

Supporting Political Prisoners

Nick Medvecky

2013

a review of

Government Repression, Prisoner Support. Sacramento Prisoner Support, 2012, 157pp., P & L Printing, Denver CO \$10, order through pandlprinting.com

Unknown to many U.S. citizens, federal and state governments currently imprison more people, 2.4 million+, in their gulag than any nation in history.

The vast majority of these prisoners are socio-economic-political victims. I'd estimate that only between 3 and 15 percent are predatory criminals.

The incarceration explosion and variety of prisons built since Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 has been matched by draconian sentences to fill them accompanied by increasingly horrid conditions. One of the growing prison populations are those being targeted and criminalized for various ecology protest actions, increasingly being designated by the government as "terrorism."

Government Repression Prisoner Support compiled by the Sacramento Prisoner Support (SPS) is a handy 157-page paperback that indexes a good summation of the ever-changing confusing rules and regulations that prisoners and their supporters face.

SPS has been involved in support activities since 2004 with much of its current involvement centered on the 20 year+ prison sentence of Eric McDavid. In the introduction, the authors state, "When we began supporting prisoners in the Sacramento area in 2004, it was difficult to know what to do." This book solves the problem for others taking on this crucial work.

There is also a variety of legal/security advice (and appropriate warnings) that should be required reading for anyone in these times of political and state-terror who seeks contact with prisoners.

Among the realities are the nuts and bolts of prison phone calls, visits, mail, commissary, how prisoners can receive materials, money donations, etc. Sections cover the periods from arrest and jail confinement, legal-lawyer advice, trial, and imprisonment.

The book also helps with suggestions for creating support groups, fund-raising, and media attention.

Of critical note: being an anarchist advocacy group, SPS specifies that, "Prisoner support is ONLY for prisoners who refuse to cooperate with law enforcement." The sad fact is, virtually all prosecution of political crimes these days involves entrapment and provocateur/snitch actions.

I'd like to suggest that the authors include an Internet link in future printings to their publication that updates information as it becomes available, perhaps even with an FAQ section.

Also links to the book's resources, such as, the federal Bureau of Prisons inmate locator, how to send funds to prisoner accounts, and Corrlinks, prisoner email access would be helpful. In other words, let the links themselves do a lot of your work, writing and updating so that the readership can get current details and stay up to date on the ever-changing rules and circumstances.

Today, prisons serve a direct corporatist function. They are vast warehouses of surplus labor. Every prisoner works and, in fact, some 600,000 are replacing free-world labor at a fraction of the pay and zero benefits. Private enterprise prison jobs are among the fastest growing in the nation.

Those who deserve our support, who resist for freedom, democracy and a rational relationship with our planet, are a severe threat to corporatist control and their profiteering.

Nick Medvecky has been active in political movement from the Civil Rights era to the current struggle against corporatist-fascism for over 50 years.

In addition to a career in journalism, including covering the Middle East, and 17 years as a criminal defense investigator, he has served more than 25 years in jails, work camps, and prisons in numerous states and countries for his political-moral-consensual "crimes."

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