

Working to end drug war injustice!

The November Coalition

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Razor Wire

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Nora Callahan

Another World Is Possible Another U.S. Is Necessary



Teresa Aviles and Nora Callahan at the
2007 US Social Forum

It's been a spring and summer of lots of travel to more places than there is room to detail, and more events and community groups are on my own schedule this season through the next. The first ever United States Social Forum was held at the end of June in Atlanta, GA. Aaron Dixon, Teresa Aviles, and Father Tom Hereford attended along with Chuck Armsbury and me. Many allied groups were represented. I explained November Coalition's understanding of this historic gathering in an interview with the DrugTruth Network, (www.drugtruth.net) during the forum:

"This conference is different from many in that there are a lot of issues. Social Justice Forum simply means people who have been affected by terrible policies all over the globe have come together to share our mutual concerns and develop strategies that will bring us out from under so much oppression. And there are all kinds of oppression. So, we have been attending workshops that are not necessarily about our particular focused issue of drug war injustice. We've attended workshops about water security. People might ask, what does that have to do with the war on drugs?

"When we look at our common problems, we have corporations that make extreme amounts of profit on people who have to suffer from the policies the companies promote — mostly to our U.S. Congress — via lots of money to make laws that will benefit them.

"When we look at water issues, the connect is — most new prisons in the United States are being built in rural areas. And they are built near fragile aquifers. We take a stack of human beings and put them over a fragile water source. We've learned to call this unsustainable human density. So as we meet people concerned with water supply and quality, we make them aware that in rural areas of the U.S., many of the resources are becoming new assets. In our

region, law enforcement officials have been talking about a 4,500 bed prison facility, and planning it over a drinking water source already quickly diminishing. Prisons are a mass of humanity planted in a small space that use up a lot of water and output a lot of sometimes very dangerous chemicals, because, very often, factories are attached to prisons these days. People that are concerned about water have to be concerned about a growing prison industrial complex.

"The war on drugs also has connects to our food security. Yesterday, we learned about companies like Monsanto™, who have seeds that sell and people are not allowed to save Monsanto™ seed. We learned that the new Iraq constitution our government helped write forbids people, farmers and gardeners, to save and own their own seeds. The connects we see in the drug war is that some plants and seeds the governments have deemed illegal. The government then in effect owns the plants. They might allow pharmaceutical companies to oversee some grown and harvesting, but ordinary people worldwide are now restricted from growing their own foods and medicines.

"Mostly, people at this Social Justice Forum this year find the thread of common oppression boils down to greed — the idea that a few people would get rich by creating policies that devastate thousands of thousands of people — those policies need to go. It feels good to be with thousands of people who find common ground in our various focused struggles.

"That is what this social forum has been about — an exchange of ideas and inspirations. We know that we'll all go home to our respective communities to struggle against what we feel are leaders and corporations who don't care about our futures, but take everything they can now. Prisons are part of that. If they cared about our futures would we be building cages for our youth?

"Our website is located at www.november.org, where the public can read hundreds of stories about how drug war injustice has impacted human beings in our country and around the world.. The hope of the future is the presence of so many young people who are determined to build a better world."

In Struggle,



For more pictures from the United States Social Forum, see page 4

Propaganda, Pimping Or Sloppy Journalism?

Support The Black Press

BY EDREA DAVIS, AUTHOR OF SNITCHCRAFT

Part 1: The Message

For the past few months mainstream media has hyped the “Stop Snitchin” slogan, giving it a life — and definition — of its own. A story on *CBS News’ 60 Minutes* presented a one-dimensional view of snitching that appears to be part of an ongoing propaganda campaign designed to hold hip-hop culture accountable for the dysfunctional criminal justice system, and divert the public’s attention from the real problems in America.

Whether it’s propaganda, pimping, or simply sloppy journalism, the story “Stop Snitchin” was biased and inaccurate. A cursory review of the facts reinforces the urgent need to resurrect the black press as an authentic voice and trustworthy news source capable of dispelling the latest stereotypes.

In the black community it is commonly understood that a snitch is a crafty criminal who negotiates a deal for himself by telling on others. Since the days of slavery, providing information to authorities to gain favor has been viewed negatively. Judas would be considered a snitch primarily because he was one of the disciples, one of the crew.

But, according to the *60 Minutes* story, witnesses and concerned citizens are now considered snitches. The report indicated that people of all ages in the black community, even children, are abiding by this so-called code-of-silence out of fear of retaliation. A related story, “*A Conspiracy Of Silence, CBS News Investigates: Epidemic Of Witness Intimidation Plagues Justice System*” aired a week after the “Stop Snitchin” show.

While it is true that blacks and other minorities have a history of strained relationships with the police, concerned citizens routinely complain about crack houses, slow response times and a lack of police patrols in inner-city neighborhoods. Black people also serve as witnesses and jurors.

Instead of displaying outrage at the suggestion that hip-hop culture has convinced law-abiding “inner-city residents” to participate in a conspiracy against the justice system, many uninformed black people believe and perpetuate this propaganda before checking the source and motives of the messenger.

Since I’m from the “P-Funk” era, I went to allhiphop.com, thuglifearmy.com and eurweb.com to see what the hip-hop generation had to say. Amazingly, about 85% of the posts I read supported the classic definition of snitching. I listened to Chamillionaire’s song “*No Snitchin*.”



The rapper rhymes about a criminal who “was looking at 30 but only did 10.” The song goes on, “streets know the deals you made with the pen.”

I suffered through the foul language of Obie Trice f/Akon, “*Snitch*.” When the first word in the song was “convict,” I knew it was more talk about criminals.

The song says, “started out as a crew who woulda known he would fold and cower.”

A few clicks later I was on sohh.com watching an interview with rapper, actor and one of the pioneers of hip-hop, Ice-T. He said, “Snitching is not telling on somebody doing something wrong in the ‘hood. It’s when you and your partner are involved in a crime and get caught and you tell on your partner. That’s snitching.”

If I was able to find the meaning of snitching in less than ten clicks of my mouse, I think it’s safe to assume that *60 Minutes*, a national news program with a budget and research staff, is aware of the nature and definition of snitching and had no interest in being fair and accurate.

A quick look at pertinent information absent from the story is further evidence that it was propaganda. For instance, *60 Minutes* neglected to mention that there was honor among thieves long before hip-hop. Dishonest elected officials, corporate executives, and even the “Boys in Blue” have adhered to a don’t snitch mantra over the years.

Furthermore, where are the statistics to prove the low clearance rate is due to this epidemic? How many of the crimes solved were due to “suburban” people assisting the police? Since hip-hop is credited with fueling this epidemic and white, suburban youth are the major consumers of hip-hop; how does the code-of-silence impact their community? How can any responsible journalist do a story on how black people relate to the police without mentioning the pandemic of police brutality and misconduct cases across the country? With the international media attention surrounding the snitch involved in the police killing of 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston, how can they produce a story on snitching without mentioning problems related to dishonest snitches? Also omitted was the fact that activists have been working to dismantle the corrupt

snitch system long before hip-hop entrepreneurs started making money off the stop-snitching slogan.

Although *60 Minutes* could not cover all of these issues, they could have presented a more balanced story. With minimal research the producers could have found an articulate expert on hip-hop culture like rapper Mos Def or Davey D, a journalist who has written on the issue. An intelligent spokesperson would have taken that shining moment to expose the corrupt snitch system, and, most importantly, change the direction and perception of hip-hop overall. Instead, *60 Minutes* empowered an irresponsible rapper to make ignorant, harmful comments.

Part 2: We Killed The Messenger

Assuming the stop snitching movement, as mainstream media reports it, is a hoax; the question would be, why do black people passively embrace and accept any message sent by a mainstream messenger? Black people are quick to jump on the bandwagon without doing research, or asking someone more knowledgeable. Anderson Cooper said it on *60 Minutes*, so we agree. Much like back in the day when the master had the flu, WE were sick.

Black people complain about mainstream media defining our values and creating leaders by giving voice to a chosen few. Our ancestors didn’t get mad or complain; they got even. They

created black publications as good, or better, than their mainstream counterparts. Black newspapers were packed with thoughtful information aimed to educate, inspire, and empower the black community. These *political Bibles* were passed through the neighborhood and looked upon as the sacred key to

overcoming oppressive conditions. People eagerly awaited their weekly messages from respected writers like Fredrick Douglas, W.E.B. DuBois, and Ida B. Wells.

Similar to the impact integration had on black schools, once mainstream newspapers included stories related to the black experience, African-Americans abandoned the black press. Unlike other minorities, as soon as blacks are accepted into mainstream they tend to dump their

IF I WAS ABLE TO FIND THE MEANING OF SNITCHING IN LESS THAN TEN CLICKS OF MY MOUSE, I THINK IT’S SAFE TO ASSUME THAT *60 MINUTES*, A NATIONAL NEWS PROGRAM WITH A BUDGET AND RESEARCH STAFF, IS AWARE OF THE NATURE AND DEFINITION OF SNITCHING AND HAD NO INTEREST IN BEING FAIR AND ACCURATE.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

In Memoriam

traditional institutions. Don't get me wrong, we should embrace diversity in mainstream media and applaud the outstanding work of black journalists and broadcasters fighting for fair coverage on the inside. However, the beloved community desperately needs the black press to separate news from propoganda and fact from fiction.

The Black community is plagued by serious social and economic problems. In the midst of a presidential election cycle we must let America know that we refuse to accept propoganda spoon fed to us by mainstream media. Let advertisers know that if they want to send us a message about our issues, do so through OUR media. Let's put them on notice that we will depend on black publishers and broadcasters who have sacrificed and struggled to exist, to be the gatekeepers of our information.

Knowledge is a commodity. Support the creators of that product. Lift up *TV One*, *BlackAmericaweb*, and *BlackPressUSA*. Pick up the phone today and buy a subscription to your local black newspaper. If you advertise, include black media in your advertising plan. For those surfing the net and enjoying thought-provoking writers like Faye Anderson, Anderson@large, Lucius Gantt, Dogonvillage.com or Bruce Dixon at Blackagendareport.com, purchase something at their site, donate, or just click on a google ad and give them a penny.

The press is considered the Fourth Estate. They are the eyes and ears of the people, anointed to keep watch on the government. How can people, oppressed for over 400 years, depend on our oppressors to be our eyes and ears?

Edrea Davis is a communications consultant and author of "SnitchCraft," a novel about a nightclub owner set-up by a dishonest snitch. Reach her at edmedia@dogonvillage.com or see www.snitchcraft.com. Her grandsons, DeJai, Diarran and DeKwam Davis, are pictured on our cover at the Auburn Avenue Festival, held in the historic Martin Luther King district in Atlanta, GA.

Our friend and reform colleague, Virginia Resner, battles cancer in a California hospice. Close friends are with her daily, and if you care to or you have met Virginia, please take time to send her a loving message. In 2001 Virginia was given the Drug Policy Alliance's Robert Randall Award, honoring her grassroots' work to help end the war on drugs. Write Virginia at:

**Virginia Resner,
c/o Mikki Norris
1224 Richmond St.
El Cerrito, CA 94530**



We honor and remember Dr. Tod Mikuriya, who died at age 73 on May 21, 2007. Dr. Mikuriya was a prominent psychiatrist and advocate for the legal and medical use of marijuana. After a short 1960's career with the federal government, he practiced psychiatry in California and helped create and coordinate cannabis buyers' clubs in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2000 he founded the California Cannabis Research Medical Group.



Growing up in rural Pennsylvania, local, anti-Japanese bigots chased him like a dog, he wrote, teaching him early in life how propoganda can train people to hate. As a marijuana advocate, Dr. Mikuriya used that understanding to help persecuted people fight back against the drug's demonization. He fought the good fight for many years, and everyone who wants drug policy to be based on reality, not propoganda, mourns his passing.



Sister Rita Steinhagen (1928-2006) is remembered as a steadfast advocate for the poor and downtrodden. She established houses for runaway youth, and is a founder of Hope Community, a model of inner city renewal in Minneapolis.

She joined with thousands of people demanding closure of the terrorist-training School of Americas in Georgia (USA), and in 1997 she served a six-month prison sentence at FCI Pekin for trespassing on the School's Ft. Benning base. Sister Rita was recognized worldwide for her contributions to social justice. In November Coalition's early years Rita encouraged Nora Callahan through long hours, day and night, of letter writing to prisoners of the drug war.

Share Parker (1951-2007) will be remembered fondly by her many friends who annually organize Seattle Hempfest. For years a Hempfest core-volunteer, Share served also as treasurer. Born in Germany, Share traveled the world extensively but settled in the mountains of northeastern Washington State by 1983.



Share helped found The Herbivores, a rockin' reggae band headlined annually at Hempfest. Before crowds of thousands, she played bass and sang with this very popular Pacific Northwest musical group.



Activist and Hip-Hop Artist Davey D (right) interviews a workshop leader



**United States Social Forum
Another World Is Possible
Another US Is Necessary**



Teresa Aviles and Aaron Dixon

Guilty Pleas Only The Beginning In Aftermath Of Atlanta "Drug Raid" Killing Of 92-Year-Old

On May 3, two Atlanta narcotics officers pleaded guilty to manslaughter charges in the shooting death of an elderly woman during a botched drug raid, but that is just the beginning in what looks to be an ever-expanding investigation into misconduct in the Atlanta narcotics squad. A federal investigation is already underway, and Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), chair of the House Judiciary Committee, has called on Attorney General Alberto Gonzales to launch a thorough investigation of issues raised by the case, including police misconduct, the use of confidential informants, arrest quotas, and the credibility of police officials.

Things began to unravel for the Atlanta Police Department's 16-man street narcotics team on November 21, 2006 when three Atlanta narcs broke into the home of 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston using a "no-knock" warrant that claimed drug sales had taken place there. The elderly Johnston responded to the intruders dressed in plain clothes by firing one shot from an old pistol, which missed the officers. The police responded with a barrage of bullets, firing 39 shots, five or six of which hit Johnston, who died shortly afterward.

