



MASS PRISON VOICE

MASS PRISON VOICE

THEY SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES



JDMC Massachusetts Chapter

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The Insidiousness of it All

Michael Skinner

“There are two ways to be fooled; one is to believe what isn’t true; the other is to refuse to believe what is true.”
Soren Kierkegaard

As the debate rages on about compassionate release, there is another aspect that I wish to shed some light on: the mental torture of the men who are isolated away from all family and friends as they lay dying, slowly and painfully in the “skilled nursing facility”. I was recently back there for a medical appointment at Shirley Medium prison. During the time I was there I attempted to go and see one of my close friends. An astute correctional officer stopped me saying it was against the rules to visit sick patients.

“You mean sick friends?”

“Yea, yea, them too,” he astutely responded.

“So, in other words, my friend is being punished for being sick with a brain tumor?”

“I ain’t punishing nobody.” he huffed and puffed.

“Sure you are.”

Name me another hospital on the planet that doesn’t allow family and friends to visit them when they need them the most? My prudent jailer had no answer, nor did any other staff member I encountered that day. How could they? It’s an idiotic rule made up by mindless louts to keep us away from those who need us the most. I fear that the consequences of such foolishness will be devastating to the men back there and have long term effects on them both physically and mentally.

According to the American Medical Association there are two types of isolation for patients. The first is described as a way “to prevent the spread of diseased organisms from hospitalized patients to hospital staff, visitor, and other patients.” The second is called “protective isolation”. The AMA states this type of isolation seeks to protect hospitalized patients from



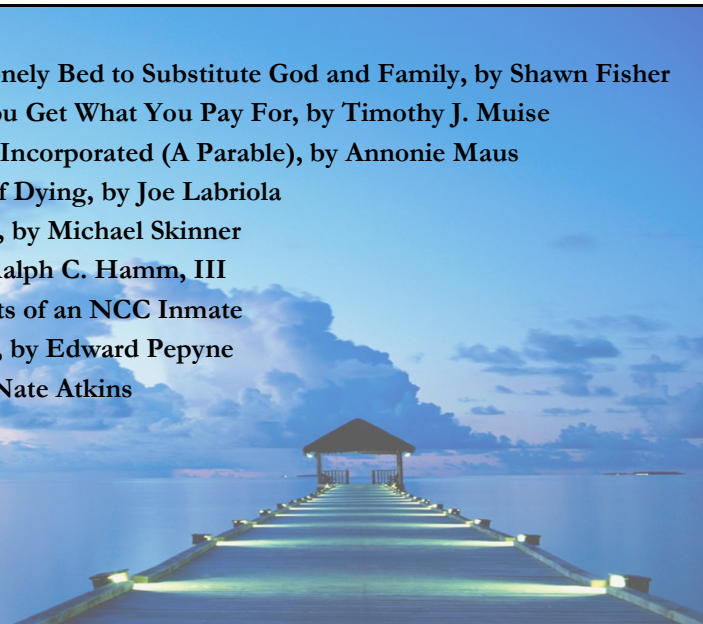
Forget-me-not (Myosotis scoriooides)

these patients must wear a gown to cover street clothing, a mask to cover the nose and mouth, and gloves to cover the hands....in rare cases, a patient may have to be isolated in a specially constructed sterile room or bubble. If only the good people of the AMA could take a tour of our “sterile rooms” in the back of the “skilled nursing facility” and see firsthand that our terminally ill patients are, in fact, being isolated as in solitary confinement for neither of the reasons they listed or adhere to. No, the men here at Shirley Medium are confined in five man wards with three exceptions for the “bubble rooms*.” Cancer patients are housed with dementia patients in all of the wards. They are locked in for close to 22 hours a day, only coming out of their cells for showers and fresh air.

Does anyone else think that it might be unhealthy for a man with brain cancer to be confined in a ward with at least two men who are in the latter stages of dementia; about the effect that it must have on this man’s mental health and the correlation that it has to physical health and wellbeing? Let’s call it what it is – mental torture! Cruel and unusual punishment! A living nightmare!

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Shall we review the cumulative effect of the following?

- Unsanitary conditions
- Housed in solitary confinement cells and conditions
- Confined and housed with mentally unstable patients
- No contact or interaction with friends
- Limited visitation with family
- Isolated from the world and left to suffer and die alone

Not long ago a group of researchers reviewed what has become the sizable medical literature on the effects of isolation cells. They found that every study on long-term solitary – three months or more – revealed “serious psychiatric symptoms on inmates.” Researcher and psychiatrist Terry Kupers is one of a small number of experts on the psychological impact of solitary confinement. He has interviewed nearly a thousand inmates in super-max like conditions: “I’ve never found **anyone** who’s not damaged by the experience.

“To stay healthy the mind has to do what it evolved to do; constantly perceive, interpret, and react to a stream of social and environmental stimuli. Cutting it off entirely is mental torpor: almost everything the brain is designed to process has vanished. After a few days in solitary the EEG readings of prisoners predictably shift, in the words of one researcher, “toward an abnormal pattern of stupor and delirium” the semi-fatuous state condemned by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1890. According to researchers who have studied people held in solitary such recurrent disorder thinking constitutes a form of trauma. Repeated trauma lastingly alters the brain. Just imagine what it is doing to someone with a cancerous brain tumor.

Dr. Steward Grassian, a leading researcher who has done studies for Harvard University and is an expert on solitary confinement, believes that some of its effects are probably permanent. The most common of these, he has

written, is a continued intolerance for social interaction. So what we are talking about is a total breakdown – mentally, physically and socially.

The K.G.B. did not promote physical contact in order to break a prisoner down, they used solitary confinement. So did the North Koreans, the Viet Cong, and I’m quite certain, the Americans. Think those being held at Gitmo were isolated?

And so does the D.O.C., only we are not talking about regular run-of-the-mill convicts sitting in the hole. No, what we are talking about are sick, dying men who are being mentally tortured as a result of their illnesses. None of these men pose any threat to society physically, and certainly not mentally either. And, if they ever did, that was a long, long time ago. This entire situation is frightening. There is no logical reason what so ever to keep these men incarcerated, at a great expense to the taxpayers, to let the mental torture continue.

*Until he extends his circle of compassion
to include all living things
Man will not himself find peace.
Albert Schweitzer*

In an encyclical letter by Pope Benedict XVI regarding care for those in need, he writes, “Yet while professional competence is a primary fundamental requirement, it is not, of itself, sufficient. We are dealing with human beings, and human beings need something more than technically proper care, **they need humanity. They need heartfelt concern, enabling them to experience the richness of their humanity.** “

This is the crux of the matter at hand. To let them out on a compassionate release, but until that time comes (if ever) we must be vigilant as to the health and wellbeing of these men mentally. To embrace them and treat them with heartfelt dedication and concern. If you feel alive that there is something worth fighting for, and then there is hope for a better day and something good to



happen. If there is nothing good left in the destiny of a person, he or she will die. They will give up and shut down, first the brain, then the body.

I challenge anyone who has an ounce of compassion inside of him to spend 15 minutes with any of the men or women isolated and to come out of there and not want to get them home to die with their loved ones in a humane fashion. The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.

Please, I implore anyone who reads this to help us and end this insidiousness and give these seriously infirm prisoners a chance to be remembered for whom they were and that there are people in our society who still care about them.

We ask you as a supporter of sound criminal justice policy and prudent, moral management of prisons to support the new medical release bill authored by Senator Patricia Jehlen and others which will be voted upon in the upcoming legislative session. We ask you contact your local state senator and representative. To find out who they are you can go to <https://malegislature.gov/People/FindMyLegislator> or call the statehouse at (617)722-2000. All you need to do is call, email, or write your legislator and simply say you are in support of Senate Bill S1139.

*“It would give me such joy to know that a friend had come to see me and yet that pleasure I seldom, if ever, experience.”
Henry David Thoreau
(Journal Entry date 12/31/1851)*

*MPV note: The Bubble is a cell with transparent plastic walls wherein the prisoner is on view at all times.

Change v. Status Quo

Nate Atkins

Anytime you step out of status quo or attempt to change there is a risk and if you are not willing to take a risk then in my opinion you deserve whatever you get or do not get. It's really that simple - any change brings risk at some level. Yet change is necessary in order to progress because if you are not progressing then you are regressing.

"Nature does not tolerate a vacuum." So as we move forward we assume risk. Change is kind of like a running stream of water in a forest; as long as the water is running and tumbling over the gravel and stones in the bed of the stream the water is sparkling and fresh; the system is alive. But now you come across a body of water that has been unable to flow, and the water is unmoving and stagnant. You find it does not look good, nor does it smell fresh. It has become foul, putrid, useless and unfit to drink.

In order for it to become useful and fresh it must move forward, become agitated, if you will. In other words, status quo will not do...we must have change. Status quo will not surrender as so many of us - sad to say- have.

Seize the times.

