

Solitary Watch

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2010/04/14/n-j-prison-abused-inmates-during-month-long-lockdown/>

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by [Jean Casella and James Ridgeway](#) | April 14, 2010

Solitary confinement in U.S. prisons can take many forms including the temporary lockdown of units, buildings, or entire prisons. These 24-hour lockdowns are routinely instituted in response to perceived threats to prison safety or authority. On occasion, they can extend to days, weeks, or even months, during which the prison is under a kind of martial law even more extreme than its normal conditions.

At Bayside State Prison in southern New Jersey, this kind of lockdown was instituted after the murder of a guard in 1997. It lasted more than a month, during which hundreds of Bayside prisoners say they were beaten and otherwise abused.

Their complaints languished for a decade. But last month, a retired judge, who was appointed by the federal courts to be a fact-finder in the case, determined that the New Jersey Department of Corrections is liable for their abuse. The decision by former U.S. District Chief Judge John W. Bissell, clears the way for inmates to sue the state.

A detailed report by Mike Newell in the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) describes what took place at the prison in the summer of 1997.

Bayside, a medium-security prison with nearly 2,400 inmates in Cumberland County, was put on lockdown between July 30 and Sept. 3, 1997, after guard Fred Baker was stabbed in the back by an inmate with a makeshift knife.

Prisoners were confined to their cells, visitors were prohibited, and a Special Operations Group (SOG) consisting of 57 corrections officers from across New Jersey interrogated inmates and searched cells for weapons. The SOG officers dressed in riot gear, carried batons and mace, and did not wear name badges.

When the lockdown was lifted, inmates began to report stories of abuse to the Department of Corrections. More than three dozen inmates told *The Inquirer* in 1997 that they had been repeatedly beaten, dragged, forced to sit handcuffed in the prison gym for hours, threatened with dogs, and paraded through a gauntlet of SOG officers who beat them with nightsticks.

What happened next is an extreme version of a typical story: a series of half-hearted investigations and widespread coverups. As John Sullivan reported in the [New York Times](#) in 2003, in a long investigative article on the lockdown:

After the lockdown ended in September 1997, complaints of abuse began to leak from the prison. Newspapers reported the stories, and the Department of Corrections promised a thorough investigation.

The F.B.I. began to investigate after receiving written complaints from several inmates. But the investigators' case file, obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, showed that the agent handling the case made only one telephone call: to the internal affairs divisions office at Bayside State Prison. Over the phone, the file says, the agent learned that internal affairs planned to conduct its own investigation. Because internal affairs was already on the job, and because some inmates had hired lawyers, the agent concluded no further F.B.I. investigation was needed. The agent closed the case.

The F.B.I. file also noted that the United States attorneys office in Newark had subpoenaed records about the lockdown, but the Justice Department said it closed the case in August 1999, for lack of evidence. Both the United States attorney and the F.B.I. declined to comment.

In the end, the investigation fell to the Department of Corrections internal affairs unit. Internal affairs investigators conducted hundreds of interviews and gave lie detector tests to several inmates. Some inmates passed those tests when they reported abuse by guards. But in nearly every case, investigators said they could not substantiate the charges against guards. Often, the investigators' reports said cases boiled down to inmates' words against guards, or inmates could not clearly identify the guards in question.

It seems almost there was a decision not to credit what an inmate says, said Justin Loughry, a lawyer representing some Bayside inmates. By late 1998, internal affairs investigators concluded there was no evidence of widespread abuse. In the end, no charges, criminal or administrative, related to the aftermath of the murder were brought against guards at Bayside.

