

Walla Prisoners Revolt

Fifth Estate Collective

1979

On May 9, 1973, three prisoners of Washington State Penitentiary, Carl Harp, Shane Green and Clyde Washburn seized the Classification and Parole Building with ten hostages, and held it nonviolently for 12 hours. During that time they were in constant communication by phone and bullhorn with media, prisoners and people outside to whom they talked about maltreatment and cruel conditions inside the prison.

The majority of the prisoners supported them, with over 200 of them staying in the yard to keep the guards and SWAT team from attacking. The three instigators peacefully surrendered after one hour in front of news reporters and cameras. The hostages later said that they were well treated by the prisoners.

The three men had as demands Federal investigation of the prison, and Federal protection for themselves—because they fear for their lives. Since their surrender the three have been placed in Solitary Confinement.

The chance of these men surviving and winning this ordeal depends on support in order to get protection, a Federal investigation, formal court charges and a public jury trial. They urgently need money for a defense fund, and letters of solidarity. Also needed are protest letters for amnesty to Governor Dixie Lee Ray, c/o the State Capital, Olympia, Washington. Harp, Green and Washburn can be written to at: Box 520, Walla Walla, Washington 99362.

Harp has communicated with the FE several times in the last few years and recently sent us the first issue of “Penology Lampoon” which he, Washburn, Green and several others had printed in prison. It’s unclear now whether it is still available, but you might try writing for it. More information on the defense of these class war prisoners from Solidarity committee, c/o La Nuit, Box 2, Stn. La Cite, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2W 3Mo.

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