Forced to Die Alone: A Lonely Bed to Substitute God and Family

Shawn Fisher

An epidemic is slowly taking root throughout the United States prison system. As of 2010, state and federal prisons house more than 26,000 inmates 65+ years old and nearly five times that number 55 and up. The boom is a direct result of the "get tough on crime legislation from the 80's and 90's. These policies have generally caused the nation's inmate prison population to jump from 330,000 in 1980 to over a million by 1995; a tripling of the population representing an increase of 235%. As of June 2012 the Massachusetts D.O.C. confirms that the state will 'need' three new specialized facilities to house an estimated 1,270 prisoners with medical issues.

Here at MCI Shirley prison, the effects of the aging prisoner have already had an impact on the population at large. In the last five years several elderly inmates have died in the bowels of the hospital services unit (HSU) called the "skilled nursing facility". Most, if not all, died alone with nothing but a bed to comfort them in their last days. What's even more

disturbing is that often times friends of these men who are housed in the general population do not hear of their passing for days, sometimes weeks later. For some this may seem like a trivial matter but it is indicative of a more serious issue that is slowly taking root among many of the lifer population, particularly the younger men serving life sentences.

Policies enacted here at MCI Shirley prohibit inmates from visiting anyone housed in the HSU area, that is, unless they work in the HSU as runners. This policy further prohibits anyone who lives in the HSU from leaving the HSU to attend programs, library, and religious services; in effect punishing individuals for being sick. Many of these men have served 10, 20 and 30+ years in prison. In that time some have lost contact with family and friends who live on the outside. In most cases, they've been incarcerated for so long that there's just nobody left to contact. In almost every instance these men have formed bonds with other prisoners that they've served time with--creating a family unit amongst each other. Men serving long term sentences serve more time living together than the ideal family unit, and yet, when one becomes sick it's very

likely that neither of them will see each other again.

Imagine being told that a hospitalized "family" member is not your concern, nor can you visit them! Imagine being that individual who is terminally ill and knowing that you can no longer see, talk, or spend time with the very person you care for and consider "family". It is a dire situation that the younger population sees and realizes, "this is what my future holds for me!" The hopelessness that instills deep within



one's soul is palpable. To know that the only thing you have to look forward to at the end of your days is not friends or family or a religious community, but rather, a bed and four walls which the D.O.C. considers a humane way to die.

One, and maybe the only, 'reason' for isolating the prisoners in the HSU according to the administration, is that the inmates are susceptible to germs. Consider the fact that these same prisoners are exposed to staff, nurses, and inmate workers, all of who are exposed to the general population and can be carriers just like anyone else. Apparently no one has noticed that! Nor have they noticed the lack of cleanliness which is the norm, particularly in the bathroom areas of the wards. Germs may be the reason given, but is it not the truth.

The restrictive policy of denying ill prisoners a sense of humanity in their dying days creates a climate of hopelessness that in turn creates resentment toward a system they truly feel is "killing them". So much so, that this dark, bleak, and foreboding outlook has become a reality to them. This "reality" has generated conversations among lifers that no one should ever have to have. Some of the men have expressed a desire to commit suicide before they get to that stage; some have even made pacts with someone they know to have them be smothered with a pillow; some have even gone so far as to make promises to one another that they will slip the other some medication to die of an overdose. In many instance inmates are refusing treatment and refusing to seek medical attention so as to avert being placed in the HSU area. The idiom

among the men is to refer to HSU placement as a "death sentence".

It is understandable that the D.O.C. has not faced such a crisis until now but how they are responding to the effects so far is not promising. Although there is a positive effort to create a companion program, it does not address the issue of "family" meeting with each other. In addition to the companion program, allowing for meaningful access of those who have bonded and cared for each other the most is needed. For most of those dying in HSU, that's all they have left. To punish individuals for being sick may sound like idle banter or simple 'corrections' but what it really is is a heartless means for end-of-life management.

The author, Shawn Fisher has authored several articles, most recently for Massachusetts C.U.R.E. on commutations. He can be reached at P.O. Box 1218, Shirley, MA 01464. For more on compassionate care and release go to www.freejoelab.com and <http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/101>

The Saga of Mass Motors, Incorporated - (A Parable) Annonie Maus

Once upon a time there was a man named Deval who owned an auto dealership called Mass Motors, Incorporated. Now Deval was one of the members of the Finance Commission who harbored an ambition to go higher: get elected mayor and after that, who knows? Perhaps the Governorship.

So it was important to Deval that the citizens who purchased cars from Mass Motors, Inc., be satisfied, not only so they'd come back to purchase cars from him, but more importantly because they were more than citizens to Deval; they were also voters.

Deval's dealership sold automobiles manufactured by Dynamic Olympian Cars, an automaker known for budget-saving family cars. Dynamic Olympian Cars was operated by aging executives and managers who still did things the

old fashioned way. But the unionized workers for Dynamic Olympian Cars worked under a modern union contract, which resulted in the workers being paid more for working less. Still, the executives of Dynamic Olympian Cars refused to modernize their manufacturing methods to save time and money. Thus the quality of Dynamic Olympian Cars deteriorated over the years.

Deval became concerned that the quality Dynamic Olympian Cars was getting worse, while the price was going up. Deval became especially concerned when a stuck accelerator on one of the Dynamic Olympian Cars caused a serious accident involving a prominent citizen on his way to work. The man was tragically killed, and several customers in the small family-owned store that the car crashed into were seriously injured. The public outcry was tremendous, fueled by the media, both print and TV, which had a field day over the affair, as they wrote how an innocent family man with a wife and three kids on his way to work was fatally injured because he was driving a car purchased from Mass Motors. That Dynamic Olympian Car was defective and should never have been allowed on the street in the first place.

In response, Deval called an emergency meeting of his salesmen at Mass Motors. He was incensed that his ambitions to be mayor could be foiled by this tragedy. "This will never happen again", he told his salesmen. "I'm going to be sued over this for sure. I don't know which one of you sold that car, so all of you are fired, effective immediately".

Deval went to the media with the commercial message that "this will never happen again to anybody buying car from Mass Motors. I have taken action against the salesmen who sold that bad car. I have fired all my staff and will begin hiring more responsible, caring sales staff tomorrow. You can trust Mass Motors".

So Deval hired a whole new staff of salesmen. "I am watching you", he cautioned them. "If you sell a defective car that has to come back for repairs or



replacement, and make this company look bad, you will be fired. You have a good job at good wages, so be responsible”.

“I’m not gonna sell a car to anybody”, said one. “I don’t know whether a car has something wrong with it or not, but I’m not gonna take any chances. I need this job”. The rest of the salesmen agreed.

Dynamic Olympian Cars kept shipping cars to Mass Motors, Incorporated. But the salesmen were doing a great job of not selling the cars they’d been hired to sell. They did so well that Mass Motors was forced to expand its business because they were being flooded with Dynamic Olympian Cars they were not selling. Their car lot became severely overcrowded. They stuffed cars into Mass Motors empty repair garages, as they didn’t need them anymore. Cars were piled on top of each other until the repair shops were full to 300% capacity. They kept building more and more car lots all over town. There was little kerfuffle when Mass Motors purchased land from a nearby community college to make more room for their cars. And still, they ran out of space because the salesmen were so successful not selling cars.

“No customer of Mass Motors has suffered injury or death because of a car I’ve sold them”, Deval said.

He added even more floors to hold the cars. After a while the whole town was a car lot. There wasn’t room for schools, libraries or houses. Mountains of rusted, unsold cars manufactured by Dynamic Olympian Cars littered the region. Both Mass Motors and the town went bankrupt. The town could no longer afford schools, or fire or police departments. People moved out because Deval had made the town so safe from defective and dangerous automobiles.

The sad lesson is that no one could be found to solve the dilemma between the union employees of Dynamic Olympian Cars who were being paid more to work less making defective cars, and Mass Motors employees who were being paid not to sell them.

The moral of this story is: MASS MOTORS NEEDS MORE SPACE!



ODDS & ENDS: Thoughts of an NCC Inmate

Our Federal Courts are littered with U.S. District Court Appellate Decisions which allow government cameras seemingly everywhere. Privacy is a forgotten issue in what is now proclaimed the public domain, and the cameras and surveillance personnel are paid for by taxpayers for use against taxpayers.

Yet when it comes to a camera in a Federal Court... recently the American public was ‘enlightened’ about by the National Security Agency’s (NSA) pervasive surveillance of phone, Internet and social media and of the massive collection and storage of these three forms of communication. Now we find our trusted quasi-private entity, the United States Postal Service (USPS) is filming everything sent through the mails; this is for usage against citizens in the future. All 160 billion envelopes are digitally recorded; logged and stored each year for governmental purposes, whatever that might entail, will ruin society).

If I received a quarter for each time a resident in a ‘therapeutic block’ told me that he now trusts no one, including his cellmate, because everything he says will be used by other ‘residents’ in ‘group’ and against him on a Section 9 Hearing for Court, I would have a substantial canteen.

In a recent *Fleecing of America* segment on the national news, the

Defense Department F-35 boondoggle was exposed. The “top-of-the-line” jet bilked the public out of \$400 billion dollars so far, and the program is seven years behind schedule. The reason this project got started and continued after its failure is that the fighter jet’s components are built in an astounding 45 states. That means 90 senators vote for the project which sends taxpayer monies to their districts. How many expensive toys does the Pentagon need?

