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When Accountability Isn't Held

(Part II)

Frederick Mason    #55487-056

USP Tucson        PO Box 24550

Tucson, AZ 85734

If you haven't read Part One, you kinda need to. It helps walk you into this part, where I'm trying to make sense of 11 police officers getting shot in Dallas, and 4 (to this point) are dead. This happened tonight (July 7th) during a protest of the recent killings of two innocent black men by police officers.

Folks, we've reached the tipping point... the boiling point... the "enough is enough" stage of social confrontation.

As an inmate in a federal prison, how do I deal with it? I do, with all my heart, feel sorry for those officers who were shot. The humanity in me is as strong as the day I entered the Federal prison system- regardless of how the prisons treat us.

And this therein IS a factor. Most inmates here actually took pleasure in seeing somebody taking retribution. I'm sorry, I can't join that folly... but inmates have some vested interest in officer abuse. Many prisons abuse inmates for maybe the same line of logic that killer officers use. At



some point, they take justice and execution into their own hands, ignoring the fact that they are not in position to judge- yet they do this quite often.

So inmates here have great contempt for the authority, because prison officials can be just as brutal to inmates. Let's be very clear here: YES, there are some good officers and staff, people who understood that we are people who made bad choices, or some who were unfairly sentenced. They understood that not all inmates are bad people.

Yet, there are officers here at USP Tucson who torment inmates based on color, or their charge, or simply because they can get away with it.

An officer can beat up an inmate and get away with it- because they can.

An officer can throw an inmate in the SHU (Special Housing Unit) for trumped up charges- because he can.

An officer can throw away your personal mail from your family, or open your legal documents and make copies- because he can.

An officer can lie to your family and say, "We tried to call him for visit, but I guess he just doesn't wanna come see you", and torment an inmate's family- because he can.



They can, and do, because there's no accountability in prisons. So... what makes them any different from police officers who kill innocent people? The complete lack of respect is there, in both situations, and often they hide behind the authority, so they can continue to justify such actions.

An officer can, if he wishes, put an inmate in a life-threatening situation... knowingly, and if the worst happens... so what?

Would YOU like to get a call from the prison, saying, "We're sorry to tell you that your son died last night in a fight with another inmate."

When what they REALLY should have said was, "We're sorry to tell you that your son was killed by another inmate we knew would try to kill him, but we read the charges of your son, and felt he didn't deserve to live. So we killed him."

Sounds rough, I know... but it happens...

Why? Because the authority, people that ought to respect EVERY human life, changed the values, and made personal decisions of the worth of certain individuals, to decide if that person ought to live or not. And if it's not about taking lives, it's certainly the abuse of power, which only leads inmates to contempt against the authority.



Can you blame the inmates for actually CHEERING what happened in Dallas? Mind you, I stood there, in shock and sadness of officers shot and killed. I have FRIENDS in law enforcement. What if it was one of them?

But I was also seething in anger at the video of the man shot and killed by wicked officers in Louisiana. Anger... rage, can drive you to change your moral values that you normally would have... simply put, enough is enough.

Or, on a lightly humorous line by Popeye...

"I've stands all I can stands, and I can't stands no more!!"

Folks... we all have our limits; we've seen the results of what happens when some change their values, just as these officers changed theirs.

In prison, it's the same. Just a couple of days ago, an inmate was murdered... in the SHU... by his cellmate.

How does the prison explain this to the deceased's next of kin? Was this something that could have been prevented, or was this the result of prison abuse? In either case, will the prison take accountability of a loss of life, or will they wash their hands of it, and act as if his life didn't matter?



'Are they playing God?

If so, a warning: be careful, lest the REAL God shows up to resolve the situation.

There's a scripture, Hebrews 10:31, that goes, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God". Every officer might want to remember that, not the ones that respect human lives, the prison officials who make it tolerable for inmates. And for what it's worth, I do appreciate that. They understand mercy, compassion and fairness. We can respect that, and under such circumstances, rehabilitation CAN happen.

But that scripture is targeted at those who don't respect inmates. No rehabilitation can EVER happen in prisons if staff and officers torment human beings- and their families. If there is no accountability by prison officers- are they really any different from those who kill innocent people in the streets?

It all seems to be summed up by Proverbs 29:2, which says, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice, but when a wicked man rules, the people groan."

As in prison- as in society. At some point, we REALLY need address this injustice...

before it gets worse...