

Fed Up! is a newly formed alliance of concerned citizens, who oppose the abuse and torture of prisoners at ROSP. We are looking for allies and help with this campaign to further expose the great injustices occurring within the walls of this Super Maximum Security Facility in the mountains of western Virginia.

Contact us:

FED UP!

5125 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15224
412-802-8575
de_tritus@yahoo.com

Contact Rashid :

Kevin (Rashid) Johnson #185492
Red Onion State Prison
P.O. Box 1900 Pound, VA 24279

<http://www.rashid-art-attack.org/>

**To see the Human Rights Watch Report
on Red Onion State:**

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/redonion/>

**To see a great website on the reality of
Virginia Prisons go to:**

www.vadoc.com



**Please take time to write to the Governor
of Virginia. Tell him the abuse is uncalled
for and that the correctional officers need
to be held accountable for there actions.**

Mark Warner, Governor of VA
State Capital- 3rd Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

Don't be shy, give 'em a call 804-786-2211

**Write the Warden of Red Onion State
Prison. Demand to know why he let's this
abuse continue. Tell him to make sure the
inmates are allowed to follow through
with the standard grievance procedure.**

Tracy S. Ray, Warden of R.O.S.P.
P.O. Box 970
Pound, VA 24279

Call him up too, 276-796-7510

And then there is always the...
Virginia Department of Corrections
Headquarters
P.O. Box 26963
Richmond, Virginia 23261-6963

804-674-3574

STOP THE BRUTALITY OF INMATES AT RED ONION STATE PRISON

Defying the Tomb:

**Prison Letters and Exchanges of
Kevin "Rashid" Johnson
Part 1**



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A flurry of activism followed the summer, 2000 death of electro-shocked prisoner Lawrence Frazier at Wallens Ridge State Prison. Wallens Ridge is one of two super maximum facilities in western Virginia. One prisoner who has done time in both Wallens Ridge and the nearby, Red Onion State Prison, has carefully documented that while the activism has died down, the racist abuse and torture of prisoners in these secretive facilities continues.

Kevin (Rashid) Johnson, currently an inmate at Red Onion State Prison (ROSP), documented numerous incidences of Correctional Officers beating restrained prisoners; and using tear gas, electrical stun weapons, and five-point ambulatory restraints to punish prisoners who do not, Rashid writes, "show appropriate deference and submission to guards." Rashid also reports denial of meals, confiscation of mails, and Correctional Officers enabling the suicide of prisoners. He reports on the failure of the inmate grievance process as a measure to curtail this abuse.

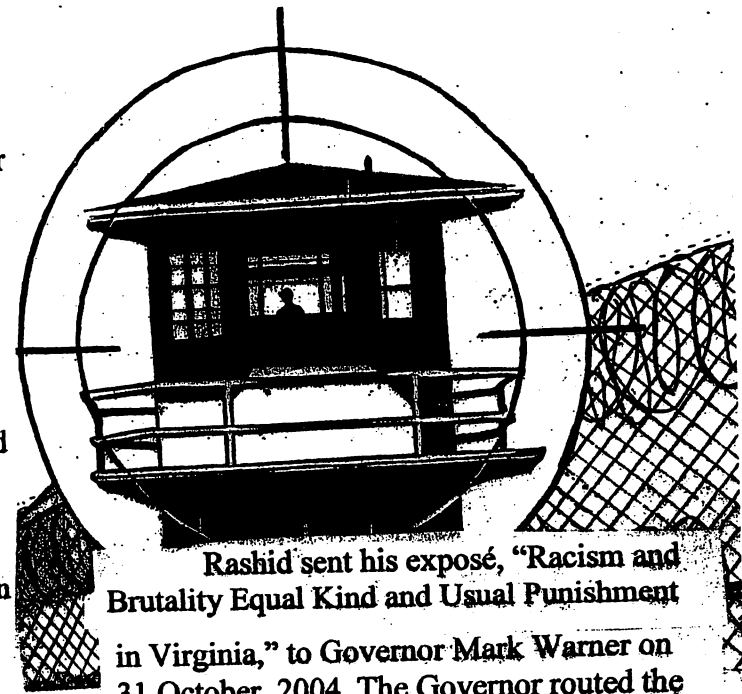
Rashid's complaints are not new. Investigations of cruel and unusual punishment, including torture, have dogged ROSP and its sister supermax facility Wallens Ridge State Prison (WRSP) since the prisons were opened in 1998 (ROSP) and 1999 (WRSP). These prisons have been the target of a 1999 Human Rights Watch report ("Red Onion State Prison: Super-Maximum Security Confinement in Virginia"), letter-writing campaigns by

Amnesty International in 1999 and 2000, and a 2000 investigation by the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice (under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act).

Following the intensive struggle for changes in ROSP and WRSP, Ron Angelone, Director of the Virginia Department of Corrections, resigned on May 9, 2002. The states of New Mexico and Connecticut, and the District of Colombia recalled the state and district prisoners they had bought cells for in WRSP. These and other changes seemed to indicate progress in Virginia's compliance with Constitutional and international conventions on protection of human rights. However, the Commonwealth failed to implement any of the recommendations made by Human Rights Watch in 1999, and according to Rashid, the abuse continues.



Prisoners must be treated with respect for their dignity as human beings and for their fundamental rights, whatever their crimes.



Rashid sent his exposé, "Racism and Brutality Equal Kind and Usual Punishment in Virginia," to Governor Mark Warner on 31 October, 2004. The Governor routed the document to Sgt. D. Tate at ROSP. According to Rashid, Sgt. Tate is "both the ROSP investigator and a supervisor in the superseg unit – he has himself been involved in various prior abuses of prisoners, myself included...." In fact, Tate is named frequently in Rashid's exposé and proceeded to find himself not guilty of any allegations.

Rashid's exposé ends with the following statement: "The state's government is using a poor, economically depressed and exploited segregated White community to brutally oppress a vastly non-white prisoner body, exactly as impoverished whites were deliberately used to savagely brutalize Blacks with license and impunity during the chattel slavery process of this same rural Amerikan south. There is clearly no interest and no intent by government officials to reign in such abuses. [In fact, the situation is] created by such authorities."