

September 9, 1971

Went to chow and noticed all the activists on each company sitting by each other, but paid little attention cause they always have some fool scheme. Forgot about the bullshit with the Lieutenant yesterday.

Went in the yard after breakfast and yard was unusually quiet all the different activist groups were congregated together. Still didn't think much of it.

Went over to school. Went upstairs was there for only a few minutes when the hack came in and told Mr. VanOstberg, the civilian teacher, that there was a riot and to be prepared to leave as soon as he (the hack) could make arrangements.

The poor civilians and the hack were scared as hell, but they held up real well. If I was in their shoes I would have fainted. Not one person on the inmate school staff participated in the riot! I had those of us who were upstairs agree to do our best to keep the civilians from being taken as hostages. They are good people and had been more than fair with us. Old Man Dickinson must have been frightened but he was cool was a cucumber and was the last of his staff to leave the prison.

Old Charlie, the asshole bandit and his kid Lucci were the last ones to get out of D Block. They got frightened when all the action started. I don't blame them and rushed to school. They said inmates were piled all over. The Hall Captain - "Red Whalen" - he is a prick but I hope he is okay. But I doubt it.

One of the school hacks "Rinsdale" locked the big gate, but the rioters have broken down several others.

If that little skinny hack doesn't calm down he is going to crack up. Myself and Joe Trueblood, Sam the Librarian, and Del Putnan assured him no one was going to hurt him.

They set the auditorium, next to the school, on fire. The smoke is billowing out of the roof. What a foolish God damned waste. These fucking idiots have set the N.Y.S. Penalogy Program back 20 years with this bull shit.

We can hear them screaming KILL! KILL! Then they chant MAO! MAO!. The bastards are crazy!

Charlie was telling me they were hitting a hack with a shovel in D block yard. I guess it was Rosey. The poor S.O.B. never bothered anyone.

The hack has taken us all downstairs in the school where there are another 10 or 12 inmates and 3 or 4 civilians. They gave us a choice of leaving or staying. To a man we want out! This rioting

is pure unadulterated bullshit! It will accomplish nothing and there is no rhyme or reason for it! There is very very little brutality - if any - and Oswald is now working on the reforms we asked for. These crazy bastards have ruined everything.

Risedale lined us all up at the back of the school, inside by the rear door, and we are waiting for the word to leave.

Holy Christ! here comes an Army of Hacks with riot clubs and white helmets. I hope Risedale assures them we are not part of the riot. He did! WHEW! I'm to old for this shit.

They finally let the civilians out! I'm glad! They never hurt anyone. They sure as hell are relieved. They want us to walk out single file and sit on the grass. I am willing but hope that prick in the tower doesn't get trigger happy. Whoops, first we have to hand the guards some long metal pipes so they can pry the bars out in a shop that is on fire. A civilian is trapped in there. They got him out and now us.

Well, here we are sitting on our ass in the grass behind the prison. I guess it is about 9:30 or 10 AM. That blue sky sure looks good! I thank God I'm not inside where those animals are rioting. We can hear them breaking windows and furniture.

Everybody is happy as hell they aren't inside, but now that they are safe some of them are fat mouthing and bad talking about what heroes they'd be if they were inside and what they'd do to this guard or that civilian. The morons are just as happy as a lark to be out of it.

I notice that a few of the louder mouth activists are out here. The punk bastards have been talking riot for the last month and now they are cringing.

They have moved us down with about 100 others in a big open lot behind the commissary and storehouse.

There goes the school burning! The crazy bastards are nut.

Well, look who is here? A little calico cat. He sure is happy. He is rubbing against everybody's legs and purring real loud. I wonder where the hell he came from.

Oh, Oh, there goes the big building with all the lumber. Hey! that is making a real fire. Look at those flames.

What the hell is this coming? My God, it is one of the inmates rioters just came out of the commissary and is running over to see us. I thought sure as hell the guard on the tower would shoot him, but he hardly paid any attention.

The little Puerto Rican Rioter has on a football helmet, a rain coat two sizes too big for him and a pair of boots that come up almost to his hips even though they are knee boots. He is haranguing us to join the riot and absolutely no one is responding. Now he is calling us yellow mother fuckers and faggots. There he goes running across the field in his grotesque, otherworldly costume, yelling that if we are men we will join him in the riot. I think we all feel a little sorry for the poor, silly, bastard.

Here comes three guys with two wheel barrows loaded down with commissary food and juices. The food is for everybody. Your damned right I ate some of it.

The commissary and the store house are now burning. The majority of opinion is that the rioters are stupid, but I know that a few of these nuts would like to be in the looting.

Damned if the rumors aren't flying like snow. We haven't left this isolated lot three or four hours yet every S.O.B. and his brother allegedly knows what is happening. One guy says two hacks are dead, another says they killed Red Whelan - all kinds of bullshit. Must be they're psychic cause I sure as hell haven't heard a radio or anything. Maybe it's wishful thinking they are repeating as facts.

