We Love You
"Claire Culhaine"
SUBSCRIBE NOW !!!

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS NEEDED TO HELP DEFER THE COST OF MAILING OUT COPIES OF "THE MOUNTAIN ECHO".

== 12 ISSUES FOR ONLY $12.00 ==

ORDER NOW

NAME: ____________________________

ADDRESS: __________________________

CITY: ___________________________

PROVINCE: ___________ POSTAL CODE __________

PLEASE SEND CHEQUE / MONEY ORDER TO:

THE MOUNTAIN ECHO
ROX 1200
AGASSIZ, B.C.
VOM 1AO

The views expressed in the "MOUNTAIN ECHO" are not necessarily the views and/or opinions of the Editor, Editorial Board or the Population. If you disagree with the contents of any article, PLEASE feel free to write us and we will gladly print your letter.
CLAIRE CULHANE: WE LOVE YOU!

Mountain—February 12, 1990

The bane of Wardens, and the CSC, and a headache to the Commissioner himself, dear, lovable 76-year-old Claire Culhaine still fights for the rights of prisoners—and damn the cost! Dr. Guy Richmond said it best: [she produces] documentary evidence of the power of corruption and the corruption of power.

Author, lecturer, and long time activist, this remarkable lady has fought the system and won, time and time again, despite being banned from all prisons for several years.

In commenting on her published book, "Barred From Prison", Raymond Boyer, Past President of "L'Office des Droits des Detenus", [a prisoners' rights group] says of her writing: "A book such as I have not seen in my thirty years experience in and out of the Canadian Penitentiary System. . . . The deepest, truest and most vivid account of what life is like behind bars, and why it doesn't change."

But Claire allows as there is hope. As one prisoner said: "Anyone that could rattle the b*st*rds at Oakalla like Claire has done, deserves our undying gratitude and fullest support."

Claire has become a legend in her own time, and many a security guard has blanched before her steely gaze. She visits those prisoners who have no other visitors, advises on particular prisoner problems and forms a voice of sanity about prisoner-issues, both to the media and to the community at large.

Claire Culhaine will be remembered in history as society's conscience-in-prison. Always available for consultation, (and I might say without pay or funding other than that from her meager pension), she never forgets that we are all valuable human beings and still important members of society—disenfranchised perhaps—but still valuable, nevertheless.

In her newly acclaimed role as intellectual lecturer, Claire often speaks at different universities and thus we are very proud to include a portion of her recent speech (to the University of Windsor) in this issue, it concerns the potential for decriminalization of the prison system.

Prisoners may write to Claire on any matter at the following address:

*303-2075 East 12th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C. V5N 2A9

Keep on scoring on the frontline Claire. We salute you!


Today, the State Senate passed the controversial "Castration Bill" where sex-offenders get three-fourths of their sentence remitted, when they would voluntarily submit to full castration.

Some Senators had demanded mandatory castration before any sentence remission.

Meanwhile, Senate leaders said, following the successful vote, the bill will never become law because it violates U.S. Constitutional guarantees.
"Don't spend another million to tell us that natives are still impoverished. . . ."

By Claire Culhaine:

How interesting that steps are being taken to "determine why so many natives are imprisoned... more than 30% of Alberta's prisoners are Metis or Indian (but who) constitute only 4 per cent of that province's total population" (Task Force To Look At Why Natives Jailed—Jan 13).

Another year, another $1-million, to tell us what we already know.

The ink has barely dried on the 1988 Final Report: "Task Force On Aboriginal Peoples In Federal Corrections", and here we go again.

It would make far more sense to use a portion of that $1-million to immediately clear up the bureaucratic backlog which contributes to so many [native and other] prisoners being held, far past their parole-eligibility release date.

Then explore [native leader] Larry Desmeules' gratis advice. Recognize their impoverished condition. Establish a job-market (in the environmental area, perhaps?) where they can be trained, and draw good salaries, like anyone else.

That is the kind of "historic step forward" we need, not another survey.

Prisoners-rights Group—Vancouver.

Parole Board decisions make sense—sometimes!