Law enforcement agencies created the ‘perp walk’ a couple of decades ago to advance the idea that the government is really doing its job. When I see James “Whitey” Bulger and the Tsarnov Brothers’ parades of cop vehicles to and from Court trips, I think we have progressed to the ‘perp caravan,’ and all the taxpayer expenses.

In the Bridgewater Complex, the NCC and the State Hospital are less than a half mile from each other. In June during the height of DOC “fiscal restraints” a ‘resident’ in distress was taken from the NCC to the State Hospital via car. Per usual he was handcuffed and shackled in the back seat of the police vehicle, yet he was the middle car of a caravan of state vehicles, some in front and some behind him, for that minor trip across the street. All that was missing was a helicopter, or maybe a drone. What “fiscal restraints”?

During the same period, when we at NCC were locked-in at 4:45pm for the day, those at the State Hospital were out until 8:00pm. And when the budget was restored, those at BSH went back to locking-in at 8:30. Here, we lock-in at 9:00. Some ‘civil commitment’!

Some readers will remember the early sixties when the Boston Strangler roamed with impunity. I was surprised to see photographs of him on TV news recently. To me it seemed the only reason for this was so that our elected officials could get more much needed Face Time in the media. After 49 years it has now been partially proven that Albert DeSalvo did have a connection to Mary Sullivan, his last victim.

The new evidence here is that familial lineage can be ascertained through DNA samples. Somehow our

government thought it necessary to follow around DeSalvo's nephew for days until he dropped a used soda bottle. This allowed the labs to test DNA from the bottle to link Albert DeSalvo to a crime committed before his nephew was even born.

It's strange how our government has a financial interest in uncovering the 'truth' in a 49 year old case. DeSalvo himself will now be exhumed for future testing ("We're sorry, Uncle Albert") – when the same government entity continues to obfuscate DNA presented by defense lawyers to spring their clients from an unjust conviction?

Or does the similarity stop when a politician's career might be on the line for convicting an innocent person?

A much hidden NCC secret is that of all the DNA taken from each and every inhabitant, none has proven a match for another case.

In the July 12 Boston Herald (pg. 14) an article appeared enlightening the masses that the Committee for Public Counsel Services (CPCS), our Massachusetts Public Defenders, has challenged the public posting of Level Two sex offenders on-line in Wakefield in a horrible case that politicians took

every opportunity to exploit for their own gain. Never let a crisis go to waste!

Not missing a chance to demonize all sex offenders, if that is possible, House Minority Leader Brad Jones led the charge to add an amendment to next year's budget (Pass the budget and you pass the amendment.) that would make it imperative that all Level Two offenders be posted on-line as Level Threes are now - even though the offender in the Wakefield case, Burdine, was a Level One! Because Aaron Hernandez is charged with murder are we to condemn the rest of the Patriots or the entire NFL?

But Representative Jones, what about the government agencies that missed the tie-in between who ran the day care center (Burdine's wife) and who worked there (Burdine)? Wasn't there a scandal earlier this year when the Commissioner of Early Education and Care was found to have a day job learning the ropes of becoming a school principal? It was her Department and others that should have connected the dots to Burdine, but Mr. Jones would rather blame all Level Two sex offenders for something none of them have done. Even Wakefield Police Chief Rick Smith agrees with the current legislation. But he also has conveniently forgotten that his Department failed on this incident too.

Shouldn't we put the accountability on the agency which dropped the ball, instead of on Level Two offenders



who had nothing to with the Burdines crime?

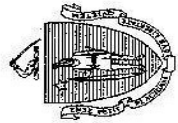
Brad Jones is a Republican who rightfully wants to reign in, pointing out that by CPCS challenging his amendment it is creating a system of "Welfare for Lawyers". (He has inadvertently touched on a major portion of our economy.) Taxpayers foot the bill for the amendment; and taxpayers pay for the opposition to the motion; taxpayers pay for the court time of all the judges who take part in the decision. Hasn't Mr. Jones forgotten that it was his and other politicians' filing of the unneeded amendment which created this scenario? There's culpability here, just as Jones has far more input, government agencies fail in their duties more than does the ordinary citizen.

But Mr. Jones: dig deeper. I bet you do not know where Nemasket Correctional Center is located or that a monumental scam of "Welfare for Lawyers" and many others exists at that DOC facility. And all of the Tens of Millions of dollars wasted each year on all these 'jobs' is due to the use of a Crystal Ball in order to fill up an institution with the civilly committed who have already served all of their prison time. Please spend some of your time investigating the real truth right here.

☞



Landscape by M.C. Escher



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 Acting Deputy Commissioner

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 Superintendent

April 18, 2013

Mass Prison Voice Newsletter
 Ms. Susan Mortimer
 Ms. Susan Huskins
 Ms. Andrea Hornbein
 PO Box 441825
 Somerville, MA 02144

Dear Ms. Mortimer, Ms. Huskins & Ms. Hornbein,

Your letter addressed to Superintendent Raymond Marchilli dated April 15, 2013 regarding the Mass Prison Voice Newsletter has been referred to me for response.

I must inform you that your letter is inaccurate. At no time has any inmate at MCI Concord been denied the Newsletter. Nor do I find any validity to your insinuation that any MCI Concord staff interfered with or tampered with the delivery of the Newsletter as alluded to in your correspondence. Additionally, I am aware of no inquiries or complaints from any inmate either verbal, informal or formal indicating they have failed to receive any publication intended for them.

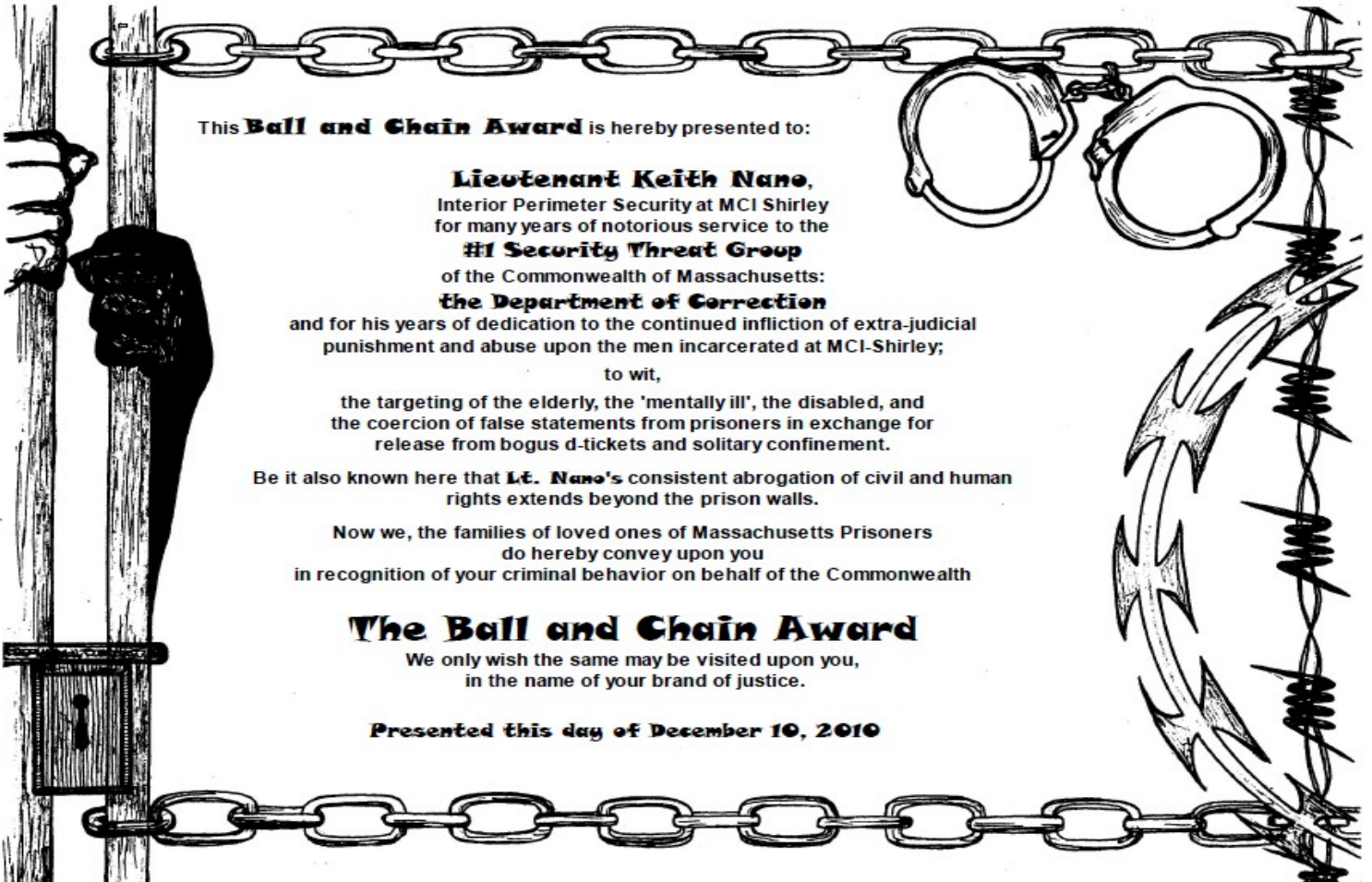
Please be advised that all mail received daily from the Concord Post Office addressed to MCI Concord is delivered promptly to the intended recipient unless such mail article is seized as contraband, in which case the intended recipient and the sender (if identified) are notified.

