

Kenneth Key A-70562

FROM MY JOURNAL - COVID 19

IT WOULD BE MARCH 14 AROUND 10:45 AM BRAVO HOUSE, THE UNIT WHERE I HAVE RESIDED OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS WOULD BE PLACED ON QUARANTINE. WHY? BECAUSE OF THE CORONAVIRUS, LATER SHORTEN TO COVID 19, WOULD MAKE ITS PRESENCE KNOWN.

IT SEEMS SOMEONE HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS POSSIBLY CONTRACTING THE VIRUS. THE ORDER CAME DOWN, NO ONE WAS TO ENTER OR LEAVE OUR CELLHOUSE.

EVERYONE WAS TO BE QUARANTINED IN THEIR CELLS. WHILE THE REST OF THE PRISON POPULATION WOULD BE ALLOWED TO GO TO SCHOOL, EAT IN THE DINNING ROOMS, AS WELL AS PARTICIPATE IN THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE GYM, YARD AND CONTINUED TO VISIT WITH FAMILY. P. 1

THAT WOULD LATER BE DETERMINED OVER →

TO BE THE FIRST MISTAKE.

IT WOULD BE A FEW DAYS AND NURSES WOULD CONVERGE ON THE CELL HOUSE, TAKING READINGS OF EVERYONE; CHECKING FOR FEVERS AND OXYGEN LEVELS AND THE PANIC WOULD BEGIN.

OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS ILLINOIS DEPT OF CORRECTIONS WOULD PLACE THE ENTIRE PRISON SYSTEM ON LEVEL ONE LOCKDOWN.

NO ONE KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON AND IT WAS PURE PANIC. ABRUPTLY CUT OFF FROM VISITS, PHONES, AND NO ONE OFFERING UP ANY INFORMATION TO THE INMATE POPULATION.

HUMANITY HAD LONG LEFT THE PRISON, AFTER ALL WE WERE OFFENDERS, AND DESERVED EVERYTHING WE GOT. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS LIKE SEVERAL OFFICERS HAD BEEN ASSAULTED AND DESPITE HAULING THE OFFENDERS WHO DONE

IT, TOOK IT OUT ON EVERYONE AS IF WE ALL WERE THE CUIPRITS OF THE OFFENSE.

I WOULD BEGIN TO TEXT A COMRADE AT THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE TO PLACE INFORMATION ON A BLOG WE HAD CREATED CALL LIVE FROM LOCKDOWN II. NO BLOG

TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS DURING THIS "PANDEMIC".

ALL OF A SUDDEN NURSES EVERYWHERE, AND EVERYONE COMPLAINING ABOUT FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS. IN LESS THEN 24 HRS AND WITHIN A WEEKS TIME, SEVERAL INMATES WOULD BE REMOVED FROM BRAVO HOUSE AND PLACED IN WHAT IS KNOWN AS X-HOUSE (WHICH WAS ONCE THE DEATH HOUSE FOR THOSE SENTENCED TO DIE.

I COULDN'T IMAGINE WHAT WAS RUNNING THROUGH THE MENS MIND; TO NOW BE HOUSED IN WHAT

Pg (2)

OVER →

WAS ONCE THE DEATH HOUSE,
STRIPPED OF THEIR PROPERTY AND
PLACED ON A MORE INTENSE QUARAN-
TINE.

IT WOULD BE ALMOST TWO
WEEKS BEFORE ANYTHING WOULD
HAPPEN FOR PRISONERS IN STATES-
VILLE. THE STATE WOULD RECEIVE
ONE DONATION OF HOTEL COURTESY
SOAP, ONE BAR WOULD BE GIVEN
TO EACH MAN, AND A FEW DAYS
LATER THEY WOULD BRING US ONE
MASK TO WEAR OVER AND OVER AGAIN
, THAT WOULD CHANGE A MONTH LATER
, AND WE WOULD START TO GET ONE
A WEEK. BUT NOT MUCH ELSE HAD
CHANGED.

ONCE A WEEK WE STARTED
TO RECEIVE WATER DOWN BLEACH
SOLUTION, DESPITE IT BEING
SAID, IT WOULD BE GIVEN EVERY-
DAY TO WIPE OUR CELLS DOWN.

