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JANUARY 28, 2014
TUESDAY PM.

RE: RESPONSE FOR 7e8c (POST).

GREETINGS LT,

YES THEY ARE SLOWLY HAVING HEARINGS IN SACRAMENTO AND THEY ARE SLOWLY MAKING CHANGES, THE NEXT HEARING IS IN THE FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY I BELIEVE. ONE OF THE LADIES WHO ATTENDS THE HEARINGS JUST WROTE ME INFORMING ME OF THAT.

TRUE, THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION IS HARD PRESSED TO IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE THE (SDP) STEP DOWN PROGRAM. THEY KNOW ITS THEIR BEST WAY TO CONTROL PRISONERS AND THE VIOLENCE. I CAN TELL YOU RIGHT NOW THEY ARE NOT GOING TO ABANDON THAT GOAL, THEY MAY MODIFY OR CHANGE A FEW MINOR THINGS, WHICH THEY HAVE ALREADY DONE IN FACT. SUCH AS GETTING RID OF THE CONTRACT WE MUST SIGN. THAT WE GIVE OUR WORD WE WILL DO WHATEVER THEY WANT US TO DO.

SEE I WOULD NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH IT PERSONALLY, IF WE HAD PEOPLE IN THE ADMINISTRATION THAT WE COULD TRUST, WHOSE WORD WE COULD RELY ON. BUT ITS JUST NOT LIKE THAT. AND MAYBE SOME INMATES BELIEVE GUARDS, BUT I DON'T.

YES, THEY ARE GOING TO MAKE CHANGES, ALREADY THEY HAVE CHANGED THE CANTEEN ITEMS WE CAN NOW HAVE, BUT ITS NOT A PRIVILEGE TO US, ITS WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE HAD TWENTY YEARS AGO.

THEY JUST TOOK EVERYTHING FROM US UPON ARRIVING AT PBS P (SHU). SO THEY COULD MAKE US SWEAT, HURT, STARVE, FREEZE, AND SUFFER, DRIVING MANY TO GO INSANE, OTHERS COULDN'T TAKE IT SO THEY BECAME INFORMANTS.

TELL YOU LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH EASIER BACK HERE HAD WE HAD ALL THIS 20 YEARS AGO.

I'VE BEEN IN SOME PRETTY HARSH SEGREGATION UNITS IN MY 30+ YEARS IN PRISON. WORSE THEN THIS PLACE IN FACT. WHICH IS WHY IT DOESN'T AFFECT

II.

ME AS MUCH AS IT DOES OTHERS. THE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO CLAIM THIS IS NOT SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. HELL, BEING KEPT IN A DAMN GARAGE FOR TWENTY YEARS, IS KIND OF WHAT HAS BEEN DONE TO US. THEY DON'T REALIZE THAT THEY TOOK THOUSANDS OF INMATES AND BURIED THEM. I THINK THAT WILL QUALIFY AS BEING IN SOLITARY, THERE'S JUST A HELL OF A LOT OF US IN THE SAME HOLE.

TRUE, THE VOICES ACROSS THE GLOBE ARE BEING HEARD. AND CALIFORNIA KNOWN FOR HAVING THICK SKINS, AND DEATH TO OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE HAS FINALLY BEGAN TO LISTEN. BUT IT'S NOT EASY FOR THEM. THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE IT UP JUST YET. AND THIS STEP DOWN PROGRAM IS THEIR WAY OF DOING THAT. . . .