I have investigated your complaint to include contacting Concord Post Office supervisory staff. I regret I cannot offer an explanation as to why any articles addressed to MCI Concord have not reached this facility as intended, but I can assure you that if your newsletter is received by the Concord Post Office and is forwarded as MCI Concord mail, then it is promptly delivered to the intended inmate. In any event in which you have specific reason to believe this is not the case due to any action by my staff, please inform me immediately.

I trust this addresses your concern.

Sincerely,

Keith Nano
 Director of Security
 MCI Concord



This **Ball and Chain Award** is hereby presented to:

Lieutenant Keith Nano,
 Interior Perimeter Security at MCI Shirley
 for many years of notorious service to the
#1 Security Threat Group
 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

the Department of Correction
 and for his years of dedication to the continued infliction of extra-judicial
 punishment and abuse upon the men incarcerated at MCI-Shirley;

to wit,

the targeting of the elderly, the 'mentally ill', the disabled, and
 the coercion of false statements from prisoners in exchange for
 release from bogus d-tickets and solitary confinement.

Be it also known here that **Lt. Nano's** consistent abrogation of civil and human
 rights extends beyond the prison walls.

Now we, the families of loved ones of Massachusetts Prisoners
 do hereby convey upon you
 in recognition of your criminal behavior on behalf of the Commonwealth

The Ball and Chain Award

We only wish the same may be visited upon you,
 in the name of your brand of justice.

Presented this day of December 10, 2010

The Double Punishment of Dying

Joe Labriola

Compassionate release does not exist in Massachusetts because no one in authority has the guts to blend mercy with judgment. They falsely presume that only they can change with time. That only “they” evolved with the passing of years. No one, and I repeat, NO ONE is the same person they were 25 or 30 years ago. The Parole Board member sitting in judgment today is the same person you saw with the bong or the beer hose during spring break in Ft. Lauderdale 30 years ago. The judge that sentenced us is the same person that took Speed to stay awake to study for exams in school. The only perfect man that ever lived was crucified so there is no denying the mistakes or stupidity. We all share in those with abundance.

A prisoner in Massachusetts who has the unmitigated gall to fall seriously ill or God forbid, the audacity to contract a fatal illness and is in the process of death is similarly punished. He will be placed in a crypt – or as they like to call it here, a “ward”. There are five men to each ward and now they are thinking about adding a sixth bed because there is no more room at the inn to handle the constant influx of elderly and dying men. The bright lights are left on until 11:00 pm each night and every 15 minutes the solid metal door is opened so a guard can tromp across the floor, flashlight in hand, to make sure that no one has croaked on his or her watch. For the sick person in the beds it is torture to be awoken every fifteen minutes.

There is a complacency that comes from being medically ‘understaffed’ in what is now called “the skilled nursing facility” instead of the “Health Services Unit (HSU).” Men lay in soiled diapers for hours and when they are changed by the sick prisoners themselves they are then erroneously deposited in the trash can causing a stench throughout the confined space. There are documented incidences of men with maggots in their diapers and elderly men so feeble they cannot even get the lids off their food trays. Such was the



case of Bill “Lefty” Gilday: even if he could get the lid off, his Parkinson’s disease was so advanced that he was unable to lift a spoon to his mouth. When this was reported to Linda Booth, the nurse practitioner, the solution was to bar any of us from being able to go back into the so called “skilled nursing facility” to witness the abuse. It remains that way even as I write this piece.

When you get sick you disappear from all your friends that over the years were as important as any family member on the street. I have a couple dear friends that I have known for three or four decades who are dying in the bowels of this prison. I am not allowed to go back and spend any time with them and they in turn are not allowed to come out to population for library, church, or any other programs. It has been to my personal witnessing a downward spiral once men are removed from the general population and cut off from all their familiar friends and acquaintances. I watched Lefty die. When he was able to come out and be engaged by his friends he was alive and full of vitality. Very shortly after being placed in the back of this skilled nursing facility he gave up. He just gave up...

The other day I saw one of my dearest friends in the world coming back from an outside hospital trip. I

wheeled my chair into the hospital corridor and asked the Sergeant on duty if I could go back and say hello for just two minutes and he said – “No!” I then asked if my friend (who is ambulatory) could come out and say hello to me in the corridor and again, he said “No!” I knew the answer before I even asked the question but I was hoping, foolishly, for just a brief second in time that someone would have the compassion to understand and be mildly understanding. What a dope. I was angry at myself for asking in the first place. Having spent months in the back, I already knew the attitude of the security staff and the medical people that did not want witnesses to see what was really going on back there.

We have had men so seriously demented with Alzheimer’s that they do not even know what planet they are on. Others lie on their pillows with drool coming out of their mouths. No one can go back there and see this and not wonder why Massachusetts does not have compassionate release. What’s the point when men are in the throws of dementia or succumbing to cancer or other diseases? We need oversight in Massachusetts on this issue, and we need it now.

The doctor here knows how bad the hospital is. She will threaten you when you complain of being sick with placement back there. Most, like me,

will back off. I'd rather die in agonizing pain than be placed in the back of this "hospital". Perhaps that is the reason conditions of confinement are so bad back there. It keeps legitimately sick prisoners from seeking medical help. Sick equal's punishment – it is that simple.

We need to let these guys go home and die surrounded by family. When a person is dying, all bets are off so far as continued punishment is concerned. I ask anyone who reads these words to get in touch with Senator Pat Jehlen and let her know that you support her bill on Compassionate Release. The more who sign on, the greater power she will have on getting meaningful changes in here. Please do not think you will live forever or that you will never get old or sick because it happens to us all.

Do something to effect change now... while you still can.

Integrity

Jesse Estelow

Rules of evidence at a grand jury proceeding are within reason non-existent. This is the prosecutor's "Wild West Show". They wield power like demigods; they are free to skirt the law

and compromise the integrity of law, while seeking to indict anybody and anyone. During my own discovery process, what piqued my interest was the review of the grand jury minutes (transcripts).

As I perused the transcript I came upon page 57 and to my surprise, Berkshire County prosecutor A.D.A. Marianne Shelvey was offering my booking photos, not to I.D. me, as that was already established. The photos she was proffering to the grand jury were specifically detailing my tattoos. I will be the first to admit my 'tats' profess ideas I held as a young man twenty years ago. These photos were taken 'up-close and personal' to detail each and every curve. Of my 35 tattoos only 8 were offered. These, understand, were not for the faint of heart. Tattoo # 1 in clear English alphabet says "HATE COPS"; Tattoo #2: "F--- You"; Tattoo #3: "F--- Authority" and so on and so forth.

This deplorable and desperate attempt to secure an indictment went way below scum-sucking, bottom-feeding fish. But let's hand it to her – there is no policy or oversight to curtail such desperate and unethical behavior. As long as the lawyers (liars) police themselves this inappropriate and unprofessional behavior will continue until the next grand jury convenes.

You Get What You Pay For

Timothy J. Muise

Did you ever see a monkey dance under the orders of his "grinder" for some meager coins from onlookers? The ape has been removed from all the splendor of a free-range beast in the jungle and reduced to a clown in order to put brass in pocket. What does this remind me of? It reminds of this latest batch of guard recruits. Yes folks, they have hired a whole new pack of layabouts, who dance for their grinder sergeant, enforcing petty rules that the grinder and his fellow oxygen wasters have long since ignored. They have taken a young man and removed him from any chance of free-range integrity reducing him to the clown of law enforcement. Bozo and Ronald McDonald have nothing on these court jesters.

The dog and pony show that is the DOC would be comical; you could just throw a tent over this circus, if it was not costing the state \$550,000,000 per year. You see, you pay Bozo, Clarabelle, and Ronald McDonald. They are your employees and instead of protecting the public safety they are turning young low-level offenders into future murderers. The circus is in town and if you get close enough you can smell the manure emanating from the soulless turnkeys. Long left in the past

is the fact that men are sent to prison as punishment, not for punishment. Men (and women) are sent to prison here in the commonwealth to be rehabilitated. To trust these clowns; these pigs slurping off the public trough, to rehabilitate is just like trusting Enron with the bailout money – sure folly. Oversized shoes, bulbous red noses, and water squirting carnations, they head off to the bank to fill their deep pockets with blood-stained taxpayer green. Your green.

