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RE: Sebastian R. Phillips

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I had the pleasure of serving part of my sentence at Mendota Mental Health Institution with Mr. Phillips where I found a bright, misunderstood kid who had been stuck on maximum security for nearly two and half years. In my first interaction with him we played chess, and he lost badly—as he did the next four games until he earned his first win and did not look back: taking the series 23-12-3 before COVID protocols shut down our activity.

He had, well has, behavioral problems which I found relatively easy to address through positive peer reinforcement and within 9 weeks, per our request, we were transferred to medium together and served another month or so together before I was shipped off to a less restrictive unit (TRU). Several months later he was transferred to minimum (TRAC3/W) where—in spite of challenges—he has remained on since 1 December.

I realize Mr. Phillips profiles as a severe risk with a concerning history of aggressive behavior, but I would like to point out—to my knowledge—he has not engaged in said behavior for more than a year and half and MMHI deems him such an insignificant risk they have placed him on the third least restrictive unit. More than that locking the door and throwing away the keys on a 19 year old kid, whose worst crime was in the heat of the moment spitting on a county jail correctional officer, would be an utter failure on our society's part: we have an implied responsibility to cultivate and “rehabilitate” minds that can assist in transforming our world. Mr. Phillips has the gift of a tactical mind and I could use him at my organization The Space Force, a NATO level NGO seeking to advance Cyber+Space alliance wide—and in fact he participated in one of our conference calls already where my staff was very impressed with his comments and what he brought to the table.

And as such I commit to remaining in his life, shaping his “creativity” and being a positive influence on his path forward. While I might disagree that a restrictive setting such as the one Dr. Miller suggested is necessary, if it includes internet access where I can help him navigate cyberspace and become an impactful actor on the network then I would support that if part of the plan was for him to move to a less restrictive setting over the next six-twelve months.