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1	LETTER	FROM ROBERT L. SMITH TO EDWIN MEESE, III, RE. NAT. INST. OF CORRECTIONS AND OFF. OF JUVENILE JUST. AND DELINQUENCY PREV. [partial]	2	ND	B6	313

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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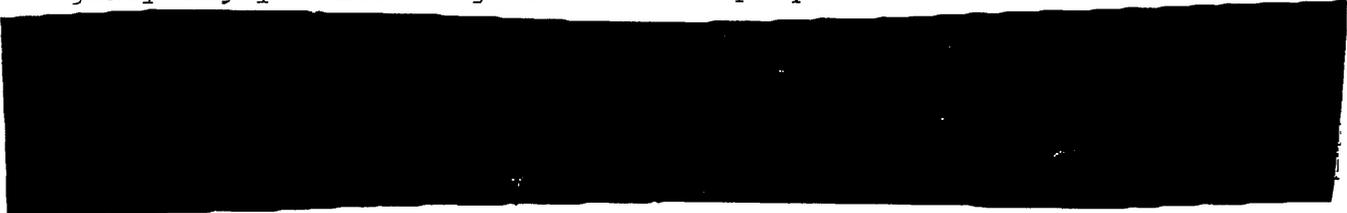
Mr. Edwin Meese, III  
Counselor to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.  
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Dear Mr. Meese:

We know each other from the Alameda County Coordinating Council days in Oakland and later in Sacramento where I worked as Allen Breed's Deputy Director of Prevention and Community Corrections in the Youth Authority. Until October of 1982 I was the Deputy Director of the National Institute of Corrections here in Washington.

Since I am concluding 30 plus years of work in corrections and juvenile justice and will be returning to California in May of this year I wanted to share a couple of gratuitous comments; one positive, and one less so. The first is about the National Institute and the second about the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Having come out of county and state service in California, I was and continue to be, appalled by the level of service offered by most Federal agencies. The National Institute has been a rare and pleasing exception to this generalization. The comments about the Institute are not offered in some act of self appreciation since much of what the Institute represents preceded both Allen's and my arrival on the scene here in Washington. But, it does represent a unique example of what an operating agency and program can be even in the Federal structure. Involving informed bureaucrats and citizens in a genuine advisory and policy role, the Institute has developed a series of programs that truly serve its constituents and do so with a modest budget. Staff are, for the most part, service oriented and not simply "money pushers" or rule enforcers. The small staff and budget obviously have helped protect the Institute from the fate of other grant in aid or formula grant agencies. NIC staff must do for themselves what others hire consultants to do. We expect competence and technical skill, not just general knowledge of some law or procedures. These characteristics have resulted in the very favorable reputation the agency enjoys with Congress and the people it serves.



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[REDACTED]

If handled subtly the new Administrator of OJJDP can turn things around for the Administration without the nonsense that is currently going on. With only a little imagination, alternative legislation and program services could be advanced that turn the current liability into an advantage. It annoys me, as a Californian, that the Administration must be embarrassed by inexperience. You have enough important issues to deal with [REDACTED] bl

Since I appreciate your very busy schedule, I do not expect a reply. Comes May my wife and I will return to Berkeley where I will establish a new career, hopefully something different from what I have been doing since we both started work back in Alameda County.

Good luck to you and the Administration with the important issues.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Smith