Holy Christ! There is an army of hacks and State Police forming ranks down by the loading docks and in front of the powerhouse. They are all armed. The shit will hit the fan now. Those state cops are mean, tough, and know their business. Oh! Oh!

They hollered and asked us if we want to go to E Block Yard where they will feed us. We agree to a man. Some of those tough talking assholes are as meek as a lamb now. I am only afraid that all their bullshit will start some of these nuts off.

Well here we are penned in a 1/2 acre lot just outside of E block. There are about 400 people in here.

A couple of buddies of mine who work in the commissary say the rioters beat the hacks and made them take off all their clothes.

Another Buddy was trying to get out of B block when he saw two hacks on the floor bleeding from the head and saw them attack a hack at Times Square. (Where the tunnels from all the blocks meet)

I want to make one thing clear. This riot was not brought on by brutality or bad prison conditions. It was brought on by dedicated revolutionary groups such as The Black Panthers, Peoples Party, Young Lords, Weathermen and 5 Percenters. They are openly and avidly dedicated to the violent overthrow of all existing governmental authority. If the guards will tell the truth they have overheard their meetings time after time.

These people are and always will be misfits in any society. They are always making trouble and blame their own misfortunes, stupidity, outright laziness and dishonesty on the administration it is easier to do that than accept the fact they are misfits.

I am at the top of their list cause I defend democracy, law and order, and rules. I sure as hell am no angel, but I believe in the above because I don't believe in anarchy under any conditions.

Now these animals are breaking windows in here. Not the rioters but the guys in this compound. Boy, some people are just like sheep, they see a person do something then everyone gets in on it, I never knew what was really meant by "mob psychology" until now. If I wasn't disgusted with humanity before I sure am now. Some people are really animals!

9 PM - They are putting us in cells in C block.

Wow! Did the rioters tear the bottom floor of this place apart! It is unbelievable!

Well, here I am in some poor guys cell. It is a nice one, he has it fixed up nice, but no reading material. I notice<sup>he</sup> has two Bibles, a Bible dictionary and several Assembly of God magazines. I hope he isn't in the riot! No one knows where their friends are!

I know several harmless kinds who were caught up in this mess and they are probably being abused by the rioters. I sure as hell hope not.

We are one yard away from where the rioters are holed up and can see most of their activity as we are looking down from one of the upper floors.

The water is off and some of these idiots are banging cups on the wall and screaming at the top of their voices for water.

The hacks and a few kitchen inmates brought around ham and cheese sandwiches, milk, and coffee. They are bringing around water and filling bottles for us.

We can hear the guys in D block playing guitars and singing. Every once in a while they yell in unison, "POWER TO THE PEOPLE" KILL! KILL!. I suppose that is to keep the authorities uneasy about the welfare of the hostages.

September 10 - Well I'm okay for a while yet. These people - Non-Rioter Cons - woke me up yelling obscenities at the guards and Troopers. Now that they are safely in cells they have suddenly become heroes.

I can have a certain amount of respect for the courage of the rioters even though it is tragically misspent, but these punks who ran out on the rioters because they were yellow and now want to be heroes calling the cops and guards mother-fuckers, cocksuckers, etc. - They make me sick!

Many of us left the riot area because we do not believe in violence and that too takes a certain kind of courage because we will be held up to ridicule and scorn from those that did riot and our lives will be in real danger from the fanatics.

Once again, all kinds of rumors are flying about: The State Troopers are going to shoot us when we file out the building. The guards will beat us etc.

I hear the rioters chanting "POWER! POWER! POWER!" The pitiful bastards don't realize that they were, in reality, all through the minute they started this tragic escapade.

Several of them are building barricades on the catwalks that surround D Block. They have on football helmets, officers riot helmets, civilian clothes, officers uniforms and one a long sheet as a cape. The guy with the turban looks like something from a Kipling book or movie. Those people make me sick.

The guards have brought around sandwiches and coffee. The amazing thing is that I have not seen one brutal act by a guard not even a harsh word. It is amazing! Of course I fear what will happen when it's all over with. They probably won't be selective and you can't blame them. God! God! I wish this had never started! What possible good will it do? None!

There are only about 250 hard core activists in the whole joint, but many, many idiots go along when they see a chance to loot and beat and boast.

The Drs. and nurses have been through here twice yesterday and twice today. They always have two Troopers with shotguns guarding them.

I see the fires burning in the dark and hear the beating of a drum or pails to a Tom Tom beat. The rioters are chanting something to the tempo of the drum beat. It is unbelievably primitive and sends an eerie chill down my spine. Who would believe that people raised and schooled in the most advanced civilization in history could revert back to primitive savagery? It shows me that savagery and animal lusts are never too far from the surface emotions of any human being.

