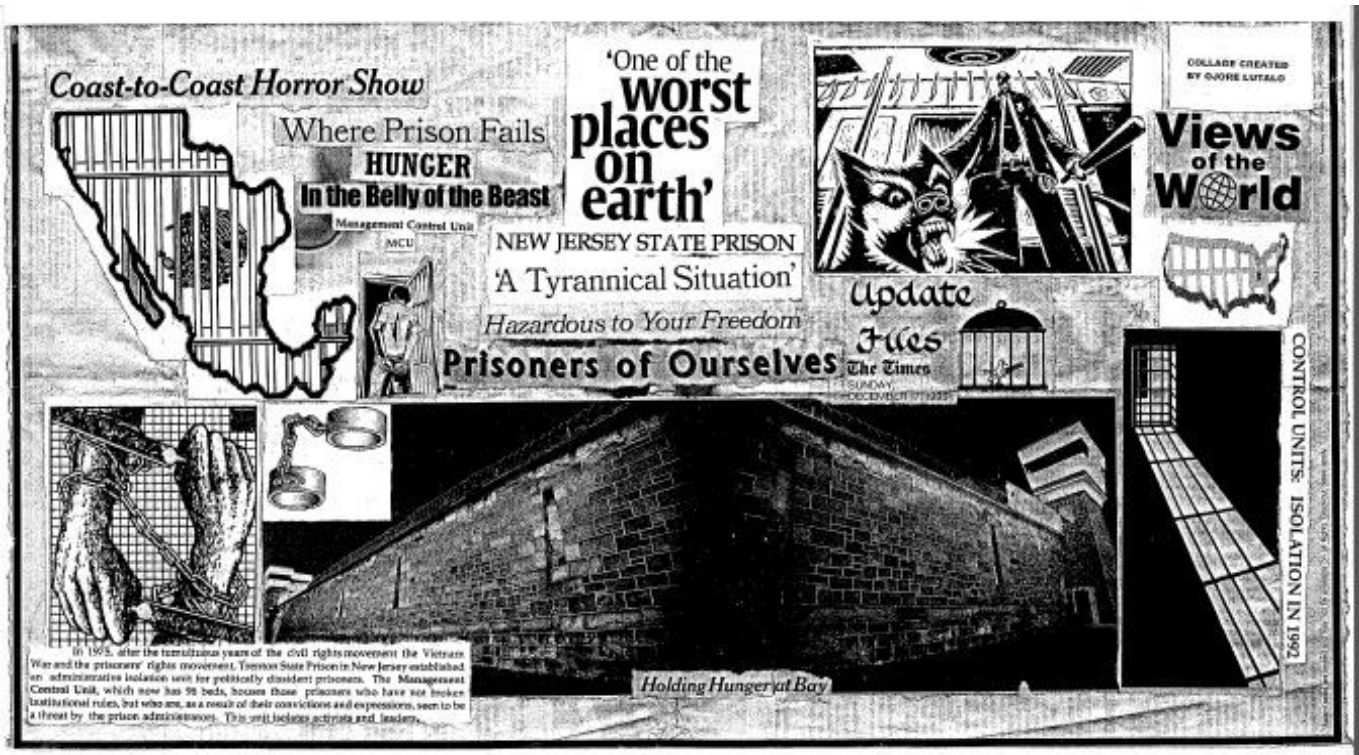


# “FROM THE INSIDE OUT”



A report by the  
**Prison Watch Community Oversight Initiative**

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Issue #2

*This report was created by Program Director Bonnie Kerness (973-410-3978/ bkerness@afsc.org), Interns Rachel Frome and Marshall (Justice) Rountree, and with further assistance from Jean Ross, Esq, and Lydia Thornton.*