By Alan Winter:

During you parole application, when you have completed the stage where Board members review all available information about you to identify (what they say) "case specific factors", you then proceed to "step-2" where Board members review the following information:

a) Professional opinions and other information [which might] indicate that release would not be an undue risk to society.

b) The inmate must have received appropriate treatment for any disorder diagnosed by a professional.*

c) The inmate must have taken part in, and benefited from, programs that will help the offender reintegrate into society and obey the law.
Such programs might be life-skills, native spirituality, literacy training, substance abuse, employment, and of course self-help programs that address the offender's needs. The Board considers treatment programs to be most desirable, because they indicate the offender's willingness to rehabilitate himself.

The Board examines other issues such as:

d) The inmate must show a good understanding of his offence—its gravity and effects, (e.g. empathy).
e) The inmate has a release plan that shows control and support.
f) If the inmate does not meet requirements "a-d", the Board may still grant release if the information indicates no undue risk.

Armed with this explanation of Parole Board policies, the new applicant for early release should review his own casefile to see how it matches these stated priorities. Then, perhaps, he may understand the enemy as being largely himself.

ON THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE FRONT

"... THERE IS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN CRIMES OF GREED AND CRIMES OF NEED"

By Claire Culhaine

The Criminal Justice system reaches from one end of the court spectrum to the other, from the accused standing in the witness box to those employed by the courts, jail, police, sheriff, parole, probation, corrections, social agencies and of course the scores of lawyers, notaries, prosecutors, jurors and not to forget those other specialists, the psychologists and psychiatrists—up to and including the Judge sitting on high.

All these people depend for their livelihood in one way or another on that individual standing in the box, sometimes handcuffed, sometimes shackled.

But first let us define the words CRIME and CRIMINAL which are most frequently related to street crime but rarely, if at all, to other areas of criminality. According to 1976 statistics published in ASSAULT ON THE WORKER by C. Reason et al., a worker in Canada dies on the job every six hours and work related injuries occur every seven seconds. The business executive who trimmed costs by cutting back on safety equipment to boost the company's profits, never intended that anyone should die or lose a limb. But when it did happen, neither was s/he charged with murder or criminal negligence, as most certainly happens when one patron stabs another in a pub in a low income district.

Fuelled by media sensationalism, the majority of the public direct their fear and hatred at the individual law breaker—who most often ranks below them on the economic pecking order—instead of at those corporations and government departments guilty of social crimes which produce a far greater number of victims than can ever be
chalked up on the street. There is a distinction between crimes of greed and crimes of need.

When the former CSC Commissioner Mr. LeBlanc was the top decision maker, when programs for prisoners were cut back, ostensibly because of lack of funds, (I felt) such cut backs understandably contributed to the constant stream of tragedies which beset prisoners in this prison system.

Take for example when a prisoner into his 9th year on a 2-year Special-Handling-Unit segregation program, whose petite point portrait valued at $1,500 was slashed by a guard, apparently was invited to “voluntarily” drop his case against the Crown.

A long awaited transfer to a lesser security just might be approved around that time, he was unofficially given to understand.

Or, as when a native prisoner was denied an escorted pass (designated as humanitarian) to attend his child’s funeral. Based on this specific refusal, research into the discrimination faced by the disproportionate number of convicted Aboriginals, (approximately 40-60% compared to the 7% of the general population depending on the region) has resulted in a court action under Sec. 15 of the Charter, and funded by the Court Challenges program. We look forward to some valid explanation for such denials, especially when these bereaved applicants are within days or weeks of their final release date.

To more fully appreciate how such internal tensions continue to be compounded, one would only have to check out the 65 recommendations in the “1977 REPORT TO PARLIAMENT” which began with: "A crisis exists in the Canadian Penitentiary System... It can be met only by the immediate implementation of large-scale reform. It is imperative that the Solicitor General act immediately on this Report, as a matter of the utmost urgency."

They ended with the request "to have a permanent reference during the rest of the 30th and 31st Parliament to enable it to review the implementation of this Report". Solicitor General Francis Fox’s first official response to this penetrating study was to reject these two significant recommendations.

Now, twelve years later, the [Parole] Board still shows no sign of adapting to this “changing world”.

