

ESSAY ON SOLITARY

MY NAME IS WILLIAM "BILLY" MARTINEZ. I AM A 36 YR. OLD SOCIALLY, POLITICALLY & CULTURALLY CONSCIOUS LATINO FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA. I'M CURRENTLY SERVING AN INDETERMINATE LIFE SENTENCE IN PELICAN BAY'S SUPER MAXIMUM SECURITY HOUSING UNIT (S.H.U) IN CRESCENT CITY, CA.

I HAVE SPENT OVER 20 YRS OF MY LIFE INCARCERATED, SINCE I WAS A YOUNG BOY & UNFORTUNATELY OVER 10 YRS IN EXTREME ISOLATED SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS I HAVE BEEN KEPT COMPLETELY ALONE, IN A SMALL WINDOWLESS CELL, FORCED TO LIVE A DAY THAT CONSTANTLY REPEATS ITSELF.

CALIFORNIA PRISON OFFICIALS CLAIM THAT SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IS USED TO HOLD THOSE WHOM THEY REFER TO AS "THE WORST OF THE WORST" MOST PARTICULARLY, THOSE CONSIDERED TO BE PRISON GANG MEMBERS OR "SHOT-CALLERS".

I WAS 12 YRS. OLD THE FIRST TIME I WAS EVER PLACED IN SOLITARY. AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE, I DID NOT REALIZE WHAT WAS BEING DONE TO ME. ALL I KNEW WAS THAT IT WAS HORRIBLE! CAN YOU IMAGINE A YOUNG, ACTIVE, VIBRANT, ENERGETIC 12 YR. OLD CHILD BEING PLACED IN A SMALL CONCRETE CAGE WITH NOTHING TO DO, OR NO ONE TO INTERACT WITH. ALL BECAUSE HE DID NOT LISTEN. FOR DAYS & DAYS.....

I DIDN'T KNOW THE MEANING OF IT THEN, BUT AFTER YEARS & YEARS..... I KNOW IT NOW

IT IS TORTURE!

AMERICA AS A PEOPLE NEEDS TO COME TOGETHER TO REALIZE WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR PEOPLE & PUT AN END TO THE TORTURE OF LONG-TERM SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. THERE DOES NOT NEED TO BE REFORMS. IT NEEDS TO END! FOR AS LONG AS THESE HELLHOLES ARE IN EXISTENCE, THEY WILL BE USED TO TORTURE OUR OWN PEOPLE.

RESPECTFULLY,

BILLY MARTINEZ

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PELLICAN BAY PRISON

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