

The original documents are located in Box 48, folder “Women - Women's Detention Center” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 12, 1975

Marba:

I would appreciate a message being sent if possible. Please let me know if it is not.

Thanks.



for Sally
Sheila

5/14 Inf. Auline that this could not be done due to time restraints.

*5/13
NO*

She understood & sent her regards.

Watergate West
2700 Virginia Avenue, N.W.
Washington D.C.
20037.

May 3 1975.

Dear Mrs Ford,

We hope you will accept the enclosed booklet, THOUGHT'S FROM A WOMEN'S PRISON, which is illustrated with artwork done by the inmates and contains, among other things, some of their poetry. The poetry reveals some of the hopes and fears of those who live and work in the Detention Center at 1010 North Capitol Street.

It was produced with the idea of interesting the community in the Center, boosting the morale of inmates and staff and making a little fund for materials for the classes.

On Wednesday May 14th at 2p.m. we are having a tea to celebrate publication. This will be held in the Detention Center so that guests can meet inmates and staff as well as volunteers.

We know of your concern for women and your interest would help very much indeed.

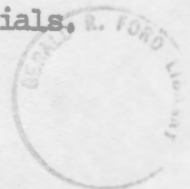
All proceeds from the book will go to the fund for materials.

With every good wish,

most sincerely

P. Taylor volunteer liason officer

P. Taylor, Superintendant of Women's Detention Center.



Ames Ford
The White House.



Watergate West, tel 333 7922

May 3 1975.

2700 Virginia Ave, N.W.

Washington D.C. 20037.

Dear Sheila,

With reference to our telephone conversation I have written the letter to Mrs Ford and I enclose a copy of the booklet. I know she is too busy to come, but as she is so interested in the affairs of women, I thought perhaps she might feel able to send a little message of congratulation or good wishes on publication.

The Women's Detention Center is far from perfect but I have found in the two years I have been volunteering there, that the staff show a great deal of patience and consideration under trying and frustrating conditions. Some of the inmates would respond to community help and interest. The book was produced in the hope that the thoughts of those who live and work there would help with community understanding, would boost the morale of inmates and staff and raise some money for materials for the classes.

All proceeds go to the Center.

Mrs Elliott Richardson said she would come and Mrs Stewart hopes to do so and we will have some guests from the neighborhood around the prison.

The Center is not a Federal Prison it is under the District Government. You will find a description written by Mrs Taylor, the superintendent, on page 24. I will be glad to answer any questions you might have and thank you so very much for seeing that this will be brought to Mrs Ford's notice.

Hope to see you soon,

Affectionately,

Taylor.



thoughts

**from
a
women's
prison.**



*Edited by
Pauline Innis.*



It is not revolutions and upheavals
That pave the way to new and better days.
But revelations, lavishness and torments
Of someone's soul, inspired and ablaze.

Boris Pasternak, After the Storm. translated by
his sister, Lydia.

Neither fire, nor moisture, nor wind
can destroy the blessing of a good deed
and blessings reform the whole world.

Sayings of Buddha.

copyright
1975.

The purpose of this little book is to share the thoughts of the inmates and staff of the Women's Detention Center of the District of Columbia, with the general community. We who live and pay taxes in the District should know something of those who live and work in the Detention Center, Not only because its situation in the Nation's Capital makes it an example for other such Centers for good or ill, but because it cannot function successfully without the help of the community.

From my two years of volunteer work with inmates and staff, I know how much they need our friendship as well as our moral and financial support.

There have been several reports on the Center but, unfortunately, most of them have been inaccurate. Perhaps the voices of the women as they speak to you through these poems, will lead to a clearer and better understanding of the problems.

All of the poetry contains the thoughts and feelings of the inmates and staff. Some poems were written by them entirely. Most were written by me from their ideas. The artwork was done by inmates in the art class run by a volunteer teacher, Brother Orthman.

As you read, you will quickly realize that the women in the Center are as varied as the general population and are highly individual in their response to life and to one another. This is why no single solution can be the answer for all offenders, and why rehabilitation programs must be varied and flexible.

YOUR helping hand is needed. If you know someone who is in trouble with the law, offer your help and friendship. YOUR concern can make all the difference to her future.

This book is not a study of the prison system. For those who want to go into the subject more deeply, a list of books and reports is given at the end together with some thoughts, criticisms and suggestion for improvement.