

Walla Walla Prisoner's Life in Danger

Fifth Estate Collective
Carl Harp

1980

Dear Fifth Estate,

On November 13, 1979 I was snatched out of San Quentin in California and flown back to the Washington State Penitentiary at Walla Walla, for the Court case around the May 9th take-over of this prison (Wash. State) behind human rights and justice. So far all is well and I'm doing fine. I won't be here long they say, and will be taken back to San Quentin, but I've got no idea when. Logical to assume I will be here for a while for we are making moves to hold me here up to and through our trial.

I just now got the chance to see volume 14, no. 4 of the Fifth Estate and the article therein on us by you. Most excellent, and I thank you Brothers and Sisters. Without all the support we've been receiving, some of us, especially me, would be dead right now. As it is, we've got them up against the wall, and on-going support will help us stay alive and achieve a victory here. It has been extremely rough on me as you well know, but to me even a few moments of struggle are worth more than a lifetime spent being a slave. All of the support out there has been my strength and courage.

Right now, with my Brother Robert S. Green, Jr. (Shane), I'm sitting in isolation on Administrative Segregation Status labeled a threat to injustice and inhumanity—I mean security (either way I'm right).

Much is happening and to come because of the outside support of which you have played a good part in helping to obtain.

What else to say, friends, but we love you and appreciate you. We got to stick together kids or it's finis for us all. Take care and be good, eat your vegetables and brush your teeth.

Love & Rage,
Carl Harp 126516
P.O. Box 520
Walla Walla, Washington, 99362

Staff Note:

Since Carl wrote us that last letter in late 1979, the situation at Walla Walla has, on the whole, remained the same and Carl Harp's personal safety still seems in a state of limbo.

Writing in a January 22, 1980 letter to the Fifth Estate, Carl told of a small "offensive" that happened earlier that month in which 500 prisoners (including those in the Intensive Security Unit—a Behaviour Modification unit—burnt and demolished their cells in a protest of the continuing inhuman living standards at the prison ("no showers, out of cell exercise etc. since 12/7/79").

Carl went on to say that the prison authorities are trying to get him transferred to the notoriously racist and gang-run San Quentin prison. "I'm being sent here to be silenced one way or the other—the latter would suit them—because of my legal and political work for and around human rights and justice here (Walla Walla). Only reason they have to transfer me is that I need protection from the guards! That danger has passed... It is a must I stay here for personal and political reasons, not to mention all my legal actions i.e. trial, state appeal, two federal suits. A transfer, especially to S.Q., is a death sentence, friends, pure and simple..."

As proof to back up Carl Harp's worst fears, a recent Washington State Penitentiary inquiry into the May 9, 1979 taking of thirteen hostages, in which Harp took part, stated, "It is sincerely hoped that he (Carl Harp) does not let a somewhat imperfect system cause him to self-destruct " A death threat if we've heard one!

We realize that there are thousands of other prisoners that are being fucked over by the state, and by running the petition below we don't mean to make less of their plight or our desire to see all Prisons torn down, but we feel that Carl Harp's situation is one of life or death and right now. We've already sent Washington's governor Dixie Lee Ray a letter of protest from the Fifth Estate collective and we're asking that you and your friends do the same by signing this petition and mailing it to her as soon as possible (please do not send this article with it).

GOVERNOR DIXIE LEE RAY, OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

We are sending you this letter as a statement of our concern for the well being of Carl Harp (126516, Washington State Penitentiary) and the state's plans to transfer him to San Quentin. We are absolutely opposed to the moving of Harp to the California prison because: 1) He is facing a trial next spring and possibly a retrial of his original charges; being housed in San Quentin, several hundred miles away from Washington, would make work on his defense nearly impossible. 2) We feel that Harp's life would be in grave danger if he were to be sent there. Tensions run very high at San Quentin and hostilities against people like him are well known and well documented.

We plan to stay informed of Carl Harp's situation and we expect that you will reconsider plans to transfer him from Washington and that he will remain at Walla Walla.

Sincerely,

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fifth Estate

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Carl Harp
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