

# Testimonies of Torture in New Jersey Prisons

## EVIDENCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

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A collection of testimonies from prisoners in New Jersey prisons, documenting uses of physical, chemical, and no-touch torture, among other human rights abuses.

**American Friends Service Committee**

Northeast Region

Healing Justice Program



Edited by:

Bonnie Kerness

Director, Prison Watch Program

89 Market Street, 6<sup>th</sup> floor

Newark, NJ 07102

(973) 643-3192

Editorial Assistant

Jessica Gonzalez

Intern, Prison Watch Program

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## INTRODUCTION

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker faith based organization that promotes lasting peace with justice, as a practical expression of faith in action. AFSC's interest in prison reform is strongly influenced by Quaker (Religious Society of Friends) activism addressing prison conditions as informed by the imprisonment of Friends for their beliefs and actions in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. AFSC has spoken out on behalf of prisoners whose voices are all too frequently silenced. Drawing on continuing spiritual insights and working with people of many backgrounds, we nurture the seeds of change and respect for human life that transform social relations and systems.

For over two decades, the Prison Watch Program of the American Friends Service Committee, located in Newark, NJ, has been collecting testimonies in the form of letters from prisoners across the United States. These letters document various human rights abuses in US prisons, including, but not limited to, physical, chemical, and no-touch torture at the local, state and federal levels. It is clear that the concepts of international human rights law need to find their way into the US law enforcement, judicial and prison systems. The United States has signed and ratified three important and relevant United Nations Conventions: *The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*; *the International Convention on The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination* and *the United Nations Convention against Torture*. The conditions and practices that the imprisoned in New Jersey reflect in this pamphlet clearly describe violations of these treaties.

In the Fall of 2014, Pope Francis was quoted widely as saying that maximum security prisons can be a form of torture since their "principal characteristic is none other than extreme isolation," which can lead to "psychic and physical sufferings such as paranoia, anxiety, depression, weight loss and significantly increase the chance of suicide. In November 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland, the UN Committee against Torture expressed grave concerns about the torture and deaths of US detainees overseas and prisoners held in U.S. prisons, jails, and juvenile detention facilities. The Committee reported that while noting that the State party has indicated there is "no systematic use of solitary confinement in the US", the Committee remains concerned about reports of the extensive use of solitary confinement and other forms of isolation in US prisons, jails and other detention centers for purposes of punishment, and discipline. Furthermore it is concerned about the use of solitary for indefinite periods of time, and its use against individuals and individuals with mental disabilities". Readers can access AFSC's Shadow Report containing relevant national testimony at <https://afsc.org/document/survivors-speak-prisoner-testimonies-torture-united-states-prisons-and-jails>

The recent acknowledged use of "brutal" methods of torture detailed in the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on the CIA's use of torture overseas is relevant to what people in New Jersey prisons are telling us. These past years have been full of complaints from prisoners and their families in New Jersey describing inhumane conditions including cold, filth, callous medical care, use of extended isolation often lasting years, devices of torture, harassment, brutality and racism. We have received vivid descriptions of and drawings of four and five point restraint hoods,

restraint belts, restraint beds, stun guns, stun grenades, and stun belts, spit hoods, tethers, and waist and leg chains. Many testify that “no touch torture” is the worst treatment inflicted on people. This psychological assault can include humiliation, sleep deprivation, sensory disorientation, extreme light, extreme dark, extreme cold or heat, extended isolation often lasting years, including other forms of situational placement, a systematic attack on all human stimuli.

New Jersey has a unique history in terms of the use of solitary confinement, in particular. In his 2003 book *Inside Out – Fifty Years Behind the Walls of New Jersey’s Trenton State Prison*, former guard, Harry Camisa says, “The guys singled out for the MCU (Editor’s note: Management Control Unit for long term isolated confinement) were viewed as potential troublemakers or political leaders who needed to be segregated to keep them from influencing the rest of the population. This was a new and controversial concept in New Jersey.” The unit indefinitely isolated activists and leaders from the prison’s general population, as it attempted to psychologically reshape their values by subjecting them to an extraordinary level of physical control and sensory deprivation.

New Jersey was a key state for people involved in political activities such as the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army. It is also a corridor state and often members of other political formations travelled through the state – many finding themselves imprisoned at Trenton State Prison. Relevant to the continuing use of the MCU was Executive Order 88, signed in 1984 by then-Governor Thomas Kean, which mandated that “any persons believed to be a member of a terrorist organization or other similar groups committed to violence, murder or mayhem as a means to achieve their purpose could be placed in the Management Control Unit pre-trial.” The AFSC, in cooperation with people held in the MCU, began the Control Unit Monitoring Project in 1987 which conducted ongoing observations of the unit via visits, telephone calls and letters. Students from many colleges and universities assisted in this effort. The effort resulted in an August 1991 article in the Trenton Times entitled “Modules or Cages? TSP Enclosures Stir Protest”; a 1992 Town Meeting and Silent Vigil held outside the prison; a 1992 article in the Bergen Record and another in the New Jersey Tribune and ultimately a 2010 New Jersey Network program called “Due Process: Solitary: Who and Why”. That Program continues to be shown throughout the country on Cable television stations.

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014, a Star Ledger headline read “Ex-Inmate Settles Lawsuit over Claim he was strapped in Chair.” The lawyer for the former prisoner called the occurrence “an instance of torture” describing seven officers entering the cell, spraying mace, punching, and kicking the downed prisoner, cuffing and shackling him and then strapping him in a restraint chair for 19 hours. In another well publicized and well documented occurrence of torture, a prisoner paid an officer to bring in a small video camera. Through the slit window in his isolation cell, the prisoner filmed for four months capturing senseless brutality and abuse. Readers with computer access can see a portion of that film if you Google “Sneak Peek”.

What follows in these pages are excerpts from the countless letters that the AFSC and Jean Ross, Esq. have received effectively providing witness that torture is not only used extensively, but actually condoned in New Jersey. We join with prisoners, their loved ones and activists on both sides of the walls throughout the state in saying, not in our name.

## **Acknowledgements**

This report would not have been possible but for the courageous individuals held in New Jersey prisons and jails who have risen above the specter of reprisal and brutal punishment to give witness to the abuses they and their peers endure throughout the prisons in our state. The support and assistance of American Friends Service Committee program staff were crucial in the development of this report. The generous contributions and assistance provided by Ojore Lutalo and Jean Ross, Esq. are deeply appreciated. Jean is an AFSC volunteer and pro bono attorney who has worked with people in prison and their loved ones in the community for over 13 years, on behalf of the People's Organization for Progress. Special thanks go to Jean for making these additional testimonies available for this report. Thank you also to Aliya Howard for her patient editing of the manuscript. A very special note of gratitude to Jessica Gonzalez for her tireless patience and hard work towards making this project a reality. Without her input, we could never have realized this collective effort. Thanks, too, to AFSC staff member Kathy Heim for additional editing. [Editor's Note: Testimonies may have been edited for space reasons but not for spelling or grammar. Witness to pain does not require a manual of style.]

**Keith Harvey**, *Northeast Regional Office Director*

**Amy Gottlieb**, *Northeast Regional Office Associate Director*

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## I. THE STORY OF OJORE LUTALO

The story of Ojore Lutalo is unique -- as is the story of every prisoner represented in this document. We tell Ojore's story more expansively because he was our "ground zero" person when he wrote to AFSC in 1986 after having just been placed in the Trenton State Prison (now renamed New Jersey State Prison) Management Control Unit (MCU). That control unit was opened in 1975 and was modeled directly on San Quentin Prison's "O" Wing. Ojore wrote asking what a control unit was, why he was there and how long he would have to stay there. He described extreme isolation with 24/7 lock down, limited or no contact with other people, and a psychological warfare that we now know as "no touch torture."

In one of his early letters, Ojore wrote: "How does one go about articulating desperation to another who is not desperate? How does one go about articulating the psychological stress of knowing that people are waiting for me to self-destruct? I did not do anything to deserve this." Ojore went on to describe being awakened by guards dressed in riot gear holding barking dogs at 1 a.m. every other morning. Once awakened, the prisoners were forced to strip and gather their belongings, while feeling the dogs straining at their leashes snapping at their private parts. He described being terrorized and intimidated, and the humiliation of being naked without knowing whether the masked guards were male or female. If we think back to slavery and to images of the civil rights movements, we recognize that dogs have been used as a device of torture for hundreds of years in the United States.

We monitored Ojore from 1986 through his court -- ordered release from prison in August 2009. During the time he was kept in isolation, we confirmed that he, along with others in the MCU, was being held there for political reasons -- for their beliefs. Ojore was considered a black radical capable of imparting his radical belief system to others. The AFSC communicated this to the Bergen Record Newspaper reporter, Bill Sanderson, who in 1992 wrote a newspaper article about Ojore and others called "New Jersey Political Prisoners Do Hard Time in Solitary." In that article, Bill reported: "Since 1986 Ojore N. Lutalo has been in solitary confinement at New Jersey State Prison, locked alone in his cell 22 to 24 hours a day. He isn't being treated this way because he broke prison rules -- if he had, he would have been returned to general prison population years ago. Instead, in a nation that venerates freedom of thought, Lutalo is a political prisoner -- one of 77 inmates segregated from other convicted criminals because prison officials fear their political and religious ideas could foment trouble. Because Lutalo broke no rules, prison officials say his placement in the management control unit, or MCU, isn't punishment. However, prisoners say life is hard enough in NJ State, the state's most dangerous and most secure prison, without enduring the MCU's enforced isolation and idleness."

In 1994 New York Channel 9 reporter Peter Fuentes aired a piece for their news programs headlined "Prison Politics" confirming that the "New Jersey Department of Corrections says these prisoners are dangerous because they have strong political or religious ideas and are capable of leading others to riot." In 2001, a documentary film maker received permission from

the Department of Corrections to film “In My Own Words,” a 45-minute documentary about Ojore which aired on a New Jersey cable station and at venues across the country. After 16 years in isolation, Ojore and many others were released from the Management Control Unit based on the finding of a Special Master ordered via court litigation in 2002.

For those of us at AFSC’s Prison Watch and others who monitor friends and loved ones in isolation units, the act of “disappearing” someone is common. Family members call from all over the country, frantic because they have not heard from a family member via an anticipated call or letter. This happens especially frequently in the “special needs” or mental health units in supermax prisons throughout the country. The absence of contact with the loved one causes alarm, and often no one responds to the family’s calls of concern.

From October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005 through October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005, Ojore suddenly disappeared from contact. For a month prior to his disappearance, no one had heard from him via mail or telephone, nor was he allowed to have visitation. No one could get any information from the Department of Corrections about his well-being.

He was held incommunicado in New Jersey State Prison’s mental health unit, called 1-C by prison workers and the “boom-boom room” by prisoners. There he was not allowed to make telephone calls, send or receive personal mail, receive personal or legal visits, or take part in any activities at all. He was held in complete isolation suffering the worst form of “no touch torture.”

*What follows are excerpts from Ojore’s experience. Imagine the thousands of people experiencing something similar in prison cages across the country. Imagine that this is happening to someone you love.*

**Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2005** – “The lockdown started around 1:30am, when a cell extraction team of several security guards, dressed in combat gear, woke me up and said: ‘per orders of the warden, you are to be moved to 1-C (the so called mental health unit).’ So I started thinking, why the ‘boom-boom room, since it is well known that I do not suffer from any psychological decompensations. . . I get up and I start feeling around in the darkness of the cell for my clothing because they turned the power off. The sergeant asks for a flashlight, but they don’t have one among themselves . . . I got dressed for the unexpected, but I could not find any thermal underwear in the dark . . . As I enter 1-C, I see four or five cells located behind a floor to ceiling fence with another fence built around the first cell, in which I am placed. They uncuff my right hand and tell me to place my hand behind my head and strip. I go through the strip search motions: raise my hands, open my mouth, stick my tongue out, lift my private parts, turn around, raise my right foot, bottoms up and then I spread the cheeks of my ass. Then they tell me to turn around and face the wall until they leave. They leave and I turn around to put my clothing on, only to find out that they took my clothing with them. There I stand, naked in a cold water cell, standing next to a puddle of water! . . . I find I am in a ‘close-watch-cell’! One camera is over the dirty, uncovered foam mattress on the floor, which is also dirty. The other camera is located over the cell door. The cell light is also located high up against the wall and

the white burning lights stay on twenty four hours a day, making sleeping difficult and your eyes start feeling like they have sand underneath your eyelids. Focusing becomes difficult. The vent in the cage is high up against the wall, and blows out freezing cold air 24 hours a day. The only bedding I am given is lying on top of the dirty uncovered mattress and are two paper thin sheets. I tear up a sheet to cover up the puddle of water on the floor to keep my bare feet dry and wrap the other sheet around my body . . . I start to feel the coldness of the cage assaulting my naked body . . . I can feel my body starting to shake so I get off the sink and start pacing the floor. When I grow weary of pacing the floor, I sit atop the stainless steel sink hugging my body with paper sheet. I entered the boom-boom room at 1:30 am.”

**Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>** – “. . . at 9:30 am, they gave me back my clothing! The telephone is ringing with calls coming in from other prison security guards wanting to know Lutalo’s status, if I had lost a sense of myself, meaning if Lutalo went crazy. I grow weary of pacing the floor and sitting atop of the sink, so I cover the dirty foam mattress with a paper sheet and lay down fully dressed and doze off. I wake up to the sound of splashing water, to see water leaking from the ceiling and running down the wall and seeping under the mattress. I call the guard who comes to the cage door. I ask if he could move me to another cage. Now the water is running underneath the cage door. Two hours later they move me into cage #2 which doesn’t have the 24 hour camera watch. Cage #2 has another dirty foam mattress with two paper sheets atop it and is just as cold as Cage #1. I start pacing to generate some body heat. The stool and the cage shelves were removed, the light switch has a steel plate over it and the wall sockets have steel plates over them. The cage light stays on 24 hours a day. The floor, toilet, and sink are filthy!”

**Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>** – “Just like I was illegally place in the boom-boom room, it was illegal for the warden to have me placed in a cage that was condemned. I stayed in cage number two until Saturday afternoon when a sergeant came to the cage and told me that I was being transferred to ‘1-C overflow’. They put me in cage #1 and I entered the cage to find a steel bed frame bolted to the wall and floor, with another dirty foam mattress and a working light switch. The cage had two mounted close watch cameras and was just as cold as the other cages. I was given two security tooth-brushes, a small tube of toothpaste, a bar of soap and one dirty very thin cotton spread and four paper wash cloths.”

**Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>** - “You call this a democracy?”

**Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>** – “My eyes are hurting more from the glare of the 24 hour bright white lights! You call this a democracy? I feel the coldness of the cage assaulting me. I pace, I doze, I cover the dirty mattress foam and lay down. The way I am now being treated is illegal. This cage is condemned. You call this a democracy?!”



**Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>** – “At 12:40 am, five guards came into the cage with a nurse. The sergeant told me that the nurse wanted to take my vitals. I thought this was a strange request since I had not requested any medical assistance and it was 12:40am with five guards standing there. The nurse only took my blood pressure and left the cage without taking my temperature, pulse or heart rate or asking any questions about my medical history, which I thought was all a part of taking one’s vitals. Around 8:30 am on Tuesday, three security guards show up and told me that I am being moved to the Management Control Unit. I am handcuffed and escorted to the MCU. I enter MCU and Cell #6 opens up, the door echoing. I step into the cage to discover that I am in another ‘close watch’- one with another dirty foam mattress on the color and a camera mounted to the ceiling. The stool and cage shelves were removed, the light switch has a steel plate over it and the wall sockets have steel plates over them. The light stays on 24 hours a day. The floor, sink and toilet are filthy. . . I still do not know why I was placed on no contact status, why I was placed in the boom-boom room or why I was re-interned in the management control unit. All of this without ever breaking a single rule! You call this a democracy?”

**October 20, 2005** – Once Ojore was able to be in touch with us and others, he let us know that he had illegally been placed back in the Management Control Unit. No charges, no reason – and after a Special Master had released him three years prior. When I called the Department of Corrections, it took many conversations before I was bluntly told that this was at the request of Homeland Security. – *Bonnie Kerness, American Friends Service Committee Stopmax Conference (June 2008)*

In yet another incident of Ojore “disappearing” without any reason, he was removed without explanation from the MCU and placed in a bloody cell. If we remember the photos coming out of Abu Ghraib of the “no touch torture” where the man was forced to stand for hours with his arms out, not moving, we can picture what went on in this bloody cell for the six hours he was forced to stand there. Again, this is happening every day, throughout the United States. It is torture that occurs without any chemical or physical abuse. When he was finally able to contact us, the AFSC received pro bono cooperation from Jean Ross, an attorney who wrote to the Department of Corrections:

“ . . . it was immediately apparent that something was seriously wrong. There were streaks of blood visible on the backs and side walls of the cell, and on the glass window of the cell door. The floor was visibly blood-spattered, to the extent that the blood adhered to Mr. Lutalo’s boots. There was also blood in the sink. Nevertheless, Mr. Lutalo was locked in that cell and he remained there for 6 hours. . . Mr. Lutalo was then moved to cell #5. He was not allowed to shower after this second transfer, so he had to wash the blood off his boots in the sink of his new cell. Mr. Lutalo then observed prisoners in white jumpsuits and white rubber gloves enter cell #1, with plastic bottles of yellow bleach and red plastic toxic waste bags. He later learned that the

previous occupant of that cell had attempted suicide about a month prior to his placement, and that the cell had not been cleaned since that time. . . The protective measures ordered by some member of the prison staff imply that the dangers of exposure to blood borne infection were known by some responsible member of the prison staff. This raises the question, then, of why Mr. Lutalo was placed in cell #1, in its original bloody state, by the persons who transported him to 2B left.” – *From lawyer Jean Ross’s letter on behalf of Ojore Lutalo, New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ (8/31/07)*

During the quarter century that we monitored Ojore Lutalo in isolation, he was never assaulted either physically or chemically. Currently, Ojore Lutalo spends his time volunteering for the American Friends Service Committee Prison Watch Project in Newark, NJ. Upon entering the office, visitors are welcomed by Ojore’s collages, made from photographs and cutouts from magazines pasted alongside the text of legal documents, blueprints, and Lutalo’s words. They are a product of his 22 years in solitary confinement. “I would create these collages to help maintain my sanity,” said Lutalo. “I would get up every morning. I would read and write, exercise. I’d write letters. Some days I would do collages all day long. I’d just cut and paste, cut and paste.”

*Throughout this report, the reader will encounter a few samples of the collages Ojore Lutalo created while in prison.*

COLLAGE CREATED BY OJORE LITALO

COLLAGE CREATED BY OJORE LITALO

# Psychological wounds

Introduction  
What is "no touch" torture?  
BEHAVIOR CONTROL

**YOU CALL THIS A DEMOCRACY!**

**TRUE THOUGHTS  
PEOPLE TELL  
THEIR STORIES**

Grim-  
Reality  
Let It  
Be Said:



OJORE N. LITALO

OJORE N. LITALO  
P.O 861-59860  
SBI#90000901548  
TRENTON, NJ 08625

Without controversy and hard times, you'll never know who you'll be when critical situations come your way. And you'll never know who your friends are.



I was held incommunicado for six (6) days in New Jersey's Trenton State Prison draconian and nightmarish mental health unit called I-C by prison workers and the boom-boom room by most prisoners. I was not allowed to shower, change my clothing, have soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, wash cloth or towel. I was not allowed to make telephone calls, send out or receive personal or legal mail (see attached). I was also not allowed to receive personal or legal visits or take part in any inside or outside recreational activities.

## Breaking Men's Minds:

Introduction  
What is "no touch" torture?  
BEHAVIOR CONTROL  
The banal and bizarre techniques of  
"no touch" torture  
An example of "no touch" torture:

No touch torture is a set of practices used to inflict pain or suffering without resorting to direct physical violence: sleep deprivation, sensory disorientation, solitary confinement, humiliation, extreme cold or heat, extreme light or dark. Intentional placement situations. A systematic attack on all human stimuli.



PSYCHOLOGICAL  
Violence

## II. ISOLATION / NO TOUCH TORTURE

### ***Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)***

#### ***Article 1***

*... the term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.*

### ***International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights***

#### ***Article 7***

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

#### ***Article 10***

- 1) All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the dignity of the human person.*
- 2) The penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation.*

#### ***Article 16***

- 1) Each State Party shall undertake to prevent in any territory under its jurisdiction other acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment which do not amount to torture as defined in article 1, when such acts are committed by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public, official or other person acting in an official capacity. In particular, the obligations contained in articles 10, 11, 12 and 13 shall apply with the substitution for references to torture or references to other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*
- 2) The Provisions of this Convention are without prejudice to the provision of any other international instrument or national law which prohibit cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or which relate to extradition or expulsion.*

### ***International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)***

#### ***Article 7***

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

***Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)***

***Article 4***

1. *Each State Party shall ensure that all acts of torture are offenses under its criminal law. The same shall apply to an attempt to commit torture and to an act by any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture.*
2. *Each State Party shall make these offenses punishable by appropriate penalties which take into account their grave nature.*

***U.N Covenant on Treatment of Prisoners: Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners***

***Rule 30***

1. *No prisoner shall be punished except in accordance with the terms of such law or regulation, and never twice for the same offence.*
2. *No prisoner shall be punished unless he has been informed of the offence alleged against him and given a proper opportunity of presenting his defense. The competent authority shall conduct a thorough examination of the case.*

***Rule 31***

*Corporal punishment, punishment by placing in a dark cell, and all cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments shall be completely prohibited as punishments for disciplinary offences.*

***Rule 32***

1. *Punishment by close confinement or reduction of diet shall never be inflicted unless the medical officer has examined the prisoner and certified in writing that he is fit to sustain it.*
2. *The same shall apply to any other punishment that may be prejudicial to the physical or mental health of a prisoner. In no case may such punishment be contrary to or depart from the principle stated in rule 31.*
3. *The medical officer shall visit daily prisoners undergoing such punishments and shall advise the director if he considers the termination or alteration of the punishment necessary on grounds of physical or mental health.*

***Rule 33***

*Instruments of restraint, such as handcuffs, chains, irons and strait-jacket, shall never be applied as punishment. Furthermore, chains or irons shall not be used as restraints. Other instruments of restraint shall not be used except in the following circumstances:*

- a. *As a precaution against escape during a transfer, provided that they shall be removed when the prisoner appears before a judicial or administrative authority;*

- b. *On medical grounds by direction of the medical officer;*
- c. *By order of the director, if other methods of control fail, in order to prevent a prisoner from injuring himself or others or from damaging property; in such instances the director shall at once consult the medical officer and report to the higher administrative authority.*

***U.N Covenant on Treatment of Prisoners: Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners***

***Principle 7***

*Efforts addressed to the abolition of solitary confinement as a punishment, or to the restriction of its use, should be undertaken and encouraged.*

**TESTIMONIES**

“I have not had any physical human contact in 2 ½ years, I’ve not been allowed to wash any of my clothes, clean my cell, clean my shower (I HAVE MY OWN BUILT IN SHOWER), receive a haircut, use the phone, receive visits, my outgoing mail was being opened, refused legal assistance, my meals are being tampered with, they are serving me WITHOUT gloves or hair nets on, sometimes feeding me HOURS AFTER everyone else has been served and this is done by the supervisor. They leave my tray in here all night until the next morning when I am served breakfast and this accumulates bugs I am videotaped leaving as well as coming back in my cell at all times and this is done by a FEMALE S.I.D. officer making me bend over and spread myself as well as show my genitals.” –***L. A., East Jersey State Prison, Rahway, NJ, 2008***

“... on July 2, 2011 I was placed in lock up in Northern State Prison with nothing other than the clothes I wore when I was locked up and a sheet and blanket that I was given by the lock up officer. As of yet I have not been given my property so I cannot read up on / sometime studying my religion.” –***J. B., Northern State Prison, New Jersey, 2014***

“... I take sleeping pills and still I don’t sleep. I am stressed. I feel as if my government and society have abandon me. I grew more and more detached the longer I am here. I am here. I’m afraid when I do return to the free world. I will not know how to behave in company. The loneliness seems more natural. I don’t even know my family no more. All I did to get in solitary confinement was refuse to sign a piece of paper. Also I wrote to take programs but was refused.” –***R.B., unknown, New Jersey, 2014***

“The captive informed of is unjustly placed in solitary confinement prior to any attempt to substantiate the allegations against him/her, depriving them of access to school/religious programs, commissary, property, and visitation privileges.” –***D. S., Northern State Prison, Newark, NJ, 2014***

“I was beaten in Northern State Prison then shipped to Trenton. The officers, 2 of 6, who attacked me had a hearing I learned that nothing was done. This happened November 2011. They shipped me out and threatened me with street charges. There were over 50 witnesses to my attack. I was brutalized! During this 6 month period I suffered numerous anxiety attacks due to the long term torturous isolation. I’ve been in isolation for 6 months. I had to be placed on anxiety medication. While in solitary here at Trenton, an officer planted a federally controlled drug in my cell. He claimed on a “blue sheet” that the drugs were in a white envelope I challenged the “blue sheet” and had a cross examination at the hearing with a sergeant who was involved and the clearly mendacious employee. I wrote an extensive statement in my defense outlining and listing relevant case law. The ‘committee’ illegally agrees to hand down orders to have me drugged by force. A government psychiatrist who stated that she didn’t agree with that order and expressed ethic concerns. She quickly removed / reversed the orders to drug me up. Shortly later the doctor moved on. She no longer works here, perhaps she’s seen too much corruption.” – **J. W., *New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014***

“ . . . We are not housed in Ad-seg for 22-23 hours a day, but for 24 hours a day. . . second, we are forced to enter a cell that is unsanitary, another person’s feces clung to the sides of a hole in the wall; another person’s blood on the sleeping mattress and floors. The dust and dust mites, the stench of the stale decayed water that just sits from a broken furnace. Sinks that don’t stop running water 24 hours a day. Day after day, the sound feels like drops of water dropping on the head of the constant listener. . . ” – **R.B., *unknown, New Jersey, 2014***