Friends,

Prisoners, along with AFSC Prison Watch staff and volunteers, were planning for this issue to focus on isolated confinement issues. This effort was in response to the misinformation in the NJ Governor's formal message vetoing Senate Bill [S51](#), whereby he claimed that solitary confinement does not exist in NJ. Oppressive practices continue to be reported regarding physical abuse, medical neglect, corruption, lack of due process, retaliation against whistleblowers and the general conditions of confinement in New Jersey "correctional" facilities. We have included some testimony about some of these issues as well. NJ prison issues have had unusual media coverage during this particular quarter, which is another reason why we have expanded this issue to report problems beyond isolated confinement. Some notable articles published were, "[Locked Up Fighting Back](#)" by Sean Sullivan, "[Christie's veto of the solitary confinement bill is senseless and cruel](#)" by the Star Ledger Editorial Board, "[We bear the responsibility of sex abuse in prisons](#)" by Bonnie Kerness, "[Christie can end child torture at NJ immigration detention centers](#)" by Kimberly Krone of the Immigrant Rights Program of AFSC and "[Breathtakingly irresponsible](#)" by Marshall Justice Rountree.

[S51](#) attempted to restrict the use of solitary confinement in all "correctional" facilities in the State, consistent with recommendations of clinical, correctional and legal experts. The Governor maintained that "the bill seeks to resolve a problem that does not exist in NJ." But lawyers and advocates for people in our jails and prisons know that solitary confinement, imposing cell isolation for 22 or more hours a day alone or with another for long periods of time, exists throughout our prison system. People in state prison administrative segregation (disciplinary/punishment) units, special units for people with mental illness, voluntary and involuntary protective custody units, and preventive detention "management control" units are all subject to solitary confinement. Similarly, solitary confinement is used in youth detention "facilities," immigrant detention centers, and county and municipal facilities.

According to the [ACLU](#), NJ imprisons over 1,300 people in some form of solitary confinement every day. A [UN report](#) condemns the use of solitary confinement for more than 15 days. Other professional reports adopt a 30-day maximum. But clinicians report that even a short period of isolation can have deleterious effects, and long periods result in indisputable harm. New Jersey, with a history of isolating prisoners for years and decades, now still authorizes isolation as a disciplinary sanction for up to 365 days.

On January 11, 2017, the Coalition Against Isolated Confinement held a rally on the perimeter of New Jersey State Prison to protest Department of Corrections policies authorizing long time solitary confinement, the Governor's denial of this practice and the adoption by the Department of a new administrative rule memorializing the practice.

About 60 people participated in the demonstration, listening to about a dozen speakers talk about the use of torture in the form of isolation, in our state. Footage of the speeches of Bonnie Kerness, Marshall (Justice) Rountree, Alex Shalom, Rev. Charles Boyer, Larry Hamm and others - can be found on the Students for Prison Education and Reform's (SPEAR Princeton) Facebook page.

On January 26th, 2017, Rev. Charles Boyer, Bonnie Kerness and Jean Ross, Esq. met with Commissioner Gary Lanigan and members of his senior staff. Their preliminary dialogue focused on gathering threshold information about where the state's "close custody" (aka "Restrictive Housing" units) are located and how they are being used. Commissioner Lanigan reported that these (solitary confinement) units are currently located in NJ State Prison (NJSP), the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women (EMCFW), Northern State Prison (NSP), and the Albert Wagner Youth Correctional Facility. NJSP, EMCFW, and NSP have Administrative Segregation and Special Needs Units, NJSP has a Management Control Unit and NSP has an MCU capacity. Department staff also briefly reported on the increase in camera surveillance and restoration of some legal access services.

We have been told by prisoners that some of the prisons are not allowing "[From the Inside Out](#)" ([Issue #1](#)) inside because of the aerial photographs of each prison. As a result, this month we will be minimizing photographs to see if that makes a difference in delivery to people inside. There are several new resources for those working on criminal justice issues and for those inside. The AFSC Prison Watch Program has produced two new publications: "[Aging in Prison - a Human Rights Problem We Must Fix](#)" and "[LGBTQ+ Prisoner Resource Guide](#)" both of which can be shared widely with people inside. Please let us know if you have anyone that may need them (they are not yet online.) For people in the community, there is also a wonderful resource called "[Coming Out of Concrete Closets - A Report on Black and Pink's National LGBTQ Survey](#)". We can send hard copies inside, on request.

Thank you for reading the following voices and reports from those inside.

