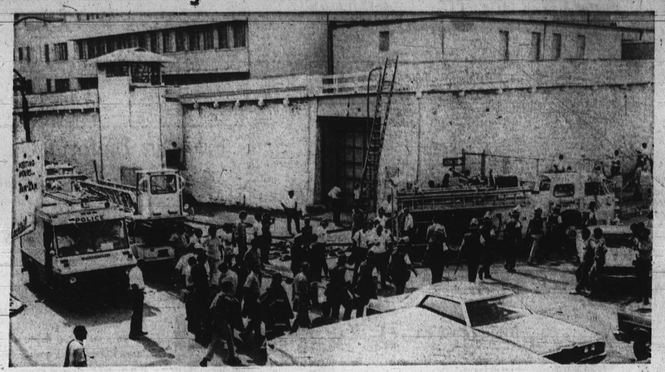
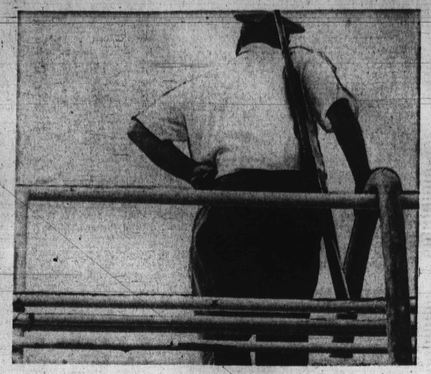
AFRO Camera Captures Maryland Pen Riot Scene

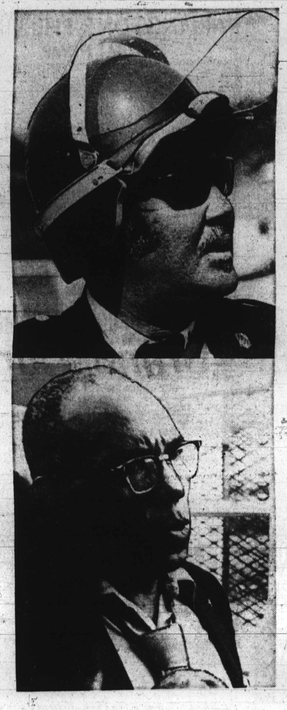


ENTERING THE PRISON — A line of riot-ready police parade into the Maryland Penitentiary grounds late Monday afternoon. They are followed by firemen even though fires started by inmates had long since been doused by a summer shower. Cameramen and news reporters mill about in the humid-90 degree sunshine as they wait for news tips. (Photos on this page by John Dorman)

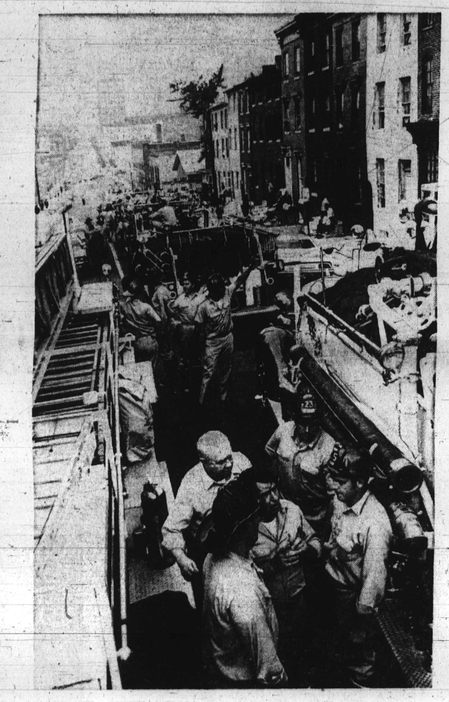


SHOTGUN slung on his back, this prison guard stands atop the 20-foot stone wall that surrounds the maximum security facility.

ALL AFRO PHOTOS BY JOHN DORMAN



OFFICER AND OFFICIAL — Police Officer H. L. Armstrong and elected official Del. Troy Brailey each had their part in bringing order to the Maryland Pen. Off. Armstrong, wearng his riot helment, helped direct police actions outside the prison. Del. Brailey, weary from hours of negotiation with inmates, is shown leaving the scene.



WAITING WORD FROM THE CHIEF — The Fire Department rang out five alarms as flames tore through Pen print and carpentry shops Monday afternoon but firemen were told by Acting Chief Thomas J. Burke not to advance on the fires or spray water on them. This delay left truck-loads of firefighters with little to do.