OKAY CHANGING SUBJECTS,

ON THE VIOLENCE IN CALIFORNIA PRISONS, YES I HAVE HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT, I WAS INVOLVED IN A LOT OF IT MYSELF. AND IT'S WHY I ENDED UP IN THE SHU. IN THE EARLY YEARS I NEVER THOUGHT MUCH ABOUT REDUCING IT, AND I'M SURE A LOT OF OTHERS DIDN'T EITHER, INSTEAD WE WERE CONSTANTLY THINKING ABOUT RETALIATION, I HAVE SPOKE WITH INMATES I KNOW FROM MY TEENAGE YEARS, WE WERE FRIENDS ONCE UPON A TIME. BUT LATER BECAME ENEMIES IN PRISON, AND NOW THAT WE ARE OLDER WE REALIZE THAT WE'VE BEEN IN SHU'S OVER HALF OUR LIVES ALREADY, A LOT OF OUR FRIENDS HAVE DIED, AND MANY MORE ARE OLD AND SICK. FIGHTING OVER THINGS THAT HAPPENED MORE THEN 40-50 YEARS AGO. MOST OF THESE YOUNGER GUYS DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY THEY HATE THESE OTHER GUYS. ONLY THAT THEY ARE RIVAL GANG MEMBERS. WE COME TO PRISON AND FIND THAT ALL RACES ARE SEPARATED, AND WITHIN EACH RACE THERE ARE PRISON GANGS, PEOPLE ARE CAUGHT UP IN THE VIOLENCE BECAUSE THEY ARE FRIENDS OR FROM THE SAME CITY AS OTHERS. OTHERS GET CAUGHT UP IN A RACIAL ISSUE. AND BEFORE THEY KNOW IT THEY ARE LABELED AS A GANG MEMBER EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT. BUT NOW THEY ARE ISOLATED WITH THEIR FRIENDS AND IT GOES ON AND ON, AND YEARS AND YEARS PASS. OTHER RIVAL GANGS TRY TO ASSAULT THEM AND THEY MUST DEFEND THEMSELVES.

III.

THIS CONTINUES TO BE A CYCLE UNTIL ONE DAY THEY DECIDE THEY ARE STUCK AND MAY AS WELL JOIN THE GANG. EVEN THOUGH THEY REALLY DON'T WANT TO. A LOT OF PRISON INMATES GROW UP IN YOUTH CAMPS (C.Y.A.) AND JUVENILE HALLS. THEY BEGIN THEIR FIRST INTRODUCTION TO GANG LIFE THERE. THAT'S HOW I LEARNED IT AND BECAME A GANG MEMBER AT 11 YEARS OLD. THERE WAS A MANDATORY GANG CODE AND YOU FALL IN LINE AND FOLLOW THE RULES OR YOU'RE A CASTOUT AND A TARGET OF ASSAULT. THERE WAS A LOT OF HONOR IN BEING A PART OF THIS. PLUS IT WAS A LOT OF FUN I THOUGHT AT THE TIME. I LIKED THE MOTTO "ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE". AND YOUR STRENGTH WAS TESTED ALMOST DAILY. SO YOUR COURAGE WAS AS IMPORTANT AS YOUR HONOR. BUT IT GOT MORE SERIOUS AS WE GOT OLDER, FROM FIGHTING IT TURNED TO STABBING AND KILLING PEOPLE. BEING A GANG MEMBER IS NO JOKE. I CAN'T COUNT HOW MANY HUNDREDS OR EVEN THOUSANDS WHO COULDN'T MAKE THE CUT. MANY THOUGHT IT WAS EASY AND GOT THE SHOCK OF THEIR LIVES. TODAY THERE ARE TEN TIMES MORE EX-GANG MEMBERS IN PROTECTED CUSTODY THAN ACTIVE MEMBERS. WHEN I WENT TO CORCORAN STATE PRISON SHU DURING THE HUNGER STRIKE ME AND ABOUT 17 OTHER PBSP-SHU INMATES WERE TAKEN TO A PRISON. THE NEXT MORNING I WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL AND I SAW A LOT OF INMATES. ONE GUY CALLED OUT TO ME. AND I ASKED HIM HIS NAME. WHEN HE DIDN'T ANSWER THE GUARD TOLD ME. THESE ARE ALL P.C. INMATES. AND I SAID ALL OF THEM. AND HE SAID YES. I HAVE NEVER SEEN NOR HEARD OF SUCH A THING. THEY HAVE ENTIRE PRISONS NOW THAT ARE EX-GANG MEMBERS. PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT MAKE IT AS GANG MEMBERS. I SAW A LOT OF YOUNG HEALTHY GUYS AND I THOUGHT MAN THESE SORRY INDIVIDUALS COULDN'T HOLD MY JOCK STRAP, THEY ARE A DISGRACE. BUT I BELIEVE THAT IT HAS TO DO WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AND EDUCATION THAT THEY GOT AS THEY GREW UP. GANG LIFE IS NOT AN EASY ONE, MOST START OFF ON THE OUTSIDE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD STREET GANG, WHICH IS THE STARTING POINT, BUT IT'S AFTER THEY ARE FIRST INCARCERATED THAT IS GOING TO DETERMINE WHICH WAY THEY WILL GO FROM THERE. SEE SOME WILL HATE BEING AWAY FROM HOME, LOCKED UP IN A CELL, MARCHING TO THE CHOW HALL, SITTING IN A CELL ALL DAY. ONLY OUT FOR AN HOUR OR TWO TWICE A DAY AND SHOWERS. SO SOME WILL NEVER GO BACK. BUT THEN THERE'S THE OTHERS, THE ONES THAT WILL END UP IN PRISON ONE DAY. THEY FIT IN WITH THE ROUTINE AND FIND IT MORE LIKE

