

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 41-xx, No. 10

PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504

October 2016

The Real Question is: *Why Is It So?*

To help move the struggle for positive, egalitarian, human rights change forward, we now have information from "experts" who have gathered facts and figures that describe in detail the reality that many of us have been living with and suffering under, invisibly and unrecognized, since the 1960s.

There is now a detailed presentation of how, beginning 50 years ago, federal authorities--regardless of their political party affiliation--systematically constructed a police, court and penal system that targets, criminalizes, polices, and imprisons staggering numbers of young African American men, especially in urban areas. No surprise there, but now spelled out and documented in detail.

The federal government encouraged aggressive policing in cities with large black communities. The federal government also subsidized the expansion of the nation's prison system. A rising arrest rate was cited as evidence of rampant crime. And thus was fostered the mass incarceration we experience today.

Flotilla de mujeres a Gaza

Una flotilla con destino a Gaza en Palestina que lleva ayuda humanitaria y 13 mujeres fue interceptada y detenida la ultima semana de septiembre por la Marina israelí. La Flotilla de mujeres a Gaza había zarpado del puerto de Barcelona, España, a mediados de septiembre en un intento por romper el actual bloqueo israelí. Las organizadoras afirman que las fuerzas militares israelís incautaron el barco y detuvieron a las 13 activistas de derechos humanos en aguas internacionales, a unas 40 millas de la costa de Gaza. Las fuerzas militares israelís remolcaron el barco al puerto israelí de Ashdod y detuvieron a las mujeres por cuatro días antes de deportarlas.

* * * BLACK LIVES MATTER * * *

Starting from a numerical basis, another report documents the devastating harm of policies that criminalize the personal use of and possession of street drugs. For example, in 2015, police booked more people for smalltime marijuana charges than for murder, non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery and aggravated assault combined. African-American adults are more than two-and-a-half times as likely as "white" adults to be arrested for drug possession. There are over 1.25 million arrests for street drug possession per year. Among many other numbers.

And included in demonstrations of the war on youth, we see that schools are increasingly modeled after prisons. In general, there is increasing criminalization of social problems.

Resources:

From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime, Elizabeth Hinton

Every 25 Seconds, Tess Bordon, HRW & ACLU

America at War with Itself, Henry Giroux

"Nothing about us, without us!"

An important resources for (formerly) incarcerated women and girls is:

The National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly incarcerated Women and Girls (NCIFIWG). The two primary purposes of the Council are: 1] to ensure that no policies, laws, practices, organizing or services are made about women and girls who are or were incarcerated without including their voices, experiences and ideas for creating more effective outcomes. 2] to support the work of everyone, as incarcerated or formerly incarcerated women and girls, whether acting as individuals or as organizations to end the practices, procedures, laws and policies that result in punishment and control leading or reinforcing the carceral state.

For more information contact: NCIFIWG, 42 Seaverns Ave, Boston MA 02130.

ART COMPETITION 2017

The competition is held by the LifeLines Quarterly Newsletter, *The Wing of Friendship*, and is open to all who are or who have been on Death Row; no more than three entries per person. The entry that is awarded 1st place will appear on the front cover of *The Wing Newsletter*. Winning entries will be published in the spring issue of *The Wing*; others may be printed later.

Please send *only* your original art work--no photocopies, to:
The Wing Editorial Team, c/o Jan Darts, Broadacres, Charlcutt, Caine, Wiltshire, SN11 9HL, United Kingdom. Entries must be received by Monday, January 9, 2017. Postage is \$1.15 for the first ounce.

LifeLines supports and befriends prisoners on death row in the United States through letter writing.

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 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; 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!

A Kind and Creative Donation

We have recently been the most grateful recipients of several months' supply of unused and quite old U.S. stamps of many different denominations. Since one of our largest expenditures is for stamps, this means a great deal to us. The donor wrote: "These are common stamps. The supply greatly exceeds the demand. You should mention this in your newsletter, because maybe an addressee has a supply of excess stamps, too." And so we have, and thank any new donors in advance.

Surviving Solitary Confinement

[*Prison Health News*, summer 2016, c/o Philadelphia FIGHT, 1233 Locust St--5th Fl, Philadelphia PA 19107]

My days consist of reading, exercising, writing, studying law, working on my case, studying medical periodicals as well as other studies, and watching television programs. With these particular routines, I manage to basically keep myself occupied. Yes, of course, doing the same thing all the time has a tendency to get boring. But when it comes to that point, you can do the same thing but switch it up.

Writing to people in the outside world is such a relief. In regard to pen pals, there are many ways to establish them....You can take one stamp a day and write anywhere to ask about a pen pal, even to places like churches. You can address the letter to the church minister and say you would like to correspond with someone....

Your not doing anything in your cell all day will definitely damage you mentally....You being in contact with family or other people will help you through....The little stuff that does remain in my life, I'm holding on to it with a tight grip.

How about your talents?Your talent is how you express yourself. Whether it's drawing, writing books or something in the field of hobby craft, it's what you're good at.

Scientific studies have shown that solitary confinement is capable of inflicting severe psychological damage to individuals in less than a week.... The people who control and operate these prisons are failing to do anything about it. So it's actually on us to do something about....

It's our First Amendment right: freedom of speech....as long as it's done peacefully....you have a chance to be productive.

Exit your cell daily for the time you're given, so you can move around. Try and eat healthy if you can. After each meal, you may want to walk/pace your cell nonstop for at least an hour so your meal can properly digest.

Due to you having no control of the light being on all 24 hours, you can try wearing sunglasses a couple hours each day. When resting, find something to cover your eyes.

Hope this can help you.

Eds. note: There are 80,000 to 100,000 people held in solitary confinement in U.S. prisons on any given day.