# AD-SEG

By Michelle Chaloka

Rehabilitation.....really  
What's ur definition of rehabilitation?  
Interactive groups?  
One on one counseling?  
Therapy sessions?  
Learning coping skills with a professional?  
Or is it  
A cell, a 10x12 cell, locked, alone,  
meals delivered through a slot in the door  
No interaction—except screaming through the metal door  
To the person next to you, 3hrs of outside rec a week  
And even that's in a cage...and  
Showers, handcuffed to and from, every other  
Day if you're lucky.  
Administrative segregation  
That's a form a rehabilitation in prison  
And no one talks about it  
Commit a crime...do ur time and well.....  
Rehabilitation...  
There's a couple institutional programs that u can attend  
As a social gathering, to see your friends, to pass pills,  
To get high, to meet your girlfriend in the bathroom  
And fuck around, to drop the institutional points you  
Keep fukn catching  
The reality... there's no rehabilitation  
Education  
Inside...u really gotta want it  
It's not easy, tedious paperwork and waiting..  
They don't want you to do anything good in prison  
You're on this list and that list...and wait  
Education was my rehabilitation  
Learning  
Helping women get their GEDs  
Tutoring, extra work  
Staying outta trouble  
College classes  
Homework, papers, tests  
It was a choice  
Either continue to do what I always did  
And get what I always got...  
Another prison sentence  
Or change....  
Today I am a woman in recovery, a daughter, a friend  
A sponsee, a sponsor, an employee a college student.  
I tell my story and make people aware of the prison conditions  
How there is no rehabilitation  
How ad seg is cruel punishment for women  
That don't know there is a way to change  
Not everyone makes it out to stand where I am today  
But I'm here and I'm their voice

# EAST JERSEY STATE PRISON



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
K.	1/11/17	Physical assault  Environmental conditions	<p>"In 2013 ... I was attacked by a cellmate. He threw hot water on me which caused serious burns. After the hot water was thrown on me, I was taken to a hospital outside the prison. [When I returned] I was placed in a detention cell ... an isolation 'dry cell' in the prison infirmary. In this cell , there was no bed, only a 2 or 3 inch mattress on the floor. There was no other furniture. As for fixtures, there was a sink connected to a toilet, but the toilet was flushed from outside the cell. The cell itself was filthy, with dry feces smeared on the walls. My teeth were chattering and I was trembling , that's how cold it was. Eventually, I was given two sheets and a blanket which provided little protection from the cold".</p>
J.	2/10/17	Solitary confinement	<p>"[In Solitary], whatever property a person have they take it and make you send it home. What if a person has no family or a person that can help assist you, then you just hit, so now they feel unwanted so the crazy doctor [psych] comes around then that person starts talking out their minds because the conditions back here are horrible then there's still no state pay. They need to allow people to do a tour throughout the whole ad-seg in Trenton State Prison, South Woods, Northern State, and Albert C. Wagner. I think people would realize the problems then."</p>
T.	2/21/17	Physical Assault	<p>" I was wrongly attacked inside my cell by an unknown officer, I was in my cell and a code 33 was called. The first responders came to the wrong floor. One of the said responders entered my cell ... stepped on my back then dropped one knee on my lower back. After cuffing me he stood up on the back of my knees and gave me a couple of kicks. I was in my cell by myself. I went to medical, I've been on numerous pain medications, pain injections and physical therapy".</p>

# SOUTHERN STATE PRISON



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
G.	1/17/17	Equal protection	' I reside at the worst prison in the state , South Woods state Prison, the racism down here is very alive'.

# NEW JERSEY STATE PRISON



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
J.	11/15/16	Special units (IPC: Involuntary Protective Custody)	"After reading this bill regarding solitary confinement , I noticed a section addressing PC. I would like to make you aware of a backdoor tactic which is being used by administration and SID to keep open these special units and receive more money from the State" . I have been in IPC/solitary confinement going on 8 years ... Now after Sen. Corey Booker mentioned the cost it is to maintain a unit like this it all makes more sense how we're being used ... DOC receives \$55 thousand per inmate for these units ... there are 47 inmates on my unit, I personally know about 11 who want out of pc, that's about 275 thousand dollars that NJSP would lose if we were to be released.
I.	11/6/16	Physical assault	" I made a complaint against Off. Perez for assaulting me, while Sgt. Patterson and Off. Perkins looked on. This happened on 08/11/16"
S.	11/27/16	Right to treatment  Access to the courts	" I've been here since '96' and in the earlier 2000's it started changing from bad to worst ... there is no accountability. The medical, mental health, social services departments, and custody do what they want with impunity. They have no respect for the prison population. The legal access and legal community is a