When there is a shift change at the prison, the guards coming through the



gate look like clowns coming out of the Volkswagen at Ringling Brothers. To slap you across the face the guards' union claims that it is understaffed. This is the biggest propaganda line since Hitler said he wanted the Jews to register for a "census". These false claims of under-staffing create murder. How, you ask? Well the union has placed such a boot across them to have umpteen captains, boatloads of lieutenants, and throngs of sergeants, leaving the line guard the minority of these fools. Without line guards the educational, employment, and programming activities are shut down. Prisoners find other things to do and they are quite counterproductive to rehabilitation. They are the activities that allow the low-level criminal to advance to an angry, hate-filled, killing machine. The lion has been poked with a sharp stick and eventually these clowns are gonna have to let him out of the cage to come visit you! Think it's funny now? They say you get what you pay for. Does it cost a half-billion to produce failure? When are you going to demand that the circus be shut down?

What's the solution? The only plan that can work is a total overhaul. The clowns must be taught that in this commonwealth it is the law that you rehabilitate. The next step is to force the union back to the bargaining table to get rid of all the managerial staff. This overstaffing is the same thing you see when you drive by a road crew of city workers: ten men leaning on shovels. We must cut the fat off the fat lady, trim the beard off the bearded lady, and pluck some of that brass out of the pockets of the clowns and invest it in the future success of the errands the system is legally bound to rehabilitate. The joke is over. The draconian old-school, good ole boy, jackal administrators who resist change must be sent packing. They should paint bull's-eyes on them and let them roam the streets of the Mattapan corridor like a big midway shooting gallery. Maybe then they will get the point! Corrections must

be taken away from the law enforcement-driven supervision of the department of public safety and placed back under the umbrella of the department of health and human services as it was when we had the most successful furlough program in the country, one of the lowest recidivism rates, and one of the most successful supervised parole rates as well. Of course, this will mean fewer jobs for the clowns but that is the only way you will be able to get what you pay for.

Deputy Denied-Oh

Timothy J. Muise

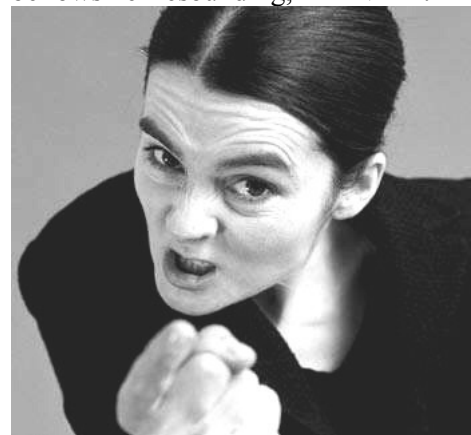
In this humble piece the names have been changed to embarrass (if that is even possible) the guilty while exposing them through the undeniable description of their sadistic actions.

There is a new sheriff in town and her name is Deputy Denied-Oh. Now Ms. Denied-Oh is a diminutive little creature, a little heavy in the stern, but for an overall small package she packs hatred in like a stick of TNT. The appropriateness of her name cannot be overstated as she denies any and all requests or ideas that would promote rehabilitation with as much fervor as Hitler denied Jews human rights. Deputy Denied-Oh's gas chamber is the Hospital Unit (HSU) at MCI Shirley and her ovens are the cells in the Special Management Unit (SMU) a.k.a. The Hole, where men choose death by a noose over the flames of the Deputy's evil heart.

If you have the unmitigated audacity to "get sick" under Deputy Denied-Oh's watch you are banished to what she calls the "Skilled Nursing Facility". Calling this death camp that would be like Satan calling hell the "Heated Eternal Respite". The moniker does nothing to describe the misery and torture. It is the Deputy's playground.

If you have the extreme misfortune of being relegated to the Deputy's death camp and ask to attend a

religious service with your brothers she bellows her resounding, "DENIED!" If



you ask for legal assistance for seeking freedom under your right to access to the courts she screeches, "DENIED!" If you beg to visit with one of your only friends left on the earth, who happens to be another prisoner, she barks, "DENIED!", and follows up with a "HOW DARE YOU SEEK HUMANITY?!" As she drags her pointed tail away from you a smile curls upon her lips. She is satisfied with the bile she has spewed. She is proud of the evil she has emanated.

Just as the Devil has minions Deputy Denied-Oh has her sycophants. You see it can prove lucrative to suck up to the Queen of Darkness. She has her main hate-bitch Lt. Whirlwind. You see she can stir up a mess, like a Texas tornado, where one exists. She will take your water bottle, seize your clothesline, and confiscate your cardboard box, faster than the breeze blows through the White Mountains. She is paid \$75,000.00 plus to ignore public safety, create angry prisoners, and act as the water bottle detective of the greater Shirley region. Your tax dollars at work!

You also have Captain Cowardly. Now this true man-bitch is totally choke-collared by these women. The Deputy says jump and the man-bitch asks, "How high?" Lt. Whirlwind says, "Let's go on water bottle patrol", and Captain Cowardly echoes, "I'm with ya!" Kids kill each other in the streets of the Mattapan corridor due to the anger instilled in their role models during incarceration, but Captain Cowardly patrols the blocks policing

cardboard boxes. Never forget he gets about \$90,000.00 to do it.

Deputy Denied-Oh, Lt. Whirlwind, and Captain Cowardly are the reason for high recidivism in Massachusetts. Their evil creates career criminals. They turn low level drug dealers into murderers. They created Dominic Cinelli and Willie Horton. Men here at Shirley World are actually signing do not resuscitate orders (DNR's) so that they don't end up in the "Skilled Nursing Death Chamber" as a victim of Deputy Denied-Oh. Men would rather die than submit to her evil. Is this what the public wants?

The cost of the likes of Deputy Denied-Oh and her minions is far too high. You must understand that crime and social demise can never be reduced if you don't rehabilitate the errant. Young men who come into prison must be afforded an opportunity to change, a real and meaningful opportunity to be productive members of society. We spend about \$550,000,000.00 on corrections (about 70% of that is for salaries alone) and we must redistribute that money toward curing the problems that have plagued the system for decades. Coordination with halfway houses and rehab programs (which does not happen now) is one of the first steps. More lower security housing where men can secure jobs is another. But most of all, you must make this a system of hope, not one of hopelessness like Deputy Denied-Oh has created in which young men to see their future as one of isolation in a hospital begging to have their shit-

filled diaper changed. The time has come to turn Deputy Denied-Oh's evil smile into an unemployment line frown. Let's hope she does not bump into one of her victims while waiting in line. He may send her to the hell where she belongs.

SUPPORT SENATE BILL NO. 1139 FOR "THE COMPASSIONATE MEDICAL RELEASE OF PRISONERS"

"If you want to see the scum of the earth and the dregs of humanity go down to your local prison and watch the changing of the guard".

Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain)

"Who shall stand guard to the guards themselves?" Chazel



Just Prey to the Gods

Ralph C. Hamm, III

As America is still reminded by the media to mourn 9/11, the children killed enmasse in Colorado, Connecticut, and recently the April 15, 2013 Boston Marathon bombing (ushering in "Boston Strong"); political pundits, so-called news media experts and their ilk, have subsided in their clamor for stiffer gun control laws, public safety, capital punishment and longer prison terms, and greater homeland security (sacrificing more Constitutional protections, until there are none), until the next catastrophe arises.

Through the intentional use of fun house mirrors and smoke-screens, the general public in America appear to be stymied... dumbfounded... over how anyone (homegrown or otherwise) could or would unleash such horrific and violent acts against "soft targets" in this society, conveniently overlooking the fact that similar acts of horror and violence were perpetrated against native American women and children and are the cornerstone of the founding of this nation. There are innumerable deaths by gun violence within this country every year

(Trayvon Martin yesterday, today...), with young black males carrying the heaviest of tolls – be that through gang/street violence, domestic violence, police/security violence or judiciary violence.

Author Tom Engelhardt so aptly stated:

The Greeks had it right. When you live on Mount Olympus, your view of humanity is qualitatively different. The Greek gods, after all, lied to, stole from, lusted for, and punished humanity without mercy while taking the planet for a spin. And it didn't bother them a bit. They felt –so Greek mythology tells us – remarkably free to intervene from the heights in the affairs of whichever mortals caught their attention and, in the process, to do whatever took their fancy without thinking much about the nature of human lives. If they sometimes felt sympathy for the mortals whose lives they repeatedly threw into havoc, they were incapable of real empathy. Such is the nature of the world when your view is the Olympian one and what you see from the heights are so many barely distinguishable mammals scurrying about. 1/

Today's America is yesterday's Mount Olympus. The inner cities, native American reservations... The Iraqs, Afghanistans, Palestines, Pakistans, Egypts, Syrias, Rwandas, Darfurs of the world are "soft targets" for American sanctioned violence, guns, bombs, UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles/predator drones), and sundry weapons of mass destruction descending down from the heights upon thousands of human targets like Olympian gifts from the Mount (White House, State Department, military industrial complex). But these have become acceptable targets of a differing hue, religion, language, culture, than mainstream America; and therefore, that much more acceptable as casualties (collateral damage) in the "War on Drugs"... "War on Terror"... "War on Humanity". Mainstream America is not accustomed to being the





prey in a war, and therefore cannot imagine what it means to exist under the gun day after day... year after year. The new Olympians have immunized their senses to the screams emanating from the inner cities of humanity for decades, as the means of conditioning themselves against the world.

