

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

Vol. 29, No. 2 PO Box 1911, Santa Fe NM 87504-1911 February 2003

WHERE WE HAVE COME FROM

Slavery "officially" ended in 1865 with the ratification of the 13th amendment to the United States Constitution. From 1619 when the first black African persons were brought to this country to the present, the atrocities of slavery and racism in this country on the African American community have had devastating effects. However, African American women have found resilient ways to survive such unforgettable hardships. The adaptability to such overwhelming hardships has given these women the strength and capability to fight against the modern day slavery of the US prison system.

The women today who are held captive in the prison system are poor, young, less-educated, single, unemployed mothers on welfare or lowly paid workers. Forty percent of women in prison held no job prior to incarceration. Of those who had jobs, two-thirds reported never receiving

more than \$6.50 an hour.

Women of color, especially African American women, have even greater obstacles to face. Women of color account for 2/3s of the women in prison, although they represent only a 1/4 of the US population. Racism and classism combine with drug abuse, violence in the community and society, and mental illness (due to the stress of trying to keep food on the table and families together), to create a collage of despair that entangles womens' lives.

The adaptive and resilient African American community has learned ways to survive and has passed this knowledge from generation to generation. These survival skills are needed today as much as they were needed hundreds of years ago.

One of the ways African American women are able to keep their families together is to rely

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WHERE WE COME FROM, cont.

on kinship relations. Just as in times of slavery, the dominant powers force apart families as punishment with unforgivable arrogance.

Today the fast tracking of foster-care permanency planning nation-wide again threatens to tear apart families. But tools of kinship families are being renewed. The African American community is doing everything possible to keep families together and to keep women out of prison/slavery.

One of these modern day abolitionists is Susan Burton of Los Angeles. Susan has been incarcerated /enslaved herself. She knows first hand the harsh realities of drug addiction, prostitution, familial and societal violence, and separation from her children. She has established a program to help women who are newly released from prison and who want very much to stay off the slave ship/prison.

Susan Burton is grounded in reality, but keeps her hope for change. Despite the success rate of her three year old program at keeping women sober and independent, (2/3s of the 80+ women who have stayed with her have not returned to prison), the funding she needs to continue her work is scarce.

Could it be the dominant racist capitalistic system needs for these women to remain incarcerated?

Despite such set-backs, Susan has opened yet another house. Her program is called "A New Way of Life." Each of the house in it can host 6 to 8 women for up to one year.

Susan can be reached at www.newwayoflife.org or at PO Box 875288 Los Angeles CA 90087. Contributions are welcomed.

MEXICO SE OPONE A LA EXTRADICION DE CRIMINALES QUE ENFRENTAN CONDENAS DE CADENA PERPETUA

Un dictamen por parte de la Corte Suprema de Justicia mexicana ha bloqueado la extradición de más de 70 asesinos, capos de la droga y el crimen organizado los cuales han sido condenados a cadena perpetua y se encuentran en las cárceles de los Estados Unidos.

En México las sentencias máximas son de 40 años y en circunstancias muy especiales una condena de 60 años puede ser impuesta. En México no existe la pena de muerte.

En una encuesta de opinión de justicia se obtuvo resultados de 6 contra 2. Roman Palacio escribió: Sería absurdo esperar que un criminal se rehabilitara si no existiera ninguna posibilidad para reincorporarse a la sociedad, por esa razón una condena de cadena perpetua sería contraria a la constitución y al espíritu de rehabilitación.

Debido a que la decisión de la Corte Suprema está basada en la constitución, ni el presidente ni los legisladores la pueden cambiar.

En enero del 2002, un juez de una corte menor en México invocó la decisión de la Corte Suprema dictaminando que Agustín Vasquez no sea extraditado. Este prisionero fue encontrado culpable de la muerte de Richard Foss, un agente de la D.E.A. del Estado de Arizona.

