

An unappreciative witness to the execution of Jimmie Jeffers
By: Jesse Greenwald / Arizona State Prison 09-12-95

As I sit and write these words, A few dozen yards away another man sits and waits for those that are preparing to end his life. Various devices designed to certify that all life has been extinguished from one of Gods finest works, are rigorously being tested and arranged. The atmosphere within these walls and within the throats of a thousand silent men, is so thick, that movement has been reduced to a standstill. All eyes reflect inward, as self evaluation and reflection of choices made fill the mind. The realization that, by the grace of God, and the inability of our fellow man, that the person who will shortly be put to death, could be anyone of use, is a sobering thought.

A million miles away, the world watches through the eyes of cameras, the events that are taking place outside my window. I have a ringside seat at one of man`s darkest hours. The cost of that seat is my freedom, and the forced participation in an experience that I would chose not to have if given a choice. When the sun rises through my window in the morning, the events of tonight will be old news to most of the world, but most of the world will not wake up inside these walls, and the value of that sunrise will be lost to them.

My compassion does not go out to the man whose life will be over as you read this, for all men must die someday. It goes out to the society that condones this barbaric act, and to the children of the children that will have it as a legacy. I am in no position to give lectures on morality, as I am serving a sentence for crimes against that very society, but even as a career criminal, there are some things that I will not do.

It`s a confusing time for this country, and I feel for the decision makers. The events of today, will be judged tomorrow, and the reasons for todays actions will have lost some of their meaning by then. I hope and pray for future generations, but hope and prayer are poor substitutes for good government. Good government is the responsibility of the people, and I fear that they are asleep, or at best, getting undressed for bed.

**Jimmie Jeffers received a stay of execution with minutes left in his life, but after 19 years of waiting to be put to death, could it really matter.....

***The stay lasted for 24 hours.