortures I suffered at Dade County Jail was more than illegal. As a political prisoner I feared that the state might cause physical harm while in custody and nothing was done to protect me. In fact, the Federal Government was involved in promoting this double state trial. Months later, pursuant to Chapter 3192, I will file a complaint in Federal Court seeking my immediate release from prison.

A total of 100 prisoners were released, while the police captured 600 fugitives nationwide. Glades was at full capacity, without a bunk to spare. Next to my low bunk was Bill, a pilot, who was surprised while smuggling pot into Florida. A Cobra helicopter from Homestead Air Force Base chased him down till he ran out of gas and crash-landed his twin engine-plane in a remote rural area. Bill and Franco were transferred to the medium and minimum security compound, previously the cannery for packing vegetables. These warehouses were now dormitories.

I kept track of the Lipton Tennis Competition at Key Biscayne, where Martina lost against German-born Steffi Graff. This time Martina behaved more maturely controlling her temper. In the next game Christ Everestt lost and Graff won the competition.

One morning I was typing a motion in the law library when the guards came over and ordered us to go back to our assigned dormitories. Juan Gonzalez told me that two Marielitos were taken to jail for attempting to escape. Guards unleashed dogs which badly mauled the prisoners. Glades had the highest record of escape by prisoners. Some of the success of escaping from Glades was related to "bribing" prison officials.

Again in the news, a veteran of Bay of Pigs and a former member of the Golden

Falcon was linked to the Nicaraguan Contra scandal. Rene Corvo was charged by the U.S. Attorney in Miami of smuggling weapons for the Fort Lauderdale Airport to Costa Rica for the U.S. support of Contras fighting the Sandinistas. Eventually, the charges would be dismissed in Federal Court. The operation of weapons for the Contra would be linked to the drug business. When I was in Miami-MCC, a pilot testified that he flew cocaine to Homestead Military Airport in South Florida. In Columbia the CIA swapped weapons for cocaine with drug barons.

Prison Crusaders, another religious organization, came to visit Glades. Many of the volunteers came to the dining hall and had lunch with the prisoners. For most prisoners the religious path was a way to make their sentence shorter; that is what prison officials wanted to hear. That evening I saw a big line in the dining hall. I knew today we were having fried chicken.

March was bad for the prison population. Most prisoners had the flu, and a long line waited at the clinic. On Friday I was surprised to see Hector Camacho, the lightweight boxing champion touring the prison. A crowd of prisoners and guards surrounded him. Camacho was dressed in flashy colors, feeling like a king in this environment, surrounded by convicted inmates.

On Monday the Probation Officer recommended six months off my tentative release date of 2000. The officer observed my long record of incarceration: "You're not the worst inmate in the system." It was difficult for them to understand my case, serving such a long sentence as a first-time offender.

In the afternoon, I went to the yard for my daily exercise and jogging. Far away, I was able to see dozens of mammoth yellow tractors pulling wagons loaded with cane for the local sugar mill. Glades was leasing some of the surrounding state land to the Talisman Sugar Mills. The harvest of sugar cane would end some time in March. Glades

also owned a large orange field next to the prison, although very seldom prisoners were provided oranges in their diet. Most fruits provided to prisoners had no value in the market.

I read a book titled, *The Shadow Network*, which described the Russian spy system from 1900 to the late 1970s. My petition to Federal Court to convene a grand jury to direct the U.S. Attorney to investigate Judge Helen Morphonio for corruption was dismissed by the Eleventh Court of Appeals in Atlanta.

In my motion I stated: "There was probable cause to believe that a criminal offense had been committed." The petition was filed invoking the First and Fifth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and in the nature of Mandamus filed in behalf of the public interest. The U.S. Attorney in Miami successfully argued that his discretionary authority to file a criminal offense was absolute. Again, experience with the jurisprudence showed me that justice is a myth.

April, 1987. My relationship with my family was not getting any better; I hadn't heard from them in a long time. I was kept in touch with my only good friend, Faith, who told me that she was no longer dealing social drugs. The Government had a lot of informants and police officers investigating drug cases to institute a police state in the United States. Faith was still working at a law office and keeping a low profile.

Last August CIA agent Edward Lee Howard defected to the Soviet Union, while under surveillance by the FBI. The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights of the OAS accused the United States of human rights violation when they executed James Terry Roach in South Carolina and Jay Pinkerson in Texas. Both were convicted of murder and were only 17 years old when executed. The institution installed a new loud speaker and alarm system in the fence on the perimeter of the prison. During the weekend the same Cuban Marielito who often masturbated in front of a female office, was locked up in jail

for a few days.

There was a lot of enthusiasm for the fight between Sugar Ray vs. Larry Haggler in Las Vegas. The experts and the press predicted an easy victory for Haggler. Weeks later Sugar Ray won the contest with his classic style of dancing around the ring. Next day a group of prisoners who lost money betting on Haggler checked into the cell block for protection.

The *Miami Herald* published an article about my legal counsel, Robert Rosenblatt, who was representing a wealthy woman who was charged with hiring a hit man to kill her husband while jogging. He became a top gun attorney in South Florida having a sophisticated clientele with a tendency to solve marital problems Italian style--with murder.

I filed another civil action in Federal Court, complaining about the canteen's outrageous prices. I received some religious books from the Theosophical Society.

Crack cocaine had no frontiers. Prisoners had access to this addictive drug. Of all the drugs, prison officials disliked it the most, because of the violence that it generated! The first time the police found crack in a raid they had no idea what it was. One small rock cost about \$10. In the next few months, the institution would transfer dozens of prisoners linked to crack cocaine.

Donna Richbough, a female working as a clerk in the main office, was arrested when the guards searched her purse and found half a pound of pot. An inmate who had been previously arrested, snitched on Donna. I felt sorry for her. This week the prison compound ran out of marijuana.

One day at lunch, a local TV news team visited the dormitories to do a report related to AIDS in the prison population. In my petition for a Writ of Mandamus related to AIDS against the Department of Corrections in Miami Circuit Court, the State Attorney's

Office in Tallahassee answered my complaint with a "Motion to Dismiss." I requested the Circuit Court to direct the Department of Corrections to "implement an adequate policy" in relation to AIDS contamination in the prison population and AIDS' exportation into society.

I continued having problems with the electric heater lamp above my bunk that radiated too much direct heat, a lamp generally used at chicken farms. I complained to guards on duty, but some of them refused to turn off the heater lamp. Another birthday rolled by on April 18.

Sergeant Palomo came to shake-down the dormitory and found a metal locker full of "buck." At Glades, prison wine was made without any major problems. Prison wine was the major cause of fights between prisoners. Later in the afternoon, I went for an appointment with the psychiatrist, Dr. Medina. For an hour I listened to him talk about his professional problems, a young doctor working long hours in a hospital in Maryland. Afterward, he prescribed liquid vitaril, a mild muscle relaxer. The Department of Corrections had stopped using valium because vitaril was cheaper.

In the dormitory a guard locked himself up in the wicker and called for assistance while a fight between two Marielitos was in progress. During fights guards did nothing to protect the inmates.

I had a telephone conversation with Rosenblatt. He was happy because he had just won a criminal case involving a ship loaded with pot; he was able to convince a North Carolina jury that the defendants were innocent. Bob thanked me for the fruitcake loaded with booze that I sent to him by mail and told me that I would have another parole hearing in Tallahassee next June. Bob was going to represent me at the hearing. I didn't have much hope. Once more, I was flirting with the idea of committing suicide. I had not, however, made another attempt, because I felt frustrated with my previous failures. My

state appeal for my 40-year sentence was still in the hands of U.S. Magistrate Everestt in Tallahassee. After four years, they had finally asked for a copy of the entire trial transcript.

The Iran-Contra Investigation hearings continued. Former National Security Adviser Robert McFairlane stated that “President Reagan was ultimately responsible for misleading Congress about the administration's secret aid the Nicaraguan Contras.”

May, 1987. Happiness is the path and not the aim in life. I asked Sergeant Mitchell for a pass to go to the main library to work on one of my civil actions against prison officials. He informed me that I couldn't visit the law library every day. Any restriction of access to the law library by prison officials was illegal, but Glades was a uniquely weird prison. Lieutenant Lee was a real racist Black officer, and Lieutenant Bennett was a White officer who was a real prick. I steered clear of those officers. Often some Correctional Officers smuggled pot into the prison and got \$800 a pound. Their paycheck was \$200 per week.

With daily rains the prison population was kept locked down. This was the only institution that locked down its general compound during the rainy season. In *Otero vs. Carlson*, a civil action against the Federal Bureau of Prisons and Miami-MCC for violation of Constitutional rights of the prisoners, U.S. Judge Hasting denied me to proceed in pauperis form in my appeal to the Eleventh District Court in Atlanta. I argued that prisoners were entitled to conjugal visits, introducing a study showing the growing homosexuality problem in prison. Without legal resources, public support and organization, it was a no-win social issue.

The only relief in the corrupt prison environment was having a pot party, where we expanded our minds and socialized. During the summer, flies and mosquitoes became a serious problem. We had problem with toilet paper and the institution took action by

rationing it. Prisoners used the toilet paper as napkins, to wrap food, clean eye glasses and so on. Now I had to hide my precious toilet paper. During the hot summer days prisoners began wearing underwear inside the dormitories.

A Marielito who arrived yesterday was stabbed by his former partner in a knife duel; both of them were wounded and taken to an outside hospital. The Marielito who had just arrived at Glades died later. One of them had testified against the other in court, but prison officials failed to segregate them.

The Department of Corrections were informed that they had to release 2,500 prisoners with the administrative gain time provided them. I was awarded with 90 days of gain time every month, instead of the former 20 days, and my date of release was getting closer. This action was taken to satisfy the Federal Court order dealing with overcrowded conditions. Florida, Alabama and Texas were the worst prisons nationwide for overcrowding.

I was called to Lieutenant Peter's office for a telephone conference hearing with Dade County Circuit Judge, John Gale and Assistant State Attorney, William Hall. The State of Florida had filed for a change of venue from Miami to West Palm Beach concerning a petition for a Writ of Mandamus that I had filed against the Florida Department of Corrections to implement adequate policy to protect the prison population as well as the general public against AIDS. Circuit Judge Gale was late for the conference and had not the foggiest idea what to do about the case. Days later he found a solution for his problem by granting the change of venue. This was a controversial case to be entertained in State Court and Judge Gale was not qualified to preside at a case that addressed a serious social problem. He had run as a Circuit Judge to gain more prestige and promote his career as a private attorney. In the future, legal wizards and state prosecutors would look for a legal loophole to dismiss the case. In my complaint I stated

that prisoners contaminated with the AIDS virus were having homosexual relations with other prisoners, and those prisoners were later released into society where they continued to spread the virus to innocent victims. This case, therefore, invoked the general public's interest.

On the news, President Reagan ordered the federal prison system to test all federal prisoners for AIDS. I had requested the Department of Corrections to take similar action in state prisons.

Being unhappy at Glade, I became involved in a substantial number of civil actions seeking to improve prison conditions and address other civil rights violations of the prisoners. The civil action under Section 1983 was recommended to be dismissed by U.S. Judge W. Turnoff. I filed a motion for reconsideration. In the morning I went to see Dr. Medina and had our usual chat about Republicans, Democrats and Communists. Again, I listened to Dr. Medina for nearly an hour. He gave me some good advice on how to keep out of trouble with prison officials, and finally prescribed liquid vitaril. To be able to deal with reality, I was in real need of both legal and the illegal drugs.

June, 1987. I called Rosenblatt about the parole hearing. I still have my tentative date of release at 2000. The Parole Board had reduced six months from my incarceration time. Suffering chronic headaches and back pain, I went to see Dr. Rodriguez. After a week of waiting for an appointment, Dr. Rodriguez prescribed Motrin 800. Later, a nurse informed me that frequent use of this drug would cause my vision to deteriorate.

Several fights erupted in the compound and several prisoners were taken into confinement. Two prisoners were caught red-handed by guards during sexual intercourse inside the walk-in cooler in the kitchen and were immediately taken to jail. Prison officials were becoming more concerned with the spread of AIDS. Guards routinely used surgical gloves when taking inventory of prisoner's personal property.

A prisoner escaped from the visiting park dressed as a woman. We heard later that the institution was embarrassed over the incident. At the visiting park, I saw homosexual visitors dressed as woman.

Glades Correctional was in the news again, when two men driving a Cadillac shot a guard who was taking prisoners to the outside doctor. The guard had refused to surrender the key to the van. Inside the van was Obryan, the law clerk, who was serving a life sentence. The two men in the Cadillac who attempted to escape were later captured by the cops and Obryan was shipped to the East Unit. A few weeks after the incident state prosecutors succeeded in convicting the two ex-convicts driving the Cadillac. State prosecutors and prison officials were not pleased that Obryan got away with his apparent attempt of escape. He was never charged by the grand jury, but was immediately shipped back to the East Unit forever.

The new prisoner sleeping in the bunk next to me was another unsuccessful pilot, named Don, who had attempted to smuggle pot in Florida. He was chased by a cobra helicopter from Homestead Air Force Base when his single-engine plane ran out of gas and crashed into a tomato field. Don suffered some injuries to his back and ribs. My new bunk mate was an easy-going, six-foot, 200-pound guy from Tennessee.

During the weekend I called Faith, who told me that she had already bought a condominium near the Midway Shopping Center in Flagler and close to the Palmetto Expressway. It was located about a mile from the Fountainblue complex where I used to live. She was very happy with her new apartment. The new wave of Nicaraguan immigrants resided in this neighborhood of Clearwater.

July, 1987. Another Fourth of July, with intensely hot temperatures. Glades, like most prison compounds, had very little green and shade area. Prison officials liked to chop down all the trees around the compound. During lunch we had the traditional

watermelon with fried chicken. In the dormitories ten bunks were temporarily taken away to pass the inspection from Tallahassee.

At the law library I was having difficulty with some Black prisoners, because they monopolized the available services. U.S. Magistrate Anderson Everestt, after four years of having my state appeal, denied it, supporting the State Court for dismissal in that, "The protection of the Double Jeopardy Clause under the Fifth Amendment on double prosecution was symbolic" *Otero vs. State* 397 So. Reporter 787. Paul Morris answered to the Magistrate, notifying the Northern District Court of his intention to appeal to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta. While I was responsible for all the bombings cited in the state complaint, our moral ground for appealing was the illegal methods the state prosecutors used to convict me. Paul Morris cited half a dozen federal Constitutional infractions committed during my double state prosecution.

At the law library, inmate Antonio Menendez was taken to jail by a Black sergeant and other guards. They searched his legal papers and allegedly found several shotgun shells. Menendez denied the charges. Since he arrived from Raiford, Menendez had been filing complaints to become a law clerk for Latin prisoners, but prison officials disliked him. I would be causing more problems in court than Menendez.

At church the Chaplain was caught red-handed in a homosexual act and was immediately fired; and Lieutenant Lee, a Black Officer was also caught having sex with a White female guard in his office. Officer Lee was penalized: his day shift was changed to an evening shift. Later, Lee was harassing prisoners for petty offenses to earn back his stripes.

August, 1987. The Cuban Marielitos were delighted about the release of 22 Marielitos from Kromo Detention Center; all of them had relatives living in Miami.

Federal Court dismissed my civil action seeking relief from the outrageous prices of the canteen and the junk food sold to the prison population. Finding Constitutional violations in state prisons was an easy task, and according to Magistrate Palermo, I was a very prolific litigator. At that point, I worked full time filing civil actions in Federal Court. I never held out too much hope of winning though.

Another Cuban named Pedro Sueiro was picked up by U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Officers. Pedro came illegally from Spain to Miami, and when the Mariel exodus began he took the opportunity to report himself as a Marielito refugee. His father was a doctor living in the exclusive Coral Gables district. Years later Pedro was arrested and charged with dealing and trafficking in cocaine. He paid a Black prisoner to protect him from other aggressive prisoners.

A week later when Pedro arrived at Kromo Detention Center, the Haitians were protesting and the guards stormed the prisoners' cells for a shake-down. In the aftermath, Pedro was injured and was kept in solitary confinement without medical care. The news was mostly broadcast by Spanish radio, as most of the English-speaking news media didn't cover the incident.

One night around midnight, after I had achieved a state of deep meditation, the dormitory with its metal double bunks became blurred under a dim light reflecting from the sign of the fire exit posted at the main door. Seconds later the dormitory turned into a moody shaped cave of brown and reddish color. My mind traveled far away from the concrete artificial jungle. I fully realized that the achievement of wisdom and enlightenment would provide me with the wisdom and energy to face further life crises.

One Saturday the library didn't open, so I spent most of the day in the yard walking around. Some Black prisoners were dealing food stolen from the kitchen: a large cup of fried rice, \$1.50; chicken, 50 cents per piece; a chunk of cheese, \$1; and reefers, \$5

for the nickel bag. The Marielitos were strong competitors.

In the local news, a riot was reported at Kromo Detention Center in Miami, caused by 100 Haitians recently brought from a sinking boat. The Haitians were aware that they would be sent back to Haiti. In the morning I cleaned my boxes of personal belongings and legal papers and found them full of roaches. At noon I called my mother, and she spent a half hour talking about her health problems and pain. I was annoyed to learn that my mother, six months after renting the house, ordered the tenants to move out.

A teacher of the Electric Class was arrested for fraud in using checks. Tired of wearing old blue uniforms, for \$5 I bought two new blue uniforms from a Black prisoner who worked in the laundry. Prison officials finally realized that they had a mental patient in the general population, when this fellow successfully damaged the air-conditioning unit in the educational facility. With a lack of facilities and professional people who care for mentally ill prisoners, the Department of Corrections was dumping them into the general population. Very often those mental patients became aggressive, attacking anyone nearby. Inmate Jones Jonas was attacked by a mental patient. To avoid a civil action, the institution granted a petition to Jonas to be transferred to Florida City. In Raiford, the prisoners filed a civil action against the institution and the Department of Corrections for dumping mentally ill prisoners into the general population increasing the number of physical assaults and injuries. Correctional Officer Daniel Callas was warned by prison officials at Raiford that he might be dismissed for joining as a co-plaintiff with the litigant prisoners.

September, 1987. With daily rains, the prisoners were compelled to remain the whole day inside their dormitories. With a prison population of 1,300 prisoners, the dormitory reflected the overcrowded spartan facilities. A Black prisoner attacked another inmate on the head, causing serious injuries. The victim was taken to an outside hospital

in critical condition.

Every week the prisoners formed a line to collect their maximum allowance of \$20 cash to buy groceries and junk food at the canteen. Most of the prisoners drawing money were Whites, while the Blacks had money from selling pot, used radios, and stolen food from the kitchen.

It took me nearly nine months of living at Glades Correctional to mingle with the crowd. One Sunday, I noticed how two prisoners covered their bunks with sheets while engaging in homosexual relationship. Incidents like this happened frequently. I received a notice for trial on October 12, 1987, from the Circuit Court in relation to a petition of Mandamus and filed to direct the Department of Corrections to implement a proper policy in the Florida prison population: a) testing of all prisoners; b) segregating those prisoners who were active homosexuals having with AIDS and providing them proper medical care; and c) those prisoners diagnosed with AIDS and later released into the community should be monitored by local health departments, their immediate family notified, and be provided medical and economic assistance according to the law. I advocated “conjugal visits” for married inmates as a deterrent to the spread of AIDS.

During dinner I heard several prisoners talking about “food poisoning,” blaming the fried chicken was laced with salmonella. Later, I had to a rush to the toilet. I went to the clinic for medication, where I found a long line of prisoners waiting to see the MT. Doctors work only from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. A pair of brand new Reeboks were stolen to a baby-face White prisoner. Deteriorated economic conditions reflected in the prison compound: the pay line for prisoners to withdraw money from their account was becoming shorter each week.

During the weekend my brother came to see me. He was doing fine with his roofing company. I explained to him that my tentative date of release was in 1999. In our

dormitory, a female Black officer was assigned. She didn't seem to mind patrolling the dormitory, where most prisoners were in underwear and others naked taking a shower. The female officer was attractive, with a nice figure, and her big ass had the attention of most prisoners. A group of religious prisoners wrote a letter to the Director of the prison complaining that prisoners in our dormitory were smoking pot and drinking wine. This letter caused more frequent shake-downs in which guards confiscated wine, reefers, and a \$50 bill.

I filed in the Southern District of Florida a petition of Mandamus under Section 18 Code 3291, alleging that I was illegally incarcerated in Florida. First, I stated about having been kidnapped by U.S. agents from Chile, in violation of international, as well as national law in the United States. I also alleged that I was a political prisoner who had been double-prosecuted under the same offenses of which I was acquitted in Federal Court. A person extradited from another country was under the protection of the President of the United States under Section 3192; accordingly, when the State of Florida tortured me in the Dade County Jail, it violated the spirit of federal law. Again, it was apparent that in our system of justice, the courts practice a double standard. I alleged to have been illegally incarcerated and demanded my immediate release. U.S. District Judge Paine in West Palm Beach dismissed the petition, ignoring the kidnapping issue. As a rule, federal court very seldom entertained a kidnapping charge conducted by federal agents abroad. Judge Paine failed to set a hearing to inquire if federal agents in fact acted in a lawful manner. Based on his selective interpretation of the law, he got into a fictional dimension of the facts. So my release from prison seemed hopeless.

Richard Quinney in his book stated: "Criminal law is administered by and for the state. The courts are an essential part of the political structure. Criminal law is administered mostly in selective interpretations of the law favoring the ruling class. Law

in the United States had been used against minorities. The legal system continues to be the means of enforcing the interests of the capitalistic economy. As the capitalism system reproduced itself, crimes are committed. One of its contradictions is that some of its own laws must be violated in order to secure the system. Capitalism produces its own sources of crime. Control of crime and the crimes of domination are necessary features and natural products of a developing capitalism economy. The class that does not own and control the means of production must adapt to the conditions of capitalism. Accommodation and resistance to these conditions are basic to the class struggle. Crime under capitalism has become a response to the material conditions of life.”¹

October, 1987. This month was cooler. The prison population was without soap, toilet paper and razor blades for quite a few weeks. During all this time I hid my toilet paper.

The white bus came regularly every week to Glades bringing more new prisoners. The *New York Times* stated that the United States and Cuba had agreed to the return of the Marielitos, after being compensated with several million dollars. The Marielitos in Glades became nervous about this new issue. Washington, of course, denied any conversations with Communist Cuba.

I wrote to 30 attorneys and doctors in Florida, requesting their support to litigate the petition of Mandamus, directing the Department of Corrections to implement an adequate policy against AIDS; none responded. I requested from Dr. Rodriguez a special diet and was denied. I complained that the regular prison diet was loaded with processed food, which might be deteriorating my eyesight, alleging the old saying, “You are what you eat.”

I received another call-out from Dr. Medina, the psychiatrist. Medina as usual

¹Quinney, 306-08, 404-05.

spoke about national and foreign policy and the Republicans, expressing his perennial admiration for President Reagan while I listened in silence. After an hour's lecture, Dr. Medina prescribed me eye drops for my infection and ordered a blood test. Days later I went to see Dr. Rodriguez who informed that the blood test was fine.

Finding a good barber in Glades was a problem. Good barbers never remained long in the barber shop. At the prison compound many prisoners were more than happy when Circuit Judge Edward Coward died in Miami. Some of them celebrated this moment with sodas and coffee. I had never observed before so much hate and public manifestation against a State Judge. And Antonio Menendez, the law clerk who was taken to jail for possession of gun shells, was released after 90 days. I really thought that he would end up at the East Unit from where he was transferred from. I was notified that I had been recommended to become a law clerk and approved for a one week training program at South Florida Detention Center. Prison officials didn't know what they were doing. Apparently they did not realize that I was quite actively filing civil actions against the Department of Corrections for violation of fundamental Constitutional rights of the prisoners. Prison officials would regret their decision.

I had filed another civil action against the Department of Corrections for banning the Christmas food packages sent by family members and friends to prisoners, under Section 1983, contending that "the Christmas food package was a religious ritual between Christians, celebrating with a feast the birth of Jesus Christ." I stated that the Christmas dinner provided by the institutions had certain economic limitations, and family members would be willing to provide better quality traditional food. I maintained that the celebration of Christmas was a religious and family event that should not be breached by arbitrary prison policy. I alleged that their action was illegal, because the State of Florida was the only state nationwide to ban Christmas food packages to prisoners. I pointed out

that the Federal Bureau of Prisons allowed their prison population to receive food packages during the Christmas season.

I caught a cold and joined a group of prisoners going to the clinic. The MT gave us Tylenol and cough syrup. The next day at noon I was working in the law library when a group of students from a local college toured the library, escorted by guards. The next day I spoke to my daughter. She was now a grown up woman with her own life and was working in a law office.

On Black Monday the stock market crashed on Wall Street and the world was in panic. Eventually, the two nations that during World War II were the most aggressive enemies of the United States, were the ones that saved Uncle Sam from economic disaster, Japan and West Germany.

November, 1987. November weather was nasty, with a lot of rain. The roof and windows leaked and prisoners were constantly drying their clothes. Dormitories were locked down for several days, limiting the space to walk around. The prisoners were feeling the pinch of overcrowded conditions since the prison budget was the same as last years and there was little hope of change. The kitchen and the quality of food was deteriorating and the library's office supply was reduced. In the civil action against the Department of Corrections requesting they allow the prison population to receive their Christmas food package, Miami's Federal Court provided me with a case number and U.S. Judge Norman Roettger was appointed to preside in the case.

After the rejection of President Reagan's nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court, Judge Robert H. Bork, President Reagan's nominated Judge Douglas Ginsberg. A few days later, a report that Judge Douglas had smoked marijuana during the 60s and 70s destroyed his nomination. Prisoners hated Judge Douglas' statement that he regretted smoking pot to please conservative public officials. The next nominee was Anthony

Kennedy, a Federal Appeal Judge from the Ninth Circuit Court in California.

The Iran-Contra Report concluded that with the clandestine sales of U.S. arms to Iran and the diversion of proceeds to the Nicaraguan Rebels, President Reagan had allowed foreign policy to be overtaken by a “cabal of zealots” who were clothed with secrecy, deception and disdain for the law. Mikhail Gorbachev arrived at Andrew Air Force Base to sign the treaty of Arms Control in Europe with the United States.

At Thanksgiving, the institution provided the prisoners with an excellent all-you-can-eat dinner of roast turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes, salad, fruit salad and pumpkin pie.

In Oakdale, Louisiana, and Atlanta Federal Prison the Cuban Marielitos initiated a riot, taking over both federal concentration camps and holding some 100 hostages. The relationship between prison guards and prisoners had deteriorated in the last few months when guards began to use excessive force, frequently using mace. And in retaliation the Marielitos took off their clothes, spread themselves with their own human waste and chased after the guards for a hug. The riot erupted two days after the State Department announced that Cuba had agreed to take back more than 2,500 of the 3,800 Mariel refugees imprisoned nationwide. Next day 23 Marielitos prisoners were spirited out of Glades and shipped to Raiford. They all wore black ribbons on their shirts in respect for a Marielito slain during the riot by a Federal Guard in Atlanta. Federal agents stopped shooting inside the prison only when the Marielitos threatened to kill some of the hostages.

Black prisoners were selling a number of AT&T credit cards for \$5 to make unlimited telephone calls. Prisoners took the opportunity to make unlimited long distance telephone calls all over the world. Days later Juan Gonzalez dialed me free a number while I was calling a friend. I often spoke with Jose Barro, one of the Plaintiffs in the civil

action against Glades Correctional. Barro was serving a life sentence for attempted first degree murder related to drugs.

We had another cold front and the electric heater lamps were turned on. Again, I complained to the guard on duty that the heat was too intense for me. A red-neck sergeant threatened to lock me in jail if I continued complaining. In Louisiana, Marielitos rioting at Oakdale Concentration Camp surrendered to local authorities and those Marielitos who were shipped in a bus to Raiford returned to Glades. A lot of complaints by their families in Miami caused prison officials to reverse their actions.

In Atlanta, the Marielitos were in negotiation with federal authorities. The Cuban-American leaders from Miami, led by the flamboyant Miami Mayor Xavier Suarez, played an important role during the negotiations and eventually solved the crisis. To serve government's interest, they deceived the prisoners. The U.S. Attorney, Edward Meese, agreed to allow the prisoners to remain incarcerated in the United States. The prisoners didn't want to be deported to Cuba.

The only one who remained neutral was Monsignor San Roman. Days later, the FBI stormed the Atlanta Penitentiary and all the Marielitos were shipped to Talladega Correctional, Mario Penitentiary and other prisons and county jails nationwide. Afterward, U.S. Attorney General Edward Meese did not honor the accord with the Cuban Marielitos incarcerated in Louisiana and Atlanta.

I was paged to report and was notified to pack all my belongings. A bus picked up two other Black prisoners and myself to attend the law seminar at Avon Park Correctional. Prison officials decided to change the seminar from South Florida to Avon Park. Tom Overtown was happy to see me. For a moment he thought I was coming back. I had to explain to him that I came only for a short law seminar. While I was busy getting an assigned dormitory he went to the canteen and bought me a sandwich, ice cream and

other junk food. Overtown was always a great fellow. Tom continued to work in hobby/craft, where he manufactured purses and ladies' bags and earned some money. Tom still kept his relationship with his girlfriend Sonia through telephone calls and letters. He has no hope of ever being released.

December, 1987. Since I had left Avon Park, a lot of changes had been taking place. Avon Park had a Black Director and there were more Black prisoners and more Black guards. The next day I was able to play tennis. Inmate Green, the young jitterbug with whom I had a fight in the dining hall, became a pimp and now he had an intimate relationship with a White man serving a life sentence. Seems that the prison population was not concerned about the lethal AIDS. I learned that Shariff, the prisoner with whom I had a fight in the dormitory, had been transferred to a mental hospital for treatment, according to a plea bargain. Tom told me that a year ago, Mark Miller was found with drugs in the visiting park, while his wife was visiting. Miller was shipped to Martin Correctional, where he filed a civil action against the institution for violation of his civil rights. Most of the prisoners I met had lost their appeals in court, and some of them might remain in prison forever.

I called Faith and explained to her that I was at Avon Park, taking a law seminar. Using a stolen Sprint credit card number, we chatted for a few hours. She was spending some money to decorate her new condo, adding a laundry room. She was very happy but told me that most of her previous friends who were dealing with social drugs were in prison or dead. Those who survived President Reagan's war against drugs invested in legitimate businesses and were keeping a low profile in the community.

I was quite nervous about my test for law clerk. We had been provided with too much data and with too little time to study. All the prisoners were under pressure. At night, while in my two-man cell, my new cell mate told me how bad it was at Desoto

Correctional Institution where he was committed. He grabbed tooth paste, soap, razor blades and whatever he could take.

On Monday, a group of 30 prisoners from different institutions within the State of Florida began an intensive law seminar. The professor of law was a dynamic Black attorney named Earnest Mathis, the Law Library Coordinator. He kept us busy morning till late at night, with a final test on Friday. The fundamental difference between Avon Park and other institutions was that prisoners were able to enjoy minimum privacy to take a shower, use the toilet and sleep in two-man cells. I felt that this was the most dramatic impact from Glades Correctional, where some prisoners behaved like animals.

I showed Mr. Mathis a copy of my civil actions against the Department of Corrections for banning the prisoners from receiving the Christmas food package, failing to implement an adequate policy against AIDS, and Glades Correctional for the spartan conditions, outrageous prices and excessive junk food at the canteen. He liked my briefs. I took the opportunity to draft 50 affidavits and had the prisoners sign them in support of the Christmas food package. I had already filed the civil action in Federal Court so I would introduce the affidavits subsequently in Federal Court.

It was cold as hell, 35 degrees. Our floor had no heater. Mathis told us more about himself. He was in his third year of law, and this Prison Project was an intern curriculum as an attorney.

All the prisoners passed the test. And in a simple ceremony, with the Black Director of Avon Park, the two co-directors of the library, Mr. Norris and Mr. Warden, along with the Black Chaplain, we were provided with a certificate as a law clerk. I asked Mr. Payne, a professor of the Mental Health Class and Lieutenant Bennett to get me a transfer back to Avon Park. I wanted badly to move out of that filthy and uncivilized Belle Glades, but the transfer never materialized. I had a previous disciplinary transfer from

Avon Park to Brevard.

As part of the graduation ceremony we had a good dinner of baked ham, potatoes, fresh vegetables and frosted vanilla cake. By prison standards, it was truly a gourmet dinner. With more law clerks, more civil actions were filed by prisoners litigating their own cases or seeking to improve illegal prison conditions. When we arrived at Glades, Sergeant Freedman met us at the main gate. We were escorted to the mess hall and later to the property room to get linen and a blanket. Our personal belongings remained in storage till Monday for proper inspection. I was assigned to A-92 dormitory, where the Latin prisoners welcomed me with a Latin *abrazo*.

On the evening news, Panama diplomatic relations with the United States were deteriorating. Washington was enforcing diplomatic pressure against General Manuel Noriega to resign as a ruler of Panama. Also, the United States didn't want a hostile government ruling in Panama and having control of the Panama Canal. In retaliation President Bush froze all the Panama assets and canal duties till Noriega was deposed. Although he was an informant of the CIA and the DEA, he had been acting very independent lately, also providing Cuba with intelligence information. Noriega was charged with trafficking cocaine. And in Miami, Former Police officer, Rodolfo Ruddy Arias was testifying against 70 officers charged with corruption.

A Major Correctional Officer who had been charged twice with rapes by female correctional officers at Martin Correctional Institution came to Glades to straighten out the prison. With the new Major, a series of sporadic shake-downs were enforced. Radios, tape cassettes and many other items were confiscated, even though none of them related to the security of the institution. At night a Black prisoner was physically assaulted while sleeping and the MT took him in serious condition to the clinic.

The new Major wasted no time beginning strip searches of all visitors at the

visiting park. A young girl was arrested and taken to the County Jail for possession of a few joints. At the visiting park, visitors often had sex, smoked reefers and snorted cocaine. The new Major also banned prisoners assigned to the Horticulture Class from planting vegetables or any other plants. On Monday, I went to Property to pick up my personal belongings. Now some of the guards were angry with me because I had filed the civil action related to the Christmas food packages. The State Attorney's Office compelled them to sign affidavits and photocopies of all package permits I had received annually.

I went to pick up my mail at the Post Office and I became upset when I was told that my mail had been sent to Avon Park. That meant that my mail would be a mess for a few weeks. The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta gave us 40 days to file a brief of appeal in relation to my case alleging the violation of the Double Jeopardy Clause during the state double trial, the restriction of witnesses by the Court, as well as other rounds. Paul Morris was in charge of this appeal. I got a surprise from the 15th Judicial Circuit Court by Judge Edward H. Fin in relation to my petition for Writ of Mandamus related to AIDS within the prison population. The case was eventually transferred from Miami Circuit Court to West Palm Beach on a motion for a change of venue filed by the State Attorney's Office. Judge Fin granted all the relief I sought. The Department of Corrections was given 60 days to respond to the court's order. I welcomed the news. We saw a group of guards walking toward the dormitory and thought it was another shake-down; we were wrong. They gave each prisoner the traditional \$5 Christmas present from the Department of Corrections. On Christmas day we had another turkey dinner like at the Thanksgiving dinner. Portions were smaller, and some prisoners went twice through the dining hall, but guards acted like they didn't mind.

I felt very disappointed when I received a letter from Amnesty International denying my petition to be recognized as a political prisoner, because I had been charged

with a violent crime. That was bullshit from those British folks in London. Recently, they recognized an American Indian charged with killing two FBI agents; also a Black Panther leader that was charged with killing a woman. Both men had been recognized as political prisoners in the United States by Amnesty International.

January, 1988. In the stock market the dollar was in a dive. I spoke to Faith, who was doing fine in her new condominium and now had a cat as a companion. Faith was worried that the Department of Corrections would never release me from prison while I was filing civil actions against them. They already denied several petitions filed by Robert Rosenblatt at the Parole Commission. I knew prison authorities would never grant me parole release. "They don't want to release me anyway, so it won't make any difference in all the civil actions I have filed against the Department of Corrections, or Glades," I responded to Faith. I added, "I would have to max my entire sentence." "You better stop filing civil actions in court," said Faith, supporting her argument. Some prisoners were expecting the worst might happen to me, because litigant prisoners were traditionally handcuffed, shackled and shipped to Raiford forever.

Sunday, while I was going to the yard for exercise, I witnessed a knife fight between a Marielito and a Mexican for an old \$15 radio cassette. The night before the Mexican complained to the Marielito that the radio cassette he bought from him was not working properly. The next morning the Marielito attacked the Mexican with an impressive seven inch kitchen knife. From the visiting park some visitors observed in shock the knife fight, before the Guards became alerted. By this time the Mexican had been stabbed several times through the abdomen and leg. The Marielito fled the area and hid inside the dormitory. Right away guards and the Paramedics came over. The Mexican was taken in critical condition to the outside hospital. Minutes later the Marielito was found by Guards inside his dormitory and taken into custody for a transfer to Raiford.

Guards abused him physically. They didn't like that the knife fight was observed by most visitors from the visiting park. Prison officials didn't like that the general public witnessing what was going on "inside the belly of the beast."

February, 1988. On Tuesday, we learned that the city water was contaminated and prisoners were ordered to avoid drinking it. A week later everything returned to normal. A Black high ranking official came from Tallahassee to celebrate and promote Black history. And Monday I was notified by The Southern District of Florida that the U.S. Marshal had served the civil action complaint to the Department of Corrections in Tallahassee for compelling the prisoners at Glades to live in subhuman conditions.

In the local news, Orlando Bosch arrived from Caracas, Venezuela, to Miami. Bosch wanted to live in South Florida with his family. He was welcomed as a hero by the Cuban community, but was immediately arrested by federal authorities under a warrant related to a violation of a federal probation term. Next March I have another parole hearing to review my case.

I was informed that one of the Classification Officers, William Knight, was swapping certain favors, like release to halfway houses and better jobs, in exchange for homosexual relation with prisoners assigned to him. Mr. Knight was an old homosexual, who took advantage of his official position. The prisoner that informed me about this was Raul Daizi, who didn't want to get involved because he was going to be released soon. Finding a witness against prison officials was quite difficult. I had filed several interrogatories with the Circuit Court in West Palm Beach in my petition for Writ of Mandamus related to the lethal AIDS epidemic. The Assistant State Attorney in Tallahassee had filed a motion to depose me, but they never followed through with their request. I have filed several interrogatories to prison officials that remained unanswered by them.

March, 1988. This year was going fast. On Sunday, high wind, rain and cold temperatures kept the prison population inside the dormitories. This week I learned that the Classification Officer, William Knight had been hospitalized. I assumed that his health problem was related to the AIDS virus. I was hoping to be correct on my judgment about Knight and his mysterious illness. At this point I had no evidence to introduce in Court to support my allegation.

After lunch I was laying in my bunk, when suddenly it commenced to rain heavily. Observing that my bunk was getting wet I attempted to close the old window. After struggling for a few minutes with the window, trying in vain to close it down, I seriously cut my right hand with the glass. With no time to waste, I didn't ask for a pass to the guard on duty to see the doctor. I took a towel covering my bloody hand and raced to the clinic for first aid, where a charming brunette nurse and Dr. Do provided care. I was in love with the nurse. The skin on my thumb was removed several inches back. I told the nurse that it was the only way to see her. Often, prisoners will execute the most difficult task to meet a female. Dr. Do gave me nine stitches. While the nurse and Dr. Do took care of me, I learned during the rainy season, generally half a dozen prisoners got themselves injured while attempting to close the old windows. Taking notice of this safety issue, I would request in my civil action against the institution, *Otero vs. State of Florida*, Southern District of Florida, Case No. 88-13020, to replace all the windows. Obviously, Belle Glades was neglecting the safety operation of the institution.

On Tuesday, I received a response from the Florida Bar Association refusing to file charges against Paul Pollack for receiving three kilos of cocaine and bribing Circuit Judge Baker and Circuit Judge Helen Morphonio. I contended that Pollack violated some ethical cannons. The Bar based their determination of dismissing my complaint on a Federal Court's ruling where federal prosecutors didn't file criminal charges against

named defendants. For years there had been substantial complaints against attorneys for misrepresenting or taking money from clients. Generally they promise a lot and sometimes take no action at all. Unethical conduct by attorneys and lack of action by the Bar was well documented in its records. Paul Pollack also took a \$2,000 fee from Humberto Lopez for an appeal that he never filed in Court. An explosive device blew up his hand and Lopez went to trial and was convicted in State Court. Later he fled Miami; eventually he was kidnapped by the FBI in Santo Domingo and was brought back to Miami to serve his sentence. There is a law that was lobbied by the Florida Bar Association that after a complaint against attorneys had been denied by the court or by them, the complainer could not disclose the information in public. I believe that is a bad law and I am challenging it through the publication in this book. The Florida Bar Association is another extension of the capitalistic system.

The canteens operated by prisoners inside the dormitory had been banned, because a Black prisoner assaulted a canteen operator, stealing \$200 in merchandise. The guard who provided the inmate with the combination of the lock was compelled to pay for it. A former White cop that was serving a prison sentence for sexually abusing a 14 year-old boy, was raped last night by prisoners.

Around Glades Correctional, yellow tractors pulling wagons loaded with sugar cane to the sugar mill were racing around the distant fields. It was the end of the sugar cane crop.

Today, I met my Probation Officer, who after reviewing my excellent record of institutional achievements, recommended two years reduction from my date of release in 1997. My date of release was coming closer.

On Friday I went to see my Classification Officer, Mr. Shaffer for another progress report. I have been requesting my reduction of custody and transfer to Florida

City or Avon Park and Shaffer told me it was approved. After a few months of waiting and nothing happening, I wrote a letter to the Director of Glades Correctional Institution inquiring about my security status and approved transfer to another prison. Days later he responded that he had no information about this matter. Afterward, I wrote a letter to the Chief Classification Officer at Tallahassee stating that I had been deceived by Mr. Shaffer, who previously informed me that my reduction of custody and transfer to another prison had been already approved. Later, Shaffer threatened to lock me in confinement because I arrived a few minutes late to see him.

Next day I met my Parole Officer, who recommended the sixty months reduction of my sentence according to our previous conversation. They already reduced 24 months from my 40 year sentence. As law clerk my task became simple. I didn't have to steal or forge passes to have adequate access to the library. On the 15th of April, I had a preliminary hearing at the 15th Judicial Circuit Court at West Palm Beach related to the petition of Mandamus about the spread of the lethal AIDS epidemic. I kept away from other prisoners my studies of conjugal visits. Some of them don't like my motions because they are homosexuals. In my motion in support of conjugal visits I stated: "Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity." Homosexuality was a quite controversial and sensitive issue in prison. It was another pandora's box.

April, 1988. Sunday morning I was walking around the yard when my name was paged by the loud speaker, ordering me to report to the visiting park. Minutes later I met my brother, who complained of waiting there for over one hour. I explained to him that prison officials never notified me of his arrival. Often the institution, in a surreptitious manner engages in different tactics, as retaliation against prisoners for filing civil actions against prison officials. When the visits was over, I went to the search room where

prisoners were compelled to remove their clothes for a general inspection for contraband. A Black Haitian Sergeant in charge of the search, was an uneducated prick. Coming in a fucking boat from Haiti to inspect my ass at Glades Correctional, was quite a job.

At Glades Correctional, Black prisoners continued to monopolize most positions at the main kitchen, the sale of Sprint credit card numbers for making free telephone calls and the laundry; Latin prisoners were taking over the sale of pot. The less aggressive White prisoners generally kept a low profile. Last night a White prisoner was raped 25 times by Black prisoners. The young prisoner was granted a transfer to another prison. Prison officials did not keep official records of all the rapes and fights to avoid the attention of the courts and the press.

The past year had brought many violent acts in all the state prisons, and Glades was no exception. By minding my own business, I managed to steer clear of any serious trouble. The law clerk seminar, my continued use of the library and the few conversations with Faith had been of great help. Added to these fairly good happenings, was daily anticipation of an early release, one more reason to “hang on.”

CHAPTER 19

WALKING IN THE PATH OF PERFECTION

Palm Beach County Jail. On April 13, an Assistant Deputy Sheriff took me and two other prisoners in a Dodge van to the new Palm Beach County Jail. We were all handcuffed to a chain around our wrists and legs shackled. It was a one-hour trip. At the jail after being frisked by the guards, we were locked in a filthy holding cell with other detainees, who usually came crying or cursing. A young blond woman dressed in blue jeans and a colorful blouse was crying across the hallway. In another holding cell a detainee was yelling obscenities to the guard for refusing to allow him to call his attorney and family. A construction worker was complaining about being arrested for having an expired auto tag. Other detainees were charged with possession of small amounts of reefers. The new Palm Beach County Jail was already overcrowded, housing 1,400 detainees and prisoners.

The detainees had one common denominator: All were poor. Later a few of them were released on bond; the rest were processed and assigned to dormitories. My prescription glasses were taken away with other few personal belongings and kept locked in a property room. I was assigned to E-5-B Dormitory with another 15 detainees and convicted prisoners. A single guard from a control room was watching a dozen of cells with circuit cameras. We were provided stained linens and old blankets.

I immediately called Faith who had just returned from a mini-vacation in New York visiting her mother. She was doing fine and happy to have seen her folks. I explained the reason for being at Palm Beach County Jail. Faith was always crying about

being broke, but frequently she took a mini-vacation ... not all that broke!

By Tuesday there were several prisoners living on the floor and some were engaged in stealing petty items from other prisoners. During lunch a Black prisoner jumped over a sleeping Marielito, kicking his ass. The poor man took the punishment without comment. The Black prisoner took the Marielito's mattress and threw it at the entrance of the dormitory. Detainees asked about conditions at Glade Correctional and other prisons. The TV was turned on 24 hours a day. Watching TV and reading old magazines were the only things prisoners could do in the dormitory. Only a few of them could afford to make telephone calls. There was a closed-circuit camera in each dormitory while a guard monitored the entire floor.

I met big Tony, a 300-pound Cuban, charged with trafficking in cocaine, a guy with a compelling addiction to eat. We became good friends. Tony bribed the trustees bringing the food wagon with a few cigarettes, getting several trays of food and eating them without any effort. We talked a lot about Miami and the good times. Tony planned to plead guilty to a 10-year sentence and serve one year with the 90 days' gain time provided lately to prisoners each month. With an overcrowded prison population, inmates were serving less time. A Federal order and State Statute at any time dictated that when the prison population reached 98 percent cap, the Department of Corrections was allowed to award prisoners with extra gain-time of up to 140 days per month; in this manner they were able to release a greater number of prisoners. Every week a few thousand prisoners came into the prison population.

