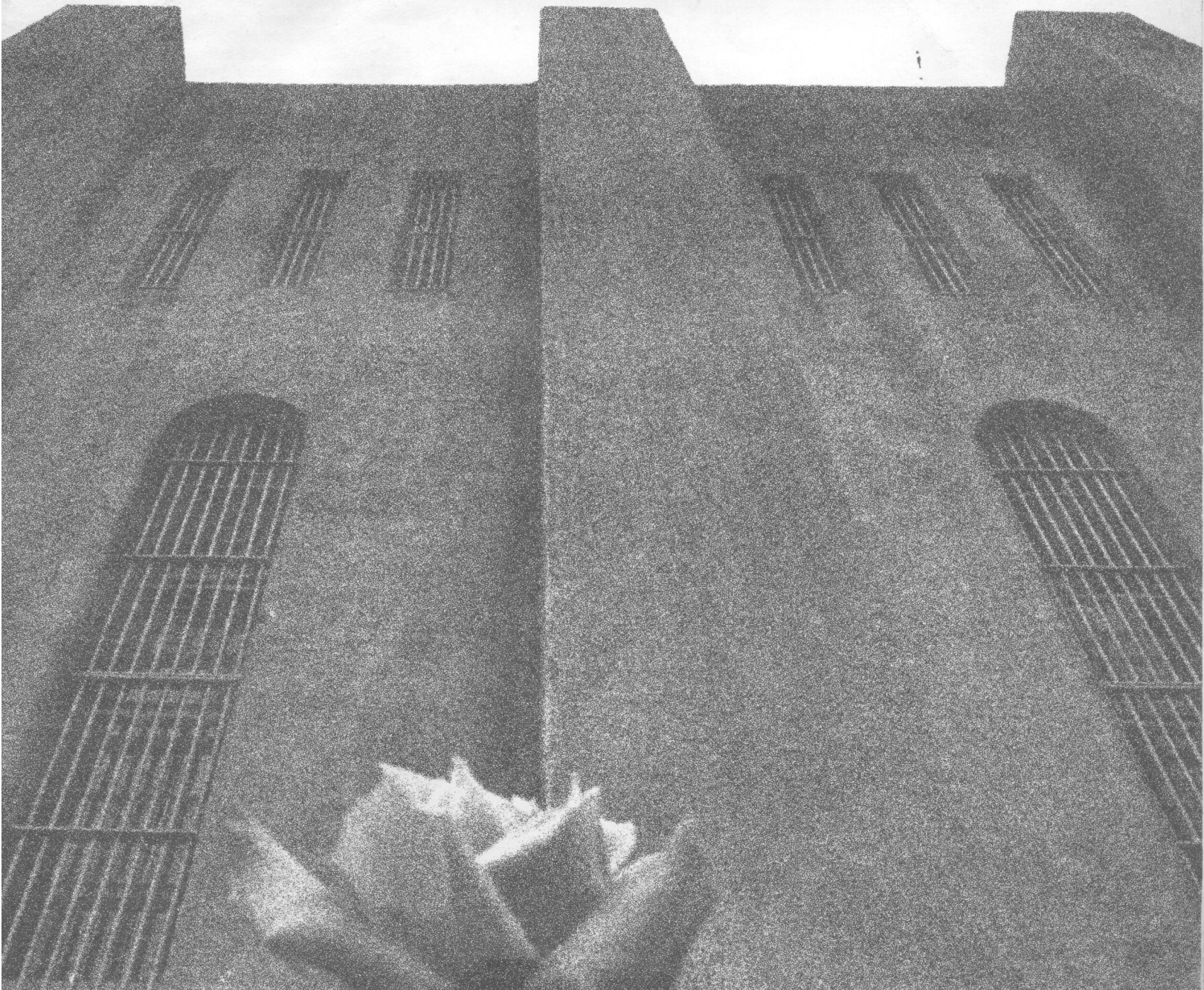


The *est* Standard Training at San Quentin Prison

**“Nothin’ This Good
Ever Happened
to Me Before!”**



As we approached, the prison loomed larger and more formidable. The thought of going in and never getting out flashed hard across my mind.

The training recently conducted at San Quentin State Prison was clearly a direct result of the graduates' love, support, and participation and of the San Quentin trainees' willingness to confront their own lives.

I assisted at the training and would like to share my experience of it with you.

Gary Clarke - est Staff

The Prison

San Quentin, across the Golden Gate Bridge and 10 minutes north, looks like an old high-walled fortress standing sentry on a strategically located knoll overlooking San Francisco Bay. Miles beyond, clear and sharp, is the city, its close-knit network of buildings rising cleanly into San Francisco's unique skyline, the familiar Bay Bridge stretching to Oakland, and sailboats, hundreds of them, dotting the large expanse of water between there and San Quentin Prison.

It was my first visit and I was nervous, apprehensive. As we approached the gate, I suddenly had to go to the bathroom.