México actualmente se rehusa extraditar a convictos que enfrentan la pena de muerte. México generalmente se rehusa a extraditar a cualquier persona que enfrente la pena de muerte sin importar que ciudadanía tenga.

IN MEMORIAM

Seventy-one people were officially murdered by state governments in the United States in 2002. By the end of 2002, 820 people had been executed since the US moratorium on capital punishment ended in 1976.

1/9	James Johnson	MO	7/23	Randall Eugene Cannon	OK
1/9	Michael Moore	TX	7/30	Earl A. Frederick, Sr.	OK
1/9	Jermarr Arnold	TX	8/7	Richard Kutzner	TX
1/24	Ronald Spivey	GA	8/8	T.J. Jones	TX
1/29	Stephen Anderson	CA	8/14	Javier Suarez Medina	TX
1/29	John Romano	OK	8/14	Daniel Basile	MO
1/30	Windell Broussard	TX	8/16	Wallace Fugate	GA
1/31	Randall Hafdahl	TX	8/20	Gary Etheridge	TX
1/31	David Woodruff	OK	8/23	Anthony Green	SC
2/6	Michael Owsley	OK	8/28	Toronto Patterson	TX
2/19	John Byrd, Jr.	OH	9/10	Tony Walker	TX
2/28	Monty Delk	TX	9/13	Michael Passaro	SC
3/6	Jeffrey Tokar	MO	9/17	Jessie Patrick	TX
3/7	Gerald Tigner	TX	9/18	Ronald Shamburger	TX
3/12	Tracy Housel	GA	9/24	Rex Mays	TX
3/14	James Patterson	VA	9/25	Robert A. Buell	OH
4/2	Daniel Zirkle	VA	9/25	Calvin King	TX
4/10	Paul Kreutzer	MO	10/1	James Powell	TX
4/10	José Santellan	TX	10/2	Rigoberto Sanchez-Velasco	FL
4/11	William Burns	TX	10/9	Aileen Wournos	FL
4/18	Gerald Casey	TX	11/13	William Putman	GA
4/26	Alton Coleman	OH	11/14	Mir Aimal Kasi	VA
4/30	Rodolfo Hernandez	TX	11/19	Craig Ogan	TX
5/3	Richard Johnson	SC	11/20	William Jones	MO
5/9	Reginald Reeves	TX	11/20	William Chappell	TX
5/10	Lynda Lyon Block	AL	12/4	Leonard Rojas	TX
5/10	Leslie Martin	LA	12/6	Ernest Basden	NC
5/16	Ronford Styron	TX	12/9	Linroy Bottoson	FL
5/22	Johnny Martinez	TX	12/10	Desmond Carter	NC
5/28	Napoleon Beazley	TX	12/10	Jerry Lynn McCracken	OK
5/30	Stanley Baker	TX	12/11	James Collier	TX
6/12	Walter Mickens	VA	12/11	Jessie Williams	MS
6/13	Daniel Reneau	TX	12/12	Anthony Johnson	AL
6/25	Robert Coulson	TX	12/12	Jay Neill	OK
6/26	Jeffrey Williams	TX	12/17	Earnest Carter	OK
7/17	Tracy Hansen	MS			

Eighteen or 24% of those killed were African-American.

Coalition for Prisoners' Rights Newsletter



VOICES
FROM
INSIDE

since 1976

CORRECTION:

Address for the CA DOC "Departmental Reveiw Board" is:
PO Box 942883, Sacramento CA 92483.

"Letter from Legislator" in the CPR September 2002 Newsletter was quoted by: Roger Vander Logt, 304568, Walworth Unit, PO Box 900-1, Sturtevant WE 53177-0900.

HELD

Santa Fe NM November 28, 2002

One hundred forty-four state prisoners are being held at the County Jail in Santa Fe, along with 144 at Gallup and 144 at Sandoval County (largely) to meet the guidelines and requirements of a federal audit being conducted by the ACA during November. That same number of inmates around the state are doing "in-house" parole because the DOC doesn't get them out in time.

