

Hell on Earth

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As I sit here in this cell, I despair at the prospect of having to spend the next 25 years of my life behind the walls of this Tennessee prison. As a convicted Murderer I guess my perspective is unique, I have been incarcerated now since I was 19 years old. I'm now 28, and proud to say that I am not the man I was 9 years ago. I've changed substantially for the better I would say. But I must admit I am surely the exception

and not the rule. During My time in prison I've seen all manner of vile filth society can imagine. Rampant homosexuality, extreme violence, and mental and physical deterioration that society cannot even ~~image~~ imagine. Not to mention the unchecked spread of diseases like Aids, Hepatitis, & Herpes.

The public can ~~ot~~ only imagine. As an inmate I have witnessed this firsthand, and as sad as it makes me to say, many of the individuals in here will never be rehabilitated. Ever! It's sad but it's the truth. I can't even begin to tell you how many conversations I've had with individuals who's

main concern is not changing, but quite the contrary, they only desire to find ways to become better criminals. And there is no shortage of ideas or advice for those seeking it. Many people would say what about the vocational & educational opportunities our hard earned tax dollars pay for? Well I've taken some of these classes and I can tell you first hand that they are a cruel joke. Prison has truly been turned into an industry whose prime product is human bodies. Whose ~~only~~ only worth is how much money can be extracted from

the taxpayers, and how much can be skimmed off the top by state ~~offiat~~ officials and reappropriated to their patrons, and personal endeavors. Take the food for example. Last year in 2016 a corporation, whose chief responsibility is to ensure their shareholders equity took over food operations for the entire state of tennessee. The company is called Aramark. Since the state has made the change it was effectively a slow death sentence for the inmates. We went from having food that was at least edible, to food that in my opinion had to have been destined for animal feed.

It is truly that horrible! It is so bad that the state will end up losing so much money ~~because~~ because after a few years of consuming this animal feed health deterioration will become so apparent that the state will have to end their contract with this corporation because the medical cost of treating inmates whose health has deteriorated due to effects of this corporation's greed will be so astronomical they won't have any other choice.

There is a silver lining however of all this. At least those who would terrorize the community, no longer have

the ability to do so. I'm by no means an
 advocate of releasing criminals just because
 of bad conditions. Nor for that matter am I
 an advocate for more leniency in sentencing
 of criminals. Ironically even though I find
 myself in the midst of those being punished
 by the ~~syst~~ system, I understand the need
 to punish those who break the law, myself
 included. Despair, is the best way I can
 describe the state of affairs of the institu-
 tion of rehabilitation. Which is why I admire
 and respect the individuals who come in every day
 and brave disease, violence, and the hatred of
 those they are charged with protecting, and

preventing from leaving, so if I've learned anything it is a respect for the law, that I never possessed in my teens. In fact I've actually come to love it. After taking a Paralegal Course from Blackstone, I learned that there is a remedy at law for any issue and concern you could ever face in life. All you have to do is have faith and a measure of competence to be able to utilize the tools that have been made available for the advancement of a peaceful society.

I'm grateful that I one day if I take care of myself one day I will have an opportunity to be free again.

I just hope that when that day comes I will not be judged for the rest of my life by my greatest mistake, but by the measure of change I've effected in my life. There is one mechanism built into the system for mercy of those who have truly changed their ways and that is executive clemency. I don't know how ~~realistic~~ realistic a black mans chances are of actually getting it - being that we are so feared by society as a whole - but I refuse to despair, just knowing that it's there gives me some solace.

Which is why I will start applying for it every year here in about 5 years. Even though I am convinced now that I will never break the

law again, I know that unless a significant amount of time will have to be served before that notion will even be entertained. I would like to take the time to thank everyone who has read this essay. ~~A~~ And I hope I've shed some light on the prison system in America.