At the new West Palm Beach Jail, the food was terrible. They provided the prisoners only meager portions of food. I sure got tired eating a bologna sandwich every day. Dog and cat food would be better. I was sure of all the jails and detention centers nationwide, West Palm Beach had the worst rating.

On April 15, I was handcuffed and taken to the downtown courthouse where I met Circuit Judge Miller. The courthouse was an old building, built in the 1940s. Judge Miller was a polite, suave-talking, mature man, who was presiding over the court on bond hearings and violation of probation. A dozen prisoners were waiting their turn, seated on old wooden chairs. Private attorneys representing prisoners and others on bond charged with violation of the law were not dressed as fancy as were Miami's attorneys. Most of the cases were related to violation of probation. During the hearings several prisoners were released, while the rest remained in custody. Finally the clerk of the court called my name. I got up and explained to Judge Miller that my case was a petition for Writ of Mandamus related to the lethal AIDS epidemic against the Florida Department of Corrections and that one of my motions was to appoint legal counsel for me. Suddenly my case popped into the Judge's mind, as he was scanning papers spread over his messy desk. Judge Miller read the case's record and explained that he had been trying to get me legal counsel, but the American Civil Liberty Union (ACLU), as well as other private attorneys, had declined to get involved in this case because I had requested that the prison population be tested for AIDS. The Federal prison population had already been tested by an order issued by President Reagan. The AIDS issue was a Catch-22 for everybody. Inmates were also concerned that prison officials might use this potential policy to confine prisoners having chronic disciplinary problems with other segregated prisoners having AIDS; this might also be the concern of the ACLU and a few private attorneys. There was the possibility that if the court granted the relief sought, prison officials might increase the violation of prisoners' civil rights.

Judge Miller also informed me that the Assistant State Attorney from Tallahassee had made a telephone call to the court a few days before, stating that it was not necessary for him to come to the preliminary hearing. Seemed like the whole goal of the State

Attorney was to drag me to court for nothing; this hearing was his idea. I requested the court to issue a Default Order against the Defendants for failing to respond to the interrogatories on time. Judge Miller understood my objection, but refused to grant my petition.

Worried about remaining for a prolonged period of time at the County Jail with detainees, I requested the Judge to order jail officials to immediately return me to Glades Correctional. Judge Miller patiently responded that the jail was indeed overcrowded and the Sheriff would take me back to Glades as soon as possible. I was concerned about my mail and that pending cases in court would be messed up; Glade Correctional might return all my mail as a general policy. The 5 minute hearing was over and I was escorted back to jail and to my dormitory by dinnertime. A 5-minute preliminary hearing had taken the whole day. Unbelievable!

On Monday, at 4 a.m., I was escorted to the clinic for a blood test for glucose tolerance. I experienced shortness of breath, fatigue, blurred vision and insomnia. The nurse informed me that I had hypoglycemia. This was the first time someone had diagnosed my symptoms. She provided me with a cheese sandwich and a small container of milk. I requested a special diet, but she refused. I also complained about my prescription glasses that were taken away upon my arrival at the Palm Beach Jail; without glasses I had to watch TV close-up.

Non-attachment. Those Japanese who practice a holistic way of life consider, in most cases, that the deterioration of eyesight to be related to over acidity in the blood and poor circulation. This is caused by refined food products and junk food. The most effective means of purifying the blood is by fasting and exercise. At the Oki Yoga Dojo in Japan the Japanese improve their eyesight through deep breathing, exercise and a simple diet of natural food, generally vegetables. In my civil action complaints against prison

officials I requested that the prison population be given a diet of natural products. The only way to heal any problem with eyesight is changing the lifestyle. The Japanese believe that insomnia is linked to mental tension. The eyes are windows to the mind and the body reveals its nervous condition through them. When the lower abdomen tenses or is upset due to sexual frustration, the eyes will tighten and the upper nose becomes congested. Eye problems of teenagers can frequently be traced to sexual tension. The philosophy of non-attachment is the fundamental philosophy of Yoga.¹

Prisoners were taken to a small yard for one hour's exercise, twice a week. I was allowed to visit the main library where I typed several letters. By Saturday six detainees were sleeping on the floor. Sunday night a group of prisoners were taken to the South Florida Detention Center to be processed and committed. The new empty bunks were immediately occupied by new detainees sleeping on the floor.

A new inmate had the flu and the rest of the prisoners caught it. The following day there was a long line of prisoners on sick call. Next day another newcomer smuggled in some pot and for the time being, a few prisoners were pacified.

The local news reported that at Palm Beach Circuit Court an attorney maintained that his client, Anthony James, who died on July 15, 1984, found hanging above the fire escape with his hands tied with strips of sheets, had not committed suicide as jail officials claimed. The court was not interested in investigating the death of a petty criminal. The West Palm Beach County Jail, as well as the Fort Lauderdale and Dade County Jails, were notorious for torturing and killing detainees and prisoners.

On Saturday morning I was watching TV when a guard came over and ordered me to pack all my belongings. I was taken to the main floor where the scene of arriving new

¹Joanna Rotte, Ph.D. and Koji Yamamoto, *Vision: A Guide to Healing the Eyesight*, (Japan, Japan Publication, 1986), 28-41, 55-65.

detainees and the filthy holding cells was the same. I saw a prisoner with his hands tied with a rope behind his back. In the Property Room I was given back my prescription glasses, pen, wallet, and other personal belongings. A Black guard handcuffed three prisoners and myself to return to Glades Correctional. I was happy to be back at Glade, even with its spartan conditions. I immediately got a decent hair cut, a good smooth shave and a hot shower. I was assigned to the same Dormitory A, in a bunk near the shower and toilet halls where I smelled all the odors of prisoners defecating and pissing.

May, 1988. I was happy to learn that Mrs. Robertson, the Mail Clerk, had held my mail as requested. During the next week I was busy answering the courts on different litigations. I called my daughter and Faith to inform them of my return to Glades. A complaint I had filed a few weeks before about the right of prisoners to receive running shorts, was granted by the Institution. With more prisoners arriving every day, the clinic was understaffed. Getting an appointment with Dr. Rodriguez and Dr. Medina was a difficult task.

I loved the new zero tolerance implemented by the Reagan Administration against drugs. The Coast Guard confiscated over 600 vehicles and 26 boats, including the 2.5 million dollar yacht, Ark Royal. In all raids, authorities found a few joints. Most owners complained that they were not responsible for a crew member having a couple of marijuana joints.

With problems in obtaining an appointment to see Dr. Rodriguez, I filed a complaint with Lieutenant Peter and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Floyd. Days later I met Dr. Rodriguez who ordered a blood tests and X-rays which turned out be fine. Dr. Rodriguez informed me that he had written passes for my appointment several times, but apparently the guards never gave them to me.

June, 1988. I enrolled in the Psychologist and Alcoholic Anonymous Programs

once a week to get another two certificates on my prison record. Sunday morning a religious group, presided over by Jack Murphy and other ex-prisoners, arrived at Glades for a short visit. Murphy spoke for nearly two hours. His dark hair had turned silver and he seemed more mature and worn out. Jack knew that the pipe dream of the inmate was “freedom.” The church was packed and he knew how to talk to prisoners, because he had been an inmate without hope for many years in the East Unit, before being selected by a Reverend from Texas to work for his church on the street. Murphy confessed that he was smoking pot when the Reverend visited him at his East Unit cell.

The general compound was periodically locked down. My brother was no longer interested in taking care of my mother's house, and Faith had taken over the collection of the rent and made needed repairs. The house needed a new roof, but my brother, who owned a roofing company refused to repair the property. Faith got \$100 every month for her efforts. She complained about the uneducated Nicaraguan and Honduran immigrants who lately had moved into her condo complex. Anglo owners were moving out, selling or renting their apartments. “They're destroying everything. Instead of using the stairway, they jump from the balcony. They fix cars in the parking lot, leave garbage and used spare parts all around and they've dumped rocks and benches into the swimming pool,” she said, somewhat alarmed.

I caught a cold and had a high fever. I didn't want to go to the clinic and wait half a day to see the MT. I was the only one in the institution wearing a jacket and sleeping with two blankets in the warm month of June.

After trembling with a high fever for a few days I went to see the MT. Dying at Glades would not make any difference; it might be a relief. I went with a group of prisoners on sick call, escorted by several guards. The MT took my temperature and pulse. I had an 103 degree fever. The MT became concerned about my high temperature.

According to the rules, any prisoner with over an 101 degree temperature should be at once taken to an outside hospital. I hated being handcuffed and shackled in a van, but the MT deceived me by saying I would return the same night; that was bullshit. A Marielito next to me refused to go to the hospital and was compelled to sign a waiver. Most prisoners knew that they never returned the same night from the hospital. At 9 p.m. two guards transported me to the Glades General Hospital. Handcuffed and shackled, I was placed in a wheel chair, while nurses asked me questions about my medical history. A Cuban doctor ordered blood tests and X-rays. While in the lobby, a beautiful young woman carrying a baby walked by and smiled in sympathy. It was a great feeling to be surrounded by free civilians instead of aggressive and untutored prisoners and prison guards. The majority of the population of rural Glades were Black as were the majority of the employees at the hospital.

I was taken to the upper floor and put in a room by myself with a guard outside. The handcuffs were removed, but the shackles were left on my legs. Across the hallway in another room were two other prisoners with guards posted at the door. Next day, I was moved into a room with another prisoner with maximum security level. It was not peaceful. The inmate or the guards kept the fucking TV on 24 hours a day watching movies, basketball and football games.

The Cuban doctor kept ordering more blood tests because he had no idea what was wrong. A nurse connected me to an IV, and the doctor told me that he was unable to diagnose my problem at this point, adding, "You know it might be lethal." I wrote to Faith and Rosenblatt, explaining that I was at Glades General Hospital, and according to the doctor I could have some fatal disease. I seriously considered that a syringe, laced with the AIDS virus, might have been injected into my blood stream during my last blood tests at the clinic. Being at the hand of the notorious and devious Department of Corrections,

anything was possible. Since AIDS had appeared, the prison population was concerned that prison officials might resort to this illegal practice with “prison-trouble-makers.” And I was a bad boy for having filed civil action against them. Illegality by prison officials was part of their surreptitious *modus operandi*. Half-crazy with such a high fever, all these ideas were running through my mind, seeking a logical answer. Feeling frozen, I asked the nurse for another two blankets. The shackles and the IV were causing painful irritation to my skin.

I asked the guards to allow me to take a bath. At first they objected. My simple request went throughout the chain of command all the way up to the Colonel's desk in Glades. An hour later I was told my request was approved. I walked with difficulty to a bathtub at the end of the hallway, escorted by four guards specially summoned from Glades to escort me, while I took the bath. The nurse wanted me to take a cold bath, but I declined. Afterward I felt better, but I decided I would not to take another shower in the hospital; it was too much hassle. So far, the medical staff had failed to diagnose my strange illness.

I was unable to cope any longer with the TV going the whole day. I told the doctor that I would no longer cooperate with them and requested to be taken back to Glades. The doctor was alarmed, responding that, “Glades has no appropriate facility to monitor you.” “I don't care,” I answered. The doctor threatened to dump me out of the hospital and send me to Lake Butler Reception Center. I laughed at him, “I won't last a 10-hour trip in a van.” I took the IV off my arm and refused to take any medication. The doctor panicked, realizing that the hospital had a rioting patient on its hands.

That afternoon, the head psychologist, Mr. Lane, came to see me. We talked in the bathroom to enjoy some privacy. Mr. Lane was informed that an inmate in critical condition at Glades General Hospital was refusing to cooperate with the staff and his

professional service was required. The psychologist requested my file and read my thick prison record. He noticed that all my requests for reduction of custody and transfer to another institution wound up in a merry-go-round. He told me he had spoken to Shaffer, and that he no longer objected to my transfer to Florida City when notified that I was dying at the local hospital. "But you have to be in good health to be transferred to Florida City," said Lane. I noticed his honesty and integrity, so often absent in other prison officials. To warm up my body was becoming an agonizing task; the IV and shackles on my legs were becoming more painful. I had at least succeeded in getting the attention of the head psychologist. Thereafter, I began to cooperate with the medical staff. They reconnected the IV, brought me several pills and monitored my temperature every few hours. Feeling chilly, I asked the nurse for two more blankets. I felt frozen. I did not eat too much, although the diet was much better than the prison food. My roommate was eating my meals, saving all the juices and individual portions of butter and jelly, toothpaste and whatever he was able to grab. For some inmates the hospital was an unexpected mini-vacation, exposing them to civilians and a chance to eat better food.

A few days later my high temperature dropped to 102 degrees. I heard when Rosenblatt called the hospital to inquire about and speak to me; the guard refused, and the conversation became an argument. My only protection in prison was from the people outside who were concerned about my well-being. When an attorney calls, prison officials listen. I could count on only two persons in the outside world, Faith and Rosenblatt. No one else. My incarceration had been too prolonged. My family and friends never expected to see me released.

My roommate, a diabetic, was returned to Glades Correctional and another Cuban prisoner with pneumonia took his bed. One day the doctor came in with a diagnosis-- pneumonia. But they were worried because my defense system was not responding to the

bombarding of medication. To the relief of the doctor and nurses my high fever finally dropped to 100 degrees.

After 16 days of hospitalization, the doctor told me that I was to be returned to Belle Glades. Upon my arrival, the prison compound was packed, with not a bunk available. I was lucky. The U.S. Immigration Department came to pick up the Mexican that was stabbed by the Marielito and I got his bunk. With the laundry facility closed on weekends, I took my linen from confinement. I was unable to find a pillow for two weeks.

I felt weak and walked with great effort, feeling quite vulnerable to other inmates. The prison compound seemed too big and too fast for me. Days later I spoke to Faith and learned that she and my daughter had come over to see me on Saturday, but I was never notified about their visit. Faith had been in touch with Rosenblatt. I told Faith that I had been diagnosed with pneumonia.

In the compound, Daizi, Gonzalez, Barro, and other inmates welcomed me back. One of them told me that they were told that I was in Intensive Care and then had prayed for me in church. I got a lot of warm support from most of them when they noticed that I was weak and slow-moving from my illness.

I met Faith and my daughter Titi in the visiting park. I had not seen my daughter since 1980. She was now a grown woman and Faith wanted me to establish an intimate relationship. Faith was a wonderful person and a well-educated woman, but a bit too authoritarian for me, although I appreciated all her concern for my well-being. Both Faith and my daughter were doing fine, both earning pretty good money as legal secretaries. In the visiting park, some prisoners were smoking reefers, and a Black couple were having sexual intercourse in an isolated area while the crowd ignored them. A heavy rain interrupted our visit.

The following week I went back to the law library to keep pace with my civil

actions filed in State and Federal Courts. In reference to the Christmas food package, Federal Court granted the Defendants Motion to Dismiss. First, I filed a motion for 30 days enlargement of time and later, answered with a motion and 112 affidavits signed by prisoners at Avon Park and Belle Glades Correctional. I cited cases where Federal Courts acknowledged that federal prisoners were allowed to receive Christmas food packages. The only way to win a social issue like that was through violent demonstrations on the streets of America to catch the attention of judges and politicians. Unfortunately, prisoners' families were too busy, barely making a living in the ghettos, paying bills, and dealing with other personal problems. Most prisoners were indifferent to this effort, having little faith in the legal system. Most were concerned only with their personal legal case, their wives and family. They lived in a micro-world of poverty and corruption. There was no doubt that the government, as well as main-stream society, had neglected them. Most social problems were simply side effects of a right-wing capitalistic system of government.

I filed a petition for a Writ of Mandamus directing the U.S. Attorney to investigate criminal offenses committed by Ronald Dresnick when he represented me in a civil action against the Metropolitan Dade County jail. After being acquitted in Federal Court on August 24, 1976, I was tortured by guards upon my arrival at that jail. I charged Dresnick with "conspiracy" for accepting a bribe offered by Dade County Jail attorney Fred Owens for withdrawing my only three witnesses. I also charged Dresnick with multiple violations of the canon governing the legal profession. A few months later the U.S. District Court dismissed the case *Sua Sponte*; that was the end of the case. The American Bar Association sponsored a law that any complaint filed in court or with the Bar resulting in dismissal cannot be publicized. Very seldom did a complaint against bad attorneys succeed in court. My only alternative would be to meet with Dresnick in private. Dresnick

represents in Florida a well known attorney, F. Lee Bailey. I don't think that Mr. Bailey is aware of Dresnick's surreptitious *modus operandi*.

I had a telephone conversation with Faith who told me that her mother had died in New York. She went to the funeral and met some relatives. She cried for a few minutes and I tried to sympathize with her grief.

July, 1988. By the beginning of the month I felt much better and had more energy. But I could no longer run or walk around the yard. I learned that Dr. Orlando Bosch, now 61, suffered multiple health problems and remained at the Miami-MCC. The U.S. Government wanted to deport him to another country. Venezuela had released him from jail and sent him back to Miami, where the political violence within the Cuban community had sprouted. Federal prosecutors were shouting that the 61-year-old Bosch was a menace to the community.

In the news, Joan Andrews, anti-abortion activist, resisted a strip search at Broward State prison: "The prison violated a much deeper and greater area of my personal privacy by an attack on my modesty and purity." While I didn't support the anti-abortion movement, I admired her courage.

The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals denied my petition for appeal requesting to direct the U.S. Attorney to convene a grand jury to investigate corruption among state public officials, Case No. 87-5726.

Ernest Mathis, the Black Law Library Coordinator in charge of training of law clerks in the Florida prison system, came to Belle Glades for a law seminar. Mathis felt at home in Glades, where most of the prison staff, as well as the prison population, had a great majority of Blacks who supported any Black program. A group of prisoners from different institutions came to take the seminar. A week later they graduated as law clerks in a simple ceremony at the church. As usual, Assistant Superintendent Floyd, the director

of the library and other prison officials congratulated the new law clerks. Prison officials were reluctant to support such educational programs, but Federal Court made it mandatory.

With an intense heat wave, temperatures were in the 100s and it was unbearable. The prison population celebrated another Fourth of July with a chicken dinner with watermelon. In the TV room several Black prisoners monopolized the selection of programs and others sold reefers and prison wine.

I met an inmate named Ricardo, a Cuban-American charged with first degree murder and serving a life sentence. Ricardo told me a story. For several years he had dealt cocaine and lived like a king, owning a white Corvette, a condo, having a lot of cash and a beautiful young wife. But all this wonderful life turned into a nightmare when one of his clients skimmed several kilos of cocaine. Ricardo went to his client's house to collect his money and shot him several times in front of his wife, who later testified against him and he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. Without hope of future freedom, Ricardo became daddy to a White teenager, and was selling dope to cover his personal expenses. Like other prisoners having homosexual relationships, he never talked about AIDS. He told me that he might be stabbed to death tomorrow, so why worry about AIDS.

During July it poured rain. Belle Glades had another stupid regulation, banning prisoners from owning a raincoat. Once, I saw an old man walking with a cane and wearing a transparent nylon coat to protect himself from the rain. Guards stopped him and confiscated the coat. In the kitchen 30 prisoners were removed from duty because they were unfit to work there. Later I learned that prison officials believed that homosexuals were considered at high risk of transmitting AIDS. In my complaint, I requested banning those prisoners with AIDS from working in the kitchen and hospital.

The general belief was that individuals with AIDS should be allowed to work anywhere, because AIDS was only transmitted through sexual intercourse, drug addiction or blood contamination. I kept track of the AIDS epidemic through a monthly report issued by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Implementing this policy was important because the prison population was quite volatile in homosexual behavior, which was linked to AIDS. According to the CDC the major single mode of exposure was men who had sex with other males, comprising 60% of the total.

Daizi was depressed because his wife had filed for divorce. After a few years of incarceration she wanted to take over Raul's house and sell it. She had already sold all his jewelry, a power boat and other things of value. Her private attorney petitioned the Circuit Court to award the house to her, citing lack of economic support of Daizi while in prison. Daizi had been paying the mortgage every month by selling avocados smuggled from the outside while working as a plumber and electrician. Daizi asked me to help him with his litigation. Although I was not familiar with divorce cases, I offered to do some research on this domestic issue.

To satisfy federal standards for prisons, Belle Glades installed a fire alarm in all dormitories as well as other building facilities. This alarm system frequently self-activated, waking us in the middle of the night. The alarm would ring for at least 30 minutes, till a sergeant turned off the system. I filed several inmate complaints to Assistant Superintendent Floyd, but I never received a response.

U.S. Immigration Agents picked up a dozen prisoners, most of them Marielitos, and took them to Kromo Detention Center and later transferred them to a Louisiana Concentration Camp. By Constitutional law, the detainees were not entitled to any protection of the law, and therefore, would remain indefinitely incarcerated without any criminal charges being made or being sentenced.

The Democratic Convention was the major issue on the news. Candidates Dukakis and Jackson kept fighting for the presidential nomination of the party, but the United States was not ready for a woman or Black as vice-president.

I got an appointment with Dr. Rodriguez and this time, he was very polite. I explained I had refused to cooperate at the hospital with the medical staff, because the TV was turned on 24 hours a day and I was very sick. I now weighed 138 pounds. At Bay of Pigs while fleeing at the swamp for two weeks and experiencing a partial fast, I had weighed 142 pounds. I told Rodriguez that I didn't want to lay in the dormitory. At the law library, I was able to do whatever I pleased and it was air-conditioned. He allowed me to return to work in the law library, but if feeling sick, I was welcome to lay in at any time.

I went to the church to see the educational program about AIDS that was shown to new prisoners. Psychologist Sherrod presided over the educational program, recently instituted by the Department of Corrections under pressure of my petition of Mandamus in Circuit Court where I had also requested testing of the prison population, segregation of homosexual prisoners with AIDS, and implementation of conjugal visits for married couples. An educational program was cheaper to implement. Human tragedy and social policies were decided according to available funds and the "good faith" of public officials. Meanwhile, American society was being proliferated with the AIDS virus, substantially generated from the corrupt prison system. I contended that the prison environment held a strong link to AIDS. The head nurse, in a brief speech, stated that AIDS was not linked to the prison environment, but acknowledged that probably 50 percent of the prison population was contaminated with AIDS. This statement was a clear contradiction. Most prisoners sat reading a newspaper or sleeping. The whole thing was garbage. Two impressive federal-and state-made films were shown about this painful epidemic. I was eager to engage in a debate, but felt weak, both mentally and physically and I didn't want

to push my luck.

My research turned up some interesting and frightening statistics. Since 1981, 60,583 persons nationwide have been reported with AIDS and 33,926 reported deaths. In Florida 211,000 persons were estimated to be infected with AIDS. In 1987, AIDS became the leading cause of death within the Florida prison population, behind murder, suicide, and heart attacks. Since 1981, over 65 prisoners had died from AIDS. During 1987, 18 inmates died at Lake Butler Medical and Reception Center.

One day prisoners were shocked to see a team of news media personnel working from Channel 34 inside the general compound, filming with a video. The news report was triggered by the *La Marca vs. State of Florida* civil action related to a group of prisoners who were raped and physically assaulted a few years ago at Glade. The news team was led by a bombshell blond wearing a provocative black dress, tailor-made to fit her beautiful body and show off all her charms. Heavily escorted by two Black sergeants, Lieutenant Lee, plus a detail of guards she walked in a challenging sexy manner while prisoners looked stunned, eyes bulging, mouths open in disbelief. In the TV room they would be jumping up and down and shouting for much less than this. "Look at that fucking White bitch!" commented one prisoner rubbing his balls, other prisoner said breathlessly, "Jesus Christ, look at that fucking ass!" Another inmate added, "She should get life in prison for this provocation!" And She enjoyed all the extra attention provided by the prison population, holding the microphone and talking with self-control while the video cameramen filmed a news report from Belle Glade related to violence inside the prison.

After weeks of living in the dormitory, a mentally ill prisoner was finally taken out of dormitory A. Usually mentally ill inmates were placed in confinement till prison officials found a proper facility for them. Raiford was the only prison facility for mentally

ill prisoners. In serious cases the prisoners were confined to a mental hospital in Northern Florida. With two civil actions pending in Federal Court, the institution was busy repairing the roof and doing other cosmetic jobs to the 60-year-old prison. I was responsible for filing one of the civil actions.

August, 1988. The institution was well-aware of inmates intensive use of AT&T and Sprint telephone numbers to make free calls. The telephone company eventually engineered a system where the prison population would no longer be able to use those numbers from a prison telephone. It had always been difficult to make telephone calls and the two coin telephones inside the dormitory became easier to use.

One morning my name was paged to report to the office of Classification Officer Knight. At the office of Classification, the officer was upset at having received a copy of my interrogatory citing his swapping of special favors for homosexual relations with prisoners assigned to him. Sergeant Nappy was also there awaiting an order to place me in confinement. I realized that Knight's homosexual behavior was a serious social problem and he might be proliferating AIDS. He flatly denied the allegations cited in my motions. I told him that if what he was saying was true, then he had only to answer the interrogatory according to a court order. He became more upset knowing he might commit perjury in the future. Knight threatened me with doing his very best behind the scenes to prolong my incarceration. His hometown was Tallahassee, where he had good personal relations with Probation and Parole Commissioners and Officers. His father had worked for the Parole and Probation Commission in Tallahassee. Having no interest in engaging in or provoking an argument with him, and possibly being locked up in jail while recuperating from my illness, I excused myself and returned to the law library.

I spoke to Raul Daizi, requesting him to give me an affidavit testifying that Knight, who was his Classification Officer, was swapping personal favors for homosexual

relationships with prisoners assigned to him. Daizi gave me the affidavit on the condition of using the document in the Circuit Court only after his release from prison. Without evidence to proceed further, and to take some pressure off me, I filed a motion with the Court, stating that in a recent meeting with Knight concerning the answer to the interrogatory, he denied the charges. Therefore, my interrogatory addressed to him was not necessary. I was feeling very weak from my recent hospitalization. Probably it was a mistake to file the motion. Later the Circuit Judge didn't compel any of the prison officials to answer my interrogatories. And my petition to appoint a private counsel was never properly entertained according to state law. I was a *pro se* litigant, very naive at law.

My constant communication with attorneys, professionals and politicians fascinated prison officials. Although often harassed, I didn't experience any worse vindictive action. I was a member of Amnesty International, my substantial correspondence with the courts was quite impressive and I kept in touch with powerful attorneys, professionals and politicians.

Another old prisoner was found dead in his bunk, the cause of death being heart failure. At the clinic, I requested of Dr. Rodriguez a special diet in the staff dining hall, but it was denied. I believed that having marginal hypoglycemia, a special diet high in protein would help me.

In our dormitory were two White sixteen-year-old juvenile delinquents. Both of them opted to become the female companion of two Black prisoners in exchange for protection and junk food. The only other option was being raped and victimized by a gang. The fire alarm system continued activating daily with false alarms. Fights and petty arguments between prisoners were reported often and the cell-block was packed. Black prisoners were selling fried chicken, smuggled from the kitchen in garbage cans, at a dollar per bag.

In my civil action against Belle Glades Correctional *Otero vs. Dugger*, Case No. 88-13020-Civ-Davis/Sorrentino, seeking to improve conditions at Glades, U.S. Magistrate Sorrentino denied my petition for class action. I immediately filed a notice of appeal on this issue, which was denied.

I had an appointment with the dentist, Dr. Larry Bennett, a 50-year-old man with silver hair. The office was filthy and messy. Dr. Bennett's assistant was a Black female, who took several X-rays. After waiting for three months, I was able to get an appointment for a checkup and cleaning of my gums.

September, 1988. New prisoners kept coming into the system. President Reagan was only concerned in implementing new laws in the U.S. Supreme Court with the ultimate goal of creating a police state, increasing the number of judges, prosecutors and police officers. After Reagan assumed the presidency, the court and prison systems were packed. Reagan was solving social problems with repression. But the President, as well as the Governor of Florida, neglected to expand the capacity of the court and prison systems. In the end, the Reagan Administration's efforts succeeded in affording the U.S. the dubious honor of having the largest prison population in the free world.

I met a new inmate charged with homicide for killing his wife. I was sympathetic to him. He was adept at Yoga and was not the classic criminal inmate. We chatted for an hour about the conditions at Glades. He told me how he was traumatized, because after the incident, his daughter and family became hostile toward him.

I received notification from the Parole Commission, denying the recommendation by the Parole Officer to reduce two years of tentative release days from 1996 to 1994. Next day, I called Rosenblatt and told him that the Department of Corrections had failed to provide me with all my gain time. According to a 1977 law, I should have been awarded 45 days every month instead of 20 days each month. That meant that I should

have been released from prison several years ago. Rosenblatt said he would check my gain time with an expert in this field.

The food at Belle Glade was getting worse. According to a recent case in court, prison officials were allowed to add more fat and ground bone to the hamburgers. During lunch I cracked a tooth. It would take several months to get an appointment with the dentist to take care of my broken tooth. The next day I went to see the optometrist who wrote a new prescription for eye glasses. I was using yoga tapes to control my excessive stress with a mini-cassette player another prisoner loaned to me.

At the library the air-conditioner broke down for two weeks. In our dormitory we had a new old prisoner with silver hair. The inmates call him Pa. He kept talking to himself, articulating with his hands as if having a conversation with another invisible person. Pat was a non-aggressive mentally disturbed inmate living in the general population.

October, 1988. By now, most guards were aware that I was filing civil actions against the institution as well as the Florida Department of Corrections. Accordingly, some guards began to watch me closely. I went to pick up a package of personal articles at the Property Room, where the guards complained that I should be using my committed name of "Hernandez."

I got assigned to my double bunk a noisy inmate. A few days later, I spoke to Sergeant Nappy, requesting a transfer to another dormitory, but it was denied. This was the price to be paid for filing civil actions in courts. I went to see Psychologist Lane who told me he was having problems with prison officials and therefore, was unable to help me. Finally I went to see Lieutenant Bennett who granted my petition and next day, I moved into Dormitory B. I was told that this dormitory was well-known for being more relaxed, housing fewer Black prisoners. Dormitory A was regularly used for all the new

inmates and transit prisoners.

With a series of shake-downs, searches and transfers of prisoners to other institutions, Glades reduced the flow of reefer and the “buck” prison wine became more in demand.

The Shuttle Discovery had a successful launch in Cape Canaveral, landing several days later at Edward Air Force Base in California. The accident of the shuttle a few years back was still in the memory of many Americans and had haunted NASA.

Two members of Raja Yoga came every weekend to meet with prisoners at the church. For a brief while it was a good feeling being in an environment of purity. I spoke to Sister Veronica in Miami, who was kindly accepting my telephone calls. I informed her that the Chaplain had approved their future visits for one hour every Sunday.

The prison population declared an emergency when hundreds of inmates reported to the clinic with symptoms of food poisoning. Outside, doctors were called for assistance. Civil actions filed by prisoners in courts for lack of adequate medical care had forced the prison administrators to be more concerned with the inmate's well being.

The Judicial Sting by Judge Wells. In a telephone conversation several months ago Rosenblatt told me he would check my gain-time and my tentative date of release, and would file a motion in court, if necessary. During all this time, Rosenblatt had been representing me in court *pro bono*. When I did not hear from him, I decided to do it myself. First, I exhausted all prison administrative relief, filing several DC-303's with the institution and later in Tallahassee with the Department of Corrections. Basically, my complaint was that I was illegally incarcerated: 1) I should have been provided with 45 days of good gain time every month; 2) Brevard Correctional Institution illegally revoked 225 days of good gain time with a series of disciplinary reports for using my legal name of Rolando Otero; and 3) the sentencing court reduced my sentence from 40 years to 30

years with a 10-year probation term. The computation by the Department of Corrections was based on a 40-year sentence, instead of a 30-year sentence. I should have been released two years ago.

When the institution and Tallahassee denied my petitions for redress, I filed the same allegation in a petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus with the First Judicial Circuit Court in Fort Walton, which had imposed sentence on me in March, 1977. My allegation of reduction of sentence was a fact, but I had no copy of the reduction of sentence. My daughter was unwilling to search for this legal document and the Department of Corrections stated they had no order from the sentencing court reducing my sentence and by law, were not obligated to search for such an order. Apparently, Judge Wells never forwarded a copy of that order to the Florida Department of Corrections as he should have, according to the law. In this conflicting area of jurisdiction was when private counsel was both welcome and handy to come onto the scene. In Florida, most courts will not recognize merits when prisoners file motions seeking judicial relief for illegal actions committed by public officials or another party.

I was surprised when my Classification Officer, Shaffer, called me to his office and showed me a letter from Judge Wells, requesting the institution inform him of my present legal sentence. Shaffer asked me, "What should I respond to the judge." I replied to him, "Forty years. That's what's on the record." Shaffer asked, "How come Judge Wells doesn't know about your sentence, when he's got the court records available to him?" I would find the answers to those questions a few months later.

Two weeks later my petition for the issue of a Writ of Habeas Corpus was returned to the Clerk of the Court because all my records had been forwarded from Okaloosa County back to Miami. A week later I filed a new petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus with the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court of Dade County, seeking my immediate release from

incarceration because my legal sentence had expired two years before.

One Saturday, I was walking in the yard when I met Big Tony from West Palm Beach County Jail. Tony explained to me that he got a 10-year sentence and after one more year in Glades, he would be eligible for Parole release. He had been assigned to work in the kitchen, the worst possible place for him to work because of his compelling desire to eat. We walked around the yard for an hour, chatting about freedom and Miami.

On the weekend I called Faith and explained to her about the court not providing a copy of my reduction of sentence to the Department of Corrections. I also explained about my petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus filed in the First Circuit Court. "Don't file anymore papers with the courts. They won't release you!" she shouted, alarmed. I told her that Rosenblatt had not filed a motion on my behalf so I would have to file a petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus in Miami Circuit Court. "They won't release you from prison if you keep filing papers in court," she kept yelling.

In the news, Charlie Street, a Black ex-convict recently released from Belle Glade, killed two Metro Police officers. Again a good number of prisoners got food poisoning, and doctors from outside came in to help.

I read Jill Ireland's "Life Wish." She was the wife of actor Charles Bronson, and described her odyssey in fighting breast cancer--an excellent book. I also read *Veil: The Secret War of the CIA*, by Bob Woodward, a biography of William Casey. Woodward was the instrument used by the CIA, to leak information from the investigation against the Nixon Administration. Nixon tried to involve the CIA and the FBI in some illegal activities. There were allegations of pay-offs by corporations for political favors. The agency supplied some spy equipments to the Plumbers team, led by former CIA Agent Howard Hunt and former FBI Agent Gordon Liddy. A Cuban team illegally entered the offices of psychiatrist Daniel Ellsberg, who had earlier released classified information

relating to the government's plan and actions during the Vietnam War. They also broke several times into the Chilean Embassy in Washington D.C.. Investigators uncovered evidence of illegal wiretapping and bugging at the Democratic Headquarters.²

An inmate filed a petition for Habeas Corpus with the Florida Supreme Court, signing it as John Doe. In the legal document John Doe complained that the searches enforced on visitors, including women and children, at the visiting park were illegal. This new policy of searching women and children at the visiting park was instituted by the new major, who had been charged twice with raping female Correctional Officers at Martin Correctional Institution. A few days later guards and sergeants stormed into the law library and closed it down, confiscating all the typewriters. A few days later I got back my Selectric II typewriter. Prison officials alleged that one of the law clerks drafted and filed that motion with the Supreme Court, typing John Doe to protect himself from retaliation. Right away the two major suspects were transferred to other undesirable jobs. Poor Harry was transferred to the laundry and easy-going Holland to the warehouse. Both men had life sentences and might qualify for early release at any time. Harry and Holland were the two best law clerks in Belle Glade Correctional.

Meanwhile, the petition for Habeas Corpus filed by the anonymous John Doe was entertained by the Florida Supreme Court which assumed jurisdiction of the case and granted the relief sought, banning any further searches of family and friends at the visiting park of Belle Glade Correctional Institution.

November, 1988. During a lot of rain and cooler weather, another Thanksgiving became part of history. The institution provided the prison population with its usual good turkey dinner and pumpkin pie, but portions were smaller this year.

Inmate Barro introduced me to another prisoner of German ancestry. Both

²Todd-Curti, 769.

prisoners were serving a life sentence and were active members of the JayCees. They explained to me how the institution manipulated the JayCees and skimmed profits from selling fresh fruits in the compound, goods at visiting times, memberships and other projects. JayCee officials declined to get involved in the complaint against Belle Glades, because they might lose access to the Florida system of prisons.

One night after the count period ended, I was watching a chess game when summoned by Sergeant Grove who escorted me to the Lieutenant's office. The Lieutenant very politely gave me the telephone number of an attorney named Linda Barley in Tallahassee who had been appointed by U.S. Magistrate Anderson Everestt to represent me in my civil action, requesting the Department of Corrections to list me only under my legal name of "Rolando Otero."

When I spoke to Miss Barley, she explained about the Magistrate's Order and said that they were going to answer the "Summary Judgement" filed by the State of Florida. I explained that I had been litigating this case for the past five years.

My petition for a Writ of Mandamus directing prison officials to implement an adequate policy against the AIDS epidemic in the prison population would remain in a legal limbo, while the lethal AIDS epidemic kept proliferating in Florida.

And so the months rolled by. I was shunted from Glades to West Palm Beach General Hospital with pneumonia and back to Glades. All through my endless filing on many different complaints, the one shining hope was that my sentence would be shortened and I would be soon free. It was the one hope which kept my spirit alive.

CHAPTER 20

MAN LOVES AS MUCH AS HE HATES, THE MECHANISM OF ONE EMOTION IS THE INVERSION OF THE OTHER

December, 1988. The case of Charlie Street, the Black ex-convict who killed two Metro Police Officers, brought more heat to the awarded administrative gain-time of over 90 days provided to the Florida prison population, when it reaches a cap imposed by Federal Court banning overcrowding. At that time, they were talking about building more prisons in Florida to avoid further cases like Charlie Street. The fact was that Charlie Street had been a creature created by state plutocrats. Every time a policeman gets killed, they make it a big issue. When a poor citizen gets killed, nobody bothers to investigate.

I went to see Dr. Rodriguez, now upset with me because I had filed an inmate request complaining about my chronic health problems. Dr. Rodriguez alleged that my health problems were caused by mental health related to incarceration. He threatened to send me to Lake Butler Medical and Reception Center for an evaluation. I refused to go because at Lake Butler over 35 prisoners had suffered premature deaths while receiving medical care.

While at the clinic I met big Tony, who was about to get a transfer from the kitchen. Tony weighed 294 pounds. After working one week in the kitchen, Tony weighed 310 pounds. He really wanted to be assigned to Horticulture classes.

In Tallahassee a former inmate filed a civil action in Federal Court, alleging that he contracted AIDS in prison while compelled to live in the proximity of other prisoners with AIDS.

A Black prisoner was released from the Florida Department of Corrections after serving a 20-year term for the murder of his wife and children. In the allegation of his appeal, his defense counsel contended that the prosecutor had held back vital information showing that the defendant was innocent. In support, the defense counsel introduced an affidavit of a dying woman confined to a senior citizen home, who confessed to the killing, have poisoned his wife and children while serving as a baby-sitter for the family.

In another dormitory, inmate Holland, a law clerk at the law library, killed another prisoner who was stealing personal property from him. Holland was immediately locked in confinement and days later transferred to West Palm Beach County Jail to face criminal charges. The inmate Holland killed, was a well-known snitch and homosexual. Later, the State Attorney summoned a grand jury to indict Holland for first degree murder. Holland pleaded not guilty, using the "self-defense strategy." He told the jury that the other inmate had been stealing from him, felt intimidated, and the prison environment failed to protect him from violence. The jury, most of whom were Blacks, believed him. Probably Holland will not be eligible for parole.

With the winter winds blowing, the electric heater lamps were turned on at night and sometimes the heat became unbearable. I complained to the guard on duty without success. I was experiencing lack of breath, skin irritation and insomnia.

The Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court civil division in Miami ruled in favor of Raul Daizi's wife, who was represented by a private attorney. The Circuit Court granted to her ownership of Raul's mother's house. The court failed to grant an evidentiary hearing, as requested by Raul according to the law. In a motion that I drafted for Daizi: 1) his wife and daughter are presently living with her parents; 2) Daizi has been paying the mortgage every month; 3) the house was partially rented for \$400 per month; and 4) Daizi's house was inherited from his mother, therefore, the house was not subject to be shared equally

with his wife. Generally, the court did not provide the **pro-se** litigators with the same latitude as that of a private attorney. Therefore, judges and attorneys were only protecting their own profession.

In Miami, six Narcotics detectives were reported under investigation for beating and killing Leonardo Mercado, a Puerto Rican petty drug dealer. Florida prison officials announced that boot camps for nonviolent juveniles were proving successful and they were planning to expand the program. The boot camp was nothing new in rehabilitation and had been another failure of prison officials in the past. A decade ago prison officials experimented with the boot camps, and a few years later a follow-up program showed that most participants committed further criminal violations and were returned to prison.

Inmate Jose Barro, Raul Daizi and myself, organized a Christmas social meeting for Alcoholics Anonymous. Mr. Vandebilt, co-sponsor of the group, cooperated with our efforts. All participants enjoyed a Kentucky Fried Chicken dinner, with corn on the cob and biscuits. Next day at lunch all the students and law clerks were surprised when Mr. Davis, the Director of Education, invited us for barbecued chicken, beans and cake.

I was shocked when the Eleventh Judicial Court in Miami denied *Sua Sponte* my petition for a Writ of Mandamus seeking my immediate relief for my illegal incarceration. I got the impression that Judge Wells was the instigator. Now I understood why Judge Wells wrote that letter to Belle Glades prison officials, asking for the kind of sentence on my record. He wanted to verify if the Department of Corrections had a copy of my reduction of sentence. And without a copy of the reduction of sentence, I would be unable to win this issue. The only issue pending would be the 45 days gain time and 225 days gain time that the Department of Corrections had revoked with a series of disciplinary reports for using my legal name of "Rolando Otero." At the prison compound most prisoners continued smoking reefers, drinking "buck," snorting crack and having

homosexual relationships. The government could neither control the population in a free society or those incarcerated.

January, 1989. The weather was great in January. One weekend the popular Hector Camacho came again to visit the inmates and walked around the compound with a group of prisoners. The lightweight champion bullshitted with the inmates for a few hours and some of them posed with the champ for a picture.

After the attempted escape by Obryan, where a Correctional Officer was killed, the institution took measures to take prisoners to an outside doctor without notice, that was the way I was taken to the eye doctor in West Palm Beach. Without notice two armed guards escorted me to his office. The doctor's office was located in an upper-middle-class neighborhood. I saw charming women walking in and out of the professional building. Two hours later, I was back to Belle Glades.

In the news, the Nicaraguan Contras lost the war against the Sandinista Government. Subsequently, they signed an agreement in which the Nicaraguan Government would celebrate free elections in exchange for economic aid and access to the American market. Over one million Nicaraguans crossed the Mexican/Texas border in the next few months and were immediately released by U.S. Immigration authorities. The new Nicaraguan immigrants received money from the CIA for travelling expenses to go to Miami and Los Angeles, the capitals of Latin immigrants and political exiles. Miami was already in chaos with this new wave of uneducated immigrants from Nicaragua. The city had not sufficient time to recuperate from the a last wave of immigrants from Mariel. State Government officials were quite concerned about the bad image Miami was getting. Traditionally the State of Florida's main source of revenue was from tourists coming to enjoy the sunshine and good weather, and now social drugs and violent crimes were affecting business. To make things worse, another Black was killed in Overtown by a

Latin Miami Police Officer, William Lozano, creating a mini-riot.

Glades was quiet, preparing for another federal inspection conducted by the American Association of Prisons and Jails. I filed another complaint against Mr. Connor, the director of the kitchen and dining hall, alleging that “prisoners were not provided with salt and reasonable portions of food.” Prisoners working at the dining hall were selling food to the prison population. Black officers were allowing some black prisoners to steal food from the dining hall. I paid \$1 and got whatever extra food I wanted. Payments of \$5 per week got dinners delivered to the dormitory. My argument was, they were selling the food that supposed to be provided to the prisoners. Belle Glades Correctional was unable to serve ham to the prison population because it was always stolen from the kitchen. Some Correctional Officers and prisoners weren't happy about my complaints to improve prison conditions.

I worked for a few days in my appeal to the Third District Court, appealing the *Sua Sponte* dismissal of my petition for Habeas Corpus, alleging I had been illegally incarcerated and should be immediately released. Days later, I filed my brief of appeal. I was also working on a 1983 civil action in the U.S. State District Court for the Southern District of Florida against the Florida Department of Corrections for having me illegally incarcerated. I knew that Judge Wells was trying to keep me in prison as long as he could. I had to use all legal remedies available. I had little faith in State Courts.

February, 1989. In the last few weeks some Correctional Officers turned on the electric heater lamps with a 75-degree temperature. I had one of these heater lamps above my bunk and on Saturday night I complained to Officer Jackson, who turned it off. Two hours later the officer replacing Jackson, turned on the lamp. I complained to Sergeant Adams, a 60-year old midget, who refused to get involved in the matter. At 4 a.m., I requested Officer Brown to take me to the clinic, complaining of skin irritation, lack of

breath, insomnia and hypertension. Minutes later, Sergeant Adams escorted me to the Clinic where I explained to the MT my health problem. He gave me a bunch of pills that I never took.

Back to Jail. On a Sunday morning I went for a walk around the yard and met Raul Daizi. I explained my problem, saying that I was sure the only solution was to destroy that fucking electric heater lamp, because it is difficult to obtain a transfer to another bunk or dormitory. Daizi, a streetwise, old ex-con, supported whatever I said, because I was his law clerk and was supposed to know what I was doing.

I returned to my dormitory, took a broom while the guard was not looking, and broke the electric heater lamp. Right away a Black prisoner went to the wicker and snitched on me. Minutes later the Black officer approached and informed me that I had broken the lamp and ordered me to pack all my belongings and see Lieutenant Kelly, another Black officer. At the lieutenant's office, I denied destroying the lamp.

Lieutenant Kelly sent me non-stop to jail with all my belongings in a pillow case. In confinement, the Black guard on duty made an inventory of all my personal property wearing surgical gloves to protect himself against AIDS. The guard took me to a two-man cell. I complained of my bad back, explaining I had a Medical-2, a pass for a lower bunk. I was then housed in a single cell DC-3. After being booked, I was handcuffed and escorted to the clinic for a medical evaluation.