IN THE HEAT — Police Major Clarence Roy and community leader Mrs. Zerita Skates stood long hours under Monday's blistering sun. Mrs. Skates, a public school teacher, is pictured with AFRO reporter John Gross. Local civil rights agencies know her for her interest in prison reform.

TWO PRISONS IN TWO DAYS—Rept. Parren Mitchell is swarmed over by newsmen as he leaves successfull negotiations with inmates of the Maryland Pen. Just Saturday night, the Congressman was called down to the Maryland House of Corrections in Jessup to calm prisoners there.

WHIRLYBIRD — Governor Mandel arrived at the riot scene on his executive helicopter. The Governor quickly joined Rep. Mitchell and City Editor Elizabeth Oliver in negotiations with riotous prisoners who wanted their demands to be heard. The Maryland Pen is behind the white wall on the right.

City Jail Authorities Have 'Failed Miserably'

FINAL INSTALLMENT OF 142-PAGE REPORT

Special Grand Jury says officials 'must take fair share of responsibility'

This is the fifth and final installment of the 142-page report on the Baltimore City Jail issued by the January Term 1972 Special Grand Jury.

After a surprise visit to the jail on June 6, 1972, the Grand Jury released its scathing report on June 30. Beginning July 4, 1972, the AFRO has published the findings.

Today's installment both completes the report and summarizes the shocking highlights of the Grand Jury's indictment against the City Jail and its controversial warden Hiram L. Schoonfield and the jail board headed by Paul Reed.

The report concludes that city officials "must take their fair share of responsibility" for conditions at the jail.

CONCLUSION

In the Office Manual for rules, regulations and responsibilities for the Baltimore City Jail, a statement of policy is enunciated on page two: "The treatment of crime and criminals may some day be used by historians as one measure the degree of civilization achieved by nations. As nations mature, so apparently do their procedures for dealing with criminals.

A positive progression in their methods from cruel, retributive punishment to regenerative treatment can be observed."

Later, on the same page, it is written that the aim of the City Jail authorities is to:

1. Segregate persons based upon type of confinement

2. Provide adequate security of the confined to prevent escape and introduction of contraband

3. Provide decent conditions in terms of size, clean physical facilities and proper clothing and adequate food

4. Develop programs aimed at reduction of criminal behavior with concomitant salvage of human lives and protection of society.

BARBARIC

It seems patently obvious to the members of this special Grand Jury that the City Jail authorities have failed miserably in their attempts to accomplish these worth-while goals.

It is our hope that historians in the future will not measure the degree of civilization achieved in the City of Baltimore, during our era, by examining only the treatment of crime and criminals, which prevails at the Baltimore City Jail, because if they do, we will undoubtedly appear as a savage and barbaric people.

As it currently exists, the Baltimore City Jail accomplishes very little.

The citizens of our community cannot be secure from those people who have been convicted of even the most dangerous crimes or those who have been arrested and are awaiting trial.

Each inmate who is incarcerated there is constantly subject to abuse and sexual assault.

Immersed in a milieu of narcotic and drug abuse, an inmate must constantly be tempted to satisfy his curiosity or combat boredom by filling his vacant hours with an artificial drug-induced reality.

Of necessity, he must learn how to acquire a weapon and how to fight to protect himself from the physical advances of others.

The ethics and the way of life learned there will be taken with him when he leaves that institution, and his release, most often, must then substantially endanger an already beleaguered society.

THE HELPLESS

At the very least, the citizens of our community must urge their elected representatives to spend the necessary funds to obtain an end to the climate of oppression in the jail whereby the strongest and most vicious inmates can terrorize the weaker inmate or guard.

Every assault upon helpless victims inside that institution is an attack upon the principles of our way of life, and in some small way diminishes us all.

If the status quo is maintained in the Baltimore City Jail there is a very real danger that these philosophical and ethical considerations will be replaced at any moment by practical ones.

LACK OF CONTROL

The same lack of control over the detainees there, which is responsible for sexual attack is the same lack of control which accounts for eighty escapes since 1966.

While we recognize that some escapes will be impossible to prevent, that yields little comfort when it is remembered that the last escapee, in May of 1972, had already been convicted of one murder and was awaiting sentencing.

Several things must be accomplished in order to reduce the high escape rate at the Institution:

1. Weak windows and faulty locks must be replaced immediately.

2. A qualified locksmith must be employed on a full-time basis to insure that each individual cell cannot be breached by its inhabitant.

3. A security ward at the City Hospital must be secured by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, for the use of the Baltimore City Jail.