Now the guys who aren't in the riot are yelling to the rioters to kill the hostages. My God! What the hell is happening to this world? Where is there any common sense, decency, compassion, or love for our fellow men.

September 11 - WOW! I just looked out my window and there are 50 State Troopers with rifles and shotguns. The Sgt. just told them to take the safety off. Son-of-a-bitch I sure hope they don't start shooting!!!!

What a relief! They were just there to protect the guys trying to fix the water main. They sure as hell looked mean and efficient. When that stupid prick told them to take the safety off their weapons I thought I was a goner.

It is hard to be rational under such strained conditions. That is why I hope no one excites the rioters. They are really subject to kill some of the hostages. If that happens they better give their ass to God cause the troopers will then move in and they sure as hell are armed. They are a well disciplined outfit against an unarmed group.

These radicals are trained and disciplined! They practice everyday. They are tough, dedicated and mean as a cornered sewer rat.

Cripe, I am getting funky as hell. No water, except to drink and very little of that, for 2½ days. I may not be strong physically but I sure as hell smell strong.

The big meeting is supposed to be taking place right now. I don't hear anything from D block! Oswald must have real balls cause if I was in his position I wouldn't go into D block with all those maniacs for a million dollars. Of course, I believe in self preservation, Oswald either has a highly developed sense of duty or he has a death wish. What ever it is you have to admire his guts! There is no one who could save him if that mob wants to take him! He knows that. He was a pisspot when he was on the parole board, but he has guts and no one can take that from him!

We are all waiting for the results of the meeting. The radio said Huey P. Newton and William Kunstler were supposed to be there. I hope the administration and the general public notices who there people wanted called in. Maybe that way they will realize that this riot is not against prison conditions but is politically motivated! These people would have rioted if the conditions were perfect. They have been looking for an excuse for two months. The only reason they hesitated was because 85% of the prison thought such action was stupid.

The aftermath of all this should be that this public wake up to the fact that the Panthers, Weathermen, Peoples Party, Young Lords, 5 % ers, etc. are not harmless minorities. They permeate many sections of our society and baby, they means business! They will do anything to accomplish the overthrowing of all mandated authority. Every one of the people who started the riot belong to one of the above mentioned organizations.

I know the bleeding <sup>hearts</sup> will try to blame the administration and society etc, but the cause of this riot is politically motivated activists. These people are fanatics. They have definitely been instigated and motivated by outsiders.

You will find that very few of the inmates responsible for this riot are over 30 and that is not because us so called "old timers" are institutionalized but because we have seen an amazing change for the better in the N.Y.S. Correction System and we had waited a long time for it.

We have been in prison off and on for years and we know the only ones who get in serious trouble are the ones who are too stupid to obey rules set up for the benefit of all concerned. You can't run a college, a city, an athletic team, a church nor a prison without rules and you can't have the same rules to govern a church or college as you do a prison. Despite all this you have bleeding heart liberals who advocate all kinds of ridiculous permissive measures.

These people aren't in here for loving their neighbor. They are in here for rape, burglary, murder, robbery, assault, forgery, incest, manslaughter, forgery etc.. Some of them have made one mistake and will never make another, many are personable, intelligent, and honest, but others are animals. One thing is for damned sure and that is despite their whimpering about the system no one twisted their arm or threatened to kill them if they didn't become pimps, rapists, murderers, burglars, robbers, etc.

Damned it is now 10 to 1 P.M. and D block yard has been quiet since about 4: A.M. I sure hope they accomplish something but I don't see how.

The Commissioner would have to be crazy to give into some of those demands! If he agrees not to prosecute then you can bet your life there will be riots all over the state. He must be firm or there will be more trouble. If he gives in he will be setting a bad example.

No one who has not been in here over the past two months would believe the venomous hatred these radical activists feel toward "any" authority. They are complete anarchist!

Believe it or not we have Trotskyites, (Peoples Party), Maoists, and even some Nazi in here.

The general public doesn't realize what bug houses these places are. They were bad enough when they had only criminals but not that they have leftist politically oriented prisoners they are pure bedlam.

These rioters are getting all their leftist idols in here so I think I will ask to see William and James Buckley. I am just being facetious, but I do feel that some conservative oriented people should sit in on the conferences just to keep the political spectrum balanced.

I can't emphasize strongly enough that these people who perpetrated this riot were politically motivated more than they were motivated by prison reform. The prison simply wasn't that bad! No prison is good, but as prisons go Attica sure as hell wasn't that bad.

There are some ignorant and stupid hacks, but I can't visualize burning, looting, kidnapping, assaulting and destroying a couple million dollars in property simply to gain revenge on about seven stupid hacks.

There isn't one damned person who is overworked in here! Not one. Most of the jobs have four or five people to do one mans work.

