



COMMITTEE TO END THE MARION LOCKDOWN

June 19, 1989

Warden Gary Henman
Marion Prison
Marion, Illinois 62959

Dear Warden Henman:

Please forgive me for not writing you sooner about your latest act of barbaric censorship. I was busy preparing for a demonstration against Marion Prison in southern Illinois on April 29.

On January 9, 1989 I wrote to you and protested that you and your staff had stolen about 30 letters that we had sent to prisoners, containing a small packet called "Reflections on Five Years of the Lockdown." In a letter to me dated January 27, 1989, you of course denied this and suggested that the prisoners had actually received the letters but were lying to us. How clever these prisoners must be for 30 of them, who never see each other, to all come up with the same lie.

But now you've done it again! At the beginning of April we mailed many prisoners a letter informing them of our demonstration and asking if they would like to send a message to us. Also included was a leaflet describing the demonstration. All of the prisoners told us that they never received the letter. Then, in mid-May we received a package from you containing all the letters (at least this time you returned them!), each with a note saying that our correspondence "has been determined detrimental to the security, good order, and discipline of the institution."

Not only are these claims preposterous and insulting, but the fact that you deliberately held the letters so that our communications with the prisoners would be prevented until after the demonstration is obvious. Fortunately, neither we nor the prisoners are as ignorant as you and messages from 13 different prisoners still reached us and were read and passionately appreciated by those of us standing in front of the gates of the hell that you run, the lake from which you draw contaminated water for the prisoners in an effort to make them sick, and three other sites in the area.

As I wrote to you last time, no one expects you or Director Quinlan to act like human beings. We understand who you are and what your function is. The only surprising aspect of this entire matter is that each time you are caught doing acts like this, you deny them and act hurt and offended. But you never stop doing them. At least you're consistent!

Yours in Pursuit of Ending the Lockdown,

Steven Whitman

Steven Whitman,
for CEML

cc: Danny Schecter, "20/20"
Dan Rather, CBS News
A.M. Rosenthal, New York Times
J. Michael Quinlan, Director, Bureau of Prisons

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