

CADET SLOUCH by Jim Earle



"You are the most suave, most sophisticated, most cool Aggie I know! As a matter of fact you've played it so cool, it's taken most of the year for you to get up nerve to ask me for a date!"

Free University Announces Fall Semester Schedule

The Free University has released its schedule of courses for the spring semester. These classes are offered to any student who wishes added instruction in specialized subjects. Five courses are offered on Monday nights. Dr. Arthur M. Sherwood conducts a class in "Bioengineering" in Room 333B of the Zachry Engineering Center. Rev. Hugh Beck teaches a course in "The Life That Changed the World" in Room 105A of the Zachry Engineering Center. A class in "English Debating Style" is held by Lincoln Union in Room 302 of the Library. T. K. Treadwell lectures on "Oceanography" in Room 305 of Goodwin Hall. Gertrud Adam conducts a class in "Gourmet Cooking" in Room 107 of the old Biology Building. All of the above classes begin at 7:30.

At 7:30 Tuesday nights, an "Audio-Visual Workshop" is held at the University Lutheran Student Center. Drs. James H. Copp and William P. Kuvlesky conduct a class in "Ethnic-Race Relations" in Room 129 of Bolton Hall at 8:00.

On Wednesdays, a group therapy session on "Speech Impediments" is held at 8 p.m. at 306 Borderbrook Rd. under the direction of Jo Ann Reeves and Jim Roberts. Also at 8 p.m., Dr. Johannes van Overbeek holds a class in "Human Sociobiology" in Room 146 of the Physics Building.

At 7:00 Thursday nights, Robert H. Fletcher teaches "An Adventure in Auto Economy" in Room 101 of the Mechanical Engineering Building.

"Urban Planning" is taught by Dr. J. H. Hinojosa. Contact him at 845-1046 for time and place.

Viewpoint The Short Road To Prison

by Norman Cousins

Not long ago, a thief broke into my parked car and stole my typewriter. A passerby saw the theft and got to a policeman in time to apprehend the criminal. This was the beginning of my direct involvement with crime and punishment in the United States.

First, something about the man who committed the crime. I learned he had been released from a penitentiary the morning of the day he stole my typewriter. He began the day with 25 cents given him by the penitentiary authorities as a stake for starting his new life. He used the quarter to buy coffee and a bun. Then, with night coming on, and with no place to sleep, he picked up a spike and used it to break the window of my car. At the time he was apprehended, he was on his way to a pawnshop where he hoped to get perhaps \$10 for the typewriter.

I looked into the thief's record—let's call him H.J. He was 36 years old. His first conviction came at the age of 16 on a charge of selling marijuana. Since that time, he had spent 18 out of 20 years in prison. We made some calculations and discovered that the various trials and imprisonments of H.J. had cost American taxpayers something in the vicinity of \$240,000—quite apart from the value of the items stolen, which in the aggregate came to something under \$5,000. Keeping him in prison during those 18 years was more expensive than it would have been to have put H.J. up in a small suite at the Waldorf-Astoria.

I am not, of course, seriously suggesting that we ought to empty our jails and put their occupants in hotel suites as a way of saving money. My purpose rather is to suggest that there is something cockeyed with the prison system in America. Judging from the number of repeat offenders, prisons have not succeeded often enough in rehabilitating men convicted of crime. Quite the contrary, most prisons seem to serve as advanced schools in crime. H.J. learned all the tricks in burglary from his prison colleagues. Obviously, he could have picked up the same skills outside prison. The point here, however, is that there is some-

thing hideously flawed in the notion that prison punishment acts as a deterrent to further crime or that it provides the kind of rehabilitation that can enable released convicts to become useful members of society. The way in which H.J. was released from the penitentiary practically insured his return. How far was he expected to go on a quarter? What role as an ex-criminal was he expected to play? What jobs were open to him?

I learned that H.J. had worked in the kitchen prison and was supposed to be a good cook. During his trial for the theft of my typewriter, I was able to prevail on the court to allow me to try to find him a job. The judge was impressed that none of H.J.'s crimes over the years involved violence, suspended sentence on H.J., and gave me several weeks to find him a job. Through friends, I was able to get employment for H.J. as cook in an upstate New York hotel resort. Several months later, the hotel changed ownership. The new owner, on learning that H.J. was an ex-con, cut his salary in half and gave him extra kitchen detail. After a week or two, H.J. protested the treatment to the management and was fired. I was out of the country at the time. When I returned, I discovered that H.J. was back in jail. He

had been unable to find himself another job and had gone back to his original trade. He was caught in the act of shoplifting in Klein's. The obvious way he went about the theft indicated that he thought prison was better than being without a job and a home.

It may be said that H.J. was a congenital thief and that nothing could have been done to rehabilitate him. I am not so sure. It may also be said that he was a confirmed menace to society and that the only place for him was prison. Again, I am not so sure. I am not so sure that the owner of the hotel resort doesn't have some part of the responsibility for what ultimately happened. Just because the hotel owner violated no law doesn't mean he should get off scot-free. I wonder, too, about the prison authorities. Turning loose a man with nothing more than a quarter in his pocket and with no prospect of a job is in itself a reprehensible act that calls for correction.

Finally, I wonder about all those who deplore the high rate of crime in this country but who don't lift a finger to help provide jobs or find places in society for men who have been punished in full for their crimes and who need to be accepted by society if they are not to act outside it.

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Letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, and no more than 300 words in length. They must be signed, although the writer's name will be withheld by arrangement with the editor. Address correspondence to Listen Up, The Battalion, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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The Battalion, a student newspaper at Texas A&M, is published in College Station, Texas, daily except Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and holiday periods, September through May, and once a week during summer school.

Represented nationally by National Educational Advertising Services, Inc. New York City, Chicago and Los Angeles.

MEMBER The Associated Press, Texas Press Association

Mail subscriptions are \$3.50 per semester; \$6 per school year; \$6.50 per full year. All subscriptions subject to 5% sales tax. Advertising rate furnished on request. Address: The Battalion, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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