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To: The American Prison Writing Archive

From: Shane Bell #10443

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Re: Essay on poor food served at the South Dakota State Penitentiary and its effects.

The food served to prisoners at the South Dakota State Penitentiary is not very nutritious, of poor quality, and usually does not taste very good. In the years I have been locked up the food continues to get worse and the quality and nutrition continues to be poor.

The prison contractor named CBM provides not only the food that is served in the chowhall on trays but also runs the prison commissary. This to me seems like a conflict-of-interest.

I believe CBM has a financial interest in its continual ~~action~~ action to serve poor meals in the chowhall. ~~that taste bad~~. Their motive is simple I believe, if they serve poor food in the chowhall that prisoners don't want to eat, then CBM will make more money ~~by~~ selling prisoners food items on commissary, which will increase their profits. This gives CBM a financial motive to make more money, because hungry prisoners will buy

more food on commissary which CBM runs, if they serve ~~the~~ poor, low grade food nobody wants to eat.

The meals here at the South Dakota State Penitentiary are based on a calorie count for each prisoner, not nutrition.

Over the past 2 years I have seen the meals here completely take away fresh fruit for a while, then only gave us fresh oranges once or twice a month. We still get very little fresh fruit.

I also have seen CBM stop serving eggs for ~~the~~ months when the prices went up for them. Even when the price of ^{eggs} went back down, ~~the~~ CBM workers at Jameson didn't want to serve them. We now get small portions of eggs once a week.

This prison serves lots of pasta noodles because it is cheap. They also serve alot of processed ham and something called mechanically seperated chicken which is the main source of protein and it tastes disgusting. I don't think anyone really even knows what is in mechanically seperated chicken. The prison doesn't season the food to make it edible because spices and seasonings cost money and CBM is all about saving money ^{on} ~~of~~ food to increase their profits.

The effects from eating this poor quality and poor ~~nutritional~~ nutritional food is poor health for all the prisoners. There is an increase in ~~a~~ prisoners who develop diabeties. There is increased sickness because fresh fruits help fight off colds and viruses which we

rarely get. Its real simple, poor food and diet equals ~~poor health~~ poor health and sickness.

Another effect of having poor food and constantly feeling hungry is that it can leave prisoners in a bad mood, ~~agitated~~ and agitated, which is not good in a prison. ~~When~~ Hungry agitated prisoners are more likely to cause problems and get into fights.

Good food can have an amazing effect on a persons ~~own~~ mood. If prisoners eat a good meal and get full, they are in a better mood and happy. Prisoners who are happy are less likely to cause any problems.

I believe that if the South Dakota State Penitentiary served more food that was ~~not~~ nutritious and tasted good, it would ~~not~~ improve the health of the prisoners and save money for the state on medical. I also believe it would lead to less violence and prisoners acting up.

The prison needs to actually have an independant nutritionist make the menu and make the prison go by it. The prison serves the same type of meal with same or similar ingrediant and calls it something else.

For example, the menu may say mexican tacos, but what we get is tortilla chips, mechanically seperated chicken, ^{beef flavored,} runny, disgusting, cheese on our tray. That is not a mexican taco!

~~Still another example~~

The poor quality food with its poor quality of



nutrition is causing prisoners to die slowly from sickness, disease, and other factors cause by poor food and nutrition.

The reality is though, that nobody cares and nobody will ever be held accountable. CBM only cares about making a profit. Prison administration only cares about saving money on costs. ~~and~~ The public and taxpayers do not care because the people locked up are criminals, ~~and they want to and want to~~ ~~and~~ The public tends to forget that we are still human beings, like them. We have families like them. Prisoners don't want to be mistreated anymore then any other ~~the~~ person. We both laugh, ~~and~~ cry and have feelings. ~~We~~ We both should have good nutritional food, not disgusting poor quality food that keeps us hungry, agitated and sick.

In summary, ~~the~~ the poor nutrition and quality of the food being served to prisoners at the South Dakota State Penitentiary is directly related to the poor health ~~and deterioration~~ of the prisoners. If the prison stopped ~~its~~ its draconian practices when it comes to the food served it would be better for everyone. If prisoners are served good tasting, nutritionally balanced diets ~~that~~ that include fresh fruits on a daily basis, the health of the prisoners would increase. The result would be less money spent on medical bills and less acting up by ~~the~~ prisoners. Commonsense states good healthy food leads to happier, healthier prisoners and less problems in prison.