

# Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504-1911

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## Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted Peoples Movement

There are tens of millions of people in the United States suffering the collateral consequences of a felony conviction. We are people who have been charged, convicted and branded with an arrest and conviction history. Millions of us have served prison time, and it is estimated that 600,000 people will be released from prison per year for the next 5 years while millions more will be placed on probation and face the extremely low standards of guilt for a probation violation.

All of us have human rights that are being abused by the criminal justice system. We believe that imprisonment or conviction on a felony charge should not result in a lifelong violation of our basic rights as human beings, either while we are on probation, in prison or as we make the transition from prison back into our communities. We are firmly committed to prioritizing De-Entry over Re-Entry, and oppose the concept of a Rehabilitative Industrial Complex that grows along with prisons. All efforts to educate, assist, and empower our communities should be within the context of eliminating human cages as a mainstream livelihood.

The *Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People's Movement* is committed to the full restoration of our civil and human rights. We have drafted a platform to develop a common voice, to pursue a common political reality... However, we recognize that the current criminal justice system has never worked for people of color, poor people, or our community, and ultimately this system predicated on racism and torture should be dismantled.

Society's reliance on prisons and punishment does not make our communities safer. The warehousing of human beings, mostly people of color, is an unacceptable substitute for social programs. Prisons are not a substitute for mental health care, and jails are

not housing for the homeless. We work to develop political power and healthy communities. The criminal justice system is cruelly devastating and disrupting, especially in communities of color.

After two generations of the Drug War, the American people are suffering far more than when it began. Over 2 million people are currently locked up in United States prisons and jails. Over 2 million children have a parent behind bars, and 10 million children have had a parent in prison at some time in their lives. With the explosion of criminalization in the 1980s and 1990s, we have entire school systems facing the effects of parents being incarcerated or facing the discrimination of a criminal record.

We call on the U.S. to recognize the treatment of ethnic minorities under standards set forth in the U. N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We want an end to racial profiling, racial disparities, and the disproportionate imprisonment of people of color. African-Americans are admitted to state prisons at a rate that is 13.4 times greater than white Americans, a disparity driven largely by the grossly racial targeting of drug laws. These punitive drug laws need to be abolished. Women represent the fastest growing segment of the prison and jail population. African-American women are more than 3 times as likely as Latina women and 6 times more likely than white women to face imprisonment.

The dehumanization faced by gay and transgender people is unacceptable, both inside and out of prison; for example, transgender and gender non-conforming people are 6 times more likely than others to go to jail or prison.

We oppose the institutionalized racism and various modes of discrimination within the courts and prison system, and are working for alternatives to incarceration along with the rights of those inside.

# CRIME OF THE MONTH

Hey dude, wanna buy a gun? While the focus of the Occupy Wall Street movement sweeping the world seems to be the disparity of wealth between the most elite 1% at the top of the pile and all the rest of us 99% who are piled upon, there's an even richer, more corrupt group at the very tip top. Turns out, 10% of that wealthiest 1% are suits selling weapons to the world. For example, the CEO's of the three largest defense contractors, Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman and Boeing, took home more than \$60 million in salaries last year among the three of them. Not bad for a day's work peddling death and destruction around the globe.

With 53% of every tax dollar being spent on "defense," and with the U.S. maintaining its position as the number one wager of wars and seller of weapons in the world, there is plenty of blood money to go around. These war profiteers use their immense treasure chests to buy our corrupt Congress, which in turn keeps right on funding war after war after war so the merchants of death can continue to rake in the dough which they use to buy the politicians. Nice scam. Too bad they are using our tax dollars to feed this deadly cycle.

Our Crime of the Month is the continued insanity of war, propagated by a few sociopaths, who make obscene profits from the carnage which our empire unleashes on the world.

## SOLICITING HOLIDAY CARD DESIGN

Imprisoned readers: Please send us a black & white drawing for this year's holiday/New Year's card. All designs must be respectful of our diversity: We can not use any with racist, sexist or religious symbolism. The deadline has been extended to December 1. Submission of a drawing will serve as your permission to use your drawing, credited with your name & state. Books as prize.

## Voluntarios: Heroes de la frontera

Son momentos muy dificiles para el pequeños pueblos de Columbus NM EEUU y de Palomas CHI Méx. Pero los voluntarios allí y en muchos otros lados han empazados centros comunitarios, bibliotecas públicas, clínicas de salud, alimentaban a los ancianos, comenzaron programas de educación sobre pesticidas y recaudaron dinero para hacer estas proyectos. Columbus y Palomas son comunidades abandonadas por sus gobiernos respectivos. Pero alla hay muchos heroes de sobrevivir.

# SUMMARY OF THE PLATFORM OF THE FORMERLY INCARCERATED & CONVICTED PEOPLES MOVEMENT

- I. WE DEMAND AN END TO MASS INCARCERATION
- II. WE DEMAND EQUALITY & OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL PEOPLE.
- III. WE DEMAND THE RIGHT TO VOTE.
- IV. WE DEMAND RESPECT & DIGNITY FOR OUR CHILDREN.
- V. WE DEMAND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, NOT PRISON PROFIT.
- VI. WE DEMAND THE END OF IMMIGRATION DETENTION & DEPORTATION.
- VII. WE DEMAND THE END OF RACIAL PROFILING INSIDE PRISON AND IN OUR COMMUNITIES.
- VIII. WE DEMAND THE END OF EXTORTION AND SLAVERY IN PRISONS.
- IX. WE DEMAND THE END OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF PEOPLE IN PRISON.
- X. WE DEMAND HUMAN CONTACT AS A HUMAN RIGHT.
- XI. WE DEMAND THE END OF CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT.
- XII. WE DEMAND PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT.
- XIII. WE DEMAND THE END OF INCARCERATION OF CHILDREN.
- XIV. WE DEMAND THE FREEDOM OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

Contact: "Strengthen Our Action & Voices Through Unity," 10950 South Central Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90059

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"Let's have a maximum wage."

Sign seen at Occupying London, Oct. 2011  
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Copies of the Newsletter will be included in all correspondence we send out. To receive our monthly issues regularly, send us self-addressed, stamped envelopes (with the CPR return address)--up to 12 at one time.

Please continue to send us address changes and renewal requests, in order to receive the year-end holiday card/new calendar. This is especially important for those in California and Texas.

Also, please note that the ONLY address to use to be sure to reach us continues to be: PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504. And remember: NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS.

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

We continue to depend on our readers' financial contributions to be able to go on with our work. Thank you very much! for your support over so many years!