II.

III

AN ADVENTURE, THEY MAKE MORE FRIENDS IN THERE, AND DECIDE TO KEEP HANGING OUT WITH OTHER DELINQUENTS, A PARENT SHOULD LOOK FOR THIS EARLY. IF YOUR CHILD IS ENJOYING HIS STAY IN JUVENILE, OR THINKS IT'S FUN TO BE SITTING IN THE BACK OF A POLICE CAR, YOU NEED TO SERIOUSLY SEEK HELP FOR HIM OR HER. IF YOU DON'T TRY TO INTERVENE EARLY, IT MAY BE TOO LATE BY THE TIME YOU RECOGNIZE THERE'S A PROBLEM. REGRETS, YES I HAVE MANY REGRETS, I WAS ONE OF THOSE WHO LIKED JUVENILE, I LIKED C.Y.A. AND I LIKED PRISON, BUT REMEMBER I WAS JUST A KID. I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING AT ALL. I HATED SCHOOL, IN FACT I STARTED BY CUTTING SCHOOL, WHICH LEAD TO SHOP LIFTING AND DRINKING AND JUST KEPT ESCALATING. BUT BEING YOUNG I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD BE, OR WHERE I'D END UP. I WAS HAVING TOO MUCH FUN. THEN ONE DAY I WAS TOLD MY MOTHER HAD A STROKE, THEN ANOTHER, THEN SHE BEGAN GETTING SICK. AND IT WAS THEN I BEGAN TO THINK AT NIGHT, MAN I'M PROBABLY NEVER EVER GOING TO SEE HER AGAIN. THEN I THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING I'VE LOST AND GIVEN UP IN MY LIFE TIME. FOR THIS AND I LOOKED AROUND IN MY CELL, REGRETS, I COULD WRITE A BOOK ON MY LIFE'S REGRETS, I'VE HAD 30 YEARS OF THEM, MY ENTIRE YOUTH HAS PASSED BEHIND THE WALLS, AND NOW MY ADULTHOOD IS QUICKLY PASSING ME BY AND I'M STILL IN PRISON. IF I COULD DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN IF I HAD THE CHANCE TO LIVE MY LIFE OVER WOULD I DO IT DIFFERENT THIS TIME, I WOULD DO IT DIFFERENT FOR SURE.

