

Justice Watch

Quarterly Newsletter

Summer 2004

Summer 2004

God's requirements:

"...loose the chains of injustice...set the oppressed free...share your food with the hungry and provide the poor wanderer with shelter...clothe the naked...turn not away from your own...do away with the yoke of oppression...then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. He will guide you, he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land."

Isaiah, Chapter 58

One Solitary Life

A young man was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, and worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book, held an office, owned a home, never went to college or put His foot inside a big city. He didn't raise a family. He never traveled 200 miles from his birthplace. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself.

While He was still young the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth, his coat. He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race, the one who said "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and "Love one another as I have loved you".

I am on the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever sailed, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has that One Solitary Life.

(The story of Jesus' life printed on an old Christmas card)

LOCKED UP! FOR LIFE?

Prisoners in U.S. prisons/jails as of 06/03: 2,033,331

Prisoners added to U.S. prisons/jails in 2002: 36,623

The number of prisoners serving LIFE sentences has increased 83% in the past 10 years.

Nearly 128,000 people, (1 of every 11 offenders) are serving life sentences. Figures compiled from the Federal Bureau of Prisons and state correctional agencies, also show the amount of time served by those given life sentences increased from an average of 21 years to 29 years between 1991 and 1997.

These increases are not the result of more crime but due to longer mandatory sentences and more restrictive parole and commutation policies, as well as the one-size-fits all "three strikes" laws. In 2003, one in four lifers was serving without possibility of parole; in 1992 it was one in every six.

Ohio has 4,729 prisoners serving a life sentence and 105 serving life without parole. Indiana has 233 prisoners serving a life sentence and 66 serving life without parole. Kentucky has 748 prisoners serving a life sentence and 30 serving life without parole. (Source: The Sentencing Project, article by Siobhan McDonough, Asso. Press; Prison Numbers Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics)

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One good eye is enough! MI Corr. Medical Services refuses to allow an examination for a cataract or surgery to remove it--because "he has one good eye." The lack of depth perception and no sight to the left side does not matter.



Justice Watch

1120 Garden Street

Cincinnati, OH 45214

Tel: (513) 241-0490

Fax: (513) 241-6850

Email: jstwatch@fuse.net

Web Site: www.justicewatchinc.org

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE! PRISONERS & NON-PRISONERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO DONATE ART WORK OR POETRY TO JUSTICE WATCH-PLEASE NOTIFY US. WE USE DONATED ITEMS FOR OUR ANNUAL FUND-RAISING DINNER PRIZES.

Justice Watch Newsletter Info: Seeking: NJ donor who donated \$5.00, 5/23/03; Texan donor #3776383, of 4/09/03, T. H. Harvey #501415, MI, AND Walter Willis of NJ whose father donated in 2003. We don't have their complete info. We feel bad if donors do not receive their newsletters. Info, please!

REMINDER: WE HAVE NO ATTORNEYS ON STAFF. Do NOT send legal papers or casework. We welcome news, information, questions, short original poems, news items, & suggestions.

SEND A \$3.00 DONATION TO RECEIVE 3 ISSUES OF THE JUSTICE WATCH NEWSLETTER, (published spring, summer and fall). This covers our costs. Give MORE to allow us to send copies to indigent prisoners.

IF YOU HAVE NO INCOME--but want the Newsletter, tell us. We'll try to find a donor for you. Stamps and embossed envelopes accepted.

IF THERE AN ASTERISK (*) BEFORE YOUR NAME ON THIS COPY, IT MEANS THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE BECAUSE WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM YOU FOR A YEAR.

SEND YOUR UPDATED ADDRESS. TX, AZ AND CA prisoners MUST KEEP ADDRESSES COMPLETE AND UPDATED. AZ and FL prisoners: Include your PO Box #--there are several PO Boxes for the same prisons there.

We no longer send to JAILS (except to our donors). Most are returned, due to a release or a move.

SECOND CHANCE BILL WOULD HELP EX-INMATES' RETURN TO SOCIETY

Most ex-prisoners have to re-learn how to live in society after years in prison: the basics such as how to get a job, keep a job, plan a budget and stick to it, find a place to live and how to pay for it. Justice Watch, through Garden Street Transitional House, helps 26-30 men a year with this. We operate GSTH with City and HUD grants, Community Shares and other donations from people who understand the needs. 650,000 prisoners are released from prison each year--about 2,700 in Hamilton County, OH. The federal government wants to help ease the transition of those prisoners into society.

JW recently received a letter from a 56 year-old man who was being released after many years. Since he maxed-out (not on parole) he was not eligible for any--NOT ANY--help! He was facing a world he didn't know with only \$75.00 in his hand and no one to help him.

OH Rep. Rob Portman has introduced a bill called the Second Chance Act. It would authorize \$112 million over 2 years to help ex-prisoners get drug treatment, student loans, mentoring, EVEN housing. The bill has a good chance of passage. Kansas Senator Sam Brownback said he would sponsor a Senate version and President Bush talked about prisoners' re-entering society in his State of the Union address.

The house is also considering a bill that recognizes the role that mentally ill offenders play in the recidivism problem. About 1 in 6 inmates is mentally ill. Recent studies describe American prisons a mental institutions by default--although they are institutions in which the disturbed inmates get no treatment. Once they finish the sentence, such inmates are dumped onto the streets without medication or therapy and soon end up back behind bars.

In his book "I Shall Not Want," Robert Ketchum tells of a teacher who asked her class if anyone could quote the 23rd Psalm. A 4 1/2 year old girl raised her hand, came to the front of the room, made a perky bow, and said, "The Lord is my shepherd, that's all I want." She bowed and sat down. That may well be the greatest interpretation of the 23rd Psalm ever heard. THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS, FOLKS!

NATIONAL NEWS

HIGH COURT SAYS JUDGES CAN'T TACK TIME ON SENTENCES!

A U.S. Supreme Court decision calls into question the sentences of thousands of prisoners. The ruling overturned the criminal sentencing system in Washington because that system allows judges to increase a defendant's sentence without input from a jury. The decision directly affects only WA, but the impact may be felt everywhere. Federal courts use a similar sentencing system and many states, including OH, allow judges some discretion to order sentences that go beyond a jury verdict.