*The following was written by an advocate for a prisoner at New Jersey State Prison:* “Mr. C.P is serving a long term sentence for the crime of murder and has been detained at New Jersey State Prison for twelve years. During that time he has not accumulated a disciplinary record, he has fully complied with institutional rules; does not belong to any gang, does not use or sell drugs, and attends school. On September 16, 2011 he was detained and sent to the punishment wing of the prison (1-Left) on what seems to be the strength of an anonymous note. He has been placed in TCC (Temporary Closed Custody) for the last 22 days. . . As of today, 22 days later and 19 days over the limit allowed by law, Mr. P has been kept in solitary, in the same punishment wing without having been charged with an institutional violation and / or without just cause to show that he is a danger to the prison population or disruptive of the normal functioning of the institution. His isolation, his placement in solitary without cause, and the denial of the rights granted to him by Title 10A, the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and the Constitution of the United States, is also a violation of his human rights. Mr. P is being kept in circumstances similar to those in Guantanamo: No charges, no due process and complete isolation from the world. He has not been allowed even to contact his consulate or his immediate family. Mr. P is a person diagnosed with severe anxiety and depression and has attempted suicide in the past. Although, he has been visited by the institutional psychologist, the harshness of the conditions in

which he has been placed can aggravate his mental health. At this time he is not allowed religious services, recreation, out of cell time, a minute of sunshine, reading material, phone calls or simply the due process guaranteed by law. All people are entitled to due process but Mr. P has been denied that right. He can only shower every three days, and the noise in that particular wing absolutely impedes normal sleep causing severe sleep deprivation and severe stress.” –

*Anonymous, New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“The reason I am writing you is because of the cruel and unusual treatment I have been subjected to. I am in detention for 2 and half months under temporary housing. I have nothing of my property with me. This is not the first time they keep me in isolation for months. I am not a gang member or any threat to the prison. I keep on getting harassed and pushing me to kill myself by taking my property and treating me like trash.” – *K.F., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“I am detained for 4 months in a detention unit (1L) with no charges or anything to justify me being there. I was deprived of my rights, I have mental problems now and lost time restriction to file my appeal with federal courts.” – *K. F., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“I’ve been in lock-up since 8.24.11 till 9.29.11 and on detention for 21 days as of today; which makes 59 days in total. On a charge I did not commit and would never commit. But I do want to go home and that means continuing my due - process. I would like that chance to show I can RE maintain in Society as a positive member of the community. I would like to put on the table a compensation to both ends an obscure legality, an Alford plea. Because even though I am innocent, I am willing to live with the guilt. I want to be with my family.” – *R.B., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“I am being penalized for my willingness to lie about . . . As of this writing, I am currently in the hole 10 days past the no more 30 day rule prescribed by 10A disciplinary procedures under subchapter 9. On the 6th day past my 30 days completed I received new charges for .754 which allegedly took place on 12-05-10 & 5-11-11.” – *J.P., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2012*

“I am writing to request the manual for Solitary Confinement Survival. I believe the manual will be very useful because the mental torture I’m enduring sometimes seems a bit much to bare. I have faith, but I’m tired of these people treating me like an animal. I need your help, please!” – *R. T., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ 2013*



“The CIA’s psychological paradigm for “no touch” torture fused two new methods “Sensory Disorientation” and “self-inflicted pain” whose combination, in theory would cause victims to feel responsible for their own suffering and those capitulate more readily to their tortures. Refined through years of practice, sensory disorientation relies on a mix of sensory overload and sensory deprivation via banal procedures in isolation the intense interrogation, heat and cold light and dark noise and silence for a systematic attack on all human stimuli. The fusion of these two techniques sensory disorientation and self-inflicted pain creates a synergy of physical and psychological trauma whose sum is a hammer blow to the existential platforms of personal identity. In 2004, the Red Cross reported, “the construction of such a system . . . cannot be considered other than an intentional system of cruel, unusual, and degrading treatment and a form of torture.” (McCoy, 2006).

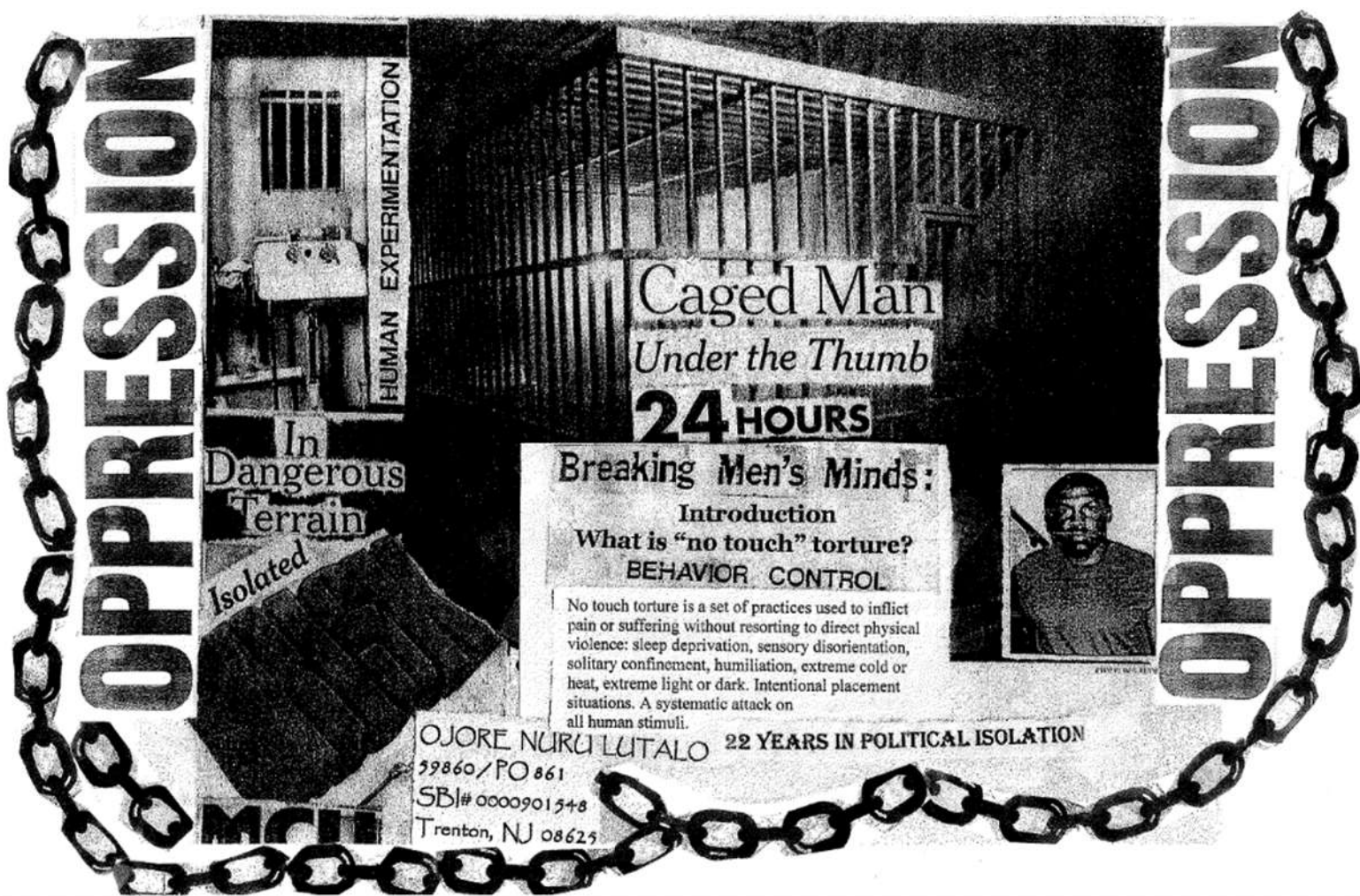
“I was deprived of food, sleep, no natural light... I was restricted to my cell for 24 hours every day... Prohibition on isolation for more than 15 days” -*J. C, unknown, NJ, 2013*

“I was assaulted four different times by correctional officers (excessive force) once in 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2013. . . I have endured sleep deprivation, screeching sounds, extreme silence, extreme cold and heat, intentional situational placement, humiliation-a systematic attack on all human stimuli. . . Prisoners are constantly being bitten and could possibly become infected with diseases such as MRSA.” – *P. B., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014*

“. . . For at least the next 67 days . . . I was literally chained to the metal bed frame in the middle of the cell, by a 3-4 foot section of heavy tow chain with defective shackles (no working safety locks) tethering me there for 24 hours a day. I was given perhaps at best six showers during this period of time and only three opportunities to change my clothing . . . the room temperature stayed at near freezing, and there were large fluorescent lights directly over the bed I was tethered to, that never turned off. When I complained to the Sheriff’s deputies, I was told there was no on/off switch for the lights in my cell and there were likewise no temperature controls accessible.” – *M.D., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2010*

“. . . I have some psychological damage because of the endless tension, frustration, harassment, stress and strain of everyday living in an abominable evil environment among thousands of different personalities and behaviors. There are times when my mental state is, in my mind, sound, while there are other times when I fall into such a deep depression that I feel I am never going to recover. This angers me because when I fall into that depression there is no one for me to go to for relief. Yet, though the decades I have learned to channel my negative energies and psychological damagers or impairment into areas of constructiveness rather than destruction, which is why I do a lot of reading, studying and free thinking. . . But this is not the case for many. For many, the anger and tension within is so tight and turns into bitter rage, once exploded there

are usually serious consequences to the individual or to others. One of the things that I have suffered and learned to deal with and adapt to a little, but still find hard to deal with, is the noise all day all night. A constant noise that yells in my face and no matter how much I try to blot the noise out, it has become a part of my psyche to where I do not hear the noise I cannot sleep. For many in prison we must 'half sleep'. That is, never go in to a sleep that you cannot immediately wake up at the slightest unfamiliar movement or sound, because that is a survival mode or mechanism one automatically acquires while in prison. . . Prison sharpens your senses because this also becomes a survival tool. But make no mistake about it, prisons are designed to destroy you; to destroy the personality of your 'self' and leave you broken and dependent." - N. G., *New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014*



### III. CONFINEMENT CONDITIONS

*From the United Nations Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly, resolution 45/111 of December 14, 1990:*

***Principle 1:*** All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.

***Principle 5:*** Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

***Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)***

***Article 10***

- 1. Each State Party shall ensure that education and information regarding the prohibition against torture are fully included in the training of law enforcement personnel, civil or military, medical personnel, public officials and other persons who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any individual subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment.*
- 2. Each state Party shall include this prohibition in the rules or instructions issued in regard to the duties and functions of any such person.*

***Article 11***

*Each State Party shall keep under systematic review interrogation rules, instructions, methods and practices as well as arrangement for the custody and treatment of persons subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment in any territory under its jurisdiction, with a view to preventing any cases of torture.*

**TESTIMONIES**

“I was arrested from November 5th to December 10th (35 days) for violation of a restraining order. (I was locked up one time before for a drug charge, for 10 days.) I had a physical altercation with my wife and she called the police. I violated the restraining order she had against me by calling her afterward . . . I was in a 12 x 6 cell with another person who was detoxing off of alcohol. He was sweating and grunting. From November 5<sup>th</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup> I was in the cell for 23 hours a day. There were 2 bunk beds, a sink, and a toilet. Sometimes the cell was very hot, and then it changed to cold. Cold air was blowing in the cell. I had a blanket, a pillowcase, and a sheet. I never took items to the laundry, I just washed them in the shower. There was nothing to read and I got no visits. It was cruel and unusual punishment . . . When I came in I had \$64. The officers stole my money. There was an intake fee of \$100 dollars, but they left about 2 or 3 dollars to me. I did not experience brutality at the hands of the guards, but I did witness it. It was a wakeup call when I heard officers killed an inmate . . . A dog wouldn’t sniff the food-it was nasty and cold. For breakfast we had stuff like cereal, oatmeal, powdered eggs, milk, and grits. For lunch and dinner the drinks would be a 4oz cranberry juice or this

disgusting generic soda. My first thought was to stop eating, but I met another inmate who used to work out who inspired me. I started putting socks on my hands to do pull ups, and for each of my 35 days inside I force fed myself . . . I began to get sores on my lips and dry skin. Medical provided no lotion for me when I asked. I was very depressed. Cigarettes and chips became money. I gave up a tray of food for a haircut. My beard started growing long. In K-Pod they gave me a razorblade to share that I had to check in and out”. ***K.B., Middlesex County Correctional Facility, North Brunswick, NJ, 2015***

“I want to take a moment of your time to briefly inform you of the conditions here at New Jersey State Prison. Firstly, the money in the inmate trust account mysteriously disappeared and all programs it paid for stopped. While money is still being put aside for the trust, we have no idea where it is going. When prisoners complain they are singled out and accosted and put in lock-up. This unit I-left, the cells are not clean and reeks of urine and often has feces on the floor. You always have to clean a cell when placed in it but excrement is too far. S.I.D. then takes your property, mail and legal work, which they read and copy then illegally hold indefinitely. Also, the mail delivery. Family letters are weeks old when received which sometimes include money orders. Legal mail is time sensitive and days late can be a major blow to the appeal process . . . We are forced to brush out teeth with canine toothbrushes. When the dentist on staff complained he was told “there dogs, there we be no change in toothbrushes”. While the rest of the state uses shank proof toothbrushes . . . The list goes on to police assaults for speaking up about conditions denial of jobs and most important of these is not being offered. Healthy food choices at Mess; on commissary or food packages and the price gouging on the items that are offered . . . Most men here including myself were sentence to die here. We are here “as punishment and not to be punished. We have a right to be treated respectfully, impartially and fairly” and excerpt from page 9 of NJSP inmate’s Report, revised October 2007.” – ***C. R., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2013***

“Currently, there are an overabundance of issues that warrant the remedial attention of executory officials who oversee the performance and policies implemented by custody and administrative personnel at the Passaic County Jail. Upon entering the Passaic County Jail (PCJ), the inmate is immediately struck by a large sign painted on the wall which reads, in part: ‘THIS IS NOT A COUNTRY CLUB’. To say as much is an understatement. However, country club or not, PCJ has a history of resistance to uphold standards of human decency, and to conform to certain standards codified by law that prohibit the use of cruel and unusual punishment.

