

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 41-xx, No. 11

PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504

November 2016

Some More Of How It Already Is Now

What's Hiding in *their* Hair?

In Ocala FL, imprisoned African American women were informed at the end of 2015 that they could no longer wear their hair in braids, twists, plats or locks and that they had to get rid of these styles or face disciplinary action and was called a matter of security.

When asked by phone by a concerned community member, the warden said she was only enforcing what should have been enforced a long time ago. The prison does not have hair oil, or picks necessary to groom an afro. Ungroomed African American hair will lock.

Without the proper tools, which the prison does not provide, African American woman prisoners have no way to groom their hair. Many are indigent and do not have the money to maintain any other style in which to wear their hair.

The prison says that the women can straighten their hair with chemicals. The chemicals in perms are safety and health hazards. They can cause baldness, an allergic reaction, burns to the scalp and other skin, and damage to the hair.

Rastafarians and Messianic Hebrew Jews are two religions that require their adherents to grow their hair. Denying African American prisoners the ability to wear their hair as their religion commands, and according to her vows, denies her the freedom of religion. The Florida prison amends its policies to accommodate other religions.

So, as of September 2015, the official policy was that if the prisoners did not get rid of their braids, plats, twists or locks they would be: given a verbal warning and certain time within which to comply; if their hair is not cut they will be held down and have their hair cut and then thrown into "confinement;" and, if the prisoner has "gain time," she will lose it if she is put in confinement. With justice for all....

* * * BLACK LIVES MATTER

*Conditions Testimony

As of the end of December 2013, Illinois' prisons were operating at 172.6% of design capacity. Alabama is the only state prison system more crowded than Illinois'. California, after decades of class action litigation and resistance by authorities is now operating at 142% of capacity.

All new, remodeled and newly designated institutions or facilities shall provide at least 50 square feet of cell, room or dormitory floor space per person according to a state statute passed in 1984. Many cells were grannied in. The prison system has also doubled up virtually every cell in the state to accommodate the thousands of new prisoners. The Logan Correctional Center, Illinois' main prison for women, had as many as 300 women living in its gym in 2013.

The state prison in Danville is the only one which still offers college classes. There are long waiting lists for the GED and vocational classes that are offered in other state prisons.

As to Illinois prisoners in solitary confinement: There are approximately 8,000 people locked in their cells 22 to 24 hours per day. Even people in the general population of prisons like Menard and Stateville spend 22 hours a day in their cells.

Illinois is 50th among all 50 states in the amount of money it spends per prisoner for medical care. California, whose system is still unconstitutional, spends about 7 times what Illinois does per person. Mental health care is, if anything, worse. Some people have been in "crisis cells"--in isolation--for months on end. Standard practice is a maximum stay of five days up to 10.

What does this mean? That 1/3 of all Illinois prisoners could be released and there would still be overcrowding.

Resource: Alan Mills, Uptown People's Law Center, 4413 N Sheridan Rd, Chicago IL 60640

Tras la victoria de Trump aumenta el valor de las acciones de compañías carcelarias lucrativas y de contratistas militares

En noticias relativas a finanzas, los mercados internacionales se recuperan tras la caída registrada ante la noticia de la victoria de Trump. El valor de las acciones de algunas compañías aumentó, entre ellas, las de la mayor contratista del sector carcelario lucrativas en EE.UU: Corrections Corporation of America, que recientemente cambió su nombre y pasó a llamarse CoreCivic. El valor de las acciones de esa compañía aumentaron 43% desde la victoria de Trump, mientras que GeoGroup, otra contratista del sector carcelario privado, observó un incremento de 21%. También aumentaron las acciones de muchas contratistas militares, entre ellas, Raytheon, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin y Boeing.

To receive the 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!

Angela Davis, Santa Fe NM, Nov. 2, 2016

The 14th Amendment to the constitution, with its provisions for "due process" and "equal protection" was a strategy to be able to incarcerate Black citizens by legalizing culpability, they were "justly found guilty" and thus "justly incarcerated". In fact it acts as a "justification for structural racism."

Incarcerated Lives Matter

"To eliminate mass incarceration, which is leading to nothing but social devastation and the making of a permanent underclass, maximum cooperation and solidarity is required on the part of incarcerated and non-incarcerated people.

"As the incarceration rate increasingly grew over the last four decades, so did the political influence and power of groups, organizations and institutions with vested economic interest in maintaining the world's largest penal system. It is unlikely they will allow the incarceration rate to be significantly reduced without a fight.

"Little attention...will be paid to the root cause of mass incarceration--racism--or how caging people for part or all of their lives has removed from the community and the family the abilities to sustain themselves free of state and corporate domination.

"The impetus for (eradicating mass incarceration) comes most often from incarcerated people and their families, because their lived experience often allows them to see more clearly the contradictions between myths and reality and leads them to develop a critical perspective on crime and punishment in America.

"History illustrates both how tenacious and variable systems of oppression are and how dynamic and creative we must continue to be to rise to the challenges they pose."

(write for contact information of author)

The 153rd Death Row Exoneree

Anthony Ray Hinton of Alabama, also speaking in Santa Fe, in January 2016, with a representative of the Equal Justice Initiative (Bryan Stevenson Executive Director, 122 Commerce Street, Montgomery AL 36104, the organization which struggled on his behalf for 15 years to obtain his release), by his side, summed up his experience of 30 years of incarceration, as a person totally innocent of the charges against him. Anthony Ray Hinton was held on death row for many years and is among those doing the most time before being freed. His wrongful conviction and the length of time it took to free him were attributed by his lawyers to prosecutorial misconduct and the indifference of judges.

"The system was afraid to do what was right....I wish I could tell you it was an accident....My case illustrates how race, wealth and class shape outcomes....Racism is worse now....It is time for good people to stand up and put a stop to it."