This was to be the first *est* training in San Quentin, and was conducted as part of *est's* public service activities. It had come about through the support of government officials in Sacramento, members of the California Department of Corrections and administrators of the Federal Prison at Lompoc where two *est* trainings have been successfully conducted. Now it was happening at San Quentin, one of the highest security prisons in California, and I was to be a part of it. Mixed emotions? Absolutely!

The prison was truly fortress-like, with its faded yellow walls curving and disappearing around the tip of the knoll. A lighthouse-type guard tower beyond the second gate guarded the main entrance into the yards. As we approached, the prison loomed larger and more formidable. The thought of going in and never getting out flashed hard across my mind.

We were machine-scanned for anything metal (even cigarette package foil is detected), cleared and let "inside."

Bleak, sparse walls and grounds. Buildings rising behind buildings rising behind bungalows. The main wall, for as far as we could see, had large coils of barbed wire attached to its top. Above that—a catwalk and manned guard tower. We passed some cons*. Closed, yet curious, wondering.

*"Cons" is the accepted term used by inmates and guards when referring to prisoners.

The Room

Definitely a challenge. The prison was built in 1852 and this could very well have been the first building or at least the second. A large hangar-type structure with a forty foot ceiling. Heavy crank-open windows on each of the side walls. On the front wall, a large stage, curtained-front and open sides. On the back wall, the scullery: a long, low, fenced-in area where dishes are washed, facilitating the kitchen in the adjoining building. It reminded me of a dog-run. Perched on top of that was a small, make-shift projection booth. The room was half-filled with a hundred or more long, heavy lunch tables with attached benches, enough to seat 600 to 800 convicts with plenty of room left over. Fastened to the ceiling, directly overhead, was another catwalk and guard station.

We partitioned off a section of the room with folding screens, laid carpet and set up chairs, tables and the platform. When we were finished the area was ready for the next day and looked pretty damn good. As one graduate said later at graduation:

"It looks like a little island of consciousness."

We left feeling pretty satisfied with what we'd accomplished.

The Training Tuesday • Day 1

We arrived at 7:00 AM and met in the prison coffee shop (bacon and eggs: 90¢) across the street from the main entrance. There were eight of us. Ted Long was going to do the training with Stewart Esposito assisting him by conducting some of the processes. Joe Roza was the Training Supervisor and David Norris, *est* staff member, was liaison between *est* and the San Quentin Administration.

The scheduled start time was 8:30 AM. By the time we signed in, were searched, had the backs of our hands stamped with "black-lite" sensitive ink and finished some last minute room set-up; it was 9:00 AM before we were even able to open the doors.

The trainees, black, white, Chicano, Indian, Oriental, were let into the room where they gave their names and numbers to three members of the Special Security Force (or "Goon Squad", as they liked to be called) who carefully recorded it all. The cons seemed almost nonchalant as they picked up their

nametags and gave the room the once-over. I found it amazing the way they could take it all in and still appear detached. Some seemed excited but most just sauntered by as if to let me know that they were going to do it their way. So, of course, it was I who had the first confront of the training.

Burt* (30, in for life) took a chair from the logistics table at the back of the room.

Gary: "Where'd you get that chair?"

Burt: "Back there."

Gary: "What's it for?"

Burt: "To sit on."

Gary: "Are there any chairs up front?"

Burt: "I want this one."

Gary: "Okay, what I'd like you to do is put that chair back and sit in one of the chairs already set up."

Burt: "Yeah. Well, I want *this* chair."

Burt started to walk off with it and I moved in front of him. He wasn't pleased.

Gary: "I know you want that chair, Burt, and what I'd like you to do is put it back and take one that's already set up."

Burt's ears were beginning to smoke.

Burt: "I want *this* chair, Gary, and . . ."

Joe Roza—huge, imposing Joe Roza—walked up.

Joe: "What's the problem?"

Gary: "I . . . ah . . ." (I'm always glib in a crisis.)

Burt: "I want *this* chair and this *gentleman* says put it back and sit . . ."

Joe: "Take it."

Burt: "Huh?"

Gary: "Huh?"

Joe: "Take it."

Burt took it and sat in it. Joe reminded me that the ground rules hadn't been read yet and agreements hadn't been established. In retrospect that was very clear. But standing there, thinking Burt was going to tie my nose in a knot, it wasn't so clear.

Their job complete, the "Goon Squad" left the room, closed the heavy steel door and locked us in. It was the only way out and my thoughts raced to stories I'd heard about riots that had taken place in that very room and of the "Hostage Policy" that states if you're taken hostage, the prison makes no deals for your release. High up on the walls were forks, dinner forks, dozens of them, deeply imbedded in the acoustic tiles, remnants of skilled target practice.

It was 9:15 AM. Everyone was seated and the training began.

*All trainees' names have been disguised.

"I'd like to find out why I keep puttin' myself back in here!"

Stewart read the ground rules for 30 minutes to the usual amount of resistance. Some items Stewart didn't dwell on. "Rides and Places to Stay," for example, went very quickly.

Ted took the platform and hostility showed up in a hurry as his role as trainer was tested with every question. Personalities and positions manifested early on as various trainees stood and challenged Ted with their anger, skepticism, indifference, wisecracks and more.