True suffering is only suffering when Mount Olympus suffers. 2/

As the minions and subjects of the children lost in the Colorados, Connecticut, Bostons, and possibly Floridas of this country, bearing witness to the banners billowing at half-mast... the tiny coffins draped in funeral shrouds. Foreign dignitaries/allies send their condolences, heartfelt or as a matter of tribute to the Mount.

But, as a country with god-like attitudes, do we mourn the other hundreds of babies of a different hue around the globe who have fallen victim to America's

gun violence and worship? Yet, all of these human sacrifices to New Mount Olympus are someone's babies. It takes mass violence in a New Olympian suburban community to attract the nation's attention for a brief moment and solicit a pseudo-response. Then the weapons lobbies react, and shut down the half-hearted response to the epidemic of violence that has plagued inner city communities forever and has evolved into a virulent culture of death; while mothers of a different hue mourn their dead babies in relative obscurity.

Babies shoot and kill other babies, with the survivors often condemned to

linguish in prison plantations in New Olympus under the onus of life sentences, because they succumbed to the economy of the culture of violence through marginalization. These children are sentenced to life in prison by a judiciary manned by judges who wield the power of life and death – who depend upon the violence of mortals for their very existence (self-worth), making them the most violent of us all. As the perpetrators become the victims, we the subjects of Mount Olympus pay homage to our man-made gods, via one form of living currency or another.

The world has become the backyards, main streets, battle fields, prisons, and graveyards of the New Olympian Order.

NOTES

1/ The United States of Fear, Haymarket Books (Chicago: 2011), page 67.

2/ We mortals must suffer through the violence perpetrated against us by the New Mount Olympus and their minions with humility, but we are forbidden to defend ourselves or fight back; nor can we protest too loudly, or an even more severe punishment will rain down upon us from on high.

"There is a difference between trying to fix something that is merely broken using reform and fixing something that's failed and will never work. What we have as a system is a failure...it's beyond broken... reform is a waste of time, energy and money. All three of those things need to be directed towards a new system."

Unknown

Parole Report and the Perception of Justice in Massachusetts

Luis D. Perez

The following is an accurate report taken on-line from the Massachusetts new Parole Board since it took over back in 2011. However it is very important that you be aware that there are another 85 cases pending. The facts in this report are solid, based on the decisions already made on 143 cases being reviewed. The statistics on parole being granted is 16.8% of the total amount.

The Board made unanimous decisions on 134 individuals and 9 split

decisions. The Parole Board Denials as of today* are 115; 80 of them with 5 year setbacks; 14 with 4 year setbacks; 13 with 3 year setbacks; 8 with 2 year setbacks and 1 with an 18 month setback.

There was a single case (1) that was postponed or continued. The Board granted 26 cases for 2nd degree lifers. 6 of those have been released, 20 still await release. In one of those cases the person died awaiting release.

Unanimous 5 year setbacks were given to a total of 80 individuals. 44 cases have 5 year setbacks at review; 22 of them 5 year setbacks at revocation hearing; 16 paroles after revocation; 5 paroles at review hearing.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those individuals who have contributed to correcting and updating the research. I am hoping that this line of communication addresses the issues of concern with our friends in your area.

For those individuals in prisons who have been working hard and been dedicated to what programs and activities are available: I want you to know that it is important that you stand strong. We got caught between the struggle of classes and how some segments of society have a different interpretation of crime and justice in America. Keep your head in the right direction and don't let hypocrisy affect your rehabilitation, values and principles.

Please keep in mind also the word and meaning of being politically correct, how the upper class and the middle classes are supporting the hypocrisy by allowing the Judicial Branch to overpower the other two branches of government. The last event was back in July and August 2012 when **the governor signed Melissa's Law (Three Strikes) even as he knew about the scandalous State Laboratory and its altering of evidence affecting thousands of criminal cases.** I wonder where was the governor's back bone?

Interpretation of Crime in America

1. When the poor steal from the rich, it is called "Crime".

2. When the middle class steal from the upper class, it is called "Mismanagement".

3. When the upper class steals from the middle class, it is called "Impropriety".

4. When the middle class steals from the poor, it is called "Noblesse Oblige".

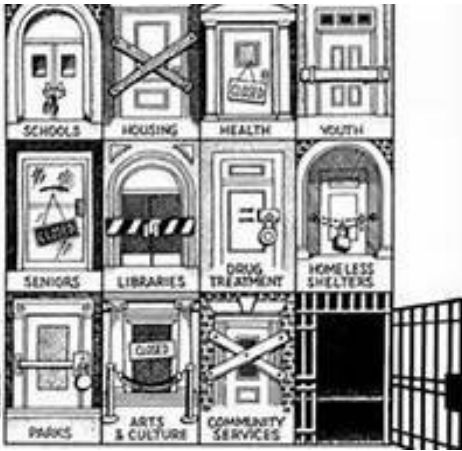
5. When there is corruption among politicians and rich people, white collar crime takes place and that is called "Normal Proceedings".

6. When the politicians of 'both' parties steal from all sectors of American society, it is called "Fiscal Responsibility".

7. And when the poor steal from other poor, it is called "tough luck".

**Luis submitted this report to us in early March. He updated us in May as follows: "In the past three weeks the Parole Board made the following decisions from pending cases under advisement: 11 unanimous denials. Nine of those received 5 year setbacks and 2 got 3 year setbacks.*

See www.mass.gov/eopss/agencies/parole-board/



Over-crowding at the Max

Edward Pepyne

The Commonwealth's maximum and medium correctional facilities are being over-crowded by the failure of the Department of Correction to follow legislative mandates at the minimum and pre-release levels.

The DOC slows the flow of inmates to lower security levels at minimum facilities like MCI-Plymouth. This is being done directly to counter recent

legislative efforts to reduce sentences and increase "good time". Here is how they do it:

* They don't hold the required six month class boards, to avoid change of status issues.

* Arbitrary "lugging" is used contrary to the CMRs which require a finding of a particular security risk. This ties up a bed in a medium that could be available for someone at the Max.

* Reducing good time for community work crews. Rather than giving good time for participating on the crews as set out in the regulations in the traditional manner, they now require actually going out for 15 days, but they don't schedule the crews to go out that many times. So the result is: no good time.

* Most important, they are not moving inmates from the minimum level to the pre-release within 18 months as authorized by MGL 127 Chapter 49 as done in the past. Now they are making up their own standard of 12 months to wrap up, which has no regulatory or statutory basis.

The slowing of flow at the minimum level not only impacts the Max; it also causes problems with parole. The Board is now paroling inmates to minimums and pre-release because it hasn't seen inmates function in those environments.

There should be more accountability for the figure head administration at the DOC and more inmates in pre-release. Following existing laws and regulations will reduce the inmate numbers at the Max and create safer parole conditions.

(MPV has said for years: Over-crowding is not necessary; it is deliberate!)

FYI: From G.L.A.D. Boston's (Gay and Lesbian Advocates & Defenders) Bruce Bell via an Inside friend:

"We are aware of the serious problems that many transgender inmates in the MA DOC system have, but as you know, finding pro bono representation is difficult.

However, we would be very interested in having any LGBT/HIV+ inmates contact GLAD so that we can evaluate their situation and see what we can provide in the way of information, resources and referrals."

You may contact Bruce Bell, Public Engagement and Information Manager at:

G.L.A.D.
30 Winter Street, Suite 800
Boston, MA 02108 or
617-425-1350 www.glad.org

Our friend says: Although G.L.A.D. is unable to represent transgender prisoners unless there is an issue of 'first impression' of an entire group, G.L.A.D. can assist in finding pro bono attorneys for transgender prisoners who are being denied treatment by the Massachusetts Department of Correction.

The D.O.C.'s G.I.D policy 103DOC652 says that treatment must be commensurate with WPATH's Standards of Care and in most cases an independent evaluation by a G.I.D. specialist.

The current 'mental health' vendor, Mental Health Management, is refusing to refer anyone for such treatment after they self-identify as being Trans. Instead, folks are evaluated by Robert Diener, M.D., the psychiatrist for MHM. Diener's only experience is as the supervisor for a couple of therapists who have Trans prisoners on their caseload. He is NOT professionally qualified and his primary intention, in line with the DOC, seems to be telling these patients that they do not have G.I.D.!

...the margin is more than a site of deprivation "it is also the site of radical possibility, a space of resistance...a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one's capacity to resist. It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds."