Lower courts will be busy trying to sort out what the ruling means for many criminal defendants. "This could be momentous--it has the potential to undo 20 years of sentencing reforms," said ACLU attorney Scott Greenwood. Many of the reforms were intended to ensure that people convicted of the same crime, under essentially the same circumstances, would be punished in the same way. In the federal system, judges are required to impose sentences that fall within a minimum and maximum range, depending on the offense, but it's up to the judges to decide where the defendant falls within that range. Factors such as amount of drugs involved, or cooperation with law enforcement, can make a difference in sentencing.

Justice Antonio Scalia wrote that a similar system in WA is unconstitutional because it requires judges to make decisions that should be left to juries. He said the constitutional guarantee to a trial by jury, requiring proof beyond a reasonable doubt, should also apply to the findings of fact that judges make when imposing a sentence. The judge's authority to sentence derives wholly from the jury's verdict. What this means is still unclear, but if the rules change, thousands of prisoners could head back to court for adjustments in their sentences.

Since the decision, judges around the country have postponed reduced sentences already handed down. Meanwhile the Bush administration's Supreme Court lawyers could use a rare procedure of bringing an appeal before judgement--bypassing the months long process of taking a case first to an appeals court. Another government option is filing an emergency appeal, requesting quick resolution. The government wants clarification of the ruling that appears to give defendants a right to demand that every fact that could lengthen a sentence be put to a jury and proved beyond a reasonable doubt. (Enquirer)

Upcoming Supreme Court cases: Missouri v. Seibert, 02-1371, and United States v. Patane, 02-1182: these involve how far police can go in questioning and collecting evidence without violating suspects' Miranda rights.

A new federal law, intended to protect the privacy of patients, is so stringent that absolutely no information can be shared by hospitals (room/phone #'s, names) unless specific approval is given by the patient IN ADVANCE. You must include family members and friends, even your pastor's name at the time of admission if you want them to visit, or they will not be allowed to see you, or entitled to any information.

UNITED STATES/IRAQ PRISON SIMILARITIES

Physical and sexual abuse of prisoners, similar to what has been uncovered in Iraq, takes place in American prisons with little public knowledge or concern, according to corrections officials, inmates and human rights advocates. In PA and other states, inmates are routinely stripped in front of others before being moved to a new prison or unit. In VA's supermax facility, newly arrived inmates report being forced to wear black hoods. Corrections experts say some of the worst abuses occur in TX, whose prisons were under a federal consent decree because of violence by guards against inmates and due to overcrowding.

Experts point out that the man who directed the reopening of the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and trained the guards there resigned under pressure as director of the Utah DOC in 1997 after a mentally ill inmate died while shackled to a restraining chair for 16 hours. The UT official, Lane McCotter later became an executive of a private prison company.

Nationwide, during the last quarter of a century, over 40 state prison systems were under some form of court order, for brutality, overcrowding, poor food or lack of medical care, said Marc Mauer, of the Sentencing Project. (Article by Fox Butterfield, NY Times)

NATIONAL NEWS

FORMER SOLDIERS MAY GET INVOLUNTARY CALL TO ARMS

The Army is scraping up soldiers for duty in Iraq wherever it can find them, and that includes people long considered off-limits, such as those in the Individual Ready Reserve, the nation's pool of former soldiers. The Army is screening them for critically needed specialists. The Ready Reserve pool is composed of people who completed active-duty tours but are subject to involuntary recall for a period of years after leaving. The Army is looking there and elsewhere because it's been stretched so thin by a recent decision to maintain troop levels in Iraq at 135,000 to 138,000 at least through 2005.

Along with sending U.S. soldiers into Iraq and other countries, the U.S. Government sends contracted soldiers (formerly called mercenaries, or the French Foreign Legion) to battle for us. National Public Radio says the work history for these men seems to be: U.S. military service, contract fighters, and then prison guard work. Does this tell us something about some of the persons who abuse, intimidate and threaten prisoners yet are protected by state rules giving them exemption from lawsuits?

Building on post 9-11 efforts to crack down on undocumented immigrants, the U.S. government is tracking down those who've been ordered deported but never left the country. Some being expelled have already been legalized; some have work permits and permanent residency; others have community roots, including U.S. born spouses and children. Yet they are snarled in the Dept. of Homeland Security's "Endgame" plan to track down and expel more than 400,000 foreign nationals. Homeland Security and Justice Dept. should overhaul the Endgame program so that it doesn't invite unwarranted arrests, detentions and deportations. If the departments don't act, Congress should intervene. Something is terribly broken when an immigration system deports people already lawfully granted a stay in the US. (Miami Herald editorial)

FROM NORTH CAROLINA: NC and other state prisoners are feeling the effects of state budget cuts with less food and longer waits for medical needs to be met. Trade agreements have hit the state hard with job losses in textiles and furniture. Three new prisons, and 3 more in process are helping with job growth. One prison was converted to a women's prison due to more women being sentenced.

FROM TEXAS: Men are allowed 3 towels per week. There are threats of, and examples of magazines being forbidden. Officially only porn/sex mags are forbidden, but some tell us even Christian and church related materials are stopped. Prisoners in TX are not allowed jackets, the Flu is treated only with aspirin, and many persons are bitten by insects, including spiders. Rehabilitation? DON'T THINK SO!

COMPUTERS TO GIVE PRISONERS UPDATED LEGAL INFORMATION!

Since the 70's the US Supreme Court has mandated that inmates have access to legal information. Now LexisNexis, a Dayton OH company, enables prisons to provide required access to legal info and do away with more expensive law books, which are quickly outdated and easily damaged. The service has installed computer kiosks in 4 prisons and jails in HI and 5 in CA. They consist of a touch-screen computer monitor covered in shatterproof glass, inside a steel box, bolted to a wall. "It seems a better way than relying on old law books" said Charles Carbone, a lawyer with CA Prison Focus, advocates for prisoners' rights.

Inmates use the database by touching different parts of the monitor screen, which includes a keypad. The Internet-based public records database provides access to more than 4.6 billion documents from more than 30,000 news, business and legal information sources. LexisNexis is negotiating with other state prisons to install the kiosks. The service for the 5 CA facilities costs \$94,000 a year. Money spent at prison commissaries is used to pay for them.

In OH prisoners have no access to the Internet or any electronic legal resources, but the state is considering buying legal information on compact discs. The computers will ensure prisoners' research is more reliable, enabling them to better assist in their defense, said John Rion, former president of the OH Asso. of Criminal Defense Lawyers. (from Assoc. Press, James Hannah)

OHIO NEWS

Justice Watch friends are sad to hear that Jana Schroeder of the American Friends Service Committee in Dayton has resigned her post as director of the OH Criminal Justice Program. Also upsetting is news that AFSC may not hire a new staff person to continue criminal justice work in OH. The decision will be made in September. **TO MAKE YOUR FEELINGS KNOWN ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROGRAM CONTACT: GLR Executive Director: Michael McConnell, AFSC, 637 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60605 (312) 427-2533.** Jana and the program through which she reached so many prisoners and families will be greatly missed. We wish her the best at her new position at Earlham College in Richmond, IN.