Eight San Quentin staff members participated in the training. Two psychiatrists, three counselors, a psychologist, a teacher and a student intern. Donna (28, family counselor) was the only woman in the training.

About noon, Burt, my friend with the chair, insisted on talking without raising his hand and was adamant about it. Ted reminded him of the agreements and that one of them was raising your hand if you wanted to talk. Burt wouldn't do that so Ted invited him to either keep the agreements or leave the training. He seemed a bit surprised at the simplicity of the choice, thought a moment and left. At this point the trainees began to get that it made *no* difference to Ted if they took the training or not. (I was told later that about here some of the cons realized that this wasn't their usual, run-of-the-mill, "do-gooder" program.) The questions began to take on a little more "meat" as the personalities continued to emerge:

Lazrus (31, tall and well muscled. Almost always wore sunglasses. 10 years):

"Seems like what *you* want us to do is lay down and let 'em keep knockin' our heads."

Warren (38, average build. Broken out of many prisons; taken hostages. Life—no parole):

"I'd like to find out why I keep puttin' myself back in here."

B.J. (25, 5' 10", muscular. Always wore sunglasses. Life):

"I only came to this thing to see what you had to say."

Chuy (25, 5' 9" and wiry. Still limping from bullet wounds in his legs. Life):

"If your life's so good, how come you got gray hair?"

Cletus (40, small and wiry. Feisty, like a bantam rooster. 15 years):

"Don't keep tellin' me what to do!"

Leon (33, tall, wiry, muscular. Always wore sunglasses. Life):

"This sounds like more of that COP-ology* shit!"

Other factors contributed to the space of the training. Three times a day, after each prison "feeding," the scullery dishwashers were manned and operated. Large tarpaulins covered the area and, while no one could see in, the rattle and clatter of pots and pans came through loud and clear. Periodically, the near-deafening "whoosh" of high-pressure steam hoses (used to scour the

harder-to-clean kettles) would intrude into the room through the windows behind Ted. Outside the windows on the opposite wall was the recreation yard, loudly occupied most of the day. And then the "Goon Squad" would come in three times a day to take a body count, regardless of where Ted was in the training.

For the rest of the day, the training was a roller-coaster, hitting both extremes often. And Ted kept putting it out there. Relentlessly. Pressing. Constantly pressing. Jumping off the stage into the midst of the hostility for a nose-to-nose confront with Lazrus, or Crown, or B. J., or Freddie—anyone—and totally willing to have whatever might happen, happen.

The day ended and we'd all moved through a lot. Trainer, trainees and logistics team. For sure I had. I was uncomfortable, drained, afraid and diligently looking for a reason, any reason not to come back. Who the hell needed it?! The noise was intolerable. I was sure the cons didn't want it! And I was just as sure that no one cared if they "got it" even if they *did* want it. So what's it all for?! Just then I peeked up out of my mind and saw Gil (47, life) going over some of the "wake-up" process instructions with Stewart. Chuy and Beto (35, life) walked by, deeply involved in a discussion about "it being the way it is." Then I remembered Werner dropping in earlier that evening and talking to the trainees and being absolutely willing to have that training be any way it was. Ah,

**COP-ology is the term cons use when they think the prison planners are trying to teach them something that the cops want to use to make them behave.*



San Quentin State Prison as seen from a nearby hill.

Ted allowed *no* guards in the room. None on the catwalk and none listening in.

what the hell! The last thing I needed in my life was another incomplection. I was coming back. And it was funny. As soon as I got I was coming back, I was excited again.

Wednesday • Day 2

We had to wait to get into the prison and the training didn't start until 8:45 AM, fifteen minutes late. Stewart opened by inviting the trainees to share about their homework processes. Hands shot up all over the place:

"I woke up at 5:30 and my body woke up, too."

"I woke up at 6:00 and I programmed myself not to get tired 'till midnite."

"I set my alarm for 6:00 and I woke up at 5:00. What happened?"

"You woke up at 5:00, sucker, that's what happened."

They were all having fun with it. All except B.J. He had his hand up for a while then put it down. A moment later Stewart called on him.

Stewart: "B.J., did you have a question?"
No answer.

Stewart: "B.J. You had your hand up. Did you have a question?"

B.J. just sat. Openly defiant.

Stewart (Moving down into the aisle):
"I asked if you had a question."

B.J.: "Never mind."

Stewart: "Did you have a question?"

B.J.: "Forget it."

Stewart: "The agreement is to stand up when you talk. Stand up."

B.J. looked around at his friends, his expression seeming to say, "Can you believe this guy?" B.J. stood.

B.J.: "I said forget it."

Stewart: "The question was, did you have a question?"

B.J.: "I forgot."

Stewart: "Did you have a question?"

B.J. shot another incredulous look at his friends. There was a hint of threat in his response.

B.J.: "I changed my mind, man, so just leave it be."

Stewart: "Did you have a question?"

B.J. can't believe it.

B.J.: "Yeah! I had a question! I told . . ."

Stewart: "Good. Thank you."

B.J. sat down, still not believing it.

