

## STAFF APPRECIATION DAY

Wednesday

December 16, 2015

At about 10:30 this morning, we were placed on a lockdown, or what they call a "modified program." Usually, this sort of thing only occurs during some sort of emergency, like a riot or fire, but the reason given for today's lockdown was "staff appreciation day." Seriously? Staff appreciation day? Isn't this what a paycheck's for? And who's showing their appreciation? Fellow staff? Isn't this kind of like blowing your own horn right after failing miserably?

I've only been here for a few months, since the 22nd of May, but since that time, I've seen them lock us up at least twice so they could have a celebration. The last time, it was some sort of barbeque so they could raise money. Either way, what gets me isn't the fact that I'm locked up in my cell for most of the day. While this can certainly be frustrating, it's not the end of the world. No, what bothers me most is that these people make an insane amount of money, at taxpayers' expense, and then they lock everyone up, so they can party on the taxpayers' dime. At the same time they're doing this, they're preaching to me about things like ethics and rehabilitation, both of which are important issues, to be sure, but issues which have absolutely no meaning whatsoever when the people preaching about them are even more corrupt than I.

If you've never seen the inside of a prison beyond the visitation area, then let me explain that prisons are more than just warehouses for those who need to be separated from society. They're complete cities, in and of themselves, and they have everything needed to run a city. You have fire and police department, S.W.A.T. teams, post offices, even a hospital and judicial system, even if they are pretty much worthless and beyond redemption. All said and done, some prisons have around 1,000 people working inside during regularly scheduled business hours, with the least paid person making a minimum of \$30 an hour. Even if no one made more than that, and not taking any benefits into consideration, we're talking about paying them a combined total of \$30,000 an hour to throw a party, totalling approximately \$240,000 over the course of an 8-hour shift. Of course, considering that some of the people who work here make upwards of \$150 per hour, the actual cost for this party goes much higher. And this, during a time of budget crisis, when everyone else is being asked to continuously cut their spending.

All of that being said, I think the thing that gets me the most is seeing these people all gather around to congratulate themselves on a job well done when I know better than most that their job performance is well below average, even on their best day. And I can say this with factual certainty, in light of the overwhelming amount of evidence continuously presented in court, especially as of late.

To me, staff appreciation means absolutely nothing if it comes from your fellow staff. That would be like your mother buying herself a Mother's Day card on Mother's Day, or a birthday present for her birthday. Sure, it makes her feel good, but it completely lacks any and all meaning. If staff truly desire to be appreciated, then perhaps they should start doing their jobs right. As an added bonus, not only will their efforts truly be appreciated, the inmate population will stand a better chance of being rehabilitated, which is, in my opinion, far more important to everyone as a whole than some simple thank you.

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