OH's prisons have programs to teach barber and cosmetology skills, but the state won't give a barber's license to a convicted felon. ODRC Dir. Wilkinson says that's just one example of the state making it difficult for convicted felons to return to society. He said "Some of the barriers in OH Revised Code have no relationship to the crime committed." Gov. Taft has directed all state departments to examine employment policies to make it easier for ex-felons to get state jobs. Many state-licensed professions--accountants to veterinarians—prohibit ex-felons from receiving a license, regardless of crime committed. State Rep. Tom Brinkman called those laws "stupid" and is supporting bills to end them. Cincinnati sponsored a workshop on the barriers that ex-offenders face in getting housing and jobs. An example offered by Councilwoman Alicia Reece was that child support payments that aren't tolled while a person serves his time, so Child Support Agencies put a hold on his driver's license, but with no license he often cannot work to pay child support.

Cincinnati Mayor Luken proposed a one-stop center for re-entering felons to sort out housing, voter registration, Social Security, job training and employment issues. **THAT'S WHAT JUSTICE WATCH DOES AT GARDEN STREET TRANSITIONAL HOUSE!!!** Maybe Ms. Reece and Mayor Luken would appreciate your letters asking them to help us out with more funding so we can continue to help with economic development and public safety issues! **WRITE MAYOR LUKEN & COUNCILWOMAN REECE AT: 801 PLUM STREET, CINCINNATI OH 45202.** (Cincinnati Enquirer, Gregory Korte, April 4, 2004)

The OH Supreme Court ruled that prosecutors may not introduce a suspect's request for an attorney as evidence of the person's guilt. Cincinnati Attorney William Gallagher says the decision clearly defines for everyone that you can tell a police officer, "I want to talk to my lawyer," and there won't be any consequences. (Enquirer)

EXPOSING THE BRUTALITY OF EXECUTIONS!

An ACLU law suit filed against Ohio is an effort to keep the process of executions open to witnesses. It charges that state law is violated when needles used to dispense lethal chemicals into the person's arm are inserted "outside the view of witnesses." The practice is an attempt by the state to sanitize a gruesome and heinous process. In January 2004, the state settled the case and agreed to allow witnesses to watch execution teams prepare Lewis Williams for lethal injection. As witnesses left the chamber disgusted and distraught at the inhumane process, the Ohio Attorney General began to reconsider his decision to allow witnesses. (ACLU News)

A law suit filed by the OH Public Defender's Office challenges injections to execute. It argues that pain caused by chemicals used in the injections torture inmates and violate constitutional protections against cruel and unusual punishment. The Public Defender's office argues a paralyzing drug used in executions, pancuronium bromide, does not dull sensation and exposes inmates to excruciating pain caused by two other drugs to induce suffocation and heart failure. (Asso. Press)

PRISON SUICIDES: Albert Baker, at Lorain CI, Thomas Brewer, at Ross CI, and Jacob Beatty at CRC all died of suicide within a 7 day period. Three others have been reported this year. A guard at Ross claims prison officials are indifferent to rapes and other assaults, contributing to a dangerous atmosphere and deaths. The state denied such accusation, but is looking for any commonalities between the "incidents."

OHIO NEWS

OH House Bill 357 reclassifies the plea of "not guilty by reason of insanity" to "guilty but insane" and requires a trial court to impose a sentence of imprisonment on a person found guilty but insane. The prison sentence must be completed, regardless of whether the individual has successfully completed treatment.

For someone to be convicted of a crime, s/he has to commit the act AND do so with the appropriate mental state (intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or negligently.) "Not guilty by reason of insanity" means you're not criminally liable because you were not in a criminal state of mind. We may lock you up until you're better, but we don't punish you for what you didn't know you were doing, because punishment under those circumstances serves no purpose except social vengeance. The "guilty but insane" plea would impose criminal blame on people who had no idea what they were doing was wrong!

OH doesn't have the money to process about 14,000 mouth swabs taken from convicted felons, preventing DNA samples from being entered into the FBI's national database. Federal funding for the program expired in mid-2001 and wasn't restored until March. Restored funding enabled the state to process a backlog of 6,003 blood samples, but didn't provide funding for mouth swabs. Ohio began collecting DNA from sex offenders and violent felons in 1997, but didn't link its database with the FBI's until 2002. Rape kit processing costs \$500 or more to analyze.

The OH 6th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in June that inmates cannot be transferred to Ohio's supermax security prison without a hearing to determine if their crimes are serious enough to warrant being held there. But the appeals court panel also widened the scope of offenses for which the state may send prisoners to "supermax," if due process is followed. (Associated Press) (No further info available)

Franklin County Common Pleas Court has dismissed charges against a man sentenced to 11 years in prison for recording fantasies of child molestation in a secret journal. The conviction was the first time an American had been sentenced to prison over the content of his private diary. The First Amendment guarantees that our private thoughts are protected from government probing and prosecution. While child pornography is generally without First Amendment protection, the U.S. Supreme Court, IN 2003, held that imaginary depictions of child erotica cannot be criminalized--their creation "records no crime and creates no victim." That case, Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition, declared the federal Child Pornography Prevention Act unconstitutional, because it criminalized the creation of "virtual pornography" involving youthful images.

OH 1st District Court of Appeals ruled that an OH law allowing law enforcement officers to pose as children to catch Internet predators is constitutional.

Prisoners at Warren C.I. are raising funds to help get a 7 month old puppy named Lilly off death row! Lilly is suffering from bilateral hip dysplasia. She needs a triple pelvic osteotomy to relieve pain, restore function and stabilize the hip joint--this costs several thousand dollars. After being in a Shelter, she was sent to Warren which has a Rover Rehab Prison program--to be trained by inmates as a service dog for assistance to children with disabilities. The inmates noticed Lilly's pain and reported it. She can have the surgery or euthanasia. To help the inmates, and Lilly, send donations to: 4 Paws for Ability Inc., LILLY'S FUND, 253 DAYTON AVE., XENIA OH, 45385, or call (937) 374-0385.

