

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 44-A, No. 7

PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504

July 2019

The Story, Past and Present, is about Money & Torture

Those of us who can bear it, know the story of the conditions for babies, little children, school age children and their parents in the places, around the country that they are being held. Different ones of us prefer different names for these hell-holes: detention, internment/concentration camps. (Concentration camps are often considered to be the mass detention of civilians without trial.) But beyond their having come into being and their recent rapid and unholy growth rate, what is this story about? Money. And the immigration policies now being implemented are working exactly how they were designed to.

In 1990, Border and Customs had a budget of about \$260 million. Today it's up to \$4 billion. This is a 16-fold increase. And, congress has just recently appropriated \$4.6 million more, to handle the thousands of people held as victims in it. We must remember that 75% of all U.S. detention are run by for-profit companies. We are told over and over again that we taxpayers are being charged \$750 per day per child being detained. This is despite consistent reports that these children don't even consistently have toothbrushes or soap. Quite a contrast to about 10 years ago when there were "only" about 5,000 people so incarcerated. Today we have over 50,000. Which makes the U.S. not only the country which, in general, imprisons a higher proportion of our population than any other. But also makes the U.S. the largest jailers of immigrants in the world.

Reports are (in, for example, the New York Times) that so-called defense contractors, housing children in presumably converted Walmarts, has made a billion dollars by doing so. It sure sounds like someone definitely wants such desperate people to come here. And to incarcerate them--because someone not only wants to profit off them, but, actually is at this very moment. At this enormously high rate.

Resource: *Sand and Blood: America's Stealth War on the Mexico Border* by John Carlos Frey.

This situation didn't appear out of nowhere. It has a history which is very difficult to be comfortable with. It began in many ways during the Bill Clinton administration. That was when the border began to be militarized, walls were started, and undocumented immigrants began to be gone after much more harshly.

In 1994, the Border Patrol began a strategy it called: "prevention through deterrence." Walls at border cities on major immigration routes such as San Diego and El Paso began to be built. This was to purposely force migration through the sparsely populated border deserts and mountains. It was to "let the terrain take care of them." The plan was that people walking across those areas would get dehydrated, get sick and die. And many did. Many dead bodies continue to be found.

And the revelations continue. Current and former Border Patrol agents--more than 9,500 out of a total of 20,000--are in a racist and sexually violent secret Customs and Border Patrol Facebook group. By the agency's own reporting they receive "hundreds" of allegations of "excessive force" every year. Customs agents and Border Patrol agents together make up by far the largest law enforcement agency in the country: a total of about 40,000. About 250 employees of Customs and Border Patrol agents are arrested every year. Charges range from traffic tickets to drug trafficking, to human smuggling and domestic violence.

A former agent has stated: "I can tell you that cruelty is the point. They have the ability to treat families humanely, but choose not to because the Border Patrol does not value the lives of immigrants. This is taught in the academy and reinforced by management."

It reminds us of the revelations begun in 2004 of the torture by U.S. soldiers at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Many of those imprisoned in the U.S. then pointed out that a lot of the torturers had worked in domestic U.S. prisons before being transferred to Abu Ghraib. Who was it that they must have practiced on? And still do.

Comunidades de inmigrantes se preparan para redadas del ICE

El fin de semana de julio 13 y 14, agentes de Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) lanzaron un puñado de redadas en el todo Estados Unidos. La medida es parte del intento del presidente de los EUA de detener y deportar a miles de migrantes indocumentados en diez ciudades importantes. Incluso a Nueva York, en donde trataron a hacer detenciones en las zonas de Sunset Park y Harlem; se informa que los inmigrantes se rehusaron a abrirles la puerta a los agentes de ICE porque estos no tenían orden judicial.

Las autoridades afirman que planean hacer nuevos allanamientos, lo que desató el temor pero también generó protestas multitudinarias.

Antes de las redadas planificadas, organizaciones en defensa de los derechos de los inmigrantes han incrementado sus esfuerzos para que las comunidades afectas conozcan sus derechos.

Como sabemos, las redadas de inmigración son algo muy traumático, y por tanto cuando las anuncian antes de realizarlas creamos que parte del objetivo es sembrar el caos en las comunidades.

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 in order for us to maintain our only permanent mailing list--the one for our January holiday/new calendar--as accurately as possible.

Also, note that the correct address to be sure to reach us at is: PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504. And still: NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS; for our protection, please do not mark envelopes addressed to us as *Legal Mail*.

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons Project for posting our Newsletter on-line for free downloading and distribution. It is at:

www.realcostofprisons.org--this is a GREAT site! Thank you for all your support!

FREEDOM TO LEARN CAMPAIGN

Seeks through legislation and administrative change to create a more productive environment for higher education in prison in Illinois and more successful outcomes for people who wish to continue their education after release. On internet at: freedom-to-learn.net Postal address: c/o Education Justice Project of the College of Education, University of Illinois, 1001 S. Wright St., Champaign IL 61820.

Guess What Organization of a little more than 500 employees has:

- > 29 accused of spousal abuse
 - > 19 accused of writing bad checks
 - > 117 have bankrupted at least 2 businesses
 - > 3 who have done time for assault
 - > 71 denied credit cards for bad credit
 - > 14 arrested on drug-related charges
 - > 8 arrested for shoplifting
 - > 21 currently defendants in lawsuits
 - > 84 arrested for drunk driving in past yr
- [answer at bottom of page, per A.C. of CA]

SOME STATE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Colorado: Extended voting rights to nearly 10,000 people on parole. Those diversion clients living in halfway houses, are also eligible to register and vote. Also included are: people on probation; on parole; jailed awaiting trial or doing a misdemeanor sentence; on bond or summons awaiting trial; or with an old, completed, conviction--all are now eligible to vote. Resource: Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC), 1212 Mariposa St., Suite 6, Denver CO 80204--"A network of organizations, faith communities, and individuals working to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety in CO."

Florida: Amendment 4 passed by 64% in November 2018. Amendment 4 ordered automatic vote restoration for 1.4 million with completed felony convictions. But the current governor of the state is adding the condition of full payment of fees, fines and restitution to its definition of "sentence served." This will knock the number of restored eligible voters down to 840,000. By 2000, 10% of all potential voters and 21% of potential Black voters had lost their right to vote because of felony convictions under then existing Florida law.

New Mexico: A bill to reform and quite likely to expand granting parole in New Mexico will be reintroduced in the state's upcoming legislative session to start in January 2020. It was passed in the previous legislative session, but vetoed by the governor.

Origin of the term "concentration camp":

"Great Britain invented the concentration camp during the Second Boer War (1899-1902). The British army forcibly removed Boer women and children from their farms and incarcerated (concentrated) them in camps near cities to demoralize the Boer men fighting a guerrilla war...."

[the 535 members of the U.S. Congress]