Since then, investigators have found that in the Johnston case:

- The narcotics officers planted drugs to arrest a suspected drug dealer, who in turn pointed them toward Johnston's residence.
- The narcotics officers lied on their search warrant application, saying that a confidential informant had bought drugs at that address when that did not happen.
- The narcotics officers lied on their search warrant application, saying the house was occupied by a large man who employed surveillance cameras.
- The narcotics officers planted marijuana in Johnston's basement after they shot her in order to bolster their case and impugn her reputation.
- The narcotics officers asked another confidential informant to lie for them after the fact and say he had bought drugs at Johnston's residence.

But that confidential informant, Alexis White, instead went to the feds with his story (and then he went to Washington, DC, to talk to congressional leaders about snitching). The fabric of lies woven by the Atlanta narcs rapidly unraveled. On May 2, three of them, Officers Gregg Junnier, Jason Smith, and Arthur Tesler, were indicted on numerous state charges, including murder, as well as federal civil rights charges. The following day, Junnier and Smith pleaded guilty to a state charge of

manslaughter, with sentencing to be postponed until after the federal investigation is complete. They face up to 10 years on the manslaughter charge and up to life in prison on the federal civil rights charge.

But the problems in the Atlanta narcotics squad run deeper than one incident of misconduct. According to federal investigators, what the Atlanta narcs did during the botched Johnston raid was business as usual.

"Junnier and other officers falsified affidavits for search warrants to be considered productive officers and to meet APD's performance targets," according to a federal exhibit released Thursday. "They believed that these ends



Kathryn Johnston

justified their illegal 'Fluffing' or falsifying of search warrants. Because they obtained search warrants based on unreliable and false information, [the officers] had on occasion searched residences where there were no drugs and the occupants were not drug dealers."

Cutting corners, though, can have serious consequences. As prosecutors noted, once the narcs had received a tip there were drugs at Johnston's residence, Officer Junnier said they could get a confidential informant to make a buy there to ensure there actually were drugs at that location. "Or not," Smith allegedly responded.

At a news conference last Thursday, FBI Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Greg Jones called the officers' conduct "deplorable." In an ominous addendum, Jones added that the agency will pursue "additional allegations of corruption that other Atlanta police officers may

have engaged in similar conduct."

US Attorney David Nahmias said Johnston's death was "almost inevitable" because of such widespread activity and vowed a far-reaching investigation into departmental practices. He said he expects to find other cases where officers lied or relied on bad information. "It's a very ongoing investigation into just how wide the culture of misconduct extends," Nahmias said. "We'll dig until we can find whatever we can."

And now, House Judiciary Committee head Rep. Conyers wants to ensure that the feds dig deep. In a letter released yesterday, Conyers told Attorney General Gonzales:

"There are several key issues raised by the Johnston case: police misconduct (falsifying information and excessive use of force); misuse of confidential informants; potentially negative impact of arrest quotas and performance measures; and the integrity and credibility of law enforcement officials. We are particularly concerned about the misuse of confidential informants. The reliability of confidential informants used in narcotics cases is often compromised because they are cooperating with law enforcement in order to extricate themselves from criminal charges. The absence of corroboration requirements for information obtained through confidential informants leaves room for abuse. All these factors can have the effect of eroding public confidence in the criminal justice system.

"We are concerned that the Atlanta incident may be indicative of a systemic problem within the Atlanta Police Department. Additionally, we are disturbed that the actions of the Atlanta Police Department may be a reflection of conduct used in other jurisdictions throughout this country. Significantly, the number of "no knock raids" has increased from three thousand in 1981 to more than fifty thousand in 2005."

Former New Jersey narcotics officer and current head of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition Jack Cole shares Conyers' concerns. "I think this kind of thing is going on across the country," he told Drug War Chronicle. "If anyone really dug into this, you would find similar things in a lot of departments. It's about using a war on drugs metaphor. When you have a war, you need an enemy, someone despicable, so you can do whatever you want to them," he said. "We train our police to feel like they have to win at any cost because it's a war."

Maybe, just maybe, the federal investigation into the Atlanta narcs will morph into the kind of hearings on drug war policing that are long, long overdue. If not, at least Kathryn Johnston has won a measure of justice.

ION Detectors: Drug Tests Or Barriers To Visitation?

BY NORA CALLAHAN

In April, my 85 year old mother — part blind, two hearing aids, two heart attacks and 17 years of drug war imprisonment of her only son, G. Patrick Callahan behind her — tested positive for illegal drugs at the prison visitation processing center at the federal prison in



Seagoville, Texas. My sisters were processed, but my mother was too deaf to understand that she was being told to leave the federal premises entirely. She's also too old to put up with much crap, and she dissolved emotionally. Hunched over, with her head buried in her hands, she sobbed and wandered alone into the fed parking lot.

She is sure that she will never see her son again, and due to bad health and finances, it was her first visiting session in 8 years.

According to reports, prison officials told her to leave and, without my sister's assistance, she physically can't. People, others rejected by the same bogus ION detectors, sold by a

military industrial complex of evil corporations, circled my mother, keeping the guards at a distance.

My sisters called me with the sad news, and we began the task of finding a reporter and TV news

station. Bea Callahan, my mother, waited the required 72 hours until local TV news CW-TV 33 out of Dallas, TX was at the gates to record the events that unfolded. (To watch the shocking video, visit www.november.org.) She finally did get to see her son.

Not just our family, but everyone needs to write and call legislative aides about strategies to stop this harassment of visitors, the needless thousands of extra dollars it costs a family, and the anger and depression that results from the gamut of prison policies gone bad. My mom was able to visit for a last day to say goodbye, but hundreds of people simply, "leave the premises entirely" and return home.

Please write or call the House and Senate Judiciary Committees and tell them your ION detection non-visitation stories.

House Judiciary Committee • 2138 Rayburn House Office Bldg. • Washington, DC 20515 • (202)-225-3951

Senate Committee on the Judiciary • 224 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg. • Washington, DC 20510 • Democratic Phone: (202) 224-7703 • Republican Phone: (202) 224-5225



85-year-old Bea Callahan breaks down on Dallas TV news after being denied prison visitation with her son

The Libby Commutation

BY G. PATRICK CALLAHAN, PRISONER OF THE DRUG WAR

The chronic problem with federal sentencing practices, and state sentencing schemes based upon the same model, was driven home yet again by President George Bush's commutation of the sentence given to Lewis "Scooter" Libby, his trusted friend and associate. Libby received a 30-month prison sentence for "obstruction of justice" after a jury trial and conviction for lying to federal agents.

The harshness of Libby's 30-month sentence was consistent, said federal prosecutors, with obstruction of justice punishments across the country. I found this grimly amusing because I also received a 2-level obstruction of justice "enhancement" — folded into my drug sentence — that added five years to my time, exactly double what Mr. Libby received.

Unlike Mr. Libby, I was never indicted for obstruction of justice, never accorded constitutional notice of the charge, and my jury never considered it. I was never found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt of obstructing justice.

Although I elected a jury trial where that's the only standard of proof for criminal offenses, I received several sentencing enhancements — none of which I was indicted for and all of which ran consecutive to the sentence allowed by the jury's verdict and guidelines.

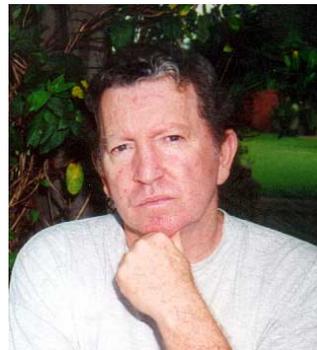
The sentencing judge on his own decided to add these so-called enhancements, which

effectively doubled my prison sentence by adulterating the burden of proof requirement — thus becoming an unconstitutional alloy of the reasonable doubt and preponderance of evidence standards. After this judicial piling-on, I was given a 27-year sentence. That was 18 years ago.

The further irony in Libby's case — a poisonous one to be sure — is that President Bush argued the same line many of us in custody have stated for years. Such as: my sentence was too severe, that judges shouldn't be allowed to take account of facts not proved to a jury, that a defendant's positive contributions to society are ignored, that his sentence would cause collateral damage to his family. These truths were important in Libby's case because he was an intimate associate of the President. Everyone else can go to hell!

We have often used "Just Us" to describe justice being a different thing for the wealthy or highly connected. This was precisely such a case.

George Bush is one of these very tough on crime types who believes there can never be too much punishment. His own Attorney General, Alberto Gonzalez, said in June that the Justice Department would push for



G. Patrick Callahan

legislation making federal sentences tougher and less flexible. They could scarcely be less flexible than how they are now, and soon we may reach the point where any conviction for crime could put someone in prison for an average 20 years.

The odd fact of the matter is that George Bush is right for once: federal sentencing is excessively harsh. Judges freely

enhance sentences with so-called 'relevant conduct' tag-ons carrying far too much punishment and guaranteeing destruction of family ties.

Federal prosecutors are bemoaning the Libby commutation, are "disgusted" and feel that it undercuts law enforcement. We wonder at all this hair pulling. Since when has justice become equal in this country? Take a look at direct appeals and habeas corpus actions where the Justice Department gets its way almost every time excessive sentences are challenged.

To the unconcerned, remember this: with only 4% of the world's population, the United States has 26% of the world's prisoners. Scooter Libby lucked out — he had friends in high places.

November Coalition Marks Decade Of Struggle In 2007

By Chuck Armsbury, Senior Editor of the *Razor Wire*

In early 1997 a handful of daring folks from the remote mountains of northeastern Washington State called for peace in the war on drugs. Nora Callahan and some local friends with loved ones in prison began publicly demanding an end to a war on people.

"Out of a Colville kitchen comes a national organization," said Congressman John Conyers at a Washington DC ceremony recognizing November Coalition three years later. On behalf of the Coalition, Callahan accepted the 2000 Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award sponsored by the Institute for Policy Studies and presented by Mr. Conyers.

The general mission of November Coalition is to educate, arouse and activate people to demand a halt to the government's use of drug law enforcement to increase prison populations. Our mission statement calls for trashing drug prohibition/zero tolerance ideology because it only increases gangland violence, profiteering and corrupt institutions.

From the earliest 1997 speeches, writings and public vigils, "Novemberistas" have been anti-prohibitionists, defenders of Constitutional law, and anchored by anguished families with a loved one in prison. Concerned, dedicated citizens stand with them in growing numbers, too.

It was incarcerated brother G. Patrick Callahan who asked his sister to organize public opposition to this bogus, yet deadly, war on drugs in all its facets. After the website (www.november.org) was launched in early 1997, and the first *Razor Wire* newspapers began circulating nationally, the Coalition's Colville office was flooded with mail and phone calls from drug war prisoners and their loved ones, each one eager to tell us about drug war injustice.

After reading hundreds of such stories, a pattern emerged of prosecutors who coerce testimony, of friends and family members who

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FROM CANNABIS CULTURE MAGAZINE
65, MARCH / APRIL 2007



Report: 10 Year Anniversary Benefit & Auction

On March 31, 2007, November Coalition celebrated 10 years of "Working to end drug war injustice" at 'Our House', the former 1920s church now occupied by the Coalition in Colville, WA.

The evening began with a tasty (and healthy) dinner, followed by the auction events. Auction items included handmade jewelry and crafts, classic record albums and tapes, underground comics, and even a 1-hour massage certificate. Afterwards, local band The Planetary Refugees provided a lively reggae beat, as a benefit card game took place on the second story catwalk.

Special thanks go to Sonia Christen and Mellow Rose, our local volunteers who did a phenomenal job of organizing the event;

engaging volunteers, collecting auction donations and preparing a marvelous feast. We raised over \$2000.00 to support the varied efforts of the November Coalition, including the news magazine you are now reading!

Thanks also to the following donors to the benefit:

Milt Spiedel, Pam Wagner, Hilary Ohm, R. E. Lee Shoestore, Peter & Laurie Quinn, Shelly Erickson, Ursula & Eric, Tom Benedict, Jack Cabe, Indigo, Gibby, Jonah Ohm Campbell, Deanna Draney, Curtis Pitts, Bev Spidel, Janelle Sunshine, Colville Veterans For Peace, Jean Christen, Chris Curley, Ruth Campbell, and everyone who attended and made our 10th Anniversary Auction / Benefit a huge success!



View from the catwalk: The Planetary Refugees perform



Ursula displays auction items



Benefit organizers Sonia Christen (left) and Mellow Rose

became snitches, others who do the time, and judges who go along with it all, everyone whining bitterly.

Tyrone Brown is one powerful case study among scores found at *The WALL*, illustrating how a well-told human drama displays the conflicted results of demonizing certain drugs and punishing some users.

Tyrone wrote the Coalition in July 2004 with a tale we could hardly believe. He said he got a life sentence at age 17 for smoking marijuana while on probation for an armed robbery where no one was hurt. He had already served 14 years when he contacted our office.

After verifying and obtaining written consent, Tyrone's words were posted on *The WALL* in March 2005. In the fall we heard from reporter Brooks Egerton of the *Dallas Morning News*, who said that while browsing *The WALL* he read Brown's unbelievable story about getting life in prison for smoking pot.

WE SEE 2007 AS A YEAR OF THICKENING GRASSROOTS' NETWORKS AND ORGANIZING NATIONALLY. IT'S RIGHT TO EXPECT GOOD THINGS TO HAPPEN.

On April 23, 2006, the *Morning News* published Egerton's investigation into Tyrone Brown. Egerton found that Judge Keith Dean did order Brown, a black teenager, to serve life in prison for testing positive in a urinalysis for marijuana use in violation of Dean's earlier 10-year probation. Yet, Egerton also found that the Judge handled a white murderer and cocaine addict much differently, excusing the man's numerous probation violations.