But questions about the Bayside episode refused to die, the *Times* reported. The newspaper's own investigations, along with those of inmates lawyers, uncovered internal prison documents, videotapes, and testimony from whistleblowers that supported the inmates abuse claims. Investigators complained of being told to file inaccurate reports. A few guards came forward to tell about the abuses they witnessed, and one prison ombudsman said that the warden had responded to reports of injuries by saying prisoners had probably gotten into fights or fallen against their bunks. According to the *Times* article:

Portions of surveillance videotapes, identified through the states Public Records Law, show guards dragging a handcuffed inmate down a steel staircase like a bag of laundry, and yanking another screaming inmate along a hallway. Other tapes show inmates with cuts and bruises. When an inmate being dragged along the floor begs to walk, a supervisor orders guards to keep him on the ground.

Dont pick him up, drag him, a voice says on the tape. I want him drug along the floor, just like that, like a pig.

Inmates told similar tales. Adrian Torres, imprisoned for car theft, said prisoners were forced to kneel motionless in the gym for hours. Anyone who moved or complained was dragged to the back of the room and beaten, he said.

You had inmates urinating in their clothes, Mr. Torres said in an interview at Northern State Prison in Newark. They made it clear: If you turn your head, if you lift your hand up, if you even say anything, they were going to beat you up.

A prison nurse testified in an unrelated administrative trial that hundreds of inmates went to the infirmary after altercations with guards. The former warden of a nearby prison said that an inmate returned from a work detail at Bayside bearing marks of a beating.

One guard, who requested anonymity, recalled that inmates were forced to walk a gantlet of guards who beat them with nightsticks. I could hear them screaming, the guard said. It was horrible.

One prisoner, Wilbert Jones, said he was attacked and beaten without provocation by a group of guards, then charged with refusing to follow orders, and placed in solitary confinement for 180 days. It is unimaginable when you are in the hole, locked up for something you didnt do, Jones told the *Times*. That had to be the lowest point in my life. His account was later corroborated by another guard who witnessed the attack, but because of the incident, he was denied parole and remains in prison today.

Four days after the *New York Times* article appeared, in April 2003, the New Jersey attorney general [opened a new investigation](#). A few inmates have since won damages in civil trials. But the March 29 decision by Judge Bissell will allow dozens, if not hundreds of inmates to sue the state for monetary damages.

According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Bissell found that it was reasonable for the DOC to place the prison on lockdown following the killing of a guard. However, both as designed and thereafter implemented, [the lockdown] violated the Eighth Amendment rights of inmates. It quickly became clear that the guards murder was an isolated incident, Bissell wrote, so a full lockdown with SOGs intimidating presence was not only unnecessary, but dangerous to the safety and well-being of the inmates.

How often do we hear government officials express concern about the safety and well-being of inmates? To hear these words from a former federal district court judge, who has been appointed as a special master and empowered to make decisions about the case, offers some hope that after 13 years, these prisoners may finally find some justice.



James Ridgeway (1936-2021) was the founder and co-director of Solitary Watch. An investigative journalist for over 60 years, he served as Washington Correspondent for the Village Voice and Mother Jones, reporting domestically on subjects ranging from electoral politics to corporate malfeasance to the rise of the racist far-right, and abroad from Central America, Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia. Earlier, he wrote for The New Republic and Ramparts, and his work appeared in dozens of other publications. He was the co-director of two films and author of 20 books, including a forthcoming posthumous edition of his groundbreaking 1991 work on the far right, *Blood in the Face*. Jean Casella is the director of Solitary Watch. She has also published work in The Guardian, The Nation, and Mother Jones, and is co-editor of the book *Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*. She has received a Soros Justice Media Fellowship and an Alicia Patterson Fellowship. She tweets @solitarywatch.

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Juan Moreno Haines](#)

October 25, 2022

by [Solitary Watch Guest Author](#)

October 13, 2022

by [Vaidya Gullapalli](#)

September 29, 2022

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cooperation.

