

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 28, No. 5

PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504-1911

May 2003

MAYDAY MAYDAY, 2003



We now appear to be living in a New World Order. Some of us like it; some of us don't. Some of us think recent developments are unavoidable; some of us think the U.S. government has chosen the worst possible course of action. These changes will affect the daily lives of ordinary working people.

We all struggle to find the meaning behind recent events undertaken by the U.S. government, both in the United States and in other peoples' countries. We all worry about our safety and our

futures. Many of us are in the position of loving our country but not being proud of it. We have different opinions about the necessity and justice of the U.S. war against Iraq and its aftermath.

There are also developments within the U. S. that represent big changes both in how our laws are written and how they are applied. As the readers of this Newsletter well know, our government often does not follow its own rules. One of the main tactics in our fight for justice has been struggling to get

MILITARY OCCUPATION IS NOT PEOPLE'S LIBERATION * NO MORE WARS

MAYDAY, MAYDAY, cont.

the government to follow its own rules. With the passage of the so-called USA Patriot Act by an overwhelming congressional majority shortly after 9/11, the rules began to change with a vengeance. Many people regard the changes as those of a police state.

Although legal immigrants are hit the hardest, the intrusive and pervasive spying provisions can be used against anyone in the country.

Now, here comes Patriot Act 2. It includes, among many others, provisions that would strip citizenship from native born U.S. citizens thought to have "terrorist ties." DNA samples would be required of those suspected of terrorism. Federal agents who conduct illegal searches would be granted expanded immunity. Arrests said to be connected to international terrorism could be kept secret until an indictment is filed.

Many incarcerated people have suffered these and related abuses when they have been illegal. We shudder to imagine how they will increase if and when they become legal.

There are also frightening parallels with catastrophic events of the last century, which some of us have lived through.

In 1942, 120,000 Japanese Americans living in mainland western coastal states, both citizens and non-citizens, were literally rounded up, losing most of their possessions, and imprisoned. This injustice is especially ironic as the Japanese Americans, one-third of the population in Hawaii, were not subjected to this kind of treatment. And not a single incident of sabotage was ever attributed to any member of the Japanese American

community.

This time around they are coming first for the Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants. There are already over 3,000 people who have been "disappeared." The Bush administration is developing a parallel legal system in which terrorism suspects - U.S. citizens and non-citizens alike - may be investigated, jailed, interrogated, tried and punished without the legal protections guaranteed by the "ordinary" system.

IT IS TIME TO RESIST!

For more information contact:
Blue Triangle Network, PO Box 7451
Dearborn MI 48121, (313) 942-7187
www.bluetriangle.org

FOR-PROFIT, NOT FOR PEOPLE

Since 1986, the Santa Fe NM jail has been run by a series of for profit companies: CCA, Cornell, and Management and Training Corp., since October of 2001 - supposed to be state of the art. There is space for 670 people in the jail. When built, in 1997, the idea was to make money renting space to the feds and others. The reality seems to be that there are a lot of empty beds there.

A federal Department of Justice evaluation visit to the jail investigating medical services, mental health services, security procedures and the treatment of women prisoners was made last May. The report was finally delivered to the County Commission in March. Perhaps it took so long because it included a list of 53 practices requiring change.

This is in addition to the Santa Fe County advisory committee report stating the need for better visitation facilities, more medical staff and less staff turnover, among others.

WHAT IS CRIME? QUE ES UN CRIMEN?

The same social and economic system exploits us - in many of the same ways - as prisoners and as workers. The Coalition for Prisoners' Rights believes that crime is the bad, oppressive things we do to each other. The more people you hurt, the bigger the criminal you are.

So the big criminals in our country are the people who are rich when others are poor, those who make profits from other peoples' misery. We fight other countries for them.

Street crime is a very small part of all the crimes committed each day. Even mobster crime is small in comparison to unemployment, homelessness, the bad food, education and health care that hurt so many of us. Yet we have been taught to believe that street crime and organized crime are big enemies to us. And when we believe that, the real, big criminals are safe.

