

Back Through the Looking Glass: The Death of Brian Rodriguez and the Fake “Flu Quarantine” at Gus Harrison Correctional Facility

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“Do not use their language. Their language picks at a frame – and it won’t be the frame you want.” – George Lakoff

On Thursday morning, March 14, 2019, at approximately 4:30am, Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) prisoner Brian Rodriguez #201421 sat up abruptly in his bunk in A-Unit, collapsed, and died. His body was discovered at around 9:30am. Brian’s death, ostensibly of a heart attack, set off a chain of after-the-fact events – corrections officers (C/Os) and medical employees running to A-Unit, the inevitable ambulance, A-Unit lock-down the next day, and the phones cut off the following Monday and Tuesday – that accomplished little more than the removal of Brian’s body from the prison, Gus Harrison Correctional Facility, also known as Adrian Regional Correctional Facility (ARF), and the removal of his name from the rolls of MDOC prisoners.

Brian’s untimely and unnecessary death could’ve been avoided if the MDOC Bureau of Health Care (BHC) employees that examined him, at approximately 2:30 or 3:00am, had properly responded to his complaint of chest pains by immediately sending him to the hospital. Instead, they told him he just had gas and that he should go back to the unit, drink plenty of water, and lay down. The deliberately indifferent prescription for his death, as written by the for-profit health-care service, prisoners in Michigan call “we-don’t-care,” where for \$5.00 co-pay visit, 99 times out of 100, you’ll be told they can do nothing for you and that you should go back to your unit and order the over-the-counter medications available in the prison store, which is delivered every two weeks. This is, *mos def*, not the standard of medical care in the community required by the Supreme Court of the United States in *Estelle v. Gamble*, 429 U.S. 97 (1976).

What it is, in reality, is a standard of denial of treatment, especially trips to the hospital, designed to line the pockets of for-profit health-care provider Corizon Health Services, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Valitas Health, which is controlled by a Chicago-based investment firm. A practice glibly referred to by Corizon employees as the “Corizon Way”. The result: Corizon is responsible for more deaths in America than any known terrorist organization, including the country’s murderous, trigger-happy police forces.

Here’s the real kicker in Brian’s case: after serving about 10 years, he was expecting to go home in a few months to a family that loved him. He was a well-known and active prisoner on the yard; he worked-out, ran, and was an excellent guitar player who even had a couple of students. No way should the MDOC and ARF administrations, and their hired-gun Corizon, be allowed to get away with this act of callous, deliberate indifference to Brian’s serious medical needs. If he was in society there’s little doubt he would’ve been taken to a hospital stat. After all, it’s better to err on the side of caution,

albeit less profitable, when it comes to a person's health and, in the case of Brian, his life. Does not the Hippocratic Oath state, "Do no harm"?

As for the lock-down, or fake "flu quarantine," it seems it was initially done to prevent people from learning the details of Brian's death as was the phone being cut off on Monday and Tuesday, via the bullshit story that "AT&T's world-wide web had been shut down." No doubt, most of the men who locked near Brian will be rode out as soon as possible before Brian's family can find out who they are and contact them. In fact, this may have already happened since the so-called flu quarantine is a total fake-out.

Meanwhile, as of March 22, 2019, the entire ARF-South has been placed on lock-down, using the flu as a pretext. The administration went all-in on this fake-out, even passing out bleach for cleaning which, although required by the MDOC's Sanitation Manual, prisoners never see until after a MRSA or flue epidemic has already broken out. Although, in this case the ARF administration realized the only way they could run this extremely short-staffed prison, where most of the C/Os are already working mandatory double shifts before the onset of the flu in the community, was to lock it down and free up C/Os from running the yard, school, and visiting room. Consequently, this so-called "flu quarantine" has morphed from a cover-up of Brian's unnecessary death into a cover-up of a dangerously under-staffed prison, which is a threat to the prisoners within and, potentially, the community without. Not that housing prisoners on a regular, fully-staffed basis in deteriorating cattle-barns with crumbling foundations that should've been condemned and torn-down years ago isn't always a threat to prisoners housed there and the nearby community.

I suspect, at this point, just like last year, many other MDOC prisons are now locked-down due to this pretext. We were locked-down at Chippewa Correctional Facility for two weeks, from January 29 to February 12, 20128. See "Fake Flu Quarantine Equals Real Lockdown in Michigan Prisons" at www.freerandgould.com. The truth is, the MDOC is currently operating with over 700 unfilled positions throughout the state. Thus, a lock-down presents a tempting solution to a very real and expensive problem. Especially if the state taxpayers find out how much is being paid out in overtime.

Nevertheless, lying and misleading the public seems to be the MDOC's collective *raison d'etre*. Take its name, for example: "Department of Corrections", where nothing is correct or corrected. Instead, it is corrupt and corrupted, right down to its euphemism for prison – "facility" – which implies a prison is not a prison. Nothing is what it seems in the MDOC's hidden behind "the looking glass" world.

Therefore, quarantine, which means to keep separate from, means exactly the opposite in MDOC-speak, as they cram-in and concentrate healthy prisoners alongside the identifiably sick ones into these old cattle-barns, virtually guaranteeing a mini-epidemic. This is akin to a few children at school manifesting flu-symptoms and, instead of being sent home, they're kept locked in the classrooms with all the healthy children. The exact opposite of a quarantine, and exactly what is going on at ARF.

If the ARF administration was truly concerned with protecting healthy prisoners, and C/Os, from the flu virus, then all they would have to do is reopen the recently "closed for remodeling" C-Unit and house those prisoners infected with the flu virus there. But they did not. Why? Because a genuine medical quarantine would've required

more C/Os, not less, and those C/Os are not available. Thus, like in 2018, we've stepped through the looking glass where "the Red Queen is talking backwards," and that Queen is the MDOC!

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