

'Cry! Is that all I've done?'

By Jay B. Mallott

There are 3 other inmates here from Alaska. They

are Non-Native. One of them looked over the last two "letters to the editor" and said, "It looks to me like all you're

doing is Crying." Needless to say, he could have a very valid point there. But, I can tell anyone this much, and

that is, that they would cry too.

However, that is not the spirit in which I am attempting to reach my Native Peoples with. It is true that many of the things that I've written previously have happened to me directly or in the least, have happened to most all of those around me. Whatever it appears to be, I prefer to call it "telling it like it is." Telling it like it would be for any resident of this concrete and steel sty. So Be It.

Getting back to the subject of how Drugs in whatever form you may wish to indulge can "rob" you of your identity? Well, we all know of the most common way it does that and usually that is that it makes you think you are somebody you aren't. In other words, you just lose your inhibitions, your reluctance to do something you wouldn't ordinarily do if you weren't under the influence of whatever drug it is you're on.

Earlier, I mentioned the focus on depriving one of their individuality, your personality, your ability to function as a human being. I mentioned that you become just another number in some computer bank. In retrospect, I suppose there's a little more to it than that. For instance, if you don't mind becoming known as "The Chief or Geronimo or Tonto or Blanket Ass or Cochise, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse and the likes," because in here, and you're Indian or Native, then you'll become known as any one of the above.

Of course this isn't the ideal place for one to want to make a name for himself. But the point is that you still want to retain your own identity. Say for instance that you do something good (or even something bad), you'd at least want to be remembered correctly, right? right. Well, forget that too because if you want to change it, it'll mean rearranging the faces, arms or legs of those that insist on calling you by anyone or all of the afore-

mentioned names.

After so much time spent in one of these joints and you become used to it? They have a phrase for that also. "You've become institutionalized" they call it. Then there's the old adage that "Imprisonment is a frame of mind." There may be something to that after all for it is possible not to let that 40 foot wall, the concrete, the steel bars, the cages, the banging and clanging of steel barred doors get the best of you if you manage to "use your mind" to escape.

There are several ways that you may accomplish the above. The main and most popular ways are to bury your nose in the boob-toob, a good book or a nasty one, run or lift weights, or gossip all day about how good a crook you "were." Never mentioning that it was Booze that got you here until you admit it to yourself first which is probably never.

But, if you decide that what I'm trying to tell you is a bunch of baloney, and you decide to keep on Boozing or Drugging it up and eventually wind up here or another like it, then there are things that you can do to preserve your sanity without resorting to those things mentioned above.

The excuse that the state used for sending me 5 or 6 thousand miles from home (Alaska) were several-fold. One was bad publicity and the resultant possibility of bodily harm or worse. Second was the educational opportunities and the relative wide open spaces of a large prison. What that state didn't say, was that all of this is also available in the Alaska State Prison System. Nevertheless, the above named opportunities are available in the form of College courses, GED courses, ABE course, Vocational courses, Clubs and Organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous, JayCee's, Toastmasters, NAACP, Gambler's Anonymous all, as in the state system.

Personally, I have preserved my sanity, self respect, innocence and all the other things needed to retain my right as a human being by having become involved in all of the above mentioned diversions. I'm a Toastmaster of CTM rank; I am the Toastmaster Educational Vice-President and Club Parliamentarian of Toastmasters and JayCee' both. I teach several courses, i.e., Parliamentary law, Leadership Dynamics, and Speak-Up and have done so for two years now. I'm a "skilled" Small Engine Repair Mechanic as a result of vocational training where I remained to become

(See CRY, Page Nine)

● 'CRY!'

(Continued from Page Four)

the Instructor's Aide for several semesters. I completed a two year course in one

year through a local community college in "Building Construction and Estimating" for 28 credit hours. Just now completing an Algebra course.

I've learned to handle most of my own Legal work because once you're in here, forget about your attorney or public defender, it's "out of sight, out of mind." you can bet on that.

Walk Straight Brother.

I have spoken.

Very Sincerely.

"Brown Bear" a/k/a, L. B