I KNOW THAT TODAY (BEGINNING FROM THE 1980'S FORWARD) GANG ACTIVITY HAS BEEN A BIG SOURCE OF MEDIA ATTENTION, AND I GUESS RIGHTLY SO. BUT BELIEVE IT OR NOT THERE ARE A LOT OF GOOD THINGS ABOUT GANG LIFE TOO. FOR INSTANCE ALMOST ALL GANGS HAVE CODES THAT PROHIBIT RAPE OR MOLESTATION OF ANY TYPE. WE ARE TAUGHT THAT AT A VERY YOUNG AGE, AND WERE TOLD ITS A DEATH SENTENCE TO VIOLATE THAT CODE. BEING A RAPIST/MOLESTOR IS THE WORSE THING A GANG MEMBER COULD DO. HE MAY AS WELL HAVE LEPRACY. NORMALLY A GANG MEMBER ONLY ASSAULTS RIVAL GANG MEMBERS. BUT THEY'RE CRIMINALS, THEY ROB AND STEAL, MONEY HAS TO COME FROM SOMEWHERE, AND THIS AFFECTS INNOCENT PEOPLE. AND OF COURSE THERE ARE ROGUE MEMBERS WHO DO THINGS THEY SHOULDN'T. BUT MOST GANGS HAVE THEIR OWN DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR VIOLATORS. IT IS VERY SERIOUS. ALL PEOPLE WHO RAPE AND MOLEST KIDS, ARE ALL GANG'S TARGETS, THEY ARE GONNA BE DEALT WITH BY

4.

GANG MEMBERS HAVE BEEN AROUND SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD. THEY ARE JUST MORE SOPHISTICATED TODAY. BEING PART OF ONE IS LIKE BEING PART OF A FAMILY. IN SOME PARTS OF THE WORLD AND IN U.S. KIDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN GANGS BUT NOT ACTUALLY FORCED.

MANY KIDS AND YOUNG ADULTS JOIN GANGS BECAUSE THEY LIKE THE LIFESTYLE, AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE GANG MEMBERS, OR THEIR RELATIVES, BUT NOT JOIN OUT OF NECESSITY. THEY MUST DEFEND THEMSELVES FROM OTHER GANGS.

I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO DISCOURAGE NEW GANG MEMBERS, (ABOUT MY THOUGHTS AND WHAT I WOULD SAY TO A 15 YR OLD ABOUT MAKING CHOICES). I WOULD TELL HIM OR HER, ABOUT A YOUNG FRIEND OF MINE NAMED RODNEY, HE WAS 15 YRS OLD WHEN I FIRST MET HIM. I WAS 17 YRS OLD. HE TOLD ME HE'S HEARD A LOT OF ME AND WANTS TO BE JUST LIKE ME. HE FOLLOWED IN MY STEPS I RAN INTO HIM AGAIN IN PRISON AND AGAIN HE USED TO FOLLOW ME AROUND, HE WAS A GOOD FRIEND AND HAD A LOT OF COURAGE, I LOVED HIM LIKE A YOUNGER BROTHER, WE USED TO TRAIN TOGETHER. BUT THEN I WAS TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER PRISON AND LATER HEARD THAT HE WAS KILLED. THAT WAS IN 1977 AND I ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM. GANG LIFE IS NOT AN EASY LIFE, (IT'S A DOG EAT DOG WORLD) YOU MUST BE PREPARED TO DO WHATEVER TO SURVIVE, AND NOT EVERY ONE IS CUT OUT FOR IT, AT 15 YRS. OLD YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOUR CHOICE WILL GET YOU AT THE END OF THE DAY, LIFE OR DEATH, AT THAT AGE YOU THINK YOU KNOW IT ALL, YOU DON'T LISTEN TO YOUR PARENTS BECAUSE YOU KNOW BEST. YOU FEEL INVINCIBLE. YOU CAN DO ANYTHING, BUT IN REALITY YOU DON'T KNOW SQUAT, AND IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THE CROSS HAIRS OF A REAL GANG MEMBER, ONE WHO WILL TAKE YOUR LIFE AND THEN EAT THE LUNCH YOU JUST BOUGHT AT MCDONALD'S. GANG MEMBERS ARE ON THE PROWL AND LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO MIGHT BE A RIVAL. IT'S TRUE THEY MAKE MISTAKES SOMETIMES AND ASSAULT PEOPLE FOR WEARING THE WRONG COLOR JACKET OR TENNIS SHOES.