OHIO NEWS

WOMEN WHO SOCIALIZE! An inmate in the Hamilton County Justice Center sued Sheriff Simon Leis, for sex discrimination, claiming women are discriminated against in that they are prohibited from participating in 3-for-1 work details to reduce their sentences. They may only work at 2-for-1 day reductions, because "women socialize too much".

PROSECUTOR'S REMARKS!

U.S. Magistrate Michael Merz said former Hamilton county Prosecutor Joseph Deters' made "improper and flagrant" remarks in a murder case. Deters made repeated comments to the jury "denigrating the integrity of the defense counsel and a psychologist", said Judge Merz. It was improper for Deters: to call the psychologist "slick"; to tell jurors they were best able to assess the defendant's mental condition because they had seen a surveillance tape. The psychologist testified the defendant was suffering from mental illness after sustaining a head injury in a car wreck earlier. (Enquirer, Janice Morse)

NEW OH DWI PENALTY: A mandatory 3 year extension to a sentence if motorist is convicted of aggravated vehicular homicide after 3 prior convictions for DWI.

"I would like Bob Huggins and everyone to know that driving under the influence of alcohol is like randomly shooting bullets in public." (Letter to Enquirer editor from Connell Peter, 6/16/04)

HOW WE TREAT "CHILDREN" IN OHIO, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

"Sheriff Leis says we need another jail. What we really need is treatment for the mentally ill and chemically dependent who fill our jails (the revolving door and wasted money syndrome). Treatment is less expensive, more cost effective. There is not enough available." (Mike Shryock, Madeira, letter to Cincinnati Enquirer)

The nation's juvenile detention centers have become warehouses for mentally ill youths, including many who have not committed any crimes, says a report from Congress. Youths are sent to detention centers because they are unable to get mental health services in their communities. The study shows that during the first half of last year mentally ill youths with no charges against them were held 33 states. From 01/01/03 to 06/30/03, 15,000 detained youths were waiting for such services. Every day, about 2,000 youths remain locked up because mental health services are not available.

Gov. Taft has signed a bill requiring the state to give more information to school districts about paroled or released juvenile offenders. Previously DOC could only say that a youth had served detention without releasing info about the severity of the offense. Schools must keep the records confidential but can use them to determine whether the student should attend regular school or be placed in an alternative setting. About 1,000 children released from de-

attention enroll in school yearly.

In OH, those 16 or older, charged with aggravated murder, must be tried in Common Pleas Court, but it's left to a judge's discretion whether to keep a suspect age 14 or 15 in Juvenile Court. Juveniles under age 18 were either victims or suspects in 25% of Cincinnati's homicides in the last 6 years. A 15 year old girl is the youngest inmate, serving time for aggravated arson. Nine are from Hamilton County, the most from any of OH's 88 counties. (Enquirer, Sharon Coolidge)

The Supreme Court refuses to require special treatment for youths under police questioning, ruling against a 17-year-old interrogated for 2 hours without being told his rights. They said the police have no obligation to treat younger suspects differently from adults under the 1966 Miranda rule that led to the warning that begins "You have the right to remain silent." Police have to give warnings to people in custody. **WARNINGS ARE NOT REQUIRED IF A SUSPECT ISN'T UNDER ARREST AND TALKS TO POLICE.** In this case the boy's parents were forced to wait outside the interrogation room as their son gave incriminating statements that were used to convict him. Police said he **COULD** have left the station. Four Justices said that because of his youth, he would not have understood that he could have walked out. The case set the stage for the court's consideration of the constitutionality of executing juvenile killers.

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HEALTH INFO

SUICIDE ALERT URGED FOR ANTIDEPRESSANTS!

The FDA asked makers of 10 drugs to add or strengthen suicide-related warnings on labels. Manufacturers didn't say if they'd comply. Though the FDA is not yet clear if the drugs actually spur suicide or if underlying mental illness is to blame, the agency bowed to pressure from anguished families who blame the pills for loved ones' suicides. Agency advisers argued for stronger warnings of agitation, anxiety and HOSTILITY in patients, especially in the first days of therapy. Listed are newer generation antidepressants: PROZAC, PAXIL, ZOLOFT, EFFEXOR, CELEXA, LEXAPRO, LUVOX--called SSI's for Serotonin Syndrome, and, SSRI's or SSRI-like drugs such as REMERON, SERZONE AND WELLBUTRIN, which work differently.

Previous warnings have been issued about using such "medication" on children. Recent ones include warnings for adults. (AT THIS POINT, THEY ARE STILL NOT LOOKING INTO THESE "MEDICATIONS" CAUSING VIOLENCE THAT IS UNCONTROLLABLE OR UNEXPLAINABLE--LEADING TO PRISON TIME FOR DEEDS DONE WHILE USING PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS.)

Serzone, an antidepressant was pulled off the market in the U.S. and other countries because it has been linked to dozens of cases of liver failure, injury, and deaths. (Asso. Press, Luran Neergaard)

Hepatitis-B: a disease spread by infected blood and other body fluids, such as semen. Those having unprotected sex, and drug users are at risk. Hep-B can cause cirrhosis and liver cancer. Sometimes the virus disappears after several months, but over 1 million Americans are chronically infected. Chronic infections are treated by injections of interferon and by two new antiviral drugs (not completely effective). See www.hepb.org or www.cdc.gov for more information.

Psoriasis: is inherited genetically. Triggers for it are emotional stress, injury, infections and some medications. It is treatable but not curable. Triggered by the immune system, it shows on the skin, usually with red, thickened areas with silvery scales, most often on the scalp, elbows, knees and lower back. IT IS NOT CONTAGIOUS! Jerry Mathers (remember him from TV in "Leave It to Beaver") is spokesman for the National Psoriasis Foundation. He is encouraged by new biologic treatments that mean less painful itching and scratching in the future.

A moving declaration quoted from *My Sisters' Voices*, stories by teenage girls of color, by Iris Jacob:

"Girls of color have forever been caretakers. This is what we are taught, from baby-sitting our siblings to cooking for our families. Part of being a caretaker means defending men of color--our fathers, uncles, brothers, and someday our sons. We have been trained to stand by them, to protect them from harm, and most of all fight whatever battles they may need help fighting.

Because people of color have had to stick by one another just to survive, very little has been done to help women of color claim their own rights. We were busy fighting for civil rights when the feminist movement passed us by, and we've been born between being black, Latina, Native American, and Asian on one hand, and being women on the other.

