

Supermax prisons

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Supermax Prisons The article, “ From Alcatraz to Marion to Florence - Control Unit Prisons in the United s” is a very enlightening piece of material about the history of supermax prison in the United States. It gives a description of the ongoing conditions at USP Marion. It provides information on the replacement of Marion to a control unit prison in Florence, Colorado. The article revealed that all over the US, a number of state prisons have mimicked the Marion.

The control unit prison’s defining features were enumerated to better understand these supermax prisons (Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML) , par 2). The first feature of a control unit prison is that prisoners are kept in solitary confinement in tiny cells and they do not have the privilege of congregate dining, exercise, religious services and there are no work opportunities (CEML, par 2). Control unit prisons do not have official policies regarding their restrictions. Furthermore, the punishments inflicted on the prisoners are made in the guise of administrative measures (CEML, par 2). Reading through the article, one cannot help but feel pity for the prisoners of these control unit prisons. One was not aware that there is a proliferation of human rights violation inside the control units. The cruelty and brutality of the physical as well as psychological tortures imposed on the prisoners are beyond one’s imagination. Aside from the abuse that the prisoners suffer from the prison guards, there is no intention of rehabilitation in these control units. What is even more surprising is that many prisons in several states in the US have emulated the inhuman conditions that have prevailed in the Marion prison. According to prison officials, the spread of the control units all over the US is due to three reasons. They claim that the control units contain the most violent prisoners who need to be separated from other prisons

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(CEML, par 40). They go on further to say that violence is reduced because the most violent person is isolated. Lastly, prison officials argue that security can be minimized at the other prisons because of the reduction of violence brought about by the absence of the worst prisoners (CEML, par 40).

As if the government was not satisfied with the ruthlessness in the Marion, it even created a replacement that boasts of tighter control for prisoners. The Florence prison is supposed to possess a “state of the art technology” with electronic doors, cameras and audio equipment (CEML, par 28). Human contact with prisoners will be placed at a minimum. What is even more alarming is that the area where the prison is located is “extensively radioactively contaminated” (CEML, par 30).

Another interesting view presented in the article is about the higher rate of incarceration among colored race as against the number of white men (CEML, par 55). This high percentage is attributed to the racism that exists in the criminal justice system (CEML, par 57).

One is really struck by the idea espoused by the author that “prisons do not reduce crime” (CEML, par 61). One is in agreement with the author that the supermax prisons violate prisoner’s rights. The prison system must be revised to put an end to the proliferation of oppression towards prisoners. It is a total disregard to the human dignity of the incarcerated individual.

Works Cited

Committee to End the Marion Lockdown . " From Alcatraz to Marion to Florence - Control unit prisons in the United States." 1992. people. umass.edu. 15 February 2012 .

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