On the way to the clinic some prisoners asked about my disciplinary problem. They were surprised to see me going to jail, because I was always very polite. Some prisoners felt I was out of place in the prison system. At the clinic the MT glanced at my thick medical file, took my blood pressure and temperature. Minutes later I was back in jail. In the evening, the MT came and gave me vitaril in liquid form, that helped me sleep. I was glad to be alone for a while. I tried to meditate, but was unable to concentrate. I

attempted to understand the wisdom of God and the meaning of every little action in this world.

Next day I was taken back to the clinic for a second medical evaluation and was told that the MT lost the report from the day before. I saw Dr. Medina walking through the hallway and explained my problem about the broken lamp. I probably made a terrible impression on him being unshaved, with messy hair, wearing wrinkled pants, shirtless, and my hands handcuffed behind. After Dr. Medina recuperated from the shock, he told me that he would speak to my Classification Officer about this matter. Doctors and psychiatrists have a lot of influence in the prison system. I came to realize that slowly, the State of Florida was cannibalizing and wearing me down.

At 2 p.m., I was allowed to have one hour recreation at the gym, located next to confinement. I exercised a little. On the way back prisoners were required only to take off their clothes. The guard didn't conduct any anal or genital inspection. I felt relieved.

On Tuesday the guard brought me a copy of the disciplinary report, charging me with "destroying state property," Code 7-1. The guard in my dormitory, Willy Power stated that "he was observing me when I took a broom and destroyed the electric heater lamp." It was not true. He never saw me when I broke the heater lamp. A Black prisoner snitched on me.

On Thursday around 11 a.m., I was handcuffed and escorted to the disciplinary hearing by a guard. I met Sergeant Nappy and my Classification Officer, Ammos Shaffer, a stocky, short man with a round face. Since my hospitalization with pneumonia last June, Psychologist Lane had spoken to him, and Mr. Shaffer was more polite toward me. Presiding over the team was a white-haired Anglo male, who recited my charges. I pleaded not guilty. I tried to avoid giving false testimony and carefully selected my statement. I explained to them I was sure that Officer Willy Power never saw me

destroying that electric heater lamp, and requested Officer Power to be present to be deposed. I also called Antonio Rodriguez, big Tony, as an eye-witness. He slept next to me and observed Officer Power never saw me destroying State property. The team refused to allow me to introduce a witness on my behalf in violation of the rule to preside at a disciplinary hearing. After all this time of incarceration, I had become a master in technicalities. On the spot, I was found guilty and sentenced 30 days of lost gain time and time served for the few days at jail; it was not all that bad. The sergeant ordered the guard to release me. I returned to my cell and packed my few belongings consisting of a few yoga books, magazines, legal papers, a toothbrush, soap and a towel.

Minutes later, while walking in the general compound I met big Tony and Raul Daizi; they welcomed me. The intensive light of the bright sun made me dizzy for a brief moment. Daizi was willing to buy a few prison knives to be delivered to the lieutenant in exchange for my release from jail. I was assigned to C-76 dormitory. Later I went to the Property Room to pick up two boxes of personal property and legal papers. Daizi helped me carry the boxes to the dormitory. He was happy to have his law clerk out of jail because his wife was leaving him without a penny. During his five years of incarceration she had sold almost everything to support herself. Now she was working in a garment factory in Hialeah paying minimum wage. I had to answer a motion in relation to his wife's petition to be awarded his house. Daizi was expected to be released within a few months and needed a place to live. I spent the afternoon walking around the yard enjoying my limited freedom.

Next day I returned to my job at the law library to draft a motion for Daizi. I also typed a letter for a prisoner to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization in Miami, requesting withdrawal of the detainer lodged against him.

I didn't tell Faith about my few days spent in jail. She had enough problems. In

my last telephone conversation with her, she had told me that she was on a diet with the Diet Watch plan and had lost 20 pounds. Faith talked about her job, her kitty, and her family living in New Jersey, just simple things, but it was good to talk to her.

In the news, Miami Police Officer William Lozano, who killed a speeding Black motorcyclist sparking three days of racial violence in Overtown, was charged with manslaughter. Lozano's arrest was coordinated by the State Attorney and his defense attorney Roy Black. Lozano was immediately released under a \$10,000 bond. Ted Bundy, the man who was found guilty of killing several young girls in Northern Florida was finally executed. And U.S. Judge Hasting was having a bitter taste of his own jurisprudence, alleging the hearing the U.S. Congress imposed, impeaching him for receiving a bribe, violated his Constitutional rights pursuant to the Double Jeopardy Clause of the Fifth Amendment. Hasting had been previously acquitted on the same charges.

March, 1989. This week I filed a motion to disqualify Auxiliary Judge Clyde Wells. I instructed Faith last December to go to the Criminal Court Records in the Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court in Dade County and request a copy of my reduction of sentence. Since then, Faith had called several times talking to the Clerk of the Court, who first told her that the record was in the vault. Days later they had no idea where my criminal record was. Eventually, the Clerk of the Court confessed that Judge Wells had issued an order to prohibit any access to my record. According to Florida Statutes any person has legal access to the records of the court. I also filed motions requesting the Clerk of the Court to provide me with a copy of my reduction of sentence. My motion was ignored. At this point I had no doubt that a conspiracy was instigated by Judge Wells to keep me illegally incarcerated. Later, I filed two motions to dismiss Judge Wells from my case. It was clear to me that I was fighting a powerful Mafia.

I was not happy in Dormitory C. The prisoner sleeping on the top bunk had really smelly feet and didn't take a shower very often. Other inmates had been complaining about his stinking socks.

At the end of February the temperature got cooler, and most inmates caught the flu. The clinic was packed with prisoners seeking medication. I kept busy at the law library, replying to the State Attorney's brief of appeal in relation to my allegations of illegal incarceration. My petition to disqualify Judge Wells was dismissed, based on a technicality.

I wrote to Bill Clay to assist me in obtaining a copy of my reduction of sentence. After I was arrested at West Palm Beach and charged with possession of pot, Clay stayed away from me. Dealing with social drugs was a sin. Weeks later he wrote me a polite letter, but declined to produce any concrete evidence. After my state trial, Clay and Rosenblatt became overnight celebrities. Subsequently, Clay, Rosenblatt, and Paul Morris left the Public Defender Office and commenced to work as private counsels in Miami, making good money as criminal and appeal attorneys. I'm appreciate Rosenblatt and Paul Morris, who continued to represent me in the criminal and appeal courts without charge-- *pro bono*. I also filed my brief of appeals with the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeal in Atlanta in relation to the Christmas food package. This complaint was dismissed by the District Court.

Raul Daizi was happy because he would soon be released. He told me that his wife was awarded his mother's house and she was trying to sell it with Pedro Realty. Selling avocados, Daizi was able to send some money to a private attorney in Miami, who would file a motion for reconsideration with the Circuit Court. The Circuit Court never paid any attention to Daizi's motions drafted by me. A few days later Daizi was released, moved into his house in Hialeah and with the help of his private counsel, got his

house back.

New prisoners kept pouring into this old warehouse housing inmates, and the prison environment continued to grow tense. Fights erupted frequently, sometimes with serious consequences.

In the news, in Miami a grand jury was investigating the death of a drug suspect, Leonardo Mercado, who died at the hand of several Narco Squad Detectives. Amnesty International was sponsoring the release of the inmate, Martin Bradley Saunders, convicted of rape in 1979 and sentenced to 35 years. In 1982, while he was committed at Belle Glades Correctional Institution he joined a lawsuit filed against the Glades and the Florida Department of Corrections by ten other prisoners. The suit alleged that conditions at Glades were so poor that inmates often were raped, beaten and assaulted by fellow prisoners, and prison officials didn't provide them any protection. Afterward, Saunders was transferred to Avon Park and Polk Correctional, where he was harassed by correctional guards with silly disciplinary reports because the lawsuit. His family and attorney were appealing to Amnesty International to support his immediate release.

During March the flu spread among the prison population and the clinic was packed. I went on sick call and the MT gave me a wonder drug for my cold. Days later, I went to see Dr. Do, a Vietnamese immigrant, as I was having problems with my urine. Dr. Do performed a physical examination and ordered urine and blood tests, including a glucose test to check my hypoglycemia. The blood tests indicated my problem were marginal.

I wrote to the Public Defender's Office, explaining to them that the Department of Corrections was not provided with a copy of my reduction of sentence granted by the sentencing Court, that my legal sentence already had expired and I was presently illegally incarcerated. I requested they search for a copy of my document. Days later, Assistant

Public Defender Stephen Kramer wrote a letter, with an attached memo addressed to the State Attorney's office in Miami, reflecting my reduction of sentence to a 30-year term followed by 10 years probation. I was very surprised that the Assistant State Attorney, Gary Printy, in Tallahassee had provided Kramer with this document. He was the official responding against my civil actions for improvement of prison conditions. Kramer in his letter said that Printy would provide a copy to the Department of Corrections. And Judge Wells had no other choice but to issue the appropriate order, correcting my sentence. I never dreamed I would get so close to freedom; it now seemed a reality.

A visitor at the visiting park was caught by guards in possession of drugs. The Palm Beach Sheriff was called. The visitor's car was searched and more drugs were found. I received an Order from U.S. Magistrate Sorrentino for a non-jury trial as I had previously requested, in relation to improve prison conditions at Belle Glades. In the next few days I was busy typing motions. The Third District Court appointed a Public Defender to represent me in my Petition of Appeal, alleging my illegal incarceration. Again, I wrote to Amnesty International in New York requesting their support, alleging that my legal sentence had already expired and I was now illegally incarcerated in Florida. I addressed them as a "political prisoner in the United States." They never responded to my letter.

Winds of Freedom/April, 1989. My initial appeal to prison officials for the disciplinary report in January 29, 1989, for the destruction of the heater lamp was denied. My computation for release on my original 40-year term reflected my date of release as April 19, 1996. A week later Mr. Townseed denied my petition for grievance stating that on March 30, 1989, the Department of Corrections received a certified new Judgement and Sentence with my corrected 30-year-term and recomputed my new date of release as June 14, 1991. I filed another appeal with the Department of Corrections that they had

failed to provide me with my legal gain time of 45 days per month according to Florida Statutes. Prisoners sentenced before 1983 were eligible to receive the gain time during their three-year mandatory sentence. I had a three-year mandatory sentence for the use of explosives.

In the compound I observed younger White prisoners hanging around with older Black prisoners. In the yard I met Valentin, a political prisoner who served 10 years in Cuba and came over in 1980 during the Mariel exodus. Years later Valentin was charged in Miami with killing his wife. He alleged that his wife was a G-2 spy working for Cuba. He failed to satisfy the court's requirement for pleading mental insanity. Nevertheless, Valentin was a well-educated man with some mental problems. Dr. Medina kept him on heavy medication. Valentin complained of urine problems, and was terrified of getting older without a female companion to love him. With a very insecure future, he had considered suicide as an escape from his problems. I invited Valentin to have a cup of coffee.

After the count, a guard came over to our bunk, searching for reefer. Apparently the guard had seen one of us smoking pot. With so little space in the overcrowded dormitory, prisoners had to smoke pot almost in front of the guards. In the top bunk was a Jamaican; next to me was an American Indian who had a canteen selling junk food and coffee. On the other side of my bunk slept a White prisoner who had been serving ten years of incarceration. About to be released this week, he had given away all his personal property.

On the evening news, President Bush continued to pledge war against drugs granting federal funds, previously used for abortions for poor persons, to hire more police officers, judges and prosecutors. In the trial against Oliver North, the court denied his request to have former President Reagan testify to prove the involvement of the White

House. A 42-page report introduced by the government revealed the active participation of President Bush in his efforts sponsoring the Contra illegal war in Nicaragua. In the West Bank, Israeli soldiers continue killing juveniles and women protesting the Israel occupation of the West Bank. The Palestinians were advocating for a free independent Palestinian State under Israeli supervision.

I attended a banquet organized by inmate Barro for Alcoholics Anonymous. Plants from the Horticulture Department were brought over to beautify the dull dining hall. Family members of the prisoners, as well as other invited civilian guests also attended. I felt uncomfortable being exposed to civilians, but the dinner was great. In the middle of the event the stupid guards called for a count and prisoners were segregated from the civilians. This was a chilly moment; I felt embarrassed being treated in such a way by guards in front of family members and other visitors.

Next day it rained heavily. I had already requested the replacement of all the windows. Weeks later I had filed an interrogatory against Glades, and the superintendent answered that all the windows were in perfect condition and the institution needed very little repair to be done. What impressed me about this matter was how easily all prison and government officials could deceive the courts and the public. Days later I filed a motion, attacking the superintendent's answers in the interrogatories. I was considering filing for impeachment. What was interesting about this case was that Federal Court never ordered an inspection of Belle Glades Correctional Institution about its condition.

In the prison compound the inmates had access to more reefers and rock cocaine. Violence continued to sprout in the compound. In the Property Room another package containing running shoes and other articles was returned in retaliation for the civil actions I had filed against prison officials.

I filed another complaint with Mr. Townseed, alleging that I was illegally

incarcerated. According to my new computation, I should had been released in April, 1987. Since I had began litigation, my tentative release date had come from the year 2,000, to June 14, 1991.

May, 1989. With the heavy rains, prisoners remained in their dormitories. Life was boring. The TV room was monopolized by a few Black prisoners watching old karate movies and basketball games. Some inmates claimed to be enlightened by smoking pot. Fearless inmate Manzano had a kitty that kept him busy looking for food. Big Tony enrolled in all the programs that awarded the prisoners with food for good behavior. Jose Barro, who had a life sentence, was actively participating in religious and rehabilitation programs in a vain effort to obtain his freedom. He had already served ten years. And in the law library some unknown prisoner was stealing my motions and giving them to prison officials, trying to obtain an early release. Following rules of proceeding, I was providing prison officials with copies of all my motions filed in the courts. I had no idea why they were in such a rush to learn what I was doing.

Since the civil action filed by inmate Jeffrey Terry and myself to improve prison conditions at Glades, we had observed some improvement. In the dining hall, prisoners were now provided with butter everyday and the white bread had been replaced by wheat bread. The leaking roof had been repaired, and the large garbage tanks removed from behind the kitchen and placed in another place. Prisoners were working, painting, fixing and cleaning the compound, decreasing the odor, flies and mosquitoes. Overcrowding conditions, however, continued getting worse.

I received an order from U.S. Circuit Court Judge Norman Roettger, vacating my three-year federal sentence that was supposed to be running concurrently with my 30-year sentence. I had filed a **pro-se** motion to vacate the sentence several months ago. Faith was the only one helping me to get in touch with the court clerk. Weeks later the federal

detainer lodged against me with the State of Florida by the U.S. Marshal was revoked. The three-year sentence was imposed in my West Palm Beach case for possession of 20 pounds of pot.

I received a legal letter from my appeal counsel, Paul Morris, saying that the Honorable U.S. Magistrate Anderson Everestt from the Northern District Court in Tallahassee issued a decision of our appeal efforts against the double state prosecution. Enclosed photocopies recited the ruling, in which over six years of storing volumes of documents that Magistrate Everestt very seldom reviewed. In his denial he cited selective cases ruling that I was not entitled to the privilege of Constitutional protection under the *Double Jeopardy Clause* under the *Fifth Amendment*. Like an emperor using his authority, Magistrate Everestt wrote that the state court acted properly and within the bounds of state law when it restricted the defense and provided the state prosecutors with more latitude. The other two legal issues of our perennial appeal were dismissed with a stroke of his pen. Our appeal efforts were based only on the illegal circumstances in which the state prosecutors achieved conviction. Up to this point, I had served more time than my sentence had supposed and the guardians still wanted to keep me out of circulation.

June, 1989. Faith came to see me and it was a nice visit. She told me that when her mother died in New York it affected her very much because she was her only human touch. We noticed a male visitor dressed as a woman in a yellow dress embracing a prisoner. Glades was a very unique prison. We talked about her condominium, kitty, her diet, and my alleged illegal incarceration. She told me to stop filing motions in court, because otherwise, after expiration of my sentence, they wouldn't release me. Faith had become an expert in diet, and I learned a lot from her. Faith always behaved very possessively, holding my hand like a wife, to deter me from meeting other women during the visits. It was a great visit! I said good-bye.

An aggressive sergeant patrolling the dormitory confiscated Manzano's kitty, placing the animal outside the dormitory. Manzano was pissed off. Fearless Manzano was an ex-con Cuban who had grown up in Miami's Latin ghettos with a criminal record as long as his leg. As a leader of a Latin gang, he fought with local gangs almost every day. Even uneducated Black prisoners feared Manzano's wrath. He had a quality absent in other prisoners: He never abused other prisoners. Often, Manzano took a prison-made knife to help another inmate. Minutes later Manzano found his poor kitty outside the dormitory and hid the little feline inside his bunk drawer.

The evening news reported that in Peking, the fearful 27th Army shot hundreds of unarmed students who were protesting to improve government oppression. Days before the 38th Army refused to obey an order to fire upon unarmed students and other civilians. Immediately the U.S., as well as other Western nations, ordered all their citizens to evacuate. Meanwhile, Chinese leaders sought protection in army barracks outside of Peking. The United States criticized the Chinese Government for the brutality in which they had dealt with the protestors.

Later, history itself would show the double standard practiced by the United States in relation to human rights. Sparked by the brutal beating of Black American Rodney King, Blacks would riot in Los Angeles' ghettos. And again the United States would send the Army into the streets of America to establish law and order. China and Cuba were right when they claimed that Washington used using a double standard in the sensitive issue of human rights. In Iran, the controversial religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini died. The news raised hope within the nation that the United States had hope of improving diplomatic relations with the new Iranian leaders.

My appeal to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeal for the Christmas food packages was denied. I filed a petition of *certiorari* with the U.S. Supreme Court. In my

allegation of illegal incarceration, I also filed a petition for a Writ of Mandamus, alleging that State Court had failed to expedite my case before my sentence expired.

With 100 degree summer temperatures, guards were compelling the prisoners to wear t-shirts. Some rules enforced by the DOC were stupid and senseless. This morality rule was implemented by guards in order to avoid female civilians from observing shirtless prisoners in the yard.

July, 1989. On the Fourth of July, the prison population was not provided with the traditional chicken dinner and watermelon. The deterioration of the prison population was reflecting slowly in the quality of the food, where more starchy foods replaced other, more nourishing foods. As well, the quality of the housing was diminishing.

The civil actions of inmate Jeffrey and myself to improve prison conditions at Glades were transferred in an arbitrary manner by U.S. Magistrate Sorrentino to U.S. Judge Susan Black in Jacksonville. Magistrate Sorrentino wanted Jeffrey and myself to file an amended complaint, a task that would take weeks of hard work and one that made no sense. We had already filed motions for appointment of legal counsel to avoid all these problems. I appealed Sorrentino's order, denying the class action. Later, my appeal was denied by the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta. Sorrentino claimed that our case was similar to *Costello vs. Wainwright* (397 F. Supp. 15), filed in the Northern District in Tallahassee. Costello was a classic case related to overcrowded conditions, medical care and food, filed by an inmate in the East Unit. What is interesting, was that Costello, the prisoner who filed the civil action, was never released under parole.

I filed motion in support of the petition for implementing a conjugal visitation program stating: "Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity." I filed several studies showing how those left behind, wives and children, were affected by the incarceration of the father. Over 36% of inmates

in jails were estimated to have children younger than 15 years. Previous studies found career criminals tended to be violent toward people with whom they lived, and usually were unemployed and substance abusers. Possible medical consequences to children of inmates included exposure to tuberculosis, hepatitis and AIDS, or other infections acquired by the parent while incarcerated.¹

Both civil actions, after months in a legal coma at the Middle District of Jacksonville, U.S. Circuit Court Judge Susan Black ordered them back to Miami. Therefore, U.S. Magistrate Sorrentino had acted improperly and arbitrarily when she transferred both civil actions in a Change of Venue to Jacksonville's Middle District. Prisoners were entitled to have the court appoint a private attorney, who could file an amended complaint. Later, I filed another motion, objecting to the Magistrate's order to have the prisoner's file and amended the complaint with a declaration of political principles in support, stating:

The American Crisis. The family, the most basic part of our social system, has been ruthlessly stripped from its functional essentials. Friendship has been coated with a layers of impenetrable artificialness, as men strive to live roles designed for them. Competition, hostility and fears have replaced the warmth of the circle of affection which might sustain man against a hostile universe.

In our society urban and prison riots offer well documented cases pointing to the 60s and 70s. They were predictable and foresaw their causes and the appropriate remedies have been known and described for many years by students of social problems. The American crisis, then, seems to be related to an inability to act.

In our society, the elite and the monopolistic corporations it represents, has

¹*Associated Press*, August, 1993.

long exploited both people and environment. It profits from poverty, inequality and war; it has a well-founded fear of democracy, liberty and communal solidarity. The media generally disseminate opinions that have served the interests of the corporate states. Free enterprise no longer serves to produce the same social consequences that it used to.

The corporate states have added depersonalization and repression, until they have threatened to destroy all meaning and all life. The belief in self-interest led to the corruption of the American life and government. Under this theory, each man has a legal right to pursue his opportunity whenever he finds it.

Competition is the law of nature and man. Life is a harsh pursuit of individual self-interest. Man has been alienated from environment and society. He has been alienated from his own functions and needs. Losing both his work-essence and his need-essence, man is no longer a unique individual, but an extension of the indifferent production-consumption system.

Solving problems by repression, instead of coping with them, produces a tense and claustrophobic society and causes the most serious injury to the social fabric itself. Any artificial social organization spells disaster. Civil liberty must be an affair of positive law, of the institution that ought to preserve and protect society. Plutocracy is the major instrument which menaces modern society. The substantial deterioration of human resources is against the principles on which the American Republic had been founded.

Among the most powerful and irrational forces moving men and women in society are Love-forces and Fear-forces. Fear-forces are physical: The fear of harms, fear of inanimate nature, fear of hate, despotism and repression. Love-forces are powerful emotional forces, as well as physical forces. Man loves as

much as he hates; the mechanism of one emotion is the inversion of the other. Love is related to sexuality. Man and woman are joined by spiritual affinity. In sexual intercourse there is a legitimate natural desire, and it is a natural act prompted by an intense spiritual affair. So the Love-force gave life its deepest meaning.

The progress of society depends largely on the progress of the intellect, and the American Republic has been organized to promote happiness. Unhappiness is linked to defective judgment and defective relations between the government and people. The present enormous sham between the ignorant and the intelligent is caused by unequal distribution of knowledge. A society as a whole must indefinitely increase by conscious choices and decisions executed by the government. The state is responsible to take adequate measures to protect society.

After filing my declaration of political principles, the U.S. Magistrate Sorrentino became a hostile adversary, dragging the case. In my last effort seeking immediate relief instead of a prolonged jury trial, I requested a Magistrate hearing, but my request was ignored. At the uncooperative hands of Magistrate Sorrentino, the U.S. District Court became an endless labyrinth of judicial red tape. Often, the jurisprudence became a stream of negative emotions and then the courts failed to do the job to which they were originally designed for, to serve and protect the people.

One night after the 8 p.m. count, a gun squad, formed by Black officers and a few chewing-tobacco White officers, stormed into the dormitory with a list of Latin prisoners, all of them alleged members of Manzano's gang. Presiding over the list was inmate Manzano, who walked to the wicker in his typical underwear along with ten other prisoners. On the spot the guards tripped and searched them and their bunks, destroying mattresses, pillows and making an awful mess. Prison officials knew that Manzano was

dealing drugs and were looking for marijuana. All the prisoners were escorted to the lieutenant's office and an hour later, returned. They failed to find any pot, but one guard found a prison knife under the mattress of a prisoner who was taken to the cell block.

In the morning, using the toilets was a problem. Plumbers had been working overtime on the old sewer system that for years had been overloaded. Every day, early in the morning, a long line of prisoners waited patiently for their turn. For nearly 300 prisoners, there were in each dormitory only 13 lavatories, 6 showers and 6 toilets.

On Sunday morning I talked to Faith, who told me that she had spoken to Rosenblatt. Bob was interested in helping me pro-bono in my litigation with the State Court to expedite my release. She asked me to stop filing motions with the court. I explained to her before I filed my petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus with the Circuit Court last year, I had waited two months for Bob to file some type of motion with the court. When Bob didn't take any legal action, I began to litigate as **pro-se** with the courts, seeking relief for my illegal incarceration. I told Faith I would continue to file motions with the courts.

The U.S. Northern District Court in Tallahassee dismissed my civil action requesting the court to direct the Florida Department of Corrections to make correction to their records and list me only under my legal name of Otero, instead of Hernandez.

I received an answer from the Third District Court of Appeals in Miami in relation to my brief of appeal for my petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus. The Court affirmed the dismissal and authorized me to file another Writ of Habeas Corpus with the Circuit Court in Dade County. The court stated that: "...at the moment of the dismissal the Circuit Court had no record available of the reduction of sentence." The Appeal Court appointed the Public Defender's Office, who filed a motion with a copy of my reduction of sentence from 40 years to 30 years, as I had claimed. Now my illegal incarceration was clear.

Russia. When Mikhail Gorbachev took power, he began to reform the Soviet Union, instituting a “new thinking” that had emerged in the late 1980s in Poland, Hungary, East Germany and the Soviet Bloc. With this goal in mind, Gorbachev instructed the KNVD to conduct a coup d'etat in Cuba to eliminate Castro, who was opposed to any political change, much like the leader of Rumania. And during 1989, General Rafael Del Pino, a veteran pilot of Bay of Pigs, flew with his twin-engine plane to Homestead Air Force Base in South Florida and requested political asylum. A following series of events led Castro to a shake-up the highest levels of his government, and on July 13, the Cuban Government executed four top Cuban military officers convicted of drug-running. The group included one of Cuba's highest-ranking intelligence officers, Colonel Antonio De La Guardia, and Cuba's most popular and decorated foreign officer, General Arnaldo Ochoa, who had command forces in Venezuela, Ethiopia and Angola. The harsh sentence carried out against Ochoa and the others were intended by Castro as a strong warning that Cuba would not tolerate the “Russian's new thinking.”²

August, 1989. I was directed to report to Mrs. Williams, who was responsible for all the paperwork for those prisoners being released. The next day I reported to her office. She asked me several questions, filled out a form and I signed some papers. I told her that my health was poor and I would be living with Faith Flax, a friend of mine living in Miami. This month I was provided with another 120 days of gain time and should be released before the end of this current year. Never once since my arrest in West Palm Beach had I even allowed myself to dream of release.

During my last year at Belle Glades I was engaged in daily and constant prayers. I became mentally alienated from my prison environment by meditating daily. On Sunday I met with the two men from Raja Yoga at the church. Several dozen prisoners congregated

² *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 9, 1993.

at a meeting that lasted one hour and concluded with a few minutes of meditation. Being at this stage of blessing was the most rewarding experience during my entire incarceration.

One morning I sat in a lotus position in the yard, meditating for an hour. After a few minutes of deep breathing, the green yard became out of focus, as I remained connected to my rhythmic breathing. An hour later I was back to reality and the prison yard zoomed into focus.

I began my participation in an Orientation Program for those candidates for immediate release. The program had been mostly designed for uneducated prisoners. The staff was supposed to provide prisoners with the ABCs to survive in a free society: applying for a job, obtaining a driver's license and so on. I considered the program a waste of time. Most businessmen did not like to hire ex-convicts because of ex-prisoner's reputations for stealing and committing other crimes on the job. Those prisoners who served all their sentences had no problem hiding this information from the employer, but for those prisoners like myself with ten years probation, it was difficult to conceal the fact that I was a convicted person. The program, originally 160 hours, was reduced to a 40-hour mandatory program. Prisoners were awarded with another 30 days of gain time for attending. After release, the inmate was given \$100, plus another \$60 when he found a job. With \$160, the inmate was supposed to survive, rent an apartment, buy food and clothes, pay transportation and find a job. Some prisoners were dumped into the street without anybody to help them. Statistics indicate that 80% of prisoners return to prison within three years.

I spoke to Faith who had just returned from another mini-vacation in San Francisco, where she had some friends. She loved that city. She assured me that she would pick me up whenever I was released from prison. At the orientation program, the

brainwashing continued.

On September 20, I was released from Belle Glades Correctional. Faith came to pick me up in a new rented Lincoln Town Car. On the outskirts of the city of Belle Glades we stopped at a restaurant for lunch. I was in a shock, nervous, walking free and mingling with other people. In Miami I stayed with Faith in her condominium near the Midway Mall. Her big kitty began to hiss at me in a territorial dispute. Days later, I reported to the Metro Police Department to be fingerprinted and provided them with my address. At the state office I collected \$100 and later I met my probation officer, an uneducated Puerto Rican female, who called me a liar when I told her that I was a political prisoner. Apparently, Judge Wells had provided them with false information that I was convicted in State Court for smuggling marihuana. My conviction on pot charges was in Federal Court. After serving almost 13 years of incarceration, I was more hostile because of an acute awareness of the corruption in our society. There was sure a lot of room for improvement in American society.

Returning to mainstream society was an unexpected emotional shock. I was nervous doing the most simple tasks, like eating with other people and working at the kitchen. I felt far away in another dimension. Miami was quite different now, with more immigrants from Cuba and Central America, and the city had grown considerably. I felt totally alienated from a society of which I had once been a part of.

The first time I was released from prison, it took me almost two years to adjust, having constant nightmare. This time it would take me longer to recuperate. I took my actions as part of my Karma walking through a spiritual path. I was more humble, observing daily events in life as a ground to develop myself. We have no enemies. We have no friends. All of them are our teachers.

During those days, I did the housekeeping while Faith worked at her job as a legal

secretary in Miami's downtown. In the evening we had excellent dinners, often with T-bone steak, potatoes, salad and wine. Faith taught me to prepare gorgeous salads. For a few weeks, we had a wonderful time, but good times did not last long.

The first few weeks I remained most of the time in the apartment, going only to the nearby park to play tennis and jog. I did not feel like meeting anybody. I had dealt with my legal problems and served my time without the help of anyone. Days later, I took the bus and visited my mother and said hello to a few neighbors.

I was gradually adjusting. The several friends and family members I met were surprised to see me again. Most of them provided me with moral support and some economic assistance. My brother gave me an old Camaro.

December, 1989. This was my first Christmas season out of prison in almost ten years. It was a great feeling being able to socialize outside the prison walls with people to whom I was able to relate. But in my mind, I was still incarcerated. My release from the prison system meant that the walls were farther away; but freedom became an illusion. The prolonged incarceration didn't rehabilitate me a bit. In fact, after being more exposed to perennial governmental corruption, I became more rebellious.

This month my Parole officer ordered me to go to the Miami Mental Health Center for a psychiatric evaluation. I went several times. The first time I checked in around 11 a.m., and waited for the psychiatrist till 11 p.m. Eventually, I got tired and depressed of waiting and mingling with mentally ill patients, homeless, and poor Nicaraguan and Cuban immigrants with no place to go. The second time I went to the center, the Miami Police Department had already sealed off the facility from the public. An employee told me to come back the next day, because a mental patient had become hysterical and threw a TV set and chairs all over the floor and attacked another patient. I saw a trail of blood in the hallway.

Under pressure from my Parole Officer, I went again to the Miami Mental Health Center and was finally able to see the psychiatrist at midnight. I was astonished when the Cuban psychiatrist asked me about my political charges, instead of my symptoms and medical history. I patiently explained to him that I was a Cuban political prisoner in the United States who had been charged with placing explosive devices against the government. My story was sufficient for him to close my file, saying he couldn't prescribe medications till he received my prison files. Needless to say, I stopped going to the Miami Mental Health Center. After my release from prison, this Center and the Parole Office were the two worst environments I visited. It was a shocking experience every time I went to those places, because they reminded me so much of the prison milieu.

Subsequently, I spent many days working in the garden at my mother's house and going to the park to play tennis. Both activities helped me to erase my unpleasant prison experience from my memory. Tasks such as searching for a job and punching a time card, were beyond me for the time being. I was resisting becoming another robot in society. The long incarceration destroyed the instinct of following the pattern of the capitalistic society.

Weeks later, I went to Rosenblatt's office to thank him for all his help and asked him to file a civil action for illegal incarceration against the Florida Department of Corrections. Rosenblatt had to verify my exact date of release. I provided him with an estimate, that according to state law, I should have been provided with 45 days of gain time instead of 20 days per month. Rosenblatt invited me to have lunch at the East Coast Fishery, a quite popular restaurant at the Miami river. Bob introduced me to his new private investigator, Luis Torres.

One day while I was working in the garden at my mother's house, three FBI agents came around, shouting questions at me about a few letters and a greeting card that I had

sent to Maria Arista-Volsky, who now was working as Assistant State Attorney. I explained to them, I had not violated a single paragraph of the law. In my greeting cards, I congratulated Arista-Volsky for her success as Assistant State Attorney and wrote, "Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity" and invited her to dinner. In 1982, during a preliminary hearing with Magistrate Nimkoff in Federal Court, Mrs. Volsky got tired of flirting with me in body language and later began giving all my friendly letters to the FBI. I never heard from her. Today FBI agents were trying to intimidate me, saying I should not communicate with Mrs. Volsky. I thought she was the one who should tell me that. The agents left, frustrated.

In a previous hearing, the Circuit Court in Miami ignored my petition to list me under my legal name of Rolando Otero, instead of "Hernandez." I remained in a legal limbo. Already Federal Court Northern District had dismissed the civil action.

My Probation Officer succeeded in harassing me. She never assisted in my reintegration into society by providing some economic assistance like food stamps or needed medical care or medications. On my own, I was able to obtain food stamps and see my doctor, Pedro Ramos, who ordered blood tests and gave me a physical examination without charge. I explained to Dr. Ramos about the pain in my sexual organs, caused by involuntary erection from lack of a heterosexual relationship. He advised me to see a psychiatrist. Days later the blood test revealed that my hypoglycemia was latent. Unfortunately, Dr. Ramos died a few months later of terminal cancer. And after almost a decade of incarceration I was emotionally sensitive.

During all this time, I met only a few friends and relatives who provided me with some economic assistance. For almost a decade my family felt hopeless about my future release from prison and had thrown away my few personal belongings. Through the State

Unemployment office, I was able to get a job in a paint store as a clerk and driver. A week later, I received a call from Rosenblatt informing me that next day we had a hearing for violation of parole. The Probation Officer had filed charges against me. This violation of probation was instigated by the FBI. First, they kidnapped me from Chile, and now they were trying to keep me incarcerated forever. I was a potential dangerous political adversary with a violent record and conviction. Previously, Rosenblatt had filed a petition to allow me to visit a yoga community, where I was planning to live. The State Court denied the petition based on the objection of my probation officer having to travel to Indian River County, near West Palm Beach. Another reason for the denial was that a juvenile had lived at the yoga community, and her parents filed charges against them for housing a minor. The same young FBI Agent who had shown up shouting with another two agents at my mother's house, as to why I had wrote a few letters and sent a greeting card to Mrs. Volsky, showed up in court to support the violation of my probation. The FBI, instead of fighting crime, were baby-sitting Maria Arista-Volsky, who now was seeking publicity and was playing the role of a victim.

In an effort to make the situation serious, the FBI agent made a psychological profile of me and contended that my case was similar to the case of John Hinckley, who almost killed President Reagan, in 1981. Apparently, Hinckley had an obsession with actress Judie Foster and tried to impress her with a dangerous and brave action. Hinckley was convicted and confined to a mental hospital for life. The devious FBI and the Parole Officer trying to create a potential motive for the violation of probation told the Circuit Court that I was a menace to Mrs. Volsky.

The petition of my Probation Officer was based on the false charges, I had continuously failed to obey a direct order to report to the Miami Mental Health Center for a psychiatric evaluation. The United States Government was trying to have me declared

mentally incompetent, because I was a political dissident. I was no longer focusing on the perennial foreign intrusion by the U.S. Government on Cuban affairs, but the manipulation of their own people. The hearing was conducted in an environment of intimidation in which I was suppressed by attorney Rosenblatt from telling the court about my numerous visits to the Miami Mental Health Center. The Circuit Judge constantly threatened me with remarks and Rosenblatt facing a hostile court thought it was my best interest to keep my mouth shut. I remain silent during the hearing, playing the role of pussycat, sacrificing my dignity in order to retain my freedom.

I had once honestly told the Probation Officer that all the values of society seemed weird to me, and she panicked. In fact, I did not want to adjust to conventional values, but simply wanted to live in a yoga community in peace, away from the mainstream of American society. But the court also denied this option.

During the hearing I was arrested and placed in jail for three days. The judge ordered officials to house me on the seventh floor, in a dormitory where prisoners were monitored by a guard. He also ordered an immediate psychiatric evaluation. During the night, I spoke for three hours to a psychiatrist who provided the court the next day with a report.

Early in the morning I was taken back to court, handcuffed and hooked to a long chain with other prisoners, placed in a waiting cell with a group of prisoners and pre-trial detainees. During the hearing, I explained to Rosenblatt, as well as the court, that I had not infringed upon a single paragraph of the law and should not be penalized. The Circuit Judge continued to say it was not proper to communicate with Mrs. Maria Arista-Volsky, who was his personal friend. I thought that the court had the responsibility to interpret the law, instead of analyzing what was proper and what was not improper. She had never objected to my letters and greeting cards. Rosenblatt argued that I had often

communicated with other prosecutors.

I met with former State Attorney's George Yoss and Hank Adorno and on several occasions Jerry Sanford who failed to obtain a conviction during the first federal trial in Jacksonville. I had a lot of admiration and respect for Jerry Sanford who I had visited a few times at the Public Defender's Office, where he was now working. Although there was a chasm of political philosophy and personal interest between state prosecutors and myself, I was still open-minded. Nevertheless, the court issued an order, banning me from communicating with Mrs. Arista-Volsky in any manner. Big deal, I had already done that without any court order. I noticed how the ruling class wastes so many resources in our jurisprudence. Anyway, I was dealing with the establishment. I was released three days later, without a job and full of bitterness.

The court gave me three options: visit the Miami Mental Health Center for treatment, see my own psychiatrist, or go back to prison. The Circuit Judge strongly insisted on frequent visits for treatment with the psychiatrist, because of my controversial political violence against the "system." They were labeling me as mentally unstable and potentially aggressive. The establishment wanted to keep an eye on me. Again I went to see my personal friend, Dr. Ramos, to whom I explained my problem. He referred me to a psychiatrist, who immediately gave me an appointment and days later provided the court with a second mental evaluation. It was the end of the proposed visits to the Miami Mental Health Center by the Probation Officer.

Visiting the Probation Officer every month became a nightmare. The uneducated Puerto Rican, Esperanza Ebbie Alfonzo, was a difficult person to deal with. She wanted me to feel regret for my political violence against the government. Of course, she was part of the establishment getting paid to prevent future political violence. I always avoided getting into any political argument with her to dodge additional harassment. I began to

play the game just like any other ex-prisoner. Dealing with the government became a game.

In spite of my difficulty in adjusting to society and the lengthy problems with my Probation Officer, I was free-- free to pick up the pieces of my life which had been broken by my long imprisonment; for that opportunity I was most grateful.

CHAPTER 21

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Luis Fernandez was another criminal attorney who helped me a lot with my never-ending legal problems. He spoke to the Parole Officer, Mrs. Esperanza Alfonzo, requesting authorization to visit Belle Glades in relation to a civil action in Federal Court against that institution. In Glades, we met with other co-plaintiffs, Jose Barro and Antonio Menendez. Both men had life sentences and were reluctant to file any motions in court because it would jeopardize their slim chance for parole release. The other co-plaintiffs were transferred to other prisons or released. While metro detective Captain Raul Diaz advised me to take note of my experiences, Fernandez encouraged me to write a book and allowed me to use his word processor every week. When Fernandez asked me the reason for the Miami bombings, I responded, “The United States has been manipulating and infringing on the dignity and sovereignty of the Cuban people for almost a century.” Fernandez is very conscious about social problems.

Faith offered me a job managing her building and dealing with the new untutored Nicaraguan tenants who were destroying it. The building was in bankruptcy under court supervision and she was afraid of losing her investment. But my relationship with her was not getting any better. Although, I was not working and without regular income, already she asked me to pay for half of the weekly groceries. She was a beautiful person who helped me a lot during my incarceration. Now, with her kitty hissing at me in a territorial dispute, Faith told me to move out. The party was over. Two months later I moved in with my mother, into a small studio behind the house. I often worked in the

yard, planting flowers and vegetables and grew giant green peppers that all the neighbors praised.

My relationship with some Latins in the neighborhood was not the best, often, some of them blocked my driveway. A transformation had been taking place in the last decade since my incarceration in South Florida. Many new building and housing projects had been built in Dade County. Miami was a totally different city.

In the Little Havana section of Miami, most Anglo neighbors had moved away to Fort Lauderdale and Boca Raton, replaced by a new wave of Cubans, Hondurans and Nicaraguan economic immigrants. For most Anglo-Americans, Miami was a cultural shock. I now felt totally alienated from the environment and had lost my interest in accepting the values of American society that I had admired and supported for decades. I had become less tolerant of living in mainstream society since my prolonged incarceration.

As soon as I was released from state prison, the Circuit Court in West Palm Beach dismissed my case against the State of Florida and the Department of Corrections to implement a policy to protect the prison population, as well as the general public, against AIDS. Without too much choice, I filed a motion of voluntary dismissal in the U.S. Southern District of Florida in relation to my civil action seeking to improve conditions at Belle Glades Correctional.

I did not forget that Ronald Dresnick had double-crossed me while representing me as legal counsel during the civil action against the Dade County Jail for violation of my fundamental Constitutional rights on August 24, 1976. Dresnick profited from my misery and pain at Dade County Jail. Fred Owens, legal counsel for Dade County, was the bag man who offered Dresnick a substantial bribe for withdrawing the only three witnesses that we had to prove that Dade County Jail frequently abused detainees and

prisoners housed under their legal custody. One day we had a “unpleasant encounter.” I asked for a settlement of \$60,000 compensation. Dresnick guided me to his bank located on the main floor of his office building and cashed a check for \$5,000. I told him that I would be back for the \$55,000 balance. After I left, Dresnick rushed to his office and called the Miami Police Department and a warrant for new criminal offenses was filed against me. The FBI took over the jurisdiction, in the assumption that I had fled the State of Florida to New York or Puerto Rico. I was able to execute a narrow escape from Miami with the help of good friends.

Poor Image. Private attorneys have a poor image in the United States. Ethical violations and abuse to their clients has been cited in thousands of cases nationwide. The **National Law Journal** released a poll in August, 1993, showing that public resentment of lawyers was running at a fever pitch.

The FBI and the Miami Police Department placed my mother's house under close surveillance. Days later, FBI agents ambushed my brother and 80-year-old mother while on their way to the supermarket. The Feds, toting shotguns, had my brother and mother spread-eagle and then frisked them for weapons. The FBI succeeded in terrorizing my family and friends. Afterward, it is understandable that my family, as well as most of my friends wanted to stay as far away from me as possible.

I had probably been one of the few political prisoners who served over the expiration date of their prison sentence, and I still had a pending ten-year probation term. In my opinion, I had served more time than was necessary already.

A Spiritual Journey. After leaving Miami, I went to Arizona where I stayed with a friend for a couple of months. Later, I bought a car for \$2,000. After being declared a federal fugitive by the FBI, I thought my best option would be to remain leave the country and seek political sanctuary in an unfriendly nation of the United States. The FBI

routinely kidnap their political and economic adversaries around the world. Therefore, since the FBI kidnapped me in Santiago, Chile, it was easy to reach the conclusion that a hostile revolutionary Cuba was the only nation in which I might find sanctuary; the same nation against which I had been fighting for decades. Life is a constant contradiction: Now, my enemies might become my friends, while my friends had turned into adversaries. Politics itself, is a science of constant contradiction.

At the last minute, I decided to leave the country in a sailboat. I drove to Corpus Christi, Texas, and checked into a cheap motel for a few days while shopping for a boat. A few days later, I bought a 25-foot McGregor. Days later, I sold my car to a Mexican, who smuggled the vehicle into Mexico.

I remained living aboard the marina that harbored expensive sailboats and powerboats. Most owners were tycoons. The marina was a sophisticated facility with floating docks, a laundry, tennis courts and a fancy restaurant. Right away, I began receiving sailing instructions from Dennis, the owner of the sailboat. Dennis was married to a beautiful woman named Donna and had two daughters. He was an engineer working for NASA. Dennis told me about several projects he was working on. In Texas, I was impressed by the efficient business organizations. What most impressed me was the integrity of the business community. The state was a military machine of low wages and low prices, executing its functions with maximum efficiency. Everything was cheap in Texas, specially rent, food and cars. In the past, Texas was well known for practicing tough racial and ethnic discrimination, but now, I didn't see much of this xenophobia. The construction of NASA headquarters by President Johnson, and the bonanza in the oil industry and the real estate sector had caused a significant immigration of skilled workers from the East and West coast had changed forever some of the traditional prejudice philosophy of Texas. In most metropolitan cities Texans were more interested in making

business with Mexicans, earning more money, and enjoying eating Mexican food.

I was planning to sail to Cuba through the Gulf of Mexico, but told Dennis only half of the story: that I intended to sail to South Florida and the Keys. My only concern was that the U.S. Coast Guard might stop me for inspection, searching for drugs. I had several false identifications, all of poor quality, and a small-caliber pistol. My estimated time for the trip to Cuba was about two weeks. But this trip would be longer because I was moving into an unknown dimension. Later, the real purpose of this trip would become confused in my mind.

One day, I sailed from Corpus Christi through the Intracoastal Waterway, cruising along Matagorda Island and Bay, facing a 25-mile-an-hour wind. I passed Galveston Island and arrived late that night at Galveston Bay, where I found a protected harbor from the bad weather. The small McGregor was a light and fast sailboat, but it was unable to take the punishment of an angry Mother Nature. At night, all the cats are black. Arriving to a bay at night was the worst thing that could happen to a skipper. After being lost for an hour, exhausted, tired and hungry, I dropped anchor in the shallow waters near Texas City, away from the main channel with its constant traffic of big ships and speeding boats. It took me an hour to drop the sails, raise the outboard engine and finish other domestic duties. After that I jumped into my bunk and fell asleep. Before falling asleep, I recall thinking that it would not surprise me if I awakened aground; the depth finder showed less than four feet of water.