We as females of color have been told that sexism does not exist for us or is not important. Yet it runs rampant throughout our communities. I cannot even begin to count all the disrespectful and derogatory things I have heard come out of the mouths of men of color. I feel guilty for thinking this is wrong. I feel guilty for outwardly accusing men of color of such treatment. I know there are many wonderful, respectful men of color, so I have no reason to be angry. Yet still I am.

I believe women of color have every right to hold our men accountable for their behavior toward us. We are beautiful, strong women and deserve to be treated as such. In fact, our men should be outraged; they should be furious about our treatment and do whatever they can to change it immediately. They should not tolerate having their mothers, sisters, and daughters subjected to such oppression.

However, we need to be enraged, too. We need to stop making excuses for our men. We need to work together, to become a force together, fighting for equality for men and women of all colors. Perhaps someday men and women of color can strive for equality, together. "

POST-CONVICTION DNA TESTING--DO IT NOW!

House Bill 1391 amends RCW 10.73.170 and the procedure for post conviction DNA testing. A prisoner who believes DNA testing may exonerate them for the crime they have been convicted of committing, and who have been denied post-conviction DNA testing may now petition the State Office of Public Defense for such testing. The Office of Public Defense will then forward the request to the county prosecutor's office. THIS PROVISION IS EFFECTIVE ONLY UNTIL JANUARY 1, 2005, after which all DNA issues must be raised at trial or on appeal.

This new law also contains an avenue of appeal when a county prosecutor denies a request from the Office of Public Defense for DNA tests. The appeal will go to the attorney general's office, who is then supposed to provide DNA testing if it determines that "it is likely that DNA testing would demonstrate innocence on a more probable than not basis. (Info from Prison Legal News, March 2004.)

Subscriptions to PLN cost \$9.00 for prisoners for a 6 month subscription-6 issues. Mail payment and order to: Prison Legal News, 2400 NW 80th St. #148, Seattle, WA 98117 (Our thanks to Mark Harris of MD for sending a copy to us).

*DISCRIMINATION IN VARIOUS FORMS***"COMMON LAW MARRIAGE--IN TEXAS"**

"For an informal marriage "common law" the couple must sign a declaration and file it with the county clerk, with proof of identity and age of each party, (Use a certified copy of birth certificate or a document issued by a state, the U.S, or a foreign government.

The declaration MUST be completed in the presence of the county clerk or deputy county clerk. No one but the parties to the informal marriage may make the declaration, and only the county clerk or deputy may certify it. A blank form cannot be provided for completion outside the presence of the clerk, therefore: it is impossible for you (a prisoner) to declare a common law marriage while you are in prison." (Question: If there is a declaration of common law marriage in effect before a person is sent to prison, will the DOC and Prison visiting rules accept it as a valid marriage and allow visitation?) Our thanks to A.F. Martinez who sent info from a Dawson County Clerk, Lamesa TX, in reply to our question.

A young man was told he couldn't be a leader at Crossroads Church because he is Gay. (NOT a criminal, sex offender, child molester, but a good man). Several ministers wrote support letters, suggesting more welcoming churches. Pastor Adams of St. Peter's UCC wrote: "Many of us are taking time to do theological and biblical studies, to be true to our heritage, and the gay community. Rev. Hitch of All Saint's church says, "If one investigates the social, political and economic contexts of the Bible, one finds that the issues are not as much about homosexuality as they are about the day, time and situation in which they were written. To say the Bible condemns homosexuality and that therefore we must condemn it as well is too simplistic and ultimately false." (Cincinnati's "City Beat" Newspaper)

Even with concerns growing about military troop strength, 770 people were discharged for homosexuality last year under the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Since the policy was adopted in 1994, nearly 10,000 military personnel have been discharged—including linguists, nuclear warfare experts and other key specialists. (Enquirer)

Homicides by members of youth gangs are up by 50% and violence is spreading to the suburbs and rural areas according to a study by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a group made up of 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors and crime victims. The findings coincide with Bush administration proposals to cut federal programs aimed at stemming violence among young people.

What does the Lord require of thee, O man, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God. *Micah* 6:8
(suggested by Ellis Chen, CA)

PEOPLE IN PRISON

PEOPLE IN PRISON--WHO ARE THEY? VETERANS, YOUTHS, WOMEN, AND FAMILIES

An OH prisoner's resume after 7 years in 3 Ohio prisons.

Maintenance/Groundskeeper Apprentice--2000 hours
 Porter for Education Dept, Landscape Mgmt Technician
 Sgt. at Arms--Vietnam Vets Chap. for Incarcerated Vets
 Snow Removal Crew Member, Dorm Porter
 Tutor/Mentor/Outreach Program NAACP Chapter
 Prison Reform Liaison Committee;
 Kairos Worship Committee
 Kent State University Student--Small Business Course
 Black History Month--prepared Quizzes
 American Red Cross Board Member
 Dorm Porter--Power Washer certified
 Mandatory Substance Abuse Program, member, then Mentor

What do you see from the above? This man served in Vietnam. He is a Veteran of the U.S. Military. He is locked up, perhaps due to use of illegal drugs. DOC and volunteers have tried to keep him busy, he's worked, volunteered is rehabilitated, reaching out to other prisoners, including fellow veterans. He's still in prison. Has Viet Nam traumatic stress been dealt with? Did war cause use of drugs? Has he gained an education? Learned a trade? In 3 MORE years will he be ready to return to society? Was prison a necessity? Helpful? JUST ASKING!

DID YOU KNOW? One-third of homeless people are veterans, including some returning from Afghanistan and Iraq! Some veterans are not prepared to deal with situations they've encountered in combat. "The biggest challenge is encouraging veterans to get help" says Iola Green, coordinator of housing programs at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Ft. Thomas, KY. Is our government able to help Iraq recover from THE WAR? Is our government ready to help thousands of American men and women harmed physically, mentally, emotionally and financially by THE WAR? What about the families of our military personnel. The children growing up without a father or mother or decent support when that parent is gone? War has many consequences--it is not a simple matter of "Winning" or "Losing". Will we help those whose mental problems are caused by war our government sent them to fight? Will they go to prison, like many Viet Nam veterans?

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS!