A SPIRITUAL LEADER

Michigan City IN December 15, 2002

There are many here that would like to participate in an Asatru group, but the prison refuses to allow this because we lack a spiritual leader. I am looking for information and someone who lives in our area that could assist. Corey Anderson, 945315, PO Box 41, Michigan City IN 46361-0041. No mail directly from others imprisoned.

DERECHOS CONSULARES

San Quentin CA el 18 de diciembre de 2002

México ratifica VCCR (La Convención Vienna en Relaciones Consulares). Ciudadanos/as (y ciudadanos de países que han ratificado la VCCR) que estan enfrentando cargos criminales y que eventualmente han sido sentenciados a pena capital contacten su Consulado Mexicano local, para que conogan sus derechos y recibir asistencia bajo derechos consulares. Fuente para documento de derechos consulares (website source for consular rights documents): <http://www3.sympatico.ca/aiwarren>

PRISON CHESS NETWORK

Jarratt VA December 24, 2002

Earn a grandmaster rating at blitz chess or international postal chess! For low-cost/free materials (from hot websites, reviews of recent books) send a SASE to SPN, PMB 339, 955 Mass Ave, Cambridge MA 02139.

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

CORRESPONDENCE RULES

Gatesville TX/Huntsville TX December 27, 2002/January 7, 2003

On September 20, 2002, US District Judge Lee Rosenthal dismissed the 31 year old lawsuit which established the Texas prison Correspondence rules. See *Guajardo v. Estelle*, 568 F Supp 1354 (SD TX 1971). On October 18, 2002, Judge Rosenthal discharged Vinson & Elkins, the law firm that represented Texas prisoners who complained of problems with the mail....New litigation can only happen if inmates will document any and all problems they have with the unit mail rooms.

HYPE

Bennettville SC December 28, 2002

It's hard to believe all the hype the US is putting on Iraq and Korea when in itself it has the most weapons of mass destruction. Like the Savannah River Site in Aiken SC. That houses more plutonium than all other countries put together....I see martial law coming and it won't be good for anyone, in or out of prison.

AFFIDAVITS

Susanville CA December 30, 2002

Any inmate who is or was housed at HDSP: send a signed affidavit to Judge John Moulds, Federal District Court, Eastern District, 501 "I" Street, Suite 4-200, Sacramento CA 95814, re case no. CIV S-01-1868 (JFM) letting him know how the appeals coordinator, with the warden's knowledge, routinely throws away appeals alleging staff misconduct, and routinely covers-up allegations of staff misconduct. Your affidavits must be signed "under penalty of perjury." State at the top of the page "Affadivit." Keep it to one page. Ask the Judge to appoint independent experts to investigate the alleged facts.

LIFERS PROGRAM

Bessemer AL January 3, 2003

We wish to created a "Lifers Program" in Alabama and we would greatly appreciate being sent copies of "Lifers Programs" that are functioning within other institutions. The information can be sent to me directly, Richard Mafundi Lake, 079972, 100 Warrior Lane, #5-24, Bessemer AL 35023-7299, or to CPSB, PO Box 12152, Birmingham AL 3502.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

New Boston TX

January 14, 2003

I am a 35 year old gay male, in prison in Texas and have experienced abuse from not just other offenders, but from guards as well, with no help or no one to turn to, even though I am on safe keeping status. I am willing to write to anyone who has experienced or is going through a state such as this who writes to me, and I will promise to answer all replies with words of encouragement. James Franklin Taylor, 679951, Telford Unit, PO Box 9200, New Boston TX 75570-9200.

NEWSLETTER

Pelzer SC

January 14, 2003

I would like to initiate a SC Newsletter. Would like the masses of society to give input. Let's exchange ideas on how the issues of politics, culture, religion, and race relate to prisoners. Darvin Wayne Allen, 233800, 2B-218, 430 Oaklawn Rd, Pelzer SC 29669.