Friday, early in the morning, I returned to the main channel. With constant cold fronts moving south, I had decided that sailing through the Gulf of Mexico was becoming suicidal. I decided to follow Dennis' advise of going through the protected Intercoastal Waterway. An hour later, I located the entrance of the Intracoastal Waterway and headed east. The Intercoastal Waterway became narrow. I had two depth finders showing an

average of 12 feet of water. I sailed non-stop until 6:00 p.m. I dropped sail and threw anchor in a small channel from the north intercepting the Waterway. I always looked for a safe spot in a crossing canal, away from the traffic of the big tugboats. Dennis and Donna told me that they don't stop and often overrun smaller boats. Tugboats and big ships were like tractor trailers on the road; they bully other smaller vehicles. I took a bath in the frozen water. The channel was muddy, like most of the Texas Coast. Minutes later, I had my dinner warmed up on the alcohol stove and ate the soup with some crackers, falling asleep on the spot.

Saturday, early in the morning, I raised the mainsail and with the outboard engine, cruised in a gusty wind that pushed my boat constantly into shallow waters and close to passing tugboats. By noon, after passing the protection of high trees, a clear gust of wind almost capsized the boat. I made a fast, 180 degree turn on the spot. It was a scary moment. Cruising solo in a sailboat was a dangerous adventure. With a muddy bottom, my small outboard engine began to fail. With lack of sailing experience, each new event took me by surprise and I was lucky not to suffer injury or loss of my boat.

By the third day, I became more familiar with the daily routine of the boat and its operation. In the afternoon I decided to drop anchor in a small lagoon, about two hundred yards from the Waterway. I selected an isolated area with five feet of water. I immediately installed the mosquito net. Two hours later, while preparing my dinner, I noticed that the boat was not rocking. Upon inspection, I was stunned to see the sailboat aground and the water level rapidly lowering.

Next day, using my binoculars, I took note of the names of passing tugboats and called them with my VHF radio, explaining my problem. Most of them responded to my plea for help, but declined to assist me. The Captain of the "Martha" explained that when a cold front passes by, the water table lowers, but by the next day it returns to normal. Of

his own volition he called the U.S. Coast Guard, telling them about my problem. The officer instructed me to continue our conversation on Channel 22. After explaining my situation with detail the officer ordered me to stay on standby on the radio and report my status every hour. A hour later the officer said the Coast Guard had no vessel in the proximity and the Sheriff would come about noon to help me. I was lucky. By noon, the water table began to rise and two fishermen in a small pleasure boat helped me to get afloat. I was happy to be on my way once more, cruising eastbound on the Waterway.

I passed Port Arthur and reached Sabine Lake. Sailing northeast, I passed the Neches River in the afternoon and dropped anchor away from the main channel, in an area known as Old River Cove, facing the big lake. At night, the water was choppy, so I took a couple dramamine for seasickness. I was able to see the tugboats cruising in the main channel with their spotlights illuminating the area. I left the masthead light turned on. At midnight, the wind was blowing at over 30 knots and the boat was violently rocking. Trying to move the boat solo under such conditions was risky, but it was my only option to escape from that dangerous spot. With the outboard engine at full power, slowly, I was able to return to the Waterway and got within the protection of a series of small keys to my rights; I sought sanctuary behind a small key with high vegetation and trees. After that episode, I had a peaceful night.

The next morning, a shot of *cappuccino* brought me back to reality. After a light breakfast, I returned to the Waterway. In this area, the channel averaged five feet in depth, so I had to keep an eye on the depth-finders. The Waterway zigzagged in woody areas. An hour later, I passed a summer camp and a high bridge. Bearing 210 degrees, I began to worry about navigating in the wrong channel. I was relieved when an hour later I met a local fisherman, who told me I was in the Intracoastal Waterway. At 11 a.m., I found an orange marker and in the afternoon dropped anchor in a wide area that crisscrossed the

channel.

I was having a major problem with the outboard engine that was constantly failing. In the narrow Intracoastal Waterway, I was unable to use the jib. Near Port Arthur I stopped at a docking facility that repaired tugboats and barges. I spoke to the foreman of the shop, who ordered one of the mechanics to check my engine. They were unable to find anything wrong and advised me to go to the Mercury dealer in town. For \$25, the Captain of a tugboat gave me a ride to take the outboard to a Johnson dealer. The service department told me to come back in a couple of days. Back at the dock, the Captain invited me to come aboard his tugboat. I was glad of the opportunity to wash my clothes and take a hot shower. I slept in a nice bunk, the food was good and I had a great time relaxing and talking with good folks. One morning, I was invited by the Captain to go in his tugboat in a trip refueling other vessels.

Days later, we went to Port Arthur to pick up my engine. For cleaning the cooling system, the Johnson dealer charged me \$125. Later, I noticed that the engine's problem remained. Early in the morning I had a good breakfast with the Captain and two members of his crew, who provided me with a supply of groceries. I said good-bye and continued my trek eastbound.

In the next few days, I cruised through Lake Charles and New Iberia. In Morgan City, I stayed overnight at a gas station dock. With a hose, I took a shower right on the dock. Next day, the owner ordered an employee to take me to town, where I bought another portable plastic tank and supplies. The gas tank was rusty and causing problems with the engine.

In Houma I ran out of gas. Noticing a gas station on a road near the Waterway, I conducted a stunt act in getting my sailboat to a rocky shore. I walked to the gas station with two plastic containers that I filled up. I bought a pack of Budweiser and some ice.

Going through the lock bridge was quite exciting. I had to wait for other larger vessels that were bullies. It was a very scary operation because I usually crossed these lock bridges with a mammoth tugboat next to me. Today, I arrived at 4 p.m. at another lock bridge close to New Orleans. One of the vessels waiting was a large supply boat named the “Reliant,” that I called on my VHF radio to ask information about the lock bridge; there were a couple of vessels waiting to go through the bridge. At the other side was the impressive Mississippi river. The Captain courteously informed me that the bridge would open by 8 p.m. and invited me to come aboard. I eased my tiny sailboat to the side of the large supply boat and secured it with a rope. Climbing three stories onto the main deck was a risky operation with my own ropes. The Captain gave me a tour of his boat: kitchen, dining hall, laundry, shower room, bathrooms and recreation room. I was astonished. I did my laundry and took a shower. The Captain gave me a box containing instant coffee, some honey and other canned food from Mexico. He told me that his supply boat was working on an old rig and President Bush was one of the investors. I assumed that this was Bush's Latin connection.

When the lock bridge opened, I was ready in my craft next to the supply boat. The Captain allowed me to cruise in front of the “Reliant.” While my 9.9 horse power engine moved at full power, the “Reliant's” engine was barely idling.

At the other side of the lock bridge was the magic city, New Orleans. Getting into New Orleans was quite exciting. I navigated in the impressive Mississippi River. The “Reliant” continued up river, while I docked my boat to a barge loaded with sand. Next day I went shopping for spark plugs for my outboard engine. On my way back, I stopped at a large supermarket and bought ice and groceries.

Afterward, I continued my trip eastbound on the Intracoastal Waterway. The wildlife was impressive in this isolated area. I met a few fishermen and a couple of

tugboats. Marine traffic was less intense. Late in the afternoon I dropped anchor away from the main channel in a swampy, wide channel. After I dropped the sails and cleaned the spark plugs, I covered the cabin with a net against aggressive mosquitoes. The bottom of this area was muddy and at night the boat was constantly drifting with the wind.

Next day, I continued my trip and by noon, I arrived to the impressive Mississippi Sound. I felt excited, it was open ocean, protected by several keys along the coastline where I was able to sail, using my jib. After a while, I saw a bunch of fins swimming around the boat and became concerned about being surrounded by a school of sharks. Generally, sharks swim swift in straight line above the water. Then, I noticed that these creatures were playful and jumping out of the water. I felt relieved when I realized they were only dolphins. In the afternoon I dropped anchor near an isolated key.

I continued my trip early the next morning. The channel had a good depth of 30 feet. I called several tugboats to ask how far it was to Pascagoula, a small fishing town which I thought should be nearby. In Louisiana, the tugboats were not as friendly as in Texas and never responded to my calls asking for assistance. I called the U.S. Coast Guard for help, telling them I was in front of a lighthouse in the proximity of Pascagoula. I sailed away from the main channel near the coast, but I remained in seven feet of water. I concluded that if I got any closer to shore, I would run aground. With my binoculars I was able to see houses and cars moving around. I had to find the entrance to the channel and go to town; I wanted to fix the outboard engine and buy supplies and gasoline.

The Coast Guard asked other boats for help. The Captain of a tugboat interrupted our conversation, saying he was in the channel a couple of miles away, and give a warning I was in shallow waters. I had seven feet of water. He advised me to return to the main channel and keep my eye fixed on an island; on my left side, north bound, I would see green markers going into town. Following his directions, an hour later I found the

green markers and continued into a small marina with shallow water.

At the marina, the local folks were very polite, allowing me to stay without paying a fee. I told them about my mechanical problems. A young fellow gave me a lift to town, where I bought ice, gas, and some food. I spent the night at the spartan dock facility. I was advised to go the next day to Dauphin Island, where they had a good marina and a mechanic. On my portable black and white TV, I watched the late news and weather report.

The sunrise awakened me. I returned to the Waterway, where I observed a couple large vessels. The day was beautiful. I took off all my clothes and rubbed my body with suntan lotion. At sunset, I arrived at the entrance to the channel leading into Dauphin Island. I followed the green markers and fixed my eye on a red light at the end. With the night's darkness, visibility became limited. I saw planes landing at a nearby airport. Noticing tall grass and shallow water, I got scared and turned back to the channel. I was lost to continue sailing. I dropped anchored near the channel. After snack, I jumped into the bunk and fell asleep, while the boat rocked with the waves from passing speeding boats.

The light of the rising sun was filtering through the cabin. Slowly, I tasted a cappuccino, making an effort to wake up for another day of sailing. Two hours later I was in the main channel and by noon I had crossed under a large bridge connecting Dauphin Island with the mainland. Being in the huge Mobile Bay was a thrill using my jib. By afternoon I returned to the narrow Waterway, stopping at a Johnson dealer who fixed my outboard engine for \$80. My fuel injector was replaced. I continued my journey and hours later, saw an apartment complex with a marina facility where I spent the night.

Next day I was cruising in Pensacola Bay near Santa Rosa Island. This area was more metropolitan with a row of houses and large buildings. The channel was wide and

great for sailing. I had an unexpected emergency when the keel dropped and I had to take my sailboat to a nearby private dock with a row of fancy residences. The owner of the house came out to welcome me and was very polite helping me to install a couple of bolts on the keel. After finishing the repairs, I continued my trip. At 4 p.m., I dropped anchor near shore; the entire coastline was a line of fancy residences. I had a couple of Budweisers and prepared my dinner of steak and mushrooms with white rice, salad and white wine. The sunset was gorgeous.

I cruised through Fort Walton, where a decade before, I had been taken by the state for a double trial. Choctawhatchee Bay was another gorgeous area. Later, I sailed all the way to Panama City. I docked my boat in a private marina with a gas facility where I was allowed to spend the night. I went shopping two blocks away at the local Wal-Mart and Albertson's supermarket. I took a shower, using a hose at the deserted dock. The late weather on TV forecasted bad weather with 25-mile-per-hour winds.

Next day, it was scary as I crossed under a large bridge with poor visibility, fog and a strong current coming from the wild Gulf of Mexico. With my outboard engine at full power, the boat was barely moving. After passing the mouth of the ocean, I dropped anchor and waited till the weather improved. An hour later, I continued my trek into a zigzagging channel. Later in the afternoon, I crossed under an old iron bridge, dropping anchor a mile away from the shoreline. I enjoyed the peaceful scenery of the lake, disturbed only by the constant echoing sound of traffic crossing an iron bridge.

The next morning, after a light breakfast, I raised the mainsail and turned on the outboard engine to return to the Waterway. Again, I rubbed my body with suntan lotion. At 1 p.m., I arrived to Wimico Lake, an isolated area with substantial wildlife. I encountered spots of shallow water, gusty winds and a choppy lake. I remained in the waterway, bearing 130 degrees. Crossing under an old railroad bridge, about one hundred

yards to my right, I saw a Chevron sign on a marina. I bought gas, ice and obtained more data on crossing Apalachee Bay.

I met a friendly, heavy-set man in his 50s, named Darrel McKin. He owned a 55-foot sailboat, docked at the Breakaway Marina. After filling up and getting some ice, Darrel came on my boat to show me a safe public marina down the river where I might stay overnight. Apalachicola was an hour away, sailing down the river. Later, his younger and attractive wife Connie came over and they invited me on a tour of the town.

The word Apalachee was coined from the Indians of the Muskogean (Choctaw) tribe, formerly in Northwestern Florida. Scattered by the British and their Indian allies early in the eighteenth century, the survivors merged in neighboring tribes. Local folks often found Indian artifacts along the river. Apalachicola, an historical town, with 2,000 old houses and trailers, for several decades was supported by a fishing industry that now was dying. The tiny resort could not supply enough catches to eager fishermen coming from all over the south. Initially the community had a large Italian and Irish population. The elite, ruling the town, did not allow any fast-food chains like McDonald or Burger King. About 50 white businessmen owned all the real estate, a few restaurants, grocery stores, hotels and other small businesses. The Catholic Church was losing ground with other religious groups. Apalachicola remained behind in progress. I thanked Darrel and his wife for the tour and told them I was writing a book about my experiences. In truth, I was planning to write a book in the future, but at this time I was simply on the run, searching for a political sanctuary, that might be revolutionary Cuba.

On the weather station of the VHF, there was an emergency broadcast, warning of another cold front. I thought that I might stay a few days at the marina, but destiny had other plans for me. While working on my boat, a man came over, identifying himself as the harbor master, Sonny Whiteburst. He told me that there was a \$10 daily fee for

docking in a public marina that did not even provide shower and bathroom privileges. Public marinas generally were free or only charged a small docking fee. I explained that I had engine problems and was expecting to receive soon some. For boats with engine problems, most places provide a few days' grace. Without a commitment he said he would be back the next day.

During the cruise I never had a dull moment. Next day, when I awakened noticed that my boat stopped rocking. Taking a look outside, I saw my sailboat tied to the dock, almost out of the water. When the low tide came, there was not enough rope to lower itself with the water level. I released the ropes and the boat dropped into the water. I was relieved that the boat had not suffered any damage. An hour later, I returned to the Breakaway Marina to see Darrel and explain my problem. I was planning to cross Apalachicola Bay as soon as weather conditions improved. December was not the best time to sail on the choppy ocean in a small sailboat.

Next day, Darrel gave me a ride to the local library where I photocopied his chart of the Western Coast of Florida down to the Keys. Thursday, a cold front hit, bringing temperatures of 35 degrees and turning the Gulf of Mexico into a rough ocean. While having dinner with Darrel, he agreed to come with me to Tarpon Springs, a tourist and fishing town above Tampa. I was happy to have his help. My concern was that when crossing the Apalachee Bay for the first time, I would be exposed in my light sailboat to the open ocean.

A few days later early in the morning, I left with Darrel for Dog Island, 25 miles away, navigating inside the Intracoastal Waterway. Before departing from the marina, Darrel asked if I had any drugs on my boat. I denied having any. He was worried about being involved in a drug trip. Almost every Latin was a potential suspected drug dealer or smuggler. I was terrified of venturing solo into the rough ocean, but Darrel said it was a

“piece of cake.” We sailed through St. George Sound. The marked Waterway had a good depth of 20 feet, and after a good sailing day we arrived at the western tip of Dog Island around 8 p.m. For dinner, we had Campbell's soup and crackers. Our goal was to sail early in the morning to the fishing town of Steinhatches, some 80 miles away on Florida's West Coast.

We awakened at 5:00 a.m. and an hour later we were on our way out to the ocean, less than a mile away. With a 40 degree temperature, we headed for the East Pass to face a rough ocean with six foot waves. When Darrel saw the unfriendly ocean, he just turned back, explaining that it would be unwise to sail in those weather conditions. I felt relieved when he decided to return. With winter in progress, I had to wait a few weeks until the weather conditions improved. Cold fronts were moving in every week. Darrel allowed me to stay for a few more days and advised me to go back to Panama City and get a job. I didn't like the idea much. Panama City was a two-day sail. We ran aground as Darrel cruised out of the channel and close to St. George Island's sandy beach. We had to drop the mainsail and push the boat. I took command of the steering. By this time I was familiar with the boat and I knew how far I could go into shallow waters. Navigating in less than four feet of water was unwise. Our way back to the marina was easier and by the afternoon, we were back at the marina dock. Connie was happy to see Darrel back.

Darrel spoke to the owner of the marina, who allowed me to live aboard my sailboat, using the dock with electricity in exchange for working two days cleaning the marina of junk and garbage and manicuring the neglected yard. The marina had a small hotel unit and a restaurant. Days later, Darrel was able to get me \$60 per week. He also provided me with frequent meals as part of the low budget project. His wife was very sweet, a former nurse from a small town. On Monday, I started to work cleaning the yard with Darrel. He was already retired and working a little bit in the marina to get free space

for his trailer and a free slip for his sailboat. There was no doubt that Darrel was a workaholic. For me, it was hard work for very little pay, but I survived. The unemployment rate in town was high. Darrel told me about the drug problems in the poor Black neighborhoods. Like Louisiana, Georgia and Alabama, Northern Florida had a reputation for being prejudiced. At the marina a few white folks didn't welcome me. They still refused to talk to Blacks and Latins. On the weekend, Darrel and his wife gave me a ride to town to do my laundry and buy groceries. That night, another cold front passed and I had to use three blankets. Darrel had loaned me an electric heater, and I was glad to have it as the temperature dropped into the 30s.

One day I went with Darrel to the Black ghettos to visit one of his friends, where I learned about the high rate of alcoholism. We went several times to the Catholic Church to meet father Wood, who was never there. Almost every man in town owned a boat. Basketball and football were a local addiction. Besides fishing and hunting, there was nothing else to do in Apalachicola. From Georgia, many weekend tourists came over to Breakaway Marina and Hotel. It was considered a good getaway resort, just a few miles from town.

Finally, Darrel got me a job at the Bay Fish Company grading Spanish mackerel for \$5 per hour. I was given the job without an interview. After being provided with polyester gloves, I began working packing fish. Days later, I was transferred to grading fish. The job was a nightmare: standing in front of an old machine for eight hours placing fish on moving scales. The machine graded the fish according to weight. The terrible smell of the fish impregnated my body and clothes. Most of the people in the community received some type of welfare. The majority of the employees were old white fishermen, already retired, who were earning a little extra money for Christmas. Only a few of the employees were Blacks. Most of the community hunted and fished to supplement their

livelihood. The whole population lived on a daily basis, with no hope for a better future, but they lived very peaceful with the few amenities they got. Most young people left town looking for something better.

My hands became painful from injuries while handling the fish. I froze my ass off working inside the cooler. All my bones ached. After several days, I seriously considered quitting. Darrel became offended when I told him I couldn't handle the job. Next day, I was told that the work was over, no more fish. I was delighted. The owner gave all the employees a turkey for Christmas that I later gave to Darrel, who had given me daily rides to work.

I began to work on the bottom of my boat. The marina took the sailboat out of the water and placed it over wood benches in a working area. I often suffered pain in my shoulder, caused by the excessive humidity and cold temperatures at the fish market; I couldn't afford to see the doctor.

One night Connie had a special dinner of fried fish, potatoes and fresh salad. It was great. On December 22, Darrel and Connie left to spend Christmas with his mother in Orlando. Again, I was left alone. I took the time to clean the cabin of my boat and rested and prayed daily to the Lord.

In the news President Bush warned the nation of a possible war with Iraq, who had invaded Kuwait. Iraq complained that the invasion of Kuwait was triggered by the United States, who manipulated Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to drop the oil prices set up by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and substantial lost of revenue had caused serious economic problem to them. It was a tradition for American Presidents to seek success and reelection in foreign policy, therefore, there was no glory for Bush in solving social problems. Therefore, the folks at Apalachicola began to talk constantly about the Persian Gulf conflict.

During Christmas, the marina and the small trailer park were deserted. Mr. Wilson, the clerk at the marina, and a couple who came to spend Christmas in the trailer park, were the only persons there besides myself. Wilson was a prejudiced person. On Christmas day I went to bed early, thereby breaking with local cultural tradition. Holidays meant nothing to me. An hour later, I was awakened by the couple visiting the trailer park, who brought me Christmas dinner and a glass of wine. I was impressed by their gesture.

Next day, I saw the Sheriff at the marina. Someone was leaving in a small boat with a rifle. It was boring after Darrel and his wife left. With not much to do, I played chess on my portable computer board. A few days later Darrel and Connie returned and I was happy to see them. Once Darrel returned, I kept myself busy. He and the owner of the marina donated the paint the bottom of my boat. A few days later, I finished the job. Darrel told me he was going to Federal Court soon regarding his civil action against the government for the concrete job done on the high bridge. He alleged that the Federal Government was refusing to pay according to the contract.

The new employee at the marina was a young man in his twenties, dressed in a camouflaged uniform. He had recently been discharged from the Army and Rick was the mechanic for the outboard engines for the marina. He taught me how to save an engine after it had been dropped into the water. And Fred, a professional fisherman who lived with his wife in the trailer park, allowed me to use his washer and dryer. It was great, as I didn't have to go to town anymore.

In Apalachicola the weather continued cold and foggy. I injured my foot when a rusty nail pierced my tennis shoe while I was collecting garbage and junk.

Next day I met Connie's daughter, Kelly, a twenty-year-old, good looking brunette. Like many other youngs in town, Kelly had signed up in the National Guard with the goal of being able to receive some fringe benefits: small monthly salary, student

loans and free medical care for life. Her parent and herself thought it was a good opportunity and no risk involved in being part-time in the army reserve--since the Grenada invasion under former President Reagan the U.S. had not participated in a foreign war. Now, something unexpected happened with what was previously a friendly nation, Iraq. Saddam Hussein invaded tiny Kuwait, a wealthy oil nation and the relationship had deteriorated between the U.S. and Iraq. President Bush to justify and legitimate his proposal of sending troops to Saudi Arabia talk about violation of human rights, but the news media afterward reminded to the president the Arabs nations never had good record of human rights. Afterward, Bush talk about the freedom of Kuwait--but still did not convince the American people to support an invasion. Months later the President warned of Iraqi troops poised to invade Saudi Arabia escalating efforts for a war. The fact was, this conflict was not about human rights, but oil, money, and power. Therefore, one day Kelly was ordered to report to her local unit of the National Guard. President Bush was making preparation for war with Iraq. Already, a substantial number of troops had been mobilized and sent to Saudi Arabia. This weekend the motel was now packed with a lot of senior citizens who came for a fishing tournament.

January 1, 1991. Darrel and Connie invited me to Panama City, only an hour's drive by car, previously, it took two days in my sailboat. In a local surplus store, I bought a used anchor for \$7. We went to Wal-Mart, Albertson's, and a restaurant where we had lunch and a few beers. While Apalachicola was cloudy and foggy, Panama City was sunny. In his New Year's Resolution, Darrel decided to stop smoking, drinking and began a diet. We had already cleaned the yard of junk and garbage and manicured the landscape.

It rained a lot and I was unable to work much. On Friday, Darrel paid me \$30; barely enough to cover my groceries. Working landscaping, I had to deal with red ants that irritated my skin. Later, Connie brought me some skin lotion. I had no idea I would

be staying so long at the Breakaway Marina, but it was time to leave. Three days good weather were forecast.

On Sunday, I left the marina without too much of a farewell. I had a good sailing day, cruising through the Saint George Sound, arriving at Dog Island around 5 p.m. I crossed through the channel like a king; the waterway was half a mile long and 300 feet wide, with a good deep bottom. Several dozen sailboats and powerboats were anchored all over. I dropped my sails and anchored next to another sailboat. My new neighbors, Tom and Lisa, were a young couple living aboard their 30-foot sailboat with their two children. I was invited for a dinner of left-over fried chicken and mashed potatoes that was delicious. After a full day of sailing, there was no doubt that I was hungry and tired.

The couple had bought their boat for \$15,000 and spent another \$3,000 repairing it. They had come via the Mississippi River all the way down to Florida, and worked in different towns as bartender and maid to cover expenses. Tom and Lisa were planning to stay several days at Dog Island, where a few people lived. I was told there was a small hotel, a grocery store and several houses. The place was beautiful. I really felt sorry to not have time to spend on the island. But with good weather forecast, I wanted to leave early in the morning to cross the bay. I had been waiting for this opportunity for over a month. I knew that if I didn't cross the bay the next day, I might have to wait another month for good weather.

At 7:00 a.m. the next morning, I said goodbye to my friends. Tom, Lisa and the children gave me a friendly salute from the deck of their vessel. With the mainsail and outboard engine, I left the island through the channel to face a 25-mile-per-hour wind and the choppy water of St. George Sound. I was planning to sail near Dog Island as a short cut, but changed my mind when the depth-finder warned me of shallow water. With a frightening 25-mile-an-hour gusty wind and a rocky bottom, it was not very appealing

running aground. I returned to the main channel and cruised right in the center. Minutes later, I decided to use my jib and the sailboat moved faster. Facing solo, such powerful forces, I prayed.

At noon, I reached the mouth of the ocean. To my left was the lighthouse in Alligator Harbor on the mainland. I was right at the entrance of Apalachicola Bay with an average depth of 25 feet. Walking on the deck became extremely dangerous. I tied myself to the boat with a rope and put on a life jacket. By 2 p.m., I had passed Buoy 24, cruising over 5 knots. It was an excellent speed for my small sailboat. I kept praying to Brother Wind to calm down. Dropping my jib and the mainsail, I kept a bearing southeast at 165 degrees.

For a couple of hours the fiery ocean became calmed. It was a journey where I was constantly praying, because I was in the hands of Mother Nature. Finally, Brother Wind became tame as I headed southeast with a new bearing of 105 degrees. The weather channel predicted good weather conditions during the week, but I had learned not to trust those forecasts.

By 4:00 p.m., the wind picked up; it became impossible to keep my selected bearing and I began to zigzag, keeping full speed. I was running at the edge of the wind. A gorgeous sunset vanished at the horizon and night commenced to fall. I turned on the boat's light and depth finder. The rhythmic sound of the sailboat gliding through the ocean relaxed me and my thoughts once more traveled to a world of fantasy. It was becoming late and I felt tired. I turned 90 degrees bearing toward the mainland, taking full advantage of the rough wind. About 9 p.m., I arrived exhausted at an unknown spot near the Florida West Coast. Trying to get an optimum wind condition, I had changed my original course several times and was not sure of my exact location. I knew I was near the fishing town of Steinhatches as I saw lights a few miles away at the coastline. When my

depth finder registered 15 feet, I dropped anchor, raising the keel to minimize damage and noise. At night, getting close to the proximity of the coast was dangerous. With choppy water and the gusty wind, the boat was rocking like hell. I took several dramamine pills for seasickness. I ate a snack and jumped into my bunk. I left the masthead light turned on. This was one of the many scary moments during my trek. Sailing solo was a constant thrill for me.

Next day, early in the morning I took on the arduous task of raising the anchor with gusty winds and choppy water, while my boat was rocking at a 30-degree angle. I kept myself tied to the boat as a safety precaution. I raised my mainsail and minutes later used my jib, but then I dropped it because of the heavy wind. I didn't have a smaller storm jib. With the sailboat in motion, I walked to the bow to tighten the jib and returned to take command of the rudder.

With my mainsail and my outboard engine running, I fixed a bearing of 150 degrees southeast, looking for the fishing village of Horseshoes some 30 miles away. I was using the new chart of Florida's West Coast down to the Keys given to me by Darrel. At noon, I found Buoy Number 18 marking the entrance to Steinhatches. I had only overshot this fishing town by several miles. The waters were slightly choppy and the boat was cruising at 5 knots, following the path of the buoys five miles away from the coast in 22 feet of water.

By noon, using my binoculars a mile or so away, I saw green marker Number 10 at the entrance of the channel to Horseshoe Beach. I dropped my mainsail and continued with my outboard engine. Frequently the depth finder warned me of shallow water, slowing down my speed, but I continued without encountering any major problems. At 3 p.m., I found a well-protected, small harbor with a gas station and store. There was not much to see at the fishing village. After filling up the three portable gas tanks and buying

some ice, the old female clerk allowed me to stay overnight at the small dock facility. The scenery was lovely and peaceful. I welcomed a rest. After a couple of cold beers, I began to prepare my dinner of fried steaks, rice and vegetables. At sunset the population of the small village vanished into their homes and I remained alone on my boat, enjoying the breeze wafting in from the ocean.

Next day early in the morning, the weather station forecasted good weather during the day, but gave a warning of possible storms later at night. I thought I might try to sail to the Suwannee River, some 20 miles away. I took a good look at the chart, unable to see any major obstacles in my new leg. At sunrise I left Horseshoe Beach and around 2 p.m. saw a green sign Number 1 marking the entrance of the Suwannee River. I dropped the mainsail and continued my trip with the outboard engine. I had a good seven feet of water passing sign Number 7, when suddenly I ran aground. I had to wear my tennis shoes because the boat was on top of an oyster bed. For an hour I struggled with the current, trying to free my boat, and not a soul around to help me. Apparently, it was a tricky channel in low tide. My chart had no additional information about the oyster bed and the shallow water. I was unable to turn the engine on to help me pull out the boat, because the propeller hit the rocky bottom of the oyster bank. Finally, between praying and pushing, I pulled out the boat, but was unable to get into the fishing town. I had two options: to return to Horseshoes Beach or continue to Cedar Keys, 20 miles away. I made the mistake of choosing to go to Cedar Keys. I knew a storm was coming, but hoped to get there on time. During the day, the Gulf of Mexico remained slightly choppy, with moderate wind conditions; there were no other vessels in this vast area. My other mistake was sailing away from shore, looking for the path of buoys five miles away from the coast. At night the ocean became choppy and windy. I was almost in total dark. Often I used my spotlight to see my surrounding in the darkness. I continued on a bearing between 90 and 180

degrees. It began raining. About 9 p.m., in the distance I saw the flashing red light of what I thought was Buoy Number 12, about ten miles from Cedar Keys. The boat sailed great and the depth finder gave a reading of 20 feet of water. I verified my position, checking the depth to the proximity of the buoy with my chart. I was sailing smoothly, approaching the five-foot waves at a 35 degree angle, zigzagging toward the red light. I was exhausted and half asleep. About a mile from the buoy, I changed course, and while adjusting the sails, the engine dropped into the ocean! Thank God it was chained to the rear cleats! I called on my VHF radio, requesting assistance from other vessels, trying to get information and the right entrance to Cedar Keys, but nobody answered my plea. At that moment, with the engine dragging in the water, I decided to go near shore and drop anchor. After heading 90 degrees, I dropped anchor with 17 feet of depth, raised the keel and prepared for a rough night. The boat was rocking and noisy and the rudder was banging against the hull, but totally exhausted, I was unable to do anything. It kept raining during the night.

I awoke at 6:00 a.m. with the noise of the rudder and keel hitting the hull. I sipped a cappuccino while thinking about the task of inspecting the boat for damage. Minutes later I noticed that the rudder had destroyed the transducer of the Hummingbird, my best the depth finders. Still, I had another depth finder in good shape. The keel had not suffered any damage; it was always noisy in choppy water. The outboard engine was still a few feet under the water, hooded by a chain to the rear of the boat. I knew I would not get any help from the local fishing folks and I didn't want to call a "May Day" to the U.S. Coast Guard because they would spend a lot of time harassing me and inspecting the boat. I had heard a lot of unpleasant stories from sailors about the Coast Guard inspections. They were not the kind of people I wanted to meet, but with a rocking sailboat I was unable to retrieve the heavy engine by myself.

After 8:00 a.m., I decided to call the Coast Guard with a “MAY DAY, MAY DAY, MAY DAY. This is Blue Barracuda sailboat.” “This is the U.S. Coast Guard Station. Change to channel 22.” Seconds later I heard loud and clear through the VHF radio, “This is the U.S. Coast Guard Station to Blue Barracuda sailboat, over.” “This is Blue Barracuda Sailboat, over” I answered. “What’s the problem? Over,” asked the officer. “I’m in the area of Cedar Key, my outboard engine dropped into the ocean. I’ve got it hooked to a chain. The water is choppy with five foot waves, windy and raining. It is almost impossible to sail under these conditions,” I explained. “Are you in immediate danger?” Asked the officer. “Not at this time, I replied. “How far are you from shore?” Asked the officer. “I assume less than five miles from the coast, northeast, between the coast and Buoy number 12. “Give us your exact position,” ordered the officer. “Give me a couple of minutes,” I responded. With the rocking boat, I examined the chart and minutes later I was back on the radio. “My position is Longitude 083:28W and latitude 29:15N.” “It’ll take us at least two hours to get there,” the officer said. Adding, “You should report your status every half hour.” “I acknowledge. This is Blue Barracuda, roger, over.”

Around noon I received a call from the U.S. Coast Guard vessel, requesting I give them a long count to find my exact position with their electronic gear. Minutes later, I saw the white patrol vessel with the orange stripe. An officer jumped into my boat and helped me get the engine out of the water. Trying to hook my light fiberglass boat to their boat, they made some dents, and I became concerned about the damage. Eventually, after several attempts they succeeded in hooking my sailboat and towed.

The trip to Cedar Key Channel was long way under rain and choppy water; it took over two hours. We followed the extended channel, with several turns, but with good depth. At Cedar Keys the Coast Guard docked at the local city marina, packed with

tourists, retired fishermen and some locals. The arrival of the Coast Guard vessel towing my small sailboat was an exciting happening to them. Seagulls were flying around and a few pelicans were poised on the dock. Immediately, my boat became a celebrity and I became a temporary prisoner of the Coast Guard while one officer searched my boat for drugs, a priority in America society. I was ordered to remain seated on the deck, while a younger officer watched and interrogated me where I was coming from and what I was doing along the coast. I explained I was sailing solo, coming from Texas. He asked me for the boat's registration and FCC license to operate my VHF radio. I provided him with all the documents. The search took over an hour and they asked me for more identification. I provided them with a couple of IDs which they checked, via their radio with their home base. By now, the large crowd of local folks and tourists were expecting a dramatic arrest at any moment. I was armed and expecting the worst. They checked my fire extinguisher that had been recently updated. I had sufficient rope, two electric surge pumps and half a dozen life jackets. When the officers finished their task looking for petty infractions, I asked the leader to help me install my engine in the bracket. The officer issued me a ticket for having outdated flares. After the Coast Guard vessel left, I felt free and breathed a sigh of relief.

To control my stress, I took a beer from the cooler that tasted great, while looking at my messy and dirty boat. Afterward, I began trying to save the outboard engine. Being without an outboard was a major concern, because I needed it going out and coming into port. I took out the spark plugs and sprayed the engine with WD-40 lubrication. When I turned on the engine manually, salty water came out with a trace of oil from the spark plug holes. After two hours at this arduous task of cleaning the engine's cylinders, I installed new spark plugs and tried to start it. Half hour later, the engine came alive, but misfired. Some people that had been observing the search by the Coast Guard came over

to say hello and satisfy their curiosity.

I was a temporary celebrity, therefore, next day, I met an attorney who invited me for breakfast. We had a pleasant conversation. He said that he always dreamed with sailing. After a couple of days at Cedar Key I have been unable to take a bath. I went to the local beach and found the bathroom out of order. I sneaked into the bathroom at Cedar Cove Inn, washed my face and shaved my beard. Cedar Cove Inn was an excellent resort that deserved its rating of ten.

Riding my bicycle, I went to the local hardware store to buy a few items and also tried to find a mechanic to fix the engine. The hardware store man told me that Jim Whale could repair it and told me where he lived. Minutes later, I stopped at a gas station and fishing supply store, where the clerk told me he had heard my calls for help the previous night. He said local people do not answer stress calls, because they could not afford it. Then, he talked about the war with Iraq. Suddenly, he said that I looked like an Iraqi; acting like a self-appointed vigilante, searching for Iraqis to lynch he was becoming aggressive with his questions. I told him I was a Puerto Rican and left right away. I was not interested in having a senseless political argument that might attract the police.

An hour later I met Jim Whale and his son at his house. I explained my problem. He came to the municipal dock and after checking the engine found a bad spark plug and he charged me \$10. Jim was one of the most remarkable persons I have ever met. He was a real conscious and religious person in his action. I went to the restaurant where his wife worked as a waitress; we had a cup of coffee. In Cedar Keys, the population worked at the few jobs available in the restaurant and hotel industries paying minimum wages. The rest of the population worked as fishermen. Jim invited me to his house where I was able to take a shower. I had dinner with them.

For the next few days, the weather was bad, the ocean rough and my boat was

constantly banging against the dock. I placed rubber fenders on the dock side to avoid damage to the hull. The public marina was exposed to the wrath of the ocean. A powerful U.S. weather station knocked out my VHF radio. How long would I stay in Cedar Keys, I wondered, still wanting to sail to Tampa Bay as soon as possible. The next leg of my journey was planned to Homosassa Beach, another small fishing town.

I often bought a barbecued chicken at the local supermarket for \$2.00, a real bargain. Daily, I toured the town on my 10-speed bicycle and I walked a lot. There was a forecast of several days of good weather beginning tomorrow. All this time I had been working on my boat. Now, battery, engine and sails were fine. I told Jim I was leaving the next day, early in the morning. He advised me to take the south bar channel as the shortest route to the ocean. The Coast Guard towed me through the northwest main channel, having the deepest water. The only major problem with the south bar channel route was the shallow water and I had to pass it before low tide at 9 a.m. Jim invited me to stay at his house where I might feel more comfortable, so I slept on a sofa in the living room.

On February 14, I left Cedar Keys. Jim came to the dock to say good-bye. I first attempted to leave through the south bar channel, but the depth finder warned me of shallow water. I panicked, returning inside the small bay area and continued through the northwest channel. It was a long way, using the outboard engine and the mainsail. By noon I reached a green sign Number 2 facing the Gulf of Mexico.

From previous experience, I knew to avoid the deeper and faraway path of the buoys five miles from the coast. With a 12-mile-per-hour wind and three-foot waves, I used my jib and cruised southeast through the Gulf of Mexico.

I loved the ocean, but I soon learned that to truly enjoy it, I had to become spiritually connected with the natural power of this impressive force of nature. Hours later, the wind calmed down. This leg of my journey was via the Homosassa River,

another fishing town with a small protected harbor. I arrived at the entrance around 6 p.m. and cruised into a long marked channel. By 8 p.m. I was still looking for the fishing town of Homosassa, but instead, found only shallow water. With the increase of darkness it became difficult to see the green markers of the narrow and shallow channel. Near the fishing town I encountered more shallow water in the channel and made a 180 degree turn, looking for a safe place to spend the night that had good depth and was away from the main channel. It was too late and too dark to look for the town. I left the masthead light turned on as a safety precaution, although my boat was quite visible in the area. During the night, numerous fishing boats sped by, rocking my boat.

Early in the morning I tasted a cappuccino, had breakfast and prepared my lunch for another non-stop journey. I got up at 6:00 a.m. and three hours later left the channel, heading for the ocean with a bearing of 190 degrees, using the mainsail and the engine with the depth finder showing ten feet of water. I used my jib very little because it took me away from my southbound course. Later, I saw on the horizon two big towers near Tarpon Springs, marked on my chart as a power plant. The Anclote River was next to this facility. By afternoon, I observed apartment buildings along the coastline and changed my course for the coast. I met two divers who told me I was in Hudson City, another retirement resort. An hour later I found the first marker to the channel: after that, everything was easy. I docked at a new and almost-empty City Marina. By 6 p.m. I had finished dropping my sail, taking care of the engine and doing other housekeeping duties.

I toured the town. The public beach was two blocks from the marina. Later a fisherman gave me a ride to a nearby shopping center where I bought gas and groceries. Although Hudson was a bigger town than the previous fishing villages I had visited, unemployment was high. Most of the neighborhood had been built in the last few decades. The great difference between Hudson and Apalachicola and other fishing and resort

towns, was that Hudson's population was made up mostly of retirees and people coming from northeastern states. Here, I never met a native Floridian. In recent decades, there had been a massive immigration to Florida of people living in northern states, fleeing from crime-exposed neighborhoods, excessive taxes and seeking better weather. True Florida natives became a rare species.

At the dock was an old rusty fishing boat. I met the owner, Andre, a man in his thirties who told me he was from Tarpon Springs and came to Hudson because of bad weather. He was in the sponge business. On his deck I saw a large compressor, air hoses and diving equipment. He had been a week at the City Marina and the Sheriff had come twice, ordering him to move out. Local authorities didn't want big and old fishing boats docking at a marina built mostly for recreational boats. Andres told me that it was prohibited to stay overnight at the marina. I was concerned that the cop might come ask me to move out.

I went to the beach and using the public bathroom I was able to take a shower and shave. For the first time, it was warm and windy. I had been several days in Hudson, so thought it was time to move. Andres told me that he was returning back to Tarpon Springs and if I headed in that direction I could go in his fishing boat and tow my boat.

Next day we began to move through the channel. An hour later, outside the channel, I jumped into Andre's old fishing boat and using a long line, towed my sailboat. The powerboat was nice for a change; they were noisy, more predictable and faster than sailboats. In the open ocean a pleasure boat called for help, saying they had battery trouble. It took a half-hour to find the boat. Andres gave them a jumper to the engine. The man gave him \$20. In this area, helping people was a business.

We arrived at Tarpon Springs at 2 p.m. Andres told me he was staying at the city dock. Tarpon Springs had a large community of Greeks, and Andres' parents were Greek.

At the entrance of the channel I jumped into my boat and thanked him for the ride. In a residential area, I saw an empty dock, to which I tied my boat and I asked the owner of the house to allow me to stay for a few days because of my engine problems. With little money in my pocket, I was trying to avoid paying a daily \$20 marina fee.

I left the alarm turned on in my boat and on my bicycle went to the City Marina to meet Andres. The marina was overcrowded with old fishing boats. Andres said he would help me to find a job. He took me in his car to a marina where they asked \$210 a month for a slip. The old marina had a bathroom and laundry facilities, but was not as sophisticated as the marina in Texas.

I looked for a job for a couple of days, without success. Where I was docked, the owner asked me to move out. Realizing that at Tarpon Springs I would not be able to find a job, I decided to continue my trip southbound to Tampa.

Early in the morning, with my engine and mainsail, I went down the river, looking for the Intracoastal Waterway. The neighborhood had beautiful residences and apartment buildings. Local government don't like people living aboard their vessels, because they pay no property taxes. The depth of the waterway varied between four and twelve feet. I went to a marina to refuel my gas tanks. Hours later, I met a Marine Patrolman who told me about several living aboard marinas down south. He informed me that I could stay anywhere along the coast for a couple of days. Most cities have a three-day grace period. I decided to cast anchor in Bellair nearby a bridge, an extensive wide area where I could remain away from the Waterway and the passing speeding power boats. I spent the rest of the day relaxing on my boat.

Next day, on my way southbound, I stopped at two marinas, but was told that the cities banned living aboard. By the afternoon the wind was up to 25 miles-an-hour. At Tampa Bay, cruising with my mainsail and engine was difficult because of a stiff head

wind and strong current. I arrived late in the afternoon at the marina where they asked \$120 a month with electricity for living aboard. It was an old facility, but had a communal bathroom, shower room, laundry and shopping center nearby.

I spent the first few days cleaning the boat, checking the engine, batteries and the depth finder. With my 10-speed bicycle, I rode every morning around the neighborhood and I jogged in the afternoon. I looked for a job at Burger King, McDonald and supermarkets, without any luck. I was using a false identification card and social security number. Without a job, hope of staying in Tampa living aboard my boat was vanishing. The marina was in a predominantly middle-class neighborhood that lately had been invaded by Blacks. My neighbors were an old couple, living on a 55-foot powerboat. They warned me not to leave any valuables on deck because Black juveniles would steal them. Otherwise, the marina was safe, with a security guard at night.

In the news, the U.S. declared war with Iraq through the U.N. in a coalition of 28 nations. After several weeks of devastating bombing by allied jets and sophisticated cruise missiles, allied troops landed in occupied Kuwait. During the few weeks war, Iraq attacked Israel with Stud missiles and U.S. brought into the conflict Patriot missiles to shoot them down. Washington asked Israel to avoid getting involved in the conflict to keep the harmony of Arabs nations within the allied forces. When the Iraqi Army tried to retreat from territory, allied jets and attack helicopters plus artillery annihilated them. The press covered this event calling it "highway of death." Under pressure by the French, the British and the press, President Bush declared the war over and liberated.

During the weekend there were heavy rains and a tornado warning. I enjoyed the rain very much. I had some leaks inside my cabin that I will later repair with silicon sealing. I was running out of money so I decided to travel to Miami. Tampa's downtown was packed with homeless persons with chemical addictions and without jobs.

I went to Miami, meeting a couple of friends who loaned me some money. Some of them were terrified at meeting me and were relieved when I left. After a couple of days, I returned to Tampa. Back at the marina I met a new friend, an Australian who lived in a 32-foot Swedish-made boat with his Vietnamese girlfriend. When I arrived she was cooking rice, fish and vegetables, which smelled like Oriental food. They invited me for dinner, but I declined. The Australian told me that he had met her in Hong Kong while working at an oil rig station. She was one of the boat people fleeing from Vietnam. It was difficult to communicate with her, because she did not speak any English. His girlfriend helped him with all the duties in the boat. They were an odd couple, because he was tall and heavy and she was short and slim.

One day, I went to St. Petersburg and for some unknown reason went to a massage house which also provided psychic and Tarot readings. I thought it was a yoga center. I met Betty Louise, a lady in her sixties. We talked for a couple of hours, but I said little about myself. She told me about her family, her massage business and psychic readings. For some unknown reason, Betty was pleased with my visit. Suddenly, she fell into a trance, saying that I had reached her because my mother was protecting me and told me that my mother's name was Maria. That was my mother's first name. "You came to this world by your own free will to work on your weakest areas of spiritual development. Therefore, you selected your own destiny," said Betty, affirming her statement as fact. "I don't recall such things," I said in disbelief. I couldn't believe that I had selected this "exciting life," having powerful adversaries and being on the run.

"Everything is a test for your spiritual development," she told me. "Your recent journey by sea and your isolation was to free yourself, to break all bonds with relatives and friends, and to provide you with a learning lesson." I remained breathless and intrigued. I had no idea of the real goal of my trek. In fact, I was becoming more confused

about life. "There is a sign of confinement that probably existed when you were younger," Betty continued. I asked more about this sign of confinement, but she was unable to tell me if it was past or future events. I had no intention of ever returning to the corrupt prison system. She advised me to look to a career in law or law enforcement. That was my two major problems: law and law enforcement!

In the two-hour reading Betty talked about Castro and Gorbachev, saying they were having domestic problems and might face strong opposition. Both men would survive the test. When Betty finished, she was mentally exhausted from her efforts. I thanked her for being so kind to me and returned to the marina. I was very impressed with Betty.