Enormous changes are needed to rid ourselves of the system that results in the big crime in this country. Workers and prisoners, the unemployed, the disabled, the retired - all people of color, poor and working people - have to work together to stop the big crooks.

The big crooks - the owners and bureaucrats and politicians who protect their interests at our expense - don't have horns or fangs or shifty eyes, just like the people now in prison don't. Maybe they're nice people, just trying to be comfortable like the rest of us. But the pursuit by these few of comforts and wealth and power mean violence and oppression against the vast majority of us. And that's more than a crying shame. It's a crime.

El mismo sistema social y económico nos abusa de la misma manera tanto a los prisioneros como a los obreros. Y la Coalición para los Derechos de los Prisioneros cree que los crímenes son las cosas malas y opresivas que no hacemos uno al otro. El peor criminal es aquel que hiere al mayor número de personas.

Los crímenes callejeros son sólo una pequeña parte de los crímenes que se cometen diariamente. Ningún crimen se compara con los crímenes del desempleo, la falta de vivienda, la mala nutrición, la mala educación, la mala atención médica que nos afectan a muchos de nosotros. Pero lo triste es que la gente cree que el enemigo es el delincuente callejero o el crimen organizado. Y si todos creemos esto, los criminales verdaderos se salen con la suya.

Un cambio enorme es necesario para deshacernos de este sistema que comete los crímenes más grandes en este país. Y todos, obreros y prisioneros, desempleados y discapacitados, los pobres y la gente de color tenemos que unirnos para ganarles a estos ladrones.

Estos ladrones - los empresarios, los burócratas y los políticos - que protegen sus intereses a costa de nosotros, no tienen ni rabo, ni cuernos, ni patas de chivo, parecen tan normales como cualquier pinto. Tal vez sean buenas gentes tratando de llevar una vida cómoda como todos la quisiéramos; pero cuando cruzan esa línea que les permite violentar y oprimir un gran número de personas para mantener su tren de vida entonces se convierten en los más grandes criminales del país.



VOICES
FROM
INSIDE

since 1976

SANCTIONING

Michigan City IN

April 2, 2003

From the Order In the Matter of Steven B. Geller, Finding Misconduct and Imposing Discipline, in the Supreme Court of Indiana, Case No. 49S00-0008-DI-460, filed November 2, 2003. "The Commission charged the respondent with six counts of misconduct, (found) guilty in four counts." The respondent violated: Ind. Professional Conduct Rules 1.5(a), 1.8(h), 1.9(b), 1.15(a), 1.15(b), 8.4(b) and 8.4(c) concerning attorney's fees, liability for malpractice, use of information to the disadvantage of a former client, holding client's property separately from their own, notification about receipt of funds, committing acts reflecting on the attorney's fitness or involving fraud. For further information, contact: Marvin F. Taylor Sr, 995801, BCH342, Indiana State Prison, PO Box 41, Michigan City IN 46361.

GENTLEPERSONS

Alberta Canada

March 20, 2003

You can stop sending your pamphlet. It is too depressing, how the U.S. treats its own people. May this Iraq affair teach everybody a lesson in how to value life.

BLACK OPERATIONS

Cañon City CO

March 19, 2003

Attn: Vietnam Vets. Those of you involved with intelligence projects like I was contact: Art Price, 66072, PO Box 600, unit E208, Centennial Correctional Facility, Cañon City CO 81215-0600.

POSSIBLE RETALIATION

Munising MI

March 19, 2003

That president and his evil administration and its unjustified war: Bush should be impeached and all accommodating co-conspirators should be held fully responsible in world court on crimes of mass destruction of humanity. And a breach of United Nations collective role modeling and responsibility for an illegal war, with no imminent, active or immediate threat to America. And for subjecting the American people to possible retaliation.

This is the final issue to use the pre-subscription renewal mailing list. Thank you for renewing and for your support.

