

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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AKA Baby Jail

The policy and practice of family detention is alive and well in South Texas as of the beginning of June 2016. The U.S. government continues to criminalize women and children fleeing extraordinary violence in the Northern Triangle countries of Central America.

These are people who are exercising their international right to ask for refuge and asylum. Yet they are immediately detained in *hieleras* and *perreras*, which are disgusting and degrading temporary holding facilities and are held in them for weeks. High bonds are set for their release and they are fitted with electronic monitoring bracelets when they are. In nearly all cases, these women and children have already been subjected to horrible suffering and violence in their home countries.

The for-profit corporations which have government contracts to run these facilities, the GEO Group and the CCA, are having their best years ever as they detain children. Corporate stakeholders are making millions.

For the last year, the legal team, the CARA Pro Bono Project, has worked tenaciously defending the interests of the detained women and children. Legal strategies have been developed to try to shut down the family detention facilities. They are in violation of the court ordered *Flores* settlement, which includes the provision that it is unlawful to detain children in an unlicensed childcare facility.

In response, the state of Texas issued a childcare license to the Dilley and Karnes City facilities outside of San Antonio. Both of these licenses were enjoined by judges, so neither is currently licensed. Nearly a year ago, a judge in California ordered the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to be in compliance with *Flores* or shut the facilities down. DHS continues to violate the terms of the order.

The CARA staff has developed effective systems for dealing with the

sheer volume of people detained. They have helped over 4,000 families just this year. There were 300 people released last week; ironically, just as many were admitted--the DHS will not reveal the numbers being held. The CARA protocol is effective but also disturbing. To many of those volunteering there, it is almost as if the lawyers working so hard to free people, are also helping ICE and putting a humane touch on an unconscionable situation created by U.S. government policy and practice.

The flow of migrants from Central American is still strong. It is sickening even to witness the U.S. government work so hard to affirm how little the lives and well-being of those they are detaining matter to those creating the policy and practices being used.

Family detention is a disaster. Even when released, families face years and years of problems to make it through the asylum process. There are not enough lawyers or other forms of assistance. There are backlogs in the courts that put people's first hearings three to five years out. There are backlogs for providing green cards to kids that will have them waiting a decade for a green card they are legally entitled to. Many people will lose their cases for procedural reasons and be deported without a judge ever considering the substance of their claim that their life is in danger if they are returned to their country of origin.

We must get rid of the felt need by those in power to punish people who are trying to stay alive in the face of ruthless violence and indifference. In all our cases.

Resource: Santa Fe Dreamers Project, Allegra Love Directing Attorney, PO Box 8009, Santa Fe NM 87504; 505-490-2789

* * * **BLACK LIVES MATTER** * * *
Free Jasmine "Abdullah" Richards NOW!

MUHAMMAD ALI

"El funeral de Muhammad Ali es, en muchos aspectos, el último acto de resistencia de Muhammad Ali, porque lo que está haciendo es unirse al país en honor al musulmán más famoso del mundo, en un momento en que en EE.UU. un candidato a presidente tiene una plataforma de un fanatismo miserable contra los musulmanes y la otra candidata presidencial orgullosamente apoyó las guerras en Medio Oriente."

Gracias Sr. Muhammad Al. Que decansa en paz--y justicia.

To receive a CPR Newsletter by postal mail monthly, send us up to 12 self-addressed, stamped envelopes (with the CPR return address).

Keep sending us address changes and renewal requests as we struggle to maintain the mailing list for the January holiday card/new calendar mailing as accurately as possible.

Also, note that the only address to use to be sure to reach us is: PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504. Some resource address listings are incorrect.

NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS, so, for our protection, please do not mark envelopes sent to us as "Legal Mail."

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons Project for making our Newsletter free on-line for downloading and distribution. It is at: <http://www.realcostofprisonsproject.org/html--this-is-a-GREAT-site!>

We depend on our readers' donations & thank you for your support! Mil gracias!

Prison Health Care Not Mentioned

Never mind that more than 200 prisoners have filed over 155 lawsuits over health care issues against Corizon Health (the nation's largest for-profit "provider of prison health care") since 2007, 14 of them since January 2016. Never mind that the local newspaper recently published a well-documented report of the lack of acceptable care, which has generated a great deal of public comment. Never mind that the NM Corrections Department recently committed to pay a new for-profit contractor \$52 million for prisoner health care over the next year. The topic was simply not part of the legislative Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee meeting. There were 28 other topics on the agenda of the four hour meeting regarding items to discuss before the next legislative session.

Numbers Tell Us

> Unaccompanied children's asylum approvals seem to depend on where they are filed. There are eight regional offices of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The office in Santa Francisco approves 86% of its applications. The Chicago office: 15%. Los Angeles also has a high approval rate, while Houston is also at the bottom. As of January 2016, decisions had been made involving 5,800 children who arrived in the U.S. since May 2014. Overall, 37% were granted asylum.

> There are 181,000 veterans in jails and prisons in the United States.

> About 112,000 women are in state and federal prisons. Of the more than 100 women's prisons in the U.S., there are eight with nurseries. The recidivism rate for women in nursery programs is 13%. The rate for all women prisoners is 26%. Nearly 100 countries have national laws that allow incarcerated mothers to stay with their babies.

> More than 4,300 federal prisoners were kept imprisoned beyond their scheduled release dates from 2009 to 2014--some for more than an extra year.

> In Charlotte NC, where police have discretion over whether or not to arrest someone found with less than half an ounce of marijuana, African Americans are arrested nearly three times as often as whites.

> In Montana, Native Americans are seven percent of the population, yet account for nearly 20% of arrests.

> In 2014, the national Centers for Disease Control found that police kill Native Americans at almost the same rate as they do African Americans.

> In the New York state prison system there are more than 1,000 pending cases before the Office of Special Investigations regarding abusive prison guards.

> The racial profiling case of Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio over the last eight years has so far cost taxpayers \$41 million with more to come. He has been Maricopa county sheriff for 23 years. Although the case began as a racial profiling one, it has morphed into contempt of court proceedings. Arpaio himself earns \$100,000 a year and owns more than \$2 million in real estate.