I was one of the inmates that was there during the incredible torcher, beating and Injustices committed. I was one of the seving inmates, who survived to Brutal take over by the SOG, at Bayside state prison. There were 2 Brutal, Torturous Acts committed to inmates at Bayside. I was the Dorm Representative for the inmates. I new Steven Beverly, and I know the reason why he did what he did to Baker. I was falsely imprisoned for 13years, Brutalized, torched by dogs, and scared for life. And yes I still have the scars to prove it. I went through numerous torches and injustices to keep me silent to stop telling what happen to me and what I saw happen to others. Im one of the few thats still around that witnessed both Brutal torchers at Bayside state prison. I still have documents and the scars to prove it. My case goes deeper than, Bayside state prison. My case reaches to corrupt judges and police and detectives, prison guards, etc. The racism and torcher and Bayside state prison, was daily not just in 95 and 97, the regular guards. That were part of KKK, Skinheads, Arian nation, and militia, openly. I was on of six inmates who had to walk through the Gauntlet of SOGs, to st down with Warden, assistant Warden and Deputy Warden and other prison officials, to negotiate the lock down and reopening of the prison. I sat directly across from Warden at the big table. I have alot to offer, maybe one day I can tell my story. I knew Steve Beverly and also know why he killed officer Baker.

My name Russell Oatman, Inmate 267082,,, email is / oatman403@gmail.com

I myself was there them mf will beat yo as down Bayside prison i was there when Baker was killed them mf was off the hook putting hands & feet on a mf there was nothing we could do because they all worked together there from the ministration to the cos down. This one punk mf name black beard he worked in the Recreation Department / Gym he really thought he was a slave master with his punk as it will never change at that place just because a mf doing time doesnt make him a an animal he is still human mf just wanna do there time & go home. Fuck D.O.C. you mf will never get no more time out of Ms. Robinson Son you dick heads.

I know of a family friend that was killed in BaySide State Prison

I was in Bayside State Prison before the Baker incident and not too long after and what I went through while there the second time, it was for Ad-Seg (administrative segregation) the newly dubbed Baker Unit B Unit was just converted into Ad-Seg and the guards were abusive. Starving inmates they had animosity for, filing false disciplinary reports to keep inmates in Ad-Seg longer, outright beating and racial taughting. It got so out of hand, the department of corrections took away the Ad-Seg status of Baker Unit and transferred A lot of us to Trenton State Prison housed on the South Compound 2DD. Im in contact with a few people thats currently incarcerated at the Bayside State Prison (Leesburg, NJ) that say its still happening, inmates so injured from beatings, theyre flown out by helicopter to a hospital.

I feel like this, from the New Jersey Department of Corrections down to the guards all get together, line up theyre prospective reports and tweek them to fit a narrative that it was the inmate did whatever in order to justify the abuse. An inmates word is absolutely nothing to a lot of society because in the minds of people, hes in prison, how good is his word. Any reporter, documentary filmmaker, whoever want to hear about abuses in prisons, Id do your interview with just wanting my interview to help bring an end to the madness thats happening behind them walls.

***SOUTHWOODS STATE PRISON IS AN STRAIGHT HELL HOLE AND THAT NEED INVESTIGATING!!!!

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NJ SBI# 727997-B

NJ STATE# 265610/127625

Years of incarceration 1994 -2000

I can attest to numerous prisons and jail in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Inmate State# HT2242

After all the trauma and abuse they let me go to a halfway house two weeks later I was so happy I cried.

I was down at Bayside State prison when the cop got killed I was on the fram. The cops was beating people up for no reason. I remember like yesterday SOG members with masks and helmets came in with a dog drag us out our room put the dogs upon us the dogs didnt bite but the guy next to me peed on himself. the cops through us to the ground told us get on our knees the dogs was barking slobbering and drooling a inch from our faces. They told us to get up go back in our rooms as we pass tha cops would punch us or kick us or hit us with the baton. I was so scared that they was going to kill us I cried on and off like a baby for 3 days.