Mailing list additions and address changes should go into effect within two months from their postmarked date. We don't have the resources to acknowledge these requests by letter. Requests for referrals and other correspondence will be answered within four to six weeks. Letters intended for publication must say "Do Print." If requesting responses, state whether you can receive mail directly from those imprisoned. The Coalition makes information available on resources and services for prisoners. We strongly urge that readers keep copies of all papers, especially legal papers, sent to those offering assistance, and be careful about sending money. In most cases we do not have direct experience with the quality or reliability of the services provided by the groups mentioned. NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS

FORENSIC REPORTS

Hagerstown MD March 21, 2003

A Baltimore County Maryland police chemist/forensic scientist, Concepcion Bacasnot, who performed serologic and DNA testing for the prosecution, has come under the scrutiny of both New York and Washington DC Innocence Projects. Following the recent exoneration of a Maryland convict who was imprisoned for 20 years, experts say Bacasnot's testimony suggested "gross incompetence, and, at worst, deliberate fraud." Baltimore County officials state there are 480 cases which may be compromised, although that they are certain no one is on death row as a result of her work.

PUSH FOR FEDERAL PAROLE

Coleman FL March 22, 2003

If our families unite and send petitions and letters to the politicians and organizations we can get relief from drug war injustice. The idea is to try to bring back the federal parole system. I was found guilty and sentenced to life for possession with the intent to distribute. That is a death sentence. A slow death, but a death sentence. Now I propose to bombard these Senators with letters to bring back parole. It's a chance for many like me to get home some day.

NOT BEHIND TIME

Angola LA April 3, 2002

P.E.E.P. (Prisoners Exposing Every Prison) is designed to expose the police brutality that continues to take place behind these walls as well as on the streets. It's time for prisoners, from all over the world, to stand up and fight for prisoners' rights! Because you are behind bars does not mean you have to be behind time. For more information, contact: Joseph Zeno, 356057, Camp J Shark 4-R-8, Louisiana State Penitentiary, Angola LA 70712. You will receive a response (hopefully within a week).

A.D.A.

Lake City FL April 7, 2003

They're violating the A.D.A. (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990) with impunity. We have to fight for the A.D.A. despite changes in medical grades and retaliatory transfers.



RULE CHANGE

"The Texas Board of Criminal Justice has changed the TDCJ correspondence rules. These changes will become effective May 1, 2003." Some excerpts follow: "Offenders may not send letters to or receive letters from other offenders." "No tablets or writing pads with stapled binding." "No clipping of pages from publications. Publications with content denied will be denied in their entirety." This has happened after the recent ending of the Ruiz and Guajardo cases. Many feel that it is very important to do everything possible to get these issues back in to court/the legislature.

Ft. Stockton TX March 22, 2003

Please send positive information for a Gay and Lesbian Prison Collection Newsletter I want to start in a few months. No sex stories please - but ideas, stories pertaining to positive or negative experiences in the prison, as well as out. Also laws, bills, and prison policies. Pace Allen, 888224, 1098 S Hwy 2037, Ft Stockton TX 79735.

Huntsville TX April 2003

Someone at the Huntsville/Walls Unit kindly send me the full names of all LVNs and RNs there, as in the unit's latest employee roster? Jimmie Montoya, 593707, Estelle Unit, 264 FM 3478, Huntsville TX 77320.

Angleton TX April 3, 2003

For more information re *Broussard v. Johnson*, 253 F.3d 874 (5th Cir. 2001) re informants, contact: Morris R. Broussard, 290674, Wayne Scott Unit, Rt.5 Box 1500, Angleton TX 77515.

"An interesting Halliburton-Brown and Root (vice-president Cheney's company) contract was one in 2002 to build 204 additional cages at the concentration camp in Guantanamo, Cuba for 'unlawful combatants.' These were made from metal shipping containers, each cage measuring about 6'8" by 8.' The price was \$9,700,000. That works out to more than \$850 per square foot. The company used workers flown in from the Philippines, some of whom tried to organize a union and were flown back home."

