

Entry 16

I just realized that I haven't told you about what happened on April 3, 1997 yet,... So allow me to do so now,...

I was working overtime in the print plant and we had just come back from eating dinner in the chow hall. They always allow the people who are working overtime in the factories to eat first before they begin feeding the living units that way we can eat and get back to work.

We hadn't been back in the factory very long when all of a sudden one of the staff came across the speaker system telling the other staff member to report to the foreman's office and shortly after that the music being played through the speaker system got turned up much louder which was odd. During regular working hours we weren't allowed to listen to music but when we worked overtime they played the radio on the speaker system throughout the factory for us to listen to. My lead man on my printing press was the first one to hear the sirens and then I heard them once he said something to me. The reason they turned up the volume on the radio was to try and block out the sound of the sirens going off on the tops of all the guard towers.

Let me explain the purpose of the sirens on the guard towers,... If something major is going on in the prison they will turn on the sirens and this let's all available staff at the medium security prison, the camp and the staff housing across the street from the prison to report immediately.

It was only about ten or fifteen minutes later when staff in street clothes began coming into the print plant and they had serious attitudes!!! By this time we were in the process of shutting down the printing presses and cleaning up as we knew something was going on and we were getting ready to go on lockdown. Due to the fact that the sirens went off and the way the staff were acting we knew something major had happened. We came to the conclusion that there was either a race riot taking place in the prison or a staff member had been killed,... well,... we were correct in our assumptions as a CO was killed, another one almost died and three others were stabbed,...

Since we were in the middle of a huge job that needed to be finished and they knew we were going to be on lockdown for a while we spent the rest of the night stacking up everything we had done and shrink wrapping the skids so they could be shipped to another print plant to be finished. While we were doing this, the ninja turtles were going around the prison and escorting all the inmates back to their cells but it was one ninja turtle per inmate so it took a while to get everyone back to their cells. I think it was close to 2 a.m. by the time they came out to get us and take us back to our cells. We were stripped searched then handcuffed and lined up outside by the units we lived in and we each had a ninja turtle escorting us back with other ninja turtles standing around with riot weapons. When we got to my cell I was instructed that when they remove my handcuffs I had to walk to the back wall in my cell and stay facing the wall until my door shut, if I moved before then I would be shot with the bean bag gun. I was tired and worn out, all I wanted to do was go to sleep so I did exactly as I was instructed to do,... I had nothing to do with whatever had happened and from this point forward I was simply along for the ride until everything was over with.

The next morning I sat back listening to what people were saying about what had happened.-) When they brought the people from the movie theatre back they took them the long way around, down the gym corridor, across the yard, up the work corridor then to the unit. But when they came out of the movie theatre they saw nothing but blood everywhere outside of the chow hall and the whole area was roped off with crime scene tape.

This is what we later found out had happened,... There was one guard who was a real piece of work, he was one of those guards who thought it was his duty to personally punish every inmate he could and he would go out of his way to do so. Well he went into the hole and went up to a Muslim inmates cell and told him that he poured his prayer oil all over his Qur'an. The inmate didn't believe him, but when he finally got out of the hole and went through his personal property he saw that his prayer oil had been poured all over his Qur'an.

So on April 3, 1997 during the dinner mainline the inmate saw the guard standing outside the chow hall doing pat searches, so he went to his unit which was the super max unit closest to the chow hall and duct taped a shank to each hand then went back out of the unit and after the guard. The guard he wanted was walking away as he approached and there was another guard between him and the one he was after, so he stabbed the guard between them in the back with one shank and slit his throat with the other, as his intended target turned and lunged at him he stabbed him a quarter of an inch from his heart and almost killed him and then turned his attention on the other three guards that were standing there and stabbed each of them before finally being taken to the ground. The guard who got his throat slit died, but all the others lived.

As I've already stated, I was working overtime when all of this went down but everyone got the facts of what happened later on from the inmates who watched it happen because there were inmates everywhere as it was dinner time.

That was the longest lock down I've ever been through, I think it lasted for just over three weeks. During that time they came around and installed cameras in all of the living units as up until that point there weren't any cameras in the living units which was odd since it was a maximum security prison.

When they came around to do their cell searches during this lockdown it was the worst cell search I've ever gone through!!! They handcuffed me and took me to the TV room where a CO stayed with me while other CO's searched

my cell. I can't remember how long I was in the TV room but when they finally took me back to my cell, I saw that everything I owned was in one big pile in the corner of my cell and they had opened everything (no liquids though) and dumped everything into the pile. It took me the rest of the day to get my cell back in order again.

As I've stated in a previous entry,... if you Google "USP Lompoc Federal Penitentiary April 3, 1997 I'm sure you will find articles talking about what happened that day.

I've heard that the video footage of this brutal murder/assault is used during the training of new staff to show them just how quickly something can happen but I'm not sure if that is true or not? I do know that a lot of changes took place at USP Lompoc after that day,...