

PAGE 5—Vallejo Times-Herald, Thursday, Oct. 14, 1965

Martinez Jail Riot Blamed On Boredom

By RICHARD GAKOWSKI

MARTINEZ—The number one enemy of sheriff's deputies inside the County Jail is boredom, not any of the prisoners, not even the rioters. The Martinez riot was the result of fast work and riot.

There is nothing to do inside except sleep, play cards, read, if a book can be had, or watch any printed matter; watch television is a privilege which has been denied since the rioters and talk.

Most of the time, prisoners talk all the time and stand on the bars at the black walls. They talk about why they're in jail, their families, past crimes, and sex, everyday topics. There is no place to sleep. I overhead two dudes, these cells away, talk about ways of getting out, ways of getting undetected at night. One was telling the surgery alarm when a train passed by during a conversation after the train passed he was finished and I had missed my connection.

RANKS RISKY

They then discussed the advantages of using machine guns or shotguns for holding up a bank. They both agreed that it was real risky. Supermarkets are easier and don't arouse the authorities so much.

Back on the shotgun ones said, "Man, I like to see the way the blast sort of lifts the roof up and pushes the door off." The other admitted he had never seen a man shot but that it must be a sight to see.

But the number one topic of conversation inside is sex. It is the first topic of conversation in the morning. It is debated in the afternoon and most often it is the last thing the dudes think or talk about. When the lights are turned out and they finally drift off to sleep.

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During my 38 hours as a dude I heard literally hundreds of tales of erotic conquests. C'mon, the techniques, unheard of by authors, actors, movie stars, were discussed in elaborate detail.

It is easy to pick out the dudes who have been on the inside for any length of time. The newcomers seldom talk of sex, but the oldtimers continually talk about it.

In a number of ways sex is also a chief topic of conversation. But never in my years in the U.S. Army did I ever hear the sex talk discussed in such detail as I did during my 38 hours inside the jail.

In the females life of a soldier, sex talk, drawings and prints are permitted and pictures of pin-up girls are plentiful.

Inside the jail, however, these are not allowed.

Homosexual affairs are also

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second of a series of exclusive inside reports on the Marin County Jail in Martinez. Following last week's and subsequent critical editorials of jail management, a leading newspapering editor of the Martinez Morning News-Gazette, a General Publication, got himself into jail and spent 38 hours "inside" to get the story.

DISCUSSIONS

Prisoners who have served时间 inside made before the break about the outside world.

PRISONERS WHO'S BOSS

THE SHERIFF OR THE INMATES?

I heard one dude who had spent some time in the joint (slang for San Quentin) discuss with another that the sheriff was afraid he had lost the last time he was there. Both were married men. Both were going back to the same place.

KEPT IN CELLS

During my 38 hour stay I was never approached nor did I see any advances being made toward me. I was not the type of guy for this kind of stuff. I was never let out of our cells into the day room.

In that time all there is no physical exercise program to divert the prisoner's emotional and psychological drive.

The sheriff's office is unable to use the exercise yard on the roof since completion of the 12 story County Admin. Building.

Council Administrator Harry Ramsey said it would be difficult to control the prisoners while people, particularly women, watched. There is no way to keep them from watching.

SEVEN STEPS

Within the walls there is little movement. The cells are seven paces long. I know, I walked it 107 times Sunday afternoon.

The dudes actively seek the trusty jobs, not because of the few added privileges.

Instead it is something to do to pass the time, to be busy.

One of my cell-mates, the one with long experience in prisons, thought he had been promoted a rank above the others before the riots. Sunday he heard another dude got it. He became very excited and asked the sheriff for a transfer to Li Ray Staffels, pleaded with him to go to a more secure farm because the inmates get to work long hours. "Time really flies then," he said.

CHANGE OF PACE

The prisoners didn't riot last because they were fed bad food or because they were being mistreated.

Instead the riots brought about a change of pace.

It was a way of letting off steam.

The rioting is contagious.

Thursday night a number of inmates went on a rampage in their cells on the ground floor.

Friday morning all day long,

and that night, it spread to the main floor and involved most of the inmates there.

Later, after Rahn's attack

on the sheriff's management of the facility which was made public Friday morning was not

brown inside until Sunday. It was not a cause.

One dude told me the rioting prisoners decided only after the basics started that they had better make some demands to make it look good.

ANOTHER BREAK

The dudes didn't really mind the lockdown, but they did want a break in the routine.

For those who had been inside for any length of time,

they were bored, but all the extra bulls on duty. The deputies were afraid, not for their lives, but for the inmates' lives.

They knew they had more trouble.

The dudes knew that and they enjoyed this small amount of power they had.

It was a break for all the

"prunes" who are properly under-

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