Unable or unwilling (depending on one’s perspective) to improve its performance, we find its Ontario Regional Director admitting that “cases will be bumped from month to month... because we are supposed to be doing something we are not able to do at this point [obtain required psychological assessments and files]. It is regrettable that many inmates may be spending more time in prison than they ought to”. (G & M Dec. 23/86)

Clearly, to decriminalize the prison system we would have to find ways to decriminalize ALL our systems.

Margaret Mead had one answer (quoted in an American Infant Health Campaign called ACTION FOR CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY) – “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”

While I’m not quite prepared to underwrite such a pledge, I do have an idea along those lines. Listening to David Suzuki’s CBC series, one of his
environment themes called "In the Year 2039" suggested the following adaptations:

- "Imagine two people in the year 2039 (only forty years away) viewing the devastation of what was once 'Our Great North Strong and Free' having the following conversation: "What a pity that way back in 1989 when on any given day that they say there were about 28,000 prisoners, mostly sitting around doing nothing — what a pity that, when there still was the time, someone didn't get involved in recycling their little corner of the earth. What a difference it could have made."

I submit that this is the moment to challenge the Solicitor General's Department to take concrete steps to implement this noble sentiment.

In so doing it would be contributing to the evolution of a new, universal lifestyle, and a society that may truly be said to have ... accepted increasing responsibility for the welfare of its members [ALL of its members], as referred to in the Statement of Principles for this George M. Duck Lecture series.

Note* Prepared and Delivered by Claire Culhane to the University of Windsor, 1990.

-A VOTE OF THANKS-

Dear Editor:

Another Inmate Committee takes office shortly and with this movement it is worthwhile to reflect on the efforts of the outgoing executive members, especially Andrew "B", the Chairman.

His job was not always a pleasant one and often necessitated mediation between the "system" and the prisoners.

Anyone who works with people knows the pitfalls and the "fine-line" a negotiator must negotiate, thus bringing about conciliation.

Our tongues off to Andy for the manner in which he "wore his hat" [of office] and our thanks go to him for a job well done. Signed,

H.B. and the residents of RMU*3

POETRY: "To Heal"

To heal, comes in many ways
The one I like most, comes this way
I was asked one day "Why" I never went to church?
Well I told him that I went to the mountains
I told him that the mountainside was my church

Somewhere on the mountainside,
I watch the day pass, and the clouds.
Some above, some below: Than(sic) I told him
I will go to your church; if you will go to mine.

I think by the time he left me, he liked mine better.

Than (sic) when you are tired and the world
is too much for you; go to the mountain and sit, or someplace alone. Even a church

is better, when it is empty.

This is how I think, this is how I feel
But who am I?
I am only a man, who lives alone, and lonely.

Ray Polard
"An open letter to the Warden from the John Howard Society"

Dear Warden:

I have just received the January edition of the Mountain Echo, courtesy of the Editor. I was very much moved by its content; particularly the article written by Len Buckley, "Project Recovery", a new group sponsored by the Phoenix self-help group.

I can only throw accolade after accolade to those who, out of an inner conviction to really take a good look at the motivating force behind their anti-societal behavior, and become responsible, reliable individuals, have chosen, voluntarily, to participate—at their own expense—in a program which, I believe will completely transform the participants life, due to the sincerity and willingness to change.

Many men and women have spent years in prison without any concrete evidence of love and concern from fellow human beings. How tragic. Our objective, surely is to offer the offender something which will help him. My hat off to those who have chosen, themselves, to conceive a program viable, in its very essence, and by its very nature.

God bless each one of them. Well done men. Keep the flag waving. We are behind you.
Sincerely,

John Fursdon, Counsellor

Dear Editor:

A little Birdie told me all about the great success you've scored with your terrific Phoenix program. Right on!!!

Hang on tight now. 100% not 99.9%

I was looking forward to [attending] your next social, February 25, but will be away being a witness for a not-so-young anymore Doug Lucas' 15-year Judicial Review Hearing.

However, I may make it sooner so hope to see you then.

The best to you and Hal and Len and ALL the others

Take care.

Love,

Claire Culhaine

PS. I'm sweating over another one on Sentencing Reform Issues, for a conference at the University of Saskatoon, next month. Becoming quite the expert, aren't I? Even while I too keep scoring on the front line (battlefront).

