

A First Person Account of Daily Life in ADSEG: Living in Filth

Segregation. We say that word and what instantly pops into our heads? Depending on your knowledge and experience the image may vary broadly, from the 1960s where African Americans were forced to ride on the back of the bus, separated from the privileged whites, to the millions of mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters held captive against their will in “segregation units” across the country, deprived of basic necessities EVERY SINGLE DAY for years on end.

To us here that word is a cut to our bodies, minds and (to the mentally feeble) souls. In my time of being incarcerated, though only 6 years, I have never experienced anything as atrocious as the conditions imposed on us here. And I am not alone in my sentiment. Many others who have been doing time before I was born know this to be true.

Any sensible person would know that even if foul conditions imposed on a peoples do not equal up to mass genocide, they still equal up to deprivations of our rights as humans! We are intellectual beings and to measure out the level of callous disregard to a people, to humans forced into the “care” of a governmental entity, as is being demonstrated here, should move those in a position of power to feel the need to help us stop this undeserved suffering.

Every day we are forced to live in single man cells here in 1 House, clothed with only shirts and boxers and socks, which are falling apart and soaked with field mice urine. We are not allowed to buy any soap to wash ourselves with from our prison canteen. And we are forced to make it through a 7-day period of washing our hands after using the restroom, taking showers, and the cleaning of our cells with a motel-size bar of soap. This just doesn't cut it.

No other prison in Missouri bars prisoners from buying soap. This is the only one. So you have to ask, why is this happening here and only here? Some believe the location of this prison, being the furthest south in the state, is prepared for and normally avoids oversight by Central Office administration in Jefferson City. But from our point of view, the main reason is the suppression of our voices to call out for help. We are denied the IRR (complaint) process—and if on occasion we do receive an IRR form it is “lost” in transit. We at SECC are calling out to the other side: HELP US! All we want is to be treated with a little humanity. Is it too much to be allowed to buy soap and stay clean? Unfortunately for us, that is the grimy reality. We here are doing our best to help ourselves, but we can't do it alone. We need help. Anyone willing to voice outrage at our suffering is greatly appreciated. All of us here at SECC thank you.