4. No accurate record is currently maintained, which would detail the route and manner of any attempted escape or escape. This should be immediately implemented, thereby allowing a greater degree of anticipation so that the physical plant can be altered accordingly.

GUARDS

5. Guards, especially those who are thoroughly familiar with the Jail and past methods of escape, should be urged to use their creativity and knowledge to devise their own escape route which could then, of course, be blocked by physical or logistical adjustments.

These guards, of course, have a wealth of knowledge about the Jail and the administration should reward their ingenuity and energies.

SUICIDES

Successful suicides can be virtually eliminated by the seclusion of individuals who are known to be sucide risks in adequate medical facilities.

The current operating procedure of returning a suicidal inmate to his cell must be stopped.

It would seem elementary that each inmate upon his entrance to the City Jail should be given a thorough physical examination, so that any contagious disease, physical handicap or drug addiction can thereby be revealed.

Our investigation has revealed to us that over one quarter of the Jail population is addicted to heroin, and since it is common knowledge that such an individual will go to any lengths to secure this drug, these inmates must be identified at once, and either watched very closely or better yet, confined in quarters uniquely adapted to their particular problems. Surprise urine analysis tests can, of course, be performed at any time during an inmate's incarceration, giving authorities a real opportunity to determine the effectiveness of its attempts to prevent narcotics entering the Jail.

GO TO THE JAIL

We suggest to the Grand Juries which follow us that when they, in conformity to their obligations, go to the Baltimore City Jail, that they make a surprise visit since it has been our experience that an announced visit is substantially a waste of time.

* * *

The next Grand Jury should also conduct a careful analysis of the bail bonding business and the feasibility of the State performing that public service.

We have examined, in some detail, the preliminary report of the Mayor's Special Committee on the Baltimore City Jail (Marbury Commission), and have discussed its contents with members of the Jail Board and other administration officials. We find ourselves in substantial agreement with the preliminary conclusions of that committee and urge the implementation of the recommendation therein.

* * *

We too recognize and have discovered independently that there is a dangerous climate at the Jail, which has existed for more then six months and has been building for a very long time.

"We suggest to the Grand Juries which follow us that when they, in conformity to their obligations, go to the Baltimore City Jail, that they make a surprise visit since it has been our experience that an announced visit is substantially a waste of time . . ."

HIS OWN TOUR—Warden Hiram L. Schoonfield and guard officer Lt. Merle J. Fitzgerald last week when Schoonfield conducted his own tour of the City Jail for newsmen saying that all was well, despite findings of Special Grand Jury which call it "barbaric and inhuman." (AFRO staff photo by I. Henry Phillips, Sr.)

IN A NUTSHELL

Here is what jury says is wrong at City Jail

Here are the overall conclusions of the January Term 1972 Special Grand Jury report of the Baltimore City Jail issued five weeks ago, and published in installments in the AFRO.

The final installment in the series is on this page, and concludes the 142-page report.

WHAT'S WRONG

We suggest that "there is a lack of control, coordination, communication, discipline and respect between the top supervisory members of the Baltimore City Jail administration and the intermediate level of the jail staff." Similarly, we agree that financial support and changes in procedures and practices will not alone change the present conditions there. The administrative breakdown at the Baltimore City Jail cannot be solved simply by removing one or two people in positions of responsibility. It is important to keep in mind that the complicated problems and the deficiencies which we have outlined and discovered in our investigation cannot be laid at the feet of any one individual. Many individuals and State Agencies in the criminal justice system of Baltimore City must take their fair share of responsibility for the conditions that exist there.

'A dangerous climate at City Jail . . .'

Citizens Who Served On City Jail Grand Jury

Here are the members of the January Term 1972 Special Grand Jury which wrote a blistering 142-page report exposing conditions at Baltimore City Jail:

Foreman: Charles W. Meyers Sr.

Assistant Foreman: Francis C. Capp

Assistant Foreman: John M. Cunningham

Secretary: Bernice K. Weathers

Assistant Secretary: Judith A. Rolfes

Oath Clerk: Ronald R. Thompson

Assistant Oath Clerk: Jack D. Johns

Doorkeeper: Vincent Giammona

OTHER MEMBERS

Hilda B. Boyd, Morris Brown, William T. Dyas, Marian C. Freeman, Gail W. Gathmann, Edith M. Hudson, Evalyn M. Koons, Harold D. Rawlings, Frances L. Reason, Waltraud F. Sarv, Betty K. Solomon and Barbara M. Taylor, Edward V. Walter, Lucille Wiley, Larry W. Winkler.