		Discipline	joke. The real litigating paralegals have been shipped out or passed away. Ad-seg (administrative segregation) is TERRIBLE! Some guys don't get to go to yard for months. They closed 1 left PHD (pre hearing detention) and made the 7 wing, pre hearing detention. The courtline hearing(s) are a joke. They gonna find you guilty of something if a C.O. or staff writes you up. " Now the C.O.'s carry mace. It's been a couple of alleged incidents where the C.O.'s mace men while in their cells. ... A couple of blind men they receive no help, and they are violating their ADA rights ( Americans with Disabilities Act) , I try to help with his appeals and letters. Sometimes it can be weeks B-4 I read his mail or legal briefs to him".
P.	12/30/16	Physical assault	"There's no telling when they're going to pop up and oppress you, they be putting guys in empty cells with no access to any type of resources to reach out to family, friends, and legal aid totally violating the internal policy ... I witness with my own eyes officers calling code 53 or 66 so they can have access to open an inmate cell and jump on them. For example when I was on 2ee Sgt. 'G' and three other cops came in to my cell and jumped on me cause I was kicking on the door cuz the officer on the tier wouldn't feed me". " Day, noon, night you have to be by your door cause you have rats, mouse etc trying to come in to your cell. Night time you go to sleep you wake up to use the bathroom it's a mouse in the bed with you ... shower is nasty and don't get cleaned you have mold in them".
D.	12/30/16	Non-healthy environment	"They keep the fans on 24/7 ... all it's doing is blowing the dust that's been on it for years and years ... old blood, spit, on the walls that may have been here for years ... truly unsanitary.
J.	1/3/17	Solitary confinement Physical assault	"I have been fighting these people on the M.C.U. (Management Control Unit) thing ... The jail done got crazy now because that old spirit or resistance is almost completely gone ... The new thing is taking guys to intake -put them in a cell, then jump on them. They just almost killed a guy."
S.	1/6/17	Solitary Confinement	"This confinement is worse than being placed in Ad-seg. 'Involuntary Protective Custody' inmates are supposed to be allowed to sign a refusal if the[y] wish not to be placed on 'protective custody' . I have sign[ed] numerous refusals, had affidavits presented by the inmates they claim threatened me, and they still have kept me on this status. This isolation is nothing but a gang unit with less privileges. They consider these units for 'high risk inmates': 2-B-I, 2-B-R, 3-B-L, 3-B- R, 4-B-L, 4-B-R, 2-D-D, 3-DD." " On the North compound the B-units, houses IPC, MCU, Title 30, PC inmates. We are

			handcuffed on every movement, even handcuffed while we have doctor, and dentist, appointments. We are treated like animals. We never asked for protection. We can have regular recreation in a yard or gym like we are entitled to in 10A. Instead all year long we are placed in dog kennels with no water, or restroom for hours .” “ We are denied access to the law library , because of this I have failed to file my briefs in a timely fashion. I cannot congregate with others to pray and they are forcing inmates to take medication back here”.
M.	1/10/17	Solitary Confinement	“My current situation is horrible. I have zero contact with anyone. I live in a special suite , my cell is in a cage where the cell next to mine is my own personal suicide watch cell where the toilet has a steel cover on it in order to force me to stand up to urinate into the sink and make bowel movements into a styrofoam tray. I also have my own personal ‘ violent person restraint chair’ room. My cell that I live in has steel plated walls as does my suicide watch cell. I am only allowed to go to ‘yard’ by myself in a small cage outside. Nobody else is allowed in the other yard cages when I go out. I am all alone with nobody to talk to.
M.	1/17/17	Physical Assault	“I was continuously threatened and retaliated against for telling administration what was going on. Two riot gear clad teams came and choked and beat me so bad that I needed to be sent to St. Francis Medical Center for further evaluation. Then I was brought to Trenton State Prison M.C.U”. “ In M.C.U. we are isolated. Stuck in our cells all day, go to yards in cages by ourselves. We are subjected to mentally ill inmates flooding their cells and throwing feces.
R	2/7/17	Violation of regulations (IPC: Involuntary Protective Custody)	“I am still housed in the M.C.U. here ... without a hearing. Others are being housed here on Involuntary Protective Custody status just to keep them in here for over a year and isolated”. “One inmate that I know personally is placed on IPC status because of a “confidential letter” saying his life's in danger so he will be in M.C.U. for the rest of his prison sentence. “Another main concern is the mental health department ... I am a special needs inmate and I don't even know my current diagnoses is”.

