

## MASTERING WORDS, NOT DEEDS

Semantics; a noun, the study of meanings in language. In California's penal system, there seems to be little conformity in semantics. Words, terms and definitions are used as a means to an end, political correctness, and political machinations, for example: the Penal Code Part 1. reads "Of Crimes and Punishments". Prison officials call their system "California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation" (CDCR), promoting and emphasizing "REHABILITATION". Now, to the mind of the average person, this sounds great, they are "rehabilitating" prisoners. However, if a curious person looks behind the curtain, they would find these words do not match the deeds, since approximately 70% of prisoners are recidivists, rehabilitation is almost non-existent. A return rate of anything over 50%, would have to be deemed a failure. Would you, buy any product, or service, that was advertised "ONLY 50% ARE RETURNED"? No consumer with half a brain would pay, or waste, good money on such a claim. Yet, California taxpayers fork out an astounding \$14 billion a year to operate "CDCR". Could it be "rehabilitation" rings much better and more productive, than punishment; a semantic device to patronize the electorate. Who, would want to think, their tax dollars are used to punish old men to death, so "rehabilitation" is used to explain why 70 and 80 year old men, with a multitude of health and physical problems, unfit for any meaningful employment, let alone be a menace to society; are in fact punished to death, or to be politically correct "rehabilitated" to death.

Semantic devices are ubiquitous: prisoners are "inmates". You, will not find a trusty, they are clerks, porters and workers. No one goes to the hole, its "Administrative Segregation", but still a form of punishment upon punishment, or to be politically correct "Rehabilitative Program". A prison cell is your "house", its still a cell. There are no cell-blocks, they are buildings now. Draconian sentences are longer than any time in history, but the semantics are softer and more politically correct. The public is assured CDCR is doing a good job, and is a humane place.

Then, there are the guards, or Correctional Officers, as they prefer. "Officer" is a title that defines a professional person, a sentient, a person of high standards and trust. An officer, would never maliciously mistreat, or abuse a prisoner. An officer, would never bully the elderly, defenseless human beings, or leave a pepper sprayed prisoner to die on the concrete floor of a prison cell. An officer, would never force a helpless old man into a cell, with a known violent prisoner that would murder the old man. An officer, would never cause a prisoner to suffer needlessly. An officer, would never compromise his ethics to conform with a group of bullying guards. An officer, would set a standard of excellence, for prisoners to model. Such officers exist, however they are few and far between. Could it be, "Officer", instead of guard, is used by the union to present a "professional" image to justify why CDCR, "Correctional Officers," are the highest paid guards in the world, and why California is the only state that pays their guards more than their school teachers.

Refined verbiage, like a Potemkin Village, can conceal reality for only so long. The reality is, California operates the most costly prison system in the nation, yet it holds the highest record for prisoner suicides, murders, and natural deaths. When, hate, indifference and resentment, are cultivated, like a farmer cultivates his crops, there should be no surprise to those records and staggering recidivism numbers. Rehabilitation is virtually non-existent. No statistics are available, as to job placement of prisoners who received "rehabilitation" vocation skills taught in prison. No statistics are available as to parolee unemployment.

When the media is denied access to prisons, because of "safety and security" reasons, one has to question; is this a semantic device, also? Ignoring, or palliating facts, does not make them any less factual. The electorate has to demand: it's not what you are saying, it's what you are doing? Question the Wizard, and look behind the curtain!

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Robert H. Outman  
Prisoner P-79939

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