

I will not elaborate further on the great value of the prisoners' mailbox as a channel of communicating complaints, requests, and charges by prisoners. It is confidential. It works.

Secondly, access to the courts is open and unrestricted. In recent years, the courts have developed a growing and healthy interest in prisoner complaints. Hearings are being held daily and decisions rendered on the merits. This has been a welcome change from just a few years ago when the courts usually did not consider such cases on the grounds that the acts complained of were matters which were solely within the administration discretion.

The courts are now hearing suits involving medical treatment, disciplinary practices, mail regulations, loss of good time, and other numerous subjects. Any communication by letter, note, or writ addressed to a Federal judge is promptly sent to the court without interference or censorship.

Moreover, we have succeeded in enlisting the interest of several law schools in providing legal assistance to indigent inmates in both civil and criminal matters.

Senator LONG. You develop some pretty good lawyers in the prison, too; don't you?

Dr. ALEXANDER. I beg your pardon?

Senator LONG. I say you develop some very good legal minds or lawyers among the inmates?

Dr. ALEXANDER. Some of them become extremely experts; yes.

Senator LONG. Excuse me.

Dr. ALEXANDER. The most comprehensive programs at present are with the University of Kansas for Leavenworth; the University of Pennsylvania for Lewisburg; and Emory University Law School for Atlanta. There are several other small programs. Others are under discussion with major law schools. Our goal is to have such legal assistance available at all institutions.

We constantly receive letters or personal visits from inmates' families, attorneys, and other interested persons. We are fully responsive to such requests, explaining why the requests can or cannot be granted.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the Bureau staff conducts regular visits, inspections, and audits at all our institutions. These range from the typical fiscal audits to inspections and studies of policy compliance. I am extremely proud of our career wardens and their associates who are a corps of administrators trained and developed since 1930 under the leadership of former Directors Sanford Bates and James V. Bennett. These career men and women are devoted to the policies and philosophy of correctional control and treatment of offenders. They are skilled administrators who have a high sense of public responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it would be helpful to this committee if it had available some of our policy statements involving inmate discipline, the prisoners' mailbox, access to legal material and counsel, and religious beliefs and practices. With your permission, I submit these statements for the record, or for the committee's use.

Senator LONG. Without objection, it will be placed in the record.