# NORTHERN STATE PRISON

NOTE: The AFSC Prison Watch Program has been receiving reports via calls and letters calling the situation at Northern “chaotic”. This is a cry for community oversight!

[“N.J. inmate pleads not guilty to charges of beating cellmate to death”](#) Thomas Moriarty for NJ Advance Media; December 6, 2017  
(NORTHERN STATE)



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
R.	8/17/16	Solitary confinement	“ when I first arrived at Northern State Prison (solitary confinement) , I was placed in the cell with ... ‘J’ . I am twenty years older than J , [he] has spent more than half of his criminal conviction sentence in administrative segregation. He informed me that he was once taking psychotropic medication and his behavior was evidence of why. It was difficult living with this young man, more so because I have been isolated from the effects of poverty and mental illness, and I didn’t see what was being done to help this young man who would be returning to society in less than three years.”
B.	12/16/16	Abuse of power	As a prisoner confined in the administrative ad-seg unit, here in Northern State , I have yet to find resolution in addressing issues concerning certain officers specifically: sco officer(s) Morales and Gomez pilfering the community within the ad-seg part i(1wing) by illegally using what is called “friendly extortion.” This way of extortion consists of forcing any of (those) who wish to utilize the systems telephone(s) or JPay kiosk machine, to pay a ransom from what one may order from canteen such as: Potato chips, candy bars, bottled water etc ... leaving one to deduct from the minimum



			limit of what (we) are allowed to order which is \$15.00 dollars . I believe this to be harsh and systematically inhumane for the simple fact that an individual may <i>have</i> to be further deprived from reaching out to family and loved ones and/or utilizing the JPay kiosk remedy system in order to address any problems or concerns”.
B.	12/30/16	Solitary confinement	“I was stripped naked and put in cell #S.W./123 (suicide watch) in Northern segregation unit. I couldn’t understand, because I hadn’t threatened anyone or myself. The nights were uncomfortable and unbearably cold. I only got about four hours of sleep a day, and my only source of heat was the sunlight from the window. Served was food with no utensils, so I ate with my hands. There was no toilet paper”.
Q.	1/6/2017	Solitary Confinement( Ad-seg)	“As far as Ad-Seg (administrative segregation) in Northern State there is problems with the living conditions such as it being infested with bugs such as mosquitos and water bugs. I was on Wing 1, cell 104 getting bitten by these bugs everyday. , and the harmful part to me was that I was locked in a cell with a bunk that had hep C, and was special needs”. Though things change a little thanks to N.J.C.A.I.C. the staff ... still do things to manipulate the congregate rec by only letting out a few rooms, the area for rec is built to hold 16 people ... they do something to their books showing they done their jobs.”
Q.	1/6/2017	Healthy environment	“The Mold which is in the showers of wing 1 and 4 needs to be addressed soon”.
R.	1/17/17	Healthy environment.	“Rights are being violated on a daily basis, prisoners are being called out of their names, scrutinized and disrespected in all kinds of ways w/o without any significant purpose but to create confusion”. “ Officers ... are violating the prisoners rights by also denying certain prisoners their right per 10A to maintain personal hygiene by way of showering, denying their right to 3 meals a day and sometimes reducing an individual down to 1-2 meals a day or no meal at all. These same officers are depriving certain prisoners from utilizing the telephone system in order to call and inform family members, loved ones or ombudsman”.
B.	1/17/17	Investigations	“A fair solution should be ... High tech body cameras that can record an officer's misconduct, high tech body cameras that [are] operable and thoroughly monitored on every unit daily, 24 hours a day”.
B.	1/17/17	Discipline	“The disciplinary committee is corrupted and should be reinforced as well because individuals are rendered frivolous sanctions for made up infractions and not