I just can't see where these activists think they are going to gain anything. The minutes they give up those hostages Attica Prison will revert back to 1940 penal ways and will do so out of a valid necessity!

Many screws will be quitting and much of the budget will have to go for repair of the damage done here. So we will have no school, no chapel, no movies, very little yard time and all the reforms Mr. Oswald advocates will most likely be voted down so where the hell and how the hell did these people accomplish anything constructive by their animalistic acts?

We still haven't heard from D block - not a peep. I see some of the guys up on the catwalks with their football helmets on, but they aren't making a sound. They are simply looking down on the yard where the negotiations are going on.

I'm worried about some of my buddies. One of them is a real small 22 year old guy and a lot of those bullying bastards have been trying to frighten him into allowing them to have anal intercourse with them. I'm afraid they might succeed.

The principal brutality in this prison and any other prison is by inmate to inmate.

There are numerous rapes of young, good looking inmates and a flourishing protection racket by several of the bigger and supposedly tougher inmates. Most of them are the same bastards who perpetrated this riot.

It is a beautiful day out. The sky is clear and there is a cool breeze. It is hard to imagine that only a few miles away everything is normal while here people are prepared to kill each other. What a strange world we live in.



It is about 3 P.M. and still not a sound from D block. I know nothing wrong has happened, but I sure as hell will feel a lot better when all this is over. Now, that sure as hell is an understatement.

I'm sure we will hear a roar from D block if and when Hughie P. Newton and Bobby Seal arrive. They are the idols of these revolutionaries.

I wish I could be more sympathetic to the cause of the rioters cause they are fellow inmates, but dam it they have screwed up every damned thing we older guys have accomplished through the courts and by non-violent strikes. I can't sympathize with stupidity. I feel like a fuckin traitor, but right is right and wrong is wrong!

I'm not all that upset over what physical and material damage has been done as I am, upset about returning to the old ways. They weren't very nice, but they will be necessary for a while now.

I still believe that if you act like a man you will be treated like a man. I have always found it to be true. Of course, some of these guys believe being a man is constantly fighting, refusing to do your job, never submitting to authority, etc. Maybe they are correct, but I hardly think so.

Even though I've been in prison before this is a whole new life to me! I can't hate a man simply because he has a job as a guard and represent the establishment.

I can't figure some of these guys out. Dave has one month to go before he finishes his sentence, yet he got involved in this shit. Why? He constantly preaches revolution as though it were a game. Maybe he realizes by now just how serious it can be. I sure hope he gets his belly full. The damned fool will never learn!!!

This whole prison is so damned quiet it scares hell out of me. Something will pop real soon! Prisons are never quiet! I sure would like to know what the hell is happening.

I believe all their negotiating will give the officials time to check things out and get the power in the right places in case there has to be a showdown by force.

It might seem very odd to say, right in the middle of a prison riot, but I am bored as hell! I've been locked in this 5' x 8' cell for three days now and I'm about ready to go batty.

Sure hope my mother and kids aren't too worried. I bet the old girl is pulling her hair out. She sure is a loyal mother. They don't come any better.

Ginny (my wife) is probably planning on how she will spend the social security money each month if I get bumped off. I better stay away from the windows cause she is probably praying I get hit by a stray bullet and she might have more pull with the man upstairs than I do. I doubt it though.

Well, they had some of the lunatics, in the hole when this happened and maybe that is good. What the hell am I talking about? It certainly is good.

What we need now is a pouring rain to cool off those hot heads in D block.

Let me look over at D block and see what the hell is happening. This quiet is killing me.

There are four guys on the catwalk and they are looking down into the yard.

I hear sirens outside the wall. Maybe the police bringing Newton and Seal from Buffalo Airport.

I just saw a white guy on the catwalk but couldn't make out who he was. He had a football helmet on.

The majority of opinions on this block is that the rioters are nuts, but we don't want to see them hurt. We hope they wise up soon!

The hacks sure as hell are worried. One just told me things are looking bad. I wonder how bad? They have looked bad for 3 days.

I've lost all my pictures of my kids. They are irreplaceable. Oh well, I better thank God that I am not 200 yards away in D block.

I'm glad VanOstberg, Germain, Beaver and Davis the civilian teachers got out okay. I'm glad Dickerson got out okay but I must admit he (or seems to be) a cantankerous old bastard. He better thank God cause a lot of people would liked to have gotten a hold of him.

I really like VanOstberg, Davis, Beaver and Germain. They do a good job, but they never bother the inmates.

Dam - no action yet! I hope this isn't the lull before the storm.

Some asshole in the cell across from me keeps moaning about his poor, dead soul brothers and as far as I know not one inmate has been hit let alone killed. I think he is having the D.T.'s. The hacks just found out he has a hack saw and has cut part way through his bars. Of course I was kidding about the D.T.'s but he sure as hell ain't normal.