Dear Editor:

It must be gratifying to see the expansion and growth of the Phoenix therapy program in such a short time to encompass nearly one-third of the prison population. The commitment of your members in terms of time, material and financial resources is a positive demonstration of the action necessary for the continued growth of the therapy program.

The support you have received from Senior Management and the National Parole Board attests to the group's hard work and perseverance in
establishing the Phoenix Groups within the penitentiary.

The Task Force on Mental Health Care has been requested to review the Phoenix Groups as part of their deliberations. I understand that the Working Committee met in the Pacific Region on January 18 and 19 to review the delivery of sex-offender programs. Please be assured that the Task Force will carefully consider the Phoenix Group’s self-help approach, with a view toward supporting and strengthening this program.

I commend the Chairman for the initiatives taken by him and all the Phoenix members.

Brendan Reynolds
Assistant Commissioner, CSC.

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter of thanks to the kitchen.

To all the kitchen workers I would like to say thank you for all the extra work and good food which was prepared and served during the Christmas and New Year holidays. I waited this long to see if anyone would show their appreciation. I have seen nothing.

So, I am wishing to let you know that there are a few of us who are really thankful.

To me, there was more food than anyone needed, and prepared very well. It's a shame that still there are a few who still complain. Really, I wonder what they would serve if we were to drop in at their home during the holidays?

So from the heart: thank you for all the care you took, and the extra work it caused you.

"In Appreciation"
(Unabridged Version)

The other thing I wish to express my appreciation for is the return of Toby ???. I seen(sic) shortly after he was transferred, the cigarettes(sic) butts, the papers all over the yard. Than(sic) Toby came back and Lord and behold. Three days letter(sic) it looked like the Lord had come down with a vacuum cleaner and cleaned up the place, even the field. Toby you are a blessing to this God forsaken place.

Thank you for caring and cleaning.

Ray Polard

__ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY,
IT MAKES GOOD $EN$EIIII!__
An open letter to Senator Ray Perrault

"The proposal for Project Recovery will be carefully considered"

Senator the Honourable Ray Perrault, P.C.
The Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Senator Perrault:

Thank you for your letter of September 1, 1989, concerning a suggested treatment plan for the inmates at Mountain Institution.

The proposal for "Project Recovery" will be carefully considered in the Task Force on Mental Health.

The Task Force, chaired by Dr. Jacques Roy, Director General, Health Care Services, has begun its deliberations and is due to report to the Senior Management Committee of the Correctional Services of Canada in late March of 1990.

Attached, please find the "Terms of Reference" for the Task Force, outlining its scope and mandate.

The assessment of risk for the release of convicted sex offenders will form a major part of the review, as will treatment delivery. I certainly share the concern that these individuals have adequate access to mental health services and the kind of psychological treatment that may eventually remove the designation of untreated sex offender. For this reason, the Correctional Service of Canada has not waited for the Task Force results to pilot and implement a number of sex offender treatment initiatives.

For example, in Ontario, where the need for sex offender assessment and treatment is most acute, the sex offender treatment program at the Regional Treatment Center has been doubled to thirty-two beds. In addition, a sex offender treatment program has been implemented at Warkworth Institution, to treat sixty aggressive and pedophilic offenders per annum, under a contract through Queen's University.

To ensure the necessary follow-up and relapse prevention upon release, a number of community-based sex offender treatment programs are being piloted in several urban centres, based on the program currently in place in Vancouver.

I thank you for taking the time to share your concerns on this important issue. Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

"Pierre Blais"
Solicitor General of Canada

*Editors Note: The preceding letter presents a response to the current interest by prominent politicians in "Phoenix Group" activities at Mountain Institution.

FREE UNIVERSITY?
FIND OUT MORE FROM DR. G. MCDougall
NARCOTICS:

ADDICTION AND TREATMENT

From The Inside Straight Group

The typical scenario of a narcotic addict is a person on skid row pulling a knife on some old lady for his next 'fix'. While this may be so in some cases, the truth is, there are narcotic addicts from all walks of life, the medical profession being most prominent.

Another misconception is that problems with drugs started with the Hippies in the early 60's. However, some drugs have been around for centuries.