*Intake for Booking Processing* All newly-arrived inmates are required to undergo a medical examination and quarantine placement only AFTER being placed in one of two holding tanks for several hours. It is not uncommon to witness a newly-arrived inmate curled up on the floor from substance withdrawals, while the officer (s) presumed to monitor the habitants of this tank, via video surveillance, disregard the individuals suffering. These holding tanks are constructed of concrete and a thick, plate-glass window. They are also extremely over-crowded and offer no

ventilation—even during the fervid temperatures of mid-summer. Each holding tank comprise a single steel component that consists of a sink and toilet, which is flanked by two steel benches that align opposite sides of the wall. It is not uncommon, however, to find that these sinks do not work, and that these holding cells contain neither soap nor toilet paper.

*Issues with Plumbing Fixtures* In my experience, myself, along with ten other men on our housing unit (Max 2) were unable to take showers for several days because the cell I was placed in with two other men had a defective toilet that ran continuously, causing the showerhead to discharge scorching hot water. This was brought to the attention of several officers on multiple occasions, whose only recourse to action was to shut our water off altogether.

*Steel Bed Frames* Upon entering PCJ, all inmates are issued one blanket, two sheets and a single mattress. However these mattresses are so threadbare and thin that they hardly equate to humane provisions. What is more, all 3-tier bed frames contain 4 x 8” slots or pockets within the steel grating; that if a man of average height would stand atop it, his entire foot would immediately fall through. Irrespective of how brief the duration of my temporary confinement at PCJ, whether a week or an overnight stay, I would always end up suffering chronic back pain after lying on a contraption that, by no stretch of the imagination could be likened to a medieval torture rack.

*Rodent and Insect Infestation* PCJ has a major problem with mice and roach infestation. Unfortunately, the need for extermination does not appear to be an issue high on the superintendent’s’ list of priorities. Prison officials are aware of the threat to health posed by these conditions, but have taken no such action to eliminate or mitigate these problems. In the ten years since my initial stay at PCJ, inmates have, and are continually being forced to live in absolute squalor; which exposes them to a variety of parasitic infections like scabies, lice, ring worm and crabs, as well as skin diseases like MRSA and impetigo. This filth contributes to the obvious infestation problem. On a personal note, I had to pluck two small roaches out of my lunch tray when I was transported there last year.” – **R. B., Passaic County Jail, Paterson, NJ, 2013**

“I have to beg for water and food. We are being killed slowly. If you were to come here you would find us in this “dry cell” naked, cold, and hungry. We are being cut off from all avenues of recourse. I was removed from special needs and placed here. Please can you get somebody, anybody to get us out of these torture chambers? We are doing nothing wrong and have no intention of doing so. I’m having serious problems with the staff and administration here. I’m getting threatened to be physically assaulted by staff as well as other inmates, I don’t eat much either. I don’t feel safe, I don’t eat or sleep, nothing. The staff wants me to withdraw my complaint. They won’t even give me paper to write on any more. It’s two other people on this unit scared for their lives due to staff misconduct and misinformation. They will kill us.” – **W.T., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014**

“ . . . Often times the sink water runs 24 hours. There are leaks from the ceiling and flooding from the floor on the lower tiers. In the summer the heat is felt due to the lack of air flow. In some cells this causes a strong odor like a moldy type and it’s difficult to breath. In the winter its freezing, it’s like sleeping outside. No heat and the windows are open for a majority of the season. . . At this point prisoners don’t realize that there is a high level of carbon in the air and complain about headaches, fatigue, and are often exhausted and spend their days sleeping. . . The water in the cells is awful and if you take a piece of white clothes and place it on top of the running water, it turns the whole piece brownish/orange. . . The toilets are a hole in the wall and you can always smell the waste in the bottom. Sometimes when you go and drink the water you can smell the sewage . . . but the toilets are awful and odorous especially because you have to eat and sleep in it. After a while you become accustom and you smell it but what can you do but ignore it. . . Showers are every 3 days and you’re lucky if you get a full 10 minute shower because once you get in your told to get out and they look for any excuse and take it away from you. . . the sheets we get are torn or have giant rust patches. The mattresses we sleep on from so many years of wear and tear have no cushion support.” – *J.M., unknown, New Jersey, 2014*

“I am writing this letter for myself and many other prisoners who are in fear for their health and just want to be treated like human beings, we are in fear of diseases for many reasons. . . We are supposed to have the right to a clean and healthy environment; but we are forced to live in cells with cracks, holes, feces, blood and other fluids imbedded in our cell walls, which draw and allow in bugs, insects, and rodents. . . The shower schedule which is supposed to be three days a week (every other day) is treated like a privilege, one which we are not privileged to get every other day because we have been told by officers that they (correctional officers) make the rules and run the facility . . . the showers on the tier are not cleaned daily and the use of bleach in them is non-existent. The laundry, when done, does not come back for days. Property is constantly lost from the laundry. The laundry comes back dirtier than when it went in, whites come back brown and smelly. . . They say we have the right to a healthy diet, yet our food is constantly served cold, under cooked, and tasteless or should I say spice less. No spices on trays, salt, pepper, butter, etc. we are not even distributed utensils regularly. I have had one disposable spoon for five month. . . This administrative were on ‘notice’ of our cells having bugs, and ants, bad plumbing. When it rains outside the water leaks in from the roof, which water runs down the walls from cells upstairs, it floods the floors the floors on the tiers and inside our cells which there is no mop. . . There are unbearable smells coming from the plumbing system and sink where you drink water. (note: officers bring in water from home cause they are afraid to drink water from here). . . we are forced to endure every day from the months of May until September extreme heat/hones which there is no window’s ad ventilations in our cells.” – *P.B., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ 2012*

“ . . . I couldn’t shower for 15 days because New Jersey State Prison claim to have run out of soap, oh, toilet paper as well. For 24 hours a day, and every day since July 28, 2011, I have sat in this cell depressed from being oppressed cause these people violated my rights and its nothing I can do about it. It’s to the point that I’m taken prescribed medication for depression and even

that isn't helping. I miss my family so much! – *S.C. New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“Mr. B and 4 or 5 of us were brought over to 1-Left on August 4 to more RESTRICTIVE AND UNCONSCIONABLE CONDITION, also in the West Compound. 1-10 is ACCURATE we have not received no tissue for AT LEAST 5 days and had to use RIPPED SHEETS. Did not have SOAP, toothpaste, toothbrush, towels, tissues, shower shoes (in which we took showers every 3 days). We were also denied; All phone CALLS (legal no exception), ACCESS to ALL PROPERTY (legal mail included), visits, PEN, PAPER, books, Remedies. So we were UNABLE to RESORT to D.O.C Rules and exhaust ALL Remedies. Also mail takes longer AND LACK OF Religious Volunteers were usually ABLE to see. I was also brought to legal visits cuffed. I was placed on 1-LEFT RIGHT, where the plastic is placed on the bar and felt like I was going to fall out AT ANYTIME WAS denied ice in the process *EVEN though it was a heat wave.*” – *W.W., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*



New Jersey State Prison  
Trenton, NJ



## IV. HEALTH & MEDICAL SERVICES & CONDITIONS

### *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

#### *Article 3*

- *Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.*

### *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*

#### *Article 6*

- *Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.*

### *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*

#### *Article 2*

1. *Each State Party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory under its jurisdiction.*
2. *No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, international political instability or any other public policy emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture.*
3. *An order from a superior officer or a public authority may not be invoked as a justification of torture.*

#### *Article 16*

4. *Each State Party shall undertake to prevent in any territory under its jurisdiction other acts of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment which do not amount to torture as defined in Article 1, when such acts are committed by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.*

## TESTIMONIES

“I write this letter in hoping that you can help me. In 2006, the prison was put in lock down and the administration gave an order that during the lock down, no inmates can be let out of their cells for any reasons. Not the lockdown was about three weeks and I came down with something call Cellulitis, a bacterial infection of the skin which if left untreated may cause septicemia, a potentially fatal condition. Now I was sick with cellulitis in my foot and for three weeks I was trying to get to the prison hospital. And after three weeks, the condition had got so bad. The prison call 911 and I was taken to St. Francis hospital where I stayed for seven days with one day in the ICU. I was sent to the emergency room. I had an inmate filed a civil action for deliberate indifference and I need help!” – *K. B., Trenton State Prison, Trenton, NJ 2010*

“I am a resident here at the Special Treatment Unit. It is to my understanding that you would like to receive letters from residents describing either violations that they had seen over the years, and /or violations they have experience here at the Special Treatment unit. The below is a one of those violations:

Issue #1: Handicap residents (those of who walk with a cane, walker, and / or are confined to a wheelchair) at the New Jersey’s Special Treatment Unit and its Annex here in Avenel, New Jersey. Due to circumstances out of their control, they are unable to work to put any funds in their account at this facility. It is with understanding that even though a individual residents is handicap, and are put on a medical lay-in, they still get paid by the administration to whom are housing such individuals. Handicap residents here are not getting such funds from this administration. These residents are unable to buy anything to support themselves in anyway. They are unable to even buy hygiene, toiletries, outside food, clothes and other type of products for themselves.” – **J. B., *Special Treatment Unit, Avenel, NJ, 2011***

“ . . . I am a man of ‘Great Pain’, 3<sup>rd</sup> degree burns to my hand. I must sleep with my hand raised to slow the ‘pain’. The pain meds does nothing when the water is too cold it stops the flow of blood, when to hot it blisters. I was denied the medical glove that protects it. I have no job, no money, I cannot use the phone because I have no money to but on the phone.” – **R.B., *New Jersey, 2014***

The following is a testimony written by a Public Defender. “. . . Mr. K also states that when he was being processed for his transfer from Bayside State Prison back to South Woods State Prison, he was “kick and stomp on” on the same knee where he had his operation. He states that as a result of this incident, he is now wheel-chair bound and unable to walk. Mr. K requests an operation on his knees which he believes is necessary to enable him to walk again. He states that he has submitted 7 medical slips without a response.” – **M.K., *New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014***

## V. MENTAL ILLNESS

One of the consequences of the deinstitutionalization of the large state psychiatric hospitals has been an increase in the number of people with mental illness in the prison system. Because the prison environment is not designed to safely care for or treat such people, and prison personnel are not trained to respond effectively to their conduct or symptoms, this increasing sector of the prison population does not “adjust” well to prison life. Specifically, their conduct increases the likelihood that they will be placed in isolation, for protection or as punishment.

This much is known about the relationship between isolation and mental illness:

1. Long term isolation is characterized as torture, precisely because it can cause unnecessary trauma.
2. Symptoms of such trauma may include present distress, and symptoms associated with mental illness and even psychosis, such as depression, anxiety, fear, paranoia, and hallucinations; physiological and neurological damage may accompany these psychological symptoms.
3. As with other manifestations of trauma, now acknowledged as a “mental disorder,” PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, such symptoms may persist beyond the duration of the triggering event or environment; for people in prison, this means increasing problems with “institutional adjustment,” family relationships, reentry, the ability to work and, eventually, recidivism.
4. The appearance of mental illness is affected by multiple factors, including individual risk factors and external environmental factors. Therefore:
  - a) People who might not otherwise graduate to symptomatic mental illness may do so, in the toxic environment of isolation; and
  - b) Isolation exacerbates the symptoms and suffering of prisoners with a history of mental illness or present symptoms.

Therefore, prisoners along a spectrum of general mental health to acute mental illness may be adversely affected by the experience of isolation; their conditions and suffering influenced by the toxicity of the general prison environment and the significant deficiencies in prison mental health care.

Because of these connections between mental illness and institutional isolation, state law in New Jersey has long placed strict restrictions on the use of isolation in the state psychiatric hospitals. Unfortunately, despite extensive litigation, the case is very different in the prisons.

Prisoners with known histories of psychiatric illness, even psychiatric hospitalization and self-harm or suicidality, are all too frequently subject to long terms of isolation. They report cursory clinical reviews, non- confidential “cell door” interviews, poor monitoring of psychotropic medication, repeated indifference to glaring suffering and symptoms of illness, and humiliation and abuse on the part of untrained and unsupported prison employees.

The following testimonies provide only a brief introduction to this world of pain and torture.