In 1998 lawyer Karen Bond was convicted of securities fraud and sent to a federal prison camp similar to the facility that Martha Stewart is likely to be in. Released after 3 years, Bond, a married mother of 3, founded the Federal Prison Policy Project, an advocacy group for reform, near Columbus, OH. In People Magazine (3/22/04), she describes her experience. "Just turning myself in was devastating. We were all crying, and the guard was yelling at us. I'll never forget the look on my son's face. They take everything but your wedding ring and your glasses. They did a strip search. You're treated like a commodity--you're not a person, you're a number. Private rooms don't exist, or private bathrooms. Mattresses have urine stains and there are no covers for them. Most of the people in the prison were drug dealers. Many of the older women looked at me and seemed to feel sorry for me. Some gave me clothes that no longer fit them. I'll never forget their kindness. There are some wonderful people there, but there are also some despicable characters.

You're up at 6 AM and you work, with a lunch break, until 3:30 PM. In the evenings you can read or write letters or make a phone call until head count at 9:30. The guards treat you like trash. There were definitely times when I was afraid. I got beaten up by a bunch of prisoners who were dealing drugs. Word had gone out that "white-collar" inmates had snitched on the dealers, and I was the one they got hold of first. I ended up in the hospital....the guards will make it plain to Martha up front: "You are no one."

Secret Service ink "expert" Larry Stewart pleaded not guilty to charges that he lied on the witness stand while testifying for the government at the Martha Stewart trial, but appeals based on this "lying witness" have not resulted in any new trial for Martha Stewart or Peter Bacanovic. It doesn't seem to matter if a prosecutor uses false evidence against the people he goes after. BUT YOU KNEW THAT!

(Martha Stewart was sentenced to 5 months in prison and 5 months house-arrest for lying about selling stocks.)

PEOPLE IN PRISON

YOUTHFUL OFFENDER! Jabron Green's father was a well known drug dealer. By the time he was 10 both parents were chemically dependant, with criminal records for drugs. At age 12, naivete and the need for adult approval lead Jabron to other drug dealers who put him to work packaging drugs and delivering them. No Child Care workers intervened when Jabron was neglected and abused. Nor did the Justice System intercede by arresting and charging the adults responsible for criminal influence on this child. The only way he knew was to work for the adults around him. Anything they told Jabron to do, he would do--he was an obedient child. Under the New York Rockefeller Mandatory Minimum laws, none of the above factors could be considered when he was arrested as a minor. His sentence is 15 years to life, plus 9-13 years! He has been incarcerated since 1993 in NY. He has an excellent institutional record and has participated in programs offered him. All appeals have been denied. He seeks early parole consideration from the Governor and the Bureau of Executive Clemency.

His parents have died during his imprisonment. His Grandmother and Uncle are trying to help him. Send letters supporting his release due to his youth, his first time offense, and excessive mandatory minimum laws to: Mrs. Priscilla Green and Mr. Homer Mathis 425 East 105th Street, Apt. # 11-A, New York, NY 10029.

(Replies to a Dear Abby column, by Jeanne Phillips, regarding a lady whose husband was in prison:)

That a relative is in prison isn't something that some families want to publicize. While many are open about the fact that someone is incarcerated--and it probably is healthier to be up-front about it--some are not.

ONE REPLY: Dear Abby:...children must be able to talk about their father and be proud of him without worrying about what people think. What is important is their relationship with their father. Keeping secrets and behaving as though their dad is someone to be ashamed of will only hurt them in the long run. That woman needs to forget everyone else and do what is most healing for her children. A family therapist may be able to help the family through their discomfort and allow the boys to feel good about him--regardless of the reason he is in jail. (signed, Dealt with it in Delaware)

ANOTHER REPLY: My son is also in prison, and I often feel uncomfortable revealing his whereabouts. When I confide in a close friend or colleague where he actually is, people are usually understanding (and curious). I've never experienced any criticism or negativity. After 10 years, it still hurts to talk about it, but knowing he's made progress in his rehabilitation helps to ease the pain. (signed Joan in Los Angeles)

FINALLY: My husband is serving 15 years to life. Although shame and guilt are normal reactions, they can be harmful to the family of an inmate. The isolation that comes from living a lie only causes more harm. A better approach is to be honest, reach out to people and admit how painful it is. Once we did, we found many other families in our area also have a loved one behind bars. The ridicule and scorn we expected never happened. Instead we were supported and encouraged. (signed Diane in Florida).

Jeanne Philips suggests contacting the Osborne Association, which offers a list of resources online at www.orborne.org. Also available from the National Institute of Corrections is a printable version of its "Directory of Programs Serving Families of Adult Offenders," at www.nicic.org/pubs/2002_017081.pdf.

President Bush signed the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (H.R. 1707), the first federal law to address prison rapes. The law calls for research on the incidence of prisoner rape, the establishment of standards to address it, and a review panel to assess the best & worst states in the nation. It does NOT directly aid victims of prison rape or include an exemption for rape victims from the Prison Litigation Reform Act, which severely impedes prisoners' access to the courts and judicial redress. Both the ACLU and Human Rights Watch pushed for this exemption. "Just passing the bill itself is not going to save anybody from being raped," says Pat Nolan of Prison Fellowship Ministries.

Can you say this 3 times quickly?

PICKLE PACKER PICKS PRODUCT PARTICULARLY!

(A Tongue Twister headline from a Cincinnati Enquirer article by Jenny Callison, writing about Kaiser Foods which pickles everything from cucumbers to cabbage)

BASIC LAW INFORMATION

What is a grand jury's job? A grand jury must determine whether there is enough evidence that a crime was committed. The 9 member jury meets in secret. It hears the evidence the prosecutor presents. It is not asked to determine guilt or innocence and no Defense testimony is offered. It is about "the crime", not the perpetrator.

Must a prosecutor take a case to a grand jury? No. According to the Ohio Code of Professional Responsibility, a prosecutor cannot institute criminal charges when he or she knows the charges are not supported by probable cause.

When can police be charged with crimes? Police officers are legally authorized to use force to subdue criminal suspects if they pose a threat to the officers or to others. To prove a crime, prosecutors must show the officers had criminal intent or acted negligently in the line of duty. (Cincinnati Enquirer, Dan Horn)

The 9th U.S. Circuit of Appeals court declared the Bush administration has no right to interfere with OR's assisted-suicide law, the only one in the country to allow doctors to help patients end their lives. The ruling said Atty. Gen. Ashcroft cannot sanction or hold doctors criminally liable for prescribing over-doses under OR's voter-approved Death With Dignity Act. Circuit Judge Richard Tallman said, "The attorney general's unilateral attempt to regulate general medical practices historically entrusted to state lawmakers interferes with the democratic debate about physician-assisted suicide, and his threat to take action far exceeds the scope of his authority under federal law."

SOME "GOOD" GUYS FALL!

