

The recent killing of defrocked priest John Geoghan, here at the Souza-Baranowski Correctional Center, must be viewed as a tragedy by anyone with even the most minute amount of compassion for the ills of the human condition. Our civilized society has determined that the use of varying terms of freedom stripping incarceration are the most humane and effective way of punishing, and hopefully reforming, persons who commit even the most heinous of crimes. Mr. Geoghan was sentenced to a decade behind bars for the crimes of which he was convicted. The possibility of even more prison time was certainly a reality for him as he had been accused of many other offenses involving unrelated incidences, but ultimately his sentenced was transformed into a death sentence.

It's quite true that all the evidence points to the fact that Mr. Geoghan's demise was by the actions of a homophobic mentally ill prisoner who certainly needs to be held accountable for his direct actions, but the fact cannot be ignored that Mr. Geoghan's blood is not on the hands of Mr. Druce alone. Equally that blood stains the hands of the men who the citizens employ to safeguard him. The Department of Corrections, and it's agents, are responsible for the care, custody, and control of those in it's charge. This three "C" responsibility starts off with the duty to "care" for prisoners. The order of these responsibilities is not random. Care is first as we as a civilized society have decided that the care of our prisoners was of the utmost importance. The dire punishment of stripping a man's freedom is the ultimate punishment in this nation which holds freedom as it's most valued concept. There should be no further punishment inflicted during incarceration thus the placement of prisoners care at the top of the responsibility list. A greater duty exists when a prisoner is old, weak, sick or in some other manner has a diminished capacity to protect himself.



The guards under the employ of our Department of Corrections have <sup>88</sup> totally lost the concept of the scope of their duties. They promote an enviroment of hatred and further punishment for those in their charge to live, or in all reality survive in. Turning a blind eye to, encouraging and even participating in violent attacks are a daily occurance behind the veil of prison walls. Guards realize that the institutions where they work are closed, for the most part, to the attention of outsiders and this makes for their anything goes type of attitude. A guard defecating in a human beings cell is outrageous to someone outside of the prison world, but it is commonplace to those hidden behind the walls. The only time these outrageous abuses gain attention is when there is a death of a high profile prisoner. The Geoghan incident was just such a case. It's shameful to report that everyone in the system knew of Mr. Geoghan's daily torture at the hands of his keepers. Guards who are body builders and held black belts in the martial arts were bullying this frail man who was close to seventy years of age. No conscience, no remorse. They abused him and sat around thier guard station laughing about it. When he reported the abuse it escalated. When he arrived at Souza-Baranowski he was not about to put himself back in the spot light. The DOC reported that he had stated he was being treated fairly there, but the reality was he had learned from his experience at MCI Concord that reporting the abuses only put him in the spot light and caused the torture to escalate. Believe me when I tell you he was treated abusively here S.B.C.C.. A blind eye was turned to him and it ultimately cost him his life. Druce had spoke of "doing" him and the guards gave their approval. That is the truth of the situation. It may be hard to swallow but none-the-less it is fact.

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Every day here at S.B.C.C. guards pass along protected and confidential information to violent prisoners concerning the cases for which heinous felons are serving their sentences. This is done with the hopes of some sort of vigilante justice being doled out. What power these guards have bestowed upon themselves. It is now arrogantly apparent that they have given themselves the power to decide who lives and dies. They have made themselves equal with God. Such a scary state.

The abuse runs right up the chain of command. Guards, sergeants, and officers alike implement and encourage it. They actually openly discuss their plans to deliver torture to prisoners they determine to be worthy of it. This cannot be allowed to continue in such a manner. It seems the time may be at hand to address this serious and urgent situation.

In the wake of the sensationalism of the Geoghan killing our day late and dollar short Governor has appointed a committee to look into the matter. Willard Romney has the foxes investigating the killing in the chicked coup. The outcome of that investigation is pre-determined and you can bet that plenty of feathers will be found but no fox tracks. All the blame will be placed on the physical killer, who is already being given the excuse that he was an extremely disturbed satanist who was a difficulty to control, and that this man of low IQ and virtually no education devised such an ingenious plot that no guards could have possibly prevented it. The truth of the enormous role the guards played in this killing will be swept neatly under the carpet of secrecy and the men in blue will continue to play God. The truth will be twisted into a plea for more guards, officers, equipment and tax payer dollars.



Such a grand opportunity to wave the banner of understaffing while ~~88~~ in reality the guards are playing cards amongst themselves and napping for the better part of their shifts. We have 4000 guards to watch over about 10,000 prisoners here in Masaachusetts. Thats one guard for every 2.2 prisoners. Thats an outrageous ratio and far exceeds almost every state in the nation. There are so many guards that they have ample time to defecate in prisoners cells, spit in and otherwise taint the food of prisoners and sit around and concoct new and even more evil methods of torture upon the elderly, weak and frail. With no repercussions for their actions guards will continue to carry out their animalistic acts and the mind set that prisoner torture is the status quo in their duties will only become even more prevelant.

A major shake-up in the system is far overdue and my prayers are that it's time has come sparked by the Geoghan killing. One of the largest factors that recidivism rates are so high is that our prisoners are forced to live in the type of animalistic enviroment I have described and that enviroment is so counter-productive to any chance of a man securing rehabilitation. Prisoners emerge from such a hostile and socially cancerous enviroment so polluted that their chances of a successful transition back into society are slim to none. The public should be outraged at this. It's time to bring a new philosophy into the system that is condusive to rehabilitation and at a bare minimum offers prisoners a chance to turn their lives around. We can't afford, monetarily, morally or safety wise, to keep releasing men to our streets who come directly from such turmoil. Administrators need to be installed who use progressive methods of rehabilitation, not unlike the current and extremely successful systems in Sweden and Canada, which actually reap "correction" from corrections departments. Let's

hope the tragic Geoghan killing is the catalyst. I pray my fears are not realized and that in a few eeks or months this push for reform isn't under that prison rug swept away like the occurances of the past.

Dostrovsky said you could judge a society by the way it treats its prisoners. Our current society cannot possibly be judged in any type of favorable light until the sicknesses of our correctional system are cured.

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