<https://youtu.be/H-1u0G12hQQ>

Sent from my iPhone

looks like Bayside is still has the same spirit , <http://www.thomhartmann.com/forum/2014/03/bayside-state-inside-chris-christies-prisons>

my father is there now. he just started a 6 year mandatory minimum sustenance there. ive been doing research then i found out this stuff. if anything happends to my dad there and he dies as a result. ill chase justice/ lawsuit untill the day i die

I always hear about how inmates state, tell your family if your not heard from in a week to follow up because you might be dead and your body might be in the woods or thrown for pigs to eat! I know several inmates at Bayside state prison today and their constant complain is unnecessary beatings, Cos beating inmates so bad that they die at the hospital and blame it on the doctors for not saving their life, Cos tearing up the only thing valuable that the inmate has to pieces from food to pictures, to having the worst contract with Aramark for food, breaking things that they purchased with their Jpay money. A group of Cos zip tied an inmate beat him then threw him down the steps, recently killed an inmate for accidently going through the wrong doors. Like, are you fucking kidding me!!!These assholes get away with murder and its okayhell no. But inmates are too scared to speak up due to Cos retaliation. Thats not justice. This system sucks and something has to change.

Completely agree with Ed c. They dont care about an inmates human rights so why should you care about theirs. I wish I could be a

juror on a case like this.

People complain about Hitler and the Nazi guards and concentration camps. They go about bringing these Nazi guards to trial. They were angels compared to New Jersey prison guards.

Especially when one considers that what the henchmen of Adolf Hitler did was in and during wartime. What is happening to people in peace time is even more sickening, worrying and disturbing!

One of these days I will be a juror in a court case where a prison guard is either a witness, a defendant, or a plaintiff. I will remember this and give this guard no credibility.

If that is what your position would/will be when a juror, I think you would be a bad juror!

Everyone deserves a open mind to what is brought before the court and against him/her, and when everyone deserves the right to be regarded innocent till the moment of found guilty, guard or no guard!

My opinion!

I know it is called a Baker Beating too

Solitary confinement is inhuman!

Excluding a human from human contact is inhuman, and equals torture!

No human being is sentenced to solitary confinement, so any such punishment is illegal!

We are pursuing a lawsuit in Federal Court on behalf of a former Bayside inmate (F Unit) who was beaten unconscious by several guards because he brought his dinner tray up late and was therefore deemed a trouble maker. If you were a victim or witness of abuse at Bayside and would be willing to testify about the treatment of inmates there, please call 732-303-6330 and mention Solitary Watch

My husband was there and went thru hell and just received this article ..how do we get in touch with the proper people..he was hurt and witnessed the abuse first hand. Orianahaliski@gmail.com

A friend of mine was locked up in Bayside prison back when they called it Leesburg. Then it was supposedly one of the better prisons in Jersey. Then I met someone who was in the lockdown in 1997, he told me about the abuse that went on in there. All these guards need to be put in prison and treated just like they treat everyone there. Also anyone involved in the coverup of these kinds of abuses should also have to pay by getting locked up. Federal prison is too good for them let them go to a prison just like Bayside.

Abuse at Bayside is still going on today according to my husband..he's locked up for 2 years..someone needs to find justice..not all these inmates are bad people and even if they were they deserve to be treated fairly.

23 hr lockdowns is a everyday event now, at the Atlantic County facility, no showers for 4 or five days, slop for food, no mattress, steel beds and overcrowded cells, all common, when will this stop, this is abuse.. legal abuse that they can get away with. Who will help these people. Not all of them are criminals some are just behind on child support, who are out of work, who will stand and fight these unfair and cruel laws.

Your choice not to take that shower in D-L or D-R. They do have 2 showers in there 1 on top floor and 1 on bottom floor they do let you out for 1 hr a day and you get to sneak out during nurse call and what not but ACJF being abusive. Absolutely not. Been there over 30 times yes food sucks it's dirty as hell but I was the reason I was there. Jail isn't suppose to be like camp but ACJF is. Especially Annex building

My name is Tommy H, and I was an inmate at Bayside Prison (units A & C) for two years recently. I have witness many barbaric acts by those so-called prison guards. The Bash Brother officers named Parker and Gandy are some of the worst offenders, and they belong in federal prison! To sum things up in a few words THEY ARE SADISTS!!!