AT 15 YRS. OLD YOU ARE BEGINNING TO SPREAD YOUR WINGS. YOU SEE THE ATTENTION YOUNG GANG MEMBERS RECEIVE, AND THINK YOU CAN IMPRESS A CERTAIN GIRL YOU LIKE BY HANGING OUT WITH GANG MEMBERS. OR MAYBE JUST WANT TO BE PART OF THE IN-CROWD AT SCHOOL THE COOL CROWD. THEN YOU START DRINKING BEER AND WINE, SMOKING CIGARETTES AND WEED, BECAUSE EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING IT, AND SO FAR IT'S BEEN NOTHING BUT FUN.

VI.

THEN YOU START STAYING OUT LATE AT NIGHT, MISSING SCHOOL, YOU GOT YOU A GIRLFRIEND NOW. MAYBE A FEW GIRLFRIENDS. THEN YOU START EXPERIMENTING WITH OTHER DRUGS COCAINE, CRACK, METH, HEROIN. AND THIS IS WHEN THINGS START TO GET BAD, BECAUSE NOW YOUR FRIENDS DON'T GIVE IT TO YOU. THE LOCAL DEALER WILL GIVE YOU A FREE HIGH TO GET YOU STARTED, HE KNOWS THAT YOU ARE GOING TO BE A STEADY CUSTOMER SOON. NONE OF YOUR FRIENDS HAVE TRIED TO DISCOURAGE YOU. THEY ARE IN IT FOR THE FREE RIDE, THEN YOU NEED MONEY, SO YOU START STEALING, FIRST FROM YOUR RELATIVES THEN FROM YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS AND FINALLY YOU STEAL FROM OTHERS. NOW YOUR PROBLEMS ARE ABOUT TO GET WORSE BECAUSE YOU'RE IN THE JUVENILE SYSTEM. BUT YOU STILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY HERE. YOU NEED TO LISTEN TO REASON, NOT FRIENDS OR THAT VOICE IN YOUR HEAD TELLING YOU TO GET HIGH. TALK TO A COUNSELOR AT SCHOOL OR IN JUVENILE. I HAD A FRIEND NAMED ROBERT HE WAS ALWAYS COMING AROUND US WANTING TO JUST HANG OUT. HE HAD MARRIED A GIRL NAMED BERTHA AND THEY HAD A BABY. ONE DAY HE ASKED TO GET HIGH WITH US, WE EVENTUALLY GAVE HIM HEROIN, I WISH WE HADN'T BECAUSE A FEW DAYS LATER HE OVERDOSED AND DIED. BERTHA HATED US, AND BLAMED US FOR IT. BUT ROBERT KEPT BUGGING US TO GET HIGH, AND I TOLD HIM NEVER TO DO IT ALONE. IF HE WAS WITH SOMEONE HE WOULD NOT OF DIED. BUT THE TRUTH IS WE SHOULD NEVER OF GAVE HIM ANY IN THE FIRST PLACE. BEING YOUNG IS BOTH A BLESSING AND A CURSE, ALMOST ALL TEENAGERS GET CAUGHT UP IN THINGS THEY NEVER TELL THEIR PARENTS, SOME ARE LUCKY AND END UP IN PRISON LIKE ME (YOU THINK NOT SO LUCKY, BUT I AM ALIVE A LOT OF MY FRIENDS WEREN'T SO FORTUNATE). IF I HAD A SON OR DAUGHTER BETWEEN 12 AND 16 YRS OLD I WOULD BE VERY WORRIED ABOUT THEM. ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE AVOIDING ME MORE AND MORE. I WOULD TALK TO THEM AND TEACH THEM ON HOW TO HANDLE THE SITUATIONS THAT I BLINDLY HAD TO EXPERIENCE, TO KEEP THEM ALIVE IS MY FIRST PRIORITY. MAKE MISTAKES IF YOU MUST, BE DUMB IF YOU LIKE, BUT KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH YOUR STUPIDITY SHOULD IT GO WRONG, THERE IS NO COMING BACK FROM DEATH, ALL THAT CRAP YOU SEE ON T.V. OR VIDEOS IS ALL HYPE, A GUNSHOT OR KNIFE WOUND CAN KILL YOU. AN OVERDOSE OF DRUGS CAN KILL YOU. THEN THERE ARE THE MIND ALTERING DRUGS, METH, P.C.P., LSD, GLUE, PAINT, AND MORE THAT CAN TWIST YOUR MIND UPSIDE DOWN. I WOULD NEVER TAKE NO CRAP LIKE THAT. YOUR CHOICES CAN BE CAREFULLY THOUGHT OUT ENTIRE LIFE BUT DON'T BE A DAMNED FET!

