

Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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A LOT HAPPENS IN ONE MONTH

FIVE CORPORATIONS MAKING MILLIONS

In the construction sector the largest player is New York based Turner Construction, a subsidiary of the German Hochtief. Their average annual income from 2007 to 2012 from prison and jail construction was \$278 million. And incarceration facilities are by no means their core business.

On to electronic monitors: led by BI Incorporated and their GPS-based devices. They monitor about 60,000 people at any given moment in all 50 states--essentially a for-profit form of probation and parole. In 2009, they signed a 5 year, multimillion contract with ICE to intensively supervise 27,000 immigrants awaiting judgment. In 2011, the GEO Group bought out BI.

Now, food services. Aramark's revenue in 2013 was just under \$14 billion and it employs 162,000 people worldwide. They include those in 600 correctional facilities. Both food shortages and maggots in food served have been reported, sometimes resulting in fines.

Next, telecommunications. Securus Technologies is the second largest provider of prison phone services and operates in some 2,200 prison and jail facilities in North America. The FCC estimates that their annual kickbacks are over \$400 million annually. A new area of operations is video visiting. They have also gotten involved in electronic monitoring.

Last in this list of outrages is Bob Barker Industries (no connection to the former TV game show host). It produces a variety of cheaply made goods for those of us incarcerated: jumpsuits (including ones with stereotypic stripes), sandals, T-shirts, board games, black and white striped canvas shoes. Their merchandise now includes a "officers-only line" of goods. They also designed a three-tier bunk and a "van cell."

Resources: *South Chicago ABC*, Zine Distro, PO Box 721, Homewood IL 60430; *Campaign for Prison Phone Justice*, PO Box 448, Wilmington NC 28402.

LIFE IS LONGER

The number of people doing life sentences has more than quadrupled since 1984, a faster growth rate than the overall prison population. By 2012, one in nine people in U.S. state and federal prisons--nearly 160,000--were doing life. During this time, there has been an increased imposition of parole-eligible life sentences and a lower rate of granting parole to the 110,000 people who are parole eligible. In many states, the amount of time actually done on life sentences has more than doubled.

There seem to be four main reasons for this increase in actual sentence length. The amount of time before a person can be considered for parole, and how much time must pass before they can be reconsidered has been increased by state legislators. Parole boards grant fewer paroles and have not increased their grant rates for older prisoners. States limit the opportunities of parole candidates to participate in their parole hearings. Life sentence lengths influence others sentence lengths.

Resource: *The Sentencing Project*, 1705 DeSales St NW 8th Fl Washington DC 20036

Precision Targeting

The anatomy of isolation is so much more than just being separated from others. This includes: social isolation, religious/ spiritual isolation, racial/cultural isolation, ideologic/ political isolation and geographical isolation. The screaming that never stops. Reality itself can seem to vanish. A deliberate manipulation of conditions for the sole purpose of increasing the degree of dehumanization and isolation.

--excerpted from a letter signed by 37 U.S. prisoners held in solitary confinement, postmarked 2016.

IN MEMORIAM

There were 20 people officially murdered in the U.S. by state governments in 2016, all by lethal injection. Their names, dates and states of death are:

01/07	Oscar Ray Bolin Jr.	FL
01/20	Richard Masterson	TX
01/21	Christopher Brooks	AL
01/27	James Freeman	TX
02/03	Brandon Jones	GA
02/16	Gustavo Garcia	TX
02/17	Travis Hittson	GA
03/09	Coy Westbrook	TX
03/22	Adam Ward	TX
03/31	Joshua Bishop	GA

Of those murdered, 9 were in GA and 7 in TX. Two were in AL and one each in FL and in MO. Sixteen were "white," and two each were African-American and Latinos.

04/06	Pablo Vasquez	TX
04/12	Kenneth Fults	GA
04/27	Daniel Lucas	GA
05/11	Earl Forrest	MO
07/15	John Conner	GA
10/05	Barney Ronald Fuller Jr.	TX
10/19	Gregory Paul Lawler	GA
11/16	Steven Frederick Spears	GA
12/06	Willlliam Sallie	GA
12/08	Ronald Bert Smith Jr.	AL

Crime of the Month

So called "progressives" are shocked, shocked, they tell us, that our government is attempting to ban immigration from Muslim countries. Harumph! Who ever heard of such a thing? It's positively un-American. People are taking to the streets in droves to protest the injustice of it all.

But wait. Did anyone happen to notice that six of the seven countries included in the recent ban are currently or have recently been on the receiving end of U.S. bombs? And these are the ones we are being told about. Reports of all the massive demonstrations around the country against these murderous acts of U. S. aggression must have gone under the radar. Or could it be that there weren't any massive protests?

Predominantly white, middle class "liberals" in U.S. who claim to be champions of human rights and social justice seem to have very sophisticated filters for their outrage. It's okay to bomb the hell out of Muslim countries, killing countless numbers of innocent children, women and men. Using drones to carry out extra judicial assassinations of "suspected" Muslim terrorists is also acceptable behavior. But don't you dare try to prevent Muslims from coming into our country. That's an affront to our deepest values.

Our Crime of the Month is the hypocrisy of the "it's-okay-to-bomb-them-just-don't-ban-them" crowd currently shouting out their conveniently selective anger at U.S. immigration policies.

* * * Black Lives Matter * * *

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!

Heroína de Hoy

En Denver, una mujer indocumentada, madre de cuatro hijos, buscó refugio en una iglesia en febrero. El mensaje que ella quiere enviar a las personas inmigrantes como ella: "Desde que llegamos a este país nuestra vida es una lucha, una lucha constante que, aunque estos cuatro años van a ser muy difíciles, no nos tenemos que rendir. En el pasado tuvimos leyes similares, que nos estaban afectando; trabajamos muy duro organizándonos, uniéndonos, y pudimos quitar todas esas leyes. Ahora no va ser la excepción. Van a ser cuatro años difíciles, pero no imposibles. Al igual que yo, necesitan resistir. Voy a salir victoriosa." por J. Vizguerra