



U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Prisons

Office of the Director

Washington, DC 20534

March 25, 1987

Honorable Alan J. Dixon  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510-6025

Dear Senator Dixon:

Thank you for your letter of March 11, 1987, in which a constituent requests that you review the conditions at the Marion and Lexington Control Units.

The United States Penitentiary, Marion, Illinois, is the only maximum security facility of the 47 institutions operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This institution houses 350 of the most violent, dangerous, and escape-prone inmates of the 42,000 inmates currently in federal custody

Contrary to the information contained in your constituent's letter, prisoner mistreatment is neither practiced nor condoned by the Federal Bureau of Prisons or by the administration at Marion. The conditions of confinement have been the subject of much judicial review and on each review, the courts have found them to be constitutional.

The High Security Unit for female offenders at the Federal Correctional Institution, Lexington, Kentucky, is not a Control Unit. It is designed for the small number of female offenders who require more security than can be provided at any of the other five federal institutions housing women. We are particularly concerned with inmates who may be subject to rescue attempts by outside groups.

The operations and procedures of the unit are closely reviewed by Lexington's Warden and Executive Staff members of the Bureau of Prisons. This High Security Unit has been constructed within the perimeter of the minimum security facility at Lexington; thus, it is not appropriate for these inmates to come in contact with the low security general population inmates.

We have ensured that inmates in the unit have access to educational, religious, medical, and mental health programs and we anticipate establishing a small industries program. There are daily opportunities for inside and outside recreation. With the exception of short periods during the day, prisoners in the unit are permitted out of their cells from 7:30 a.m. to 9:45 p.m. and participate in regular job assignments. Additionally, they are allowed full correspondence privileges, access to personal and legal visits, and outside telephone calls.

I am satisfied that the inmates in our custody are being confined in a humane and proper manner. If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norman A. Carlson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N".

NORMAN A. CARLSON  
Director