Bell Hooks

Manipulation

Excerpts from the internet

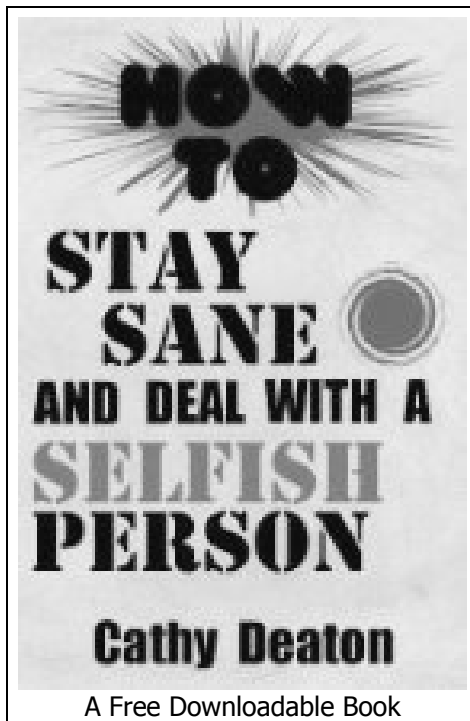
It seems that some people, no matter the circumstances, can't help but manipulate. Everyone has done it, but there is a point where manipulation becomes dangerous and unhealthy. Depending on the source, it can be hard to stay away from these manipulative people and situations, but with perseverance it's possible to stay sane.

To stay sane in the midst of manipulative people and situations can be very hard, especially because these folks tend to be family, friends, lovers, children, and co-workers. Identify these people. Awareness is key.

Sometimes manipulation is very overt or obvious, such as a co-worker or boss threatening you with job loss or more work, or a partner trying to make you feel guilty so he or she can get a desired result. However, it can very often be subtle manipulation, so much so that you might not recognize it. This is called crazy making. Once you can identify what the other person does to try to create chaos, you can become prepared to fight it, which will enable you to remain sane and calm.

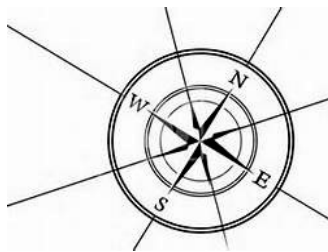
1. Pay attention to your boundaries as manipulators will push them. It is essential to have the ability to communicate clear boundaries. A good indicator that boundaries have been crossed is if you feel angry or guilty. Often when we are manipulated, we feel powerless, so it's important to find a way to take your power back. There are many ways to assert yourself and define your boundaries to the other person. How you respond depends on what you want as an end result. It might be necessary to confront the manipulative person, cut communication off completely, say nothing, put down or enforce a boundary, or talk with a friend and process emotions. Your goal is to stay sane and not react.

2. Manipulative people come in many forms. A very important



thing is to have a strong sense of the type of people you want in your life. Although it does not make the feeling of being manipulated feel any less hurtful, the clearer you are about what you want and what is acceptable behavior will make it easier to identify situations where manipulation is happening. When you are aware of these manipulative situations it becomes easier to know something needs to be done in order to maintain sanity.

3. Keep on trucking. It takes years to hone these skills. Learn from the times it has happened and take note of what you can do to change.



From Sue's Desk

As most of you know, I've been up here in Nova Scotia for almost 2 years now. Thinking back, it doesn't seem that long but it has been. I miss being with the girls as we ready the newsletter to be mailed out and in putting it together. Thank you

Susan, Andrea and Terry, you girls do great work.

I enjoy getting the occasional card and letter from some of you like I did over the years when I lived in the U.S. Next week, I will have the privilege of voting for the first time in MY country. In doing my research I found out that people in prison up here do have the right to vote as long as they are Canadian citizens. That amazed me. I have always felt that those of you who are incarcerated and are US citizens should have the right to vote. That fact that you committed a crime should not cost anyone the right to vote. Perhaps those in government are afraid that 2 million plus votes might push them out of office? That's food for thought. I am going to try to find out what I can do to help you people to get that right back. You should also encourage your families and friends to support this as well.

The U.S. portrays itself as the great humanitarian country and wants everyone around the world to believe that as well, however, it treats its prisoners and poor citizens like crap. To me, you can tell a lot about a country by the way it treats its own people. Wake up America and start treating your own the way they should be treated. Knock off the chest-puffing about how concerned you are about people from other countries and start with treating your own with dignity and respect. RESPECT, you got to give it to get it!

When I go to the polls to cast my vote for Premier of Nova Scotia, I'll be casting it with each and every one of you in mind.



Islamic Manuscripts from Mali: Timbuktu - an Islamic Cultural Center

Timbuktu, the legendary city founded as a commercial center in West Africa 900 years ago, is synonymous today for being utterly remote. This, however, was not always the case. For more than 600 years, Timbuktu was a significant religious, cultural, and commercial center whose residents traveled north across the Sahara through Morocco and Algeria to other parts of Africa, Europe, and Asia. Located on the edge of the Sahara Desert, Timbuktu was famous among the merchants of the Mediterranean basin as a market for obtaining the goods and products of Africa south of the desert. Many individuals traveled to Timbuktu to acquire wealth and political power.

Other individuals traveled to Timbuktu to acquire knowledge. It was a city famous for the education of important scholars whose reputations were pan-Islamic. Timbuktu's most famous and long lasting contribution to Islamic—and world—civilization is its scholarship and the books that were written and copied there beginning from at least the 14th century. The brilliance of the University of Timbuktu was without equal in all of sub-Saharan Africa and was known throughout the Islamic world.

Over the past 1,200 years, the Western Sahara area has given birth to powerful empires: Ghana (8th-11th centuries), Mali (13th-17th centuries), and Songhai (15th-16th centuries). The influence of these empires transcends Mali's current boundaries in its contributions to civilization and culture, particularly through Muslim scholarship. Many peoples, ideas, and goods passed through these empires by land and via the Niger River. Among travelers to the region were many Muslim scholars who came pursuing knowledge and

whose scholarship survives in their manuscripts.

In 1960, when the former French Sudan—previously part of French West Africa—became independent from France, it took the name of a historic kingdom in the area that it covers, the empire of Mali. Today Mali is an independent, democratic, culturally diverse, predominately Muslim nation that sits at an important nexus of West African culture. The fabled city of Timbuktu lies in the Sahel—the

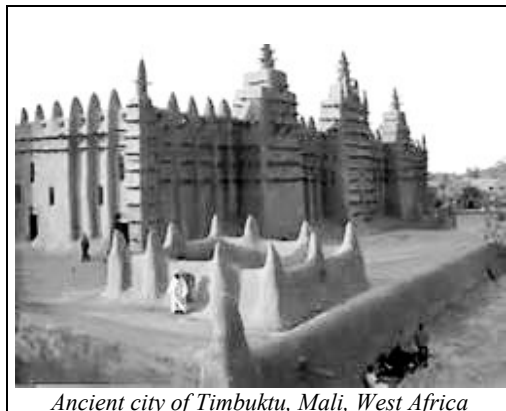


Pictured here is Abdel Kader Haidara , one of Timbuktu's leading manuscripts experts and son of a deceased renown local scholar, Mama Haïdara. In front of Haïdara in a glass case is a Koran, with, on the lower part of the image, a note indicating that several kings of Morocco owned it. The writing is typically Moroccan 12th century.

southern edge of the Sahara, eight miles north of the Niger River in Mali.

The texts and documents included in *Islamic Manuscripts from Mali* are the products of a tradition of book production reaching back almost 1,000 years. Although this practice is anchored in the methods of Islamic book production, it possesses features particular to West Africa. The bindings of manuscripts from Timbuktu, and West Africa in general, are unique in the Islamic world. Their decoration

with incised markings is in a style characteristic of the area. Further, pages are not attached in any way to the binding—a practice different from all other Islamic manuscripts.



Ancient city of Timbuktu, Mali, West Africa

Message from Atty. Lynne Stewart September 28th, 2013

From Deep in the Belly of the Beast...that is, Texas.

Now another month has passed and I am getting increasingly irritable that these jokers are so cavalier with my life and what time I have left. (I also am getting weaker.) My application for compassionate release is moving but glacially (are there any glaciers left ? Only in the bureaucracy...) We learned that the request has left the General Counsel's office of the Bureau of Prisons in Washington and is now being considered by an "Independent Committee" (whatever that means). From there it will ostensibly go to the Director, Mr. Samuels, for the final recommendation and request for a motion to the Judge.

As you can appreciate there is still plenty of room for slips between cup and lip. I truly understand that I, with the strong and consistent support of all 30,000+ of you, do constitute a "threat" in their small universe. That is to say that, the will of the People cannot be ignored forever. With that in mind, I want to urge everyone to come on out on

OCTOBER 8, TUESDAY, MY 74th
BIRTHDAY FOR A LOCAL SHOW OF
OUR COLLECTIVE WILL IN
OPPOSITION TO THE "DEATH
PENALTY"

ORGANIZE ORGANIZE ORGANIZE
ORGANIZE ORGANIZE ORGANIZE

YOU AND YOUR COMRADES,
FRIENDS, ACQUAINTANCES CAN
GATHER AT YOUR LOCAL FEDERAL (US)
COURTHOUSE OR POST OFFICE TO
REMINDE THEM THAT WE WILL NOT LET
ME DIE IN A JAIL CELL !!!

If you can do this please notify
Ralph of your location (917 853 9759,
518 358 2525) or email my web site at
llywerleft@gmail.com. We hope this
will be nationwide and we can spread
the word of the senseless cruelty in the
way the Bureau of Prisons administers
a program that is supposed to be
compassionate. I may be the “poster
child” but this is done on behalf of all
the prisoners who are languishing, in
pain or worse, trying to go home.

