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To: The American Prison Writing Archive

From: Shane Bell #10443
South Dakota State Penitentiary

Re: Essay on the need for education and job training for prisoners to help keep them from returning to prison

There is a real need to have education and job training opportunities available to prisoners. Warehousing prisoners and then letting them out of prison with no education or job training is a ~~recipe~~ recipe to ~~recindism~~ recindism back to prison.

I have seen it time and time again. A prisoner gets out of prison where he hasn't actually learned anything useful that will help them get a job when they get out. They stay out for awhile then return for one reason or another.

If prisoners were able to get actual ~~training~~ training in a field that they can actually earn a legal living wage, then less prisoners would return to prison.

Education opportunities are also very important but ~~are~~ are rarely available in prison, or if they are it is usually only High school equivalent GED, also called commonly as a "Good Enough Diploma" which is not very useful.

In this day and age it is hard to get a job

that you can earn a legal living wage without some kind of education and job training. It is already hard enough for a felon to get a descent job, if the prisoner had the job training in the prison he would be more likely to get a good job.

For example, here at the South Dakota State Penitentiary, Jameson Annex there are P.I. jobs in welding. If a prisoner learned to weld in prison and got the practice to learn this trade, he could easily get a job starting at \$15 to \$20 an hour, as welders are always in demand in the job market.

The problem is that there are too few P.I. jobs here at the prison that teach welding or any other ~~trade~~ trade like carpentry.

If prisons focused on actually rehabilitating prisoners instead of just warehousing them, then there would be alot less people coming back to prison. Learning a legal job and how to keep it is part of rehabilitating people in prison.

It seems to me the state doesn't want to rehabilitate prisoners so they stay out of prison because putting and keeping people in prison makes money for the prisons, courts, lawyers, probation offices, etc.

If taxpayers really want to rehabilate and keep prisoners out of prison, then education and job training they can actually use to get a job is just common sense. If not, it will be just a revolving door for alot of ~~people~~ people to return to prison.