

Folk-Rock Stars Give a Concert at Jersey Prison

By **LES LEDBETTER**
Special to The New York Times

CLINTON, N.J., Dec. 7—Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Roberta Flack and the rest of the Rolling Thunder traveling music show came to this isolated part of northwestern New Jersey tonight to perform for 300 inmates of the Clinton Institution for Women, and to draw attention to the imprisonment of Rubin (Hurricane) Carter.

The musicians, who have been touring the Northeastern United States and Canada for the last five weeks, performed for approximately 300 inmates of the prison. They were received warmly, if with some catcalls and a small amount of confusion.

Joan Baez created one of the biggest rounds of applause when she began to dance with an inmate of the prison, 26-year-old Willie Rogers, to the delight of the young men and young women confined in this medium-security institution.

Bob Dylan sang several of his more famous songs and then brought Mr. Carter to the stage at the end of the performance.

Mr. Carter, who has been in prison after having been convicted with John Artis of a triple murder in a Patterson tavern in 1967, has been attempting to gain a retrial on the grounds that the key witnesses against him have recanted their original testimony.

Mr. Dylan has met with Mr. Carter on several occasions and has written a song about his plight. He will headline a benefit on behalf of the former widdleweight boxer tomorrow night at Madison Square Garden.

Probably — along with the Beatles — the most influential force in popular music in the

1960's, Mr. Dylan has recently resumed making tours after an eight-year absence from live performances.

This was probably both the smallest audience before which the tour has performed, and one of the toughest. When the young women, who make up two-thirds of the prison's 300 inmate population, did not like an act they shouted catcalls and told the performer to stop.

When they liked a particular performer, such as Joan Baez or soul singer Roberta Flack, they screamed and cheered.

The show tonight was held in a small field house which also serves as an auditorium.

The female inmates were as well-dressed as any crowd going to a concert in New York City.

The ladies wore platform shoes, low-cut dresses, and fancy costume jewelry. The male inmates were also dressed as if they were going out to a big concert, if a little more subdued than the women.

The show lasted about 90 minutes. The first performers were Bob Neuwirth, Mick Ronson and Rob Stoner. As they performed, they were joined by musicians such as Joni Mitchell, Rambling Jack Elliott and Ronee Blakley.

One of the more unexpected appearances during the concert

was made by Allen Ginsberg, who appeared in a suit and tie and read two of his poems. The crowd cheered.

Miss Baez got a particularly warm hand when she said, "we want to thank the authorities for making it so easy for us to get in here. I only wished they'd make it easier for you to get out."

At the end of the concert Mr. Carter held an impromptu press conference and said that he was more hopeful of getting a new trial and getting out of prison because of the interest taken in his case by such musicians as Mr. Dylan and the rest of the performers.



The New York Times/Robert M. Klein

Bob Dylan, right, in concert at prison in Clinton, N.J., where Rubin Carter is a prisoner. Roberta Flack, third from right, and Joan Baez were also on stage.

The New York Times

Published: December 8, 1975

Copyright © The New York Times