Stewart: "What's the upset?"

B.J. (Surprised. Thought it was over.):
"What?"

Stewart: "What are you pissed off about?"

B.J.: "Oh, man! I told you . . ."

Stewart: "Stand up."

B.J. looked hard at Stewart then slowly, deliberately, got to his feet.

B.J.: "All right, man! Enough of this chicken-shit game. Why don't you just go on with the training?"

Stewart: "This is the training, B.J. What are you pissed off about?"

B.J.: "If I was pissed off, you'd be the first one to know it."

B.J. sat down.

Stewart: "Stand up."

B.J. (Sitting): "Back off, man! You're liable to get hurt!"

Stewart: "Stand up or get your ass out of the training!"

B.J. was beginning to fume. He stood.

B.J.: "Look! I don't . . ."

Stewart: "The question was, what are you pissed off about?"

B.J.: "I ain't pissed! So fuck off!"

Stewart: "You're full of shit, B.J. And you're a fuckin' liar!"

B.J.: "I'd like to have you say that to me outside, jack!"

They were standing almost nose-to-nose.

Stewart: "Exactly! You're standing there, ready to rip my head off and telling me you're not pissed off. You can't tell the truth so that makes you a liar! You're a liar, B.J.! Get it!"

B.J.: "Look, mother-fucker! Get off my case! Get back up on that stage and do your mother-fuckin' training!"

Stewart: "We're doing the training, B.J. Your training. This is the part where B.J. gets he's a liar and full of shit!"

B.J.: "I ain't tellin' you . . ."

Stewart: "Are you pissed off?"

B.J.: "Bet your ass I'm pissed off!"

Stewart: "And are you pissed off because I didn't call on you when you had your hand up?"

B.J.: "Yeah, I'm pissed off 'cause you didn't call on me when . . ."

Stewart: "That's the truth! Congratulations, B.J. Thank you."

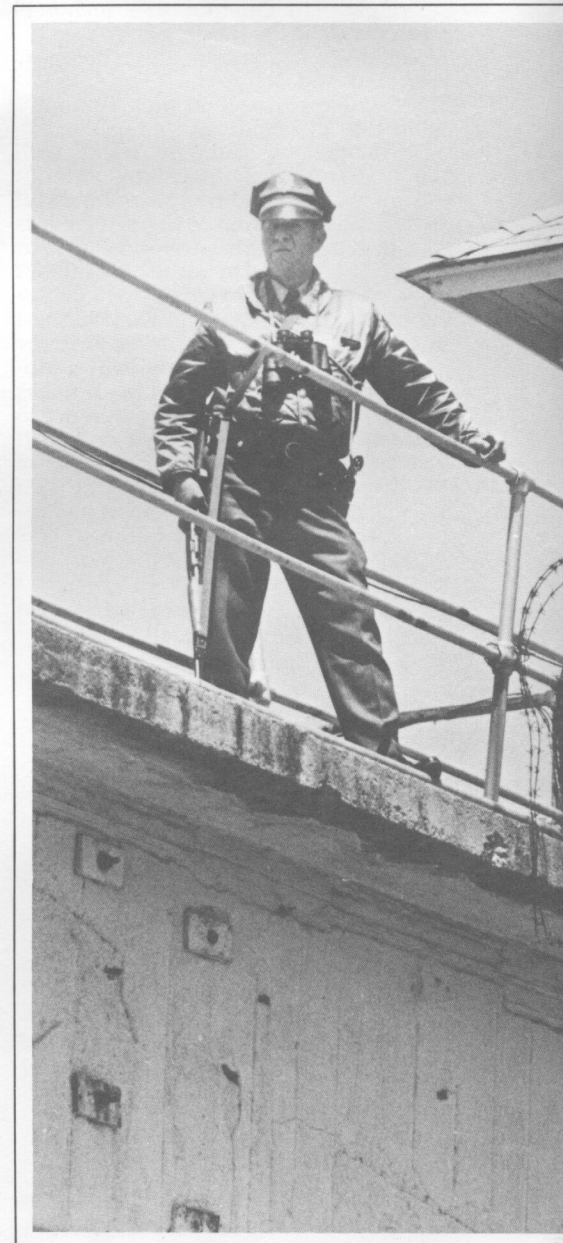
B.J. sat down. The room lightened up. And on it went.

The Guards

There are two types of guards at Quentin. One mans the guard towers and entrances, carefully checking who comes and goes. The other is referred to as Special Security or "Goon Squad." This group wears khaki jump-suits and para-

trooper boots and is trained to deal with any insurgence or rioting. Should any occur, the "guards" are to stay out of it and call the "Goon Squad" immediately. The "Goon Squad" keeps the peace and the cons know they'll do anything that's necessary to keep it.

Ted allowed *no* guards in the room. None on the catwalk and none listening in. It was further agreed that when it came time for the mandatory body count



"What the man is tellin' you is that you don't need to get your head knocked doin' what you're gonna end up doin' anyway!"

the guards would allow Ted (or Stewart) enough time to prepare the room. That arrangement worked perfectly.