There is still up to this day many abuse going on inside NJ prisons the guards get away with everything so went those prisoners are release to society I don't blame them for having so much anger many of them are inside prison for a first offense and nothing major they don't deserve to be treated like animals this guards and people in charge get paid to do a job and not to abuse and get away with it in most of the cases mostly everyone in charge with prisons and investigators are corrupted things need to change before things get worse for society abusing and neglect is not the way to rehabilitate prisoners and what people in charge are doing to prisoners that makes all of the corrupted ones worse than pigs they need to look themselves in the mirror before they judge and dare to abuse others very upset with reading about abuse in prison and their cover ups we need the media and family members of the people abuse in prisons to speak up and together

There is too much abuse in NJ prisons the guards and everyone that works and administer the prisons are fully aware of all the abuse but because they are low lifes as well as the guards abuse every prisoners because they are the biggest criminals it makes me sick how this individuals get away with all the abuse that's still going on in NJ prisons I believe all the family members of abuse inmates need to get together and make some changes and together stop the abuse in prisons that's not right I hate abuse I better not see noone abusing another in my presence because they will learn their lesson come on NJ I'm all for it let's get together and ask for justice noone no matter who it is deserves to be treated like garbage in prisons the guards don't have the right neither all the other people in charge of prison to abuse the inmates they get paid to take care of the inmates make sure they don't escape or abuse each other their jobs are not to abuse them just because the laws in NJ are letting them get away with abuse it makes me sick to see people like that get away with abuse wake up America.

I listened to some of the corrections officers conversations, they called it a Baker Beating, and I have no doubt that everything the inmates said was true.

My Dad worked at Bayside and then Southern State. That place is insane. My dad was career military and definitely an authoritarian when in the military but a decent man. However, after working at that prison for 5 years he changed. He started beating us kids half to death and attempted on 2 occasions to murder my mother. I know of one guard who tried to turn in what was going on in that prison and I know that other prison guards murdered him to keep him quiet. I know one gay man in that prison that my dad and 6 other guards did everything they could to abuse and attempt to make him commit suicide. My Dad got charges pressed against him but nothing came of it. All 6 of the other guards stuck to their blue code of silence. The charges against guards get hushed and nothing ever comes of them. When something does the State Department of Corrections pays the inmates off quietly and goes on with business as usual.

You may be writing about one event but I can say for certain this was and still is going on all the time there. I can honestly say. I was so glad when my dad got out of that wretched job after 16 years. However, the mentality of that place ruined my family and I will never forgive New Jersey for allowing it to continue. I honestly believed my Dad had become possessed while he was there. Now I know he went mad with power. That is a huge problem with DOC and the Police in New Jersey. They have been given so much power with the blue code of silence that I believe they start to think they are untouchable. For the most part, their right. They have no accountability.

So does the administrator a black female (E.DAVIS) know of these happening in Bayside..probably so as well as the social workers. When you call everyone has an attitude that you are calling asking about your family. I have called many times and only twice spoke with someone that has some since. Do the NJ prison officials care or are they going to have a repeat of the previous years. Ten years ago in the womens prison in NJ all the officers were having sexual relationships with the inmates for special privileges and the officers were bringing in stuff from the outside for the inmates. Its crazy that a place of reform is actually a nazi camp. what can the outside people do without their loved ones being hurt or killed? Someone tell me.

I was there just recently and I can tell you from actually living it that those bastards at Bayside State Prison are the meanest pieces of shit you would ever want to deal with. There is so much racism down there as far as the cops that you would think you were still in the 50s somewhere still fighting for your civil rights.

My husband is at Bayside and the things he tells me that are happening are crazy and just wrong. To know if he is ok on a daily basis and not use so much money on the phone, he calls and hangs up so I will know hes ok. We are out of state and cant visit often so we worry about him all the time. When will something actually be done and the prisoners cant say anything or they will be tortured.

nah, this sort of thing never happens in jersey.. :)

bout time the the inmates got to be herd kick some ass woot

Thanks for this. Were discussing Assata Shakurs work this week, and this is a `timely reminder, which well incorporate in our discussion.