Narcotics, such as heroin, morphine and codeine are derived from the seed pod of the opium poppy. The use of such drugs started when Greeks and Romans smoked opium (poppy sap) around 4000BC in the middle east.

Greek and Roman physicians would prescribe the drug long before the time of Christ. From there, the Arabic traders shipped the drug both to China and India, starting about 600AD.

The Chinese, when first introduced to Opium, used it only for medicinal purposes, however, around the early part of the 17th century, European traders showed them the recreational side of this habit-forming drug.

Thereafter, (in 1729), the Chinese Government outlawed the drug entirely. The traders, however, continued to illegally trade it for porcelain, silk, and other profitable products.

As a result, in the late 18th century, opium addiction had become widespread among the Chinese; it even helped to foster the so-called “opium-wars” of 1839-1842, where China lost to England.

During the 19th century, people in both the United States and Europe could buy laudanum, morphine, and other opiates, all without a prescription, thereby generating two hundred thousand addicts in the U.S. alone.

Inasmuch as the Harrison Act (a group of U.S. anti-drug laws passed by Congress in 1914) greatly reduced the drug problem in the U.S., addiction to opiates, and in particular heroin, began to increase in the 1940s and continues to rise to this day.

Addiction to heroin has been described as a mild form of schizophrenia. Without heroin, the addict looks forward to a life with no peace—only anger and frustration.

The addict, therefore, wonders how he ever found happiness before heroin, for now it has to act as a panacea (or cure-all) for his difficulties.

For some heroin addicts, being addicted is often the first time they have found peace within themselves. Thus, besides its known physiological effects on the body, heroin equally produces a deep-seated psychological need as well.

This leads to the greatest question: can heroin addiction be cured?

To date, a cure for narcotics addiction remains unknown. Scientists have, however, discovered effective treatments, but the clinical effectiveness of such treatments depends largely on the individual being treated. Doctors note that all methods of treatment generally pose problems, with no form of treatment helping more than another.
doctors' treatment can promise the addict a cure.

Recently, doctors have substituted methadone to feed addicts in place of heroin. Once supported by methadone, the addict has no physical need for heroin and will not experience heroin withdrawal symptoms.

Without such symptoms, and with extensive counselling and support, the addict, (now supported by methadone) may continue to work at a steady job and even live out a normal everyday life.

Alternately, another form of treatment acceptable to the medical profession constitutes a withdrawal program using chloradine to reduce the withdrawal pains of heroin. Doctors recommend following this chemical withdrawal with active participation in a N.A. program.

N.A., or Narcotics Anonymous, started in 1953 and has to date helped millions of addicts worldwide. The N.A. approach uses a basic twelve-step program similar to Alcoholics Anonymous.

Matching A.A.'s performance, Narcotics Anonymous provides a group of individuals with caring personalities, those very members who have "hit bottom" so to speak, and are now working towards their own recovery. These men offer life-experiences to help the newly recovering addict, those who have "walked the walk" as it were. Furthermore, while it is true that not every addict finds the strength in his life to live as a normal person, one recovered addict is worth the whole program.

If in fact recovery is in your plans, and you too have an addiction to narcotics, then now is the time for you to do something about it, by taking care of this particular dysfunction in your life—right now.

At least then, you will have developed a fighting chance for survival when you reach the street. Join now.

Barry Baird
The NA Inside Straight Group.

REMEMBER THE LIBRARY IS OPEN EVERY DAY. THEY OFFER AN EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF NEW BOOKS—AND IT'S FREE!

NEW COMPUTER RULES:

INMATES NOW ALLOWED TO BUY COMPUTERS WORTH A MAXIMUM $2000!

Mountain—Feb 9, 1990

According to regulations issued today, inmates may now purchase personal computers and printers with a combined total not to exceed $2000.

The Echo has been informed that this special allowance will be separate and above the normal cell-effects limit of $1000.

The school computer clerks have information on the types and potential of differing computers as well as various types of printers.

One clerk observed: "The $2000 amount must be spent on NEW equipment and the new regulation does not allow for "leased equipment".
Meanwhile, the computer clerks have asked about maintenance contracts and the supply of software. More information will be available shortly.

Have you thought about a University Education?

MOUNTAIN—Feb 1990.