VII

A 15 YEAR OLD COULD BEGIN TO IMAGINE THE LIFE HE MAY LEAD IF HE CONTINUES TO REBEL AND TEST HIS LUCK DOWN THE BLURRED PATH OF A REBELLIOUS YOUTH. HIGH ON ADRENALIN OR HIGH ON DRUGS, EVERYTHING AT THAT AGE SEEMS MORE ADVENTUROUS THEN THREATENING. I KNOW I'VE BEEN THERE. I BEGAN MY REBELLION AT AGE 12 AND NEVER LOOKED BACK, I WAS CONVICTED OF MURDER, AND SUSPECTED IN SEVERAL OTHERS, I WAS ACCUSED OF KILLING THREE RAPISTS AND A DRUG DEALER. AND GIVEN A LIFE SENTENCE. IT DIDN'T END THERE, WHEN I ARRIVED IN PRISON I ASSAULTED A LOT OF RIVAL GANG MEMBERS, AND GUARDS, IF I COULD HAVE KNOWN THAT I WOULD BE SPENDING ALL MY YOUNG LIFE IN PRISON, YOU COULD BET I WOULD OF CHOSE A DIFFERENT PATH. IF I WAS ASKED WHAT I MISS THE MOST, IT WOULD BE THE SOFT TOUCH OF A WOMAN. I WAS BEING EXAMINED BY A NURSE YEARS AGO, SHE WAS PLACING WIRES ON DIFFERENT POINTS OF MY BODY AND SHE LIFTED UP MY SHIRT, I WAS OKAY UP TO THEN, BUT WHEN SHE TOUCHED ME RIGHT BELOW THE WAIST BAND I BEGAN TO CONVULSE. I COULDN'T HELP IT, SHE LOOKED AT ME FOR A MINUTE. I THINK SHE UNDERSTOOD IT HAD BEEN SO LONG SINCE A WOMAN TOUCHED ME LIKE THAT AND ANYWHERE NEAR MY WAIST.

I ALWAYS TELL YOUNGSTERS WHY WOULD ANY ONE WANT TO SPEND THEIR LIVES LIKE THIS, MOST PRISONERS DON'T MAKE IT PAST 7 YEARS BACK HERE, FOR EACH ONE OF US THAT HAVE BEEN IN SHU 20 YEARS AND MORE, THERE ARE 50 THAT RAN OUT THE BACK DOOR, BROKEN DOWN, WISHING TO BE ANYWHERE BUT HERE.

WHEN I WAS A TEENAGER MY DREAMS WERE NOT OF A LIFETIME IN PRISON, I WANTED TO GO INTO THE MILITARY. THE MARINES, AND IF I COULD START OVER AGAIN THATS WHERE I WOULD BE. IN SOME WAYS THE PRISON ROUTINE IS SIMILAR TO THE MILITARY, OR MAYBE MILITARY PRISON.