Mildred H. Barnet Although I sometimes believe that most Americans are too self involved to pay attention to such things, I preferr to believe Howard Zinns statement in his book The Peoples History of the US when he writes on Page 635:

In a system of intimidation and control, people do not show how much they know, how deeply they feel, until their practical sense informs them they can do so without being destroyed.

In a highly developed society, the Establishment cannot survive without the obedience and loyalty of millions of people who are given small rewards to keep the system going. These people the employed, the somewhat privileged are drawn into an alliance with the elite. They become the guards of the system, buffers between the upper and lower classes. If they stop obeying, the system falls.

That will happen, I think, only when all of us who are slightly privileged and slightly uneasy begin to see that we are expendable; that the Establishment, whatever rewards it gives us, will also, if necessary to maintain its control, kill us.

Chilling conclusion huh?

I have been writing to & visiting prisoners, and supporting the rights of prisoners for well over ten years. I am appalled at the treatment of prisoners and the fact that the most egregious actions by guards are seldom if ever punished, much less stopped. It is not unusual for (especially mentally ill) prisoners to be tormented and even pushed to suicide by guards. This is seen and reported by other prisoner witnesses in the area, and nothing happens to the abusers. Being drunk on duty, in the case of one of the perpetrators I know of and complained to the authorities about, is neither punished nor stopped. Of course, to dispose of the mentally ill by putting them in prison the regular and quite foreseeable result of Reagans closing of state mental hospitals in the nineties itself an egregious action for a country that proclaims its virtue to the world. Anyone in the field of mental health should rebel at the horror that resulted (with foreseeable consequences) in delivering the most handicapped of people into the hands of thugs. These things are seen and reported by prisoners, protested by people like me on the outside, and nothing happens to stop it. The most vicious of killer guards continue on their well-paid jobs. It seems unlikely if not impossible that these criminal actions are not known by the administrators, since prisoner supporters write to the administrators and complain regularly about these incidents. From the failure to respond, one can only deduce that this behavior by guards is acceptable if not encouraged. The story above, though chilling, is not unusual. The problem is that the public at large either doesnt know or doesnt care. I am closing in on 82 years, and the cruelty I find in this country which proclaims liberty and justice is such that I will leave it only in grief for those I leave behind. WE are the Nazis. There is no excuse for not knowing anything about this; you elders must recall that there was no forgiveness for the Germans; are we more blameless than they?

The fact that little has been accomplished to date does not surprise me in the least. In California they call it The Green Wall of Silence. The whole process from start to finish is an exercise in brutality. Here is just one disturbing case in point in the news yesterday.

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/CRIME/04/13/maryland.police.beating/index.html>

As a whole my own experience at the now defunct California Youth Authoritys Fricot Ranch School during 1964-65 was not intolerable which may bother some of you that believe in harsher punishment.

The place had its moments however for a 12-13 year old boy.

One such night we were all told that we hadn't stripped down fast enough for our shower and were then told we needed to retrieve our cloths from the laundry pile in which they had just been thrown. This was really gross because we needed to put on sweaty underwear soiled by someone else. A guy close to me ended up with a pair of briefs that contained a very large fecal stain in them. So he complained loudly to all those around him waving them in the air so that we all could all see his unlucky draw. I couldn't help but laugh out loud at his predicament. Two crew cut blond counselors glared down at us from the observation room where they were timing our movements with a stopwatch. When they heard me laughing they became incensed. The one with the stopwatch in his hand counting down the seconds, stopped his countdown in order to yell at me,

So you think this is funny huh? Do you Alan?

No it's just that his underwear has shit on them.

Well they are yours now, so put them on.

No!

No?