Some economists think that the value of a university education (one similar to that offered here), can cost you from $25,000-45,000 on the outside. Investigate this MONEY opportunity, right under your very nose. Make your time here COUNT! As it were—get paid!

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE WARDEN

By Tom Jacks
Mountain Institution, Feb—1990

Since some of us prisoners earn only $6.90 per day, and since most of us earn quite a bit less, I would like to know why staff have not initiated plans to raise our salaries so that we can afford to pay the increased cost of canteen items.

Point 1. Although many of us need the $75 that we are allowed each canteen period, we only get a "take-home" pay of $62, (maximum).

Point 2. I would say that slightly more than half of the prisoners here in Mountain Institution smoke. The cost of smoking has risen prohibitively, such that most prisoners cannot afford to smoke, as well as maintain other uses for their money; i.e. stamps, food-stuffs, candy, shaving gear, personal grooming items etc.

Point 3. At least five years have passed since prisoners have received a pay increase, as opposed to a "levelling-off", as occurred recently, (November 1989).

We therefore request that you allow us a current-account pay rate of at least seventy-five dollars per two-weeks, in order to keep us operating at a "break-even" basis.

It is difficult to take seventy-five dollars out of our account for canteen, if we don't actually receive that amount.

Thank you

Growing Pains

An elderly man complained to his doctor that he wasn't feeling well.

"I'm doing all I can to help you," the doctor said. "You know I can't make you young again."

"I don't want to be young again," the man said, "I just want to keep on getting older!"

Sensible Lyrics

Isn't it funny how teenagers are wild about rock-'n'-roll songs with crazy titles instead of those sensible ones we used to have—like "Cement Mixer Putty Putty," "Three Little Fishes in an Itty Bitty Poo," and "Flat Foot Floogie with the Floy Floy"?

By the way, are you ready to take the equivalent of $25,000 from the CSC by way of SFU course grants?
INFORMATION ABOUT VISITS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Phone calls: All personal calls must be "collect" or paid for by ITF. Inmates should know the following:
1. A request form with names and telephone numbers you will be calling must be submitted in advance to V & C.
2. You are permitted 2 personal and 2 agency calls per week, (Mon. thru Sun.).
3. (a) Day calls are not booked.
   (b) Times are 0945hrs-1045hrs, and 1300hrs-1400hrs.
4. Night calls are by prior appointment. Appointments can be made seven days in advance. No night calls on weekends and holidays. Times for night calls are:
   1740hrs-2120hrs, Mon-Fri.
5. Legal calls are from 0900hrs-0945hrs, Mon-Fri. No personal calls during this time and no legal calls AFTER 0945hrs.
6. All legal calls must be pre-booked. Time limit is 15 minutes.
7. V & C number is 796-9512 for V & C concerns only. The Institutional number is: 796-2231.

Visits
1. All visits must be security cleared prior to visiting.
2. Visitors are allowed in for 2 sessions Mon-Fri., plus all day Sat. & Sun., (including statutory holidays).
3. Visiting times:
   - 0900hrs-1100hrs
   - 1230hrs-1530hrs Mon-Wed-Fri.
   - 1800hrs-2100hrs Tues & Thurs.

Correspondence:
1. All outgoing mail is deposited in the mail box in either RMU or V & C. Letters must not be sealed, except for privileged correspondence.
2. A mail list is posted in the kitchen and all huts after 1600hrs. Mail pick up time begins at 1645hrs.
3. Postal address is: Box 1200 Agassiz, B.C. VOM 1A0

Visitors: Owing to building and reconstruction activities, visitors must phone ahead to V & C to book a table for weekend (and holidays) visits only. The Institution allocates tables on a first-come-first-served basis on a phone call from your visitor. Inmates cannot book tables themselves. The telephone number for your visitor(s) to call is: 796-9512. Those visitors who have not booked will be denied entry on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Visitors will not be allowed to enter the Institution after 1030hrs, or 1500hrs, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or 2030hrs on Tuesday or Thursday.
4. Children must be under the control and supervision of their parent or guardian at all times.
5. Conduct during the visits must be acceptable for a public place.
6. V & C is "out-of-bounds" unless you have a visit.
7. Hobby items going out must be cleared at least one half hour before visiting terminates.