## **TESTIMONIES**

“One night I was lying in Cell 1 of the Boom Boom Room. One prisoner cried out that he was cold. He cried out for a blanket because as the night went on it got progressively colder. They gave him none. This was a normal occurrence. The way he got in there was by sneaking a razor in between his buttocks. Upon being stripped and searched, it was found. He threatened to castrate himself, so they placed him in the Boom Boom Room naked, in restraints. They put him on psychotropic meds and it was business as usual . . . When a prisoner was on suicide watch, they would put them in a special gown with straps and place them in an empty cell. They would check on them every 45 minutes . . . The unit was usually quiet because the prisoners were overwhelmed by the psychotropic meds they were taking. The doctors would come around and ask prisoners if they were okay and if the meds were working and if they needed higher doses. After that they’d be on their way. . . After 16 years, I was released back into General Population by way of a court order, and they placed me in a special needs unit. There were 48 cells and 42-43 were receiving psychotropic drugs.” “Prisoners who were on psychotropic drugs-I could see how they began to deteriorate because they would start to neglect their hygiene, start to smack their lips, and jerk involuntarily. They would also shuffle their feet and their hands would lock up. There was nobody for me to really talk to because most people were on psychotropic drugs. Guards would place roaches in prisoners’ food”. - *Ojore Lutalo’s accounts of what he witnessed at NJ State Prison, 2015*

“I am reminded of mentally ill Frank in New Jersey, who was forced into an isolation unit. The guards taunted and teased this man, made him dance as he begged them for cigarettes, water or food while they laughed. Frank killed himself.” – *As told by Bonnie Kerness, explaining reports received in 2009*

“In New Jersey I’ve received reports of the use of something called the ‘chicken suit’, where the mentally ill are forced to wear clear plastic suits during their stay in the Special Needs Unit in a county facility. In essence they spend their days naked.” –*Anonymously told to Bonnie Kerness, 2009*

“ . . . I’m diagnosed with severe anxiety issues were I pick at my feet till they bleed. Every doctor in this prison knows this. By the third week, I couldn’t take it. I was peeling whole toe nails off! Blood everywhere. I started cutting out skin on my foot. It was getting worse. They

called the psych over. I was put on constant watch. However, since custody had already told the guards in lock up to not move me under no circumstances, they put me in a dry cell with no water, no sink, just a whole.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, 2012*

**NEW JERSEY STATE PRISON**

**SPECIAL Needs UNIT**

**(Resisting) The Drug Therapy chair # 1-EE**

**Psychological wounds**



THE TWO (2) FORCED MEDICATION CHAIRS ARE LOCATED IN A ROOM IN ONE OF THE PRISON'S "SPECIAL NEEDS UNITS" CALLED 1-EE WHICH IS LOCATED IN THE SOUTH COMPOUND SECTION OF THE PRISON HERE AT TRENTON STATE PRISON (TSP). THE CHAIRS ARE SITUATED SIDE-BY-SIDE. THE CHAIR IS DESIGNED TO RESTRAIN A PRISONER(S) FROM BEING ABLE TO MOVE HIS OR HER ARMS, LEGS OR MID-SECTION OF THEIR BODIES.

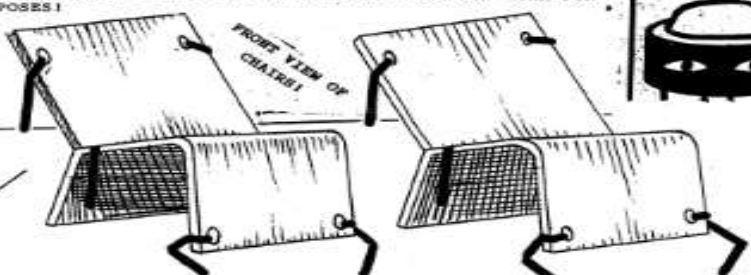
A PRISONER(S) IS PLACED IN THE CHAIR TO BE FORCED MEDICATED. THEY IN THE CHAIRS WITH VELCRO STRAPS. THEY USE TO BE SECURED IN THOSE CHAIRS WITH HANDCUFFS. SOME PRISONER(S) HAVE A SHEER, BLACK HEAD NET PLACED OVER THEIR HEAD AND FACE. IN SOME CASES A GAG MADE OF WHITE CLOTH IS PLACED OVER THE PRISONER'S MOUTH UNDERNEATH THE BLACK HEAD NET TO PREVENT THE PRISONER(S) FROM SPITTING - OR VERNALIZING HIS OR HER PROTECT OVER BEING FORCED MEDICATED!

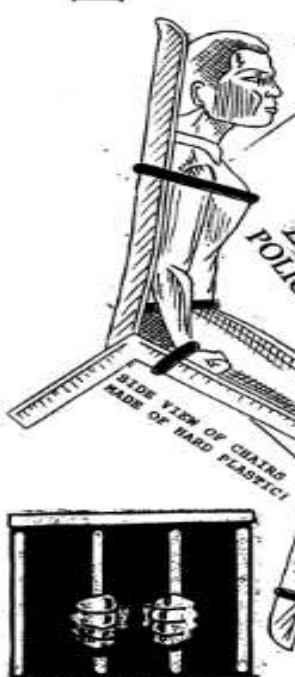
ONCE A PRISONER(S) IS SECURED IN THE CHAIR, A NURSE INJECT THE PRISONER WITH SOME KIND OF PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG INTRAVENOUSLY. THE ATTENDING NURSE IS SUPPOSE TO TEST THE PRISONER'S HEART RATE AND BLOOD PRESSURE EVERY FIFTEEN (15) OR TWENTY (20) MINUTES IN THE EVENT THE PRISONER(S) MIGHT POSSIBLY GO INTO CARDIAC ARREST FROM THE FORCED INJECTION OF THE PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG!

THE PRISONER(S) IS KEPT IN THE CHAIR FOR A MINIMUM OF FOUR (4) HOURS; MOST TIMES MORE! AFTER THE PRISONER(S) IS REMOVED FROM THE CHAIR, HE OR SHE ARE STRIPPED NAKED AND GIVEN A QUILTED GOWN, AND PLACED IN A COLD CELL WITH NOTHING BUT A FILTHY PIECE OF FOAM FOR SLEEPING PURPOSES!

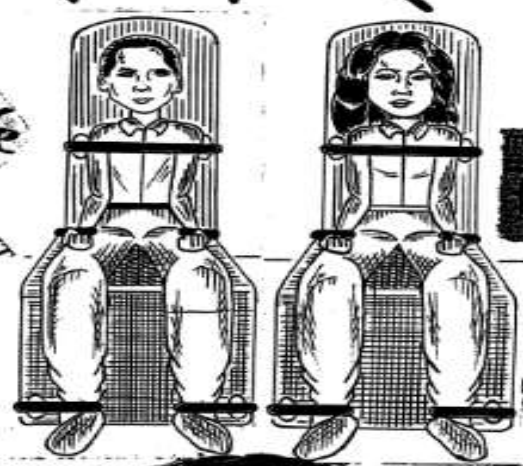
**Tortured Bodies:**




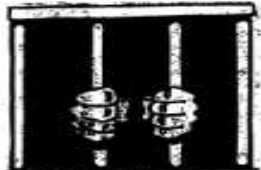


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## **VI. USE OF FORCE & DEVICES OF TORTURE**

*Article 1 of the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) prohibits policies and practices that “constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.” The UN Human Rights Committee, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, and the UN Committee on Torture have all cited the United States prison conditions as violations with international standards, particularly the CAT, which states:*

- 1. Each state party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial, or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory under its jurisdiction.*
- 2. No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture. [CAT, Article 2C]*

### **Article 4:**

- 1. Each State Party shall ensure that all acts of torture are offenses under its criminal law. The same shall apply to an attempt to commit torture and to an act by any person which constitutes complicity or participation in torture.*

### **Article 10:**

- 1. Each State Party shall ensure that education and information regarding the prohibition against torture are fully included in the training of law enforcement personnel, civil or military, medical personnel, public officials and other persons who may be involved in the custody, interrogation or treatment of any individual subjected to any form of arrest, detention, or imprisonment.*
- 2. Each State Party shall include this prohibition in the rules or instructions issued in regard to the duties and functions of any such person.*

### **Article 11:**

*Each State Party Shall keep under systematic review interrogation rules, instructions, methods and practices as well as arraignments for the custody and treatment of persons subjected to any form of arrest, detention or imprisonment in any territory under its jurisdiction, with a view to preventing any cases of torture.*

### **Article 13:**

*Each State Party shall ensure that any individual who alleges he has been subjected to torture in any territory under its jurisdiction has the right to complain to, and to have his case promptly and impartially examined by, its competent authorities. Steps shall be taken that the complainant and witnesses are protected against ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of his complaint or any evidence given.*

## TESTIMONIES

“. . . It’s not just the conditions of the prison or lack of programs and proper medical attention. It’s also the way we are treated by the guards and staff. We have to walk through a gantlet of guards who are wearing helmets and swinging and banging their night sticks in a threatening manner as we go to and from chow, or any movement. They talk to us like we were dogs, cursing at us, threatening us, it’s insane! Prisoners are being beaten! When they pull you over for a pat down, they manhandle you, slapping your sides, grabbing your leg and giving it a quick yank, and what not doing their best to get us to say something.”-*R. K., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ 2008*

**The following was an excerpt released by the New Jersey Star Ledger:** A former Sussex County jail inmate has filed a lawsuit against seven corrections officers, saying they beat him twice – once in a cold shower while he was shackled-and restrained him for 19 hours in a chair known as the “happy chair”. The alleged attack on R., 27, occurred Oct. 4 after N. saw another inmate in the restraint chair and tried to talk to him, according to the lawsuit filed by N’s attorney, J. P, in U.S. District Court in Newark. The ‘defendants’ unlawful and inappropriate use of the restraint chair on plaintiff was solely for the purpose of punishment and intimidation,” in violation of its permitted use, according to the lawsuit. “This was an instance of torture,” said P., a veteran civil rights activist who has filed an array of lawsuits on behalf of inmates at the county jail. Sheriff M. who said he had not yet seen the lawsuit and could not comment on its specifics, said the restraint chair is not used to punish inmates. “The chair is used for his (an inmate’s) protection or for the protection of other nearby inmates and guards,” said S., who took office Jan. 1. After N. talked to the inmate, seven officers maced N., put him in restraints, beat him in a cold shower, then strapped him for 19 hours in the chair, “affectionately known as the ‘happy chair’ among corrections staff,” the lawsuit states. – *Story written by Joe Moszczynski, February 10, 2011, nj.com*



## **VII. CRUEL & DEGRADING TREATMENT / ABUSE BY PRISON PERSONNEL**

### ***Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners***

#### ***Principle 1***

*All prisoners shall be treated with the respect due to their inherent dignity and value as human beings.*

*Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment*

#### ***Principle 1***

*All persons under any form of detention or imprisonment shall be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.*

### ***International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)***

#### ***Article 10***

- 1. All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the dignity of the human person.*
- 3. The penitentiary system shall comprise treatment of prisoners the essential of which shall be their reformation and social rehabilitation.*

### ***Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)***

#### ***Article 13***

*Each State Party shall ensure that any individual who alleges he has been subjected to torture in any territory under its jurisdiction has the right to complain to, and to have his case promptly and impartially examined by, its competent authorities. Steps shall be taken to ensure that the complainant and witnesses are protected against all ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of his complaint or any evidence given.*

## **TESTIMONIES**

“I’m having very serious problems with the staff, and administration here. I’m getting threatened to be physically assaulted by staff as well as other inmates, I don’t eat much either. This started after I sent out my lawsuit, I don’t feel safe, I don’t sleep, eat or nothing. They (staff) are trying to intimidate me by using threats of bodily harm to get me to withdraw my complaint. They also put false information out there about me; which can possibly get me killed in here. As you see they won’t even give me writing paper no more. I wrote the division of operations twice, but to no avail. I wrote Jean Ross, no response, I have wrote everybody under the sun nothing; I’m not the only guy on this unit that is going through this treatment its two more people on this unit

that's scared for their lives .due to the staff putting out false info on them everybody in their prison has (life) we are not from this jail. They'll kill us and that's it something needs to be done, this is not right. I need your Help!!!!!" –**W. T, Northern State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2013**

“This happened in November 2011. I was shipped out and I was actually threatened with street charges. S.I.D. did not file charges. S/C over 50 prisoners witnessed the brutal attack I endured, I was BRUTALIZED!!! I documented everything. I am totally aware of the power of the pen. I have amassed an extensive file on the D.O.C. During this 6 month period, I suffered numerous anxiety attacks- due to the long term torturous isolation. I had to be placed on an anti-anxiety medication. . . Shockingly, the D.O.C. hasn't changed! I was beat in Northern State Prison, then shipped to Trenton. The officer who attacked me had a hearing- I learned nothing was done.” – **J. W., Northern State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2013**

