

SHIRLEYWORLD UPDATES
"Let The Bullets Fly!"
Chapter LXXXVIII

by Timothy J. Muise

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- FREE SPEECH RULES AT SHIRLEYWORLD! SECOND MEETING WITH LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

On Friday, February 26, 2016, a selected Panel of Prisoners, selected by prisoner members of CURE-ARM, INC., met with members of the Legislative Harm Reduction and Drug Law Reform Caucus here at ShirleyWorld. The Free Speech warrior was fortunate enough to be organizer and MC for the event which was the second time the prisoners met with the caucus here at the prison; much to the chagrin of prison guards and suits. The words of our departed plump-in-therump Deputy Denied-Oh echo loudly in my head. She stated "This will never happen again!" after Free Speech Central had put together a presentation meeting back some time ago where prisoners gave critical speeches to members of the legislature. Since those now proven hollow words of Deputy Denied-Oh we have organized TWO meetings with legislators here at the prison which were unprecedented in the number of Senators, Representatives, and staff who attended. The best part of this whole campaign as far as the cause for free speech is concerned is that we totally left out any prison officials in the process. We did not go to the "fox" about the problem in the chicken coop. We cut Director of Mistreatment Lurking out of the equation as she has torpedoed far too many events with her excuses of "Oh, that rep could not make it." or "I spoke to them but they had other plans." As her Pinocchio Nose grows with rapid pace we "get the job done" without her. The "Super" "Rubber Stamp" Wry-On can't say "NO" when she gets the call from the legislators; she has to let them in, and then her staff can measure the boild of their blood when they find out "Tim Muise" is organizing the event. For decades here at ShirleyWorld they abusive guards and suits have chilled free speech and violated numerous civil rights. We are now exposing them and have a direct line to the State House to do so! We handed the legislators a list of names which consisted of the top offenders here. You can guess some of the names; Lt. Peckehead, Lt. McHardly, RO Woodhead, CO Scumlafia, etc., and we received a promise to keep them on the radar as dcoumented abusers. We also received a promise that the Caucus will be back. Most importantly we received assuarncce that members of our little "Free Speech" panel of prisoners will be brought into the State House to testify as "experts" on Criminal Justice measures. "Never about us, without us!" as Andrea James says! The guards here will never again be allowed to act with impunity. If Lt. Dick beats a handcuffed con we will be able to use our direct line to have him investigated. If Lt. Shameless acts the fool we can now shine a light on it. We have made a great advancement in prisoner rights here at ShirleyWorld and there is much more to come.

What follows are the "Meeting Minutes" from the latest February 26, 2016, meeting. Also are some documents which were turned over to the Caucus by the assembled group of Free Speech Warriors. The next phase of the effort, Phase III, is being worked on as I write and I will certainly keep you posted. The proverbial "They" said we could not do it, but we did! We are on our way to fully exposing the abuse of ShirleyWorld and the DOC state wide. Viva Free Speech! LONG LIVE THE FREE SPEECH WARRIORS!

More To Come...

On Friday February 26, 2016, Members of the Harm Reduction Drug Law Reform Caucus came to MCI Shirley to meet with a select panel of prisoners. State Representatives Swan, Tucker Barber, and Toomey along with staff from the offices of Senator Chang-Diaz, and State Representatives Sannicandro, Fox, Kahn, Heroux, Chan, and R. Hunt came to the prison to follow up on A prior meeting in October of 2015. This "Roundtable Discussion" was the Second Phase of a Three Phase process which will culminate with the panel of prisoners giving presentations at the State House before a full House.

CURE-ARM Director Tim Muise worked tirelessly with the offices of Swan, Sannicandro and Fox to get these two meetings to happen. The following is a brief description of the discussions that took place at this event:

Before the meeting commenced, Caucus members introduced themselves and explained why they came. Each prisoner on the panel followed by introducing themselves and gave a brief summary of what they spoke on in October. Topics ranged from the mistreatment of volunteers and visitors, voting rights for prisons and Veterans, using the Veterans administration hospital to care for the veterans in prison, and ended with a reminder of what rehabilitation is, according to Thurgood Marshall- "the quest for self-realization".

State Representative Paul Tucker of Salem, asked Tim Muise "what prompted your change and how will he continue that once you are out?" Tim explained that his transformation from being addicted to heroin to now being 12 years clean was completely attributed to his faith in God, "My past will not dictate my future," he said.

Representative Tucker then asked about reentry. Ken Seguin, Outreach Coordinator for CURE-ARM, spoke about the failure of the parole system and how it has failed many particularly Hung Truong. A man who served twenty years in prison on a Second Degree murder conviction before being released on parole. While on parole, and despite 108 positive reviews from his parole officer, Hung was returned to prison for taking cough syrup where he has remained for the last five years.