After Egerton's story broke, the Coalition began hearing from Texans at first, people outraged by the unequal justice, stupefied by judicial bias against marijuana, and stunned by the favoritism for a white defendant with connections to power and influence. Tyrone's plainly told story and poems first sent to our office in mid-2004 were about to get even more public exposure.

Just before the elections in early November, an ABC *20/20 Special* featured Ty's story, including interviews with Egerton and Tyrone, and a clip of ABC's futile attempt to talk with a stonewalling Judge Dean, then actively campaigning for re-election. Dean lost his reelection bid. Public support and demands for Tyrone's immediate release exploded.

Today, Texas officials are listening — notably Judge Dean and prosecutor Bill Hill. Both men have joined in a plea to the Parole Board and Governor Rick Perry to release Tyrone.

Much of the Coalition's educational thrust in 2007 is aimed at exposing the social fracturing of communities caused by the

government's widespread use of informants. The secrecy generated by massive drug war informing is fully documented by the United States Sentencing Commission in its 2005 15-Year study.

The Commission bemoans the hidden deals made by prosecutors who manage intricate webs of snitches, especially in large urban communities. After all, ask Commissioners, how can we assess evidence we're barred from reviewing? The chief result is that the USSC cannot do the job required of it by Congress.

Drug police units rely heavily on confidential informants. We don't know how many are in any community because prosecutors and police forces keep this information secret. The estimated numbers are growing, and the numbers also tell us that "98 per cent of the time police don't have any goods on anyone, just a confidential informant," as Nora Callahan told college students recently. Many of our Wall stories reflect this reality of convicting the accused by words alone.

Coalition volunteers have unearthed once-hidden truths about prosecutorial abuse of power at all phases of the criminal justice procedure. Both in *Razor Wire* articles and in direct communications with affected communities, "Novemberistas" continue to call for public review of snitching's negative impact on working class brown and black communities — and specially targeted communities of hippies of all colors as well.

A grassroots' "Stop Snitchin" movement presents its message on a large billboard in Kansas City, Missouri. Sponsored by a local family, the billboard has generated considerable talk and media attention, including from the City's Mayor, initially enraged by the message.

After meeting with the family and a local news reporter under the billboard, the Mayor absorbed the heartfelt words of a father of a drug war prisoner and offered to help create a less-divisive message of snitching's ugly downside. We wish the Mayor luck, and 2007 starts hot!

Over the past three years November Coalition volunteers across the country have collected signatures of support for legislation to bring back federal parole. More than 120,000 people have signed our *Petition for Relief from Drug War Injustice*, and congressional leaders have responded by introducing bills. It is expected that the Second Chance Act and a bill to return federal parole will be introduced early in the 110th Congress.

"What we need most is an Omnibus Crime Bill," said Nora Callahan in a recent interview with *Drug War Chronicle's* Phil Smith. "Otherwise we'll be picking this thing (a laundry list of drug reform issues) apart for the next five decades. An omnibus bill would open the door to broad hearings where we could address the myriad, negative effects of the drug war — from imprisoning huge numbers of people to depriving students of loans and poor people of

housing and other federal benefits, and from political corruption to police violence. If we try to deal with all these problems one by one, the prison population will have doubled again by the time we get it done," Callahan said.

November Coalition is spearheading a campaign called "No New Prisons" in 2007. Focusing first on Washington State and the Pacific Northwest, we plan to publish details of the struggle of prison oppositionists — those who do the work of preventing more prison expansion.

The *Razor Wire* continues to be published and made available to grassroots' activists for public distribution, and we've established a business called November's Natural Soap, made with hemp and other fine oils. Profits supplement the tireless generosity of loyal donors who support the Coalition's work.

November staff and volunteers have renovated an historic 1920s Colville church, later a natural food co-op, into offices and meeting space. Called *Our House*, the 4500 square foot building has a large kitchen, guest accommodations, and a Great Room where private meetings, special workshops and public events take place.

We see 2007 as a year of thickening grassroots' networks and organizing nationally. It's right to expect good things to happen. What better time than now for increasing mutual respect and aid within the drug reform movement, and its diverse interests?

For further information on all our projects and how you can participate, contact us at 509-684-1550 or email chuck@november.org.

For online information about some of the above:

- www.november.org/thewall
- www.november.org/parole
- www.november.org/BottomsUp
- www.novembersoap.org

Governor Perry Frees Tyrone Brown

On March 9, 2007, Texas Governor Rick Perry signed an executive proclamation t h a t conditionally p a r d o n e d Tyrone Brown's life sentence.



After 16 years in prison, Tyrone is now living, working and attending school in the Dallas area, very happy to be reunited with his mother and other family members. Free at last.

I Got Published!

MAY 12, 2006 - ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Why Not Take Case Into Courtroom?

Re: the April 29 article "*Limbaugh Strikes Deal On Drug Court.*"

Whatever happened to Rush Limbaugh's position that people should obey the law, and people who don't should be punished?

If Limbaugh really wasn't guilty, as he claims, then why didn't he just go to trial and prove it?

I can understand Limbaugh's addiction. How else could he bear to listen to himself?

Charles Crehore, Tucson, AZ

JANUARY 18, 2007 - SPARTANBURG HERALD-JOURNAL (SC)

Mandatory Sentencing

Hurray for your stand in Sunday's editorial on the federal mandatory sentencing law. I agree that the law needs to be changed.

First, the law is unjust. The law gives long harsh sentences to nonviolent drug offenders. Less punishment is often given to more violent crimes of rape and murder.

Second, the law does not consider the individual. The law punishes each person the same. The punishment should fit the person and the crime. The person's value to the community is not considered.

Third, the federal sentencing law is costly. The Bureau of Justice Statistics report in 2005 states that the total number of people in prison was 2.2 million. The taxpayer pays the bill for this increase.

Finally, the cost has hit an all-time high. You pay \$23,000 a year to jail each nonviolent prisoner and only \$8,554 to educate one child (Bureau of Prisons, 2005; National Education Association, 2005).

The wheels of justice need to turn. Our politicians need to reform this unjust law.

Eva Poteat, Spartanburg

CORRECTIONAL FORUM - SEPTEMBER 2004 ISSUE

Re: "*Slowing The Revolving Door: The Success Of Drug Courts*":

I am writing to strongly encourage the Pennsylvania Prison Society to deeply investigate and oppose SM129/PN147 — the drug court bill.

While I truly did benefit from the treatment I received in drug court for over two years, I am forced to regret taking the program, as are the majority of former participants.

Most "clients" fail the drug court program in Erie, and invariably end up with much more severe sentences than they would have received had they not taken the program, leading one to suspect the program is a means of coercing guilty pleas from defendants.

In order to enter the drug court, I had to plead guilty to multiple felonies, so that I entered the program with 55 years of probation. Several clients entered with over 100 years of probation!

The drug court program was unrealistically and impossibly strict; an abstinence-based program built on that Reaganite phrase "zero tolerance". You can't frighten, threaten and terrorize a drug addict with low self-esteem into respecting himself or herself and the law. I attended three different rehabs and two halfway houses and by no means am I only speaking for myself. **Treatment and punishment** do not work together and I doubt they ever will.

Drug courts seem to me to be a coercive way of obtaining guilty pleas under false pretenses, a way of putting non-violent drug offenders under the criminal "supervision" apparatus of the state for decades and a way for dying Rust-Belt communities to spend state and federal dollars as an extension of the penal system under the guise of compassionate "treatment."

Jeremy D. Fowler

JUNE 3, 2007 - ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION (GA)

Stop Snitchin' Movement Face It - Drug War Has Been A Disaster

BY EDREA DAVIS, AUTHOR OF SNITCHCRAFT

In light of the developments in the Kathryn Johnston case, Atlanta Police Chief Richard Pennington picked a bad time to advocate for trusting the police and to blame their reliance on informants on a "no-snitch" campaign.

Using paid snitches instead of trained police appears to have more to do with circumventing constitutional rights than a "no-snitch" movement.

Cases chronicled on November.org — the Web site of The November Coalition, a nonprofit organization working to end drug war injustice — reveal that informant's are an overused tool in the drug war, which, like the war on terror, is a major catastrophe.

It has cultivated a cadre of dishonest snitches and overzealous cops resulting in mounting distrust of police. Ideally, we'd like murders prevented.

Rather than blame a "no-snitch" code, Pennington and officials across the country should admit that focusing on petty criminals has allowed violent crimes to skyrocket, created a rift between police and the community, and done nothing to stop the proliferation of drug use.

Edrea Davis, Atlanta, GA

Prisoners: Get The Facts!

Send us a copy of your published editorial or letter — you'll receive a free copy of the 5th Edition of *Drug War Facts!* (Published by Common Sense for Drug Policy at: www.drugwarfacts.org)





HR 261 - A Bill For Nonviolent Offender Relief In 2007

BY GLENN H. EARLY, PRISONER OF THE DRUG WAR

On January 5, 2007, U.S. Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee of Houston, Texas presented to the 110th Congress HR 261, the Federal Prison Bureau Nonviolent Offender Relief Act of 2007. HR 261 is a clear and concise bill that will provide immediate relief for federal prisoners who are at least 45 years of age, with no history of violence, and who have served half their sentence.



of HR 261 or any other future bills for family members to send to their own district's Representative. Family members can also call the Capitol Hill Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and talk to their Representative or leave a message in support of HR 261 and any other bill for prisoner relief that may be filed in coming weeks.

What percentage of today's 195,000 federal prisoners will HR 261 actually help? That's not yet known, but all federal prisoners and their family members should support and promote this bill and others soon to be presented to the Congress which can bring immediate relief from long sentences to incarcerated people.

More importantly, prisoners can help create conditions for change by writing members of Congress directly, asking them to support HR 261 and any other reentry or release legislation likely to be developed such as "The Second Chance Act" and "The Bill to Revive the System of Parole for Federal Prisoners."

Also, prisoners can draft letters in support

While expecting they'll get little help, prisoners and their families must still do everything possible to change the current system. For the good of the whole, we must unite as individuals and groups to support new laws that create beneficial social change. If we continue to assess common problems in the prison system with only an individual interest or narrow outlook, it's unlikely we'll create much future for the common good.

HR 261 is but one proposed solution to prison overcrowding, and doesn't explore others or criticize political leaders still eager to wage a drug war and incarcerate more nonviolent offenders. I can't wait to see the next legislation to relieve federal prison overcrowding.

Sen. Biden Wants To Completely Eliminate Crack Disparity

When Congress passed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986, it included language that meted out a mandatory minimum sentence of five years for dealing 5 grams of crack cocaine, yet the same 5-year mandatory minimum sentence for dealing 100 times that amount, or 500 grams, of powder cocaine. Thus, the bill codified a racially unjust divide.

The U.S. Sentencing Commission found that in 2000 some 84.7 percent of federal crack offenders were black, while only 5.6 percent were white, and has made four recommendations to curb the sentencing inequity. Congress has repeatedly ignored the recommendations.

Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., wants to change the status quo. In June, Biden made the brave leap of proposing a bill to eliminate the sentencing disparity completely, instead of

making the law unfair, but less so.

Biden's "Drug Sentencing Reform & Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007" would raise the amount of crack cocaine so that 500 grams of either crack or powder cocaine would trigger the same mandatory minimum sentence.

According to a Sentencing Commission fact table on 2006 federal cocaine cases, the median crack offense involved 51 grams of crack — or 100 to 500 doses. The median powder cocaine offender weight was 6,000 grams, about the amount of cocaine that would fill a briefcase. Not only do these weights suggest that most federal offenders were not kingpins, but worse, the statistics also show that more than half of federal cocaine cases were crack cases — dealing as little as 2.3 grams. One-third of crack cases involved 25 grams or less. — *Source: St. Petersburg Times*

Crack vs. Powder: Congress Takes Notice

BY TYSON E. MARSHK, PRISONER

The 110th U.S. Congress has finally noticed something that men and women like me have been familiar with for some time, inequity in sentencing practice for crimes involving crack cocaine and powder cocaine. While it only takes five grams of crack cocaine to trigger a mandatory minimum five-year sentence under federal law, it requires 500 grams of powder cocaine to warrant that same sentence.

This inequity has spurred members of Congress into introducing two bills to correct this disparity, but this is only partly good news. H.R. 79 was introduced on January 4, 2007 by Rep. R. Bartlett (MD-6), and while this bill would equalize crack and powder penalties, it would achieve this by making one gram of powder cocaine equal to one gram of crack cocaine. Consequently, this legislation qualifies all cocaine offenders for harsh punishment for a relatively small amount of drugs, while destroying families and communities, and while prisons continue to be built unnecessarily for incarcerating these drug-law violators for ungodly periods of time.

On the other hand, H.R. 460 was presented on January 12, 2007 by Rep C. Rangel (NY-15) and seeks to equalize sentencing laws by making one gram of crack cocaine equal to one gram of powder cocaine, and requiring 500 grams of either substance to trigger any mandatory minimum sentence. This bill makes sense and is a step in the right direction towards correcting unjust sentencing laws.

As of the end of March, H.R. 460 had 10 Co-Sponsors while H.R. 79 had none.

We must show our support for H.R. 460 by contacting our federal representatives. Ask yours to support this important legislation by signing on as a co-sponsor. Let's also put time and energy into campaigning against H.R. 79 as a nonsensical solution to the inequity in cocaine laws and show our members of Congress how this would only continue to perpetuate injustices across the country.

I cannot minimize the importance of being vocal on these matters by contacting your elected representatives or by speaking about these matters in your community through letters to the editor and other media outlets. Regardless of how good or promising H.R. 460 may sound, members of Congress are unlikely to take any positive action to pass this bill into law unless they know they have the support of their community and voter base.

