

SATURDAY 2/8/2014

" I WAITED PATIENTLY FOR THE LORD;
AND HE INCLINED UNTO ME, AND HEARD
MY CRY." PSALM 40

Hello world!

By now you've probably read the article in Time magazine (Feb. 10 issue) written by Mr. Mark Thompson. This journey began almost 2-years ago and as you can read, Mr. Thompson is a great writer. He was very patient and determined to share the facts and views that would help us as a nation. It is my hope also that this story will help others. That my fellow veterans will find the courage to reach out. That our families will have a better understanding and together we can protect other families from suffering the way we have suffered.

My greatest hope is that my own children will know in their own hearts, regardless of what others may say, that their father lived his life as a man of integrity. That when he failed, he got back

up, and he continued to fight for them, for others and for the better of our nation, our people, until God determines the day of my final breath.

I know, and expect there will be different opinions over this. And that is okay. God bless America!

I will be the first to tell you I was not the best Marine, but I am confident I put my whole heart into it. I am proud to have served with every generation's sons and daughters. In the early 80's, my generation, we fought the beginning stages of NW III in Beirut (Bervit), Lebanon, "The Root" to us who served there.

It became evident this would be a long battle when they suicide bombed our barracks. We fought with honor, and integrity, and cruel determined viciousness knowing that the eyes of our brothers from past wars would know and see that Marines are the same.

I was proud to serve with the next generation of Marines in the 90's Gulf War era who proved themselves to be of the same caliber. There are no regrets of my service post-9/11. Even though us

old farts jokingly called these young Marines, "The Pepsi Generation". Everyone seemed obsessed with video games and i-pods. But once again I could see that Marine fighting spirit demonstrated over and over again. It gives me great confidence that we are safe so long as Marines are on watch.

I hope that anyone who would share negative views about me (eg Top F.) would write to me personally. But whatever, more people know my true character and can judge for themselves. I've screwed up plenty and have probably condemned myself far worse than you will. I'd love to hear of your success, overcoming the knock downs you experienced?

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So what do I do now?

Perhaps I am to be the voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Over 10,000 military veteran, war related, suicides --

How many thousands once law-abiding citizens, war veterans like me are in prisons having lost everything?

Most of us look at suicide as the "easy" way out, or a "cowards" choice. And say things like, "it's a one way ticket to hell." Really? Or are we just too scared as a society to deal with the real problems that drive a person to such despair?

I personally understand...

There are so many accounts of veterans coming home from war and then harming their own family. That is a driving fear. If I lose control and harm my wife or my child... No... I cannot allow that scenario to unfold. I would rather end my own life than cause harm to someone I love, someone close to me. With care and treatment there is another way.

Anyway... I look forward to receiving your letters or comments, good or bad.

So today I watched the movie, "The Butler" with Forest Whitaker and Oprah among other famous actors. It's created some interesting conversations here among the prison populat-

ion that are so mixed between rich and poor, young and old, black, white and hispanic, criminally minded and integrity minded, freedom motivated and socialist motivated, pro-liberal, democrats or republicans, pot-smokers and non-pot smokers.

What really stood out to me was how similar the mindset is to work in "prison" now, as it was (or is) for black Americans to work in their own country. To wear "2-faces", to walk on eggshells every moment, to live in a sub-serviant position to morons that have power to literally destroy you, drive you to insanity or at the very least cause great daily suffering.

Sadly, what our nation is failing to see is that suffering does not inspire men in prison to become better citizens. It creates bitterness and anger. Prison by its nature is "suffering", but removing any incentives to "choose" to better yourself (eg school, job training, treatment) destroys hope at a better future as law-abiding citizens. We only survive because of a few staff members who really care about humanity.

We have a veterans group here, GrahamVets, but our current staff coordinator is due to retire in April. We do not have

any word on who will step up to keep our group active. It seems to us, inmates, that they, state, would rather see the group disbanded.

On the otherhand I would hope the state would support our veterans more!

Send more vets within the prison system here and permit v/A sponsored programs.

Add vets training, education programs.

Especially for mental health issues, like PTSD.

Establish job placement and housing assistance programs above and beyond the typical

state level prison sponsored methods which are already stretched to a breaking point.

So what if "veterans" are "different". We are different. We are among the most disciplined

and well-behaved, professionals within the prisons. Most all of us have served our

nation honorably. The "system" is so paranoid about inmates being "different".

It looks to me that our prisons are more like communist, socialist training centers. Even

the prison guards and staff are being "trained" to think like socialists, but they cannot

see it.

Until next time,

Wm P. Cully