Representative Tucker asked Joe Labriola, Commander of the American Veterans In Prison, about medical treatment. Joe explained to him about his own medical problems and how he is suffering from injuries incurred in Vietnam. He explained how the Department of Correction (DOC) gave the low bid to a nonprofit organization called "Mass Partnership for Correctional Health Care" to manage the health care of the prison population. "I just want to be treated as a human being and not as a piece of metal," he said, "a situation that is compounded by an elderly population and due to a lack of parole and release."

Representative Tucker then asked about solitary confinement and the alternatives. Tim and Joe explained that we are not pollyanna's and that solitary is needed but only for the reasons stated in DOC policy.

Representative Tucker then asked Tim Cassidy, CURE-ARM Public Relations Director about the process going from maximum security to medium security prison? He also asked what an average day was like in a medium security prison compared to a maximum security prison.

Representative Tucker was also amazed that there was no vocational training here at the facility and wondered why not? Tim Muise told him that the only vocational training that is provided is the MASS COR sewing shop. "No one at this table," explained Tim, "has never heard of someone leaving the prison system and gone on to work as a tailor."

Representative Christine Barber of Somerville, asked about substance abuse and mental health treatment. Shawn Fisher, Director of CURE-ARM, informed her that mental health is limited to those who only have open mental health cases and are usually limited in what they can provide. "They are severely short staffed and the treatment is general and not specific to an individual's needs", he told her.

Representative Timothy Toomey of Cambridge, asked what can be done to address the idle prisoner population. Many things were addressed but Mike Skinner, Steering Committee Director for Bread & Water Prisoners, Inc., spoke of how we are warehoused with nothing to do all day. "As a result prisoners look for some kind of outlet which then turns into drinking, gambling and drug use. Without vocational training, and college education and programming this trend will continue".

Rebecca Miller of State Representative Sannicandro's office asked a question from the Representative about the pay scales for prisoners and how they are compensated for their work. She also asked about canteen prices. James Ware, and MCI Shirley maintenance professional and first degree lifer answered by explaining that many prisoners receive \$1 to \$2 dollars a day totaling \$5.00 - \$10.00 dollars a week for five days of work. The pay scales have been the same since 1983 while the prices in the canteen have increased by 390% percent.

"By today's canteen prices no prisoner can survive without the ongoing help family and friends from the outside: which we consider an unsanctioned tax upon our families". Inmates are also charged a \$3.00 co-pay for sick call slips which is the equivalent to a two (2) and three (3) day paycheck.

Mike Skinner then spoke about parole reform and how it has changed since the Dukakis era. "Prisoners going before the parole board are judged by our six part folder". He pleaded with the Representatives that the parole board should begin their evaluation of a prisoner years in advance. "Follow us around and speak to us. Do not assess us on a file folder," he said. He also spoke of how the parole board is retrying the cases of those going before the board and not basing their decisions on what the prisoner has accomplished since the conviction of his/her crime. Which is what the parole board is supposed to do including attacking those who testify on behalf of the prisoner. "Prisoners are turning down parole rather than facing a hopeless situation", he said.

Ken Seguin followed up by speaking of presumptive parole and how the parole board would be tasked with making parolees succeed on parole rather than looking for ways to violate them. With presumptive parole, parole is presumed and parole hearings are not turned into the retrying of a case.

Evans Auguste, Facilitator of Project Youth spoke about the Classification System the doc uses, and the Code F override. "Prisoners have the points to go to a minimum security but the DOC is not letting us go," he said. The policies of the DOC and the parole board are conflicting. It is counter intuitive logic.

Jamal Gooding, member of the African American Coalition Group (AACG), spoke of his proposal for "Skype for Life", a program that would modernize the DOC to impact all aspects of at risk youth: thus, ending the school to prison pipeline.

The meeting concluded with all nine panel members agreeing that Prison Legal Services (PLS) does not represent us or any other prisoner. They have never come to this prison and spoke to any of the informed prisoners on this panel about conditions of confinement. The meeting ended with a quote from Andrea James, "Never about us, without us".

CAUCUS MEMBER IN ATTENDANCE WAS:

State Representative Timothy Toomey, Jr. and his Legislative Aide Will Sutton.

State Representative Benjamin Swan, and his Legislative Aide.

State Representative Christine Barber and her Legislative Aide Clair Teylouni.

State Representative Paul Tucker.

Amanda Jenkins, Legislative Aide to State Representative Tackey Chan.

Mary Tuitt, Chief of Staff to State Representative Gloria Fox.

Rebecca Miller, Legislative Aide to State Representative Tom Sannicandro.

Legislative Aide for State Representative Kay Kahn.

Matt Liber, Legislative Aide to State Representative Randy Hunt.

Nicole Stevens, Legislative Aide to State Representative Paul Heroux.

PRISONER PANEL:

<u>Tim Muise</u>	<u>Joseph Labriola</u>	<u>Ken Seguin</u>
<u>Shawn Fisher</u>	<u>James Ware</u>	<u>Timothy Cassidy</u>
<u>Mike Skinner</u>	<u>Jamal Gooding</u>	<u>Evans Auguste</u>