Editorial: A Much-Needed Second Chance

The United States now has more than two million people behind bars, a number that has been rising steadily for decades. But state lawmakers who once would have rushed to build new prisons have begun to see that prison-building is not the best or most cost-effective way to fight crime or protect the public's safety.

Several states have instead begun to focus on developing community-based programs that deal with low-level, nonviolent offenders without locking them up. And they have begun to look at ways to control recidivism with programs that help newly released people find jobs, housing, drug treatment and mental health care — essential services if they are to live viable lives in a society that has historically shunned them.

Texas and Kansas have recently made important strides in this area. But corrections policy nationally would evolve much faster if Washington put its shoulder to the wheel. Congress needs to pass the Second Chance Act, which would provide grants, guidance and assistance to states and localities that are developing programs to reintegrate former inmates into their communities.

The states have made a good start, thanks in part to the efforts of the Council of State Governments and its prison policy arm, the Justice Center. The center's analysis of corrections patterns has led to sweeping changes in Texas, where the Legislature was facing a projected upsurge in the prison population and a projected outlay of more than a billion dollars to build several new prisons.

The surge in Texas was not being driven by crime, which had risen only slightly, but by a breakdown in the parole and probation systems, which were unable to process and supervise the necessary numbers of released prisoners. Mental health and drug treatment services were also lacking. By expanding those services, along with other community-based programs, the Legislature projects that it could potentially avoid the need for any new prisons.

A similar solution was found in Kansas, where about 65 percent of the state's admissions to prison were traced to technical violations of probation or parole, often by people with drug addictions or mental illnesses. The Legislature has expanded drug treatment behind bars and created a grant program that encourages localities to provide more effective supervision and services as a way of keeping recently released people away from crime and out of prison.

The social service networks that are necessary for this kind of work are virtually nonexistent in most communities. To put those networks together, the states need to require that disparate parts of the government apparatus work together in ways that were unheard of in the past.

It is encouraging that state officials are willing to break out of the old patterns. But they need help. The Second Chance Act would bolster the re-entry movement with money, training, technical assistance — and the federal stamp of approval.

Nation's Mayors Call for New Bottom Line in U.S. Drug Policy

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) made history in late June 2007 by passing a resolution calling for a public health approach to the problems of substance use and abuse. Mayor Rocky Anderson of Salt Lake City, Utah sponsored the resolution.

The resolution proclaims the War on Drugs a failure and calls for "a New Bottom Line in U.S. Drug Policy. Called for in particular is a public health approach that concentrates fully on reducing the negative consequences associated with drug abuse while ensuring that our policies do not exacerbate these problems or create new social problems of their own."

In adopting the resolution, the mayors proclaimed addiction a broad public health concern and endorsed specific health-related measures. These include greater access to drug treatment such as methadone and other maintenance therapies, elimination of the federal ban on funding sterile syringe access programs, and establishment of prevention policies based on needs assessed at the local level.

THE RESOLUTION ALSO CALLS FOR USING A GREATER PERCENTAGE OF DRUG WAR FUNDING TO EVALUATE CURRENT PROGRAMS' EFFICACY AND ACCOUNTABILITY. RATHER THAN MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF U.S. DRUG POLICY BY EXAMINING DRUG USE LEVELS OR NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPRISONED, A NEW BOTTOM LINE SHOULD BE USED TO ASSESS IF DRUG-RELATED HARM IS REDUCED.

The resolution also calls for using a greater percentage of drug war funding to evaluate current programs' efficacy and accountability. Rather than measure the success of U.S. drug policy by examining drug use

levels or number of people imprisoned, a New Bottom Line should be used to assess if drug-related harm is reduced.

National drug policy should focus on reducing social problems like drug addiction, overdose deaths, the spread of HIV/AIDS from injection drug use, racial disparities in the criminal justice system, and the enormous number of nonviolent offenders behind bars. Federal drug agencies should be judged — and funded — according to their ability to meet these goals.

Moreover, since the impact of drug policies is most acutely felt in local communities, evaluation and decision-making must occur at the local level — and federal funding must be provided to enable communities to pursue those policies that best meet the unique challenges of substance abuse.

"The mayors are clearly signaling the serious need for drug policy reform, an issue that ranks in importance among the most serious issues of the day," said Daniel Abrahamson, Director of Legal Affairs for Drug Policy Alliance.

Adopted resolutions become the official policy of the USCM, which meets every year to promote the best practices and most pressing priorities of U.S. cities. The June 23-24 2007 event held in Los Angeles, California was the 75th Annual USCM Meeting.

Source: *Drug Policy Alliance*

"THE MAYORS ARE CLEARLY SIGNALING THE SERIOUS NEED FOR DRUG POLICY REFORM, AN ISSUE THAT RANKS IN IMPORTANCE AMONG THE MOST SERIOUS ISSUES OF THE DAY."
— DANIEL ABRAHAMSON,
DRUG POLICY ALLIANCE.

The United States hasn't always been the world's leading jailer, and now that we are, we aren't any safer than before.

New jails are being built in the middle of urban areas, disguised as sky-scraping office buildings while new prisons are built or expanded in rural areas. The prison boom is doom to any community plan that would embrace a sustainable future.

Mass incarceration doesn't reduce crime, or make communities stronger.

Prisons are not the 'clean industry' hired consultants promise, and fall far short of the goals of economic prosperity local officials tout when romancing their constituents. Horrible environmental impacts will face future generations — imprisoned or free.

No New Prisons is a collaboration of citizens and groups opposing new prison construction and expansion. Everyone is invited to share and create resources for citizens just like you.

For more info, see www.nonewprisons.org.

How Did The United States Become The World's Leading Jailer?

In the midst of the prosperous 1980's the federal government enticed state and local governments to adopt 'tough on crime' policies. New policing tactics and sentencing schemes led to an increase of a million prisoners in less than a decade. Today there are over 7 million people in prison or some form of law enforcement control.

People living in areas of persistent, historical urban poverty were imprisoned at rates that rival no other era or country. The expansion of prisons was far-reaching, involving every state and the federal government. With almost no public scrutiny, millions of people were arrested and imprisoned.

How Has The War On Drugs Caused The Prison Construction Boom?

Get 'tough on drugs' slogans led to laws that weren't smart. These 20-plus-year-old laws are unconstitutional, and were largely written with little thought to future oversight and accountability. Fiscally, drug laws have drained resources away from social programs that were more effective than prisons.

The drug war intensified under The Sentencing Reform Act (SRA) of 1984 that gave law enforcement officials virtually unchecked power to enforce federal drug sentencing laws. New laws handed this power to the police and prosecutors, but Congress failed to formalize effective legal procedures for monitoring the new sentencing system. States adopted the same or portions of the federal experiment called 'sentencing reform.'

Long prison sentences for nonviolent drug offenders are the single greatest multiplying factor behind the monumental increase of US prison populations in the last 20 years. The book *Lies, Damned Lies, and Drug War Statistics*, the only scientific analysis of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) budget, proves a 30-year, steady increase in incarceration and its spiraling costs due to thoughtless and punitive drug war laws.

The US Sentencing Commission can't monitor and review over 90% of the hidden policing-process anchored in drug-targeted communities

by snitching and informant systems. Police and prosecutors, who have traditionally worked hand in hand, nowadays have the power to charge and power to sentence, defying 'checks and balances' principles honored from our nation's foundation.

The power to punish — power that can't be scrutinized — leads defense attorneys to counsel defendants to plead guilty; the government wins about 97% of drug cases brought to trial. The role judges play at sentencing has been limited by legislators responding to a 'moral panic' driven by fear-mongering media and politicians, fueled by wealthy conservatives intent on more policing and imprisonment of lower class people.

These methods of sentencing are under new scrutiny in higher courts, but the prison industrial complexes continue growing because the drug war rages on.



Most new prisons are built in rural regions to house people from urban areas. Pictured above is Wallens Ridge State Prison, a for-profit facility built and operated by the town of Wallens Ridge, VA, and featured in the documentary film *Up The Ridge, A U.S. Prison Story* (available from *Holler To The Hood* at www.appalshop.org/h2h/film)

By the 1990's, the U.S. was opening on average one new prison or jail every week. Today, the United States has the largest prison population in the world and the highest incarceration rate in the world. It took America 160 years to incarcerate its first million people, but just twelve years to incarcerate the second million. — Justice Policy Institute.

The Drug War — It's Prisons, Poisons And Environmental Racism

A New November Coalition 'Family Album' Display

An educational exhibit available to small or large groups and organizations that have public lobby space, this colorful, visual presentation and companion literature illuminates the intersection of the drug war, prison expansion and global environmental destruction.

Use our new display at local events, or create your own event at your churches or libraries.

Coalition volunteers steadfastly illustrate the horrifying facts of a policy so destructive that it's produced a vast prison industrial complex and global network of for-profit companies intertwined with police and military might.

Some volunteers, looking to build key alliances in the coming years, coordinated a day of informational tabling at Earth Day events on April 21st & 22nd, 2007. The exhibit anchors and assures interaction with others concerned for people and our environment. Consider putting the exhibit in regional libraries, civic clubs, office lobbies, churches, and at other public or private places where non-profit groups are welcomed.

Contact us at supplies@november.org, or see www.nonewprisons.org for details.



Display in lobby of the Community Building, Spokane, WA



Earth Day Festival, Spokane, WA, April 21, 2007



Children in Putumayo, Colombia painted this "before and after" mural describing effects of U.S aerial coca fumigation on their communities.

Broadside Text

(You can download the color broadside at www.november.org/projects/EarthFlyer.pdf.)

The November Coalition was founded in 1997 to warn fellow citizens about the destructive increase in prison populations in the United States caused by more than 20 years of harsh drug sentencing laws and dubious policing techniques. The Coalition built alliances with groups all over the world because drug war injustice is global.

Drug war battles aren't fought on the streets of the wealthy. Drugs, legal and illegal, are used in all classes of people, and at about the same rates.

Prisons and jails aren't built in upper-class neighborhoods either. So-called "Correctional Complexes" are being built in rural areas where workers are so desperate for jobs they are reduced to working in warehouses for people. In other eras, mass imprisonment employed 'disposable populations' or 'undesirables' as slave workers in concentration camps.

In Colombia and now Afghanistan, the people living gentle on the earth, the sustainable farmers, can be sprayed with poisons that kill fish in streams, livestock, food crops and human life. Like the jobless and poor of the United States, people who are economically vulnerable become easy prey for drug manufacturers. Not unlike prison profiteers, the drug trade relies on desperate people who need jobs and an economic future.

People can be convicted in broad drug conspiracies and sentenced to prison for decades without any physical evidence presented in court. Drug war enforcement relies heavily on 'bartered testimony,' wherein the first people arrested in a group of drug-involved friends can 'snitch' their way to freedom by telling on others. Without a system of easily obtained plea bargains and convictions, prisons could not be profitable.

Corporate profits increase sharply with the use of herbicide defoliants, a growing global military force, and steady expansion of multi-agency policing that fills an international network of prisons. Power to control large human populations, primarily poor classes of people, and the destruction of natural resources form a steady and cozy weave in globalization strategy.

The drug war is institutionalized and devastating environmental racism that needs urgent citizen action.

I Just Came Back From A War

BY GRANNY M OF MICHIGAN RAINBOW FARM

I have occasion to listen to quite a bit of country radio at work, and they are currently playing a song called "I Just Came Back from a War." At the first few, fragmented hearings, I thought it was one of those "rah rah go team, might-makes-right" tunes like "Courtesy of the Red White & Blue" ("We'll put a boot in your ass/ It's the American Way").

But the first time I really listened to it, I realized it was simply a soldier's personal viewpoint of why he went to war and how it's affected him.

What does this have to do with our cause? After that first 'real listening,' and each time I hear it since then, it gives me chills for expressing perfectly how I felt while returning from the gates of Rainbow Farm after the siege and murders of Tom and Rollie on September 9, 2001:

I Just Came Back From A War

The very next morning

I took a walk through the neighborhood

I thought it's been so long

since I've been in a place

where everything is good

People laughing and children were playing.

(Stanza from "I Just Got Back From A War,"

by Darryl Worley)

We really were engaged in an actual war down on the Farm during those terrible few days before the infamous 9/11. All the masks were stripped aside, and the helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and storm troopers made the real nature of the Drug (and Culture) War crystal clear to the very few of us who actually witnessed them.

"Chances are I never will be the same/ I really don't know anymore/ I just came back from a war."

It really does put a wall between "veterans" and "civilians," if I may be so bold as to use the former term to describe myself in this context. You can't go through something like that and not be profoundly affected, but it's not something that you ever feel you've effectively communicated to anyone who wasn't there.

In the case of Rainbow Farm, for me, the bitter irony is that here "in the land of the free" IS also the "land where our brothers are dying for others who don't even care anymore." Yes, this "sweet Rainbow way of life" does "come with a price," and it is often exacted by our own government on those, like Tom and Rollie, with the courage to exercise the rights that soldiers are allegedly dying to protect in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And like the vet in the song, we Rainbow foot soldiers were hated vehemently for "everything (we) stand for," by people who had a completely different notion of what "standing for" meant.



Tom Crosslin (left) and Rollie Rohm, shot and killed by law enforcement agents after a days-long stand-off in early September, 2001 on Tom's property, Michigan Rainbow Farm. Crosslin faced 20 years in prison on marijuana and weapons charges, and the state was moving to seize Rainbow Farm under civil asset forfeiture proceedings. Michigan child welfare authorities had taken Rohm's 12-year-old son, Robert, and placed him in foster care after an earlier raid. For more info, see www.rainbowfarmcamp.com, or read Burning Rainbow Farm: How a Stoner Utopia Went Up in Smoke, by Dean Kuipers.