“I am writing this letter to include the details that took place during my stay in Bayside State Prison. I was shipped to B.S.P. in September of 2010, upon entering the prison that day I witnessed a prisoner being beat while in handcuffs in the intake area. Once I was in B-Unit I was verbally threatened simply because I was black or because I had dreadlocks. It is almost impossible to report these incidents when you ask for a grievance or remedy form you are targeted relentlessly. I've been choked while being surrounded by several officers. I was not allowed to eat the dinner meal because C.O.'s would claim they don't want to see my stupid face. On the compound there is a red line called the “Baker Line”. If you step a foot on this line or cross this line you will be beat or if lucky, subjected to gathering every pebble, rock and stone in an appointed area. . . At this time there was an African American administrator Ms. D. She would try to reach out to the inmates that were being assaulted and threatened but the fear of being killed was very real. If you put in a remedy/grievance at that time your mail was monitored outgoing and incoming. It was no secret that the helicopter would airlift someone to the hospital at least once a week due to the severe beatings. In 2011 I personally was involved in an incident where an officer assaulted an inmate on the walk way in the blind spot. I helped escort the inmate back to his housing area which happened to be the same unit I was housed in. Once everyone saw the bruises and knots on the inmate we decided to have a hunger strike to put a stop to the violence, beatings, threats and harassment. During the first night of this hunger strike C.O.s came into trailer four hurling threats and racist remarks saying they would kill us one by one, they ran the prison not the administrator (Ms. D). Once they realized that we were not giving in all 96 inmates were locked in on that side of the trailer. . . It was our constitutional rights being violated on a daily basis and no one did anything to stop it. Inmates were beaten to death, inmates were refused medical treatment because the medical staff were a part of the problem, C.O/s would violate federal laws and open an inmate's mail without the permission of the administrator, take inmates personal family photos and make sexual comments about inmate's children, wives, mothers, daughters even keeping photos or an inmate's family or friends. Sometimes visits were not called out on time because the unit C.O.s did not want to get up from watching T.V. Female C.O.s would lie on inmates and say an inmate pulled out his

penis, grabbed his crotch area or made sexual advances at them. Then they would laugh while that inmate was beat viciously. C.Os come and trash your cell, your personal property, take item's from you and give them to other inmates. All of this was what lead to a hunger strike in 2011 on trailer 4.C.Os. Surrounded the unit day in and day out like a militia ready to attack. They never even notified the administrator Ms. D. they notified the assistant administrator, a white guy, which came into the trailer at 12am drunk with a distinct alcohol odor to his body. He was yelling at us, calling us dumb ass nigers for not eating. We asked to speak to his superior and he replied "that bitch doesn't run this facility I do, now do as I said and listen to these officers." – ***M.S., South Woods State Prison, Bridgeton, NJ, 2014***

"They offer a yard every 2-3 days and that is for about 2 hours and you go by yourself in a caged in area no larger than a large dog pen without any ability to walk or get proper exercise. . . I witnessed firsthand a female officer having sex with inmate J. in the control booth on my previous unit. . . she still works here, and has inappropriate relations with inmates still." – ***J. M., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ 2014***

"This sergeant put his hands on me and told me why did I make false accusations on him while he was beating me in the back and chocking me." – ***K. P., Northern State Prison, Newark, NJ 2014***

"These people (I say people because what go on in prison is bigger than just officers) treat people with disrespect and inhumanly but they are the civilized correcting the uncivilized. I don't believe this is the way it is supposed to be. . . I have 3rd degree burns on my left hand and refuse to sign papers not putting the prison accountable. So the jumped on me mess the nerves in my burned hand up and my left ankle. I cannot stand for long periods of time. Then they locked me locked me up. And would not let me contact my family for four months and them themselves would not." – ***R.B., New Jersey, unknown, 2014***

"On 1-25-2012 at 3pm me and another inmate were handcuffed, stripped searched and put in a cage while our cell was being searched by various officers all under the supervision of Sgt. A. At 6:40pm, 3-hours and 40 minutes later me and Mr. .. were approached by Sco. Grabowski while in the cage, he was holding a large brown paper bag. Grabowski said Mr.. I was ordered to confiscate your regular mail. Mr. .. asked is that all you took? Officer Grabowski said 'yes'. Myself and Mr. .. asked can we see what is in the bag, we were told 'no'. Sco. G. said either sign for the property or when were done its 'trash'. 9:00pm., 6 hours later myself and Mr... were taken back to our cell and locked-in. Upon entering the cell I found my Qu'ran in the toilet. Mr. .. Qu'ran was ripped, our food package and canteen items were dug into with pens and combs. My regular mail, my mother's funeral pictures, legal mail, and radio was confiscated from my cell along with Mr.. regular mail, legal mail and family pictures. Which means Sco. G. and Sgt. A V.

lied about what was taken from our cell, as well as pushed Mr. .. to commit the crime of ‘forgery’ by signing for my property by giving him an alternative, ‘either sign or its trash.’ – *W.M., East Jersey State Prison, Rahway, NJ. 2012*

“Officer D. instructed Inmate ----- to get on the wall and interlace his hands behind his head and to spread his legs. Inmate ----- complied with this order. Officer D. walks over to the slop cans and puts on his gloves. He then returns to Inmate ----- and grabbed him by his interlaced hands and attempted to slam Inmate ----- head into the wall.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“On one day during 2013 I was assigned to E unit, when I arrived, Officer R. and officer Sheppard checked my property. Finding something they confiscated, I was aggressively told to put my hands on top of my head, and pulled backwards. Stressing my back, while Sheppard's knee was in the middle of my back, I was threatened and told that I would or could be beat up. The officer Sheppard asked if I was scared, when I said yes, he said you'd better be, we'll kill you down here you fucking spit. I also witnessed an inmate come from “B” unit, when he came to “E” unit, officer Sheppard made the inmate lay on the floor, with his hands behind his head, while on the floor, officer Sheppard placed his property bag, now full of water, on his back and made him remain in that position for 2 hours. These are things they do to inmates each day on “E” unit.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“On February 8th 2010 at approximately 810 am I was one of several prisoners involved in a fight within the Bayside medical waiting area, at which point a code 33 was called and upon correction officers, Sergeant and other personnel arrived the fight was then within the medical gate of medical. Upon the officers separating inmate \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and myself to my knowledge all three of us was placed in handcuffs and leg irons. At which point I was placed next to inmate \_\_\_\_\_ and then numerous officials began to strike me in the head and face area also the side of ribs and chest. They said scream. When I would not scream officer Divito who I knew by sight and voice placed his arms around my neck and head in a sleeper hold which cause me to fear for my immediate safety. He then laid me face down on the ground and jumped off a desk onto my mid to lower back which caused me to defecate on myself. Which enraged the officers. I heard them also beating inmate \_\_\_\_\_ by evidence of hearing punches land and inmate \_\_\_\_\_ screaming stop your hurling at me and all along with officers screaming stop resisting. One officer then stated you bring this gang shit to medical we are going to kill you. At which point I was then placed on my knees and told to put my chin on my chest and don't look up. My head was then placed through a wall and punches continued to be administered by police. I was then dragged around the corner by my shackles and clothes where officer N Canion then began kicking me to the sides, head, testicles, and said if you got a knife the helicopter won't get here fast enough. He then told me to look at him when I looked up he pointed to his name and said I'm doing this to you and punched me several times directly in the face. He then dragged me into

what looked like a very small kitchen with a refrigerator, microwave and coffee pot with cabinets and again told me to kneel on my knees cross my ankles and place my chin on my chest and don't look up. As I complied again punches were thrown to head, face and body area, where I was told I was going to be placed in the shower to wash the feces off. I was placed in the shower in shackles and handcuffed behind my back. The water was on a level so high it burnt me and I tried to get from under the water where I was. I was told I would be beat if I did. Upon the officer being satisfied they placed me in a cell removed the handcuffs and shackles and asked me did I have a problem with being beat while 3 officers surrounded me with night sticks smacking them in their hand. I feared they intended to do me more harm so I said no I was then placed in a cell completely nude for about 45 minutes.”– *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“Approximately on Dec 6, 2007 I was beaten very badly, they almost killed me there. They handcuff me punch and stomp me out like 12 officers was kicking me repeatedly it felt like my ribs were about to break. They pick me off the floor and slam me on my head and busted my head open I had butterfly stitches in my forehead. They was spitting on me calling me nigga's, slamming my head against the walls and using my head to open up door's, ramming my head into the door. I was throwing up blood for a couple of days, they was coaking me, trying to break my legz, twisting my ankles, both of my ankles looked like I had water balloons on them real swelling. After the nurse cleaned my blood off me and put the butterfly stitches in my forehead they beat me up all over again and rebusted my butterfly stitches open. IA cover up for them I had a tee shirt with alot of blood and boot prints on it, I told IA about, I thought they was gone help me. But the lady asked where's it at, I said it's in my detention cell, they had shipped me to southern state the next morning for like a week then to hear SWSP so when I took a shower the officer at SWSP in detention search my cell and took my bloody shirt. They did not give me the proper medical attention. I was in so much pain all they gave me was motren. I had to sleep sitting on the bed leaning on the wall for 4 months cause I couldn't lay down cause my back wouldn't allow me to. I still have back pains now I can't play basketball no more, or workout as hard as I used to because of this sharp pain I have in my back and I get mind grains on a regular basic a lot of people tell me to go get my head check out cause out of nowhere I get head pains, sometimes I have to lay down for two or three days in a row because the headache does not go away right way. They messed with me mentally as well, I always be dreaming about that ass whopping they gave me (pardon my french) I dream about that. I wake up with cold sweats and all they mess me up mentally and physically and then had the nerve to send me to Trenton adseg for 515 days for them beating on me. Lying making false charges towards me. They gave me double Jeopardy and I didn't do nothing wrong. I suffered and still suffering from going to Bayside prison. It's more things they done to me. I'll share with a lawyer or someone who will come hear me out for this Bayside state prison situation. (thanks)  
P.S. I'm in fear of my life for given up this info it might be some retaliation towards me they might have some boyz down here, just given y'all a heads up.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“In the 3 months I’ve been here at BSP I have seen officers assault and beat at least 100 people.”  
– *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“As a prisoners rights advocate, I have never in my 25 years of confinement, witnessed oppression or the overwhelming power of fear as I have at this facility. I have likewise never witnessed the “abuse of authority” on levels which occur at this facility.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“When conducting cell searches, staff intentionally destroy inmate property, have been known to dump ice into inmate floor lockers containing legal documents and other personal property, and plant pills, drugs or other contraband.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“I was savagely assaulted on 7-18-14 by guards at the Bayside State Prison while being referred to as a “nigger . . . While in the A-unit dayroom, I was instructed by Senior Corrections Officer (“SCO”) M. T to place my arms out to the side and I immediately complied. Then, without cause or provocation, SCO Tamagni began ramming my head against the wall and then tackled me to the ground on the concrete landing platform outside the entrance to the A-unit. AT this time he punched me twice--once in the nose, causing a severe nose bleed , and once in the right eye, causing swelling, discoloration, and impairment of vision. Handcuffs were then placed on my wrists behind my back. While laid on my stomach in restraints, SCO R. Rosell kicked me between the legs in the groin and called me “nigger.” When I yelled out in agony SCO T. T stated “shut up, nigger,” and stomped on my head, causing me to go unconscious.” –  
*Anonymous, Bayside State Prison, Leesburg, New Jersey, no date*

“Both myself and my cellmate were escorted out of the cell, patted down and advised to proceed to the dayroom. Suddenly, approximate five or more officers entered the unit with a sergeant. My cellmate and I were thereafter handcuffed and made to sit at separate tables facing away from one another. While in this position, I heard comments referring to us niggers and spics. Suddenly, S. and one of the other officers, walked over to me, grabbed me by the arm and escorted me into the unit pantry. There, all of the other officers waited. Once inside, the sergeant stated “I hear you two motherfuckers were smoking inside your cell?” He then grabbed me by the throat and slammed me into the wall. While looking my eyes, he stated, “you must be new here, don’t you know what we do to motherfuckers here?” When the sergeant released my throat, S. slammed me to the floor where I was stomped, kicked and punched throughout the body. After my beating, which seemed to have lasted several minutes, I was picked up from the floor and returned to the dayroom. The officers then went and took my cellmate into the same pantry. I however do not know what they did, as I could not actually see and was forced to remain facing the wall. I did hear a commotion, which lead me to believe that he was also assaulted. Slightly

turning my head, I was told “if you move your fucking head again, I’m punch you in your goddamned face!” As he walked by, I looked at the officer making the statement, who took it as me moving my head, and was punched in the face.

Shortly thereafter, I was pulled from the seat, had the handcuffs lifted, which were cuffed behind my back and escorted off the unit. During the walk to detention, my arms were twisted backwards and I was nearly lifted off the ground. The pain was unbearable and I felt that they were going to break my arms. Prior to detention placement, I/M’s are interviewed by a nurse. However, because my handcuffs were so tight, my circulation had been cut off, hands were turning colors and the nurse could not get a pulse. She asked staff to remove the cuffs and went to the computer to pull my records. When she left, S. who is 250 plus pound, stood on my foot, I was in shower shoes, asking me if it hurt. The pain was unbearable. I was escorted into a detention cell, received no charge, and offered no phone call or shower for seven days. After the seventh day, I was released to population and sent to “B Unit.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“ . . . If I sent back their is a strong possibility that I will be beating up by the officers for writing them up, or killed . . . Now, after I was told I was going back to Bayside I called the Ombudsman and told them that I fear for my life and if I sent back to that prison it’s a strong possibility that I will be beating up by the officer’s for writing up sergeant A. Smith SCO Ms. D and SCO B. ... Several officers came to the cell and told me to back away from the door then the door was open . I was standing but the bed with my hands on the it the officer’s came into the cell SCO S. came on one side of me and SCO D. came on the other side of me and SCO S. was in the back of me one of the officer’s said you like to write officer’s up then She pulled my dreads and R. punched me in the face then S. punched me in the face knockin me to the floor then S. was kicking me S. then rammed has knee into my rib several time’s trying to break them then the sergeante that was their told D. R. to knock me in the eye with his flashlight and try to pop it out I tried to cover up but he was still able to hit me with that flashlight in my eye and that hit had me dizzy while on the floor one of the officer’s had has knee pent in my neck punching on me then S. grib my ankle up in the air twisting it trying to break it then they pulled me out of the cell and had me walk on my ankle at first I couldn’t then I was too if I didn’t walk right I was gonna get beat up again. I walked to the Day room and was told to set down at the table and D. R. came up to me smackin me in the face like I couldn’t block it because my hands was in handcuffs. I was then taken to medical and the nurse asked me what happen to my eye and I told her I fell off the bed because I was scared that if I told her the officer’s it I would get beat up again. But to back up before I came out the cell the officer’s put the cuffs on me while laying on the floor they told me to get up I tried but couldn’t with my hands cuffed behind my back so Shelton took my dread into his hand and tried to pull me to my feet, but it didn’t work so S. and R. pull me to my feet.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“My stay in bayside state prison has been the worst experience I’ve ever had to deal with. I’ve been incarcerated going on 7 years in Sept. The last month of me being at that prison I’ve experience the C.O. humiliate me calling me spic & other inmates niggas . The way they talk is disrespectful and uncalled for. While being house on F-unit I personally saw a female officer by the name of Mrs. Z. and another C.O. called P. D. smack a inmate and provoke him. At the time he defended his self a bunch of C.O. came in beat on him handcuff him. Drag him out the door push him down the steps while handcuff pull his pants down and strip him naked in 9 degree weather. That was unbelievable because I’ve never saw something like that my whole life. I personally don’t want to go back there and be degraded and humiliated or even hurt. The sad part is I’ve experience all this in a month or so between Dec. 19, 2013 and Jan 30, 2013...”–

*Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“Two officers (whom I can name but won’t at this point) retrieved an empty tray and had cell 113 opened. One officer proceeded to throw the empty tray at inmate (redacted). Inmate (redacted) kicked the tray back out of his room. Then the officer proceeded to go into cell 113 and attempted to manhandle inmate (redacted). Inmate (redacted) fought back and dazed the officer, knocking him down. The other officer took off running and called for backup. Inmate (redacted) took no further action against the dazed officer. Seconds later an innumerable amount of officers rushed into C-unit, ran down to cell 113 and proceeded to completely demolish inmate (redacted). Shortly after the first wave of officers came a second wave of officers dressed in full riot-gear arrived. They proceeded to take a turn savagely beating and continually macing the already handcuffed and subdued inmate (redacted). Eventually they drag inmate (redacted)’s lifeless-looking body off of the tier, leaving behind an extremely bloody mess. . . I was told about another incident that took place about two weeks prior to the incident involving inmate (redacted). Apparently the officers on B-unit beat up an elderly inmate and drug him out of the unit and across the compound half-naked. This inmate also received the all to common helicopter ride to St. Francis Hospital. Civilian members of the staff whispered to various inmates that the old man died. Although some of the civilians seemed disgusted, I can only assume that job security and fear prevent them from speaking up. After all, we are only a bunch of criminals who deserve to be ‘punished’, right?” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“I was told by officer green on (f unit) that if I made the mistake of coming out of the shower without my shirt on, I would be beaten to the body in the back kitchen area. That’s where most body beatings take place. . . They have officers that stand guard at the remedy box at center, it is sometimes impossible to submit an grievance or risk a beating . . . The heat index in that cell was over 100. It was the first time I thought I was going to die in jail. . . I served 14 year in 3 federal penitentiaries [...] they are nothing compared to the brutality and pure disregard for human being blk or white . In 6 months at Bayside, I witnessed over 13 beatings by staff. Even the woman officers join in. . . I spent 6 months of fear! At bayside and i just thank god for



coming to northern state . . . Every staff member there should be fired because they all knew or witness the violations. Clearly 8th amendment. Including the entire medical department.” – *Anonymous, New Jersey, no date*

“I am currently being held in the detention unit here in this prison. I was given 30 days detention after receiving three disciplinary charges after defending myself from an attack by an inmate here in this prison who was acting on behalf of correctional officers. The attack and following struggle left me in the prison infirmary for five days. At the time of the attack, I was on a tier in the administrative segregation unit and I was returning to my assigned cell after being let out of the shower by a COR F. This C.O. however left inmate . . . Cell door open so that he could attack me. This is their third time attempting to have an inmate in this prison assault me. After not getting the results they wanted the second time they C.O.s took it upon themselves to attack me as a result of that confrontation I was given 4 years ad. Seg. In 2009 and transferred to the ad. Seg. Unit at East Jersey State Prison but when that unit closed I was sent back here in March of 2010. Almost immediately upon arriving back here I began to be harassed and it continued to escalate until they attempted to have me assaulted. *L.M. New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

“. . . on July 28, 2011, officers ran in my cell, I was maced and assaulted by these officers. When I told S.I.D. about this incident he laughed and said he hadn't seen any report on it and that I should 'take it on the chin', cause without any proof, it will go no where. However, if that's the case, why am I in a detention unit without any charges being subject to cruel and unusual punishment for an unfounded allegation????”- *S.C., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2011*

## VIII. RACISM / DISCRIMINATION

*From the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination:*

***Article 1: Discrimination between human beings on the ground of race, color or ethnic origin is an offense to human dignity and shall be condemned as denial of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights . . .***

***Article 2: No State institution, group or individual shall make any discrimination whatsoever in matters of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the treatment of person, groups of persons or institutions on the ground of race, color, or ethnic origin.***

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### ***Universal Declaration of Human Rights***

#### ***Article 2:***

*Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.*

*Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation or sovereignty.*

#### ***Article 18:***

*Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.*

#### ***Article 27:***

*In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.*

### ***International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)***

#### ***Article 2***

*States Parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races, and, to this end:*

- a. *Each State Party undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation. . .*

### **Article 5**

*States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law . . .*

- a. *The right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice;*
- b. *The right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm, whether inflicted by government officials or by any individual group or institution.*

### **Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners**

#### **Principle 2**

*There shall be no discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin.*

## **TESTIMONIES**

### *Discrimination*

“I am a transgender and I have been living as a woman since I was 13 years old. I have been going through discrimination and harassment, I been verbally and mentally, emotionally abuse, for a little more than 6 years. Name call, like fag, pig, disgusting and other names that will not be appropriate to say. . . I can’t receive photo of myself because the warden and the mail office say that is inappropriate because I’m dress like a woman. I am constantly put in segregation because of my gender. I been told not to walk around the courtyard because I walk like a woman. That my provocative behavior will bring me problem in this facility. I am mentally depressed, I been humiliated and bully.” – **J. M., unknown, NJ**

### *Racism*

“I am still in lock up here. I am in the same clothes. I have not been able to call my family, shower, for over three days. No property, no canteen, nothing. There is a list they go by and I am not on that list yet I am being moved from room to room by this cop over her named. . . , he have threw (sic) out my things each time. He told cops that I assault women CO’s, which I don’t. This cop is putting my life I danger. Today I went for an x-ray and once more he moved me. I was moved this time into a condemn (sic) room, no water, nothing. My last room my light was out. He does something to have me moved. I am on too much meds to do this. I don’t feel safe around this cop. I don’t want PC (Protective Custody), but something needs to be done. I see this cop

setting me up, he have said to me already that he kills Muslims like me.” – *Anonymous, Northern State Prison, New Jersey, 2010*

“I am writing in regard to a violation of my first amendment rights, and discrimination against me by on Doctor here at Northern State Prison. Please find enclosed an annexed certification of facts pertaining to this matter. I sought entry into an Administrative Segregation Rehabilitation Program which, to my knowledge, is directed by Dr. G. . . On June 6, 2011 I wrote to Dr. G. again to express my interest in being granted an opportunity to enter his program, as I believe it would be beneficial to me. I admitted to having past troubles which I would like to keep in the



**Ex-inmate: I was tortured**

A former Sussex County jail inmate has filed a lawsuit against Sussex County officials, saying they beat him to his knees in a cold shower while he was strapped — and restrained him for 19 hours in a chair known as the “happy chair.”

The alleged attack on Robert Norman, 37, formerly of Sussex County, occurred Oct. 4 after Norman saw another inmate in the restraint chair and tried to talk to him, according to the lawsuit filed by Norman’s attorney, Jeffrey Patti, in U.S. District Court in Newark.

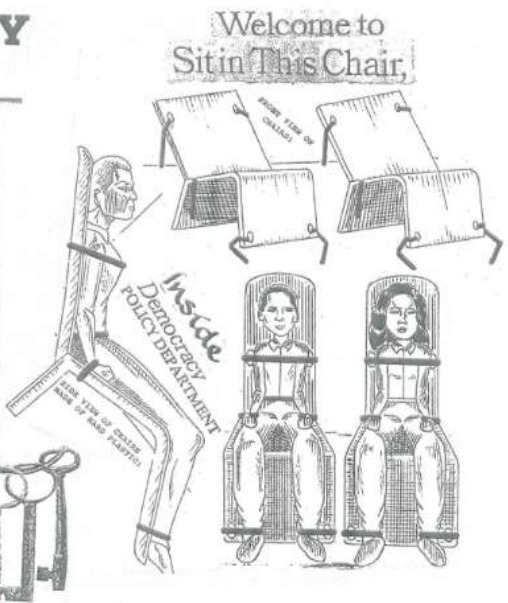
The “deliberate” and “unlawful and inappropriate use of the restraint chair on plaintiff was solely for the purpose of punishment and intimidation,” in violation of its permitted use, according to the lawsuit.

“This was an instance of torture,” said Patti, a woman civil rights activist who has filed an array of lawsuits on behalf of inmates at the county jail.

Sheriff Michael Strada, who said he had not yet seen the lawsuit and could not comment on its specifics, said the restraint chair is not used to punish inmates. “The chair is used for his (an inmate’s) protection or for the protection of other inmate inmates and guards,” said Strada, who took off on Jan. 1.

After Norman talked to the inmate, seven officers Michael Norman, put him in restraints, beat him in a cold shower, then strapped him for 19 hours in the chair, “affectionately known as the ‘happy chair’ among corrections staff,” the lawsuit states.

—*The Atlantic*



past, and that rehabilitation should be applied to those in need of such, to which extent, I fit such a program. Dr. G. explained that I cannot enter his program due to my affiliations and ideology which are Nationalistic/Pro European American. When asked if other prisoners “gang affiliated” were in the program, he admitted there were. He based my non-admittance into his program on my political ideology, which is unconstitutional and blatantly discriminatory . . . there are prisoners in the program with their own nationalistic, political ideology, there are prisoners who are S.T.G. labeled (Security Threat Group), and there are prisoners in the program with extensive violence on record. . . My political ideology is National Socialism, founded by Adolf Hitler, and Dr. G. is Jewish. . . I wish to be placed into the Administrative Segregation Program.” – *G. L., Northern State Prison, Newark, NJ, 2014*



**Ex-inmate settles lawsuit over claim he was strapped in chair**

**By Ben Horowitz**  
Star-Ledger Staff Writer

A former inmate at the Sussex County jail who claims he was beaten twice and restrained in the “happy chair” in October 2010 has settled a lawsuit against the county for \$35,000, according to the inmate’s attorney.

The attack on Robert Norman, now 31, of Wantage, occurred after he saw another inmate in the restraint chair and tried to talk to him, according to the lawsuit filed by Norman’s attorney, Jeffrey Patti.

When he filed the lawsuit in 2011, Patti called it “an instance of torture” and claimed that after Norman talked to the other inmate, seven officers entered Norman’s cell, sprayed Mace in his face and punched and kicked him about the face and body.

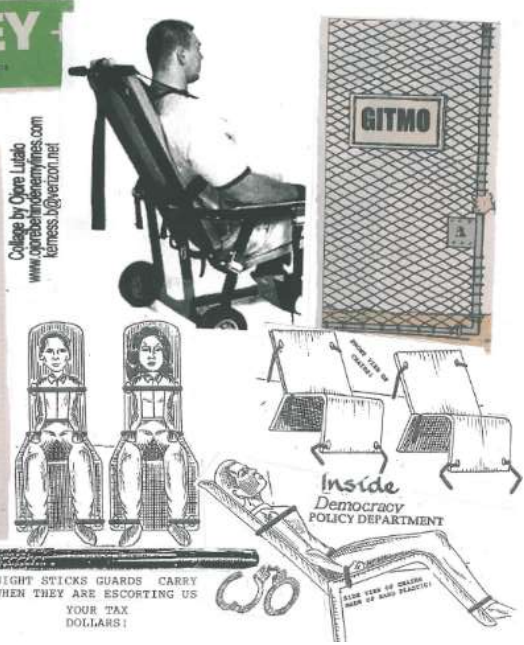
Then Norman’s hands were cuffed behind his back, his legs were put in shackles and he was taken to the shower where officers beat him and ran cold water on him, according to the lawsuit.

The attack concluded with Norman being strapped for 19 hours in the restraint chair, “affectionately known as the ‘happy chair’ among corrections staff,” the lawsuit said.

“The defendant’s unlawful and inappropriate use of the restraint chair was solely for the purpose of punishment and intimidation,” in violation of its permitted use, according to the lawsuit.

In an interview Tuesday, Patti said, “Mr. Norman absolutely feels vindicated about the outcome” of the lawsuit.

“It’s been a long haul for him,” the attorney said.