HAND SANTIZER WOULD BE DO-
NATED AS WELL, BUT WE WOULD

ONLY RECEIVE IT RIGHT BEFORE MEALS WERE BROUGHT TO CELLS, THAT WOULD BE THE EXTENT OF PREVENTIVE MEASURES PUT IN PLACE.

THE WHOLE IDEA OF SOCIAL DISTANCING WOULD BE TOTALLY IMPOSSIBLE. I LIVE WITH ANOTHER INMATE 24/7 AND OPEN CELLS ON ALL SIDES, AND NO PROPER VENTILATION, A MAN COUGHS AND IT TRAVELS THROUGHOUT THE CELLHOUSE AND THE PARTICLES OF COVID 19 MOVES LIKE THE DEATH ANGEL IN THE EXODUS STORY AND EVERY WEEK I WOULD LAY AWAKE AND WONDER WOULD IT PASS OVER ME.

GOVERNOR WOULD ANNOUNCE COOK COUNTY JAIL AND STATEVILLE HAD MORE INDIVIDUALS IN ONE PLACE WITH THE VIRUS THEN ANY WHERE IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

THE LOCK DOWN WOULD FEEL LIKE IT WAS DISPLINARY, TACTICAL UNITS WOULD BE BROUGHT IN, DRESSED IN FULL RIOT GEAR, NEW GUNS

THAT SHOOT RUBBER BALLS; MY QUESTION WOULD BE FOR WHO?

THERE WAS NO RESISTANCE, NO UNRULY BEHAVIOR, NOTHING! THE LOCK DOWN WOULD BE A FEW MORE WEEKS IN, AND WE WOULD START TO GET THE NEWS THROUGH THE WALL, AS NAMES WERE YELL OFF G-JONES, BIG RUSTY, OLD MAN JESSIE AND BIG FELLA WILSON ALL HAD DIED AS A RESULT OF COVID 19.

THE NUMBER OF DEATHS WOULD BE PLAYED DOWN. BIG FELLA WILSON WAS A BUDDY OF MINE, AND A CLASS MATE IN THE NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND SAT RIGHT NEXT TO ME.

IT HIT ME HARD, HAD MADE HIM A SAILHOUSE CAKE A WEEK BEFORE THE QUARANTINE, THAT HE SHARED WITH OUR CLASS AND WAS JUST A GREAT ALL AROUND GUY. HE WILL BE GREATLY MISSED.

MANY WOULD DIE OVER THE MONTH THAT I KNEW, AND I WONDER IF THEY HAD FAMILY AFFORD THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAY GOOD-BYE; I KNOW IF I GOT SICK AND DIED NO ONE WOULD BE THERE, I WOULD TRANSITION. THAT WOULD BE IT,

INMATES WHO DIE IN PRISON WITH NO ONE TO CLAIM THE BODY FOR BURIAL, ARE SIMPLY CREMATED AND END UP IN A STORAGE ROOM SHELF.

IT IS NOT THE VISION I LIKE, BUT CERTAINLY THE MOST POSSIBLE REALITY, HAVING NO ONE TO CLAIM MY BODY OR BURY ME. MY ONLY SON INCARCERATED AND RESIDES RIGHT ABOVE ME.

IT'S MY PRAYER THAT EVERYONE GETS A DECENT BURIAL AND THEIR LOVE ONES A CHANCE TO SAY THEIR GOOD BYES.

BUT I KNOW IT WILL NOT HAPPEN. AND IF SOMEONE FAMILY ^{P5(4)} OVER →

MEMBER SHOULD DIE THEY WILL NOT BE ALLOWED THE RIGHT TO ATTEND, AND IF GRANTED PERMISSION, WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR SECURITY \$1,000 TO \$2,000. A MAN SERVING A LIFE SENTENCE IS EXCLUDED.

NOW MY TEMP IS TAKEN EACH MORNING, AS WELL AS MY OXYGEN LEVEL BY THE NATIONAL GUARD, SUPPOSE TO GET IT 3 TIMES A DAY, BUT THEY ONLY DO IT ONCE.

SOME DAYS ARE FILLED WITH STUDYING, READING, AND LISTENING TO THE WHISPERS OF THE DAY, FILTERING WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG, AND QUESTIONING SHOULD I PASS THE INFORMATION ALONG.

I REMAIN FAITHFUL DESPITE THIS STORM THAT HE'LL BRING US ALL THROUGH, SO WE EITHER GET BUSY LIVING OR WE GET BUSY DYING.