I'm sure the guy in the song feels that he stands for freedom, democracy, justice, but to the people who hated him he stood for US imperialism and cluster bombs. We felt that we stood for the same things that soldier felt he did, but to the Authorities and the "Law-and-Order" segment of the population, we stood for free drugs and sex for children, guns, destruction of property, and anarchy.

Our perceived differences were heightened to an excruciating degree by the 9/11 attacks that happened the day of Rollies' funeral and the subsequent national nervous breakdown/post-traumatic stress political reaction.

That's a tough gap to bridge. And that's in addition to the basic gap between those who've experienced it and those who haven't, wider in the case of the Farm, simply because everybody knows there really is a hot war in Iraq; no one can deny the horrible things our military veterans have experienced and

endured.

Yet, many people have never heard of Rainbow Farm, and it's simply inconceivable to them that such a thing could truly happen here under cover of the Stars and Stripes. Or they have the idea you're making it up/ exaggerating/they deserved what they got, cause our government doesn't just kill citizens for being a nuisance to the status quo.

Or it's just not real at all, even if someone doesn't technically disbelieve you. Friends, family, strangers on the street — no one really gets it unless they've been through something similar (and if they have, there's an immediate bond). The rest look at you with a sort of puzzled, wary expression, their silence making it obvious they're dying to change the subject.

Chances are I never will be the same; I really don't know anymore. I just came back from a war.

PeaceLoveGratitude, Granny M

Sharp Jump In Number Of State Prisoners; Parole Revocations Largely To Blame

FROM THE SENTENCING PROJECT

The Department of Justice reported in June that in the year ending June 30, 2006, the U.S. prison and jail population increased to 2,245,189 people. The state prison population increased by 3 percent, more than double the average annual growth since 2000.

The Sentencing Project's analysis of the Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics report, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, also reveals the following:

- Increasing Parole Revocations Most Significant Contributor to Prison Growth
- U.S. World Leader in Incarceration
- Reentry – Record Number of Returning Prisoners
- Extensive Racial/Ethnic Disparities in State Incarceration
- Sentencing Reforms Don't Go Far Enough

Visit The Sentencing Project at www.sentencingproject.org

Download the Bureau of Justice Statistics report, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2006*, at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/pjim06.htm

EDITOR'S NOTES



By **Chuck Armsbury, Senior Editor**

When Systems Corrupt Good People

Lately, I've been studying why good and normal people sometimes do bad things. Like those ordinary Columbine high schoolers on 4/20 in 1999 who went bowling in the morning before killing fellow students and themselves in the afternoon. For example, the nice kid you know from your small town who joined the Marines, and who now kicks in Iraqi doors and shoots women and children, or the prison guards who go to church on Sunday and kick prisoners' butts during the week.

Revelations of Abu Ghraib torture represent very well this ages-old dilemma. "The Christian in me says it's wrong, but the corrections officer in me says, 'I love to make a grown man piss himself,'" said Specialist Charles Graner as reported on *BBC News* in spring 2005. Employed previously as a prison guard in the US, Graner is the Abu Ghraib military policeman shown smiling and having fun next to a pile of naked Iraqis in widely circulated photos.

What was it about the inner sanctum of Abu Ghraib, Saddam Hussein's former dungeon, which brewed a nasty concoction of power, sexual perversion and multiple counts of torture and abuse? How did our US troops come to act like Saddam's henchmen?

Was Graner some kind of sick sadist, a psychopath, an undiagnosed schizoid? Do we look within the torturer's head for answers? Or do we find those answers by a study of the power of situations to turn nice Christians like Graner into torturers, others into silent bystanders?

Phil Zimbardo's book *The Lucifer Effect* provides answers we're looking for. Dr.

Zimbardo is the Stanford University psychology professor who designed and supervised the August 1971 Stanford Prison Experiment (www.prisonexp.org). Dividing student volunteers by a coin's flip into guards or prisoners, Zimbardo's five-day experiment produced surprising results. Mainly, from the start these ordinary students quickly "became the roles" they had assumed in this psychodrama. Guards dominated, prisoners submitted.

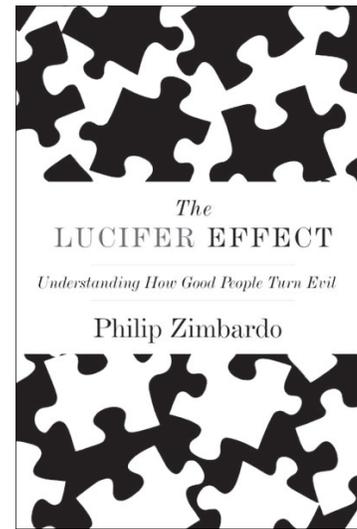
Those who became guards by flip of a coin began to act like real prison guards: giving senseless orders, punishing rule violations, acting arbitrarily and manipulative. Likewise, students playing prisoner soon adopted strategies for dealing with their unequal power-situation. Each student for the experiment earned daily money; each was screened for hidden personality quirks, and several wore long hair and described themselves as leftist radicals.

After five days that began with a 'fake' arrest to start the experiment, to the moment Zimbardo called it off, each of these 18 male students 'lived the roles' they played. Particular "guards" became abusers, rule followers or good guys; a couple "prisoners" experienced real emotional trauma, rebels were put in the (closet) hole, and one had to be released before five days.

The Lucifer Effect is Zimbardo's 2007 full account of the SPE. There's a full chapter on Abu Ghraib, sections on the 1978 Jim Jones' Guyana mass suicides, Halloween mischief and anonymity, studies of attitudes about ridding society of social misfits, types of dehumanization and the evil of inaction.

To dispel utter hopelessness, Zimbardo finishes with a chapter on "Resisting Situational Influences And Celebrating Heroism." This is a very valuable book for social researchers and anyone wanting answers about the dynamic interplay of personality, systems and real situations, or more grandly, psychology and sociology.

After all, *The Lucifer Effect* is about you and me. It's about who we really are, or more so, who we think we are? Are you a Good Samaritan,



or do you walk on by that drunk lying in the gutter? Under what circumstances would you ever intervene to stop a crime?

Zimbardo and other 'situationists' offer convincing evidence that changing circumstances can bring out the angel or devil in any one person, family or nation. "We" are always "Them" to the Other. And under the power of a wrong situation, you or I may cast aside morality, habits of mind, principles and beliefs and "do wrong."

Unfortunately, it seems only a few of us frail humans become heroes who resist unlawful or immoral orders, denounce oppressive leadership or correct a teacher, doctor, supervisor or preacher when s/he is wrong.

The language of psychology and 'psychobabble' is found everywhere in US culture. The majority of mental health experts teach that we "have" certain obsessions, and that we're bipolar, schizophrenic, or depressed, and that these sociopolitical labels are actually a medical disease, like diabetes or measles. Drug Courts universally adopt this medical model to describe and treat drug law offenders.

Zimbardo's lifetime achievement is demonstrating that social reality produces these "mental" symptoms, and that systems and social situations powerfully influence future behavior that can trump individual will, personality traits or religiosity.

Where lies hope within this entrapping web of evil systems and situations? How about in a nurturing web of a social system and culture that reinforces cooperation, mutual respect, and equitable sharing of resources?

For more on *The Lucifer Effect*, visit www.lucifereffect.com.

I'd like to receive comments and contributions on this devilish subject.

Respectfully, Chuck Armsbury

The Stanford Prison Experiment has been optioned as an upcoming major motion picture — see www.lucifereffect.com/movie.htm for details.



Participants in the Stanford Prison Experiment



Cocaine Floods America Despite Tons Captured And Billions Spent

U.S. cocaine prices have dropped and purity has increased, despite years of effort and billions spent by the U.S. government to combat Colombia's drug industry, John Walters, the White House drug czar, acknowledged in a letter to Senator Charles Grassley, (R-IA) in early 2007. Low prices and high purity are commonly seen as solid indicators of a drug's overall availability. Colombia provides 90% of the cocaine in the US.

Grassley, in an e-mailed statement to the *Associated Press*, said the new data is "all the proof that anybody needs" that the White House drug office "has gotten quite good at spinning the numbers, but cooking the books doesn't help our efforts to curb cocaine and heroin production and consumption."

In related stories, the *San Diego Union* reports that on March 18, US Coast Guard cutter Hamilton intercepted and boarded a Panamanian registered cargo vessel holding 19 tons of (presumably Colombian) cocaine, the biggest drug seizure in maritime history. The Hamilton's Captain Lee takes pride in the ship's record. Since 2005, it has seized 121,000 pounds of cocaine, worth \$1.6 billion.

Also, the *UK Daily Telegraph* reports that earlier this year, Colombia forces seized almost 25 metric tons of cocaine, found ready for export in a hide on the Pacific coast.

"This is the largest seizure in Colombian history," said Defence Minister Juan Manuel Santos.

That's 43 TONS of pure cocaine captured in the early part of 2007, yet street availability remains virtually unchanged. Record seizures make great headlines, but do little to address root causes in the futile "war on drugs".

8 Florida Ex-Prison Staff Charged With Abuse

Associated Press reported in May on eight former prison employees accused of abusing inmates, including forcing some to clean toilets with their tongues. The eight were among 13 prison employees who had already been fired from the 605-inmate medium and minimum security at the Hendry Correctional Institution in the Everglades.

The previous warden and an assistant warden resigned, and three others were reassigned after an inmate was beaten and choked by guards in March. State prisons chief

Jim McDonough said the warrants include charges of battery and failing to report inmate abuse. McDonough said the FBI and the U.S. attorney were also looking into civil rights violations.

New Prosecutorial Guidelines Address Racial Disparities In The Criminal Justice System

In early April, the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law released new guidelines for prosecutors designed to promote equal justice, improve public safety and increase confidence in the criminal justice system.

If adopted, the guidelines will reduce unwarranted racial disparities in the criminal justice system and provide prosecutors with practical tools to use in their work.

The recommendations focus on ways in which race plays a role in criminal prosecutions. The protocols were developed with the assistance of and signed onto by 13 former U.S. Attorneys, who also called on their colleagues in federal, state and local law enforcement to adopt the procedures in their offices nationwide.

The prosecutorial guidelines, along with an article describing former U.S. Attorneys' perspectives on racial disparities in the federal criminal justice system, will be published in the *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, a journal devoted to federal and state sentencing issues with a wide audience of judges, practitioners, and scholars. The guidelines are also available at the Brennan Center for Justice website, at www.brennancenter.org.

Remove Governor From Parole Process

An OK state senator is asking lawmakers to consider a proposal to remove the governor from the parole process for nonviolent offenders. According to Sen. Richard Lerblance, (D-Hartshorne), "Oklahoma is the only state where the governor is involved in the parole process. Taking the governor out of the process would be part of an overall solution to Oklahoma's prison overcrowding issue. The prisons are bursting at the seams right now."

Critics have long said that governor's involvement makes the parole process too political, especially during election years. An estimated 80 percent of the growth in inmates during the past year is attributed to fewer releases. — *Source: Tulsa World*.

Pain Doctor Convicted of 16 Counts in Retrial

Virginia pain specialist Dr. William Hurwitz was convicted in April on 16 counts of drug trafficking after a jury for the second time decided that he had overstepped the bounds of legitimate medical practice in prescribing

large doses of opioid pain relievers to patients. Hurwitz' original conviction was overturned on appeal in 2006, and supporters hoped he would walk free after his second trial.

While prosecutors portrayed Hurwitz as little more than a drug dealer, pain patients and their advocates saw him as a brave and heroic figure who prescribed necessary drugs for patients with nowhere else to turn.

In mid-July, Hurwitz, originally sentenced to 25 years, was re-sentenced to less than five years by a judge who concluded during his retrial that Hurwitz helped far more patients than he hurt.

Federal prosecutors were seeking a life sentence for Dr. Hurwitz.

Source: The Drug War Chronicle

FBI Informant Stages Neo-Nazi Rally

A paid FBI informant was behind a February neo-Nazi march through the streets of Parramore, FL that stirred up anxiety in Orlando's black community and fears of racial unrest that triggered a major police mobilization.

In court, an FBI agent said the bureau has paid its informant, David Gletty, at least \$20,000 during the past two years. Gletty's secret life became public in an unrelated federal court hearing resulting from the arrest of two suspected white supremacists on charges of conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine.

Orlando City Councilwoman Daisy Lynum, whose predominantly black district includes the march route, said she wants to know who was behind it, the neo-Nazis or the FBI and other law-enforcement agencies.

Wearing swastikas and holding signs declaring "White Pride," the 22 neo-Nazis who turned out for the rally were protected from 500 counterprotesters by about 300 police officers.

"If he was being sponsored by the FBI, then American National Socialism has a lot to thank the FBI for," Bill White, a former spokesman for the National Socialist Movement, said in an e-mail.

Inmate Funds Charity From Prison

Namat Rahman made a mistake, and he's had a long time to think about it. He's in the 15th year of a 20-year no-parole sentence at the federal prison in Seagoville, TX for a drug law violation.

But remorse is not enough, so he does what he can to help others by raising money — most of it from fellow inmates — for The Smile Train, a charity that sends surgeons to Third World countries to operate on children who have cleft lips and cleft palates.

He hasn't seen his own six children or his wife since he left them in Pakistan to come to America in 1985. He worked as a convenience

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

store clerk and a hotdog vendor in Philadelphia to make money to bring his family here, but let a friend talk him into making a few heroin deliveries, for which he was convicted and sentenced in 1992.

In prison, the 47-year-old has raised about \$3,000, enough to pay for a dozen operations at the average cost of \$250 each.

"We are all fathers," Mr. Rahman said of the inmates who contribute. "When it comes to a child, they give."

"It's an amazing story," said Michelle Sinesky, spokeswoman for The Smile Train. "We've never had anyone like him."

Mr. Rahman, one of the few Muslims in the Seagoville prison, said he has been treated well by other inmates and the staff, even in the days and weeks after 9/11.