## **IX. SEXUAL ABUSE / VIOLENCE**

The horrors experienced by many young inmates, particularly those convicted of nonviolent offenses, border on the unimaginable. Prison rape not only threatens the lives of those who fall prey to their aggressors, but it is potentially devastating to the human spirit. Shame, depression, and a shattering loss of self-esteem accompany the perpetual terror the victim thereafter must endure. – *Harry A. Blackmun, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Farmer v. Brennan, 1994*

### **TESTIMONIES**

“On June 11, 2013, I was sexually abuse and robbed by another inmate in S.S.C.F. Delmont, NJ. On June 23, 2013, I was in such a RTS and this Post Traumatic Stress Disorder which was caused by the RTS i.e. Rape Trauma Syndrome, took me into a point where I really wanted to kill myself. Well, when I told Sergeant Thomson, he call me a “freak” and I was placed in psychiatric watch. However, I continue and reported the abuse to Dr. G., Sergeant G., Doctor G. and Officer F. The medical team i.e. mental health team, reported the abuse to SID and documented. Now I find myself house in a isolation unit heavily medicated for RTS and PTSD.” – *J. S., Northern State Prison, Newark, NJ, 2013*

“In or about April 2012, Former Detention Center officer S. began to sexually assault and demand sexual acts from me which were non-consensual and against my will. B. threatened me with physical abuse should I resist her sexual assaults or report this activity to another employee. B. continued the sexually assaults and threats until approximately November 2012. . . This is humiliating considering the fact I was raped at the Detention Center.” – *S.F., Union County Jail, Elizabeth, NJ, 2014*

“The following was written by a Public Defender. “Mr. K. states that both he and another inmate were raped and abused by a corrections officer at South Woods State Prison. Mr. K. said he has already filed charges against the officer, and he is willing to take a polygraph test. Mr. K. has been transferred to several different prisons, but he is now back at South Woods State Prison. According to the Department of Corrections’ website, Mr. . . . is now incarcerated at Northern State Prison. Mr. K. said the incident of sexually abuse occurred in 2008, and he has since been transferred from South Woods State Prison to East Jersey State Prison and then to Mid-State Correctional Facility. He said that he left Mid-State Correctional Facility in order to have an operation on his knee, and from the hospital, he was returned to Bayside State Prison. He said that he needed to leave Bayside State Prison because the officer who had abused him was transferred to Bayside State Prison. . . Mr. K. said that he was returned to South Woods State Prison where the officer who had abused him has family and friends on the corrections staff. He states that he has been ‘terrorized, retaliated on, set up and wrote up on so many charge,’ in retaliation. He said that he is

now in 'ECU II handcuffed in a wheelchair.'- *M. K., New Jersey State Prison, Trenton, NJ, 2014*

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YOU NEED TO (KNOW)**

**THE GOVERNMENT HAVE  
INCOME FROM TAX REV  
ENUSE-ABOUT \$30 BIL  
LION EACH DAY.....**

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## **X. WOMEN IN PRISON**

### ***Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)***

#### ***Article 1:***

*. . . the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, or human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civic, or any other field.*

#### ***Article 2:***

*D. To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with its obligation.*

*G. To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.*

#### ***Article 5:***

***State parties shall take all appropriate measures:***

*A. To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women. . .*

### ***International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)***

#### ***Article 3:***

*The State Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.*

### ***Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women***

#### ***Article 2:***

*Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to the following:*

*C. Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.*

#### ***Article 4:***

*States should condemn violence against women and should invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination. States should pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women and, to this end, should:*

- *Exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, and in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the state or by private persons*
- *Take measures to ensure that law enforcement officers and public officials responsible for implementing policies to prevent, investigate and sensitize them to the needs of women.*

## TESTIMONIES

“I was locked in isolation. I was scared and cried a lot. I sat there day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. Not once was I ever taken out of my isolated cell. I was in a separate building and was not allowed to buy canteen, was not allowed recreation, library, television, or church. I was prevented from making telephone calls or having visits. I was allowed a short shower, after which I was locked back in my cage. My cell had a window that was four inches wide and three feet long. The window was wide enough to fit one eye. I needed fresh air so badly that I started to rub my nails against the rubber seal around the window, it was thick and hard rubber but I wanted air. I rubbed for months. My nails broke down but I continue to scrape. The pain and blood didn’t disturb me. It took me 8 months to get a tiny opening. I felt worse than a caged animal. I spend three years there and have phobias where I still need to be enclosed in my cell.” – *J. V., Edna Mahon Correctional Facility, Clinton, NJ, 2005*

“ . . . for over two years I have been sexually abused by male prison guards and male civilian personnel at this institution. . . This abuse started in 1998. . . by touching, then oral sex, then intercourse. [A]t one time, one of the officers felt I was pregnant and quickly administered some pills he brought in to “bring it down,” as he stated to me. I remember becoming very [sick] from this. One of the officers was very brutal with me and one day actually slammed me against the wall while his hands held me tightly around the neck; [he stated] he [would] kill me if I ever said anything. Then the sergeant who had the most sexual acts with me threatened me a few times saying if I [or anyone else] dared ruin his career that he [would] kill me. I strongly feared for my life and did as [I was] told each time I was called upon. . . The word “no” does not exist in our vocabulary and when we dare say [it] we get punished.” – *J.V., Edna Mahon Correctional Facility, Clinton, NJ, 2001*

“ . . . We are forced to sleep on the floor in the middle of winter with bad backs and aching bodies, cold air blowing from the vents no matter what the temperature was outside. At 2 o’clock in the morning, they wake you up and tell you to pack up and clear the room.” *J.L., Edna Mahon Correctional Facility, Clinton, NJ, no date*



## **XI. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS**

International treaties, conventions, and declarations provide basic guidelines for the treatment of prisoners. State and federal laws, in the form of statutes and regulations prescribe rules of law for correctional practice, and court decisions impose rules on specified jurisdictions, while providing guidelines for others. However, these rules and guidelines are all too frequently ignored in the U.S. prison system. Meanwhile, the United States continues to criticize other countries for violations of prisoners' human rights.

The "Torture in New Jersey Prisons" report is meant to help illuminate – and eliminate – this hypocritical double standard, and move our country toward a rational and humane correctional system, which would reflect our country's professed values and effectively provide for the safety and rehabilitation of our people, our families and our communities.

For decades, the America Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has spoken out against the torture and abuse of prisoners. AFSC criminal justice programs nationwide have received thousands of calls and letters from prisoners and their families that document egregious violations of international human rights standards, including the Convention against Torture, ratified by the U.S. in 1994. The list of abuses is long and horrifying: vicious and deadly assaults on prisoners, the use of stun guns and restraint tables, rape, prison chain gangs, and unconscionable medical care, to name just a few.

Since 1992, the AFSC Prison Watch Project in Newark, New Jersey, has monitored the use of extended sensory deprivation and devices of torture in prisons across the country. We also continue to receive complaints of isolation, racism, brutality, and other violations of human and legal rights. The problems we hear from across the country mirror those from New Jersey, but the testimonies in this folio come exclusively from New Jersey prisoners, to emphasize that these national problems exist close to home.

It is clear that the concepts of human rights law need to find their way into the U.S. police, court and prison justice systems. One way this can happen is for prisoners, their families and loved ones, and prisoner rights advocates to weave the language of international standards and treaties into their arguments for humane prison conditions and treatment of prisoners.

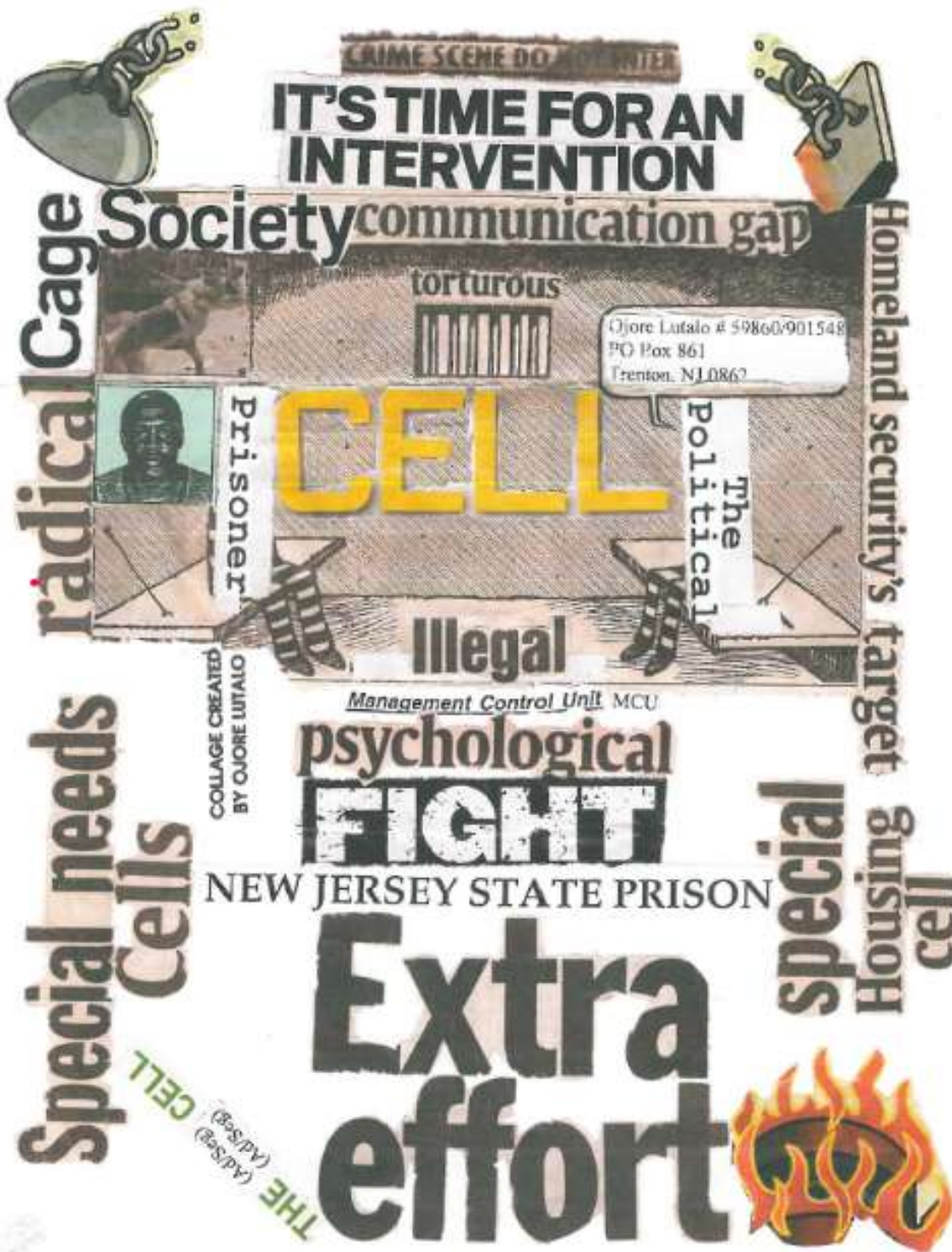
Another way is to infuse accepted international standards into the legal framework of our criminal justice system.

This report correlates the major issues and conditions in New Jersey prisons to the most relevant international standards as stipulated in international human rights agreements.

As a final note, the following concluding recommendations should receive priority attention:

- Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture.

- End the use of isolation immediately, and, in New Jersey, support S2588
- Removing human beings from their community, depriving them of human contact and the support of their families and loved ones, denying them stimuli, and subjecting them to inhumane conditions is cruel, unnecessary and counterproductive. Treating people in this manner violates our shared humanity and fails to honor the light present in each of us.
- Provide conditions of confinement in jails and prisons that are in compliance with U.S. domestic laws, protect the state and federal constitutional rights of prisoners, and adopt laws, policies and practices that are in accordance with international norms and obligations.
- Adopt a Prisoner's Bill of Rights in state law, comparable to the New Jersey Mental Patient's Bill of Rights, which address, among other matters, restrictions on isolation, restraints and involuntary medication, and the right to protection from harm.
- Adopt effective grievance procedures, accompanied by quality assurance mechanisms that ensure Department-level attention to and responsibility for allegations of violations of prisoners' rights.
- Adopt laws that improve transparency of correctional operations, policies and practices.
- Permit international observers to enter and evaluate institutions of confinement.
- For prison / jails not under the direct control of the federal government, the U.S. government must actively engage states and localities to facilitate such access.
- Establish effective systems of independent oversight of each prison and jail.
- Ensure that the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 is immediately implemented in all confinement facilities nationwide, to protect those entrusted to state and federal custody against sexual violence.
- Require prison and jail personnel to use the least restrictive responses to avert harm.
- Prohibit the use of chemical agents in prison and jails.
- Limitations on mobility and lack of ventilation significantly undermine the safety of all exposed to harmful agents.



## **XII. RECOMMENDED PUBLICATIONS & WEBSITES**

- *Survivors Manual: Surviving in Solitary*

<http://www.afsc.org/image/survivors-manual>

- *Survivors Speak: Prisoner Testimonies of Torture in United States Prisons and Jails*

<http://www.afsc.org/document/survivors-speak-prisoner-testimonies-torture-united-states-prisons-and-jails>

- *Inalienable Rights: Applying International Human Rights Standards to the U.S. Criminal Justice System*

<http://www.afsc.org/content/inalienable-rights>

- *Our Children's House*

[www.justdetention.org/pdf/ourchildrenshouse.pdf](http://www.justdetention.org/pdf/ourchildrenshouse.pdf)

- *American Civil Liberties Union*

<https://www.aclu.org/prisoners-rights>

- *Quaker Initiative to End Torture*

<http://www.quit-torture-now.org/quit/home/>

- *The Campaign to End the New Jim Crow – Princeton & Trenton NJ Chapters*

<https://www.facebook.com/CENJCPNJ>

- *Women Who Never Give Up: Dedicated to Helping Families Get Justice in Our Criminal Justice and Prison System*

<http://wwng.org/>



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