Now that you've disobeyed my order you'll just have to put them on over your head instead!

No way. Man.

Both counselors had come down the stairs by now and stood behind the split door of the linen closet. From just inside the doorway they now demanded that I join them and to bring the underwear along with me. I held the pungent smelling underwear away from me with two fingers and went cautiously into the room naked as the day I was born. One of them slammed the door behind me and with one man on either side of me they continued barking their orders Dame it put them on now!

No!

Do it now! they demanded

There is no f***ing way I'm going to do that.

Then now you are going to have to put them in your mouth!

No f***ing way man!

At this point they rushed me and wrestled me to the floor trying to insert the underwear in my mouth while holding me in a tight head lock. I struggled to free myself while choking from the pressure being applied to my wind pipe then suddenly somehow I was able to break free. Once on my feet I burst out of the room still naked and into the adjoining dayroom. I headed for the front doors to exit the building in tears and quite frightened as to what to do thereafter. As I reached for the door handle it opened in front of me. It was my therapist and mentor, Hold on there Alan what's wrong now? I tried to compose myself and to catch my breath as I explained what had taken place. He quietly listened to my side of the story then said Don't worry I'll take it from here you did the right thing. From a distance I could hear him listening to the counselors side of the story. Then when they finished debating their actions my mentor returned giving me some clean cloths and his assurance that all would be fine now. He told me that the two counselors had given their assurances that the matter would go no further. However I could tell the two were still very pissed off and so I thought to myself that it wouldn't be long until they would pick up where they had left off.

As if to prove my point a few days later the same two counselors woke us all up around 1:00 AM then ordered us to all get dressed as rapidly as possible. Once we were all dressed we were ordered outside and made to line up in formation in the pitch blackness of a country night. There was no moon that evening which left only the stars to illuminate the road behind the lodge so one of the two counselors had to use a handheld flashlight to observe us lining up and to also lead us down the road. As we marched into the night he called out a rapid paced cadence in military fashion. Then once we were at the base of a nearby hill about a mile away we were ordered to halt. We stood there at attention in silence, while maintaining our formation and wondering just what kind of bullshit these two pricks were going to have us do next. We didn't have to wait long until the other counselor appeared in his four wheel drive pickup truck then set about maneuvering it in such a way as to illuminate the entire hill using his high beams. Once he was satisfied with the angle we were given the order to march up the hill. Then back down the hill, over and over again without pause. The hill was about two football fields in length with a steady steep incline which necessitated that we lean forward in order to maintain our balance. Up and down the hill we marched to their rapid cadence until the counselors grew tired of the drill which was well over an hour later. Sweaty and tired to the bone we all marched back to our lodge moaning from the pain in our leg muscles. Once outside the lodge we were given the order to enter the shower area, strip down to our underwear, store our cloths and return to our bunks. As I laid down I could see from my room's elevated position that many of the others in the dorm room below had decided to sleep on top of their blanket having become too fatigued to bother opening it up, some of these even had their feet still dangling off the bed as I fell to sleep exhausted.

On another occasion these same two counselors made us stand nude with our arms out at our sides until most if not all of us could no longer hold up our arms. Still we were not released but made to remain standing at attention for several more hours until the weaker guys started to wobble and faint. Only after several had fallen were we finally allowed to go to our bunks for what remained of the night.

On yet another occasion we were made to participate in a cross country run in the mid-day summer sun. The run ended only when someone passed out from heat exhaustion.

These two Nazi storm troopers (as I called them) were the main source of our discomfort while we were confined there.

Or take my older brother's experience also at age 13 and weighing less than 125lbs.

My brother told me of how one of the staff in solitary had become irritated with him and they had exchanged some harsh words. Sometime later as Mike rested quietly on his bed the counselor rushed into his cell after soaking a towel with urine and held it over my brother's face until he passed out. I thought of the fear my brother must have felt while a man weighing over 250lbs was on top of him smothering him with piss.

If we do such things to children what are we capable of doing to adults?

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