I was unsure about making my journey to Cuba to seek political sanctuary. I read in the local newspaper about more dissidents fleeing from the island. Also, I had interest in writing a book. A former CIA agent who traveled to Cuba and remained there for a year had great difficulty in writing his books. In undeveloped Latin America, libraries were unsophisticated. Eventually, the former CIA agent traveled to France and Europe, where he was able to write his memoirs in a book which was very controversial to the CIA. The agency hunted down and harassed him and other dissidents who released agency secrets. Such leak of information caused the death of a CIA agent in Rome.

I wrote to several communes and communities nationwide asking for information about living there. So far, I had received no replies, and so after two weeks, with no other options available, I prepared my boat for the trip to Cuba. I made a telephone call to my spiritual godmother to say hello and she gave me a reading. I was shocked when she told me that I had been on a long journey by sea and would receive some money and continue my trip by land. How could she say I would travel by land, when I was planning a trip by sea? I was planning to sail all the way down to Key West and finally to Cuba.

I few days later, I received a letter from several communities and communes, including Harbin Hot Springs, from the community coordinator, Christine Child. I always had an interest in living in a New Age Community. At that moment my destiny changed. I decided to travel by land to Middletown, California. At the marina they agreed to hold my monthly dock rent until December.

In the news, U.S. troops were returning home and welcomed as heroes. Some allegations of torture to American pilots and killing by Iraq troops were simply propaganda.

In December, 1989, the United States invaded Panama to hunt for only one man death or alive, Manuel Noriega. It was the first time in history, that one country had invaded another country and brought a head-of-state to face criminal charges. Noriega had refused to give up his power as strong man in Panama. The invasion was a picnic because Panama had no air force, tanks or attack helicopters. During the invasion, U.S. forces slaughtered over 5,000 civilians.

In despair, with the Cuban and Russian embassies surrounded by the overwhelming invader forces, Noriega sought political asylum at the *Papal Nuncio*, who days later shattered this ancient tradition surrendering him to the U.S. forces. Subsequently, Noriega was flown to Miami to face a long federal trial in violation of international law.

Like in Nicaragua, the promised American economic assistance to Panama never materialized. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, the United States considered it more strategic and wise to invest in Eastern Europe.¹

During the Federal trial in Miami, U.S. Judge William Hoeweler refused to accept the Noriega case as a political trial. Manuel Noriega's defense zeroed in on a guns-for-

¹*Miami Herald*, February, 1992.

drugs flight linked to U.S.-supported Nicaraguan rebels, but a strenuous protest from Federal Prosecutor Michael Patrick Sullivan sharply limited the questioning. Inquiries into the Contras came during cross-examination of the Government's star witness, Panamanian drug pilot Floyd Carlton, who testified that Noriega received cash bribes to protect drug flights. Carlton also said the same Costa Rican airstrip used to deliver arms to the Contras was used to fly drugs to the United States. Apparently, the defense was trying to show that Carlton and others used a secret arms supply network, set up with U.S. authorization, to fly drugs into the United States without Noriega's knowledge. During the 1990 trial, Noriega testified the CIA paid him \$11 million while ruling Panama and admitted receiving a bribe from Japanese businessmen interested in buying the Panama Canal.

Three years later, Cable News Network (CNN) would be charged with contempt of court on the recommendation of a special federal prosecutor, claiming that the network disobeyed a judge's order not to broadcast taped recordings of General Manuel Antonio Noriega while the former dictator was in jail. According to the complaint CNN had obtained taped recordings of telephone conversations between Noriega and his lawyers, members of their staffs, his family, his mistress and former military subordinates.²

Out of prison and after a long trek, I found readjustment to society to be difficult. My decision to seek sanctuary in Cuba had led me on an exciting, but often dangerous trip to Florida. In spite of my plan to head for Cuba, fate took a hand, changed my well-laid plans and my entire life.

²*New York Times*, March 30, 1994; *Associated Press*, February, 1992.

CHAPTER 22

NEW AGE COMMUNITIES

Harbin Hot Springs. After five days, traveling 3,200 miles across the nation, I arrived exhausted in Middletown around 11:00 p.m. I called the Harbin front desk and a van was sent to pick me up. Five minutes later, a Harbin resident named Marvin picked me up at the local grocery store. The nudist New Age community was in a canyon 1,600 feet high and four miles from Middletown, surrounded by rugged mountains 2,600 feet high. Several minutes later at the front gate, I met a clerk named Pablo, who assigned me to a dormitory in the Fern building. While Marvin and I walked to the dorm, he told me that Harbin was “home.” Although he had been moving from one community to another, Harbin was unique he said, adding that he had lived two years in this New Age Community.

Monday morning at the restaurant, I met the community coordinator, Christine Child, and several other new candidates. Christine was a charming middle age British woman who had come to California to live in New Age Communes and Communities. There was a lot to learn from Christine. She gave us a lecture about Harbin and afterward, we were provided with applications for membership. We were assigned to housekeeping, which was the testing ground. I was impressed with the friendly relationship between members. Although pay was quite poor, most workers seemed afflicted with a contagious kind of happiness, hugging all the time. I thought maybe I had finally reached “home.”

Heart-Consciousness Church. The philosophy of the New Age Church for candidates and residents was to provide a serene and inspiring place for New Age teachers

to share wisdom. Harbin offered a sanctuary to those wishing to get away from the pressures of modern society. The commitment of the center was to create a new society as a religious organization. The Church emphasized personal privacy and respect to the space of the individual. Physical violence, drinking and use of social drugs was prohibited. Months later, I would learn that ninety percent of the population drank socially and smoked pot. The use of cocaine was taboo. The administration was trying to keep the amount of drugs under control, tolerating residents smoking pot as long as it was done with extreme discretion. Harbin outlawed open smoking of marijuana or dealing in dope, because these activities might cause confiscation of the property by the government. Nevertheless, in pioneer California, banning marijuana was like a Catch-22. California was a mecca in the New Age concept and had the largest community of hippies who were traditionally addicted to smoking pot. Smoking cigarettes was allowed only on the smoking deck next to the parking lot. Sex at the pool was also banned, but almost everybody felt compelled to infringe upon this unpopular regulation.

The principal officials of the organization were Ishvara, Neil Murphy, Peter Buttle, Jane Hartley, Julie Adams, Khan McIntoch and Stan Dale. Adams and McIntoch were co-managers, running the community with iron fists. Esch was the head of bookkeeping, Weiner was the head of security, and Surya was head of housekeeping.

Religion. The Church allowed American Indians to visit free at Harbin, alleging that the Indians were the real owners of this sacred land; therefore, an Indian witch doctor was frequently allowed to provide free sweat baths in the meadow area. Having the American Indians visible in Harbin was a wise business decision.

The Church's religious rituals were extracted from those of the American Indians, as well as the Eastern philosophies of Hinduism and Buddhism. Although the Church alleged creating a new way of living, in fact, the staff and most residents acted with the

same values of contemporary society. The staff never followed their own rules, often acting arbitrarily. Their goal was to operate a business, make money and perpetuate themselves as rulers of the community. After decades of barely surviving, Harbin was lately becoming a popular resort with profits of over \$1 million annually.

The Church was vague in describing its purpose and philosophy to candidates and residents. They simply stated their ideology as: “Unify with each other, grow in strength and spread the message throughout the world, creating a new society for all people wanting to belong to it.” This was an ambitious project that required a high level of contribution and harmony. In a blue pamphlet, the Church described another position that was more commercialized and was aimed toward a middle-class audience of prospective New Age guests: “A hot springs and conference center nestled in a quiet valley with clean air and pure spring water, which had been regarded for centuries by Native American Indians as a sacred healing place. The Church self-imposed the responsibility of preserving the springs as a sanctuary for others to rest and reflect.”

Ishvara, the creator of Harbin and Executive President, was quite busy buying more real estate, while reducing the few privileges, bonuses, and salaries of Harbin's workers to a bare minimum. Candidates and residents had to cover their own medical and hospital expenses. Employees were compelled to sign a waiver, freeing the Church from any civil action for accidents or employment benefits. The Church owned a dozen houses around Middletown, plus Camp Venture and Dry Creek Ranch, formerly a summer camps for boys. Camp Venture was previously owned by an organization that had waited for a decade for the landing of extraterrestrial aliens. California is a magic land for new ideas and everything was possible.

Persons coming to live at Harbin were mostly those who were facing crises in their lives: Wives running from their husbands, husbands fleeing from their wives and children

running away from their parents; all were experiencing emotional turning points in their lives and many were addicted to both alcohol and social drugs. Most residents were from the lower social classes. Nearly 50 percent of Harbin's residents were retirees and other persons having some type of income like unemployment and welfare benefits. The third highest income of the Church was from the resident's rent, which was 50 percent of a resident's weekly paycheck. Other high income was dues and fees. New residents, unable to pay for their own meals, routinely were looking for leftovers at the communal kitchen and restaurant.

New candidates were compelled once a week to participate in an instruction course. Those candidates who succeeded in living harmoniously with others, eventually would graduate to become permanent residents. Living in harmony meant acceptance of all the rules, regulations and philosophies without question. Residents and candidates had no participation in setting the policies of the community and did not share in profits. All candidates paid a \$250 refundable security deposit and \$960 in dues, to be deducted from their weekly salary. Regular weekly salary was the minimum wage of \$4.25; no overtime was paid. Candidates and residents paid \$110 weekly rent. From the \$170 per week, the remaining \$35 was for buying food and clothing, laundry, transportation, medical and dental care, as well as other personal expenses. After six months, a resident's salary would be increased to \$200 per week; for most members, this would be top pay. Candidates were provided with one massage per month as a health treatment, and received a 50 percent discount on massage classes; in this manner Harbin supply itself its massage staff. Residents were allowed to have a guest for two days each month.

Housing. At Harbin, housing assignments, as well as other petty privileges were not provided on a strictly logical basis. The few privileges of housing and jobs were obtained after candidates and residents had learned their way through a labyrinth of red

tape and according to their social relationships. Harbin described this discrepancy of policy: “As with everything else at Harbin Hot Springs, assignments are made by the Karma system and not on a strictly chronological basis.” With a labor pool of untutored workers, the staff was always searching for skilled and professional candidates.

Julie Adams and Khan McIntoch were the most powerful persons at Harbin, which was primarily a women's community. A person moving into a new house had to ask each individual living there for approval. If one of them objected, the person might remain living in a dormitory or a tent. There was no doubt that Harbin is a very emotional community, and not everyone would be able to live under those spartan conditions. It was rare to meet skilled and professional workers, but the few that came to Harbin, eventually would leave the community. But for most people, the brief experience at Harbin was like magic, a brief romance with the environment and the New Age people.

While dogs were prohibited, cats roamed freely around the compound. Another business decision was to allow deer to roam about, eating anything that was green, while providing wildlife scenery to the community. With the severe drought in California, most deer moved into Harbin, because at the nearby ranches, hunters shot them.

Fern's kitchen was a vegetarian kitchen for residents as well as guests. Preparing and eating a tuna sandwich felt like committing a felony. Although vegetarians were talking about peace all the time, they were quite hostile and rude when catching someone eating meat or fish in the kitchen.

For the next three months, I worked at housekeeping, cleaning rooms, bathrooms and other facilities. Surya, a dynamic German lady in her fifties managed the department. Her fiancée was Sanharsh, a long-time follower of Rashness Bawam, Oregon's Guru who bought 92 Rolls Royces with money from his followers. Finally, the FBI framed and kicked him out of the country as a *persona non grata*. Rashness' followers, however,

forgave his sophisticated taste for expensive cars.

For several months, I slept in the dormitory on a foam mattress on the floor with barely enough space to walk around it. All my clothes were packed in three nylon bags stashed next to my mattress. There was a total lack of privacy and my personal belongings were exposed to be stolen by others. Fear of theft was a major concern for me, because some of those checking into the dormitory were hippies with very little money and almost no belongings. I was told that very seldom had anyone reported something missing. As a policy, any person suspected of stealing was immediately expelled from the community. Therefore, the community was a safe place.

For a while I was happy living in the dormitory in Fern Building because it was located conveniently in the center of the community. The communal kitchen, three pools, restaurant, grocery store, theater and main office were within one hundred yards. I asked for a room and was told there were none available. For Harbin's standards, I owned too many personal belongings and thus was not the ideal model of a resident. Most residents believed, I would fit better in contemporary society than in a New Age Community. Most residents believed, I had a military mind in my approach to problems and people.

I was not paying my \$100 monthly docking fee to the marina for my sailing boat in Florida so I would be able to buy a computer with a word processor to write a biography. The computer expert at the main office, John Stonebreaker, helped me select the right type of computer. Thank goodness for his help! To buy a computer, one must enter a veritable jungle of dozens of different models. The old model with the 8088 motherboard was on final sale and the 286 and 386 were the new computers on the market. Eventually, I decided to buy the 286 with a hard disk, a floppy disk, black and white monitor, keyboard and printer for \$1,000 from a Chicago computer dealer. A few weeks later when I received my 286, Stonebreaker came over for a few hours to teach me

how to operate my PC. He installed several different softwares, free of charge. For the next six months I would be typing the manuscript from my personal diary and other research sources. My life in Harbin was working in the Housekeeping Department and on my manuscript.

I met several persons who were pleasant to talk to; one was Neil Murphy, who was in charge of the maintenance department. He was one of the oldest residents. Murphy had become familiar with Eastern philosophy and its daily meditations and often visited retreat centers and monasteries. He was a wise man who talked very little, was easy-going and lived in a simple way.

One of the most extravagant, and dynamic person was Cosmo, a sixty-year-old former Catholic priest. He used to come every weekend and work in housekeeping in exchange for rent. In the evening he presided a free Tao class related to energy and sexual relationship. Cosmo brought the most embarrassing topic to his audience, and spent good time chasing girl. He resigned from the Church in which supposed to practice celibacy. In the last few decades, the Catholic Church has been involved in a waves of scandals involving priest being secretly married, homosexuality, and sex abuse of children. Cosmo religious background was an asset for his new career. In Harbin he was doing a rehearsal of his teaching, in which he was subsequently certified in New York. I failed to see any spiritual value in Cosmo's behavior. Now, Cosmo knew what he wanted, and didn't waste time.

When a dispute arose between residents, the person had to seek grievance by writing a letter, explaining the problem to a committee of three senior residents and request redress. Twice, I filed a complaint against other residents and asked Katrine Hughes to act as arbitrator. She was great at this task, having developed a sense of social problems and conflicts.

Europeans seem to be fascinated with communes and other self-supporting communities. In Harbin there were several Europeans, the majority British and German. We also had a young Russian couple with two children. The couple was from the upper class in Moscow and had the opportunity to study English and leave the country during Gorbachev's rule. Both were terrible as workers, making all kinds of excuses about reporting to work on time. Eventually, the husband left the community to work in San Francisco as a musician and the wife remained in Harbin. She was a very pretty young woman and only days after her husband's departure, developed an intimate relationship with a hippie who had fallen in love with her. Like most residents, having two children and poor salaries, they moved out of Harbin to seek better opportunities.

By the end of the summer most experienced residents in housekeeping had left the community. Surya resigned as manager and went back to Germany to settle personal matters with her previous husband and get her green card as a U.S. resident. She recommended as new manager a hippie named Lucas, who had arrived at the community only a few weeks before. Lucas had previously lived at Harbin and was assistant manager for a year in housekeeping. He immediately named Carol, a sweet girl, as his assistant. Without the dynamic Surya, the quality of work deteriorated and complaints piled up on Julie's desk. She was co-manager and supervisor of the housekeeping operation. Weeks later Carol resigned, and without too much choice, Lucas named me his assistant. A week later I became the new housekeeping manager. My aggressive personality and fast promotion caused me some problems with other long-time residents.

My assistant manager was Richard Hilty. With him in charge of the operation of the laundry, I concentrated on the outside, getting rid of spider webs, cleaning rooms, windows and outside walls. Fern's kitchen was restocked with needed supplies. We all worked very hard, and for me, the heavy schedule suited my needs at that point of my life.

I was earning \$235 per week. But good times never last too long. Richard's addiction to booze and pot eventually caused me some problems.

It took a while to adjust to Harbin's environment of nudism, but after a few months, I felt quite relaxed sunning nude on the pool deck. Most candidates and residents were in their forties and fifties and many were eager to start an intimate relationship. A few lesbians and gays visited the resort.

Harbin was the mecca for massage classes. Also offered was a three-day "Sex, Love & Intimacy" workshop, by Stan Dale for \$500. Most of the students came from the San Francisco Bay Area. At Fern's communal kitchen I learned to cook vegetarian dishes from the guests. The kitchen and the pool area were the center of activities at Harbin. And the theater had a unique setup with a thick carpet and pillows.

John Kazy was a nice fellow who fled his comfortable condominium in the Bay area, when his wife learned of his love affair with her juvenile stepdaughter. John found sanctuary in Harbin and lived in a tent for a year. He used to lend me his Toyota when I went to Santa Rosa to get books from the public library and buy parts for my old car that I had bought for \$1,000; eventually I spent a lot of money fixing it up, doing most of the repairs myself. I went to K-Mart in Santa Rosa to buy tires and fix the rear brakes. I replaced the catalytic converter, muffler pipes, a leaking power steering hose and gaskets at the top and bottom of the oil pans. My car was a vital part of my life, providing a much-needed escape from time to time.

I received a letter from the marina in Tampa, notifying me of the confiscation of my sailboat for lack of payment. A new manager had taken over and refused to recognize my agreement with the previous manager that I be allowed to pay at the end of the year. Losing my sailboat was a blow to me. To add more complication to the confiscation, during the proceeding they succeeded in including my illegal name on the blacklist with

the national credit bureau.

With this bad news, I decided to donate my sailboat to Harbin. I thought it would add a recreational activity to the community. Harbin had to pay the \$2,500 marina fees and traveling expenses to bring the boat over. Julie Adams welcomed the idea, but Ishvara didn't, and it was the end of implementing the only recreational activity in the community.

I met a Mexican-American guest named Teresa, who lived in San Francisco. She was working for the California Department of Transportation. During the summer she came once a month and we became good friends. Little did I know then that our friendship would be a long and loving one.

Being manager of housekeeping qualified me for special privileges. At once, a double room at the Hill House became available to me. Julie, as well as the staff, was unable to say no to any of my requests, as I was working sixty hours a week. I was allowed to receive a free massage every week, something that helped me keep my sanity under so much pressure. I dedicated myself to Harbin, doing my very best in all my work and responsibilities. I was considering living at Harbin forever.

At Thanksgiving the Church provided residents with a delicious turkey dinner at the Conference Center. By November the weather became quite cold. The creek had dried up for lack of rain and often temperatures dropped to the 20's.

At Christmas the Church celebrated the holiday with another delicious turkey dinner. Afterward, I returned to my room at Hill House to work on my manuscript. I never socialized too much with the crowd or participated in any official meetings, with the exception of the manager meetings which I was compelled to attend. Although a privileged person, I was beginning to have doubts about the Church's concern for the workers. Marvin, a long-time resident who had told me that Harbin was "home," had recently been kicked out for having an argument with another VIP resident. Another

resident named Alex Mena, a Mexican-American, was banned for six months from Harbin. Mena spent the night with a young female resident, drinking and smoking pot, and had sex with her. The girl went to the main office the next day and complained that Mena took advantage of her while she was drunk.

In another incident, two Metro cops came to the warm pool and with their billy clubs hit a masseur and dragged him unconscious to their patrol car. The day before a female guest had filed a complaint he had made sexual advances after her massage. McIntoch ordered the masseur's expulsion from the community. The masseur refused to leave the community and went to the warm pool. Khan called the cops.

The manager of the greenhouse was demoted for proposing sex to one of his female workers. She claimed of being sexually harassed by him. In cases with male residents the Sheriff escorted them off the property. This was violation of Due Process Clause because many of them didn't have a fair hearing and provided with sufficient time for moving out. Most residents were homeless or had no money to move out. The few who had family or friends to help them in such an unexpected crisis were lucky. The Church had kept a long black list of former residents banned from returning to Harbin. Oddly, this blacklist included names of dissident residents who previously had tried unsuccessfully to improve living conditions at Harbin. After all these recurrent shake downs, the same executive board was reelected without any major problem. Trying to do anything against the wishes of Julie and McIntoch was suicide -- sheer suicide!

After working long hours, housekeeping became a most efficient department. On my path to perfection, however, I had generated a few adversaries, who conspired behind the scene against me; my assistant manager Richard Hilty was of them, and Libby, the office manager was another. I became concerned with Hilty sense of gratitude, because I strongly supported his nomination as my assistant manager. Now Julie Adams was trying

to overload my assigned responsibilities, and for the first time I objected. After several months of hard work, Julie conveniently forgot my excellent performance and demoted me from my job as Housekeeping Manager. I felt that my reputation and good work were at stake. Being in a top position one day, and at the bottom the next, was another traumatic experience for me. My dismissal was not based on my job performance, but in my poor relationships with several senior residents. I was used to this roller-coaster kind of destiny.

Emotions played an elemental role in the community. There existed an abyss of personality and cultural differences between me and some residents. Of course, after my dismissal, most of my friends vanished. Housekeeping was one of the most prestigious and important positions in Harbin, but one with a short life because there was a lot of pressure and great expectancy by Julie. In the beginning I had hoped I would remain in Harbin forever, in the belief that it was “home,” but I reached the conclusion that Harbin was not my goal, but rather a temporary path. For the majority of the residents and candidates Harbin was a road crossing, a rest stop while in crisis.

After I was demoted from housekeeping, Richard Hilty took over, but his reign was a short-lived. Richard was less consistent in his administrative duties and was demoted a few weeks later and assigned to landscaping. Harbin was a small community and it was difficult to live in the same place while harboring hate. Richard, after being demoted, went through the same experience I had: from a path of power, to the trail of humility. After his demotion we again became good friends.

I began to work on the construction crew with Wayne, a retiree, who had worked in construction all his life. Harbin became a proving ground, a place to work on my humility and patience.

At the community garden, I was able to obtain two small lots to plant corn,

potatoes, green peppers and mint. Gardening brought me peace of mind and a sense of accomplishment.

One day I arrived at the Hill House, while Rick the Chief of Security was sun bathing on the wooden deck. While watering my plants, the telephone rang. After the telephone call, Rick hastily left in the Security's white Jeep. Twenty minutes later, McIntoch came to my room inquiring for Rick. I told her that he had left a while ago. Minutes later, Bob Dunn, manager of auto repair, and Peter Conrad, a computer technician arrived, followed by two Assistant Deputy Sheriffs whom I met at the rear door. Without time to get my gun, I decided to face the officers; I had not idea about the purpose of their unexpected visit. One of the Assistant Deputy Sheriffs inquired about Rick. I told them, "Rick just left." "In his white Jeep?" he asked. "Yes," I answered. After they left, I decided to take a shower. To make things worse, I had gotten a painful back, probably from digging at the future pond around the massage decks.

A hour later I drove down to the main site to see the "Ice Queen", Khan McIntoch. She explained that Rick had pending 20-year-old charges related to an alleged robbery, and now he was facing a warrant for his arrest; state prosecutors and cops had not forgotten him. As I was leaving, the two Assistant Deputy Sheriffs arrived. Later Peter Conrad told me that another patrol car with two more Sheriffs arrived at the Hill House, asking more questions about Rick's whereabouts. I became worried and began paying attention when any law enforcement vehicle came to Harbin.

I later learned that Rick's problem had begun a week earlier, when another resident stole \$2,500 from the safety box in the main office. Rick investigated the incident and confronted the resident, who later returned all the money. McIntoch reported the case to the local Sheriff, who arrested the alleged thief. During the investigation of the case, the Sheriff's office conducted a routine security check on all the persons involved in the

incident. Rick, as Chief of Security was included in the security check. Rick was wanted on that twenty-year-old robbery, and a warrant for his arrest was still valid. This was nothing new. Harbin had a reputation for harboring hippies and fugitives. That was life: one day law enforcement, next day fugitive! But the magnitude and impact of this petty case was to affect other persons, including myself. The accused resident was unable to post bond until the Court heard the case. The prosecutor agreed to settle the case in a plea-bargain in which the resident would serve a three-year probation with a criminal record for life.

Marly Starwater was another long-time resident of the Hill House. She had worked as a baby sitter for residents' children. One day Marly packed all her personal belongings. She had met a man at Harbin and after dating him for a few months, signed a marriage contract for six months. Marly was moving to Berkeley with her new husband. Days later at the pool, Marly gave me a massage, greatly relieving my lower back pain. She was emotionally stable and spiritually developed and had taken massage classes to become a certified massage therapy. She was a sweet person.

Sunday, feeling better, I went to the hot pool. While in the pool, I noticed the increasing number of guests coming to Harbin. The recession had not hurt them much. I continued to work a lot of hours at my word processor, adding new chapters to my transcript. I also spent some time praying for my unknown future. In the last decade, life had become very spiritual to me. Facing serious legal problems without foreseeable solutions, I invoked the divine wisdom for guidance and protection.

All my initial feelings of security in this mountain retreat were gone. The recent direct meeting with law enforcement was imprinted in my mind. Maybe I had more spiritual lessons to learn. I planned to stay in Harbin until fall, when I thought I'd try living in another community or commune. As for later, who knows? I wanted to return to

serious meditation.

Saul Landau was the Director of the Institute for Political Studies in Washington D.C. He was a controversial liberal with a good relationship with the Communist Government of Cuba, human rights advocate groups and other left-wing organizations around the world. When Orlando Letelier came to the United States from Venezuela, Landau offered him a job. Letelier also became active in Washington D.C. with human rights organizations and political circles. In the meantime, Letelier succeeded in attracting international attention about Chile's gross violation of human rights under the military junta. Letelier also succeeded in attracting the attention of DINA Secret Police and General August Pinochet. On September 21, 1976, Orlando Letelier was killed by a remote control-activated bomb. The FBI became involved in investigating the case and a few years later, members of the Cuban Nationalist Movement, led by Ignacio Novo in New Jersey, were indicted and charged with first degree murder. The Cubans were linked to the Chileans. An American and former DINA agent, Michael Townley was the government witness. At a later trial, the Cubans were acquitted.

I decided to make contact with Landau to explore the possibilities of leaving the U.S. in a rush if I ever needed to and to have available a sanctuary in Communist Cuba where there was no official diplomatic relations. Washington and Cuba has a low key diplomatic representation known as the "Interest Section." Diplomatic relations with Cuba were at their lowest point during the Reagan Administration. My other reason for getting in touch with Landau was to seek help with publishing my book. When Landau was working to publish his book, *Assassination on Embassy Row*, about the Orlando Letelier assassination, his co-writer had interviewed me. If my book was eventually published, I might receive money in advance that would help me to travel and remain free. I was fighting for both my freedom and my dignity.

I also called Taylor Branch at his home in Maryland, asking him if he would be interested in becoming my co-writer. Taylor was a professional writer, working full-time for a publishing house. I met him once while I was on bond in 1980. He came to Miami to interview me while co-writing his book *Labyrinth*, also about the Letelier assassination. When I told Taylor of my present legal problems, he lost interest in becoming involved in my book.

I also called Eugene Propper, the Assistant U.S. Attorney who had prosecuted the Letelier case and subpoenaed me while I was in Raiford penitentiary in 1977. Propper told me, now, he was in private practice. I honestly explained my legal status and my intention to write a book, requesting his assistance in finding an agent and publisher. Propper was interested in representing me. Propper maintained, he was able to deal with Sam's law, which banned persons convicted of a felony to receive royalties or money from a book relating their life and violations of law. I accepted his offer. I always had an urgent need for a good attorney because of my constant challenges and frequent collisions with the law. Through monitoring my telephone conversations and mail, the FBI became aware of my conversations with Landau, Branch and Propper. The Feds immediately visited all three in an effort to force them to stay away from me. And the agency succeeded!

Events at Harbin became stressful. The cops kept coming, inquiring as to Rick's whereabouts. I was worried that they might run a security check of the entire community, even though I was there under a false name, using another person's social security number. I made plans to leave Harbin in a rush, if needed.

John Stonebreaker, the computer expert working at the main office, came to install some additional software on my computer. I spent a lot of time working on manuscript.

Marly gave my back another massage and told me that the pain might be a spiritual message. She was right. It took me a week to understand the wishes of God--I

should drastically change my life.

Teresa came to Harbin. Days later, I followed her to San Francisco, two hours away. Living for so long in the country, I found the city quite scary. Teresa lived in the Mission District, a high crime area. I was armed at all times, and when I parked my car, I was worried that I might not find it the next day. Teresa played the role of hostess and took me on a tour around the city. With a cold and fever, I spent most of the afternoon at her apartment watching movies. We had an excellent dinner. On Sunday morning I returned to Harbin, via Highway 101, where I felt more secure. During the trip I saw a lot of police patrol cars. I was not worried as I had a radar detector that warned me in advance of the presence of the aggressive California Highway Patrol.

I went back to my construction job at Harbin. Two young girls, Kim and Michelle, moved with us. The Hill House was filthy, just like all the other houses. In the first few days they worked hard, cleaning the kitchen and living room.

I called Saul Landau in Washington to ask about my manuscript. I could not get in touch with him or Taylor Branch in Maryland. Weeks later, I learned that Taylor was traveling to Egypt. He also was working on a new book about the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. Black history had become profitable for publishers.

One day I went with Richard Hilty to a Zen Retreat Center an hour away, on the outskirts of Santa Rosa. It was a great experience. People were very polite and allowed us to sleep in the library. We were awakened at 6 a.m. for meditation and the ritual of a Japanese Buddhist breakfast. After a vegetarian breakfast, we returned to Harbin. The Zen Center was eager to recruit new members. I took frequent mini-vacations on weekends to keep my mental sanity.

I called Saul Landau again. I had sent him several floppy diskettes of my manuscript. Saul told me he had not received the floppy diskettes. I knew the diskettes

had been intercepted by the FBI, as Saul was a controversial political dissident living in Washington D.C., the back yard of the FBI, and his liberal political views were not welcomed by the establishment.

May, 1992, was quite an exciting month. The trial began for four Los Angeles Police officers for excessive use of force against Rodney King. Permission had been granted for a change of venue to Semi Valley, mostly a middle class White community, because of excess publicity. A White jury found the officers not guilty of all but one charge and the court declared a mistrial. The jury had looked at the King video but did not see what TV viewers saw. The acquittal of the officers triggered another racial riot in Los Angeles, spreading to several cities nationwide. More than 58 persons were killed, 2,383 injured and 11,824 arrested, with \$717 million in property losses. President Bush stated that the Justice Department would investigate if a violation of civil rights had occurred in the King case. The same conditions of poverty, discrimination, lack of opportunity and excessive police abuse that had caused the riots in Watts, 20 years before, had now triggered another riot. The Federal Government planned to investigate and prosecute those Blacks who had attacked White citizens during the riot. Months later the Black assailants will be identified, charged and acquitted after a trial.¹

Shock waves from the Rodney King verdict and the riots that devastated Los Angeles drew harsh reaction from the Third World. China told the United States to put its own house in order before calling on Beijing to clean up its human rights record. China, which had been harshly criticized by the United States after the Tienanmen Square massacre, suggested that the King verdict demonstrated the hypocrisy of U.S. policies. Iraq called for an urgent U.N. Security Council meeting on the rioting. And lawyers claimed two Libyan suspects wanted for an airliner bombing feared they would not get a

¹ *San Francisco Examiner*, May 1, 1992.

fair trial if they surrendered to U.S. authorities.

One afternoon, I went to the hot pool and got a massage by one of the female therapists. On the weekend I went to Santa Rosa to buy an auto alarm at Radio Shack. I was planning to leave Harbin within a few months and would carry all my property in my car. Also, I was planning to travel to San Francisco more often to see Teresa. I certainly needed the alarm when visiting her high-crime area.

The construction crew worked replacing the old roof. We had an early summer, with temperatures in the 90s. Rick, the Chief of Security, surrendered to local authorities and days later returned to Harbin. He was able to take care of his pending legal problems and a week later, we finished replacing the old roof at the hot pool.

While working one day, I injured my head on a post. At the main office, Ann took me to see the doctor at the Middletown Clinic. I got four stitches in my forehead for the one-inch-long wound. Teresa went to Arizona to visit her parents, so I was not able to travel to San Francisco.

I spoke again to Saul Landau. He acknowledged receiving my second set of diskettes of my manuscript. He proposed that I should testify in Chile against Contreras, the Chief of DINA Secret Police, in relation to the assassination of Orlando Letelier in Chile. I was not interested, fearing I might be exposed to another kidnaping by the FBI as they had done in 1976, in Santiago, Chile. Landau planned to explore the option of going to Chile with others. But I was more interested in getting my book published, being paid royalties and living in peace. Living in peace was becoming a difficult task. Days later I spoke to Taylor Branch, who had received a printed copy of my manuscript. I was concerned that my attempt at writing a book eventually would promote my “fugitive” status to the “Most Wanted Man in the United States.”

I again met again Marly. I liked her; she was a sweet lady, always hugging friends,

sharing her energy field with a healing purpose. I told her that I planned to go to San Francisco the next week to visit a Zen Center and would like to stay in her apartment. Marly welcomed my request. In the next few days I installed the auto alarm in my car as a measure of precaution.

On a hot afternoon I drove to Berkeley, arriving around 4:00 p.m. Nobody was at Marly's apartment, but an hour later I met Marly and her unsociable husband, Bud, who said that he was unable to understand my English. Marly invited me to go with her to San Francisco on the train. It was an exciting trip. The shocking contrast to the Bay area was the massive number of homeless people begging for money. Marly dragged me around the downtown area. Although I wore a jacket loaned to me by Marly, I still felt cold.

From a public telephone booth, I called Teresa, explaining, I was staying at Marly's apartment and was planning to visit the Green Gulch Zen Center at Stenson Beach near the Golden Gate Bridge. Teresa invited me to stay the next day in her apartment and to go to Sunday's carnival. She declined my invitation to join in my trip to the Zen Center because she wanted to buy some pants and tennis shoes for Claro, her eleven-year-old son. Teresa said she would leave the key in the mailbox in case she was still out shopping. Afterwards, we took the train back to Berkeley. Marly invited me for Chinese dinner in a restaurant near her apartment. At 2 a.m. we were awakened by my auto alarm and I had to rush outside and turn it off.

I drove to the Green Gulch Farm Center the next day. The trip was great, with fantastic scenery on a zigzagging road through the mountains. In the main office, I learned that to participate in the work exchange program, I had to pay \$12 per day. I couldn't afford that amount on my minimum wage salary at Harbin. I took a walk in the gardens, finding everything on in perfect order and a wonderful sense of peace. Some residents were chasing guests who had failed to check in at the main office. It occurred to me that

some religious groups had become too materialistic.

I left the Zen Farm and took Road 1 toward Muir Beach where I found a beautiful little area with dark sand. A few people were riding horses and children were playing in the sand. Minutes later I drove down to Stenson Beach. The scenery was gorgeous driving along the coast. Stenson Beach was very popular. A lot of people were sunbathing. Several tables and barbecue stands were available. It felt weird watching people wearing swim suits, by now so accustomed to Harbin's nudity. In the quiet of that lovely beach, I realized that during the time I had been living at Harbin, I had been undergoing a constant and subtle transformation.

Back in San Francisco, it was not difficult for me to find my way to Teresa's apartment. The key was inside the mailbox as she had promised. I drank a couple of beers while waiting. An hour later, Teresa and Claro returned. We talked a lot about her family, her job and Harbin. Teresa missed her family who lived in Arizona. She showed me a picture that she bought recently of a Guatemalan Indian. Teresa had a fascination for Indian arts and jewelry. She was in love with the scenery of New Mexico and the Arizona desert, often visiting Navajo ruins. She was a liberal who constantly talked about the Sandinistas and Cubans, without suspecting that I was a fugitive and at one time an extreme right-wing fanatic. She was terrified of the Cuban exiles from Miami, having read in newspapers and heard of terrifying stories from liberal friends about the Cuban exiles blowing up and killing people. She was an ardent admirer of the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions, but did not have the courage to resort to violence. She knew that the majority of those organizations who had resorted to violence, like the Weathermen organization, was dead or in prison. The University of Berkeley was the contemporary popular site of violent revolutionaries, who in the '60s and '70s kept local law enforcement and the FBI busy. But peaceful resistance was more convenient for most liberals, who were making

social change by attending cultural events and parties, drinking tea and smoking good home-grow pot.

We had dinner in a neighborhood restaurant, and on Sunday joined the crowd along Van Ness Street to watch the carnival. On the street I noticed numerous homeless people drinking beer.

After the parade of floats and Latin bands we went through the fair. There were kiosks selling beer, and Asian, Mexican, Italian, and American food, and sales of pictures, cassettes and t-shirts. Budweiser and Pepsi sponsored well-known Latin bands. Younger people were wildly dancing in the streets.

The entire area was sealed off by checkpoints controlled by the police. Undercover and parole agents were all over the place. Although California was always portrayed to the voters as a liberal government, in fact it was one of the most repressive state governments. The Los Angeles Police Department had a reputation being one of the most brutal police forces nationwide, being credited for causing the Watts riots in the '60s, as well as the recent riots. Los Angeles' internal reports show police officers too aggressive with firearms. The *Los Angeles Times* reported citing reviews of 700 shooting reports since 1989. After the Rodney King beating in 1991, a civilian commission recommended reforming the department's use-of-force policies, including those for firearms. Experts stated that the high turnover of policemen had caused a decline in the experience level.² After the San Francisco riot, the police illegally arrested people on the street before the curfew period and kept them in jail for weeks without a hearing. With 12,000 arrestees local authorities sometimes were unable to find the detainees for preliminary hearings or legal representation. Families were frustrated. The politicians immediately passed a law, legalizing the illegality of the massive arrests. The Bush Administration had no plan to

² *Monterey County Herald*, August 15, 1994, 5A.

help the local government with its chronic social problems, blaming the Democrats for the riots. As usual, the legacy of the Reagan Administration was reduction of the national budget to control the annual deficit. Social programs were cannibalized, while the defense budget suffered minor alternations. To be reelected President, Reagan reversed himself when he gave up his plan to control the budget.

The 1992 carnival parade in San Francisco was not at all near the standard of the Calle Ocho Festival in Miami or the New Orleans Mardi Gras. Nevertheless, it was entertaining.

In Harbin I continued my daily routine of working on the construction crew with Wayne. Although I was demoted from housekeeping, I was still earning the management salary of \$235 a week, a good salary for a community. Frequently, I called Saul Landau and we talked about political issues, which he was well-informed. Landau told me that the Cuban Government was not interested in accepting my petition for political asylum. Very few people sought political asylum in revolutionary Cuba. A few who had were: Robert Vesco, former financial guru wanted by the FBI for fraud; several former CIA agents, one of them wanted for murder, and a few Black-Americans who had hijacked passenger jets to Havana for ransom. Cuba, a small nation, was unable to develop from its initial phase of state police repressive apparatus created because of the constant threat of U.S. intervention. I was getting tired of my lifestyle in the United States, lonely at times, always on the run and living camouflaged. Getting positive identification and a decent job were serious problems. My relationships with most people were superficial and brief. I thought that if I traveled to Cuba, I might play an important role in improving the relationship with the Cuban communities in the United States and in promoting commercial trade between U.S. and Cuba. With the enforced U.S. Embargo, the Cuban people had been suffering for a long time. The problems was that the Cuban Government

was paranoid about me in the belief I was a CIA/FBI agent, trying to destroy the only diplomatic relations they had with the U.S. through the "Interest Section" in Washington DC.. And the CIA and the FBI tapping my frequent telephone conversations with Saul Landau probably have concluded that I am a spy working for the Cuban Government. They knew of my calls to Landau but were unable to monitor our conversations. When I called Landau, I always asked him for the number of another telephone where we could enjoy privacy in our conversations. The FBI was also monitoring the telephones of my family members and some of my best friends.

The construction crew had been working harder than ever: replacing old roofs, installing springs, PVC connections for the water system, stone work to beautify Harbin, and a wood deck at the information center at Middletown. McIntoch offered free labor and a local politician paid for the materials. In this manner Harbin kept alive their public relations, by participating in such social projects. At the same time they kept up good relations with the local government. In Middletown, I noticed the Highway Patrol and the Sheriff cruising around more frequently. One day while I was jogging, a Highway Patrol car followed me for a few minutes. I always try to stay inside Harbin's boundary to avoid any encounter with them.

To the citizens of Middletown, the residents at Harbin were a bunch of hippies and sex addicts, running around nude and involved in sexual orgies; this was not true. Of course, being nude provided a great potential for sexual relations at the hot pool; there is not gimmick, you get what you see. Residents at Harbin perhaps become involved in intimate relationships a bit more often than in mainstream society, because most of them came looking for the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity. One scary issue was sexual diseases.

Harbin residents saw the locals as uneducated rednecks who were quite violent.

Residents visited Jimmy's Pizza and local bar and often fights broke out with the locals.

I went to work at Dry Creek Ranch, another new property that Harbin had bought two years ago. Peter Buttle, a former Navy Officer from Texas, was in charge of the Ranch. He knew a lot about construction and the environment. Working on the drain field was hard work, requiring much digging and a lot of shovelling.

Teresa and Claro came to spend the weekend and we had a great time together. Julie Adams ordered me to move out of Hill House to a house in Middletown, located at Douglas Street. Rick, Chief of Security, had complained that my computer was interfering with his TV soap opera programs. After my demotion from housekeeping, I was finally stripped of my only privilege, a large bedroom at Hill House. The house at Middletown was filthy. The residents behaved like hermits, locking themselves in their rooms. This was certainly not the friendly California I remembered from 1964.

For almost three years, I was in love with Harbin. It was a great concept in an exotic place, but it was time to go. With my computer silenced, my demotion to construction, and being forced to move in with unfriendly folks, I was slowly becoming convinced that Harbin was not my kind of home after all. The time had come for a decision--good or bad.

CHAPTER 23

FLIRTING WITH SOCIALISM

COMMUNES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

AMERICA'S SOCIALISM DREAM

The Church's main issue became to raise the rent of candidates and residents. In the weekly pamphlet publication of *The Harbinger*, a proposal was made by a committee formed of residents, most of them from the massage staff. They recommended that after one year's membership and having paid the full membership dues, members should be entitled to one week's free rent, free sick time and one week of vacation. Most residents had serious questions about Harbin's concern for their welfare.

In response to this proposal, Ishvara wrote an article explaining to the community that the Church was somewhat behind in its payment, but was not in bankruptcy, adding that in the last year, the Church had an income of \$2.2 million and paid 50 percent of its income, \$887,000, to residents in salaries. What Ishvara didn't say was that most of that money went back to the Church in the \$72 rent charges, \$44 in membership dues, and \$32 for use of the land. Ishvara acknowledged investing 1 million dollar in Sierra Hot Springs in the past three years and in remodeling the Globe Hotel. The manager of Sierraville, Carol O'Shea, had made arrangements with various substance abuse programs obtaining skilled construction workers for Sierraville. Harbin was always looking for cheap labor. Now, Ishvara described Sierraville as “a place where the abuser can stay clean.” In Harbin there was also a house for alcoholics only. Both communities had an artificial policy of “no alcohol or drugs on the property.” Many of Harbin's residents now labeled Ishvara as

a slum landlord. His worship of money was a concern of everyone.

This proposal ended like many other previous efforts by the workers to improve living conditions at Harbin. Immediately, Ishvara and Julie retaliated by assigning undesirable jobs and housing. The experienced massage staff was decimated and replaced by rookies. In the aftermath, a good number of residents left the community. There is not doubt that as a non-profit religious organization Harbin is grossly infringing upon several Internal Revenue Regulations.

My daily routine was quite steady. During the day, I worked at Dry Creek Ranch pouring concrete with Peter Buttle, and later played tennis in Middletown or sunbathed at the pool, with a final dip in the hot and cold pools. At night I frequently went to the movie. Harbin succeeded in creating a good movie library copying movies from movie channels, using a large satellite dish.

In the house at Middletown, I had three roommates. Bill was a retiree who decided not to become a member of the Church, so he could keep his money and properties. He performed non-resident work in exchange for rent and groceries. Janet was a 50-year-old former nurse who became disappointed with conventional society. While working at housekeeping, changing her name to Georgia. She was ugly, neurotic and could not stand the pressure at work. Some residents believed she was mentally disturbed. Teresa told me she believed Georgia was a man. "I don't believe so," I responded, "because she is having an affair with Steve, the manager of the wood crew." Georgia was a vegetarian. Alexander was a slim man in his fifties who worked as a masseur, was polite and a strict vegetarian.

The Construction Crew. Our manager Wayne, was a former contractor and retiree receiving a good pension. David was a young British who was Wayne's assistant manager. Walter was a tall, slim Black in his forties, a former member of the Hare Krishna Commune. He loved Harbin because it was the perfect environment to chase

White girls. Walter was always high as a raccoon. His wife was a White girl who was pregnant.

Before working for the Church, Walter and his wife sold earrings, chains, incense and other New Age products to the passing guests at the main site. For a few months they lived in their van and after Walter began to work for the Church they moved to an old trailer in the RV park. Gary was a 45-year-old bouncer who had a pot belly and was an alcoholic. He has been in the hospital several times, suffering chronic problems with his alcohol addiction. He paid \$2,000 to enroll in a therapy program against alcohol. The Church loaned him the money. After returning from the program, he seemed to suffer a lot of stress as a side effect of his recuperation. Steve was a 40-year-old man from South Florida. I knew very little about him, except he was educated and streetwise. I assumed he might be another fugitive. Steve was to return to his old job at the restaurant, cooking short orders at breakfast. Yes, we were quit a crew, all right. In spite of our different personalities, our hand work earned us a \$75 bonus for the concrete job at Ishvara's house. The news was published in the weekly two-page **Harbinger**.

I went to Dry Creek Ranch to jog with another female Harbin resident. Afterward, I was invited by Peter and Monica to stay for breakfast and join them for a horseback ride. Several cowboy neighbors showed up with their horses. I rode March, a mare with a lot of impatience in her blood. We rode on wide trails that zigzagged around the mountains, becoming narrow and rugged with a lot of rocks. At the end of the trail we let the horses take a break and I joined Peter for a walk around the creek. Monica remained with the other cowboys talking about horses and barbecues. During the ride some horses were undisciplined. I had to be on guard with March. He was determined to pass all the other horses, a real bitch. It had been a beautiful day.