			given a fair hearing to prove innocence”.
J.	2/16/17	P	“I have traveled through some of these institutions that New Jersey provides. I have seen men physically abused in CRAF, and South Woods, . I have heard the screams of frustration in Trenton Ad Seg and Rahway, but I have never seen the psychological and psychosocial destructive tactics that are being used here in Northern State Prison.”

## BAYSIDE PRISON



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
M	1/17/17	Equal protection	“ I was residing at Bayside State Prison for three years and I endured discrimination for jobs that I was overqualified for”.

## EDNA MAHAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY



### 4 N.J. corrections officers indicted over sex abuse claims

The indictments were handed up by a Hunterdon County grand jury on January 19, authorities said. The indicted officers include Brian Y. Ambroise, 33, and Thomas Seguire, 34, against whom the prosecutor's office publicly announced charges last year. They also include two others, Jason Mays, 43, and Ahnwar Dixon, 38, whose arrests had not been previously disclosed publicly.

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
J.	2/18/17	Sexual Assault	“Pat down issues: breasts are touched/jerked up by fem COs- inappropriate touching. Some of us are targeted by some COs harassment...Strip searches in bathroom in front of a window with no curtain- no privacy. any employee can easily see in.”
J.	2/18/17	Right to Medical Treatment	“Hypoglycemia is not recognized to have snack bags like the diabetics get. I've had numerous low blood sugar episodes, very dangerous”
J.	2/18/17	Physical	“Ad seg: dungeon like conditions: dark, filthy, not climate

		Environment	controlled for winter and summer seasons. “
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# SOUTHWOODS PRISON



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
N.	2/21/17	Access to the Courts	“They continue to close the Law Library saying that they are understaffed”. Meanwhile prisoners are not being afforded the right to work on our ongoing legal appeals and actions for weeks at a time”.

# ESSEX COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY



Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
S.	2/14/17		“ I am a [Federal detainee at the Essex County Correctional Facility. Anytime a fight occurs on our unit we are locked in solitary confinement for at least three days (locked in cell 24 hours/day no showers, no religious services, etc). In August 2016 we spent five days under those conditions while the facility officials conducted a shakedown”.

# SOMERSET COUNTY JAIL

[“Inmate dies in Somerset County Jail, reports say”](#) Dave Hutchinson for the Star-Ledger; Monday, January 16, 2017

“The sheriff’s office has refused to give her(mother) details of what happened, the report said.”



## **THE ALBERT M. "BO" ROBINSON ASSESSMENT + TREATMENT CENTER**

Bo Robinson Assessment and Treatment Center is one of the halfway houses in NJ that is privately owned. In 2012 the NY Times did an 10 month investigation into Bo Robinson and



other private facilities citing deep ties to Gov. Christie. The article also deeply criticized the conditions of confinement in the halfway houses. In the summer of 2016, AFSC Prison Watch received numerous calls and letters complaining about the facility, noting that 20 people were locked in a dormitory, unable to get out in case of emergency. In this case, an emergency response team of about 10 people contacted the Department who had staff visit and correct the situation immediately.

Initial	Date	Category	Testimony
J.	1/30/17	Cruel and Unusual Punishment: Physical Environment	"I suffered a medical emergency: a heat stroke. Why? The heat win there was activated but not properly... The inside temperature reached 95-100*. F. This is no exaggeration! What was done for me? Absolutely nothing! I've written grievances (2) at Bo-Rob-to get ignored."
J.	1/30/17	Cruel and Unusual Punishment: Healthy Environment	"Only 20 feminine pads a month, insufficient for us: deaf DOC ears. There are no feminine pads available on commissary"
J.	1/30/17	Due Process: Grievances	"The staff interfere with grievances about them"