

For the attention of Governor Mary Fallin, Senators, Representatives & Citizens of Oklahoma

I wish to bring to your attention how the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and the Davis Correctional Facility owned and run by Corrections Corporation of America have conspired to downplay a serious incident that took place within the maximum unit at DCF on Tuesday, March 27, 2012.

This was not gang related but one man acting alone. His name is Bob Hughes, a New Mexico inmate housed in Oklahoma under the interstate compact. DCF spokesman Bryan Yandell described what happened in an email released the following day as, "a brief altercation" and that "two prison employees were treated for non-life threatening injuries during the use of force."

My husband, Jerry Hamilton 91102, is housed in Echo Alfa, part of the maximum unit at Davis. He recognized Bob Hughes because both were once housed at OSP. He observed the following events that took place approximately 15 feet away from his cell door window. In no way could it be described as a "brief altercation".

Hughes had abducted a lieutenant and the pod officer called Johnson he'd used their own handcuffs to handcuff them behind their backs. He held a 10-inch knife to the lieutenant's throat and ordered Johnson into case manager Grizzle's office. The door was left open. Hughes was being escorted to Grizzle's office at the time. Hughes was handcuffed behind his back before leaving his cell, but had succeeded in removing them. Hughes ordered Grizzle to leave the pod through the pod door and fetch Barlow the unit manager.

Approximately 5-10 minutes later the pod door opened and Barlow, the security major, and another officer walked onto the pod. Hughes told all three to sit on the floor. Jerry could hear some of the barrage of abuse Hughes shouted at Barlow for the way the maximum-unit is being run. As they stood behind the safety of the half glazed wall of the pod, Jerry could see case manager Grizzle, the warden, associate wardens and numerous guards and staff observing the situation as it unfolded. Jerry saw an officer with a video camera filming everything. Hughes now had several members of staff held hostage.

Without warning, the security major jumped up and lunged at Hughes. Hughes let go of the lieutenant pushing him unharmed to one side. Hughes then grabbed hold of the security major's shirt cuff dragging him backwards towards the open office door. He stabbed the security major in his side as they struggled together. Hughes fell backwards into the office with the security major. Johnson was still inside where he'd been told to stay. Hughes tried to shut the door, but at this point, approximately 15 officers charged in upon him. Another four officers were outside the office trying to restrain the lieutenant from joining in the melee once they'd freed him from the handcuffs. The situation remained out of control for

several minutes while the warden frantically tried to establish order amongst his staff.

During the fight Hughes was sprayed with a whole quart of Mace that found its way via the ventilation system into the surrounding cells. Just two days later they soaked another inmate with Mace four cells away from Jerry that gassed the whole pod. Mace is used regularly at DCF and to excess. My husband's eyes and sinuses were badly affected and he ended up with an infection that caused him great pain and discomfort and prevented him from seeing properly for several days.

Jerry was transferred to Davis from OSP in August 2008. He was told that the transfer would be to his benefit. He was not transferred for punishment. Since then he has witnessed the Davis maximum unit for general population become a punitive, administrative segregation. He is classed as general population but is forced to live side by side with a volatile mix of disruptive inmates and those in protective custody most of which have been transferred from OSP.

It is no doubt this unprofessional use of prison housing where the grievances of those who don't routinely cause trouble are ignored while favor is given to the disruptive element as appeasement that triggered the explosive actions of Bob Hughes. This incident must be brought to the attention of everyone so that a full inquiry can take place into the running of the maximum unit at DCF and improvements made before something catastrophic takes place.

My husband hasn't left his cell to shower or exercise in over a year because of intimidation from inexperienced, inadequately trained officers and unit managers exacerbated by chronic understaffing. I have written in the past to DCF and the ODOC warning of these problems.

I have been informed in writing that my concerns are unfounded, this is why I am bringing all of this to your attention in the hope that as Governor of Oklahoma you will ask the OSBI to conduct a full investigation into the collaboration between Donna Boone for the ODOC and employees of CCA to downgrade a very serious incident into a "brief altercation". The way the maximum unit at DCF is being run is out of compliance with prison policies and procedures of both the ODOC and CCA. A conspiracy to hide the true facts is surely breaking the law?

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