I went to San Francisco again to see Teresa. She was no beauty queen, but had a

beautiful body and was sexy. When I met Teresa, she told me that she had not met a man in many years and was “almost a virgin.” Later, the truth emerged; she confessed to dating other men quite often. During her younger years, she had lived under a restricted Latin culture and now wanted to use her freedom. I admired her because she was a good mother and sweet person. She still missed her former boyfriend Jose, a Mexican-American construction worker in his fifties who owned the building where she lived. While dating Teresa, Jose was very generous with her and her son Claro.

There was a wide gap in personality and values between Teresa and myself. Teresa always wanted to go out dancing to nightclubs and eat out, while I preferred to stay inside the apartment and watch movies. I wanted to avoid being exposed on the streets for legal reasons, and with Harbin's minimum wage, I couldn't afford nightclubs and restaurants. Lately Teresa was complaining that I was too rigid, too tense. This was actually a warning that our relationship was over.

I wrote to Twin Oaks Commune in Virginia and the Farm Community in Tennessee with the idea of visiting them. I was interested in finding another community where I might feel more comfortable. Both of them welcomed my visit. I was planning to take a long vacation in October. I was feeling burned out at Harbin.

One morning we heard a helicopter flying constantly around an area. Peter Buttle told me it was a state helicopter looking for pot. I had no idea Middletown was a major grower of marijuana; that was the reason the County Sheriff and the Highway Patrol kept watching people around this rural area. No escape from this law enforcement group! In Northern California three major industries were grapes, wine and horse farms. But like Miami, in Middletown an added economic resource was marijuana. In South Florida I knew a lot of businesses who went bankrupt, but growing and dealing in drugs kept their business financially healthy.

I learned that Walter and his pregnant wife were ordered to move out of Harbin for being late with their rent. They paid over \$1,000 per month rent and Walter was unable to keep up with his rent. She was not working, so Walter had been putting in a lot of extra time to pay the bills. I felt sorry for them.

While building a wood deck at the gym, I hurt my back and I was in a lot of pain. I was concerned, unable to take sick leave at Harbin and weekly rent was mandatory for residents and candidates.

Weeks later concerned with my health, I went to Kaiser Hospital in Santa Rosa. I saw the doctor, who ordered a blood test to check the sugar in my blood and an X-ray of my lungs. The x-ray was fine, but the blood test showed a mediocre reading of 85 for my sugar level; the ideal reading was between 90 and 120.

I drove to the Santa Rosa Shopping Center to buy a few items at Walt-Mart and some fruit and vegetables at Safeway. Later, I drove toward Bodega Bay. It was a wonderful trip with rolling hills covered with hay and dairy farms. U.S. 1 is quite scenic with rocky beaches along the way. At Arched Rock Beach I stopped on the side of the road and walked along a narrow and steep trail toward the beach. The day was cloudy and foggy, with a cold breeze blowing from the calm ocean. The sight of several sailboats on the horizon reminded me, that I missed my sailing boat.

I drove next to the Russian River and parked my car in a public parking lot. Below, I saw the deserted beach on one side, and on the other side a crowd of tourists taking pictures of a harbor of seals. During March and July, the seals came to the mouth of the Russian River. I adventured onto the rugged, steep trail leading down to the beach. I walked for a while, seeking to meditate, but my lack of concentration disappointed me. I gazed at the ocean, enjoying my precious freedom. My thoughts went to my family, friends, my complex legal problems and my plan to leave the United States soon. I had

come to Jenner Beach to camp overnight, but suddenly, I felt lonely, wanting to share my experience with somebody else; by myself it was just boring.

I returned to Harbin driving through the scenery of Interstate 116 to Santa Rosa. The narrow road was manicured by tall redwoods and wild flowers. I passed through small towns and resorts, amazed at the beauty of the green forests. An hour later, I arrived at Calistoga, a small town with numerous SPA resorts; half of the population of Calistoga consisted of floating tourists! I zigzagged around Mt. Saint Elena with its elevation of 4,000 feet. At the top of the mountain was a State Park, where visitors stopped for a hike on the trails and to refill their containers with free mineral spring water.

Back in Middletown, I went to Harbin's warm pool to relax. Hours later, I had two messages from Teresa. When I called her back, she told me she was not coming this week to Harbin. Too bad. But I didn't feel like going to see her.

The following weekend I went to see Teresa. Early in the morning we went to the Farmer's Market. I was impressed with the variety and low prices of the fresh vegetables, fruits, nuts and seafood. At noon, we went to a public musical concert at Berkeley. People bought food and fruits from kiosks and made a ritual of sharing it with their loved ones and friends. Teresa took me to a nudist beach called Gray Whale, where we lay naked under the sun while the waves thundered over the rocks and on the small sandy beach. It was perfect peace. Back at the apartment Teresa cooked a Mexican dinner, a real treat.

On my way back home, I crossed the bridge dividing San Francisco and Oakland and visited Karyn Gladstone, who lived in Berkeley. I had met her while working at Fern Kitchen. She lived in an old house, and her companions are a good-looking cat and half a dozen birds locked in a metal cage. Karyn's old house seemed like a museum with antiques all over the place. She was as slim as a mannequin. Harbin's residents had not liked her because she was an intellectual who wanted everything free. She recently passed

the test to become a certified clinical psychologist. Karyn wrote a book about Central America and the intervention of the United States in its affairs, but it had never been published. A shame! She is a bright woman.

I decided to take massage classes from Diana Lonsdale. I had heard many compliments about her; residents got a 50 percent discount in massage classes. I needed 100 hours to obtain a certificate as a practitioner. Sunday night I went to the Meadow Conference Center where I met Diana and a group of 21 students. I was the only student from Harbin. Most of the participants were in their mid-thirties to mid-fifties. Some students were seeking a profession that would provide them with a good steady income; others were professionals who wanted to have a new, less stressful career. And a few couples wanted to learn the techniques of giving massages to each other. I was surprised to find a few nurses in the group who told us about some unpleasant things going on in the hospital where they worked. Their stories made me shiver!

The Meadow Building had a large kitchen, laundry room and two bathrooms for the workshop. I took the opportunity to do my laundry. Students were allowed to camp outside or sleep inside the building. During the next five days we lived communal style, sharing food, cooking and eating together.

The first class was loaded with a lot of energy and I felt every bit of it. There was no doubt that Diana was one of the best massage instructors, with over 20 years of experience. In the next few days we learned about most techniques of massage. The class was conducted naked and in a unisex fashion, where students massaged each other. At the end of the class, Diana undressed and about a dozen students massaged her beautiful body in a ritual of love. She was graceful and sweet, a remarkable, beautiful, fifty-year-old woman, with a lot of talent and personality.

Every day before beginning the class Diana ordered all the students to lie down on

the floor and with a background of New Age music, provided us with guided meditation. One day was a surprise for all of us. After being told to lie on the floor, Diana directed us to roll over and touch each other, expressing repressed love. I was astounded and didn't count with this event. I was so shy that I initially refused to participate, but Diana with a sunny smile dragged me into the group. Students mingled with each other, finding human touch, and often, unexpected intimacy. Everyone enjoyed. Diana's class was more than about massage, it was also about energy, touching and feeling. She was a master at satisfying everyone's problems during the class.

On Friday afternoon, the group met at the stone-front building and formed a circle sitting on the floor. Diana talked for an hour about the business aspect of the massage, explaining that the profession had a shadow over it. Massage parlors have been linked to prostitution. She provided tips to the students on how to initiate themselves into a legitimate business. All the students were allowed to exchange views. Two ladies cried while reciting emotional problems with their husbands and family. Some women confessed of being neglected of affection and care. An attractive woman confessed to be in love with another student. For some students, the massage class was a therapy group, sealed with Diana's divine love and wisdom. A 50-hour certificate was given to each student. The whole thing had been both practical and inspiring for me.

In the national news, South Florida's Hurricane Andrew had caused substantial property damage, as well as some deaths. Homestead Air Force Base was crippled, with most buildings and houses damaged. Andrew's devastation caused \$20 billion in property damage, 17 deaths, and destruction of some 63,000 homes. Approximately 250,000 people were left homeless and most of Southern Florida remained without power for a few days.

I spoke to Sterling, the bookkeeper, to have my check by Friday. Now the

construction crew was working on two of Harbin's houses on Jackson Street, connecting the sewer system to the city pipe system. Hard, but rewarding labor!

One afternoon after work, I went to the hot and cold pools to relieve my sore muscles. Judy, a massage therapist, gave me a massage as part of the health treatment. I was planning to spend a few days with Teresa and get my Mexican tourist visa.

I drove for two hours to San Francisco. We spent a week visiting the beach and other places. I went to Big Sur, driving along the coastal Highway U.S. 1. The scenery was gorgeous. I was very impressed with Carmel, a beautiful city, with magnificent residences along the cliffs and the beach. Carmel was a popular city, well known for its year-round wonderful weather. I checked into Andrew Molera State Park which had a small sandy beach about ten minutes walk along a trail. Next day, I returned to San Francisco.

On my way back I stopped at a Wells Fargo Bank to withdraw my money from my savings account. Bank officials became suspicious of my ID and refused to give me my money; I had made a serious mistake. In the next few days, I withdrew all my money, using the automatic teller. The Bank had a limit of \$300 cash per day.

Twin Oaks Commune. I said good-bye to Teresa and headed east on U.S. 80, a super-highway, connecting the East and West Coasts. California's eastern border is gorgeous green forests of tall pines along a road that zigzagged through mountains and enjoys a perennial spring season. By noon I crossed the border into Nevada, with hot deserts, fancy hotels and gaudy casinos. The Nevada Highway Patrol was active, giving out traffic tickets around the border. Gambling is a great part of the economy of Nevada. I saw slot machines almost everywhere, from Seven-Eleven stores to gas stations. In late afternoon I drove off into the town of Wells and checked into a motel. After a day's driving, I was happy to take a hot shower. The grocery store and restaurant were too far

away, so I settled for snacks of Kentucky Fried Chicken I had in my car.

Next day I set out on U.S. 80 and later stopped for breakfast and gas. The car was doing pretty well. A breakdown might be a serious problem for me as it could attract the attention of the police.

At noon I arrived in Utah where the super-highway crossed through the unlimited desert that later spread into the Rocky Mountains. In Salt Lake City, I noticed a lot of construction of a good number of new wooden cabins along the road.

In Wyoming the scenery was vast deserts, mountains and long valleys between each town. In Rawlins, I went south to Teton Reservoir, where I found an almost deserted lagoon with a few retirees camping and fishing. Setting up the tent in the high wind was a difficult task. I was no expert at camping. The average elevation above sea level was almost 6,000 feet and it was cold.

Early in the morning I returned to U.S. 80. At Cheyenne, Wyoming, I took Interstate 25 south to Denver, Colorado. Colorado was pretty around its west border, with its high mountains and rolling hills covered with corn fields. In Denver's downtown, police cruisers hid behind bushes and walls, waiting for new victims. At noon, I crossed the east border into Kansas. Farms, with crops of corn and sunflower fields stretched along the road, a welcome change from the mountainous states.

In Missouri, the Highway Patrol was quite visible. At noon I noticed a lack of power in the engine, so I drove to Wal-Mart to buy spark plugs and an air filter. In the evening, a storm was brewing and a tornado warning was broadcast, so I checked into a truck stop motel and got a room for \$21. Before the storm arrived, I replaced the spark plugs and air filter. I enjoyed the storm, gazing from my window. Next day, I noticed that the engine problem was not solved and that worried me. I knew it was not serious, so I kept driving, crossing Illinois with its rolling hills, farms and corn fields. When I arrived

in downtown St. Louis, I got lost for an hour. To find U.S. 64 East, I had to drive through many small towns. I stopped in a truck stop, where a young fellow looked at my engine and cleaned the rotor. We agreed about replacing the rotor, cap, and wires. He charged me \$4 and told me to buy some parts at a store in a country town a few miles away. In Napa I bought \$80 worth on parts. While replacing the rotor and spark plug wires, I noticed that the coil was leaking oil. That must be the problem, I thought. I replaced the coil and the engine improved. I drove on Wyadotte Wood State Park in Indiana. The countryside was great and the local folks were polite.

Next morning I crossed Kentucky with its horses and tobacco farms. The barns were painted in thermal black to increase the heat to dry its tobacco leaves hanging inside. The state's two main industries were tobacco and horses. The eastern border was closely monitored by cops and my radar kept warning me. My Whirler Radar was great, very sensitive, with a capacity to detect the radar gun from behind as well as ahead. When I stopped for gas, a retired cop warned me to be careful in West Virginia, warning me I should drive under the 65-mile-per-hour speed limit. I took his good advise.

At noon, I crossed the border of West Virginia, moving with the traffic at 60-miles-per-hour. I stopped at a welcome station to get a map. Another lovely sunny day and the highway zigzagged through mountains covered by thick forests. At Virginia's border there was a sign warning radar detectors were illegal. I removed mine from the dashboard and camouflaged it with my personal belongings on the rear seat. It never beeped in Virginia. The state was pretty, with rolling green hills and mini tobacco farms. I passed the second major city in Virginia, Charlottesville, arriving at Louisa County after sunset.

The Wonder of Communal System. The fundamental objective of communal economics is that human rights have a greater priority than property rights. Communal

economic system emphasize the individual's responsibility to the community. Members of these communal societies have free and open access to all their communities' commodities and services, in exchange for their labor and the observance of other community agreements. Community economic agreements, behavior norms, and interpersonal responsibility are based upon trust. Each community decides through participatory process what programs and services it will support with its labor and money resources. The community might consider growing all of its own food. The level at which income, land building and other assets are shared has a major effect upon standard of living. Residents work and play outside and taking break together, learning to flow with the seasons and the weather; they often have high times together making syrup, ice skating, picking up hay, extracting honey, shelling peas, cooking, childcare and tending animals as well as pets. Other things they do is construction, cutting firewood and gardening. The most important elements in community lifestyle is the relative personal freedom and the peaceful environment.

Twin Oaks was another hippie communal in Virginia. Following the instructions provided, I drove on dark roads through the countryside. Minutes later I met two members of the commune walking on a dirt road, who advised me to park my car in a nearby parking lot. I took some of my personal belongings to the visitors' house. I met other visitors who planned staying for the next three weeks to consider becoming permanent residents. I was informed that at the end of the three weeks we would have to move out and wait for several months until we were accepted. Housing was critical. I was told that there was a waiting list of six months to be allowed to stay in the commune as a permanent resident. Recently, deterioration of the economy had forced many people to look for the basics in commune and community living, like at Twin Oaks and Harbin Hot Springs. With a substantial number of candidates, Twin Oaks became picky in selecting

new permanent residents.

I was surprised to meet Anna Mary, who had been a resident at Harbin. She was a sweet lady in her mid-fifties running naked, singing to the birds while spaced out. The coordinator of the group told Anna Mary and me to go to the main dining room and have dinner, a great suggestion as I was hungry and tired.

I was happy to sleep in a warm bed. My roommate was a blond fellow about 30, named Bob. He said he was a nurse and seemed like an intelligent fellow. My other roommates were Jennifer, Sarah, Viola--a German girl, June--a British girl, David, Miriam, and Bob. Seemed like Europeans had a great liking for the commune lifestyle.

Next day we met the new coordinator, who gave us a tour of the community. What struck me the most was that some members dressed very poorly. Some of the residents were friendly to the visitors. The housing was about the same as Harbin with spartan rooms. There were a few common denominators in the lifestyle of these New Age people: some residents cared very little about their personal appearance; some rooms were messy and filthy; women didn't use makeup or shave their legs; most residents were naked inside the building; several people used the bathroom simultaneously; and the few items of furniture, electronic equipment and other items were old.

At the dining hall, members were provided with a nutritious vegetarian dinner. Sometimes, meals included meat. The community was not very enthusiastic about breakfast, but on weekends they served waffles with a variety of fruit toppings or pancakes. Members were able to help themselves to granola and other cereals, milk, peanut butter, jelly and toast, and eat as much as they wanted and at any time. The kitchen and the hammock shop were open 24 hours a day, and there was no doubt that this facility was the major activity center at Twin Oaks.

At the hammock shop, the coordinator gave us a lecture about the production of

hammocks which provided 75 percent of the commune's revenue. Most residents had to work in the hammock shop. All visitors were trained in the production of hammocks. Most permanent residents had multiple jobs; only management personnel had one job. In the surrounding woods were several dozen hammocks hanging on trees, placed there for testing. The first week, we were to work 38 hours, including time spent at meetings. Residents were provided with a month's vacation annually, but given no money to cover expenses. Twin Oaks had its own mill, organic garden and a dairy that produced their own fresh milk and excellent cheese. They also produced tofu, which they sold to local restaurants. Like Harbin, the commune had a turnover of permanent residents, which forced them to seek new members through the Visitor's Program. Harbin had the highest number of turn-overs. The Visitor's Program also guaranteed the commune extra free labor in exchange for room and board. Twin Oaks was a pioneer commune that had survived for 25 years.

Twin Oaks was quite serious about conserving energy; they had solar panels in all the buildings and gas water heaters. The commune had 85 permanent residents and spent \$30,000 annually on electricity and gas, while Harbin Hot Springs spent \$140,000 annually in electricity and gas, with 150 permanent residents. Of course, Harbin operated a resort and depended heavily on electricity on the heating system and hot water, while Twin Oaks used solar collectors, gas water heaters and wood stoves.

We were given a yellow work sheet that would keep us busy 38 hours during the first week. While members had a schedule for assignments, at the hammock shop residents were able to work at any time, 24 hours a day. Visitors were recommended to work at least 10 hours at the shop, where they were provided with fresh, aromatic roasted coffee, doughnuts, fruit juices and cake, foods not available in the main kitchen. They had also a large selection of cassettes and DC diskettes. The commune kept a ratio of 60

percent women and 40 percent men population. Several young women as residents energized the community. While women engaged in work that traditionally had been done by men, males labored in jobs usually done by females--quite a switch!

On Sunday afternoon a common meeting was held at the dining hall. They talked about increasing the production of hammocks, mentioning that another commune, East Wind in Missouri, was also producing hammocks for Twin Oaks. They also talked about searching for another market for the hammocks, in case the major buyer, Pier 1, decided to drop them and buy hammocks from other suppliers in another country. Diversifying their revenues was another concern of the residents, and for such reasons they began to lease space for workshops.

Some duties assigned to visitors were undesirable: washing dishes, grading vegetables, mopping floors, working in the garden and other odd jobs. To satisfy the 42 hours of work for the first week, I volunteered to cook in the kitchen, fixing stir fried rice with vegetables, which many of the residents liked. Meals were prepared without spices or salt. I later reported to the hammock shop for two hours, working in set-ups, the first phase in the production of hammocks. Hours later, I unpacked my computer and continued to take notes from my personal diary. I wrote a letter to a couple of publishers providing them with a chapter of my unedited manuscript. This was a mistake; I later learned that publishers expect an impeccable manuscript. My little contact with publishers and agents I found most of them imperious.

Members of the community were proud of conserving energy and living in an environment where they did not have to drive to work every day. China was a pioneer in this concept because of their lack of fuel, inadequate transportation and massive population. Having a main kitchen and prepared dinner for the community saved us a considerable amount of energy. Bicycles were available to shuttle from one house to

another through shaded trails and several electric cars were used for the elderly and staff. Residents and visitors sometimes were able to select an area in which they wanted to work during the week. Twin Oaks was a profit sharing commune, with the profit being spent in the community. Residents received very little cash, only \$50 per month; with that money they had to buy their own clothes, shoes and cover other expenses. There was no money left for personal recreational activities like going to a movie, or having dinner in town. To take a vacation, residents depended on their family and friends. The philosophy of the commune was mostly to provide for the basic needs of each member. What I liked most was the conscious ecological balance and their energy-saving policies. The houses and buildings were built with a minimum of destruction of the surrounding vegetation. Like in a Zen Center, everything was in perfect order. Harbin lack of this kind of harmony.

I went to town to buy beer. By noon I was back at Twin Oaks and continued working on my assigned duties. In one of the meetings, we were told that residents receive the benefit of medical care after six months. In the local school the commune children met other kids and often visited their homes where they observed those children lived better and had more toys. In the commune they had a playground made by the residents and a few cheap toys, but it was not difficult for these youngsters to notice the vast limitations while living in Twin Oaks. All the juveniles, after becoming adults left the commune.

While I was working in the hammock shop, permanent residents were talking about presidential candidate, Bill Clinton, who had challenged President Bush to a TV debate in which Bush refused to participate.

One old man told me he liked to listen to Radio Havana at night, even though he didn't agree with everything the Cubans had to say. He claimed that the United States and other capitalistic nations manipulated news information. A middle-aged woman said that the latest data by a local newspaper stated that 15 million Americans were hungry and

suffering from malnutrition. The debate continued on and on about political and social issues. Commune residents had only one major issue in common: they opposed the materialistic lifestyle of the average American and the American capitalistic system of government. They advocated a social democratic government that would promote energy conservation and a national health and hospitalization system. I was afraid that this dream would not become a reality till the nation descends into total bankruptcy that would force the Republican elite to surrender political power.

I worked in the garden picking string beans with other visitors and residents. A poorly dressed young woman in charge of the crew, demanded from the visitors to talk little and work more collecting string beans. We later went to the grape patch where we pulled weeds till noon. After lunch, I worked in the hammock shop for two hours.

One morning, we had a tour around the property. A permanent resident, named Jim, gave us a lecture about different trees and insects. He gave us a lesson about poison oaks and ticks which carry Lyme disease that could cripple human beings within two years. We reached the cemetery where they bury residents and pets. Our liaison explained, much to our surprise, that two of the members had committed suicide. One of them decided to kill herself when she became disappointed with Twin Oaks and was unable to return to society. The resident explained to us that the commune had its own problems and was not the perfect lifestyle for everyone. Some residents supported the community, claiming the two suicides were a result of outside problems.

Twin Oaks was formed mostly by White Anglos, with only two Black residents and one Japanese visitor. Some of the residents complained about the little time they had left for themselves. Residents worked 40 hours per week in different types of jobs and satisfying the suggested weekly schedule of work, were not allowed to work at any outside job or earn extra cash. The community had total control over their lives, also

imposing moral values. The idea of living in a commune that might provide me with a job and all my fundamental needs was attractive, but I was afraid I might suffer claustrophobia after becoming a permanent resident; this had happened to me at Harbin where I had freedom to come and go. It was a general belief that one of those who had committed suicide felt trapped living in Twin Oaks, because she had burned all her bridges with society.

Most residents considered themselves being part of a middle-class lifestyle. Soon after my arrival, I had no doubt that Twin Oaks was one of the most successful communes nationwide. Some residents proudly maintained that Twin Oaks had the highest standard of living compared to other communes and considered themselves part of the affluent middle class. When I asked them to define what they considered a middle-class lifestyle, their answer was vague. I told them that I was from the lower social class, owning a \$2,000 car, computer, boom-box stereo, three bags of clothes, six pairs of sneakers and a few hundred dollars in cash. Those revelations shocked a few of my listeners because they lived very simply. Some rooms were messy and with very few visible valuables. A few residents, who were the more well-educated, owned computers and wore fancy clothes. I visited the building where they lived and their rooms were in perfect order and clean. The community restricted members from spending and owning too much. Members were banned from owning a car. The community had over a dozen vehicles in the motor pool available for the residents for daily short trips. There was no doubt that residents had more security--sacrificing some personal freedom. The environment at Twin Oaks kept the community isolated from general society. Members refused to have television sets available to avoid TV's commercial and political brainwashing. Some residents were political dissidents very active in social issues.

A meeting was held with a political movement activist, named Maurice, a tax

conscious dissident. Maurice had not paid individual income tax for the last decade, and the Internal Revenue Service was still trying to figure out how to put him in prison. He claimed that he did not want his money used for conducting war against other countries and building more deadly weapons.

Twin Oaks supported other organizations: those fighting AIDS, tax-and-war conscious dissidents, lesbians, pagans, peaceful political dissidents, and environmental and civil rights organizations. They also supported those political groups advocating protection of the Yanomami Indians in Brazil and Venezuela, who live in the South American Amazon rain forest. Most of the residents dreamed of living in a better society and that the people would have some control of their environment and lifestyle.

Twin Oaks was more lenient with lesbians than homosexuals for two fundamental reasons: the commune was ruled by women, and they were more concerned about gays who might spread AIDS to other members. Only one male resident, a bisexual, was HIV positive. He had intimate relations with another female resident. Subsequently, the man left the community and the female took an AIDS test that was negative. Now, they encouraged members to use condoms and be tested once a year. At Harbin I never heard the staff talking about AIDS as well as other sexual diseases.

I was trained in weaving the hammocks. Another meeting was held with a liaison talking about the commune's government. A Planning Council ruled the commune, but residents were allowed to object to them. At Harbin the planning committee was formed by the inner circle within the staff led by Ishvara.

I worked in the cannery where a female resident later filed a complaint against me because I tried to help her carry a heavy load. I was experiencing problems with a few of the women who behaved like men. I had always respected and admired women with feminine qualities and in Twin Oaks, there were very few of them. Most didn't shave their

legs, use cosmetics or wear sexy clothes. It was a disappointment for me.

A lecture was presented about managing children in the commune. A woman who adopted two Black children told us that in the commune, it is easier to have children than in the outside society, where she has to find a job, work and pay others to take care of her children. In Twin Oaks mothers don't have to cook or clean the house. Female members had to request authorization to bear a child. They had a strict birth control policy; the commune would go bankrupt if one-third of the female population got pregnant.

I called Teresa who complained about the hot weather in San Francisco, saying that she might go to Harbin on the weekend. When I left, Teresa, who seemed bored and tired of having me around, now said she missed me. I told her that I might be back in a few more weeks. I intended to visit Florida soon to get some money for my future. I was planning to leave the country in the next few months before things got worse.

Saturday all the visitors went on a room tour of several buildings. Some residents, who previously lived in the East Wind Commune in Missouri, believed that the living standard in Twin Oaks was higher because they were provided with better meals and had inside bathrooms instead of outside latrines. Apparently East Wind was more primitive.

Twin Oaks felt successful about their accomplishments in the last 25 years and believed that their lifestyle would be imitated by other communes. On the dining hall's board was a chart with names of all the permanent residents and dates of the reported illness. Lately, the community's leaders were concerned with lice, contracted by the children at the local school. They also advised that any gastrointestinal problems should be reported to the main office, believing that too many residents had gotten sick lately and they wanted to monitor the kitchen and food.

I gave free massages to several visitors and residents. In my free time I kept busy with my computer and in the afternoons, jogged on the dirt road.

I had my interview to become a permanent resident at Twin Oaks. The meeting was two hours of questioning by three residents, two men and an older woman. They told me for any available job, women had priority, even though they may not be qualified for the position. The staff explained that I could not own a car and any income received must be given to the community.

The staff were mostly concerned about teenagers having sex with other adult residents. This problem was moot, because the community only had half a dozen children, all under age six. Residents were compelled to race to the main office and inform the staff of any consented sexual relationship between teenagers and adults. This policy was enforced to keep the image of the community within the boundaries of mainstream morality of the religious and legal system.

In the mid-1800s, a successful commune in New York, named Oneida, was destroyed after a decade of harassment by religious groups charged them with child abuse and the Federal Government sent in the U.S. Army. The commune practiced free sex, and often, men had several wives. Their marriage consisted of couples having intimate relationships as long as they were in love. When that fever of mutual attraction ended, the relationship terminated. If the woman got pregnant the community was responsible for the child. What was more controversial was that they introduced juveniles into sexual relationships with adult members. In the aftermath, the leader fled and sought political sanctuary in Canada.¹

Another commune led by David Koresh at Waco, Texas, was destroyed in 1994 by Federal Agents for possession of illegal weapons, practicing bigamy and allowing sexual relationships with teenagers.

¹Constance Noyes Robertson, *Oneida Community*, (N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1970; pages 265-356).

In America, children are encouraged to talk like adults, work like adults and have sex like adults. I believe teenagers should have the fundamental right and freedom to do whatever they want with their own bodies; it would be up to parents to teach morality, enforce a curfew and celibacy. In America most teenagers have sex before their fifteenth birthday; in some public high schools, girls are provided with condoms, and often, given data of how to avoid becoming pregnant. The reason behind this policy by the U.S. Congress was that nationwide, 12.6 percent of teenagers become pregnant every year and most of them are receiving welfare. Behind each law there is a powerful economic reason that created them.

Twin Oaks is a nice commune, but I was not ready. Members earned very little money and the community controlled too much of their private lives. I felt it would be difficult to adjust to the weird idea of women's equality and live in a place where females behaved like men. One of the members described me as a "Latin macho stereotype" A pretty harsh description of a guy who was searching only for peace and quiet in his life.

Like in Harbin, there were no secrets in the commune. The staff knew I often drank a few beers and smoked pot. The great majority of the population often socialized drinking and smoking pot. The commune didn't have too many problems controlling alcohol or pot, because residents couldn't afford to buy it. Once a month they celebrated some festivity and holiday, in which residents were able to enjoy drinking some beer and hard liquor.

Wednesday, the visitors had the customary party in Aurora, inviting all permanent residents. In the evening several dozen residents and visitors celebrated with the opportunity of relaxing. Up to this point, the relationship both groups have had, has been during working hours. Celebrating unity, some of us drank some beers and smoked pot.

Diana, a female resident, agreed to check the spelling of my manuscript. I

provided her with a copy of the document on a floppy disk. Diana was a divorcee, having a relationship with a lesbian. She told me her personal drama: Diana was a school teacher married for twenty years with alcoholic who physically abused her. After a painful divorce, she commenced to date another woman. Diana told me Twin Oaks had only kicked out two permanent residents in 25 years.

One Friday, most visitors packed up and left. Only June, the British lesbian and myself remained at Aurora. Later I spoke to Jim, a polite and educated hippie in his fifties and told him I wanted to remain for a couple of days, and he was delighted to help me. I was reminded, however, that another group of visitors was coming and I would not be allowed to stay too long.

The Twin Oaks' Visitor Program was fundamental for the community: to recruit new residents and provide a good source of cheap labor. Only a couple of visitors interviewed were approved as potential residents. For most visitors the three weeks were a mini-vacation and they would not return to live at Twin Oaks because they had family, friends and a job waiting for them. To most visitors, communities like Twin Oaks, East Wind and Harbin had nothing to offer. But with the increasing trend of perennial inflation, a sick economy, lower salaries and chronic unemployment, communes will surely continue to mushroom in the United States as well as other countries.

On a Monday morning, I left Twin Oaks and I drove to Arlington, Virginia to see John Stonebreaker. He had been very polite, helpful and honest so far, and I decided to give my computer to John to install a menu and some software and to fix my printer. John promised to take care of my CPU and printer and ship them back to me, as soon as I got back to Harbin. In Arlington, I was unable to get in touch with John through telephone calls at his work, so I mailed the computer and printer to his ex-wife in Arlington. Immediately, I was back on the road heading south to Miami. Going to South Florida was

very exciting to me, where the FBI and local cops were constantly looking for me. In the afternoon, I checked into a motel.

Early in the morning, I was back on the road and an hour later, crossed the Florida state line, packed with Highway Patrol vehicles watching for traffic infractions. At West Palm Beach, traffic was congested. Florida cities now are linked to one another by commercial buildings, shopping centers and real estate developments. South Florida has one of the fastest growing populations in the United States. I arrived in Miami about 5 p.m., driving to my friend's house. They were surprised to see me again. The next day I went to see Carlos, the mechanic, who took care of some of the engine problems with a tune-up and a change of oil; with some new tires, my car came alive. The friends and relatives I saw gave me a few thousand dollars.

I stayed for a couple of days in an apartment near the airport. I made the mistake of using the telephone that I suspected of being monitored, but my worst mistake was using two of my telephone credit cards. The FBI would be able to obtain a lot of information from them, including places I had been living and persons I had called during the last year.

I found South Florida totally devastated by the hurricane of a few months before. Some streets were still inaccessible with fallen trees and garbage piled up along the roadside. Under pressure by the Federal Government, insurance companies were processing claims and paying right away, and this flow of money energized the local economy.

I left Miami and headed north, arriving in Jacksonville at noon. I crossed the Georgia State line a few hours later, stopping at Georgia Veteran State Park. The camping site was beside scenic Lake Blackshear.

My long trip from California to Virginia and my stay at Twin Oaks had been both

exciting and interesting. Considering the option of remaining living at Twin Oaks as my permanent home, I came up with no answers; the people were nice and the commune a great place, but too restrictive for me. So, I would continue my search.

CHAPTER 24

The 1992 Presidential Election. In my opinion, the best thing the American people did in 1992 was to elect the Democratic contender, Bill Clinton, as the new United States President. In a mere 100 days in office, President Clinton reversed the trend of the ultra-conservatives, Ronald Reagan and Bush. Now dead was the Star Wars Program, Reagan's vision of a leak-proof shield against Soviet nuclear attack, implemented in the last decade at a cost of nearly \$30 billion. The Star Wars Program was an expensive scheme in which the Reagan Administration rigged the test to fool the U.S. Congress, the American people, and the Soviets. Now, Defense Secretary Les Aspin proposed an anti-missile weapon improving the Patriot Missile used successfully in Israel against the attacks of Iraqi missiles.¹

The Reagan and Bush Administrations initiated, and supported for year a violent campaign of bombing against abortion clinics and intimidation of women and doctors. Janet Reno, the new Attorney General, asked Congress for authorization to stop blockades, harassment and violence against abortion clinics. In May, 1994, Congress finally passed a bill designed to protect women, doctors and other health personnel from tactics of violence and intimidation. President Clinton proposed spending more money on AIDS and breast cancer research.²

The Clinton Administration, did however, continue the trend of former Presidents Reagan and Bush of building more prisons and issuing larger sentences to drug users. To support this policy he and the U.S. Congress legislated more new Federal laws even

¹*Associated Press*, May 14, 1993.

²*Washington Post*, May 16, 1994.

though some officials were advocating treatment and community service.³

The issue of human rights was given priority and senior U.S. officials warned China that Washington would impose human rights and other conditions on the renewal of Beijing's trading status which facilitates the export of Chinese goods to the United States.⁴ This effort failed when Peking leaders replied to Washington that they would not accept interference in their domestic policy, and that the United States had as much to lose as China.

While the Reagan and Bush Administrations enjoyed the support of the powerful rich class, as well as the media, President Clinton faced strong opposition by the elite. The news media constantly attacking Clinton's policies. His new program to institute a national health plan for all Americans became controversial with big corporations, especially insurance companies, drug manufacturers and hospitals. The President and his wife worked to implement a national health care plan similar to the Canadian Health Care Plan. It was a bumpy road for the President and his wife.

To me, it is like a breath of fresh air that the First Lady, Hillary Clinton, was active in promoting women's rights and implementing social programs. The difference between Mrs. Clinton and other First Ladies is great. Nixon's wife was mostly concerned about her family and her new aristocratic friends. Ford's wife loved the good life and had good taste for booze. Rosalyn Carter, while a sweet and religious lady, was concerned mostly with human rights. Nancy Reagan loved sophisticated parties and cultivated the powerful rich. She was a strong anti-abortion advocate, supporting violent and illegal protests against abortion clinics nationwide. Three defendants, who during the Reagan

³ *Associated Press*, May 1993.

⁴ *Washington Post*, May 15, 1993.

Administration were found guilty of bombing an abortion clinic, were sentenced to a minimum of three years in federal prison, thanks to the intervention of the President and Nancy. Bush's wife was a charming lady concerned with domestic problems. But Mrs. Clinton is a different First Lady. She blatantly accused the health insurance industry of greed which had driven the nation to the brink of bankruptcy as well as lying to the public about the President's plan to protect its profits.

The First Lady denounced a television advertisement ran by the Health Insurance Association of America, speaking against the Administration's health care plan. She accused insurance companies of wanting to exclude people from coverage because the more they can exclude, the more money they can make.

Charles N. Kahn, III, executive vice-president of the insurance association, representing over 300 health insurance companies, criticized the Administration for their universal health care plan limiting the cost of the policy. Small wonder! Such limiting would definitely limit their profits. Mrs. Clinton, in a tough speech to a friendly audience at the American Academy of Pediatrics, complained of the insurance group's \$6.5 million advertisement campaign to divide public opinion. She is indeed, a tough lady!

The Farm Commune/Tennessee. Early one morning in 1992, I packed my tent and headed northwest. I was going to Tennessee to visit the Farm Community. Since 1971, the Farm became a pioneer in establishing a commune in the most capitalistic nation and became successful in a short period. Initially, they had a lot of problems with local cops because of their tradition of growing their own pot. While most men worked at nearby communities, women and other residents remained in the commune doing housekeeping and maintenance tasks. They sent a few volunteers to Guatemala to help the Indians with free medical care and sanitation. For years the Farm has been assisting the Guatemalan Indians to sell their goods in the United States.

Much to my annoyance, I got lost for an hour in Chattanooga and was exhausted by the time I arrived at the Farm at sunset. I met Ed at the printing shop and he called Ann, a lady I had written about visiting the community. She welcomed me to come over without asking any further details. I had already called a few days in advance notifying her of my arrival. After approval, I assumed that I would stay a couple of days as a guest on a work exchange basis. I was told that Ann was not there. After making a telephone call and talking with another member, Ed said that I could live with the Livingston family without any explanation.

The Farm had been through some drastic changes. At the zenith of its success the commune had 1700 residents, accepting almost anyone, with a policy of peace, love and free sex, but only a few members accepted responsibility and worked. After over a decade of success the Farm collapsed, finally facing reality. The failure was a shock for them, as it was for other communes trying to implement a new American socialism concept. This failure temporarily reaffirmed the capitalistic system philosophy. Those persons with socialist political principles probably were praying for the first time in their lives. To survive, the Farm thinned the population to 200 residents, according to seniority, working in small diversified industries. New members who stayed or arrived later had to support themselves with their own businesses or by working in the nearby towns.

John Livingston was a carpenter who worked at a nearby town community, while his wife Rosa was a baby-sitter for other residents. She was also an expert in Yoga instruction. The Livingstons generally charged \$15 per day, providing a breakfast and daily dinner. In the end, he and his wife allowed me to stay on a work-exchange basis for room and board, paying \$5 per day to help cover food costs.

Next day, I went to a local mechanic named Taylor. His son welded my muffler and changed the oil and filter. I drove to town to get a haircut. The barber talked a lot

about the Iraqi war and economics. The main topic was the presidential election. Later, I drove to K-Mart to buy another auto alarm. The Radio Shack alarm drove me crazy with its faulty turn-on at midnight, waking up to the entire neighborhood.

I was surprised to learn that Rosa was born in Spain, because she spoke perfect English. She had spent most of her life in the United States and had lived in other Yoga communes, till she married. John and Rosa had three children. She liked practicing her Spanish and I enjoyed her company.

I was invited to have dinner with the Board of Directors of about twenty persons. After dinner, they began their official meeting by dealing with local issues. The Board was proposing to raise the present membership fee for new residents from \$300 to \$3,000, claiming that the money was needed to keep up to standard the road construction, water supply, electrical service and drain system. The local government didn't provide them with any of those services. This hefty raise was unpopular with some of the residents. The Livingstons were among the dissidents, complaining that the goal of the Farm was to provide an affordable community. Just like Twin Oaks and Harbin, the Farm had financial and political problems. Nevertheless, I found the environment at Twin Oaks and the Farm more emotionally stable than at Harbin. At the Farm, residents dressed better and had more amenities than those at Twin Oaks. Workers received a reasonable salary for their labor.

They had a publishing shop and a few other industries providing some economic security. The grocery store sold mostly organic products, and they had a small clinic which was mostly for emergency cases. I gladly worked a few hours every day cleaning windows, stacking firewood and painting in exchange for my room and board.

The Farm was a ghost town, a half-alive memory of a socialist dream of people saving energy and living together without the pressures and rules of mainstream society. I

did not notice much political activism like at Twin Oaks. The Farm was barely surviving with the emphasis on living peacefully in an energy-efficient environment, eating organic food, and working without pressure.

Days later, I left the Farm and stopped in a hotel to spend the night. Early next morning I took Interstate U.S. 40 to Oklahoma and gave a ride to a man going to Las Vegas. When I told him that I was headed to San Francisco, he suddenly changed his destination to Salinas. His name was Albert Kennedy, a cowboy who had worked on ranches all his life. Albert helped me drive by taking turns at the wheel. He praised President Bush and his policy of an undeclared war invading tiny Panama, where U.S. forces kidnapped Noriega to face trial in Miami, the bombing of sub-developed Libya, and the invasion of and Iraq in the Middle East. In fact, Albert liked everything the Republican Administration proposed. That afternoon we crossed the New Mexico State line and around midnight, we entered Arizona. I noticed a lot of Highway Patrol cars hidden along the road with my radar detector which was constantly beeping. At one point, I picked up a police cruiser aiming his radar gun from behind. In the dark, the officer saw my radar detector's red light blinking; he was playing with his gun. At sunrise we crossed into California. I noticed substantial changes in the last few decades: new farms, a sophisticated irrigation system and the growth of cities and towns.

We drove along Highway 101 till the afternoon, when I dropped Albert Kennedy in Salinas. I arrived at Teresa's apartment in the afternoon. The poor Mission neighborhood was the same: large numbers of homeless and illegal Mexicans, some of them defecating and pissing right on the street. I spent a couple of days with Teresa. She complained and grumbled about something almost every day till I felt like I was married to her. After that visit I felt relieved we had not married.

Everybody at Harbin was surprised to see me again. Most residents when they

leave, never return. Richard Hilty gave me a hug and Julie seemed happy to see me. I assumed that John Stonebreaker had been acting as a spy, telling her of my whereabouts and plans. I was concerned because he had my computer with my diary and manuscript; although in my personal notes, I had not written anything incriminating myself. I had written a draft of my manuscript in a cryptography style. Julie gave me a royal welcome and allowed me to stay in a private room at Redwood and directed Neil Murphy to hire me in maintenance. I learned Khan McIntoch was leaving Harbin in December to join her new boyfriend, an attorney from Los Angeles, who would provide her with a more secure and emotionally stable environment. McIntoch was the “Ice Queen” in Harbin who used to call the county police to kick out male residents for petty arguments.

October 1992. I met Don Shipp, who was in charge of maintenance. It was a relaxing job with another three residents, doing mostly painting, plumbing and electrical jobs. During the fall, Harbin had fewer guests. Now, the pool was packed with residents and students taking classes at Stan Dale's workshops. Once a month, we met those sexually addicted folks who came to Stan Dale's workshop for a lecture on intimate relationships. This was the only workshop that warranted extra security measures, to avoid locals from peeping from behind bushes. During the workshop, forming a circle, the students remain breathless and tense while watching a naked couple engage in performing different techniques of love-making. A young lady wearing glasses who resembled a school teacher started to talk about safe sex, but everyone ignored her. Immediately, all of them registered for another class. At the end of the workshop participants took the opportunity to exchange names and addresses with other students for future orgies.

After three days of living at Redwood, I moved to the dormitory at Fern building. With not much to do, I decided to do some body work and paint my car. A few people had seen my car in Miami, and a new color would look great. The car had been involved in an

accident and the front fenders were damaged. I went to Santa Rosa to buy all the materials. Bob Dunn at the auto shop was very helpful after I explained to him that I had no experience doing body work or painting a car. In the next four days, I sanded it down, did the body work with fiberglass and painted it. I was giving my car a face-lift!

The first week my \$235 salary was reduced to \$170 per week. I was really pissed off! After two weeks at Harbin, I was still sleeping in a dormitory with all my personal belongings in my car. There was a room available at Lower Lake, but the house was used by residents recovering from alcohol addiction and they objected having me as roommate. They had learned from Jim McDonald, who picked up the garbage, that I used to fill the garbage container with empty beer cans. McDonald had substituted his addiction to alcohol with marijuana smoking. He regularly informed Julie Adams of the personal habits of each resident based on his observation of the garbage collected at each Harbin housing unit. The other room available in Middletown was on Douglas Street, but two residents objected to having me back as a roommate without explanation. One of them was the neurotic Georgia, who had worked for me in Housekeeping. Although most residents believed she had a mental handicap, nevertheless, I had recommended her to manage Landscaping. I thought working with plants might promote her mental health and happiness. Georgia was frustrated because the male population never paid any attention to her endless conversation.

November 1992. I called Saul Landau in Washington. My fellow-Brigade comrades had told me Saul Landau was a Communist; this information was provided by the CIA and the FBI. In my frequent telephone conversations with Landau, I found him to be an intelligent man. Landau often visited Cuba and thus, was up to date on the social, economic and political developments and problems on the island. For Landau, I was a controversial right-wing Cuban-American with links to the CIA and a long history of

political violence. Even with a wide intellectual gap between us, somehow we got along fine. It was always pleasant talking to him, because he was well-informed on many current social problems and political issues.

Everything was fine, till I called the Wells Fargo Bank from the Middletown Branch about my savings and checking accounts. The clerk nervously asked several questions about my social security number, to verify identification. I had been reported to the police by the Wells Fargo officials last September, when I tried to close out my account and they became suspicious of my identity. The Wells Fargo Bank had a reputation for its intensive cooperation with law enforcement agencies. When leaving the bank, a Highway Patrol Officer entered the bank and I executed another narrow getaway. Besides their banking services, Wells Fargo was also involved in doing police work, self-appointed vigilantes linked to the establishment. At this point, I was convinced it was a good idea to pack up and leave Harbin if I was to remain free.

Everybody was impressed with my paint job. Some Harbin residents had always been suspicious about me and when they learned I had painted my car black, one of them nicknamed my car "Nightrider." They never stopped talking about me.

I drove back to San Francisco and told Teresa about some of my legal problems. I was worried that the cops, looking for an illegal immigrant, might check with her. Teresa was a woman of contradiction: She constantly talked about social and political problems; she opposed violent action, yet admired the Sandinista and Cuban revolutions which remained in power by force and repression; she criticized Patricia Hearst for being a coward, using Castro's words, "a rich girl playing revolution." Yet in some ways I admired Teresa. I thought she might be receptive to my difficult situation, but she was not. She became terrified and wanted me to leave as soon as possible. That was the end of Teresa flirting with social change and revolution. She failed to realize revolution is linked

to violence and illegality. In fact, most labor and social changes in the United States had been achieved through violence. I was very honest and told her briefly about the bombs in Miami. When I told her that the FBI was looking for me for parole violation, she almost fainted. I never finished telling her about the rest of my odyssey. Such revelations would have been just too much for Teresa to handle, I was sure!

Sierra Hot Springs. At noon I left for Sierra Hot Springs, another church property near Reno, Nevada. The town was at 5,000 feet above sea level. It was cold with several inches of snow on the highway. I arrived in Sierraville at midnight; the town was deserted. Sierraville was composed of several dozen houses and a few businesses on main street.

