

# Abuses of Discretion

by Jeremy Pinson

Prison officials are afforded broad discretion by Congress and the Judiciary with the expectation it will be used in furtherance of security interests. Recently ADX Florence Associate Warden D.W. Stamper and SIS Technician Michelle Bond rejected a news article entitled "The Gray Box" which had been published in the online magazine Doit Society Reports. The reason given was "It discusses incarcerated persons" but of course the real reason was I had been quoted about life inside ADX Florence where inmates are housed in indefinite solitary confinement.

In another abuse of discretion Unit Manager Patricia Rangel has denied visitation privileges to Susan Greene a Pulitzer nominee currently working on a grant for The Nation and The Fund For Investigative Journalism. One would think that prison officials would want the press to be able to come and see me to vindicate their practices in the public forum. But because their practices are simply indefensible their choice is to ban the media from seeing me and ban me from seeing what the media says about me.

These are just 2 examples of how ADX Florence officials abuse their powers because their greatest fear is that the public will learn here are housed many regular people whose only offense is to have

exercised their right to speech to speak against the Government. Prohibitions on accessing the press and censorship are practices one would expect in countries like China, Syria or Iran not the United States. The basic things that make our country great are tarnished by the Orwellian abuses of power perpetrated by people like Michelle Bond, Patricia Rangel and DW Stamper. An assault on free speech by classifying it as a "security" threat offends the basic principles our founding fathers built this country upon. Some may believe it is not so serious since it is prison inmates but what about Bradley Manning, Julian Assange, Ellsworth and others whom the Government has used "security" to silence dissent? What about the 6 Whistleblowers being prosecuted by the Government for exposing corruption? Americans should care because as the old saying about Nazi Germany goes, "When they came for the Gypsies I did nothing because I wasn't a Gypsy, When they came for the Jews I did nothing because I wasn't a Jew, When they came for me there was no one to help me either." Though this butchers a classic work my point is when you excuse inaction in the face of injustice on the belief it is okay since its being done to an unpopular group (i.e., inmates) you are complicit in that injustice. Injustice is like a cancer, it spreads from what it devours. Censorship is the highest form of injustice.