Be Out there on October 8. It is
already an historic day. Let’s make it
More So!!! Let’s Win.

Lynne Stewart



Who is Lynne Stewart?

Lynne Stewart is a radical human rights attorney who has devoted her life to the oppressed – a constant advocate for the countless many deprived in the United States of their freedom and their rights. Lynne has been falsely accused of helping terrorists in an obvious attempt by the U.S. government to silence dissent, curtail vigorous defense lawyers, and install fear in those who would fight against the U.S. government’s racism, seek to help Arabs and Muslims being prosecuted for free speech and defend the rights of all oppressed people. She was arrested in April 2002 and arraigned before Manhattan federal Judge John Koeltl, who also presided over her trial in 2004. She was convicted, and received

a 28-month sentence in October 2006. However she was free on bail until 2009, when the government appealed the sentence. In late 2009 Lynne was re-sentenced to 10 years in federal prison. She is now in a federal medical facility for women in Texas, thousands of miles away from her home, family and community.



True to the Cause Remembering John McGrath 1940-2013

Our comrade John was a long-time social justice and anti-prison activist. John was at Walpole in 1973 when guards walked off the job anticipating that the prison would devolve into even greater mayhem. Instead, the prisoners organized a cross-race coalition and collectively ran the joint. For an all-too-brief period the men of Walpole proved that the abolition of prison can be a reality. John helped to organize the National Prisoners Reform Association. He continued to advocate for the rights of prisoners throughout his life.

John was active with the grassroots Friends and Families of Prisoners, working out of Dorchester, for years. Much of the work with which he was involved helped inform the important work Instead of Prisons (1976), republished by Critical Resistance in 2000. More recently he organized screenings of 3,000 Years and Life, the 1973 documentary about the Walpole Uprising.

John could be seen at countless demonstrations on behalf of prisoners, was involved in community campaigns for better education, anti-racism and social/economic justice, and attending services and events here at CCB. John cherished his decades-long friendships with his fellow prisoners and allies. His passing is a tremendous loss to us all.

Friends and Allies Inside & Outside celebrated John’s life on June 15, 2013 at the Community Church of Boston.

*R.I.P.
Marc Finstein, Billy
Barnowski, John McGrath
and Herman Wallace*

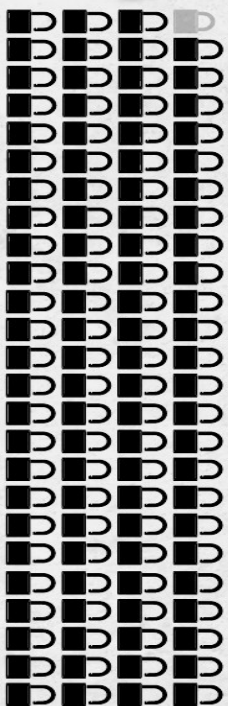


John at Community Church of Boston

INCARCERATION NATION

THE RISE OF AN IMPRISONED AMERICA

The United States is often touted as the Land of the Free. However, its overcrowded prisons and jails, brimming with inmates at unprecedented rates, paint a very different picture.

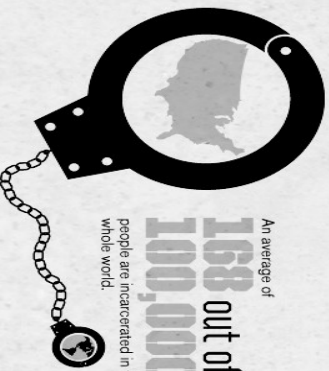


INCARCERATION RATES* (PER 100,000 PEOPLE)



COMPARED TO:

ALL COUNTRIES
743 out of 100,000 people are in prison or jail in the United States.

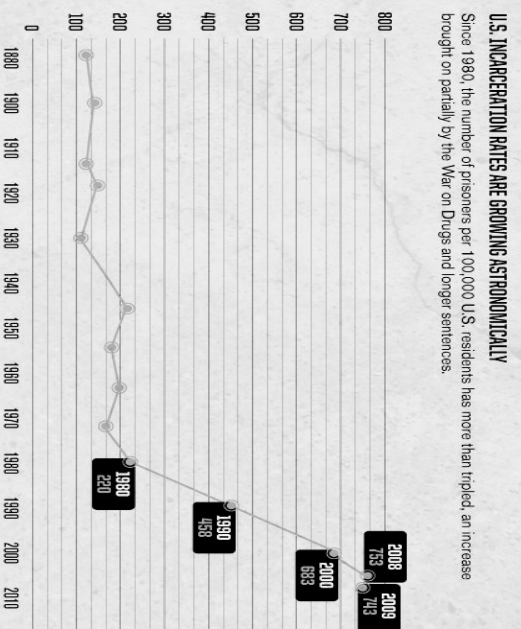


An average of 168 out of 100,000 people are incarcerated in the whole world.

NEARLY

1 in 100

U.S. ADULTS ARE BEHIND BARS.



U.S. INCARCERATION RATES ARE GROWING ASTRONOMICALLY. Since 1980, the number of prisoners per 100,000 U.S. residents has more than tripled, an increase brought on partially by the War on Drugs and longer sentences.

OTHER DEVELOPING NATIONS

The United States easily takes the lead in incarceration rates when stacked up against all the countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

It has a figure close to 14x higher than that of Iceland, the OECD country with the lowest lock-up rate.



As one of the countries with the lowest record incarceration rates, Norway's maximum imposed jail term is 21 years.

It also permits inmates to retain the right to vote while imprisoned.



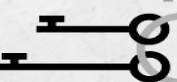
COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST INCARCERATION RATES

Rwanda's statistics include inmates being held for crimes relating to the 1994 genocide.

Russia has a notoriously stringent penitentiary system.



Even so, the rates in the United States still surpass them by at least 20%.



*Most recent data gathered from 2006 to 2010.
**Sentenced prisoners only. A further 85,000 are reportedly held in "administrative detention."

Sources: Center for Economic and Policy Research | Bureau of Justice Statistics
New York Times | International Center for Prison Studies, King's College London
US Census Bureau | The Sentencing Project | Pew Research Center | Global Post

P	I	B	S	C	H	O	O	L	Y	A	R	D	N	V
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This issue of MPV was mailed the week of October 13 - 18. Please let us know if your copy is unduly delayed.



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| antagonize | finicky | mist | occasional | schoolyard |
| beautiful | greatness | mutiny | omnipotent | seriousness |
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| canister | induct | neat | plantation | tantamount |
| economize | loiter | nitpick | proof | temptation |
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Skull, by Leonardo DaVinci

Greetings to our friends Inside - This issue of Mass Prison Voice is a double edition. We thank you for your patience!

MPV is unique because we are in solidarity with prisoners and their loved ones. MPV is a grassroots collective that has not used grant money to cover our publishing cost, because we want to remain free to see your direct experiences reflected in these pages. No one speaks for or around us and we are aligned with the people directly affected by mass incarceration, racism, classism, ableism, misogyny, reform liberalism and all the other 'isms' that are the foundation of the P.I.C.

Special thanks go to everyone who submitted articles and to Beckey who did much of the typing for this issue. We are grateful to people Inside who have donated books of stamps. We understand that such generous contributions are the equivalent of a week's pay for those on the Outside. We especially want to say thank you for a contribution that paid for the mailing of this double edition. The

funds are part of the monetary settlement stemming from a suit against the DOC's October 2000 week-long paramilitary shakedowns upon the men at Walpole and Shirley Medium, led by the despicable Colonel Eugene Marsolais and his goon squad. Thirteen years later a piddling amount was pried from DOC Legal and some of it is now being put to good use (constructive revenge) to send MPV your way. Thank you, Glenn Mortimer!

FYI:

➔ Critical Resistance in California will mail its quarterly newspaper, The Abolitionist, free of charge, to prisoners. Their address is The Abolitionist C/O Critical Resistance, 1904 Franklin Street, Oakland, CA 94612.

➔ Get a complimentary subscription to HCV Advocate Newsletter. Send your name, 'con' number, and address to Hepatitis C Support Project/HCV Advocate, P.O. Box 427037, San Francisco, CA 94142-7037. Thanks to Victor at Corcoran!

➔ Also, an on-line website, Solitary Watch publishes a 4 page print edition four times a year. We believe it is free to prisoners. The address is Solitary Watch, P.O. Box 11374, Washington, D.C. 20008.



They're Baaaaack: Who ('s about to) Let the Dogs Out to Search Your Loved Ones?!!!

SAY NO TO THIS FASCIST PRACTICE!

We know how drugs get Inside: 7 to 3 shift; 3-11 shift and 11-7 shift.

Stop Andrea Cabral, Secretary EOPPS, One Ashburton Place, Suite 02133, Boston, MA 02108



A big shout out to Chaplain Sister Ruth who retires this month.

She will be sorely missed.



Subscription form to share with family and friends. Free to those on the inside. Sliding scale \$4.- 10. for 4 issues. Send this form and your check or money order (payable to Susan Mortimer) to:

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