IN ORDER TO KEEP FROM GOING INSANE, I TRY NOT TO THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT THE OUTSIDE WORLD. ESPECIALLY WOMEN. BUT SOMETIMES A VERY PRETTY FEMALE COMES AROUND AND RUINS THAT FOR ME. I EXERCISE A LOT SO I DON'T HAVE TIME TO THINK ABOUT MUCH AND BY THE TIME I'M DONE I'M TOO TIRED.

THERE'S MANY WAYS OUT THERE TO SEEK ADVENTURE, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE MAKING YOUR WAY THROUGH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM. TRAVELING FROM PRISON TO PRISON, I REMEMBER

A POSTER IN THE COUNTY JAIL THAT MADE ME LAUGH, IT SAID IF YOUR LOOKING FOR A STEADY JOB, AND YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL, GO TO PRISON. I WAS SITTING IN A HOLDING CELL WHEN I FIRST WENT TO PRISON AS A 19 YR OLD KID. I SAW ANOTHER PRISONER COME IN AND WAS PLACED IN A CELL NEXT TO ME. I COULD NOT HELP BUT NOTICE THE WAY THAT HE WALKED. HE WALKED SLOWLY AND HIS ENTIRE BODY SHOOK, HIS ARMS WERE HELD OUT IN FRONT OF HIM. I ASKED HIM WHAT WAS WRONG. AND I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO TELL ME HE HAS (MS) BUT HE SAID HE WAS SHOT BY A GUARD IN A RACE RIOT, THE BULLET HIT HIM IN THE ARM BUT THE RIFLE THEY USED AND BULLETS WERE DESIGNED TO MAIM PEOPLE, THE BULLET TRAVELS DOWN OR UP THE BONE, THEY COULD SHOOT YOU IN THE LEG AND THE BULLET WILL COME OUT OF YOUR HEAD. HE COULD NOT USE HIS HANDS FOR ANYTHING, HE COULD BARELY WALK. HE WAS FROM A GANG OF AFRICAN AMERICANS THE CRIPS WHO I HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS IN. IMAGINE LIVING LIKE THAT FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. I THINK THAT ONE OF THE THINGS THAT HAS DRIVEN ME ALL THESE YEARS IS MY HATRED AND MY NEED FOR REVENGE. YOUNG KIDS OUT THERE COULDN'T IMAGINE A LIFE LIKE THIS. I HAVE NEVER TOLD MY FAMILY ABOUT MY LIFE, ALL THEY KNOW IS I'M IN PRISON, THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT GOES ON BEHIND THE WALLS. IT'S TRUE THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE HAS BROUGHT US ALL TOGETHER, TO WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS BUILDING BETTER PRISON ENVIRONMENTS. BUT ITS NOT AN EASY PROCESS, LOOK AT IT LIKE ISRAEL AND PALESTINE, ITS IN MANY WAYS LIKE THAT, NOTHING IS EVER COMPLETELY DONE, AND NOT EVERYONE IS IN TOTAL AGREEMENT, BUT PEOPLE ARE STILL WORKING AT IT, WE SEE THAT FINALLY PRISONERS ARE BEING RELEASED FROM THE SHU. SOME, LIKE ME ARE STILL CAUTIOUS AND SKEPTICAL, WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT TRUSTING OFFICIALS IS NEVER A GOOD THING. BECAUSE THEY CAN CHANGE THEIR MINDS OVER NIGHT. I'M STILL AN ADVENTURER SO WHATEVER IS DONE I'LL TAKE IT IN STRIDE, IT WILL BREAK UP THE SAME ROUTINES, I MAY SEE SOME PRETTY FEMALES, CORCORAN PRISON HAS A LOT OF PRETTY LADIES WORKING DOWN THERE, I LIKED IT DOWN THERE WHEN I PASSED THROUGH IT.