The verbal jousting for the rest of the second day was loud, barbed and varied. Lazrus' fury had subsided for the most part, but B.J. was still going strong. Orin (25, 10 years) had uncovered some childhood fear. Carver (42, life) questioned the value of telling someone the truth if it hurt them. Girard (30, 10

years) shared how mad he was at Ted and watched his anger disappear in the communication.

During another set-to with Lazrus, Ted pressed him to get that "owning things the way they are is having your life work." In the midst of the exchange, Jarvis (36, 6' 3", cool, out in 28 days) raised his hand. Ted called on him.

Jarvis: "Say, Ted. D'you mind if I say somethin' to my brother, there?"

Ted said okay and Jarvis put it in the language of the yard.

Jarvis: "What the man is tellin' you is that you don't need to get your head knocked doin' what you're gonna end up doin' anyway. See, I got no hassle with the Goons, know what I mean? I mean I know if they want me to move down the way a piece, sooner or later, one way or the other, they gonna have me down the way a piece. Now I can either move down there on my own or end up down there with a lump up-side my head. So when I spot the Goons movin' in, I ask how far down the way they want me to move, and man, that's where I move. See? I win. The Goons know there ain't no fun roustin' me. So they go lookin' for one of *you* assholes to beat on."

Lazrus got it. Others did too. And the training went on.

The Danger Process put cracks in a lot of acts. Even the tough ones with all the layers. And seeping out through the cracks, a drop at a time, were sadness, fear, grief, and more of the stuff they'd suppressed for who knows how long. It was a life and death struggle for some. B.J. with his "tough guy" number; Carver still battling with his religious convictions; Mandrake (25, life) afraid *not* to stand at attention; Bear (40, life) the permanent hardness on his face beginning to melt; and on and on and on till the day ended.

When the "Goons" opened the door to take the cons back to their cell blocks, it was clear to me that things were different. The cons were all, to varying degrees, taking a look at their lives from a new point of view. Some of what they saw they liked, a lot they didn't. We'd started with 94 trainees; there were now 71 and I had no idea if *any* were going to show up on the following Tuesday. Well, we'd know in six days.

Tuesday • Day 3

The day was bright, clear and already warm. Ted was high as a kite as we dis-

cussed the coming day over breakfast. In fact, we were all rarin' to go. We even had two extra logistics people, Lloyd Fickett and David Fisher, who were going to handle microphones (we hadn't had mikes the first two days).

Once again we weren't admitted until after 8:00 AM and the training began at 8:45. Fifteen minutes late. The cons looked to be in good shape. Stewart commented to me how much their faces had "opened up" and it was validated in their sharing:

Peter (28, life): "I like me a little better."

Lenny (25, 6 years): "Now I know what my wife meant when she said marriage was a heavy commitment."

Dean (31, life): "I remembered my dreams. I never did that before."

Jackson (28, 10 years): "I was upset with what you said about my mama dyin', so I asked myself how come. Then I seen they was only words. And I don't need to get upset over words. 'Specially your words. *Your* words is *your* problem."

Wesley (24, 3 years): "My life's better. It's just like the one I had yesterday but today it's better. And it's better 'cause that's the way I want it."

In a discussion about fear and the Danger Process, B.J. told Ted that he hadn't been afraid. Ted said fine and asked B.J. to take another look. B.J. wouldn't look, Ted pressed him and the discussion turned immediately into a heated confrontation. The more Ted pressed, the more resistant B.J. became. The more resistant he became the more he refused to stand or use the mike when he talked. The situation went immediately to the basic, fundamental agreements of the training which B.J. refused to keep. Again Ted made the choice a simple one:

"Either keep the agreements or get the fuck out!"

It looked like a hard, hard moment for B.J. He was furious. He had no one's agreement and it was clear to me that no one in that room cared if he stayed or left. Someone said:

"Do somethin', man. I wanna get on with this thing."

B.J. had himself in a box and it was difficult for him to keep it all together. He shot a scathing look at Ted, another to the room and walked out. The sharing continued:

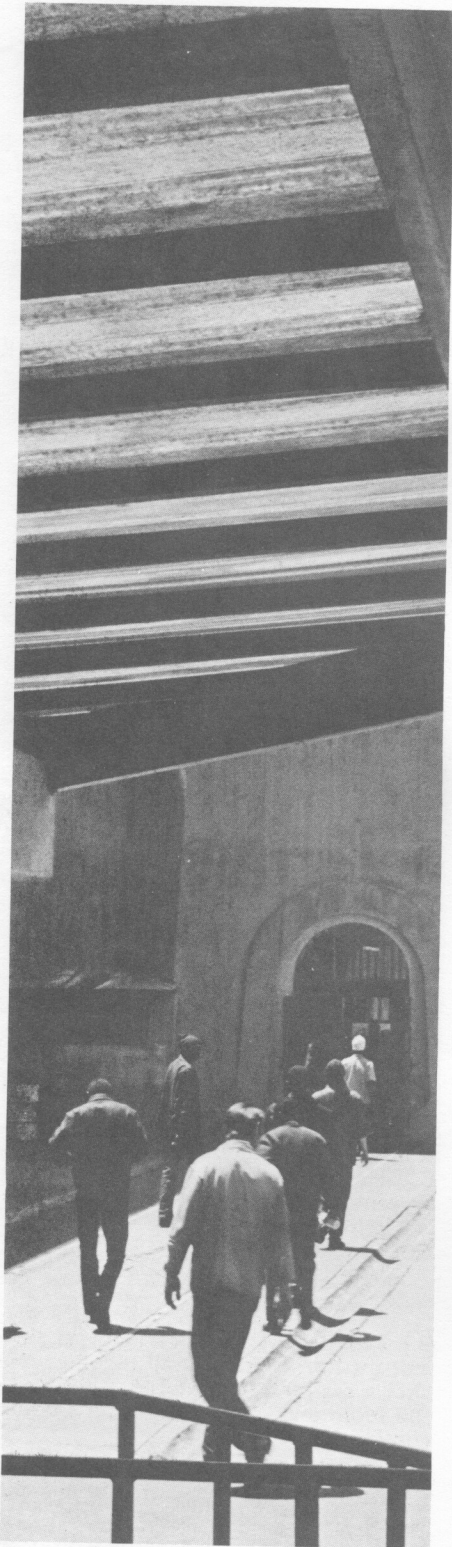
Girard: "Y'know? It doesn't matter *what* I believe. It's always gonna be just the way it is."

Leon: "I ain't sayin' I go along with what



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**"Y'know? It doesn't matter what I believe.
It's always gonna be just the way it is."**



© Marino Colmano 1976

you say but there might be somethin' to it."

Warren: "It wasn't all that bad when I found out I was an asshole."

Thirty minutes later Joe Roza walked in the room. B.J. was with him. (I found out later Joe had spent that time confronting B.J. on his agreements.)

Ted: "Joe! I don't want him in here if he's not perfectly clear on the agreements and willing to keep them!"

B.J. sat down. A moment later he raised his hand.

B.J.: "I got mad 'cause I thought you were layin' somethin' on me. I thought you were tellin' me that I was scared *then*, right when you were talkin' to me. An' I wasn't. I was mad. I see now you were askin' was I *ever* scared. The answer to that is yes. Just now, comin' back in here, I was a little bit scared. So if it's okay with you I'd like to stay around."

Ted: "I'm glad you're here, B.J."

B.J. (to the room): "An' if any of you guys object to that, I'll see you outside. Know what I mean?"

The cons started letting go of more and more of their stuff. The hostility that *was* still there was now aimed at "getting down to it." Even the kitchen and the steam hose noise, filtering into the room louder than ever, began having its own place in the training. It was all moving ahead and the cons were actively sharing themselves and digging it. For them, even Donna, the one woman in the training, was not the novelty she had been for the first two days.

Ted did another process where the trainees walked around the room "being" with one another, possibly the first time most of them had ever done anything like that. For sure they hadn't tried it in the yard.

Mandrake: "I don't think that'd be a smart move, Ted."

Ted: "What's that?"

Mandrake: "Walkin' up to some brother in the yard and sayin', 'Scuse me, bro. I just thought I'd come over here and BE with ya. Y'know, so I can move through my barriers.' I say that to some brother in the yard, he's gonna move through my teeth with a two-by-four."

The general consensus was that they wouldn't try that in the yard for a while. Their enthusiasm grew as others shared about the process.

Dean: "I kept judgin' everybody. I don't know if I can give that up."

Wesley: "I only liked them if they were clean, or smiled a certain way."

Gil: "I started out being self-righteous.

Then I got what I didn't like was tattoos or people who had 'em. Now they're okay. Funny, huh?"

Carver: "I kept seein' me in everyone."

William: "Goin' 'round lookin' at everyone I seen how I never been with anyone. Man! You know how many years I fucked away?"

Lazrus: "I seen I got somethin' goin' on with the fellas. Ladies is all right. But I got to prove somethin' with the fellas."

The discussion about "reality" took us well into the evening. I mentioned before that the day had been warm. It was. Then it got hot. From noon to 5:30 the temperature in the room was a constant 92° and we felt it. Usually that condition, under those circumstances, would promote tension and flaring tempers. But it didn't. A few shirts came off. Some shoes. That's all. It was just another part of it.

They seemed to put *everything* into "building their centers." I mean, they really got into it.

Crown: "I built something I always wanted. A conference room. You know, where I could make problems and solve them. I didn't feel like a loser."

Lamont: "I never had any rapport with my mom. We talked on my phone and I got a better understanding of her."

Leon: "I fucked up. I built this great place, just the way I wanted. Put all my good stuff in it. It was *fine*, y'know? Then I forgot the goddam windows."

Ted: "Tonight, when you're in bed, go back into your center and put them in."

Leon: "Yeah? Can I do that?"

Ted: "Sure."

Leon: "All right."

Leon was pleased.

Chuy: "I don't usually share, but I built my center really high. I put in all the things you said. Then I got through and I was sitting there, looking down on the people. I didn't have nothing to do so I gave myself a fix."