- letter to the editor, Santa Fe Reporter, April 9-15, 2003 issue

The Coalition for Prisoners' Rights Newsletter is published monthly by the Prison Project of Santa Fe, Inc., PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM, 87504-1911. Subscription rates are: free to prisoners, their family members, and ex-prisoners who request it themselves; \$12/year for other individuals; \$25/year for government agencies and for-profit institutions. Please do not send names of other people; order only for yourself. We appreciate those who help us by sharing their newsletter and by sending stamps.

¿QUE ES LA JUSTICIA? WHAT IS JUSTICE?

La primera condicion para que exista la justicia es saber que la justicia es un proceso, algo en lo que tenemos que trabajar todos los dias. Pero estamos muy lejos de lograr esta justicia.

Cuando cosas malas nos suceden y reaccionamos hiriendo a las personas que creemos que nos han hecho daño, esa no es justicia - es castigo. El castigo sigue solamente a la injusticia. El castigo no trae la justicia, unicamente mantiene las cosas como son, y esto es lo que quieren las personas que estan en el poder.

Muchos de nosotros estamos tan enojados por la manera en que hemos sido tratados en nuestras vidas que es muy dificil pensar en como hacer cambios. Y todas las instituciones que existen hoy en dia como la policia, las cortes, las prisiones quieren que busquemos venganza.

La segunda condicion para que la justicia sea justa incluye el compartir equitativamente. Vivimos en un pais rico. Aunque dejaramos de tomar mas de lo que merecemos de otros paises, tendríamos lo suficiente para que todos los que vivimos aqui tuvieramos lo que necesitamos. No es justicia que algunas personas tengan mucho dinero mientras otras no tengan lo suficiente para pagar por sus necesidades basicas.

La tercera condicion para que exista la justicia es tener control sobre nuestras vidas y poder para mejorar las. Es muy dificil luchar por la justicia, pero solamente puede haber justicia para uno, cuando exista la justicia para todos.

The first condition of justice is knowing that justice is a process, something that has to be worked on every day. We are very far from it.

When bad things happen to us and we react by hurting the people who we think have hurt us, that is not justice - that is punishment. Punishment can only come after injustice. Punishment does not work toward creating justice, it works toward keeping things as they are. Which is what people in power want them to be.

Many of us are so angry about how we have been treated in our lives that it is hard for us to think about how to change it. We are encouraged to use all our energy to think of how we can get back at people and get more for ourselves. And all the institutions that exist now, such as police, courts, and prisons, encourage us to do so.

The second condition of justice, being fair, includes sharing equally. We live in a rich country. Even if we stopped taking more than our share from other countries there could still be enough here for everyone to have what they need. For some people to have alot of money while others don't have enough to cover their basic needs isn't justice.

The third condition of justice is having power to control our lives, and to improve them. Working for justice is hard work, especially since it goes against so many of the lies we have been brought up with. There can only be justice for one when it is there for us all.

Crime of the Month

aka Crimetoppers

In the guise of national security Washington has plowed full steam ahead to make our lives an open book, blatantly ignoring our civil rights. But getting information from the Justice Department, the Oval Office, federal offices or even congressional delegations is becoming trickier by the millisecond.

Both the Democratic and the Republican national headquarters have advised their congressional and other candidates not to respond to issues questionnaires sent by the nonpartisan group, Project Vote Smart. Vote Smart was started in 1992, responds to toll-free phone calls (1-888-VOTE-SMART) and publishes the free "Voters Self-Defense Manual," which includes contact

information on Congress people and their voting records. When Vote Smart began its National Political Awareness Test in 1996, 80% of the candidates replied, at least partially, to questions on how they would vote on specific issues. Now, with this bi-partisan conspiracy of silence, only 35% responded in 2002.

No doubt our courageous leaders are following the example of Attorney General John Ashcroft when he ordered all federal agencies to reject Freedom of Information Act requests if they could cook up an excuse to say "no." No one agrees any more with James Madison's message: "A people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

Or perhaps they do. This is our Crime of the Month.



05/03

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