MPLU LOCAL CHAPTER

Kenedy TX

November 2002

Once I've completed the class action suit, I will be sending a copy of it to everyone for all to sign and return. I will also be sending those who have written, a free copy of my newsletter "The Struggle." The comrade who sent me the info that he submitted to the United Nations, please send it back to me and write me. Sidney Williams, 563001, 899 FM 632, Kenedy TX 78119.

SMOKING

Carlisle IN

December 19, 2002

They took smoking out of most DOCs across the country as a result of the Clean Air Act, IC 16-41-37 and the federal government pays them for this. Yet, what is not said outside the DOCs is, smoking has not stopped or really even slowed down. Why? Well, because the staff of the DOCs has turned this into a way of racketeering the inmates. They supply the tobacco at a charge of 10 times its cost.

We don't have to be victimized, but it will take us all to change it, and it doesn't take any violence. If you are tired of being victimized, then do something about it.



VOICES IN SOLIDARITY

WE STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH ALL THOSE CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

"That Justice is a blind goddess Is a thing to which we Black are wise. Her bandage hides two festering sores That once perhaps were eyes." -- Langston Hughes

FORWARD TO THE STRUGGLES AND VICTORIES OF 2003!

BLACK SEEDS

2003 Black Historical and Educational Calendar. Now available in bookstores and other outlets nationwide, or by ordering directly from Black Seeds, Inc., 1217 17th Street NE, Washington DC 20002, (202) 398-4104. \$7.50 each plus postage and handling (\$3 for one). Must pre-pay.

CRITICAL RESISTANCE (CR)

Critical Resistance South: An organizing effort to bring together prisoners, former prisoners, families, community organizers, activists, young people, students, people of faith, immigrants and all others concerned about and/or affected by the Prison Industrial Complex for a Regional Conference and Strategy Session. April 4-6, Tremé Community Center, 100 St. Phillip Street, New Orleans LA. PO Box 791213, New Orleans 70179, toll free: 866-579-0885, www.criticalresistance.org

Critical Resistance Radio in CA: Every other week from 4-5pm on Tuesdays at KPFA 94.1 & KPFB 89.3 in Berkeley and KFCF 88.1 in Fresno. Up-to-date news, personal stories, and cultural highlights about the Prison Industrial Complex. CR seeks input from prisoners, via call-ins, written materials, poetry, ideas for shows, stories. Send to: CR, 1212 Broadway, Suite 1400, Oakland CA 94612.

LOCKED UP AND FREE

A brochure, "Locked Up and Free," can be ordered free of charge from: CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH, PO Box 737, Butler NJ 07405. It teaches "centering prayer," a very effective meditation practice. There is also a free 12 minute VCR tape, "True Freedom - Prisoners Speak Out." It doesn't matter what religious beliefs we have - or if we've never been religious at all.

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.

Crime of the Month

aka Crimetoppers

So you thought that passage of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act would limit influence peddling during the next federal election. Think again.

Although the bill banned the expenditure of soft money by national party committees, \$750 million in the last national election alone, rules had to be issued by the Federal Election Committee (FEC) to implement the law.

"Soft money" is defined as the unlimited contributions that national parties raise from sources normally prohibited from donating to candidates by federal law. These contributions are not to be used to affect federal elections directly, but various loopholes have allowed the parties to get around these restrictions.

If anything, the new rules have

made it easier than ever to buy a candidate. The FEC has ruled that state and local parties can raise and spend unlimited amounts of soft money for national elections. They have also ruled that congressional candidates may even be paid a salary while running for office, up to the \$130,000 a year rate that Congress pays itself.

Further, while the national parties are prohibited from taking soft money, the FEC says they can set up "independent" soft money committees and that these can keep operating forever without reporting where their money comes from.

So the status quo continues, only it's called "reform" - and that is our Crime of the Month. It's called Bought and Sold; we've been there, done that.

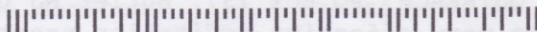


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