10:30 PM. Things were moving along beautifully and the training was working. It was in the middle of a process—with daisies. Then an interesting thing happened.

Stewart had the trainees right in the middle of climbing their daisies when David Norris informed him that it was time for the count and the "Goon Squad" was waiting outside. The cons muttered their objections to the interruption.

Stewart: "It's okay. Hold it right where you are, keep your eyes closed and stay in the process. We'll go on after they take the count. Don't worry about it.

"My life's better. It's just like the one I had yesterday but today it's better. And it's better 'cause that's the way I want it."

They won't know what you're doing anyway."

They seemed to like that idea. The "Goons" were let in and this was the picture: Sixty-one trainees, most of them "hardened" criminals, standing in the middle of that huge room, eyes closed, grinning broadly (some even giggling), holding various daisy-climbing positions, while three unsuspecting members of the "Goon Squad" walked among them and counted. Leroy, eyes closed and "basking in the sun," called from across the room:

"Don't forget me. I'm up here on my leaf."

It was definitely the fastest count the "Goon Squad" ever took.

Wednesday • Day 4

I was sitting with Ted while the trainees were coming into the room. Cletus stopped by the table.

Cletus: "'Mornin', Ted. Got a minute?"

Ted: "Sure, Cletus. What is it?"

Cletus: "Gotta tell you what happened this mornin'."

Ted: "Okay."

Cletus: "Remember me talkin' about them guards that was always hasslin' me in my shop?"

Ted: "Yes."

Cletus: "Well, I did what you said and it worked."

Ted: "What worked?"

Cletus: "Well, they came in to check things out, like they always do, an' that always used to piss me off. So I got to thinkin' 'bout what you said, 'bout diggin' things the way they are. So I says, 'Mornin', boys. How ya doin'? How 'bout a cuppa coffee? Just made it fresh.' Well, that put 'em in shock right there. They were seein' the new Cletus and didn't know if they should shit or go blind. One said somethin' 'bout bein' late for somewhere, the other one said, 'Oh, yeah. That's right.' an' they split. But they was different splittin' than they was comin' in, know what I mean? I mean I know the next time they come in, we gonna rap together over coffee."

8:30 AM. The training started on time.

The space of the training was safe and the cons were beginning to know it. And that's how they shared themselves.

Leroy: "I been goin' around not likin' 'Q'. Know what? 'Q' don't give a shit if I like it or not!"

Lazrus: "I always thought it was healthy

to worry. Like worryin' might keep you out the way of a bullet. I don't need to worry. I just need to keep out the way."

William: "I spent a lot of time wanting what I didn't have and not likin' what I *did* have. That's stupid! If I'd start likin' what I got I'd be in great shape."

I saw B.J. actually laugh at *himself* when Ted pointed out his perpetual preoccupation with sex.

All the usual stuff was there. Pain, confusion (Carver left), resistance, upset, unconsciousness, etc. And they stayed with it. Somebody would nod off a bit, wake up and be right back in it.

The room, or more accurately the space and the people, was transforming right there in front of me. There was a moment when I felt very special just to be there and be part of it.

7:30 PM. Twenty graduates, twelve men and eight women, arrived to assist at graduation and direct the trainees in their Personality Profiles. As they walked in and took their seats in the back of the room, the ladies in the group were openly and thoroughly appreciated.

The graduates, in for the last few hours of the training, were moved by the sharing and swept up in the fun of it. They, and the cons, were clearly anxious to get to the Personality Profile.

There was a powerfully moving moment when Ted shared an excerpt from Werner's Aphorism Book:

"I know that you know I love you,
What I want you to know
Is that I know you love me."

At that moment all that existed in that room was an exchange of love between us. And everyone knew it. Some of the trainees were embarrassed, even blushing, when they realized what was going on.

As the trainees completed their Personality Profiles, they moved out of the training area, received copies of the Aphorism Book and *The Graduate Review*, and were invited to join the "old" graduates for coffee.

Turner was sitting on the stage, smiling to himself, his legs dangling off the apron. I walked up to him.