A corrections officer with the Hamilton County sheriff's Office was arrested in May and charged with engaging in sexual contact (sexual battery) with a prisoner under his custody at University Hospital.

CT Governor John Rowland resigned amid months-long allegations of graft, a federal investigation and a drive to impeach him for accepting gifts from friends and businessmen.

MD's police superintendent was sentenced to 6 months for misusing thousands of dollars in police funds when he was Baltimore's police commissioner.

WE ASK WHY! OH WHY?

1. In OH, after an argument with his wife a 28-year-old man got out of the car to take a walk and wandered into a gravel pit. It took 50 rescuers to pull him out of the quicksand. Then Hamilton County Municipal Court Judge Julia Statuberg convicted him of criminal trespassing and inducing panic!

2. In IA, District Judge Charles Smith sentenced a woman to 50 years in prison but said "The mandatory minimum sentencing structure imposed on this court is in my opinion wrong. It may be legal, but it is wrong." The woman shot her abusive husband to death after suffering 18 years of abuse at his hands. "No human should have to put up with that," the Judge said. (Enquirer News Service)

3. In Washington a former biologist in the FBI laboratory pleaded guilty to submitting falsified DNA analysis reports in over 100 cases. She pleaded guilty to a single count of making false statements on official government reports she prepared. She faces ONLY a year in prison and a fine.

ONE SOLUTION!

My roommate gave her son a toy drum for the holidays. The small boy beat the drum day and night. Finally I couldn't take it any more. I gave him a new pocket-knife and asked him if he knew what was inside the drum.

SALMO 23

El Señor es mi pastor, nada me falta. me hace descansar en verdes pastos, me guía a arroyos de tranquilas aguas, me da nuevas fuerzas y me lleva or caminos rectos, haciendo honor a su nombre.

Aunque pase por el mas oscuro de los valles, no temere peligro alguno porque tu, Señor, estas conmigo, tu vara y tu baston me inspiran confianza.

Me has preparado un banquete ante los ojos de mis enemigos, has vertido perfume en mi cabeza, y has llenado mi copa a rebosar. Tu bondad y tu amor me acompanan a lo largo de mis dias, y en tu casa, oh Señor, por siempre vivire.

ADVOCACY CONTACTS

SLDN (SERVICEMEMBERS LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK), PO BOX 96128, WASHINGTON DC 20090-6128, (202) 328-3244. A non-profit organization dedicated to ending witch hunts, death threats, imprisonment, and discriminatory actions against military persons under the policy of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." With American service members fighting the war on terrorism, they shouldn't face harassment from our own military, or anti-gay violence, or discharge under current military policy.

FAMM - FAMILIES AGAINST MANDATORY MINIMUMS
1612 K STREET NW, SUITE 7001 WASHINGTON DC 20006
EMAIL: famm@famm.org Website: www.famm.org

WE GOOFED! The complete address for ART BEHIND BARS is: PO Box 2034, Key West, Florida 33045-2034 They accept donated art for an art-based community service program in Key West. Write for current information. (Our Spring '03 edition left the 0 off the zip code).

We have requests for educational opportunities for prisoners. The following addresses are furnished by an OH inmate who has taken their courses.

- American Bible Academy, PO Box 1490, Joplin MO 64802
- Hope Aglow Ministries, Inc., PO Box 5057, Lynchberg VA 24503
- Lamp and Light Publishers/Source of Light School, 26 Road 5577, Farmington NM 87401
- Exodus Bible Correspondence School, PO Box 6363, Lubbock TX 79483-6363
- Family Radio School of the Bible, 290 Hegenberger Rd, Oakland CA 94621
- Good News Mission Bible Correspondence Course, PO Box 418, Conover OH 45317
- Grace Ministries Bible College, PO Box 2991962, Dayton OH 45429
- Crossroads Bible Institution, 2976 Ivanrest SW, Suite 125, Grandville MI 49418
- Emmaus Correspondence School/Life Keys Bible Course, 2570 Asbury Road, Dubuque IA 52001

CENTER FOR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS (212) 614-6464
666 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY 10012 email, ccr@igc.org

A non-profit legal/educational organization committed to the creative use of the law as a positive force for social change.

National Institute of Justice, Sarah Hart, Director 810 Seventh St., NW, Washington DC 20531

NIJ is the research, development, and evaluation agency of the U.S. Department of Justice and is dedicated to researching crime control and justice issues and public safety.

ANYONE WHO HAS SENT MONEY TO "PRISONER'S ATTORNEY CONNECTION IN GREENVILLE, SC" FOR A "PAROLE PETITION" AND NEVER HEARD BACK FROM THEM, PLEASE CONTACT DAVID THOMAS #145934, DOOLEY STATE PRISON, E-2, PO BOX 750, UNADILLA GA 31091. (He is allowed mail from other prisons-he sent money and never heard back from them or got a refund.)

Pen Pals! An ex-offender who understands the need for UPDATED, free-world pen pals offers the following: 50 names & addresses of organizations, businesses, couples & individuals who offer correspondence and other services. Send 7 unused first class postage stamps, & clearly printed name, #, and address to: Pen Friends & Services, PO Box 4076, Amarillo TX 79116. Garrett Cunningham promises updated and current information.

Prison Talk Online claims it will make available a bi-monthly, publication focusing on concerns of prisoners. Current subscriptions to Con-tact News are available for \$10.00 for 6 issues. If you know anything about this organization, its sponsors, etc. we would like to hear from you--good or bad reports. Who sponsors it?

DEATH PENALTY

At a Missouri Supreme Court hearing a prosecutor was trying to block a death row prisoner from having his conviction overturned on the basis of new evidence. "Are you suggesting," asked Judge Laura Stith, "that even if we find he is actually innocent, he should be executed?" Frank Jung, an assistant state attorney general, replied, "That's correct." "To make sure we are clear on this," added Judge Michael Wolff, "if we find in a particular case that DNA evidence absolutely excludes somebody as the murderer, then we must execute them anyway if we can't find an underlying constitutional violation at his trial?" Again, Jung said yes. (Reported in the New York Times)

Legal experts say this exchange is unusual only for its frankness. Many prosecutors say new evidence of innocence after the original trial should generally not be considered by courts. "We want convictions to stay in the 'win' column," said Jaimie Orenstein, a former Justice Dept. official, "because society has a legitimate need for finality in answering the question of whether someone is guilty of a crime."