At the lodge I met Grant, a worker, and Carol the manager. Grant was a heavy-set, tall fellow, in his mid-forties with a beard. Seems he was a coal miner coming back to civilization. Carol was an overweight sweet lady who looked like a grandmother. I was assigned to sleep in a dormitory on the second floor. The main building was an ancient structure. Now I knew why Harbin's residents didn't like the Sierraville spartan lifestyle.

Next day Carol told me that I had to work three days for my rent and I should volunteer to work once a week in the kitchen to get a discount price on my meals. During the weekend when paying guests used the lodge, workers were unable to use the kitchen and was compelled to pay for dinners and buy my groceries. Having no other option, I accepted the somewhat tough living conditions imposed on me.

My assigned work was at the Globe Hotel in Sierraville which had been under remodeling for the last year. Harbin had invested \$1 million in the property. I finally caught on: Ishvara, while reducing worker's salaries, was buying real estate and upgrading properties. The Church was a multi-million-dollar corporation with assets estimated at \$30 million.

At Sierra Hot Springs, my main objective was to meditate and explore my inner

soul. I very much missed my 286 computer. Besides the word processor, I had several games, including chess which had always rescued me from complete boredom. With no games I spent some time reading the few books available at the lodge and taking walks along the road.

Often during weekends I drove to Truckee, 30 miles away, another small town with several hotels, gas stations, grocery stores and other small diversified businesses. The town was packed with wealthy tourists looking for cold weather to satisfy their endless desire to ski. I was sure that Robert Rosenblatt, my former attorney, would love this place.

It snowed for days, dumping 36 inches in the valleys and surrounding mountains. Temperatures were in the 20s, and sometimes even below zero. Two young guests suddenly decided to leave the lodge, because of a snowstorm warning, when local authorities routinely closed down U.S. 80. With freezing temperatures outside, I remained in the lodge most of the time. During the winter months the fireplace and the kitchen became very popular places with residents and guests alike.

During the week residents were shuttled to work at the Globe Hotel at Sierraville, a 10-minute drive in the 4X4 Toyota Truck owned by the Church. Usually, Grant was the person who took the workers to town. He was a divorcee living with his twelve-year-old daughter, Vanessa, who attended the local high school.

Victoria was the massage therapist at the lodge, and her husband Rick was in charge of security and taking care of several horses owned by him and the Church. Sandra was a single girl in his thirties who worked at the Globe Hotel. She was involved in rebirth instruction, yoga and New Age philosophy. Ann was a sixty-year-old woman recuperating from cancer. Her husband did general duties. They had a charming eleven-year-old daughter named Kaisa. Frank was a weird and unsociable man who never talked

or worked too much. He formerly lived at Harbin. Frank was allowed to work only 25 hours per week to cover his rent and dinners and did very little, usually cutting wood, shoveling snow and driving an old truck with a big shovel to clean the road. Some of them lived in old cabins with wood stoves under truly Spartan conditions.

Charlie was a dynamic sixty-year-old man who had fled from his family in Houston, Texas. He lived and worked at the Globe Hotel and came almost every day to the lodge for dinner. Wayne was a hippie and a hermit who did not talk much, and who also had previously lived at Harbin. He was in charge of the workers and succeeded in making my life miserable for the first two weeks. His wife was a friendly woman with a sunny smile, working as a social worker for the County, earning good money. And Libby and Tim were in charge of operating the office, including its computer system. They had moved from Harbin a few months before. At Harbin, Libby was my archenemy, conspiring to bring about my demotion from Housekeeping. Some women were former prostitutes, addicted to heavy drug and alcohol. All the residents had long histories of chemical addiction. Rick was another Vietnam veteran who wished to forget his past and live in the present.

I kept calling John Stonebreaker in Arlington to ask about my computer and printer, but without luck. The last time I had spoken with him, he promised to ship them immediately to Harbin, but never followed through. Unable to work anymore on my book, Sierraville was becoming boring. I talked to Tim, who grew up with John, explaining my problem. Tim promised to call John and ask about my computer and printer.

An agenda for the weekly meeting included discussion of the dirty dishes and pots left in the kitchen. Carol threatened to close down the kitchen, unless the residents kept the place clean. She was operating a private business with free labor and needed a full time person working in the kitchen. By this time, I was working over 30 hours a week as a

volunteer in the kitchen, washing dishes, preparing breakfasts and shoveling snow to keep my discount on food and free meals. I felt very proud the first time I baked bread. Working in the kitchen helped me to keep my mental balance while compelled to remain inside the building.

I was told to move to Cabin Number 3. At first I liked it, because it offered more privacy. There was a small wood stove in the center, but half the Sheetrock from the ceiling was missing, allowing most of the heat to escape. At night I spent most of the time stocking the wood stove with logs. The cabin was extremely cold. I told Carol about it, and she allowed me to return to the dormitory where there were electric heaters.

At the Globe Hotel I worked Mondays through Wednesdays sanding and painting walls in frozen temperatures along with other residents. At Harbin, residents worked only six hours daily; at Sierraville we worked eight hours. The rest of the week I remained in the lodge. I went often to the hot springs to relax. Noticing a substantial difference in the environment, I began to miss the more civilized aspects of Harbin. Sierraville was a hell of a lot more rustic. But I kept reminding myself: I moved to this isolated village for security reasons to avoid meeting the cops at Harbin.

Sunday, I was invited to their religious congregation along with a couple of other guests. Seated in a circle, Victoria, Carol and Libby addressed the meeting using, as at Harbin, American Indian rituals. Sometimes they danced and sang. Victoria then passed a large wood stick with feathers, and each person introduced himself to the group. I was the mystery man and all the residents were expecting to hear more about me; I used all my skills reciting a brief introduction. These meetings were okay, but I liked to sit in silence and meditate, focusing my attention on my inner-self instead of outer-happenings.

At the lodge's main kitchen, my gallon of premium chocolate ice cream turned up missing. Days later, I learned that Vanessa, who was addicted to junk food, had eaten my

gourmet ice cream. Also, the kitchen residents had little space to stock their food, and there were no small pans for residents to cook their own meals.

A new resident by the name of Yellowbird, another Vietnam veteran with a missing limb, arrived. Yellowbird told me that he had been living with American Indians for several years and was familiar with all their religious rituals. Every time he saw a hawk flying around, he would say, "You're my soul brother. Peace." He spoke the phrase as if talking to an invisible super being. Yellowbird's memories from the war were a nightmare and he refused to talk about it. His missing leg had created some limitations in attracting pretty females. Yellowbird, although receiving government disability as a veteran, was strictly anti-establishment; for this reason I liked him.

On a snowy Thanksgiving day we had a delicious turkey dinner, seated at a long table, sharing with several guests in the kitchen. Carol recited a prayer before dinner. Outside lay the beauty of winter, everything white. Everybody enjoyed the warmth of the wood stove and the down-to-earth feeling of the rustic facility.

At noon I went for a hike to the hot pool. The trail was covered with snow. It was great to undress, walk in the snow and sit in the steaming redwood hot pool while my thoughts got lost in the valley. The cold breeze and the swinging of the tall pines brought me back to the reality of beautiful scenery. After that, I often visited the redwood hot pool to purify my thoughts with the wind and the white panorama.

Tim told me that John had promised to ship my computer within the week; I felt very happy about that. John was working as a computer technician in Washington D.C. earning good money and I had no idea why he was hanging onto my computer and printer for so long. Lately, he was acting very strangely.

At Christmas, half a dozen guests visited the lodge. I volunteered to make a cheese cake and Libby and Tim baked several ducks and a turkey. Even though New Age folks,

they loved eating meat. We had wild rice, salad, chocolate cake and my cheesecake. Incidentally, the holiday dinner was free for everybody. I am sure that made the food taste doubly delicious.

In January the weather became rough. The electric power often went off, the outage sometimes lasting for hours. Staying at Sierraville was costing me money so, I was anxious to move out. It was like living in a prison. I didn't dare say no to any request by Carol or the residents. I had already checked at Harbin and everything was fine; nobody had been looking for me.

With eight feet of snow on the ground, the dirt road to town looked like a white time tunnel in which every turn was risky. I told Carol that I would like to spend a week's vacation at Harbin and asked her to make a reservation for me; otherwise I would have to pay while living there. She was expecting me to come back.

I planned to leave for Harbin Hot Springs on Wednesday, but by Tuesday at lunch time it was already snowing and the latest forecast warned that another heavy storm was coming. The countryside was already covered with at least 40 inches of snow.

After checking weather conditions with Caltrans, I set out driving through U.S. 80 West to San Francisco. Around 5:00 p.m., I called Teresa from Sacramento and told her that I would be stopping over just to pick up my mail and would like to stay at her apartment for the night. I was tired and did not want to drive all the way to Middletown. Much to my relief, after seconds of hesitation she agreed. Since learning that I was a fugitive, Teresa was no longer interested in seeing me. The thought of having the FBI SWAT team breaking down her door terrified her. Teresa felt frustrated because she was looking for a husband, and instead had only met a fugitive. I arrived at 8:00 p.m. and activated the car alarm because the car was loaded with all my personal belongings.

Teresa acted very coldly, offering me only hot soup for dinner. Too bad! Our

relationship had changed drastically. I was aware of my legal problems and their consequences, so could hardly blame Teresa.

Early in morning I left for Harbin, driving on U.S. 11 North. In Harbin I drove to Richard's trailer, and he was happy to see me. Julie welcomed me with a smile at the front desk and assigned me to a private room in Redwood 1. I took the opportunity to work on my car which had developed a chronic idling problem. I bought an EGR valve at a Chrysler dealer and installed it the next day. Bob Dunn, the auto shop manager, was very polite. I was determined to keep my car in top shape; it was my only means of transportation. A breakdown on the road could lead to tragedy for me.

During this period Harbin had caused a tremendous impact on my lifestyle. I was eating vegetarian dinners more often, and jazz and New Age music replaced most of the rock and fast music. But still I felt a nostalgia for the music of the '60s and '70s, music which expressed more feeling and was loaded with energy, a type of music that was part of a new trend in American society. American music was part of history. In Vietnam it was not the bombs and daily battles that conquered the Vietnamese people, but American culture and its music. The impact I felt was from a constant transition of my political and social values.

I was aware that by this time the FBI had learned a lot about me. One morning after a week of relaxing at Harbin, once again I left the community, vanishing into the immense underground.

My experiences at the Farm and Sierra Hot Springs communities and my return to Harbin had brought many meaningful changes into my life. Finally, the decision was made: I wanted only to vanish into anonymity in the vast underground.

CRISIS IN AMERICAN SOCIETY

After the last election, the Republicans gained an assuming majority in the Congress forcing President Clinton and his wife Hillary to retreat from all their social reforms, including the controversial universal health care program to cover all Americans. Former President Jimmy Carter, also under pressure by special interest groups, failed to implement this social program. Although Republicans never had the talent to solve the social crisis in America, some how, they were elected by a majority of votes, which expressed the frustration of the people against the Democrats.

The Clinton administration intensified its attacks on the Republican of waging “class warfare.” While the Democrats gained support from the middle class by painting the “Republicans as slavish servants of the rich cutting school lunches to give more tax to the wealthy,” the Republicans to cozy up the middle class saying, “Democrats want to soak the rich to pay for shiftless welfare recipients.” Vice President Al Gore said the Republicans, “they take from hard-working middle-income American families and give it to the wealthiest.” Whatever is the outcome of this mud-fights, America is heading for disaster.

Poverty Program Grew. In the wake of the urban riots, many liberals believed that the White House surrendered in their war on poverty, ignoring the plight of inner-city residents. Some conservatives believed George Bush had neglected domestic spending while his Administration blamed the riots on the failure of the social programs of the '60s. During the 1995 new budget, the Clinton administration was unable to deters the Republican majority in the Congress of cannibalizing social security and medicare.

The American Dream of a home, a car and a savings account, all on one salary,

now lives in Europe and Japan. In many respects, Japan today emulates America during the 1950s. While Americans still appear to be living well, they have little savings, but instead have gone grievously into debt. The entire household must now go to work to keep up the family payments on the American Dream.

United States Supreme Court. The Reagan Administration succeeded in appointing new conservative Supreme Court Judges to protect the interests of the plutocrats . . . and civil rights organizations and labor unions are in serious trouble. What the American people have achieved since the 1960s, the Reagan and the Bush Administrations took away in a single stroke and without hesitation.

High Court Rules U.S. Can Seize suspect Abroad. According to the new ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Government may kidnap people from a foreign country to stand trial, even if the United States has no extradition treaty with that country. Voting 6 to 3, the Court cleared the way for the trial of Humberto Alvarez, a Mexican accused of participating in the 1985 kidnapping and murder of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Agent Enrique Camarena and his pilot. The DEA arranged to have the doctor forcibly abducted from his office in Guadalajara and flown to El Paso, Texas, where he was arrested by DEA agents. In its ruling (*United States vs. Alvarez Machin*, 91-712) the Court stated: "...comes at a time when the United States has indicated an increased willingness to reach outside its borders, even without the approval of the foreign country, to go after criminal suspects in international terrorism and drug trafficking cases." Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, writing for the court, stated that "although such kidnappings may be 'shocking' and violate international law, they are not prohibited by the extradition law, they are not prohibited by the extradition treaty outlining procedures for obtaining criminal suspects or the Constitution. The fact of Alvarez's forcible abduction does not therefore prohibit his trial in a court in the United States for

violation of criminal laws of the United States.”

Justice John Paul Stevens in a dissenting opinion joined by Justice's Harry Blackman and Sandra Day O'Connor said that “desire for revenge is no justification for disregarding the rule of law that this court announced today.”

The Mexican Government filed a protest on the kidnapping, arguing it violated a 1978 extradition treaty between the two countries, demanding Alvarez's return and promising he would be prosecuted in Mexico where the crime had occurred. Mexico contended the United States had no legal jurisdiction in the alleged criminal offense. Alvarez, who maintained his innocence, has been jailed in the United States since his abduction in 1990. The Canadian Government, which also has an extradition treaty with the United States, filed a brief in the case, supporting Mexico and asserting that “such abductions contravene fundamental principles of justice that Canada has sought to uphold.”

In the Alvarez case, the Federal Appeal Court in California ordered his return to Mexico and overturned his conviction. Another man, Rene Martin Verdugo, who was also abducted in Mexico, was ordered to stand trial in the United States for the murder of Camarena. It is interesting to notice that the United States during World War II, criticized Nazi Germany for kidnapping allied spies operating in Sweden; now, after several decades the U.S. is committing the same sin.⁵

The trial related to DEA agent Enrique Camarena was overshadowed by charges that the CIA used Mexican drug traffickers to smuggle weapons to “Contra Forces” in Central America. The Mexican drug trafficking cartel kidnapped, tortured and murdered him operated until then with virtual impunity. The testimony of pilots who flew weapons to the Contras and returned to the United States with drug cargos was published in 1988

⁵ Ruth Marcus, *Washington Post*, June, 1992.

by the Senate Foreign Relations Narcotics Subcommittee.

The “guns for drugs” scheme was also a key issue in Avirgan vs. Hull. But until the trial of Camarena's killer, most of these reports centered on “Contra Camps” in Honduras and Costa Rica. Documents released at the trial show that drug airstrips and bases in Mexico also played a role in the Central America War. The personal attempt to kill Eden Pastora came as the renegade Contra leader was resisting pressure by the CIA to merge his small guerrilla band with the Nicaraguan Force, a large rebel army controlled by the United States. Although Pastora was a Contra commander, he hated other Contra leaders who had been officers in the Nicaraguan National Guard. He also provided information about the drugs-for-weapons operation to a Mexican journalist who was killed the day of the La Penca bombing. In fact, Pastora suffered a CIA-sponsored bomb attack which targeted two Mexican journalists at La Penca, killed for getting too close to the guns-for-drugs operation.⁶

Justice Defend Miranda Rights. Shoring up the right of criminal suspects not to answer police questions, the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that Federal Courts must continue to hear claims that police failed to give Miranda warnings. The court rejected a plea by Michigan officials, supported last year by the Bush Administration, to deny state inmates any chance to go to the Federal Courthouse with Miranda complaints if they already have aired the claim in State Court and failed. The ruling was one of the most important the court has made on right-to-silence, ordering police to tell suspects of their rights before questioning them. That duty was first imposed on police in 1966 in the famous case of *Miranda vs. Arizona*.

Fundamental Rights. Justice David Souter, writing for the majority, said that warnings to suspects “safeguard a fundamental right” that individuals enjoy under the

⁶ Scott and Marshall, 126, 137-38; Andy Land, *Convergence*, Winter, 1991.

Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. That is, not to be forced to give evidence against themselves.”⁷

The war against drugs is a huge waste of funds. Drug efforts to cut the supply are not working, despite the billions of dollars being spent. Federal drug warriors were expected to spend more than \$2.1 billion this year, pursuing President Bush's national drug interdiction policy, a strategy critics claim is a gigantic waste of taxpayer's money. An additional \$5.9 billion, earmarked for law enforcement and international activities, will also be spent primarily on the federal effort to curtail the supply of illegal drugs. The ultimate purpose of the supply-side drug war was to make the drugs less available and more expensive on the nation's streets.

Experts of the American Commission on Drug Policy stated that “careful analysis of national drug policy shows the drug supplies have not been reduced, yet federal officials continue to squander money on ill-fated interdiction programs.” More than 70 percent of the federal drug budget was aimed at interdiction and other supply-reduction programs, while less than 30 percent was budgeted for drug treatment and education.

Since 1989, the Defense Department has been assigned as the leading agency in detecting international drug smugglers. Its interdiction budget has almost tripled from \$329 million to more than \$900 million. A Congressional study found the military effort had failed to reduce the supply of cocaine on the nation's streets and would never be capable of executing such a task.⁸

The United States Government has neglected social programs while working aggressively to control social drugs. On a single Fourth of July holiday weekend there

⁷ *Chronicle Wire Services*, April, 1993.

⁸ Bob Sablature, *Houston Chronicle*, August, 1992.

were 400 alcohol-related deaths nationwide from the total of 701 casualties according to Mother's Against Drunk Drivers (MADD). Although alcohol has been causing increasing injuries, damages and fatalities, and U.S. Government accepts alcohol as a drug, part of the traditional American culture. The major reason for the war against social drugs is the substantial amount of money that it generates which undermines the wealth and power needed for the plutocrats to rule.

Libya refused to surrender two officers to face trial in the United States related to the bombing of the Pan American fly, alleging they won't have a **fair trial**. They are right, the American jurisprudence is a political extension of the government. General Manuel Noriega after his kidnapping by U.S. troops faced criminal charges in Miami, never had a fair trial. The proceeding was manipulated to obtain conviction; also, the government illegally monitored all his conversation with his attorneys, family and friends with the blessing of Federal Court.

The L.A. Riots. In 1992, Black Americans were still suffering from an excess of brutality from local law enforcement. While the U.S. criticized China as well as other nations for violation of civil rights, American police continued to torture and kill poor citizens. In Los Angeles, the police beat another Black and on April 28, 1992, a white jury acquitted them, causing another riot. In the aftermath, 58 persons were killed, 2,383 injured, \$717 million in losses occurred, and over 12,000 persons were arrested. Compared to this riot the Tienanmen Square Massacre in China was a picnic. Experts stated that the same social conditions that sparked the riots in Watts a few decades ago were the same social conditions that created this 1992 riot.

The Reagan and Bush Administrations were credited with pouring fuel on the fire of perennial crises in the ghettos when they suspended funds for social programs in the cities nationwide. More than 25.4 million Americans depend on food stamps. "Food

stamps rise sharply in recessions and come down in recoveries,” said Robert Greentein, former director of the Agriculture Department's Food and Nutrition Service.⁹

President Bush refused to provide the inner cities with any substantial aid, but invested \$40 million to oust Saddam Hussein. The Bush Administration proposed a \$15 million budget for Intelligence and covert action to overthrow Iraqi President Hussein and later increased CIA spending on the Iraq effort to \$40 million. All these dollars were spent in vain. Senior U.S. officials believe that Hussein will be able to hold onto power indefinitely.¹⁰

Communist Leaders. Those who believe that the Communist Party is finished are in for a striking surprise. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and other former Republics, who replaced the obsolete Russian Communist Government for capitalistic principles, faced substantial problems in the transition. In February, 1993, Lithuania became the first former Soviet Republic re-electing an ex-Communist leader. Since Lithuania's independence was recognized after Moscow's 1991 coup attempt, living conditions drastically declined. Lithuania's economic problems are linked with those of other former Soviet Republics. Communist leaders are playing an important role in those new Republics.

Human Rights. Finally the United States opens files on Human Rights for the first time. In September, 1994, the State Department released the first accounting of its own human rights practices to an international body. Among the more recent human rights areas of concern cited by the department were police brutality, the death penalty and attacks on abortion rights activists.

⁹ *Washington Post*, May 25, 1992.

¹⁰ *Los Angeles Times*, May, 1994.

The State Department regularly issues judgmental reports on human rights records of nations around the world, but never before has assessed their own record. It did so in a 213-page compliance report prepared to conform with the 1966 International Covenant on civil and political rights, which the United States had not signed until two years ago. One of the caveats imposed by the Bush Administration holds that any treaty provision that goes beyond U.S. law or practice will be considered null. Similarly, the United States refused to accept a prohibition against the execution of juvenile offenders, which is permissible in about half the States. The only other nations that execute juveniles are Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria.

Two of the nation's largest human rights organizations, the American Civil Liberties Union and Human Rights Watch, issued a scathing report saying the United States falls woefully short of complying with the covenant. The groups reported significant shortcomings in the area of police brutality, treatment of prisoners, race relations and sex discrimination.¹¹

The FBI and the Waco Massacre. The Waco siege will be remembered as a series of tragic miscalculations, 51 days apart. First, four ATF agents were killed and 16 were wounded. After the FBI and ATF agents executed its commando raid using an 50-ton converted M-60 tank, the religious commune was burned to the ground and most of its residents, some 86 adults and children died. Koresh knew in advance of the raid and most agents believed they were knowingly sent into a deathtrap. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno authorized the commando assault because the FBI had run out of ideas on how to arrest and send to prison David Koresh and his followers.

Analyzing the facts, there was no justification for attacking a religious group that was not involved in any criminal activity; but in the months leading up to the February 18,

¹¹ *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 13, 1994, A3.

1993, raid, federal agents had amassed plenty of justification for storming the Waco compound: David Koresh spent \$200,000 on weapons and ammunition, including 123 M-16s to be turned into automatic weapons. Another allegation was that teenagers had been sexually abused. Koresh had married a fourteen-year-old girl named Rachel Jones. Also, Koresh indulged liberally in sex with the women in the cult, including other teenage girls, claiming them as his wives. The cult practiced free sex, and some adults, often, had intimate relations with other younger members. Cult members believed that it was up to the commune to institute their own lifestyle ruling and not the government.

Since 1982 the jurisdiction of the FBI has widely increased and new assignments from the White House and Capitol Hill just keep coming. By the summer of 1993 the agency had become involved in 281 criminal violations which included: gangs drugs, street crimes, hate crimes, savings-and-loan scams, car-jacking and protecting abortion clinics. It was also participating with local police in 71 task forces that targeted fugitives and violent gangs. Presently the FBI has a \$2 billion budget with 10,355 agents.

The 1968 gun-control law is one of the most controversial. It was legislated as a result of a series of political assassinations in which apparently U.S. Government agencies had been involved. It began with the assassination of former President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and Robert Kennedy. Those shootings led to the two most extensive federal gun-control statutes ever.¹²

Acquitted by 12, condemned by one. The eleven members who survived the shoot-out and final blaze of the Davidian Commune] were taken to trial. Four ATF agents were killed during the assault. On February 26, 1994, a federal jury found four of them innocent of all charges and the other seven guilty of lesser offenses related to manslaughter and several weapon possessions. On June 17, U.S. District Judge Walter S. Smith nullified the

¹² *U.S. News & World Report*, May 3, 1993, 37-40; *Time Magazine*; May 3, 1993, 33.

jury verdicts, sentencing most of the Defendants to the maximum of 40-year terms. During the trial, the judge didn't uphold any of the Defense objections, but upheld all the Prosecutor's objections. Analyzing the policy of assaulting the commune made very little sense, when ATF agents were able to arrest David Koresh on his daily visit to town.¹³

FBI AGENTS PROMOTED FOR ROLES IN IDAHO SIEGE. The FBI Director Louis Freeh disciplined the FBI deputy director Larry Potts and 11 agents for “improper judgment and neglect of duty” during a 1992 shootout killing the son and wife of white separatist Randy Weaver. His wife, Vicky Weaver was shot as she held her 10-months baby in he arms. Right away, Freeh enthusiastically proposed deputy director Potts for promotion to the bureau No.2 job on a permanent basis. Senator Larry Craig, R-Idaho, was pressing the Idaho prosecutor Randall Day to charge federal agents under state law. Day was reviewing Justice Department internal investigations, which concluded on October of 1994 that federal criminal charges were not warranted.

Civil War in America. On April 19, 1995 a Federal Building in downtown, Oklahoma City was blew up with a toll death of 167, becoming the tragedy of the year. The bombing instant flashbacks to the bomb that rocked New York's World Trade Center in 1993 where Federal authorities charged Sheik Omar Abel Rahman and 10 codefendant. The accused mastermind of the trade center bombing, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, was kidnapped by the FBI from Pakistan and flown back to New York to face trial.

First, authorities believed the bombing was an international terrorist action, but

¹³ Dick J. Reavis, Dallas' free-lance writer.

days later the investigation reversed itself when a former soldier named Timothy McVeigh, was arrested and Terry Nichols surrendered. Initially the two brothers, Terry Nichols and James Nichols, were charged with conspiring with others to make an explosive device; afterward, McVeigh and Terry Nichols were charged with the bombing. The government sought the death penalty in the attack. The following Sunday authorities called a national day of mourning and held a televised memorial for the victims who died in the explosion pledging to prosecute those responsible. But the women and children who died at Waco didn't had a nationwide memorial prayer by public officials.

According to FBI sources the incident was linked to the catastrophe at Waco and ATF and FBI were among the agencies that had offices at Oklahoma City's office building. The doomsday cult's compound burned on April 19, 1993, after a standoff with federal agents. Another incident that also might precipitated the Oklahoma bombing was the confrontation with the Idaho white supremacy Randy Weaver, who believes that no gun-owning citizens are safe and refused to pay taxes. In August 1992, Weaver hold up for 11 days in a cabin after his son, a federal agent and his wife were killed in gun battles. He was acquitted of murder, convicted of lesser charges and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

The New underground. There is some similarity of the radical of the 1960's, and the new underground dissidents of the 1990's. The Michigan militia surfaced in the investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing after one suspect was arrested. The Michigan Militia was created based on an ideology of fighting any foreign invasion and apocalyptic showdown with tyrants plotting to oppress America; they stockpile weapons and ammunitions, conduct military field exercises isolate forests. Apparently, the militia has good connections within the military, who provides them with intelligence data and potential plans against civilians. On April 30 1995, Sixty Minutes interviewed two active

members of the Special Forces who identified themselves as part of a government opposition connected to the militia movement.

The militia movement spreaded rapidly nationwide. The FBI raid against the Davidian commune at Waco is strong evidence that the government intends to wage war on citizens who refuse to give up their guns. The militia movement alleges that the federal government had changed the original Bill of Rights that allowed citizens the right to bear arms, and limited American's civil liberties. In the past, right- wing paramilitary organizations had the unofficial support of the government to arm themselves and fight communist; but after communist Russia collapsed and joined other nations to implement capitalism values there was not need any longer for the government to support these right- wing groups.

Citizen for Legal Reforms, is another Dallas-based organization crusading against lawyers, bureaucrats and police. A Gallup Poll found 39 percent of American think the federal government “poses an immediate threat to the rights and freedom of ordinary American.” All these organizations fight the establishment in different manner, peaceful and with violence methods, but they have something in common, there is a substantial need for a change.

Aftermath of the Bombing. A week after the April 19, bombing, President Clinton sent a \$1.5 billion anti-terrorism measure to Congress while law enforcement increased security in federal buildings; the main road to the White House was immediately closed. And months later, the Senate responded with a swift \$2 billion anti-terrorism legislation package, expanding laws enforcement' powers and limiting appeals to death-row. There is not doubt the nation is divided more than ever, and the government remain out of touch with the average citizen and their social problems.¹⁴

¹⁴ *Associate Press*, April 20-22 and June 7, 1995.

Vietnam. For over three decades public discussion of the Vietnam War has gone on without the participation of one of the most important architects, Robert Strange McNamara, who ran the Pentagon under Kennedy and Johnson, but never talked about it. Recently, McNamara wrote his Vietnam memoir antagonizing the right wing as well as the left wing saying: “The war caused terrible injury to America.” McNamara was a whiz kid with limited grasp of military affairs recruited by John F. Kennedy to head the Pentagon. Years later he learned that war was not manageable. Vietnam was a war full of errors and hesitations. He narrated Kennedy's endorsement of the 1963 military coup against South Vietnam's dictator Ngo Dinh Diem. After his death, the Viet Cong gained more ground; eventually, the expansion of the war attracted North Vietnam regular troops. When Lyndon Johnson became President he kept McNamara, Rusk and other advisors. Johnson committed himself to the defense of South Vietnam, but had to forfeit his dreams of social programs of “Great Society.” McNamara became an advocate of bombing, pauses, and illusionary peace diplomacy. On February of 1968, McNamara left his post to preside the World Bank.¹⁵

With toasts of sweet Russian champagne, U.S. and Vietnamese officials signed an agreement with the United States to establish liaison offices in each other's countries in January of 1995. President Clinton said that Vietnam must do more to help solve the fate of 1,621 American servicemen listed as missing in Vietnam before full diplomatic relations are restored. North Vietnam took over the former South Vietnamese Embassy in Washington, abandoned after the fall of the Saigon government in 1975. Last year President Clinton lifted a 19-year old U.S. trade embargo.¹⁶

¹⁵ Peter Baerstrup, *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 1-7, 1995; page 32 and 33.

¹⁶ Associate Press, January 31, 1995.

The CIA. Despite a decisive victory over Moscow's spies, a *U.S. NEWS & World Report* inquiry found America's elite spy agency plagued by incompetence and fraud. Some of the problems were addressed when the Congress convened hearings on the CIA's \$3 billion budget.

After the CIA operations officer Edward Lee Howard defected to Moscow in 1985, three FBI agents were disciplined for failing to apprehend him. Howard evaded an FBI surveillance team and fled to Russia with CIA secrets. Although double Agent Aldrich Ames bought a \$540,000 house and a \$40,000 Jaguar, it took FBI counterintelligence experts nine years to catch him. Even so, the Aldrich catastrophe had not become a political issue on the scale of the CIA's Reagan-era covert operations in places like Angola and Nicaragua.

One of the many crises of the agency that hit the front page was Bay of Pigs, but others seldom came into light. Another of those crises occurred when Iranian radicals seized the U.S. Embassy in 1979. Later in 1986, the Chief of Operations known as "Directorate of Operations," warned that the CIA's radio communications with the handful of American secret agents in Iran were not secure. Field officers failed to take action and in 1988 Iranian authorities hunted down Iranian spies working for the CIA; they were tortured and executed leaving the agency in the dark. That loss of agents in Iran was the second collapse of the spy network in that country.

The Directorate of Operations earned a reputation for treating some defectors roughly, perhaps because spies who volunteer classified information are always considered double agents. Some of those spies refused to provide more information and cooperate with the CIA. Often, case officers exaggerate the value of their agents and also claim nonexistent agents to obtain additional money for expenses; one of them bought a Porshe.

Despite the agency's success over the Russians, most Cuban and East German spies were double agents. The CIA fired a case officer named Mark McFarlin for knowingly allowing several shipments of cocaine from Venezuela into the United States. To complicate matters, McFarlin became romantically involved with Drug Enforcement Administration officials in Caracas.

With the collapse of the Soviet empire, the CIA found itself drawn into new missions like the war on drugs, weapons proliferation, economic intelligence and terrorism. The criticism of the clandestine service is not whether the CIA is carrying out bad foreign-policy directives, but whether it is doing a good job. Nevertheless, the daring and ingenuity of the clandestine operation services helped the CIA win many battles against the ruthless Soviet Secret Service.¹⁷

Spies. Currently, the American people have begun to awaken in a dramatic fashion concerning their relationship and loyalty to the mighty United States of America. Since 1975 over 40 persons have been charged with espionage, including an FBI agent. As a consequence, public respect for secrecy, and betrayals of lower paid bureaucrats and military personnel had increased. Some of these flashy spy cases are: Christopher John Boyce, a young brilliant man from California; John A Walker, retired from the U.S. Navy; and former CIA Agent Aldrich A. Ames. Boyce worked for several years for TRW, a company producing spy satellites for the CIA; he provided the Russians in Mexico City with intelligence data of an ultra-secret spy satellite. Boyce began to be disturbed when learned that the CIA, who had a secret base in Australia collecting data was deceiving that friendly government; U.S. satellites were used to spy on not only potential enemies such as Russia and China, but on friendly countries such as France and Israel. Boyce saw its operation as part of a pattern, which included Vietnam, Spiro Agnew, Richard Nixon, the

¹⁷ John Walcott/Brian Duffy, *U.S. News & World Report*, July 4, 1994; 34-47.

assassination of former President Salvador Allende in Chile and others.

In the fall of 1967 John Walker initiated his contact walking into the Soviet Embassy in Washington. He was not as idealistic as Boyce. John had become accustomed to a big-spender life-style and needed money. He sold to the Russians critical information about: a study identifying problems with the nuclear Tomahawk land cruise missile; a plan how the Navy would respond if war broke out in Central America; schematics of the missile system about the U.S.S. Nimitz and its known weaknesses; an exhaustive study of how America's spy satellites could be sabotaged; disclosed the location of sensitive underwater microphones used by the U.S. Navy to track Soviet subs; and authentic codes to launch U.S. nuclear missiles. His former wife, Barbara Joy Crowley, knew about his secret life for at least 15 years. She was frustrated with her marital life, and those domestic problems had caused an addiction to vodka. And her daughter Laura Walker was peddling money to her father and friends to keep her act together. Eventually, Barbara and her daughter Laura did it both ways: first, they betrayed their country and later destroyed their family. Barbara, seeking revenge, went to the FBI, ending her former husband's career. But, she was distressed when she learned that her son Michael Walker, a seaman assigned to the carrier Nimitz, was arrested. Jerry Alfred Whitworth, a former communication specialist for the U.S. Navy was also arrested. In the aftermath, the FBI portrayed Barbara and Laura as heroines.¹⁸ And Ames was one of the most sophisticated double agents because of his official position as a CIA agent and as Chief of Soviet Counterintelligence in Mexico City, which gave him access to so much classified intelligence data. He had spied for the Soviet Union since 1985. The CIA and FBI officials claimed Ames compromised three dozen operations inside Russia. During

¹⁸ Ed Magnuson, *Times Magazine*, June 10, 1985; 18-26; Peter Earley, *Family of Spies*, Bantam: New York, 1989; 5, 12-17, 347, 403.

preliminary hearings in Federal Court, Ames described the function of the CIA as a total waste of human resources.

Christopher, the Walkers, Whitworth and Ames, unconsciously, reached a common consensus, of excluding their loyalty to the government; and according to them, pursuing free enterprise and capitalistic values, there is nothing wrong with spying for money.¹⁹

The AIDS Syndrome. The first civil action complaint that I filed in U.S. District Court for Southern District of Florida Federal Court was dismissed when a federal judge ruled that AIDS was legislation issue, and it was not for the court to decide this matter. Time has shown that the court acted improperly. My second civil action filed in State Court got lost in a labyrinth of red tape. In my opinion our system of government is obsolete and fails to support fundamental Constitutional principles to protect the American people's best interests.

The system of prisons in the United States continues to promote homosexuality, breeding the AIDS virus and exporting it to free society. Conjugal visits has been traditionally banned in the federal system of prisons and in most state prisons. Since I filed my petition of Mandamus, very little has been done to protect the prison population or the general public. After California and New York, the State of Florida is the third leading in the number of AIDS cases in the United States with the total of 35,378 as of December, 1993. Since 1981, there has been 355,936 AIDS cases diagnosed, with 250,000 deaths reported, making the case-fatality rate 61.2 percent for white males.²⁰

Development of AIDS generally occurs about a decade after infection. In 1994 a

¹⁹ *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 19; September 19, 1994; A-3; Robert Lindsey, *The Falcon and the Snowman*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979; 63, 83, 107, 145, and 164.

²⁰ *Center for Disease Control*, December, 1993.

new study showed a very different pattern; only a quarter of the most recent infections are gay men; half of the new infections are among hard drug users who share needles. And about a quarter are heterosexually transmitted. Most of the 40,000 new infections with HIV, and as much as half of the new infections among heterosexuals are related to crack cocaine. Crack addicts who become infected are mostly young men and women who live in inner cities and are members of minority groups.

Recently the CDC stressed voluntary AIDS testing for pregnant women, making AIDS testing standard prenatal care for the four million women a year who become pregnant; about 2,000 children a year will be infested. Proposal for widespread AIDS testing results have been controversial because of fears that the test results won't be kept confidential and the infected people will have trouble getting insurance or face discrimination.

There is no doubt that AIDS is a puzzle virus.²¹ Therefore, the lower social classes are likely to be a high risk to lethal diseases and other premature causes of death. Within the international intelligence community there had been speculation that the AIDS virus was created by the U.S. Government to destroy the scum in society, but the project went out of control. This might sound like science fiction, but nevertheless, I believe that AIDS was man-made. Recently, Dr. Steve Morse, from Rockefeller University has come with the new theory: "AIDS, as well as other viruses were created when humans intruded into the wild." I don't believe this hypothesis, because AIDS generally attacks those people with certain sexual preferences and drug addictions. It is interesting to notice, most of these contagious bacteria and viruses have mushroomed in the last few decades, after scientists began to mess around with bacteria and viruses with military purposes. Once, the Army tested germs in New York and San Francisco, causing the mysterious deaths of

²¹ Gina Kolata, *New York Times*, March, 1995.

several hundred senior citizens. Chemical warfare is so terrifying that during the Second World War, Nazi-Germany decided to face defeat, instead of using mustard gas against allied forces.²²

After 14 years into the epidemic, the nation is losing interest. Media attention had faded. HIV has proven a formidable foe of science, developing resistance to anti-viral drugs. The public distracted by competing concern, is paying less attention. AIDS had fallen to 17th--behind crime, the economy and other social ills.²³

In Florida the system of prisons continues to be overcrowded. Florida's Governor, Lawton Chiles, who campaigned for re-election made an agreement with the Federal Government to deport criminal aliens to open up space in the prison system. The State wanted to deport 500 imprisoned aliens in 1994; that would save an estimated \$7.5 million.²⁴

Prison System in the United States. The wealthiest country in the world finds it necessary to lock up over one million of its citizens behind bars, because they had failed to find more appropriate ways to deal with the social problems of crime. The nation's state and federal prison population topped one million for the first time in history, hitting 1,012,851. The total is more than double the 462,002 prison population of December 31, 1984.²⁵

The Great Society, a Fading Memory. In a presidential message to the 89th Congress in 1965 Lyndon Johnson declared that "we must arrest and reverse the trend

²² *Time Magazine*, September 5; 66: *Times Magazine*, September 12, 1994; 62-69.

²³ Lisa M. Krieger, *San Francisco Examiner*, January 29, 1995.

²⁴ *Associated Press/San Francisco Chronicle*, Oct. 28, 1994; B-4.

²⁵ *Associated Press/The Monterey County Herald*, Oct. 28, 1994; 1-16A.

toward lawlessness.” With the Vietnam War consuming most of the budget, Johnson replaced his rhetoric of building a “Great Society” for fighting crime in the streets of America; therefore, civil-rights and poverty issues practically disappeared from presidential pronouncements. This active combat against crime called for a fair and efficient system of law enforcement to deal with those who break the law. Crime prevention and crime fighting became intensified at all levels of government.²⁶

The presidential and congressional election of 1968 capitalized on the rising of the crime rate in America. Each candidate blamed the problem on others. Richard Nixon, in the election of 1968, committed himself to a full-scale attack on the problem. However, the greatest threat to law and order was the protest against the war in Vietnam, the draft system and racial injustice.

And in 1994, crime continued to be a dominant concern of voters. President Clinton, searching for support, promoted the Administration's crime bill addressing the International Association of Chief's of Police in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The trip was also designed to capitalize on Clinton's announcement that the 30 billion dollar crime bill would help to hire more street police. Clinton came up with the idea of hiring more underpaid police officers in exchange for fringe benefits like education, medical care and hospitalization.²⁷

COMMUNES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES. Most mainstream Americans are unaware of the existence of another way new life in the United States. Living in commune and community is a new concept lifestyle, in which members become and extended family, and frequently, friends and visitors are residents of another

²⁶ Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., 857.

²⁷ Tom Kenworthy, *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 18, 1994; A-3.

community.

The fundamental different between commune and community is: Communes are generally organized in rural areas, a group of people linked by a common policy sharing almost everything, members participate in planning, receiving small monthly allowance and the ownership is collectively; while in community the people has a common social, economic, and political interest, and individually own property. Each group is unique, having different structures.

Essentially, these groups have a relaxed environment and live collectively. Communes are well known for having a lower class structure providing barely--the basic. These organizations succeed in business enterprises requiring intensive labor. In some communities living condition might not be attractive as a way of life to mainstream society. For this reason children when become adults, move out seeking better future.

In the 70s some religious organizations succeeded in their economic goals, having a free labor pool, they competed against other conventional business enterprises. But they require total obedience and commitment from their members. To satisfy Internal Revenue regulations, all non-profit organizations should provide some type of social service to general society. Some of these organizations are registered as religious groups, others provide an environment and treatment for alcohol and other addicted chemical substances, and another groups enhance mental health to the community and members.

Some Cubans have the wrong belief, this unified lifestyle is linked to communist. Although this concept is nothing new, in the United States this lifestyle became a side effect of the hippie revolution in the 1960s. Initially, the federal and state governments were reluctant to accept this new lifestyle, because is a contradiction of capitalistic values--ownership, possession, greed and competition.

Twin Oaks commune was a pioneer, who fought the federal government to obtain

a non-profit status. They are proud of walking everyday to work, instead of driving into heavy traffic promoting pollution. The commune has a hammock factory right in their backyard. China with a vast population, lack of adequate transportation and technology was the first nation to implement this project having workers living within a walking distance from production centers.

The Farm community was harassed by local cops for their tendency to grow their own pot--they don't any more. And for many years Harbin Hot Springs was not accepted by local folks. But their economic and political influence in town, changed the mind of many folks.

Another commune is Ganas, which is striking different from all of them: Ganas is located in a dense metropolitan area in New York, and practice free sex. The commune could be define as a cult using feedback technic. The core group worship their leader, an energetic and clever lady, Mildred Gordon. The Matriarch engage in daily and endless therapy sessions with residents and visitors during dinner; the conversation topic is focus on a single subject related to commune interest. For a monthly fee of \$600 visitors are provided with room and board--a bargain. But working for Ganas might become a nightmare. Members live in constant pressure, working long hours, and suppose to be available to work at anytime.

The most sophisticate from all of them is Esalen institute, in Big Sur, California. The resort is locate in the striking scenery along the pacific coast. Like Harbin, wearing clothe is optional. They have a beautiful garden of flowers and vegetables. The great majority of guests are affluent persons and Europeans tourists. Esalen is registered as a mental health organization. They have a small group of permanent residents receiving salary. The majority of the labor pool comes from temporary students, who pay approximately \$800 due, plus a monthly fee. During eight months the student work in

exchange for room and board, having free access to a mental health program, and receive substantial discount on massage classes and other educational programs. Nevertheless, Esalen is a very exclusive resort, operating as a business enterprise catering the rich.

In Israel communes are called Kibbutz. This type of communes are basically agricultural and are sponsored by the government. Communes are very common within Communist countries.

Communes and communities are also customary in other democratic European nations, because they have been through so many wars and experienced so much lack of basic needs, that this way of life became a necessity. In Scandinavian countries communes and communities are very traditional. What is interesting is that often, communities are formed by upper class groups to share kitchen, dining hall, recreational facilities, and other basic expenses.

In South Florida a contractor applied this new concept in a housing project, in which each tenant paid a minimum of \$600 for an apartment, including food. The apartment building has a main kitchen, dining hall, laundry, and recreational facility. Those families with children for an extra monthly fee has baby-sitting service. The diversify monthly fee vary according to the housing amenities.

With all their internal problems, commune and communities are performing a fundamental social function that the government failed to execute.

This cooperative way of life offer more security to the members and is an economically wise. These organizations are stable, enhance mental health and are a powerful instrument to deal with the government. Currently, the capitalistic system does not enhance the same salutary effect that used to. In the United States more jobs would continue to drift to China, Mexico, and other undeveloped nations, and then--living in communes and communities would become more attractive to most Americans.

In his book *Criminology* Richard Quinney defines the political order, the legal order and crime, concluding:

The Legal Order and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism. The legal order of the United States changed and adapted as the nation grew economically. In each stage, the economic development requires a special kind of legal order to ensure the dominance and continuance of the new capitalist system. Criminal law is one of the primary ways of maintaining the social order, managing problems caused by structural conditions and helping the capitalist system grow.

During the 1960s, the legal order entered a new stage of development. Early in the decade the nation's problems were simply and conveniently concentrated on one domestic enemy--crime. Crime, and the fear of it, were crucial in political campaigns. The Federal Government assumed a new role: launching the "war against crime."

Crime in the Capitalistic Society. A Marxist understanding of crime began with the recognition that crime is a material problem. Criminology today supports current institutions at the expenses human freedom and social revolution. Accordingly, the source of crime are believed to come from the person who violate the law, not in the society that produces criminal activity. The necessary condition for any society is that its members produce their material means of subsistence. Social production is primary in all social life.

Since crime is a manifestation of society's material conditions, failure of conventional criminology is to ignore the material conditions of capitalism. All social life in capitalist society, is subject to economic conditions of production and the struggle between classes produced by these conditions. For the capitalist system to operate and survive, the capitalist class must exploit the labor of the working class. The relationship is dialectical: The capitalist class survives by appropriating the surplus labor of the working class, and the working class as an exploited class exists as long as surplus labor is

required in production. All history of capitalism is the history of class struggle. Capitalism as a system of production, based on exploitation by the ruling capitalist class that owns and controls the means of production, is a dynamic system that passes through its own stages of development. In fact, capitalism is constantly transforming its own forces and relations to production. As a result, the whole of capitalist society is constantly being altered within the capitalist political economy. The capitalist system must continuously reproduce itself; therefore it is the state that promotes the capitalist order. A subtler way of reproducing capitalist society is to perpetuate the capitalist conception of reality. Those who rule in a capitalist society accumulate capital at the expense of those who work, and they impose their ideology on the workers as well.

