

First U. S. Narcotic Farm,
Lexington, Kentucky.

July 23, 1935.

PERSONAL

Dr. W. L. Treadway, Asst. Surgeon General,
United States Public Health Service,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Treadway:

Concerning my official letter sent a few days ago reopening the question of what patients should be allowed to buy with their personal funds, I am writing you personally about it as the matter seems to be of considerable importance, especially the buying of tobacco. Perhaps you had intended that we should buy out of Maintenance funds all sorts of tobacco and cigarettes for patients, but this is not done in any prison, and it would involve a rather unnecessary expense if we should start to do it here.

The restrictions on purchases cause considerable discontent - practically the only real discontent that we have had here. I quote below from a letter written by a patient which shows the general attitude.

"We can't buy or get a thing, not even smokes or the other necessities of life, the worst kind of criminals and thieves can buy or receive these things, well this is just a little more injustice to all of us humans".

Perhaps the attitude may seem unreasonable, but it is nevertheless the way our patients feel, and we should do something to appease them.

Last Thursday there was a little disturbance in that eighteen of our farm group refused to eat supper, complaining that it was not sufficient. The supper was, however, very good, consisting of the following: Assorted cold meats - Bologna, salomi, head cheese, yellow cheese - spinach, rice, baked potatoes, fresh berries, apple-butter and muffins. We had the Disciplinary Board sit on these people the next day and all of them were put in isolation for a short period. They were surprised at this and were rather contrite about it, all except two or three who were evidently the ring leaders; but in our investigation of the affair we came to the conclusion that the trouble was not with the food, but was due to a discontent brought about by the fact that the patients had not been allowed to buy tobacco. Some of those who were summoned before the Disciplinary Board brought up the matter of tobacco spontaneously and others who were asked about it said they were very much displeased and could not use the tobacco we were furnishing.

We are getting along very well here considering the difficulties and the fact that so many of our people are entirely new in their work. It will take some time for all of them to get into a definite routine, but I feel that they have done pretty well, even our clerical and bookkeeping departments who have made several errors about which you have written.

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The matter of the food strike is considered a minor incident not worthy of an official report. In fact, we have let nearly all of these patients out of isolation and they are back on the farm working and vowing that they will not engage in a thing of this kind again.

Very truly yours,

Lawrence Kolb,
Senior Surgeon
Medical Officer in Charge

LK:gp