

THE DANGERS OF WEARING "BEACH SHOES"

by Timothy J. Muise

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Prison can be a dangerous place. Most of the violence I have seen over the course of the past 15 years can be attributed to situations "created" by the prison. Lock men in a unit with no positive activity opportunities and eventually the pressure cooker overboils. No one who "exists" in here (because no one really lives in prison) is surprised. The Boston Herald will write a story about "killer cons" or "sex change operations" and do their best to incite the animus of the public. If the public knew the level of incompetence that exists amongst prison officials they would really get their dander up. Failed negligent operating procedures endanger the public. But it can't be all that dangerous in here as this seems to be the new "French Riviera" to some. Let me explain.

One of our assistant wardens here, a five foot nothing, 165 pound, a bit long-in-the-tooth, woman, walks around this prison, unescorted, wearing "slip-on beach shoes". These K-Mart specials are the same that trod the piping hot sands of Gloucester's Good Harbor Beach. They are the same podiac surf combers that high school girls wear to the lake for a keg party. This diminutive warden roams this mens prison freely, not with the usual jackboot of the oppressor, but with a rubber soul flip-flop like she is seeking the Beach Boy's endless summer. Let the guard's union tell it and this place is like an ongoing attack on Pearl Harbor, but from the footwear of the warden I don't think she sees too many bombs falling.

Now this warden "patrols" the sands here looking for the scourge of clotheslines. You see the laundry here ruins your clothes. One wash in the prison laundry and your whites are a nice shade of dog turd brown. Now this color may have been popular when Jim Brown was rushing for Cleveland, but myself I'd rather keep my whites white. In order to avoid the ruin of ones wardrobe you must wash your stuff in the shower or in the sink. Most of us live in two (2) man cells that are designed for only one man. (This craphole - "ShirleyWorld" - operates at 140% of capacity) You cannot have stinky laundry laying around as it causes a "safety" issue. Men will fight over much less in prison, but if you had to sleep in a closet size cell with someone else's ripe gym clothes I don't think you would go for it either. So we do what is rationale - we wash them. After washing we make small clothes lines out of shoelaces and dry them. Not a big deal, but this "Gidget" of correctional surfing will order your breach of security laundry day shut down faster than Moondoggy would hang ten in a rip curl. The hell with rehabilitation. We must scrub out laundry felons! That will surely enhance the public safety. Her shoes will at least be appropriate for the Ship Of Fools she embarks on each day.

Myself I'm going to try to stay off the beach. I will hang my laundry in protest of the endless summer. I will break her surfboard, drain her sunblock, and poke holes in her parisol with my pen. Like Belushi said in the classic film Animal House, "Did we give up when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor? Hell No!", and I will not give up reporting the madness. This puts a whole new spin on political "flip-flopping".

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