"We are brothers in this compound," he said. "I wish people out on the streets would follow the example of Seagoville."

"One person can make a difference."

Source: *Dallas Morning News*.

Medical Marijuana User, 66, Accused Of Dealing

Meet Christine Rose Baggett, a 66-year-old great-grandmother who was formally charged in June as a "drug dealer" in Spokane, WA.

Baggett, a widow with no criminal record, suffers from two kinds of arthritis, two herniated discs in her back and a broken ankle that hasn't healed properly, she and her attorney said. Her sight is failing and she has a laundry list of other ailments for which she walks with a cane and uses marijuana for relief.

The Spokane County prosecutor's office has chosen to pursue a felony trafficking charge against Baggett for the ounce she bought last August from another man.

What the court record shows is that Baggett admitted purchasing an ounce of marijuana from a man on August 23 for \$180.

But she gave some of it back to him "as payment for delivering the marijuana to her", thus qualifying her as a drug dealer, at least in the eyes of Spokane's law enforcement community.

"If you were my grandma," Baggett's attorney, Frank Cikutovich, told her, "I would say use whatever medication you need and I will fight for you until my dying day."

Source: *Spokesman-Review*.

Stories From Inside: Prisoner Rape And The War On Drugs

It is widely accepted that the U.S. "war on drugs" has been both costly and ineffective. Less known is the link between current U.S. drug policies, prison overcrowding, and rape behind bars. In *Stories from Inside*, released in May, Stop Prisoner Rape (SPR) makes clear

how the war on drugs has contributed to the sexual violence that plagues prisons and jails across the country, derailing justice and shattering human dignity.

In the U.S. today, more than 500,000 people are incarcerated on drug charges alone, with thousands more imprisoned on drug-motivated crimes, such as property offenses and public order violations. Overcrowded facilities are breeding grounds for sexual abuse, with non-violent drug offenders among those at greatest risk for violence.

Chavez Aids Bolivia With Coca Leaf Plan

BY CHRIS KRAUL, CHICAGO TRIBUNE NEWSPAPERS

Caracas, Venezuela — President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela has found a novel way to dispense foreign aid: by promising to underwrite coca production in Bolivia.

Officials confirmed in February 2007 that Venezuela would buy whatever legal products Bolivia can make from coca leaf, as part of that nation's attempt to wean farmers from the cocaine industry.

Chavez's promise could finance the production of some 4,000 tons of coca leaf in Bolivia, Venezuelan officials say. Possible coca-based products include soap, bread, herbal teas, toothpaste, medicines and cooking oils.

No dollar amount for Venezuela's support has been announced. Three factories are under construction in Bolivia with Venezuelan financial aid and Cuban technical support; production could begin this summer.

First announced in January by Venezuela's ambassador in Bolivia, Julio Montes, the deal was finalized in Caracas during meetings of the two countries' foreign ministers. The pledge is the latest in a series of foreign aid promises in Latin America as Chavez tries to expand his influence and promote his "Bolivarian Revolution."

Included in Venezuela's foreign aid programs are a promised refinery for Nicaragua, cut-rate fuel for Ecuador and continuing bond purchases from Argentina. Chavez's promise is a big step in Bolivian President Evo Morales' efforts to legitimize the production of coca leaves, a crop Morales once grew.

The announcement came as the United States government is scaling back its anti-drug enforcement funding to Andean nations, including Bolivia and Ecuador. Chavez has long supported Morales' efforts to find commercial markets for coca-based products.

Indigenous communities in Colombia and Peru, which claim the leaf is sacred, have attempted to promote commercial, non-cocaine uses of coca in soft drinks, cookies and anti-arthritic ointments. Botanists have extolled the nutrients that the leaf contains.

Stories from Inside offers first-hand accounts of 24 prisoner rape survivors, all of whom were sexually assaulted while serving time for non-violent drug-related offenses. The report includes an overview and analysis of the war on drugs, and offers appropriate policy recommendations.

For a copy of the *Stories from Inside* report, contact Amber Durfield at adurfield@spr.org or (213) 384-1400 ext. 102, write Stop Prisoner Rape at 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010, or visit www.spr.org.

But such projects have been opposed by the U.S. government, which sees the export of any coca product as a violation of the Vienna Convention, an international accord under which signatories agree the coca leaf is a dangerous substance that should be banned.

Morales in December 2006 announced he was expanding legal production of coca in Bolivia to 50,000 acres from 30,000 acres by 2010. The United States protested, saying that Bolivia needed only a fraction of that acreage to supply domestic needs.

The coca deal will do nothing to lessen the hostility of the Bush administration toward the Chavez regime. That hostility was evident at a

VENEZUELA'S NICOLAS MADURO SAID THE TWO NATIONS WERE WORKING ON PROJECTS TO "VALUE AND DIGNIFY THE COCA LEAF." VENEZUELA, CUBA AND BOLIVIA RECENTLY SIGNED THE PEOPLE'S TRADE TREATY OUTLINING COOPERATION AND ABOUT A \$1 MILLION INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH ON COCA PRODUCTION.

February congressional hearing when U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said democracy and human rights were under attack in Venezuela.

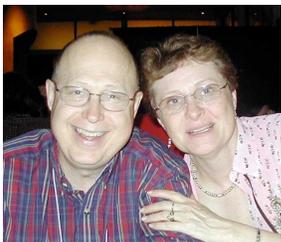
"I do believe that the president of Venezuela is really, really destroying his own country, economically, politically," Rice told lawmakers. But the Venezuelan and Bolivian governments made it clear U.S. objections will not affect their plans.

Appearing in February before reporters with Bolivian Foreign Minister David Choquehuanca, Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro said the two nations were working on projects to "value and dignify the coca leaf." Venezuela, Cuba and Bolivia recently signed the People's Trade Treaty outlining cooperation and about a \$1 million investment in research on coca production.

A Brief Overview Of Anti-Snitch Conference In Atlanta

BY ALAN BEAN, TULIA FRIENDS OF JUSTICE

The ACLU's Drug Law Reform Project called their March 15, 2007 Atlanta roundtable event, "*Undercover, Unreliable And Unaddressed: Reconsidering The Use Of Informants In Drug Law Enforcement.*" The invitation-only gathering was a testing-the-waters experiment bringing together a representative sample of academics, media people, grassroots organizers, Hip Hop artists, and people who have been personally violated by dishonest informants.



Alan & Nancy Bean
Tulia Friends of Justice

"Law is just one piece of the puzzle," Loyola law professor Alexandra Natapoff told us. "What needs to be changed is social tolerance for unfair practices." This statement was reinforced by Anjuli Verma's insightful report on a series of focus groups assembled in Texas earlier this year by a high-profile research organization.

If opinions from the broad cross section of people questioned in this small study is anything to go by (and I suspect it is), Mainstream

IF REFORMERS WANT TO CHANGE THE MINDS AND HEARTS OF MIDDLE AMERICA, WE NEED BLACK COMMUNICATORS TO FRAME AND DELIVER THE MESSAGE TO A BLACK, MIDDLE CLASS AUDIENCE. IF WE CAN'T CONVINCE BILL COSBY OR OPRAH WINFREY, WE DON'T HAVE A PRAYER WITH THE WHITE MAINSTREAM.

America isn't too worried about the criminal justice system in general or the abuse of informant "snitch" testimony in particular. Most people assume that appropriate checks and balances are in play and that most "snitches" are small fish used to catch big fish.

None of this is true, of course. In the drug war, most informants are relatively big fish rattling on their small fish associates, girl friends and family members. Ed Burns, an ex-cop and schoolteacher who now produces HBO's inner city drama "The Wire," remarked that "there are very strict rules about using informants, and they are broken 99% of the time." Dr. Natapoff cited a report by the California ACLU suggesting that most police departments in the Golden State have no policies to violate.

Jack Cole, Executive Director of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP), laid out familiar but shocking facts. Most Western democracies have incarceration rates in the 100-200 per 100,000 people range. In the USA, by contrast, 717 of every 100,000 white males are currently behind bars-and that's just the white guys. At the depths of Apartheid hell in pre-liberation South Africa, 851 black males

were incarcerated. In the USA 4,919 black males per 100,000 are currently behind bars.

Black participants wanted to talk about "white supremacy" and "white hegemony." Marc Lamont Hill, professor of Urban Education and American Studies at Temple University with a machine-gun, rat-a-tat speaking style, put it bluntly: "I don't want to assume that the law could be anything but malevolent toward black defendants given the influence of white supremacy. All the spaces that were open at one time are being controlled. In the hood, there are police officers on every single corner."

Cole, a retired police officer, blamed it on drug prohibition: "We spend so much money on the war on drugs; we don't have any money to help people."

The Wire producer Ed Burns acknowledged the relevance of racism and the drug war but was inclined to blame mass incarceration on the loss of manufacturing jobs. "When the jobs disappear, the drugs come," he said. "We are doing all of this because there are no jobs."

In other words, the Atlanta gathering brought together bold, well-informed people with strong opinions. That's what it was designed to do, and the differences in perspective were as invigorating as they were enlightening. However, as results of the focus groups and Bill Cosby's well-publicized rants suggest, there is a wide slice of black Americans who have no particular problem with the drug war, mandatory minimum sentences or the abuse of informant testimony. This population is concerned about the mass incarceration of black males, but there seems a tendency to shrug and say, "If you do the crime, you do the time."

If reformers want to change the minds and hearts of Middle America, we need black communicators to frame and deliver the message to a black, middle class audience. If we can't convince Bill Cosby or Oprah Winfrey, we don't have a prayer with the white mainstream.

As I suggested in my presentation at the roundtable, we need to discover and publicize an avalanche of Tulia-style criminal justice horror stories. The recent exonerated of Ann Colomb and her three sons after they had been convicted by perjured inmate-informant testimony is a story still waiting to be told.

Financing a united, massive and coordinated storytelling will require millions of dollars in funding — and that will mean converting a long list of high profile people to our reform gospel.

We felt part of a widespread consensus at the Atlanta gathering of the need to change the national narrative—a daunting task, to be sure. As Ed Burns put it, "When you're going up against mythology you're swatting smoke. Where does the responsibility for changing all of this begin?"

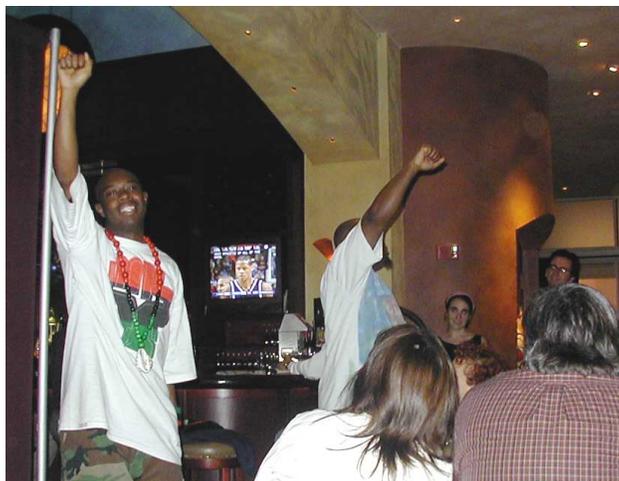
And we are going up against mythology; particularly the well-entrenched myth that helping poor people creates nothing but dependency and a false sense of entitlement. It is widely believed that locking up the poor, the drug addicted, the mentally ill and the ignorant will somehow teach them a lesson. And even if there is no deterrent effect, Mainstream America believes that mass incarceration makes the streets safer.

As Professor Natapoff suggests, the America middle classes tolerate unfair practices so long as they are believed to enhance public safety. Until we can change that impression we will get nowhere.

The Atlanta gathering probably raised more questions than it answered, but that's how it was designed. A follow-up gathering is needed — and soon. This time I would like to hear Alexandra Natapoff, Ed Burns and at least one black representative from the Civil Rights and Hip Hop generations lay out their visions for the way ahead in hour-long presentations followed by vigorous small group discussions.

As Dr. Natapoff told us in Atlanta, "This is just the beginning of the debate."

Source: edited for length from online writing at www.gritsforbreakfast.blogspot.com/2007/03/talking-snitches-in-atlanta.html



"Spoken Soul" artists Brotha's Keepa (www.brothaskeepa.com) share the message they teach in Memphis, TN



Compassionate Release A 'Dead Letter'?

The U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Sentencing Commission are at loggerheads over a commission proposal to expand the extraordinary circumstances that make prisoners eligible for so-called compassionate release or reduction in sentence.

The commission in early May sent Congress a proposed sentencing guideline that, for the first time in 24 years, would give courts guidance on what should be considered extraordinary and compelling grounds for adjusting a sentence.

The guideline broadens the grounds beyond current policy at the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and comes at a time when the Justice Department is in the final stage of approving a regulation that narrows even further the current policy.

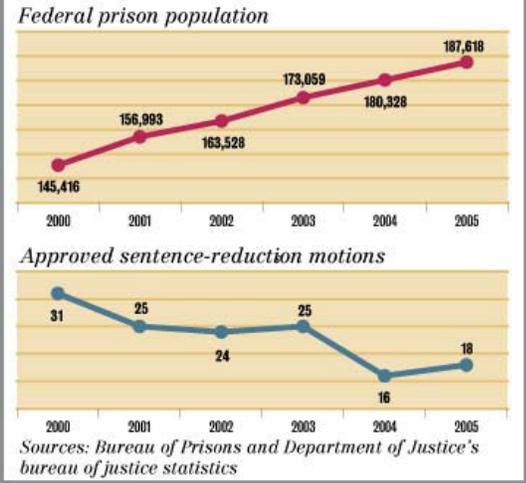
The American Bar Association, Families Against Mandatory Minimums and other groups had urged the commission for years to act on a mandate to the commission in the Sentencing Reform Act of 1984. In that law, Congress mandated that the commission issue policy

statements on how the law's compassionate-release section should operate and what factors should be considered extraordinary and compelling.

