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Jm

2/17/2022

Fighting For Our Humanity By Frederick Mason

I want to share with you something I wrote on February 7th, 2022 regarding inhumane sanitation at USP Tucson. If you've read enough of my essays, you'll notice this issue has been addressed to USP Tucson, but flatly disregarded.

So, I wrote a BP, or a grievance, on the issue of filthy showers, and how the prison continually neglects their responsibility. But in writing this, I knew it could be a fruitless affair. So, let me share with you the grievance, and kinda walk you through this false sense of addressing grievances. Here's what I wrote:

"On Monday, January 31st, the prison here at USP Tucson went on a nationwide lockdown. On Wednesday, February 2nd, inmates in B2 had showers in uncleaned shower cells. On Friday, February 4th, staff continued to run showers, sending inmates in filthy shower cells. Today, Monday February 7th, staff again ran showers, knowing they were never cleaned or sanitized. When addressed to an officer, he said, 'I aint cleaning no showers!'"

"With 100⁺ inmates in B2, using 9 available shower cells, and over the last 3 shower runs, this means each available shower was used at least 30 times, with not one drop of chemicals used to clean or disinfect. Staff clearly knows this, but refuses to take steps to ensure sanitary showers for inmates.

In light of the CDC announcements played at least 3 times a day on sanitation, in light of apparent 8th Amendment violations concerning 'safe and humane' conditions like *Womble vs Christmas* (10th Cir. 2019) (denial of clean showers) and *Fountain vs Rupert* (5th Cir. 2022) (unsanitary conditions), in light of rights to sanitation based on the Mandela Rules and ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), and in light of Complex Warden D. Gilbert's own words, as per memo, 'It is extremely important that you maintain a HIGH LEVEL of sanitation...' why then has no staff member even attempted to allow us clean and sanitary showers - especially during the COVID-19 pandemic? A lockdown does not disqualify us from sanitary showers".

Most of what I wrote is kinda self-explanatory; because of two gang members being killed in a Texas federal prison, the BOP feared repercussions, and put all federal prisons on lockdown. That included us here at USP Tucson

But the problem (amongst many) here is that when we go on lockdown, staff goes in punitive and apathetic status; we've been fed trays with no sporks, the milk has been bad, or we didn't get any at all, and the showers were horrid,

Imagine going into a shower, after 29 other guys have already used it, and not once was it ever →

cleaned. This was what staff was forcing us to do. On Monday, February 7th, as I was going to the shower, I asked the CO (Correctional Officer) if anybody was going to clean it... after all, it has been a while week.

The CO said he didn't know, since under this lockdown, no inmate is allowed out of their cell... well, last week they took at least FOUR inmates to go to Medical, and one other guy was brought in from the SHU (Special Housing Unit)... and well, we're out the cell for showers. So, why not get a couple of inmates to clean the showers, or get the CO's to do it. By default, it is their responsibility.

"I ain't cleanin' no showers!" the CO said,

"Well, how are we supposed to take showers in filthy shower cells? What's the point of taking a shower if all the showers are filthy?"

He didn't have an answer for that. Yet they went and found a pump-spray chemical container, and set it out by the lower-tier showers; a perfect match for the pump-spray chemical container on the upper-tier, the one that's been sitting there unused all week.

Nobody's trying to help us.

It's really troubling when staff have clear objectives, in how to treat people, but take the lowest end of the road to ignore humane treatment. They are careful in protocols that are punitive, but careless in protocols involving human decency. I rarely write grievances, because I know the prison will ignore them, or "lose" them (which is illegal). But, I had to create a paper trail, to fight for these guys here.

Simply put, we deserve humane treatment - and clean showers. So, I wrote the BP, and immediately planned to use another tactic: as long as BPs are under the prison, it won't get properly addressed; they'll cover it up or throw it away, or delay the process so that you can't properly file. So, I have to create an essay - like this one - and share it with as many people as I can, to force staff to do the right thing.

Sooner or later, I'll write on the follow-up of the BP; whether WSP Tuyen tried to answer it, destroy it, or retaliate against me, we'll see.

But, it's the risk one has to take when fighting for our humanity.

We simply deserve better than this.

Note: As of 2/17/2022, there still has been no response to the BP...