

PEACE AND BLESSINGS...

MY NAME IS MR. PATRICK AUSTIN, BUT MY FRIENDS AS WELL AS MANY FAMILY MEMBERS CALL ME "PARISH". I CAME INTO THE "N.Y.S. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS" FROM "RYKER'S ISLAND" IN JULY 1990. MY STATE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER IS # [REDACTED].

DURING MY INCARCERATION I HAVE NOTICED MANY CHANGES WITHIN THE PRISON SYSTEM ON MANY LEVELS. THE MOST NOTICEABLE CHANGES ARE FOUND IN THE DEPARTMENTAL PHILOSOPHY CONCERNING THE INCARCERATED MAINTAINING STRONG FAMILY AND COMMUNITY TIES. THE PHILOSOPHY HAS ALSO SWITCHED FROM REHABILITATION TO STRICTLY PUNISHMENT, AND EVEN THE MINDSET OF THOSE BEING HELD IN CAPTIVITY HAS CHANGED.

I AM GOING TO TAKE THIS TIME TO GIVE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE CHANGES THAT I MENTIONED ABOVE, WHEN I CAME INTO THE SYSTEM IN 1990 ALL INCARCERATED SOULS WERE ALLOWED TO SEND OUT FIVE FREE LETTERS TO OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS EACH WEEK. THIS WAS A MUCH NEEDED SERVICE BECAUSE MANY ARRIVING INTO THIS SYSTEM HAD SURCHARGES FROM THE COURT WHICH PREVENTED THEM FROM HAVING ENOUGH MONEY IN THEIR ACCOUNTS TO PURCHASE MANY OF THE BASIC THINGS WHICH ARE NEEDED.

(2)

MANY THAT ARE INCARCERATED COME FROM BROKEN HOME, AND POOR COMMUNITIES. HOWEVER, MANY OF US ARE RESIDING IN PRISONS THAT ARE LOCATED HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY FROM OUR FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND FRIENDS.

THE DEPARTMENT HAD A "FREE BUS SERVICE" IN PLACE WHICH ALLOWED MY FAMILY TO COME TO SEE ME IN PRISONS SUCH AS "ATTICA, COMSTOCK ETC...", BUT THE FREE BUS SERVICE IS NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE. COMMUNITY GROUPS, CHURCHES, ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERS WERE ENCOURAGED TO COME INTO THESE PRISONS TO MEET US IN THE EARLY 90'S, BUT NOW THE RULES THAT ARE IN PLACE DISCOURAGE PEOPLE FROM VISITING THESE PRISONS,

PEOPLE CONVICTED OF VIOLENT FELONIES USED TO BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK RELEASE PROGRAM, BUT THAT WAS TAKEN AWAY EVEN THOUGH THE PROGRAM SHOWED POSITIVE RESULTS. THE DEPARTMENT HAD COLLEGE PROGRAMS IN THE MAJORITY OF THESE PRISONS, AND MANY OBTAIN THEIR DEGREE'S. EVEN THOUGH THE COLLEGE PROGRAM SHOWED POSITIVE RESULTS THAT ALSO WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE MAJORITY OF THESE PRISONS.

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EVERY PROGRAM THAT PROVED TO INCREASE A OFFENDER LIKELIHOOD OF SUCCESS WHEN THEY RETURN TO SOCIETY HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY. WHY? BECAUSE THE "D.O.C.C.S." ISN'T INTERESTED IN PROVIDING THE INCARCERATED WITH THE TOOLS FOR SUCCESS. THE "D.O.C.C.S." IS BEING USED TO WAREHOUSE US FOR AS LONG AS THEY CAN, BECAUSE WE REPRESENT MONEY TO THIS BROKEN SYSTEM.

EVERYTHING THAT THE MEN IN THE 1971 ATTICA RIOT DIED FOR IS SLOWLY BEING TAKEN AWAY. THE "I.G.R.C." & "I.L.C." IN THESE PRISONS DOES NOT OPERATE AS THEY WERE DESIGNED. THE "P.L.S." NO LONGER RECEIVE THE FUNDING NEEDED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THOSE OF US BEING HELD IN CAPTIVITY. THE POLICY MAKERS IN THE "D.O.C.C.S." I AM TALKING ABOUT THE COMMISSIONER AS WELL AS HIS "EXECUTIVE TEAM" ARE OUT OF TOUCH WITH WHAT ACTUALLY GOES ON IN THESE PRISONS.

WHEN INCARCERATED SOULS LIKE MYSELF WRITE "ALBANY" OR OTHER KINDS OF COMPLAINTS CONCERNING MISCONDUCT BY STAFF WE GET TARGETED FOR PHYSICALLY AND VERBAL ABUSE. DURING MY MOST RECENT STAY IN THE "S.H.U." I WASN'T ALLOWED TO GET CLEAN TOWELS OR SHEETS, I WAS DENIED CLEANING SUPPLIES FOR THE CELL, I WAS DENIED RECREATION, AND FOR SEVERAL DAYS I DIDN'T HAVE ANY FOOD TO EAT ONLY WATER TO DRINK.

(4)

MY PERSONAL PROPERTY WAS STOLEN, AND I CONTINUE TO BE HARASSED BECAUSE I MADE COMPLAINTS AGAINST STAFF. IN THESE MEDIUM SECURITY PRISON I STAND OUT, BECAUSE MOST OFFENDERS SHARING THIS ENVIRONMENT WITH DONT HAVE ANY FIGHT IN THEM.

THEY ARE SCARED TO EVEN WRITE GRIEVANCES, BUT THEY HAVE NO PROBLEM FIGHTING ANOTHER INCARCERATED SOUL. THERE ISN'T ANY UNIT AMONGST US ANYMORE, IF ANYBODY WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MY DAILY REALITY IN THIS ENVIRONMENT OR IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS THAT NEEDS ANSWERS I CAN BE CONTACTED AT THE ADDRESS SHOWN BELOW:

PATRICK PARISH AUSTIN [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SINCERELY,
PARISH...