The Bureau of Prisons has interpreted the law narrowly, generally only approving motions for cases in which a prisoner is terminally ill or incapacitated by illness. The Justice Department warned last summer that any expansion of current policy would be a "dead letter".

Despite the department's opposition, the commission defines extraordinary and compelling reasons as: "... terminal illness; a permanent physical or medical condition, or deteriorating physical or mental health because of the aging process, that "substantially diminishes" the prisoner's ability to provide self-care; the death or incapacitation of the prisoner's only family member capable of caring for the prisoner's minor child or minor children; or, as determined by the Bureau of Prisons, there is an

FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION IS UP, SENTENCING REDUCTIONS ARE DOWN



extraordinary and compelling reason other than, or in combination with, the reasons described".

Since 1990, the Bureau of Prisons has filed an average of only 22 sentence-reduction motions each year despite a steadily increasing federal prison population.

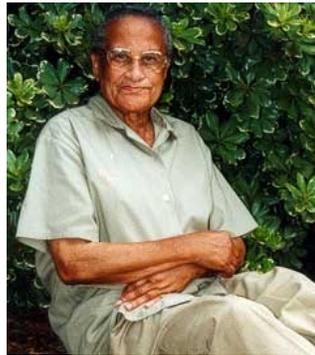
Source: *National Law Journal*

Alva Mae Groves Sentenced To 25 Years At Age 72

I am now 86 years old and have been incarcerated since 1994. Although I was charged with Drug Conspiracy, my real crime, according to today's laws of betrayal, was refusing to testify against my own children to receive a sentence reduction. Of course I didn't really understand all the talk about enhancements, acceptance of responsibility, and so on, that had to do with my sentencing. But I did understand that since I wouldn't turn against my own family, I was going to receive a very lengthy prison term. Never did I dream it would be twenty-five years.

When I was arrested I had \$1,000.00 in the bank from selling eggs and candy. Most of it was deposited in change — nickels, dimes and quarters — and the bankers substantiated this fact. I earned that money one egg at a time, one soda pop at a time, one candy bar at a time. It wasn't from selling drugs as the government contends.

I realize everyone has a day to die; death is a fate that will not be cheated. But I don't want to die in prison. I want to die at home surrounded by the love of what's left of my family. I do not have enough years left of my life to finish serving this 25 year sentence. I'm appealing to anyone to write letters for me to the Pardon Attorney's Office in Washington while my application is still pending.



Vicki Rosepiler Cancer Victim Serving 24 Years

I received the longest sentence (292 months) of anyone in my case. Although I pled guilty, I didn't have any key information to trade for sentence reductions. In response to my 2255 motion, the magistrate stated, "the first to squeal gets the deal."

In 2000, I was diagnosed with cancer. I was not able to receive treatment for 6 months, so the cancer spread to other areas and I was eventually flown to the federal medical facility in Carswell, TX to endure chemo, radiation and radium seeks implants (brachytherapy.) I endured all this while chained to a bed, alone and frightened. No one can imagine what this does to a person. I now value every moment and I'm thankful to be alive every day. I have many long-term side-effects due to extensive nuclear medicine that my body endured. The odds are not in my favor that the cancer will remain in remission. There is always a high risk that it will return elsewhere. I don't want to die in prison and have worked extremely hard to better myself.

In the event I receive clemency I have a wonderful support group waiting to help me rebuild my life. I will live with my mother and father who fortunately are still healthy and have stood by me throughout this horrible nightmare. (For more info, see www.candoclemency.com)



Vicki (right) with her mom

Teaching Addicts To Stay Alive

Death Toll Drops As Baltimore Instructs Inmates How To Deal With Overdoses

By JONATHAN BOR, BALTIMORE SUN REPORTER

Standing before 50 men dressed in red jumpsuits, drug educator Nathan Fields belted out the question of the hour: What are the street remedies for a heroin overdose?

"Burn their fingertips," said one inmate.

"Walk them around," cried another. "Put ice on the genitals," a voice rang out.

"Throw them in the backyard," someone said, eliciting a round of laughter.

"Guess what?" shouted Fields, addressing a rapt audience of inmates. "All those street remedies are more dangerous than the overdose itself."

Busting myths was a central point of the call-and-response that recently engaged a group of "street scholars" at the Baltimore City Detention Center. So was doing the right thing — calling 911, performing rescue breathing and, when possible, injecting a dose of Narcan, an antidote that can reverse an addict's downward spiral by blocking the brain's opiate receptors.

For the last several weeks, the city health department has been holding a series of overdose prevention classes there, hoping to arm drug offenders with tools to save lives on the streets where most will return.

The program is part of a larger effort to further reduce a death toll that for many years rivaled that of homicide in Baltimore. Between 1999 and 2005, the last year for which figures are available, the number of city residents dying of drug overdoses dropped by about a third, to 218. That compares with about 270 homicides a year.

Nationally, the trend has been quite the opposite. Between 1999 and 2004, the number of overdose deaths rose 77 percent to almost 20,000, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accidental poisonings, of which overdoses were the largest part, were second to automobile accidents as a cause of death from unintentional injury. Nationally, the increase has been blamed on rising abuse of OxyContin and other narcotic painkillers, as well as cocaine and sedatives.

In Baltimore, where heroin remains the chief culprit, officials credit the decline in overdose deaths to the expansion of drug treatment slots and to the city's Staying Alive program. Launched in 2004, the program teaches addicts to avoid overdosing themselves and to recognize and treat others in the throes of doing so.

Overdose education is one of the latest wrinkles in a philosophy of harm reduction — others are needle exchange and methadone maintenance — which recognizes that some people will never shake drugs but seeks to minimize the damage of their addictions.

Until recently, Staying Alive focused its

efforts on the city's bustling outdoor drug markets. Though officials haven't abandoned that, they decided it also made sense to bring the program into the detention center, where an estimated two-thirds of inmates are addicted to heroin when they enter. The city joined a short list of jurisdictions around the country to do so.

"It's forward thinking to do this because it deals with the reality of where people are as opposed to where we want them to be when they get outside," said Susan Sherman, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who played a leading role in starting Staying Alive three years ago.

New Mexico was among the first states to educate inmates about overdoses, establishing its "Blue Project" two years ago in the Metropolitan Correction Center in Albuquerque. A nonprofit called Prevention Point Pittsburgh began a similar effort in the Allegheny County Jail.

New Mexico hasn't yet evaluated the impact the program is having on overdose deaths. But Bernie Lieving, the state's harm reduction coordinator, said he senses that the program "empowers people to feel like they're able to take care of themselves and each other." He said he's also encouraged that over half of the inmates have gotten prescriptions filled for Narcan.

In Maryland, the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services invited Staying Alive into the prisons. For several years, the agency has been offering acupuncture, drug education and counseling to a limited number of offenders sentenced by the city's drug court.

In the recent class were 50 men sentenced to six-week terms in a military-style barracks tucked within the hulking stone walls of the downtown prison. Taught separately were 19 women housed elsewhere in the same low-lying building. Over the course of a year, 650 male and female inmates pass through the alternative sentencing program.

"If there's anything we can do to educate them not to die, that's something we want to do," said Gregory Warren, director of substance abuse treatment services for the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

After enduring a period of forced withdrawal in prison, inmates can easily overdose if they return to drug use and assume they can tolerate the same heroin dose they took before.

"If I'm away from drugs, my body actually starts to repair itself," said Fields. So while he urged the inmates to stay drug-free, he also advised them to start slowly if they must start at all.

Later, he explained how to save others from

overdose with an injection of Narcan, which can overcome the effects of heroin, OxyContin and other opiates. "But the anti-overdose medicine will do nothing to reverse the effects of a cocaine overdose," said Fields.

The inmates came equipped with the lessons of the street — only some of which were accurate. They correctly rattled off the signs and symptoms of heroin overdose: blue extremities and slow or nonexistent breathing. But just as confidently, they recited street remedies that, as Fields explained, could finish the job that heroin had started.

An unconscious addict, for instance, could drown in a cooling bath. An injection of salt water could send a victim's blood pressure soaring. Holding a match to the fingertips, meant to jar the addict into consciousness, could produce burns severe enough to require amputation.

"And if I'm unconscious and you burn me, what will I feel?" Fields asked the crowd.

"Nothing," someone cried out.

A better choice would be rescue breathing, a mouth-to-mouth technique that can keep an unconscious addict alive until paramedics arrive.

To demonstrate the technique, the teachers positioned two mannequins on a table and asked volunteers to step up. Don't start the rhythmic breathing, Fields told them, before making sure the person is truly unconscious.

The forceful pressing of knuckles upon the chest will rouse anyone who's even slightly awake without inflicting harm.

"If he jumps up, that's good," said Fields.

As the class ended, two inmates who agreed to be interviewed affirmed that the class addressed issues with which they were frighteningly familiar.

Anthony Kerr, 35, said he once overdosed on a combination of heroin, Xanax and alcohol. He passed out in a friend's apartment on a Thursday night, then awoke the following Sunday in someone else's basement.

Kerr, who is from Edmondson Village, said he learned that a friend had saved his life using a mouth-to-mouth technique that he had learned in a college lifesaving course. He said he was glad to see the technique explained to others.

"We're all clean, which is a good thing," said Kerr. "We all have a goal. We're on the same page."

Antonio Jones, 35, of Woodlawn said he hoped that the class would produce a ripple effect that would reach the streets.

"It's for me to have the information so I can help someone else save a life," he said.

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, April 15, 2007

I Know – Let's Really Scare Kids About Drugs!

BY STANTON PEELE

In an episode of *South Park* ("My Future Self n' Me"), Stan's parents hire Motivation Corp. to discourage Stan from using drugs. The Corp. employs an actor to come to live with Stan's family. The actor pretends to be Stan in the future after he has ruined his life by taking drugs and drinking. Now that's an anti-drug program!

Watch out — Motivation Corp. may be coming near you soon. In March of 2006, a group of television ads to counter Montana's growing methamphetamine

problem were launched. Aimed at children 12-17 years old, the ads present horrifying pictures of what happens to kids who use drugs.

According to one publication, "Finally, someone in the ads production business has come through with a campaign that not only fulfills the goal of reaching their target audience, but also leaves an indelible impression on anyone who views what they have produced." (See these ads at www.montanameth.org.)

But there have been harrowing anti-drug ad campaigns previously. In fact, they have rarely been absent from U.S. television.

You may recall the famous egg and frying pan ad, "This is your brain on drugs. Any questions?" This was created as part of a series begun in 1987 by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America — a non-profit coalition of advertising, media, and public relations professionals. The Partnership was given \$200 million annually by the federal government. Media outlets contributed over \$3 billion in free television time, making it the largest and most expensive anti-drug campaign ever.

However, the Institute for Social Research's tracking study of teen drug use discovered that despite their enormous exposure to such anti-drug ads beginning in 1991, adolescents' perceived risk of using drugs declined and drug use rose sharply. Support for the Partnership predictably waned.

To counteract the growth in drug use, in 1998 Bill Clinton and his drug czar, General Barry McCaffrey, announced a five-year, \$2 billion ad campaign. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, "It's the largest media blitz ever undertaken by the federal government. And antidrug ads like these will be hard to forget."

They included bugs crawling all over a teenage boy (a hallucination presumably brought on by methamphetamines) and an ad depicting a girl demolishing her kitchen with a frying pan.

The government agency charged with research and science concerning drugs — the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) — commissioned a study of the effectiveness of this campaign over the period from September 1999 through June 2003. The study found the campaign had no effect on children, although parents were highly favorable towards it.

The study found something even more surprising: "There were no significant reductions in marijuana use either leading up to or after the marijuana campaign for youth 12 to 18 years old between 2002 and 2003. Indeed there was

evidence for an increase in past month and past year use among the target audience of 14- to 16-year-olds."

Actually, years of systematic research have repeatedly found that intensely negative anti-drug messages are ineffective, and any changes measured in response to them are more likely to be in the direction of greater drug use. The mechanism to account for this "rebound" effect is that the exaggerations and

YEARS OF SYSTEMATIC RESEARCH HAVE REPEATEDLY FOUND THAT INTENSELY NEGATIVE ANTI-DRUG MESSAGES ARE INEFFECTIVE, AND ANY CHANGES MEASURED IN RESPONSE TO THEM ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE IN THE DIRECTION OF GREATER DRUG USE.



Mail Call

Dear November Coalition:

Thanks for your help with Drug Prohibition Awareness Month in January 2007 at the Winston-Salem (NC) Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship. It was a great success!

Enclosed are two sheets of petitioners for your files. We also distributed almost all copies of the *Razor Wire* that you sent.

We fielded answers to all sorts of questions about drug prohibition, especially the injustice created by policies based on religious dogma, not medical science. UU's can understand the issue when framed in those terms.

Best of luck with your endeavors. If you are in the Winston-Salem area, please do not hesitate to contact me.

For Justice and Peace, Jim Campbell, MD

Dear November Coalition:

My name is Willard Allen, I thank you for expressing concern about my case and the information contained in the *Razor Wire*, Summer 2006, that you sent. Please keep me on your mailing list to receive updates and more *Razor Wires*. I am currently working in the kitchen here at FMC Devens and make approximately 12 cents an hour, so I'm not able to make a monetary donation at this time.

Another reason I have decided to write is on behalf of my children, who are having a rough time dealing with my incarceration. Their mother doesn't want them

drama of such messages turn children off, so that they reject anti-drug warnings entirely.

I witnessed several network and cable news shows on which the developers of the current campaign in Montana were interviewed. The programs were all highly favorable to the media backgrounds of these men. On no program that I saw was a drug prevention researcher interviewed.