The extensive report, published in its entirety in the AFRO was the latest in a series of highly-critical investigations into the jail.

It brought pungent comments from two of Warden Hiram Schoonfield's most vocal critics: City Councilman Dr. Emerson Julian (D.-4th) and Del. Troy Brailey (D.-4th)

Said Dr. Julian: "The Grand Jury report clearly and unequivocally substantiates my oft-repeated charges that the City Jail is not being managed properly and that a change in leadership is needed at the institution . . .

"The dirty linen which has always been there has now been hung on the line where everybody can see it. There can be no more excuse-making. We've had enough hogwash and malarky. Schoonfield just has to go."

Del. Brailey added: "I have said all along that Schoonfield is very crude and uncultured and should be fired . . . I would say that the Grand Jury report is just confirming many of the things I said over a year ago."

* * *

In the past six months, there have been five other exposes of the jail situation by federal correctional experts including a survey by Warren A. Wirth, published in the AFRO April 15, and a Federal Judge Frank A. Kaufman next issued a 51-page legal opinion attacking the jail's operation.

* * *

Some of the shocking highlights of the Special Grand Jury report follow:

"Weapons such as pieces of board, pipes, homemade knives . . . are prevalent throughout the jail . . ."

". . . both consenting and forced homosexual acts take place daily."

". . . homosexuals are allowed to wear lipstick, bras and dresses, thereby enticing the rest of the jail population."

The Miscellaneous Incident Report System contained 20 incidents of theft from December 15, 1971 to April 15, 1972."

". . . heroin is readily available in the jail . . . one quarter of the jail population is addicted to heroin . . ."

"As it currently exists the Baltimore City Jail accomplishes very little . . ."

". . . 80 escapes since 1966 . . ."

". . . there is a lack of control . . ."

* * *

"It is possible for inmates availing themselves of the toilet facilities to look directly into the dining area and vice-versa . . ."

". . . strip cells are jail cells with a dim light and a hole in the floor . . . this serves as a toilet for the inmate and can only be flushed by a guard from the outside . . . the smell of human excrement pervaded the entire section . . ."

"One of the inmates indicated that if he were given a $10 bill he would be able to get a bag of heroin in ten or fifteen minutes . . ."

* * *

"Guard morale is extremely low; transgressions of the Jail rules and criminal activity proceed unchecked because the guard is indifferent and does not have the power to control the situation . . . absenteeism among the guards is high."

". . . it takes approximately ten to thirteen minutes to saw a sufficient space to permit a person to crawl through some jail bars. This time estimate is based on the time it takes an inmate using the crudest of hacksaw blades without a handle to saw through a total of four bars, which results in four glass panes being rem- . . ."

* * *

"The Scandinavian approach involving limited conjugal visits should definitely be examined."

"The stewards are forced to use very antiquated equipment in preparing large quantities of food for the inmate population . . ."

". . . the real problem with the food lies in its being served in the cells. The food is carried in antiquated carts to the various sections of the jail by inmate personnel. We observed soup being served in the following manner: The inmate took a plastic bread wrapper and placed his hand inside it. He then took a paper cup and dipped his hand with the paper cup into the soup and poured the contents into a second cup to be served to an inmate. In many cases the carts are left to stand for several minutes while the food gets cold . . ."

"It is easy to see why food is a major complaint of almost every inmate at the Baltimore City Jail."

"Whole sections are punished for the wrongdoings of four or five members on that section."

"Perhaps the lowest paid, most dangerous job in the municipality of Baltimore City is that of a jail guard . . . The guards, who are underpaid, risk their lives daily in the pursuit of their professions. This risk is increased by the poor security of the jail itself as well as a lack of sufficient manpower to control the inmate population.'"

"One prisoner's cell was littered with food and was extremely filthy. The toilet bowl in his cell was covered with caked-on excrement . . . Upon entering the cells, the odor was overwhelming."

* * *

"Strip or 'isolation cells contained prisoners who were not permitted clothing . . . Food, papers and garbage littered every section of the cells and the walkways in between."

". . . each inmate who is incarcerated there is constantly subject to abuse and sexual assault."

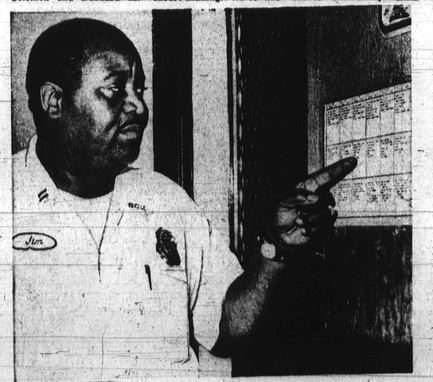
* * *

"Sodomy and other perverted sexual acts are prevalent."