Many states allow prisoners, within certain restrictions and time limits, access to DNA tests to prove their innocence. St. Louis prosecutor Jennifer Joyce is pushing a bill, the first in the nation, to deter "frivolous" requests for DNA tests. It would charge a prisoner \$1500 to \$2500 for the cost of a test that fails to exonerate, add 6 months to the sentence, and require the failure to be considered at parole or pardon hearings.

WE HOLD THIS PRINCIPLE TO BE SELF EVIDENT: The facts of the innocent already executed in America are the strongest tool for PERMANENT ABOLITION of the death penalty. A web-site called: www.OVER1,000EXECUTEDINNOCENTINAMERICA features a section on the innocent currently on death rows. It asks us to help save the 47 women and nearly 5,000 men waiting to be murdered by our governments. (written by Marvin Gabrion, Federal Death Row, Terre Haute, IN.)

Under pressure from the world court, an Oklahoma board recommended the governor spare the life of a death row inmate from Mexico who claimed he was denied his right to contact his consulate after his arrest. Osbaldo Torres is one of 51 Mexicans on death row in the U.S.A. who were cited in a ruling by the International Court of Justice in the Hague, Netherlands. The court said rights were violated because they were not told they could get help from their governments as guaranteed by the 1963 Vienna Convention.

TX executed a mentally ill killer after Gov. Perry rejected a parole board's recommendation to commute his sentence or delay execution. Kelsey Patterson, 50, was diagnosed paranoid schizophrenic. In a 5-1 vote the TX Board of Pardons and Paroles endorsed a petition from his lawyers that he be spared. This was the first time at this late stage the panel recommended commutation of a death sentence, and renews the legal quandary of whether it is "proper" to execute someone who is mentally ill when the Supreme Court says it is unconstitutional to execute someone who is mentally retarded.

November 19, 2003, Illinois lawmakers unanimously revamped the state's capital punishment system. Most recommendations from a panel created by former Gov. Ryan to study the problems that led to wrongful convictions are included in the new law. Among them: 1. Judges will be able to rule out the death penalty in cases that rest largely on a single eyewitness. 2. The state Supreme Court will be able to overturn a death sentence if it finds it "fundamentally unjust" even if it finds no procedural flaws. 3. Execution of the mentally retarded is banned. (USA Today, 11/20/03)

Stephen Vrabel is to be murdered by the state of OH on July 14th. He was unable to stand trial for 6 years due to his mental instability. Now "cured" by psychotropic drugs, he has been found guilty, sentenced to death.

Justice Thurgood-Marshall (Ford v. Wainwright, 1986) stated, "It is no less abhorrent today than it has been for centuries to exact in penance the life of one whose mental illness prevents him from comprehending the reasons for the penalty or its implications."

Acquitting the guilty and condemning the innocent--the Lord detests them both. Proverbs 17:15
(Suggested by E Chen, CA)

ORIGINALS

THERE IS NO JUSTICE IN GOING TO TRIAL...

By Sharanda Jones, TX

If only I had known -

1. The real meaning behind mandatory minimums
2. The Prosecution can be unfair, misleading, and have overall control
3. Federal agents are not truthful while relaying factual statements of case summaries
4. Convicted felons seeking exemptions from prosecution are used as credible witnesses.
5. If one cooperates with prosecutors you stand a chance of not spending your entire life or many years in prison.

I was an American who believed Federal Judges and Officers of the Court were consistent and fair. I went to Federal trial with a 7 count indictment-was found guilty of only 1 count. I was a first time, nonviolent offender. I received a life sentence. Somewhere the scales of Justice aren't balancing!

Many others face the same circumstances--cases with no substantial evidence, false testimonies from witnesses and no previous crimes. Is this America? Where is the justice?

Defense Attorneys don't know what to do anymore. Their schooling and code of ethics never prepared them for a system as it is now. If an attorney is ethical & not prepared to deal with false information, you can't win.

Americans think going to trial is the only chance to be vindicated by truth, to determine right & wrong, guilt or innocence. Innocent until proven guilty is a myth! You are guilty upon arrest. If you aren't wealthy or have no assistance to offer criminal investigators - you are going to prison for a very long time, despite your innocence. Mandatory Minimum Sentencing Guidelines are brutal, excessive and unjust.

Conspiracy is a criminal offense that is impossible to challenge. Conspiracy is a blanket charge geared toward wide range implication to sustain the Federal Court System and its barter and trade construction.

Prison is serious; it is horrible. You are treated like an animal and have no rights. You find it impossible to imagine how you got here based on corrupt accusations.

Investigating law enforcement agents are skilled deceivers and masters of disproportional facts. The investigation agents in my case lied in every sense of the word! They lied enough to get me convicted of one count of Conspiracy and sentenced to life. They lied before, during, and after trial. Where is my justice??

STOP SAYING YOU CAN'T

By Trey Birriel, NY

- Stop taking and taking and learn how to give
- Stop looking so mad and smile
- Stop running away and learn how to live
- Stop screaming and talk a while.
- Stop being so cold and learn to be warm
- Stop lying, stop being untrue
- Stop being like others, find your own form
- Stop hating if that's not you.
- Stop saying you don't care and show concern
- Stop wishing on others no good.
- Stop saying you don't know what you can learn
- Stop saying you Can't when you Could.
- Stop saying you tried and you can't go on.
- Stop giving up easy on you
- Stop thinking your hopes and your will is gone
- Stop saying you can't pull through.
- Stop showing off hate, show the love you got
- Cause you're causing a life time scar.
- Stop being the person you know that you're not
- And start being the person you are.

THE EDGE!

By Sheena King, PA

I'm on the edge with no end in sight,
 Shoulders bent from burdens, nothing's light.
 Ceaseless prayers, but I'm still uptight,
 Don't back me up - like a rat - I'll bite!
 No food in my stomach, can't sleep at night,
 My emotions go low, then soar like a kite.
 To be in control, I try with my might,
 People push, they want me to fight.
 I need spiritual help to end this plight,
 Only God in Heaven can make me right!



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FAVORITE QUOTES

"To tell the truth is dangerous; to listen to it is annoying." (Anonymous, sent by James Bauhaus, OK)

"It is no defense if our current system is more the product of neglect than of purpose. Out of sight, out of mind is an unacceptable excuse for a prison system that incarcerates over 2 million human beings in the United States." (Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy)

"Asking prosecutors what we should do about wrongful convictions is like asking Hannibal Lecter what we should do about cannibalism," said Rob Warden of the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University in Illinois. (As written in the Angolite Magazine)

"The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened." (quote by President John F. Kennedy, sent by Richard Burt, NV)