If only they would have asked me to participate! I would have asked, "Did you and your colleagues examine the research on the effectiveness of drug prevention programs and media campaigns?" Imagine if they answered "no" — the only answer I could anticipate. What arrogance and disrespect for research and the children the ads are supposed to reach!

Now that's a news story — a highly funded, popular, and critically acclaimed program initiated with much media ballyhoo causes drug use.

(Editor — Stanton Peele is a psychologist whose work has appeared in previous *Razor Wires*, a man who has changed the addiction field. He has pioneered, among other things, the idea that addiction occurs within a range of experiences, and the "harm reduction" approach to addiction. This 2006 article and others can be found at www.peele.net.)

to see me here at the prison. However, I believe she just needs time.

I am interested in trying to get something started in Maine where I'm from and where my children live. Something like the "In Arms Reach" Program with NFL Legend Carl Banks and Terrence Stevens (*RW*, summer 2006) who increase public awareness of what children go through because of an incarcerated parent.

Just because I have a 30-year sentence does not mean that I cannot support my children. I need help with information about how to go about this, and any guidance would be appreciated deeply.

Sincerely, Willard J. Allen

(I emailed your letter to *In Arms Reach*. Other groups may respond to your concerns and goal for Maine after reading your plea here - ed.)

Hello Coalition,

In the last *Razor Wire* issue, winter 06/07, I noted several references to the "Drug War Chronicle." Is that a newsletter or magazine? Please send information on it. Keep up the great work. Every time I get the *Razor Wire* it's an uplifting experience!

Thanks, Jay Smith

(Sorry, Jay, but *The Drug War Chronicle* is an electronic newsletter only, published online weekly at www.stoppedrugwar.org/chronicle - ed.)

I'm homeless right now as a result of the "war on drugs" and would love to be a member but barely have enough for food because of high bails, lawyers, etc. Can I still join somehow?

Jenn in San Diego

(Hi Jenn, of course you can join! We're pleased to sponsor you. I'm sending you a couple back issues today. If you are interested and comfortable telling it, we'd also like to know more of your experience - ed.)

Sandra Hendrix

On July 26, 2000 I was sentenced to 71 years in prison — 11 years of that to run concurrent — meaning a final total of 60 years confinement.

My story begins with a close friend who was facing habitual theft charges in Indiana, and to avoid prosecution told police that I was a big-time, illegal drug supplier in Toledo, Ohio, and that I had been his dealer for eight years. In reality, I had been nothing more than a friend to him.

I had 'been there' for him through his earlier 4-year prison term, writing letters, sending money and accepting his collect phone-calls. I also opened my home to him, including him as part of my family.

Coupling promises of marriage with an engagement ring placed on my hand, he played on decision making problems I was having as an addict — begging and pleading constantly until he finally had me feeling guilty. I bought and delivered drugs to Indiana. He had the police agents waiting on my arrival.

Needless to say, under current snitch sentencing allowances, he received a letter from the prosecutor telling him that all the charges against him were dropped as a result of my conviction.

I'm an almost-50-year-old mother of five and grandmother of 14. I adopted three of the grandchildren I've raised since birth — Amanee (10), Zafir (9) and Frank (17). Zafir was born with brain damage and is a special needs child. As a result of my absence, Zafir has become violent, causing serious harm to other children.

I was the only 'real mother' he knew, and being torn out of his life has made his condition worse. My two sons are raising the three youngest children; so between both households, they support ten children.



Sandra with her family

My family is slowly and painfully falling apart. Both of my parents have been gone for many years. My children's' father is also deceased, and with the head of the household incarcerated — where now can they turn?

I led a productive and fruitful life for almost ten years despite battling daily with drug addiction. I believe in my heart that if my family were not black and low income, unable to afford good legal counsel, I would have done better at trial and received a more balanced sentence.

I can't bring myself to accept that my grandchildren will grow up without me, or that I will die in prison. On July 1, 2001, less than a year after my sentencing, Indiana's drug laws were changed, now allowing alternative sentencing options for drug dealers and treatment for addicts. Meanwhile, and with no retroactivity allowed, this grandma is serving the rest of her life in prison, on an open-ended search for a way out.

Please write me:

**Sandra M Hendrix 102312
Rockville Corr. Facility
811 West 50 North
Rockville, IN 47872**

Informant Urged Suspect To Sell Him More Drugs

A key witness in a Florida drug case, Stephen Wilkinson, was free on bail after being arrested on drug distribution charges when he met defendant Brandon Erwin and others in a Tampa, FL night club, and told law enforcement he could provide information about drug dealing in the club. Wilkinson testified he was trying to find a way to provide "substantial assistance" to authorities in order to receive more lenient treatment in his own case.

He was facing a minimum of 15 years behind bars and, after his cooperation, wound up with a year of probation, he said under cross-examination from defense attorney Rachel May.

"Kind of hit a home run, huh?" May remarked.

Under questioning from May, Wilkinson said he signed an agreement with a state prosecutor that required him to provide information to help in the prosecution of a particular level of crime. Under his plea agreement, he was to receive a three-year prison sentence, but if he assisted in bringing another case that could get someone a potential sentence of at least 15 years, he could have two years shaved off that recommendation.

Wilkinson testified Erwin initially offered him smaller quantities of drugs than he purchased, but he asked for larger amounts at the direction of Drug Enforcement Administration Agent Scott Albrecht. Under federal law, sentences for drug trafficking are enhanced when larger amounts of drugs are involved.

"Have you ever heard of sentencing entrapment?" May asked Wilkinson.

"No," Wilkinson responded.

Source: Tampa Tribune

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES THE RAZOR WIRE
NEWSPAPER AND OTHER SPECIAL NOTICES

Count Me In!

Working to end drug war injustice

My Contact Information (non-prisoner):

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip +4 _____
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Annual Dues: \$30 • Students: \$15 • Prisoners: \$6

I don't know a prisoner, but I will sponsor one.
I have enclosed an additional \$6.00

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

TNC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your gift or donation is tax deductible.

Do you have a loved one in prison?

I want to sponsor my imprisoned loved one's membership and have enclosed an additional \$6.00.
 I am a prisoner. I have enclosed at least \$6.00 (money order or stamps), or made arrangements for payment.

Name _____
Registration Number _____
Prison _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip +4 _____

**The November Coalition
282 West Astor • Colville, WA 99114**

Voice & Fax: (509) 684-1550 • Web: www.november.org



Upcoming Events

August 5-6, 2007, Spokane, WA. *SpoCannabis Festival*. For more info, see www.spocannabis.com

August 8, 2007, New York City. *Drop the Rock Meeting*, 6:30 PM at the Correctional Association, 135 E. 15th Street, New York City. For more info, contact droptherock@correctionalassociation.org or see www.droptherock.org

August 10-11, 2007, Dubuque, IA. *Swords Into Plowshares: Anarchism, Christianity And Principles Of Peace, the 2007 Conference of Jesus Radicals*. Featuring Fr. Tom Hereford of November Coalition. At Loras College, Dubuque, IA. For more info, contact jesusradicals@jesusradicals.com or see www.conference.jesusradicals.com

August 11- 14, 2007, Williamsburg, VA. *26th Annual International Society for Individual Liberty (ISIL) World Conference*, featuring Jerry Cameron of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP). For more info, visit the World Conference page at www.isil.org

August 18-19, 2007, Seattle, WA. *Seattle HempFest*. For more info, see www.hempfest.org

August 25, 2007, San Clemente, CA. *OCNORML / November Coalition Curbside Rally*, 1:30- 5:00 PM at San Clemente Pier, Avenida Del Mar & Avenida Victoria, San Clemente, CA. For more info, contact rachel@november.org or see www.ocnorml.org

August 25-26, 2007, Olympia, WA. *Olympia Hempfest*, at Heritage Park in downtown Olympia, WA. For more info, see www.olyhempfest.com

September 1, 2007, Washington, DC. *"How Music Helped Me Escape from Prison"*, 7:00 PM at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2700 F Street, NW, Washington, DC. Presented by Prison Art Gallery and The Prisons Foundation. For more info, contact 202-393-1511 or staff@prisonsfoundation.org, or see www.prisonsfoundation.org

September 15, 2007, Boston, MA. *18th Annual Boston Freedom Rally*, Hosted by MassCann. For more info, see www.masscann.org

September 18, 2007, Vancouver, BC, Canada. *Beyond Prohibition Coalition Workshop*, 6:00 - 9:00 PM at the Strathcona

Community Centre, 601 Keefer Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada. For more info & to RSVP, contact Dave Diewert at ddiewert@shaw.ca

September 22, 2007, Huntington Beach, CA. *OCNORML / November Coalition Curbside Rally*, 1:30- 5:00 PM at the Huntington Beach Pier, 315 Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, CA. For more info, contact rachel@november.org or see www.ocnorml.org

October 3-6, 2007, Philadelphia, PA. *Arts In Criminal Justice Conference*, sponsored by the Nathan Cummings Foundation; hosted by Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program. November Coalition staff will attend. For more info, contact info@artsincriminaljustice.org or 215-685-0759 or see www.artsincriminaljustice.org

October 5-6, 2007, Cologne, Germany. *IACM 4th Conference on Cannabinoids in Medicine*, at the Holiday Inn, Dürener Strasse 287, 50935 Cologne, Germany. For more info, contact Franjo Grotenhermen, Rueckertstrasse 4, 53819 Neunkirchen, Germany / Phone: +49-2247-968083 / Fax: +49-2247-9159223 or see www.iacm-conference2007.org

October 6-7, 2007, Madison, WI. *37th Great Midwest Marijuana Harvest Festival*. Sponsored by Madison NORML, Wisconsin NORML, Is My Medicine Legal YET?, University of Wisconsin-Madison Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP), the Drug Policy Forum of Wisconsin and Weedstock.com. For more info, see www.madisonnorml.org

October 12-13, 2007, Hollywood, CA. *NORML's 36th Annual National Conference: "Cannabis, Creativity and Commerce"*, at the Sheraton Universal Hotel, 333 Universal Hollywood Drive, Universal City, CA. For more info, see www.norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7250

October 27, 2007, Laguna Beach, CA. *OCNORML / November Coalition Curbside Rally*, 1:30- 5:00 PM at the Main Beach, Pacific Coast Highway & Broadway, Laguna Beach, CA. For more info, contact rachel@november.org or see www.ocnorml.org

November 24, 2007, Huntington Beach, CA. *OCNORML / November Coalition Curbside Rally*, 1:30- 5:00 PM at the Huntington Beach Pier, 315 Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, CA. For more info, contact rachel@november.org or see www.ocnorml.org

December 5-8, 2007, New Orleans, LA. *2007 International Drug Policy Reform Conference*, hosted by the Drug Policy Alliance. At the Astor Crowne Plaza, 739 Canal at Bourbon Street, New Orleans, LA. November Coalition staff will attend. For more info, contact Stefanie Jones at sjones@drugpolicy.org or visit <http://conference.drugpolicy.org>

How to communicate with The November Coalition

• **Letters:** We receive lots of mail. Rest assured that we read every one of them, but we simply don't have the time or staff to actually respond to more than a few.

• **Legal cases:** We cannot offer you legal representation or advice. Please do not send us your legal work unless specifically requested.

• **Prisoner profiles (The WALL):** Please continue to submit your stories, but if at all possible, send pictures with them, preferably of a prison visit with your loved ones. Stories should be concise, factual, and include personal background such as age, family status etc. *Although The November Coalition staff endeavors to verify the accuracy of WALL stories, written by the prisoners themselves, we assume no responsibility for their content.* Credentialed media can be provided with documentation and family contacts if they wish to research a story. To do so, please contact media@november.org.

• **Articles for Razor Wire & Internet:** Editorials should be no more than 800 words; articles no more than 1,200 words. Submitted items should be typed & double spaced, or neatly printed by hand if you don't have access to a typewriter. Please limit the use of bold, italics, underline, or other special formatting.

• **Artwork:** We need your cartoons and sketches, please! Let your creativity and imagination run wild.

• **Donations:** We will gladly accept postage stamps from prisoners and others, as well as monetary donations.



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The Razor Wire is a supplemental communication to imprisoned members of the November Coalition. Published twice a year, we notify members of special projects and progress, maintaining a daily updated website at www.november.org. Join thousands that visit us online for up-to-the-minute drug war reports and instructions on how they can help end the failed war on drugs. Support people working to end drug war injustice with a donation and membership in November Coalition today.

To join The November Coalition and receive this newspaper, see membership form on page 22.

IF YOU OWN OR OPERATE A RETAIL STORE, OR DO COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, CONTACT OUR OFFICE FOR INFO ABOUT BULK DISTRIBUTION.

Toons by Paey



Wheelchair bound and in constant pain, Richard Paey continues to serve his 25-year prison sentence for "illegal prescriptions." The Florida Supreme Court announced in March that it will not hear Richard's appeal. His attorney says there are only two options left for Richard's freedom: the pending clemency request before Gov. Charlie Crist, and an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. As of June 2007, The Florida Parole Commission has recommended that Gov. Crist consider Paey's clemency petition. (For more info, see www.november.org/cartoons)



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What is The November Coalition?

The November Coalition was founded in 1997 as a non-profit, grassroots organization with a mission to raise awareness in individuals and communities about the spiraling increase in numbers of imprisoned in the United States due to drug-law enforcement.

We arouse and activate fellow taxpayers about existing and impending dangers of an overly powerful federal government acting beyond constitutional constraints. We counsel victims of this peculiar 'war,' most of whom were minor participants, and warn our fellow citizens of the steady erosion of civil liberties, human rights and personal freedoms allowed by federal and state authorities.

Coalition members and supporters are convinced that the War on Drugs does nothing but stimulate an ever more profitable and violent underground economy. The intent of any law should create a safer country and safer world, not one more costly and less free.

Visit us on the web at www.november.org.

November Coalition Foundation
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