Criminal Justice, the Monopoly Sector and the Military-Industrial Complex.

The state, in its efforts to stimulate the accumulation of capital and stabilize the social order, forms an alliance with the monopoly private sector of the economy and the Military-Industrial Complex. The continued growth of the monopoly sector and Military-Industrial Complex depends increasingly on the state. And in a symbiotic relationship, the continued growth of the state depends on the monopoly sector for its own economic well-being as well as services and technology for maintaining social stability. Social programs financed by the state provide new investment opportunities for monopoly industries. The new technocratic approach to crime and social control has developed rapidly. Under the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), a multi-million dollar market in domestic control has been established for hundreds of industries and research institutes. Social expenditures on criminal justice necessarily increase with the development of advanced capitalism. Criminal justice is the modern way of controlling a surplus population. A way of controlling this unemployed surplus population is simply and directly by confinement in prisons. So the rhetoric of criminal justice and conventional

criminology, that prisons are for incarcerating “criminals,” is a myth. Violence and criminals are creations and byproducts of capitalism.

Accommodation and Resistance. As the capitalist system reproduces itself, crimes are committed. One of the system's contradictions is that some of its own laws must be violated to perpetuate the system. Accommodation and resistance to these conditions are basic to the class struggle. Crimes of violence rise when the problems of life are further inflamed by the loss of life-supporting activity. Crime under capitalism is an appropriate and consistent response to the material conditions of “surviving” in society. The capitalist state denies those behaviors as “crime.”

The Political Order of Criminal Justice. The capitalist state promotes the further development of the capitalist mode of production. One of the fundamental characteristics of advanced capitalism is the political economy of criminal justice. The court system is a political agent of capitalism. Welfare and law enforcement are the primary forms of the state's social expenses, regulating class struggle, repressing action against the social order, and giving legitimacy to the capitalist system. Creating and administering the criminal justice system as a whole has become a principal social expense of the capitalist state. Criminal justice, as a social expense of the state, necessarily expands with the further development of capitalism. The largest share of expenditures in the criminal justice system is obviously spent on “employment” of workers in the system, currently with a million employees. Workers in the criminal justice system, then, provide in their labor “the use-value of ensuring the maintenance of the capitalist class structure.” They are the “repressive workers” who engage in actual or threatened use of physical force and legal punishment against those infringing upon the social order of capitalist society. The concrete value of their work is to maintain domestic order, to make the society safe for capitalist accumulation, and to protect class relations. The crisis, however, becomes a

fiscal one: State expenditures on criminal justice grows faster than the revenues available to support an expanding criminal justice system. Yet, as the social problems generated by the capitalist mode of production grow, repressive measures must be expanded. A moral position is taken whenever any human conduct is limited and controlled. The decision to regulate some conduct, to the exclusion of other behavior, is an action to construct and protect a particular kind of social order. Former President's Reagan and Bush described the present system as a "new order."

Beyond Criminal Justice. Criminal justice is the characteristic form of control in advanced capitalist society. As the crisis in capitalism grows, however, the capitalist development reaches its final stages, even criminal justice fails to control the population. The crisis in capitalism at the same time produces a crisis in criminal justice. The final development of capitalism will be the initial development of socialism. Out of capitalism's final development socialist forms appear. Capitalism is transformed into socialism, when capitalism can no longer reconcile the conflict between the current mode of production and the relations of production. That is what is happening in the United States today.

Finally, when the capitalist system fails to control the population, criminal justice ceases to be effective, and a new social life forms "socialism." The transition of socialism is the ultimate trend of history in a capitalist society. Socialistic social theory provides people with an understanding of their alienation and oppressed conditions and offers a means of expression that is the beginning of socialist revolution.²⁸

²⁸ Quinney, 23-24, 90-2, 105-63-64, 221-22, 384-85-98-401, 405-15, 419-22.

CHAPTER 25

Since Castro took over, the die-hard Cuban exiles have played an important role in the foreign policy of the United States. Generally, their activities has an element of illegality and violence. Watergate was one of them. However, some operations were conducted within the scope of the law and with humanitarian purpose. During the Somoza dictatorship, the Brigade 2506 sent food and medicine to the victims of the earthquake. Years later during the Nicaraguan Civil War created and supported by the U.S. against the Sandinista government, Cuban exiles participated in the training of Nicaraguans, in military operations, and operated a field hospital in Homestead, Florida providing medical care to the *Contra* rebels. Also the Brigade sent humanitarian aid in food and medicine to Santo Domingo, after a hurricane flooded the Island. All their activities had a touch of politics. There was no doubt that the powerful CIA is their shadow, manipulating and profiting from those events.

Today the Cuban exile community is led by a dynamic man, Jorge Mas Canosa, a Brigade veteran and successful businessman who presides over the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) supported by the Cuban exile elite. Generally, the CANF endorses Republican candidates and supports anti-communist organizations. Recently, Mas Canosa began providing substantial donations to the Democratic Party, just in case they win the presidential election. And he was right, a Democratic candidate named Bill Clinton was elected.

The CANF has been successful in their efforts to allow new Cuban immigrants to emigrate from a third country to the United States to join their families living in the United States.

While Cuba supported the Marxist Government of President Jose Eduardo Dos

Santos in Angola, the CIA and the die-hard Cuban exiles supported the rebel forces presided by Jonas Zavimbi. The Cuban American National Foundation also donated \$3 million for medical supplies to Zavimbi. One time Cuba had at as many as 30,000 troops supporting the Dos Santos Government. There is no doubt the Cuban-American Foundation has become an powerful economic and political organization in the United States.

There is a consensus among those persons who are well-informed about the Cuban affair that enforcement of a U.S. embargo against the Castro Government unfairly penalizes the entire Cuban population. Right-wing politicians in Washington and the CIA were the creators of this policy based on their anti-communist philosophy of solving every political and social problem with military solutions. The United States contents, the embargo against Cuba was imposed because Castro confiscated all U.S. properties without compensation. Another secondary goal of this policy is to establish a precedent that capitalism is the only system of government that works and any other system is obsolete. Also the CIA will never forget the Bay of Pigs defeat. Only China, North Korea, North Vietnam and Cuba remain Communist.

The United States suffered a stunning defeat in the United Nations General Assembly when a resolution calling for an end to its increasing tough economic embargo against Cuba was adopted 101 to 2. Washington's allies considered the embargo an attempt to impose U.S. laws on other countries.¹ The most peculiar thing about this affair-while the U.S. penalize Cuba with an economic embargo and political isolation, they reward their former enemies, North Vietnam and China with international loans.

I was surprised when a few years ago, Vietnamese leaders living in exile in the United States welcomed Washington's decision to reconsider the establishment of

¹ Anthony Goodman, *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 27, 1994; A-12.

diplomatic relations and the lifting of the economic embargo against North Vietnam. I hope the Cuban leaders attain this wisdom. Cuban exiles have lost credibility in the judgment of other nations because some of them are an instrument of Washington and the new order.

The United States has become an unpopular nation, especially in Latin America, where Washington has been imposing its will since the Spanish-American war. Showing their objection to the present policy, leaders of Latin America, Spain and Portugal have agreed to seek an end to the 30-year-old U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. At the end of the fourth annual Iberoamerican summit meeting, more than 20 heads of state and governments approved a declaration critical of U.S. economic measures against Cuba.

The economic crisis has caused a mysterious ailment of the eyes and nervous system that affect over 43,000 people annually. Canada had sent \$360,000 in emergency food aid delivered through the World Food Program to children and pregnant women. Cuba will get another \$720,000 in 1995. Canada and Mexico are the only two nations in America that did not break off trade or diplomatic ties with Cuba after the revolution led by Fidel Castro in 1959. Canada is one of the nations that advocates peaceful political change.²

In recent years, Cuba has been flirting with capitalistic values, allowing some degree of free enterprise and welcoming foreign investments. Once more farmers and other entrepreneurs have been allowed to sell their products in local markets.

Before Castro came to power in 1959, Cuba had a vast tourist industry in the Caribbean, 80 percent were American tourists. But that influx was cut off by Washington's 34-year trade embargo against Cuba. For many years the Communist

² Reuters News Agency, July 1994; Aurelio Rojas, *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 23, 1994; A-6.

Government considered tourism as corrupted, and resuming it only after the disappearance of the Soviet block, which accounted for 85 percent of Cuba's foreign trade. The Cuban Government has been involved in major hotel construction. Cuba is also scheduled to re-enter the cruise business with the Italian company Costa Crociere.

The static American foreign policy didn't promoted all this economic reforms in Cuba, but finally, Castro with his unique instinct of surviving, and to save his revolution concluded, marxism can work with free enterprise. Many leaders have pressured Cuban President Fidel Castro to implement democratic reforms in his country. During December, 1994, region leaders asked President Clinton to lift the embargo at a summit of Western Hemisphere nations in Miami. The summit included discussion of restoring Cuba to the Organization of American States and the creation of a Western Hemisphere free-trade zone. Unfortunately, President Clinton excluded Cuba from the free-trade zone.³

In the past, Castro had only negotiated with a group of hand-picked Cuban intellectuals friendly to his government, ignoring those groups who strongly opposed him. The failure of Castro to negotiate in good faith with die-hard Cuban exiles had been one of his major obstacles to remove the 33-year old U.S. embargo.

On May 2, 1995 the Clinton Administration secretly negotiated an immigration accord with the Castro government allowing the 21,000 Cuban refugees detained at Guantanamo base to comes to the United States. This policy reversed a 36-year policy in which illegal immigrants from Cuba will be returned to the island. Bill Clinton hopes to deter future desperate Cuban rafters from setting off across the Florida straits. The accord is unpopular with Cuban-American leaders in Miami. In an interview, Castro said he was willing to negotiate with the United States, but blamed the Cuban-American for carry on a

³ *Los Angeles Times*, August, 1994; Tom Raum, *The Sunday Herald*, December 11, 1994; Larry Rother, *The New York Times*, October 19, 1995.

war against him and no desire for a peaceful dialogue.⁴

A month after the immigration accord, to score more points with the Clinton administration Castro arrested his long time protegee, a financial guru and 23-year fugitive, Robert Vesco. After fleeing the United States, Vesco lived in the Bahamas, Costa Rica and Nicaragua where he made substantial investments, including bribes to public officials in exchanged for a sanctuary. To guarantee this accord Vesco had a private army formed by Americans and Cubans Vietnam veterans. After living several years in the Bahamas and Central America, he finally left to Cuba, a country hostile to the United States. Following his arrest in Havana, the United States said they were filing for his extradition. Weeks later Vesco was released from jail. Obviously, Castro was playing power chess.

On October of 1995 President Clinton signed an executive order: making easier the restriction of travelling to Cuba by Cuban-Americans, academics, artists and members of the clergy, allow American relief agencies and human rights groups to greatly expand their work in Cuba, the removal of travel restrictions for Cuban Americans who want to visit seriously ill relatives in Cuba, allowed American news organizations to open bureau in Cuba, and Western Union to set up offices in Cuba to help Cuban Americans to send money to their relatives travelling to the United States once they obtain visas, but--Mr. Clinton uphold the 33-year-old trade embargo on Cuba.⁵

Weeks later Castro visited the United Nations and went into a public relation campaign inviting those who love him and those who hate him. Although some Cuban exiles remained away from the meeting at the U.N. , it was a success. It was a wise

⁴ *U.S. News & World Report*, May 15, 1995,47-49.

⁵ Steve Greenhouse, *The New York Times*, October 6, 1995, A-10.

decision from Castro to include all the political groups. The Cuban American Foundation was one of those organizations who remained away. According to them, in the near future Castro would be facing difficult problems and a *coup d'etat* by his own army would follow. I have great doubts about this prediction. Cuban exiles had made this prophecy over and over. The worst crisis Castro had faced was when the communist block collapsed. Castro is in total control of his government, and while he attempt to save his revolution, the Cuban exiles should do their best in ending the suffering of the Cuban people living in the island through negotiation.

I advocate diplomatic solution, rather than military solutions. The United States should lift the economic embargo against Cuba and provide access to the free market in exchange for democratic reforms similar to the one the *Sandinistas* and the *Contras* implemented in Nicaragua. Several things might result: Cuba could move closer to the West and reach an agreement implementing political and economic reforms, and improve its record of human rights; a return to democracy might follow in which Cuba would share political power with the Cuban exiles.

Ironically, while the Russian pendulum is swinging from the left to the center, the American pendulum is swinging from the right center to the extreme right.

In the same way that Communism fell, the capitalistic system may likewise soon fall. The magic is over. The American dream has gone to Asia and Europe and unpredictable future events would expedite its end. It is time for social changes. "There is no enemy. All of them are our teachers."

PEOPLE AND AFTERMATH

Grayston Lynch. The man who became *de facto* commander of the battle in Bay of Pigs is retired from the CIA and now lives peacefully in Florida. In 1980, during a hearing to revoke my superseded bond at Fort Walton Beach, Lynch testified in my behalf for which I was very grateful.

William (Rip) Robertson. The man who was second in command of the invasion, years later was assigned to the vain efforts of the Vietnam War by the CIA. One day Rip came back to the United States, dying at the Dallas International Airport in 1970.

Jose Perez San Roman. The military leader of the Brigade experienced a devastating emotional shock during the fiasco of Bay of Pigs and the death of more than a hundred of his men. His miscalculation had been too much trust in the United States. After his release from a Cuban prison in December, 1962, he declined to assume the leadership of the Brigade, or any other organization fighting Castro. San Roman isolated himself, working in the Talisman Sugar Mill, located in the West Palm Beach swamps near Belle Glades. I met San Roman frequently while working at the Talisman. In 1989, he committed suicide, dying in a tragic manner, like many other Brigade veterans.

Gustavo Castillo and Gaspar Jimenez. These two Cuban-Americans, charged with the attempted kidnapping of the Cuban Consul and killing of his bodyguard in Merida, served several years in Miami-MCC while appealing in Federal Courts their extradition to Mexico. Consequently, Jimenez and Castillo were extradited to face trial in Mexico, probably the first U.S. citizens to be subjected to a political extradition to face trial in Mexico since the Mexican-American war. Their families spent a fortune paying bribes to officials of the corrupt Mexican system of justice. In the aftermath, Castillo and Jimenez served very little time in Mexico. As U.S. citizens they were immediately

included in an exchange of prisoners between the United States and Mexico. The majority of the Cuban community does not talk about this and other unpleasant affairs; some of the new immigrants are not even familiar with this issue. The community feels embarrassed and afraid to publicly admit that the United States use its legal system to maintain a peaceful domestic order.

Maurice Ferre. This energetic and intelligent candidate was defeated in an election where the Black community penalized him for firing a Black city administrator, electing Xavier Suarez as Mayor of the City of Miami. While the Black community was united to get rid of Ferre, as usual, the Cuban exile community was divided into two groups: a minority that supported achievement of political power and solutions of domestic issues, and a majority who wanted to fight international Communism and free Cuba. The latter group was generally composed of senior citizens.

The man who replaced Ferre was Xavier Suarez, another aristocratic Cuban-American attorney who became a politician. Most attorneys who had become politicians had rather poor records of civil service. Armando Lacasa was an attorney who was elected commissioner for several terms and failed to be re-elected when the *Miami Herald* disclosed a labyrinth of bribes and apparent illegal conduct. Currently, Ferre works full-time in his lucrative business enterprises in Miami.

Jerry Sanford. The former Assistant U.S. Attorney went into private practice as a criminal attorney and later unsuccessfully ran against Janet Reno for State Attorney. He now works for the Public Defender's Office in Miami. While I was free on bond, I spoke to Sanford about the old times when he was in charge of the Organized Crime Task Force, which included investigation of terrorist activities in the Cuban exile community. At that time, I was one of the bad boys blowing the town to pieces and waking him up at night. For Jerry and the local cops, for a while, I was a shadow. In truth, I was just trying to tell

Jerry that I was around and the local cops knew that. In those days Jerry walked with a .45 in his belt. We became friends when he was with the Public Defender Office. It was a nice challenge; the boys of the FBI loved it. I have great respect for Jerry, because he is a man of integrity and an excellent criminal attorney.

Ricardo (Monkey) Morales. This devious character was killed in a bar in Key Biscayne. The executor was never charged with any crime by Metro Police. At the time of his death, Morales was writing a book and informing the FBI about corruption related to local cops. Consequently, the State Government was more interested in seeing Morales dead; he just knew too much.

Raul Diaz. The former Metro Captain couldn't resist the temptation of the good life, charming girlfriends and eternal party time. Diaz divorced his wife and resigned. He now work for a private detective company. One of his best clients is Robert Rosenblatt, one of my attorneys.

Manuel Revuelta. After his release under probation from federal prison Revuelta worked long hours in his own business selling mattresses. In the building next to him was a pawnshop, holding a shotgun as retainer. Revuelta's wife also operated a legitimate business with the name Firestone and Allstate, selling car-break-in tools to detectives and police agencies. The attorneys of those multinational corporations requested their names be changed, but his wife declined. The corporations then applied pressure on the federal prosecutor to violate Revuelta's probation. Days later the SWAT team broke into Revuelta's business and charged him with possession of the shotgun that was in the pawnshop. He is currently serving a 35-year sentence in a federal prison.

Hector Serrano Bonilla. Now adopting a low profile, Serrano lives in South Florida with a 20-year-old nymph. His Probation Officer considered reporting him in violation of his probation terms for having sex with a minor. The report was never made

when Serrano told the Probation Officer that he might consider becoming bisexual.

Serrano finished serving his federal parole.

Roberto De Los Heros. This was another teenager paratrooper who jumped into the Zapata swamp and after the failure of Bay of Pigs invasion, attempted to escape from the marsh with me. After his release and return to Miami in 1962, a decade later, he became a successful brain surgeon with the U.S. Air Force. I assume that at this time, De Los Heros is in private practice.

Ciro Orizondo. My former roommate was arrested in another case of drugs in Fort Lauderdale and once more, testified against his friends in order to receive another light probation term. Orizondo continues to be an intellectual master bullshitter.

My former girlfriend **Kathy Seoane** after our relationship subsequently joined her husband. She became a psychologist and for a while lived very happy with her two sons; years later her husband died of cancer.

Faith Flax. She is still living and worked as a legal secretary in Miami. As a dynamic entrepreneur she has the pipe dream of owning her own business. Faith lives a very lonely life with her kitty, having very few friends. After many years on the run, one day I had a telephone conversation with her. She was sick, bitter and alone. I learned she had frequent blackouts and doctors couldn't figure out a diagnostic. I assumed it was caused by her previous addiction to good cocaine. Once while in Miami, I went to her apartment and Faith didn't open the door. I left the apartment building and when I was driving away I saw through the rear mirror a police cruiser racing with its flashing lights. I just made another narrow escape.

Barbara Marsh. She divorced Harry and began to date a police officer, who does an excellent job in avoiding a collision between his charming fiancée and the authorities. A difficult economic situation had compelled her to sell her beautiful residence; Barbara

no longer can afford to buy fashionable clothes and summer mink or throw weekend barbecue parties with champagne by the pool. Her former husband **Harry Marsh** was also rescued by a Federal Parole Officer, who took over the difficult task of keeping Harry out of trouble with the law. She has already succeeded in getting back Harry's optical license in Florida. Thanks to the hard work of this attractive Probation Officer, Harry has become a productive man in society. Maybe Harry could sell a few cases of contact lens to those working at the U.S. Justice Department and the Congress.

Frank Castro. The power broker who presided over the dynamic Golden Falcon and the ultra-secret National Front for the Liberation of Cuba remained for a while in self-imposed exile with other Cuban Americans in Santo Domingo to avoid criminal charges related to a case of smuggling drugs in Texas. In 1982, with the help of the CIA, Frank was able to return to Miami to organize training camps in the Everglades for the Contras. With the Contra war over, Frank became rusty, drinking too much Dominican rum. With the enforced embargo intensified against Cuba, Frank had hope that the Cuban revolution might collapse and he could be the military leader in the future U.S. sponsored Cuban exile government.

Drug Lords\Brigade Veterans. Roberto Carballo, after finishing his term as President of the Brigade, Carballo became a successful businessman dealing in drugs. He keeps a low profile in the community, attending church every Sunday and enrolling in the local college; Carballo owns several businesses in Miami. The wife of one of the political prisoners incarcerated in Mexico in relation to the kidnapping of the Cuban Consul in Merida had to blackmail him in order to obtain economic assistance to support herself and her two daughters.

Guillermo Tabrau. This Brigade member was a successful jeweler and businessman for decades. He served as a “selective informant” of the Miami Police

Department, buying stolen jewelry and notifying the cops. Tabrau often fraternized with circuit judges, police officers and other public officials. At one point, Tabrau was the bagman between the drug lords, Circuit Court Judges and Miami police officers. Years later, Tabrau became another entrepreneur involved in the booming drug trade in South Florida. During his zenith his son owned a farm with wild animals that included monkeys and lions, till the DEA stormed it with a warrant for his arrest. In the aftermath of his long surreptitious career, Tabrau and his son were arrested in a sting operation and charged with dealing with cocaine. All his real estate and other properties were confiscated. Again ... Tabrau began to cooperate with the government in exchange for a light sentence for his son.

Carlos Hernandez Rumbaut, became wealthy with the blooming social drug enterprise in the early 70's and made a wise decision fleeing the United States and sought sanctuary in Spain. He attracted the attention of the U.S. Attorneys, and once Jerry Sanford while being Chief U.S. prosecutor went in vain to Spain to investigate Rumbaut about his dealing with drug.

Jose Medardo Alvero Cruz, was a pioneer in the drug business in South Florida during the end of the 60's. He might be describe as the Godfather of the Drug Lords. For a short while, Cruz owned the most sophisticated discotheque in Miami, till the DEA and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) confiscated it. He also had his own baseball team and was very generous giving money to friends facing difficult problems. Eventually, the government charged him with violation of tax codes, faced trial and convicted to five years. After serving his term Cruz made the sagacious decision of moving to Spain.

Oliva Cantu the flamboyant Drug Lord who owned a sophisticated recording studios in Miami, became a celebrity within the inner circle of Latin singers. Cantu made a donation during the marathon for my release on supersedeas bond in 1978. During his

incarceration in the 80's I became briefly his legal adviser. In the aftermath, he testified in behalf of the federal government related to police corruption and enrolled in the government witness protection program to avoid a long incarceration.

Armando Lopez Estrada. For a while, he lived in Costa Rica, helping the Nicaraguan Contras as an operative of the CIA. Later he lived in Santo Domingo and Miami. He was once interviewed by CBS' "60 Minutes" representing secret Cuban exile organizations, including CORU. Lopez Estrada has learned to keep his distance from prosecutors and the Feds, obviously aware that we are living with the enemy. Lopez Estrada is one of my best friends.

Orlando Urrea. This Brigade member who also belonged to ultra-secret organizations within the Brigade 2506, became a successful politician, running as representative of the Allaphath community. He died of cancer.

The **Brigade Association** had lost the leadership and credibility for acting often unconditionally to please the wishes of those ruling in Washington. For Washington politicians and the CIA, the Brigade, nevertheless, has a new potential to elect them into office as well as to neutralize their political adversaries.

Rafael Del Pino. Lieutenant Del Pino, one of the youngest T-33 fighter pilots in Bay of pigs, a decade later became a General in Castro's Air Force. In 1990, Del Pino fled Cuba in a twin beach and landed at Homestead Air Force Base, seeking political asylum. The CIA paid a substantial amount of money to Del Pino to encourage other Cuban high-ranking officials to desert the Communist Government. The Del Pino case, as well as another of two Cuban intelligence officers who fled from a Communist country in East Europe, were well-publicized to undermine the Castro Government. To date, Cuba, China, North Korea, and Vietnam remain as the only Communist Governments in the world.

Tom Almond, William A. Clay, Robert Rosenblatt, and Donald Dresnick are

all successful criminal attorneys in Miami. All of them earning pretty good money, generally representing persons charged with offenses related to drugs. In the last decade the Federal Government passed a law where persons charged with offenses related to social drugs cannot use that money for their defense. The bonanza is over and once more attorneys will have to struggle to make a living. They will no longer become rich overnight on drug cases.

Nevertheless, William Clay became very wealthy, owning several businesses, a cattle ranch and flirting with buying a resort in Costa Rica.

While I was on the run Rosenblatt filed a lien and foreclosure against my mother's house in relation to the \$7,500 fee, plus interest with a total of \$20,000 for representing me during the West Palm Beach trial.

After being several years in the underground communicating with very few people, once, I called Rosenblatt who apparently was astonished to hear from me saying, "I was the man coming from the grave." He was very supportive of Dresnick and didn't listen to my allegations that during the civil action Dresnick betrayed me, dropping the three most important witnesses. Aware that his telephone was monitored by the FBI, I made arrangements to call him at another number. For many years, I trusted Rosenblatt as a friend and as attorney. Also, I used to believe in Ronald Dresnick who sold out to the government. Minutes later when I called a weird busy signal came and in my mind thought my defense attorney sold me out to the Feds and they were tracing my number. To make my growing doubts worse, Rosenblatt denied of anyone using the telephone, and then, asked me to "surrender" to the authorities. I panicked--frequently, defense attorney swap criminal cases with prosecutors. In my mind I asked myself, which authority? The FBI that kidnaped me from Chile, or the FBI that promoted that double prosecution. Maybe Rosenblatt means the State of Florida that conspired to double

prosecute me and keep me in prison forever. To surrender in behalf of justice? There is not justice! American justice tasted bitter, it's another Bay of Pigs in my life. Rosenblatt told me law enforcement agents had been spreading out I had died of AIDS. Why AIDS? Now, I sensed, he admires and hates me at the same time. Like Clay, he conveniently forgot that some of their success was produced by my illegal actions and the challenge to the system. I was a stepping-stone in their careers. After a deep breath, I explained Rosenblatt all this time I had been writing a book and he changed his mood, adding he was eager to read the manuscript. For several minutes we talked like the old times about family matters, friends and law enforcement agents. For many years we had a unique relationship, but unfortunately now, everything was different. Next day, I was under police surveillance--I quit my job and moved out of the crime-infested neighborhood. Eventually, the FBI became my shadow.

Auxiliary Circuit Judge **Clyde B. Wells** died in a plane accident. Judge Wells was one of my worst enemies and a great manipulator of the State Court. He directed the Clerks of the Courts in Okaloosa and Miami to deny me access to my criminal records, which according to State law, were public records; Judge Wells blocked my immediate release in violation of both the State and Federal Constitutions.

Patrick Sullivan continues working as Assistant U.S. Attorney in Miami. His pipe dream is to be appointed a U.S. District Court Judge. Sullivan became a successful Federal Prosecutor with the highest number of international kidnapped cases by the U.S. Government. He proudly prosecuted me, as well as other scandalous cases of General Manuel Noriega, who was abducted by U.S. troops in Panama and brought to face trial on drug charges in Miami. The United States is the only nation in the world that has legalized international kidnapping within the jurisprudence.

“Dragon Lady,” **Maria Arista-Volsky** is now Assistant State Attorney in Miami,

prosecuting lower-class citizens. Arista-Volsky is another entrepreneur nourishing from social problems on behalf of justice. Her job enforcing state law is of paramount importance to support and perpetuate the capitalistic system. Thanks to her efforts, American ghettos continue to mushroom.

Eugene Propper. After his success in the Letelier case, Propper resigned as Assistant U.S. Attorney and now works for a private law firm in Washington, D.C.. Propper is a brilliant attorney.

Carter Cornick. This Special Agent after his success in the investigation of the Letelier case, was awarded with a promotion. Cornick presently holds an important post at FBI Headquarters in Washington D.C. There is no doubt that Cuban exiles have been an element in the promotion and success of some FBI agents.

FBI agents **Bob Ross** and **George Kiszynski** were also promoted to important posts in the FBI's Miami office. I worked very hard to boost their careers; of course, often I had to infringe upon the law. I promise the boys of the FBI that I will no longer mess with their real estate. They were the first to decipher my civil disobedience. Nevertheless, the FBI does not practice what it preaches. In the past, women, Latin and Black FBI agents have filed civil actions in Federal Court against the Bureau for violation of their constitutional rights. Still, the FBI continues to grow using Gestapo tactics, resorting to heavily armed commando units against religious groups, tax protestors and political dissidents with the goal of perpetuating capitalistic values.

Manuel Contreras/Chief of DINA Secret Police. In September 21, 1976, Orlando Letelier, former ambassador in Washington of the deposed Allende government was killed by a bomb; in September 1977, came the first report that Letelier's assassination had been ordered by Manuel Contreras, Chief of DINA Chilean secret service.

Contreras vowed he'd never spend a day in jail. For 19 years Chilean authorities rejected intense American pressure to prosecute the powerful Contreras, but in the winter of 1994 the newly elected civilian government indicted Contreras on criminal charges for the slaying of Orlando Letelier. He was quickly found guilty and his conviction was upheld by the Chilean supreme court. But convicting Contreras was easier than sending him to prison. Instead of going to prison Contreras holed up in his Ranch in southern Chile. This outraged the Chilean public, which has waited a long time for justice to be carried out against the military thugs who ran the country from 1973 to 1990.

When Chilean authorities commenced to take action, Contreras moved to a Naval hospital for medical treatment for a variety of ailments. Military officials supported him, complaining that their comrade was too sick to go to prison. Eventually a panel of civilian doctors examined Contreras and ruled he was fit to serve his time in prison. DINA secret police was the most hated organization in Chile and abroad.

Isabel Letelier. The widow of Orlando Letelier received substantial compensation by the Chilean Government for the slaying of her husband. Now, Mrs. Letelier lives in Chile. Like former President Corazon Aquino in the Philippines, Mrs. Letelier became a very active political person in her native country, promoting fundamental human rights and freedom of expression. She was the most dynamic person advocating the investigation of his husband assassination and sending Manuel Contreras to prison.

The impeccable professional soldier, **Michael Townley**, for years was a DINA agent in Chile, engaged in assassination plots eliminating political adversaries of the military Junta led by Augusto Pinochet. Townley became a government witness, testifying against the Cubans in relation to Letelier's death in Washington D.C. Eventually, all the Cubans were acquitted in a second trial by a federal jury, and Townley was the only person who served three years in federal prison. Later, the U.S. Justice Department was

willing to swap Townley for a drug baron living in Argentina. The Argentines wanted Townley for the assassination of General Carlos Prats. Townley's attorney succeeded in canceling the swap, after which Townley had second thoughts about returning to Chile because he had talked too much to the FBI. His friends in DINA advised him to stay away from Chile. As a compromise, he enrolled in the protection of the government witness plan and bought a Radio Shack franchise somewhere in the Midwest.

Richard Gerstein. The former State Prosecutor for Dade County frequently visits Carder Race Track in North Miami Beach to bet on race horses. He does not spend as much money as he did when fixing criminal cases as Chief State Attorney. The FBI ended Gerstein's career of fixing criminal cases. He was for many years the most devious and corrupted man in the Florida criminal justice system.

Janet Reno replaced Richard Gerstein as State Prosecutor for Dade County and was re-elected several terms. On March 23, 1993, President Bill Clinton Appointed Reno as U.S. Attorney General. One of the primary duties of the new "Queen of Justice" is to protect the public against crime and subversion. Reno, in her short term of office has made some tough decisions, not all of which have been particularly popular with the American public. Janet Reno is a woman of "unusual tastes." Unmarried, childless, and at 6'2", she is an imposing person. She often relaxes by chain-sawing trees. The *Miami Herald* stated that her performance as a prosecutor was atrocious. Her office had been accused of lacking investigative zeal, often letting cases languish for years. During her years as State Attorney, Miami became the drug-running, Mafia capital of the world, and banks were glittering with drug money. While she sat back idle, doing very little to stop crime, Florida's political and judicial system were rife with unbelievable corruption. In one year alone, half of the judges in the Miami court system were under federal criminal investigation. Six judges were arraigned on bribery and extortion, and in one case, on

murder. All these cases were federal cases, prosecuted by a crime-fighting U.S. attorney appointed by the Bush Administration.

Routinely Reno sexually harassed female county employees. Florida Senator Bob Graham said that it was a widely-held belief that one of Reno's lovers is ABC affiliate WPLG-TV's female news anchor, Ann Bishop. A former assistant state attorney admitted that Reno was a lesbian. According to Florida attorney Jack Thompson, the new Attorney General is a hardened lesbian of the worst conceivable way.

She ordered the assault against the Branch Davidian religious group in Waco where 86 adults and children died. FBI and ATF agents used CS gas. Chemical warfare experts have testified that an inflammatory agent more lethal and insidious than tear gas used by police in riot situations, should never be used in enclosed spaces because a fire may result.

Former Waco District Attorney Vic Farrel, who had arrested Koresh several years before and tried him on state charges of which he was acquitted by a jury, commented that the siege by Reno and the FBI was a vulgar display of power. Reno insisted that she ordered the attack on the Waco Compound because they were concerned that "child abuse" was going on. Well, they can rest easy now ... those kids will never be abused again!⁶

TIME CHANGE! Two former Assistant State Prosecutors, **Hank Adorno** and **George Yoss**, became well-known criminal attorneys. Before Adorno and Yoss put terrorists behind bars; now they get them out of prison. Money talks! Both men represented Dr. Orlando Bosch when he was arrested in Miami, after his return from Venezuela for violation of parole. Their old transportation had been replaced by spanking new Mercedes Benz. In American society, justice is a continuous contradiction. The

⁶ Texe Marrs, *Big Sister is Watching You*, Texas: Living Truth Pub., 1993, 149-166.

system of justice is another soap opera, and Adorno and Yoss have done much to fill the soap roles.

William Lozano is the Miami police officer who killed two Blacks and was found guilty in the first trial and later tried to commit suicide to avoid a prison term.

Subsequently during a second trial he was represented by a top-gun attorney, Roy Black, and acquitted.

Detective **Danny Benitez** is another Latin opportunist and a compulsive eater. Besides having a big pot belly as result of his addiction to food, Benitez is a terrible cop.

The Circuit Judge who presided at my case in Miami and the hearings for a petition of violation of my 10-year term of probation, was nominated by President Reagan as U.S. District Judge. He was a conservative, much like Circuit Judge **Leonord Nesbitt**, who was also appointed by Reagan as a U.S. District Judge in Miami. Judge Nesbitt, as well as State Prosecutors Adorno and Yoss, were responsible for the riots by Blacks in the Miami ghettos after the acquittal of Miami cops charged with the killing of a Black, Arthur McDuffy.

Judge **Alcee Hastings**. A few decades ago former U.S. District Judge Hasting became well-known for granting political asylum to Haitians coming in boats to Florida. Hasting was appointed to the bench in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter and thereafter was charged with bribery after an FBI sting operation, but was acquitted by a federal jury in 1983. In 1989, the U.S. Senate convicted and removed him from the bench. The conviction was overturned later by a federal judge in Washington, who stated that the Senate trial was improperly conducted. The action was stayed, pending the outcome of a similar case now before the Supreme Court. Hastings complained that his trial was a vendetta by the Federal Government for granting political asylum to the Haitians. In November, 1992, Hastings, a Democrat, ran for the U.S. House of Representatives and

handily won the election, making him the first U.S. official ever removed by impeachment to be subsequently elected to Congress.

Saul Landau continues presiding at the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) in Washington advocating respect of human rights and other social issues. He is an luminous man, working with dazzling ideas.

The couple that sold me the sailboat in Corpus Christi, **Dennis and Donna**, divorced a year later. Both couples have married again. Later the Dallas detectives learned about a plot to assassinate Donna, in which her former husband Dennis was involved; apparently he was trying to avoid paying child support. The Texas State Attorney filed criminal charges and Dennis became a fugitive.

Darrel Mekin and his wife **Connie** are still living at peaceful Apalachicola, a fishing town in the Florida panhandle. Darrel is a dynamic old man. Their daughter Kelly moved to Jacksonville in pursuit of exciting adventures. I am very grateful to Darrel, his wife Connie, and the folks at Apalachicola for their hospitality.

Taylor Branch is doing what he does the best, writing. He finished his book about Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ishvara, the slum-landlord presiding over Harbin continues nourishing from cheap labor and the misery of others.

Julie Adams continues to be the unchallenged Queen at Harbin Hot Springs, executing unsavory tasks for Ishvara.

Carol O'Shea, the Sierra Hot Springs manager who was in charge of a drug and alcoholic rehabilitation program, acknowledged committing sins with drugs and gambling, and returned to Harbin Hot Springs for rehabilitation.

Diana Lonsdale, the massage and healer therapist continues giving classes at Harbin Hot Springs. She is one of the most remarkable women I have met in my life. Her

charm, wisdom and spiritual sense made a tremendous impact on me. Diana is a real New Age lady and a sincere friend. I thank Diana for allowing me to participate in her massage classes.

Peter Buttle and **Monica** bought a house in Middletown and live in an eternal romance with their two children. I had a wonderful time with them. I miss their barbecue parties.

Terrified that the FBI SWAT team might break into her apartment my ex-girlfriend **Teresa Baca** moved out in a flash with her son Claro from San Francisco to Arizona.

A jury awarded **Rodney King** with \$3.8 million from the city of Los Angeles. King was the Black beating by police officers in 1991 and sparked three days of racially charged riots. The different between King's civil action complaint and mine was--his attorney didn't double-cross him.

CONCLUSION. Creation and destruction are two aspects of a single force. The bombing sprees in late 1975 were aggressive protests against the new order ruling the world. The Bay of Pigs invasion and the bombings had caused substantial changes in my life. Since that time, my political philosophy has drastically transformed itself. I no longer support the hypocrisy of secret wars and invasions on behalf of freedom and democracy. Instead of using violence, I now employ healing attitudes toward other human beings and advocate instead socially responsible energy-efficient programs. I presently feel totally alienated from the conservative mentality that at once seemed to me a fascinating and inspired ideology. In this long transition, I have replaced violence with a pen, although violence is a legitimate right of the people to protest against oppression.

Today, I am a federal fugitive of the mighty United States of America and of the perennially corrupt State of Florida. Every day my alienation from American society

increases, making it difficult to adjust to the conventional values of this materialistic society. America's lack of leadership, prolonged political crisis and poor economic state are part of the symptoms of needed drastic changes in society. I especially appreciate the support given me by some Brigade veterans and friends during my journey through a political labyrinth. Thanks also to all my friends, both men and women, in the community who offered me unfailing support during this prolonged odyssey.

Writing this book became a more difficult task of what initially thought. It took me several years to write the first draft, conducting a considerable research, and later keeping an update data. Often, moving from one community to another, lack of money for editing and eventually facing arrogant publishers and literary agents prolonged more my project.

In the belief the Spanish government might be interested to bring to light the real fact of how the **Maine** blew up at the Havana bay in 1898, I went to the Spanish General Consul in New York and asked for their support to publish the book--they were not interested. I was shocked for their apathy--but for decades they lived under Franco dictatorship; subsequently under the social-democratic government and as part of the European common market. Now, Spain was facing serious economic problems like many other European nations. I saw Spain as another undeveloped country, with very little to offer to Latin America. It is understandable how Spain lost its empire in a flash.

Besides being economically rewarded, my major satisfaction was being involved in a project in which would make corrections of contemporary history. I consider the United States government as the worst historian. I thought all this effort was conveying a social and political message. Also, I am aware that this task might jeopardize my freedom as well as personal security, but--I am willing to pay that price.

I apologize if some of the data in this book is not up to date, but my present legal status impairs my ability to conduct additional research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TAMING POWER IS A LIFE ENTERPRISE

SUPERIOR MAN WINS MOTIONLESS

Special thanks are due to the following persons for their support and help over the past 20 years in favors both small and large.

- Kathy Seoane, Yolanda and Emeterio Santovenia for their endless support.
- Fefa, Mercedes, Jose, Shelly and Pedro for the uninterrupted prayers and assistance.
- Former Metro Detective Raul Diaz, for encouraging me to take notes for the writing of this book. Raul Diaz was always a friend and a gentleman.
- Luis Fernandez, my good friend, for also encouraging me to write down my experiences and to share it with others. Luis is a very humble person and a good attorney.
- My brother Orlando has been amazed of my perennial legal problems and my clandestine lifestyle.
- I am grateful to Attorney, Tom Almond, for the good work at the Federal trial at Jacksonville.
- William Clay and Robert Rosenblatt for representing me while they were unknown Public Defenders. In the aftermath, they became well known criminal attorneys in Miami, and a very wealthy. I assume, some how, contributed to they success.
- Attorney Paul Morris for representing me in my State Appeal. I admire Paul's principles of justice and equity. He has been an honest and straight-

dealing attorney.

DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this book to those persons who are aware of the real social problems we are facing in society; to those who suffer and beg for mercy; to those who in their path search for an eluding justice. And to those who dream of a better society ruled by the people and for the people.

- To those *attorneys* who are concerned with social problems, seeking equity and justice for the underprivileged in the courts.
- To those *men* and *women* who are serving time in prison and those innocent victims left behind, the children.
- Assistant U.S. Attorney *Patrick Sullivan*, who is still searching for principles of justice in Federal Court.
- *George Yoss* and *Hank Adorno*, two skillful men who bolstered their careers by using social problems and society crises to their advantage. Both men are aggressive entrepreneurs in the jurisprudence.
- *Bennett Brummer* and his *wife*. As Public Defender, Brummer has brilliantly represented the underprivileged in State Courts.
- *Jerry Sanford*, a man of principles and probably the only Federal Prosecutor who did not hesitate to state the truth in a court forum.
- *Norman Roettger*, Honorable U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida. I have a great admiration and respect for a United States Judge who believes in American Democracy. Judge Roettger is a man of principles and dignity.
- *Peter Nimkoff*, Honorable U.S. Magistrate for the Southern District of

Florida is an impeccable man who truly believes in the fundamental principles of justice. Nimkoff has been one of the most controversial U.S. Magistrates in history.

- To the perennially manipulated and divided *Cuban exiles* who are searching for political power in order to recuperate their homeland in a labyrinth of political intrigue. They continue to worship their worst adversary, the United States of America.

- *Maurice Ferre*, the best Mayor Miami has ever had.

- *Barbara Marsh*, whose help I greatly appreciated while I was a fugitive. Barbara is an excellent gourmet chef and a charming lady.

. And finally I dedicated this book to my lovely spiritual *Godmother* who with her wisdom and love guided me through this labyrinth.

I also dedicate this book to the following “bad apples”:

- The perennially corrupt *State of Florida* for succeeding in victimizing its own people, without infringing on a single paragraph of the law.
- The *Metro* and the *Miami Police Departments*, who infringes upon fundamental human rights of the American people.
- *Janet Reno*, the United States Attorney General, whom I feel misrepresents the true spirit of justice in America.
- The boys of the *FBI*, who first hunted me down in the South Pole and brought me back to Miami to face a Federal Court and a double trial, simply because I broke a few windows in their Miami office. During my travels through a labyrinth as a fugitive, I worked on my book, mailing my manuscript and floppy diskettes to potential agents and friends. Most manuscripts were intercepted by the FBI, who apparently did not approve

of my writing ability. The Feds engaged in a dragnet operation against my family and friends, with surveillance, harassment and monitoring of telephones and mail.

- To *Ronald Dresnick*, one of the worst surreptitious criminal attorneys in South Florida. When Mr. Dresnick double-crossed me during the civil action against the Dade County Jail, he betrayed all American people who have been humiliated while experiencing incarceration and being compelled to suffer “the indecent strip search of anal and genital inspection.” Dresnick profited from the misery and pain I suffered in the Dade County Jail. In my opinion, South Florida has the best and worst criminal attorneys. I hope that Attorney Dresnick and others like him will learn something from this book.
- To “Lady Dragon” *Maria Arista-Volsky*, Assistant State Attorney in Miami, who promote a system of legal abuse, enhancing misery in society.
- To *Richard Gerstein*, former State Attorney for Dade County who was caught red-handed by the FBI receiving a bribe from a man facing criminal charges by his office. Gerstein is one of the worst criminal and state attorneys in the history of the State of Florida.
- To *Ellen Morphonios*, the most corrupt Circuit Judge in the United States. She is well known by State prisoners as the time machine, because her traditional long sentences.
- To the *Plutocrats* and *Entrepreneurs* who have cannibalized the American people on behalf of capitalistic interests.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

I consider myself a creation of the materialistic and violent American society. But now, I am breaking with the establishment, and more interested in walking in peace on a spiritual path.

Since April 17, 1961, when I landed at Bay of Pigs, my political beliefs have been in constant transition. Like a pendulum, from extreme right they came to left center, finally becoming social democratic Marxist. I believe in a system of government ruled by the people, instead of the plutocracy. I believe in a society that promotes the welfare of the people, instead of profit, competition and wars. I am not alone in my belief that eventually, the Western capitalist world is decaying as much as Rome did centuries ago. Over-production as well as others natural disasters will cause the total collapse of capitalism by the end of this century and a New Age era will began, having the people ruling for the first time.

The darkness of life has led me to light. All my experiences have been the result of past actions; when they come, I shall face them cheerfully and keep good thoughts always in my mind. I have neither enemies nor friends; all are my teachers.

El Condor,

Political dissident in the United States.

GLOSSARY

ARNV	South Vietnamese Army
ATF	Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Bureau
BAR	Browning Automatic Rifle
B&E	Breaking and Entering
BIM	Metropolitan Intelligence Brigade
BPA	Bay of Pigs Association
Brigade	Brigade 2506
CHILBOMB	Investigation of the assassination of former Ambassador Orlando Letelier in Washington D.C.
CAF	Cuban American Foundation
CINCLANT	Commander in Chief of the Atlantic
CNI	Center for National Information, formerly DINA, Chilean Secret Police.
CNM	Cuban National Movement
CORU	Consortium of Anti-Castro Groups
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DINA	Chilean Secret Police
DISIP	Venezuela Secret Police
DOT	Department of Transportation
DZ	Drop Zone
FAA	Federal Administration Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FLNC	National Front for the Liberation of Cuba
FDC	Florida Department of Corrections

IRS	Internal Revenue Service
IPS	Institute for Policies Studies
IV	Intravenous
JCS	Joint Chief(s) of Staff
LCU	Landing Craft Utility
LEAA	Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
LSD	Landing Ship Dock
MIBOMB	Investigation of Miami Bombs in 1975
MIR	Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left
MT	Medical Technician
NCS	National Security Counsel
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OSA	Organization of American States
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PDO	Public Defender Office
PDO	Parachutist Drop Officer
SA	Special Agent
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SIMC	Chilean Military Intelligence Service
USPA	United States Parachute Association

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