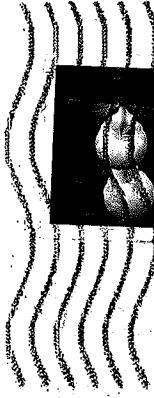


Thomas Colt, E63137
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San Quentin, CA 94974

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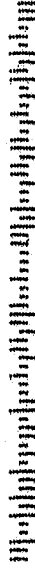
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PRISON UNIVERSITY PROJECT
Post Office 492
SAN QUENTIN, CA

94964

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May 1, 2020

Dear PUP,

Thank you very much for the generous gift. It's nice to know that someone out there cares about society's failures and rejects. You ~~can~~ provide a very valuable service by helping educate prisoners ^{who} ~~they~~ often have nothing better to do with their time behind bars. Most of them are under-educated to begin with, engage in foolish activities, get busted, and then get an over-worked, under-paid lawyer to ~~rep~~ "defend" them against the awesome power of the State.

The very availability of educational opportunities in a prison setting is a tremendous incentive to learn for those of us with an ounce of curiosity and who want to better ourselves. Your presence here provides a corrective to what is often a poor public school system and a social structure that under-

values education.

I cannot think of a better setting to provide education for those who, prior to coming to prison, did not give any thought to educating themselves. Education is perhaps the greatest rehabilitative tool available aside from vocational training.

Though I have yet to take any PUP classes because I already have a degree in sociology from the University of Oregon and am very busy litigating the outrages committed by the parole board and other government actors, I know that most prisoners who take PUP classes greatly appreciate them and love the challenges of learning they present. There is no substitute for exercise of the mind. And, in prison, the mind can quickly degenerate without educational opportunities. It is too easy to sit in front of a TV set and vegetate or go to the

(2)

yard, play dominoes or cards, or otherwise fall into counter-productive activities. My experience with those who have taken PUP classes has been positive. They like the challenge ~~of learning~~ and excitement of learning. It's a great counterweight to the boredom of prison.

~~The~~

I have no doubt that the PUP educators themselves have a great deal to do with the success of the PUP project. The enthusiasm for what they do here is infectious. I should say that I have met some of them, having sat in on a class or two that I had to drop. I've also witnessed how PUP educators interact with prisoner/students and know that the success of PUP is highly dependent on the quality of that student-teacher relationship. From what I've

observed, PUP educators have a great respect for us, ~~to~~ and treat us like regular people. They recognize the potential for greatness in all of us. That positive attitude has, I'm sure, much to do with the success of the PUP project.

I have the greatest respect for the PUP volunteer-educators. You should be paid for what you do here and paid more than the average instructor. And it's a crying shame that other prisons lack the educational opportunities provided by PUP. It says so much about our country.

We are all looking forward to your return. Thank you for all you have done here. Your work is priceless, invaluable. The need for your work is nowhere greater than it is here. Thank you.

Thomas Calt

E63137

4-W-105

P.S. It's OK to share this letter with others.

PPS: I recently read an article on Denmark's educational system, which the writer (David Broder, I believe) said was key to the success of Denmark's country as a whole. The emphasis ~~is~~ is on learning about the forces within us (feelings, emotions, etc) and the complex relationships in their society. My description doesn't do justice to the article. It was published in a February issue of The Daily Journal (possibly 2-18-20), a legal newspaper.