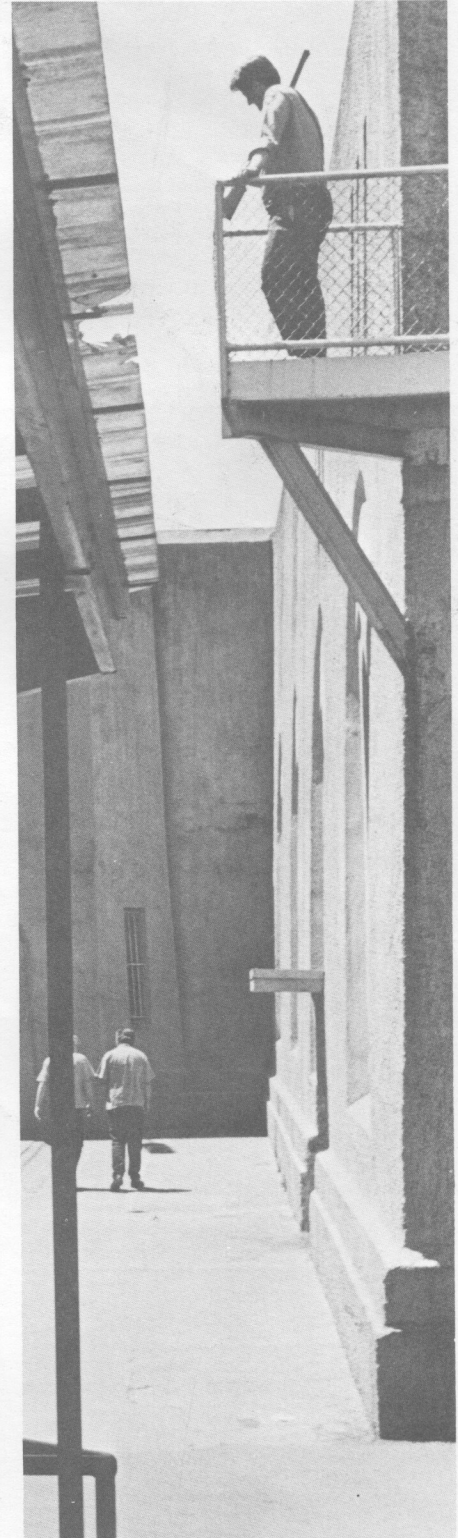
Gary: "How did you do?"

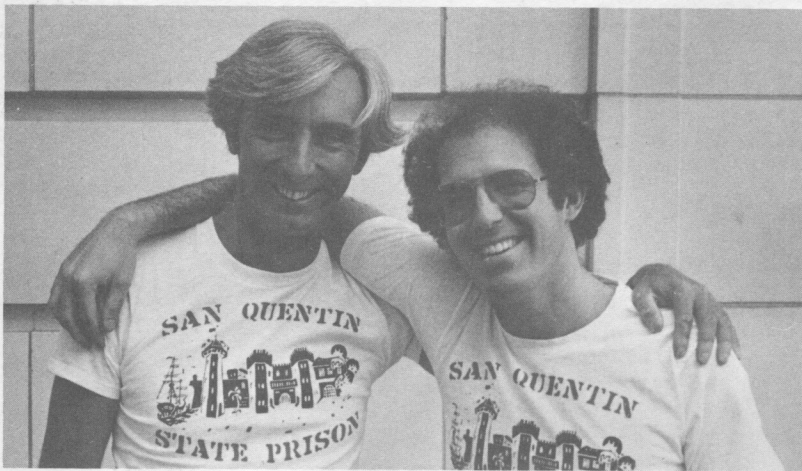
He looked up, grinning.

Turner: "Hundred percent."

We talked and he shared some more.

Turner: "I know now what Ted meant about some people not lettin' themselves cry. It's all stuck right here (he indicated his throat). I guess I'm not quite ready yet. Nothin' this good ever happened to me before."





est trainers Ted Long and Stewart Esposito in their San Quentin T-shirts, produced in a prison shop by one of the graduates of the training.

"I came in here to 'get' Ted. When I seen I couldn't do that I just kicked back and got the training instead."

Warren was talking to Charlene Afremow, one of *est*'s trainer candidates, and said:

"Whenever I was in prison it was always a trap, so I'd escape. Except when I was out, that was a trap, too, so I'd do something to get thrown back in prison. I never knew 'till now it was *me* makin' it that way."

Chuy asked Lloyd:

"If I put 250 people together for a training, how much is my commission?"

Beto asked Bob Curtis, an *est* staff member, how he could get *est* into Mexico.

Lazrus told Nancy Foushée, also on staff:

"I came in here to 'get' Ted. When I seen I couldn't do that I just kicked back and got the training instead."

I turned around and saw Warren hugging Ted. He no sooner moved away

than Bear stepped up for his hug. Bear! —who (I was positive) hadn't smiled for 15 years, was hugging Ted! A lot of guys hugged Ted. Some didn't. B.J. didn't. Said he wasn't quite there yet. But he did shake hands a lot.

We started breaking the training room down and some of the cons pitched in. The "Goon Squad" arrived, called for the first of three groups to be taken back to its block and directed them to gather just outside the door where our truck was parked. They seemed somewhat bewildered by the space in the room. The talking, joking and laughing were still going on and the cons were hanging back for as long as they could. The "Goon Squad," watching it all, seemed moved by the interchange and, as if wanting to contribute, allowed the cons that extra bit of time. The good feeling in the room was definitely contagious.

One particular incident pinpointed, for me, where the trainees were. We were all loading the truck and exchanging good-natured jibes with the "new" graduates. I was behind Linda Esposito, Stewart's wife, who was carrying some screens. A dozen or more cons were standing around as she waited to unload her armful. She kidded them:

"Look at that. A bunch of big, strong men just standing there while this poor, frail lady has to struggle with this awful, heavy load."

One con laughed and shot back:

"That's the way it is, baby."

The group laughed and another con said:

"Yeah. How come you set it up like that?"

I noticed that the *est* training had come to San Quentin.



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