

Paul Jones
Statement

DORSEY: Alright, let me hear that statement.

PAUL: Okay. My name is Paul [Simon?] Jones. Since August 18, 1976 I've been in a state of limbo. I'm talking about the kind of limbo that the Board of Prison ? has me suspended because I'm in Pelican Bay Prison SHU. PBSP SHU. With an indeterminate sentence, administrative segregation due to being accused of being a ? to some young boy and gang conspiracy and criminal activity that has never been defined. The classification committee has been instructed by institutional gang intelligence unit (ITI) to keep me in ?? in SHU until I debrief, parole or die. The goal of ITI is to torture us by filling our mental and emotional space with fear, rage, powerlessness and despair. To cut us off from sources of life and hope. That is why they came up with the short corridor, an even more restricted area of the SHU which consists of four buildings in this facility where everything we do is given more scrutiny and used against us and once we get chronos to keep us there permanently, such as talking to another prisoner in the pod next to yours. No matter what they do in attempt to shut me off from the outside I refuse to debrief and become an informant on anyone for any reason. ?? SHU prisoners are release date ? 100% of the time unless they get out of SHU. With those options of snitching or paroling gone, many of us are left to die a slow death such as in SHU short corridor. I came to prison as youth in 1969, while ??? in the streets, born into the abject poverty that can close off opportunity altogether, we gathered on street corners ?? for no other reason than to ?? I can certainly understand young people's despair. I know that even before they have begun to embark on life's journey, they are fully aware it holds nothing for them. No expectation or hope for better things, or better times. We learn early on in life that we ?? little to be in control of the big circumstances in our own lives. Prison looms very large in many of their futures.

I have be eligible for parole since August 18, 1976. That is 35 years of being in limbo. I came to prison with a sentence of seven years to life, which means that after serving seven years I was eligible to be released from prison on parole. At this time being in PBSP SHU short corridor with an indeterminate status has changed my seven-to-life sentence to a life without possibility of parole without my having committed a crime to even warrant such a new sentence, which amounts to a civil death sentence without benefit of a judge, jury or trial. Truthfully many of the prisoners have been held in ?? for so long that we are becoming an aging and increasingly infirmed short corridor population. When most people hear the word prisoner, they are likely to have a variety of responses. If you think people take a free association of prison you are likely to get dirty, scary, bad, bars, rape and other images that reflect what people think about conditions in prison. Criminals, punishment and other common responses underscore the mainstream understanding that most citizenry are used to thinking of prisons as a social response to crime. Not many people have an accurate or well-thought-out idea of what it truly means for prisoners, and what it means for society at large. The institution of prison is not known for its transparency. Prisons today are typically located in rural areas far away from the populations that they imprison. The very(?) architecture with its imposing and razor wire fences, and its narrow opaque windows encourage this austerity. For all the sensational attention that crime receives in the media, the prisoners themselves are kept out of sight and mind. Many of my indoctrinated ?? we love our parents, teachers, leaders, priests, rabbis, and ministers, as well as political leaders without questioning that

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people who commit crimes deserve harsh punishment. Prisoners are not ?? unless they are a zealot, or unless they are a celebrity. Martha Stewart, ??? in which case you usually sympathize with them and the actual question of what happens to prisoners is ignored. Prisoner abuse is only something that happens far away. So abuse in prisons rarely make headlines. And the media never deals with problems of anything other than isolated incidents. The only prisoners who receive attention are the ones whose stories would influence people's support of harsher punishment. Even though the public is not getting the information they need to understand how harsh punishments are, prisoners are never given a human face. By dehumanizing prisoners and glorifying those who are their keepers, by spreading fear of prisoners without trying to understand them, by creating the demand for punishment without reviewing the actual effect of that punishment, they have created a climate in which a great many prisoners become vulnerable to abuse. Looking at the stories that have come out of the California prison system concerning the physical torture of prisoners, we find that prisoners in PBSP SHU have had their skin peeled from their body by guards scalding water ?? ribs arms broken, while prisoners were strapped to gurneys by sadistic guards. And ?? in state prison, guards shot and killed 39 prisoners and wounded another 200, and the prosecution never brought charges against guards or any of those killers. But there is no mention of the abuses taking place in California prisons that is known to have one of the largest prison populations in the world. You can hear? about a celebrity facing prison time, or about abuses in prisons in some other country, or stories of the torture at US run prisons overseas ? US media had to cover it, generating incapacity of damage control. Not only did they shy away from suggesting the torture, the systemic or even torture, the assertion they would not hesitate to make in the case of Cuba or Chinese prisons. They failed to illuminate the extent of connectivity between the US prisons overseas and at home, including the many torturers at Abu Ghraib who were prison guards and officials in the U.S. before being sent to Iraq. Prison is cruel. Some guards are decent folk who needed a job. But many are sadists and racists who are drawn to the power they get over other human beings and becoming inhumanely unreasonable. In the short corridor the ITI has total control over not only the prisoners housed there but also over regular guards who work there. In the long run it doesn't even matter too much if a guard is a good or bad individual because it is their job to be cruel or manipulative and controlling toward prisoners. And if they don't perform their job they will be replaced by someone who will. Imagine what it's like to be in PBSP SHU short corridor where conditions are considered ghastly, sordid, horrible, and depressing in the extreme. But not a violation of prisoners' constitutional rights by the courts because such conditions are deemed necessary for security reasons. Imagine what other abuses of our rights are possible when security is the highest priority, and you can start to figure out what it means to be a prisoner in PBSP SHU short corridor, an area whose very existence violates principles of international law and human rights. Reinforces the reality that prisons serve to function of warehousing the barren?? their inhabitants. Short corridor prisons ?? and Degrading environment while ?? institutionalized

Debriefing process or retard our process... keep movies shown as entertainment to grown men. Push us into unquestionable obedience.

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Prison officials prefer prisoners who act like mindless idiots instead of conscious individuals and they go out of their way to harass or even mentally torture those who resist. Meanwhile SHU prisoners who have been locked up for ten to forty years administratively do not have access to good education or mental stimulation, are separated from our families and loved ones, and in a dehumanizing environment do not receive emotional support. We aren't allowed phone calls, can't take pictures, no contact. Short corridor prisoners are constantly bombarded with the message that we are prisoners and gang members, but we do not receive resources to rehabilitate ourselves. SHU prisoners who experience personal growth while in the short corridor do it despite SHU, not because of it. In American society, people are trained to depersonalize things. If you get statistics and objective, unbiased information, you might be motivated to sign a petition or write a policy paper. We want you to realize that we are human beings who are being oppressed at Pelican Bay State Prison. Prison guards go all out to destroy politicized conscious groups, and ?? very quickly ?? they allow racist gangs to thrive in general population. Nowadays, they lock up so-called gang leaders but the gang structure itself, and the racist microcosm of culture that gives rise to it, are left in tact. In Texas, the US district judge in a 1999 decision stated that as the law stands today, the standards permit inhumane treatment of inmates. What we want citizenry to take away from this message is two things: that they can put a stop to the inhumane treatment of prisoners, and that in order to deal with this abuse we have to change the attitude of society about prisoners as human beings who deserve to be treated as such.