"While it is very difficult for the members of the Grand Jury to relate to our fellow citizens . . . the exact atmosphere that permeated this section, suffice it to say that it exceeded the odor one experiences upon entering the elephant house at the Baltimore City Zoo."

* * *

On July 1, 1972, as reported in the AFRO, there was further indictment of the jail. Six inmates of the jail filed suit against the warden, Deputy Warden Parks and five guards for "cruel and inhuman treatment," including "torture, by hanging them by their wrists and burning their feet with matches," handcuffing inmates to bars, beating of inmates and unprovoked use of teargas." This case is still pending.



SAYS "GOOD EATIN'" — Capt. Jim Cotton, City Jail, points to the menu of the day seen proof of "good eatin'" at jail, despite Special Grand Jury's findings that the food is served poorly and often cold, making it a major complaint of every inmate at the jail. (AFRO staff photo by I. Henry Phillips, Sr.)

Law Enforcement graduates at CCB

By DR. SIDNEY KOBRE

In the graduation class at the Community College of Baltimore this year were a number who recieved their degrees and certificates in law-enforcement.

This year the number of graduates in the program exceeded those in previous years.

Forty-one were in the June graduating class on the Liberty Hgts. Campus.

Among the graduates were both young people attending full-time and members of the Baltimore City Police Department and of other security agencies.

The classes were given in both the day and evening, and youngsters sat alongside of a captain, lieutenants, sergeants as well as patrolmen.

* * *

The increasing number of young students were attracted to the program in criminal justice, expecting to enter police work, or joining the staffs of correctional institutions. Some of these young people desire to work with juvenile offenders, believing that this job is important, particularly in the prevention of delinquency, or in helping those youngsters who do get into trouble.

The members of the police force who attended the evening classes came to advance themselves on their jobs and get a broader knowledge of the administration of justice.

Some of these mature men, in the police department a few years, or a number of years, worked for their degrees, while others, for their certificates in law-enforcement.

A number of the policemen in the program have received promotions and attribute their advancement to their CCB study.

Prof. Hayes Larkins, heading up the criminal justice program, was formerly a captain himself.

* * *

Lt. Herbert F. Armstrong received his Associate in Arts degree with high honors.

He is assigned to the Northwestern District. Prior to this assignment, he was administrative assistant to the Deputy Commissioner of Operations Bureau Battaglia.

Before this, Lt. Armstrong was an instructor in the education and training division of the Baltimore City Police Department. Lt. Armstrong is married.

* * *

Mrs. Ruby Lee Blue, who has several children, one of whom is bed-ridden, also earned her degree in law-enforcement. This was done in spite of many handicaps involved in caring for her family and working and attending classes.

* * *

A Vietnam veteran, Edward Cauthorne studied full-time in the law enforcement program on the GI Bill of Educational Rights. He earned the A.A. degree at commencement.

* * *

Marcellus N. Boles, a veteran patrolman of the City Police Department, received his degree at the June commencement.

He was a charter member of the CCB chapter of the Lambda Alpha Epsilon, a national police fraternity, which seeks to promote professionalism in police work.

Joseph N Johnson, a full-time student, received his A.A. degree in law-enforcement.

He is a member of the fraternity. It is of interest to note that his sister, Valentina Johnson, will be receiving her degree in the law-enforcement program at the end of the summer.

Mary Moses, the Homecoming Queen two years ago, also studied in the law-enforcement area. This shows that beauty and a serious interest in police work and criminal justice can go together.

A member of the Baltimore Police force assigned to criminal investigation, Lt. Howard F. Parrott, also earned his degree after attending CCB part-time for the past five years. Lt. Parrott was assigned formerly as an instructor in the educational and Training Division of the City Police Department.

* * *

There his practical experience and academic duties proved to be a happy blend. Upon being promoted to lieutenancy and assigned to Police-Community Relations Division, he used all of his previous academic and practical experience in dealing with the public.

Others in the program who graduated this year were: Mark Hammond Ward, pre-trial officer; James H. Smith, a security officer at CCB; Calvin Milton Cason, Robert G. Elliott, a full-time student who won the scholarship award; Theodore L. Scott, William Stanley, William R. Taylor, Wilmon L. Powell, John Press, Clayton G. Bevel.