

Critical Resistance
1904 Franklin St., Ste: 504
Oakland, California. 94612

2/5/17

Dear [REDACTED]

I hope this finds you and yours well. I'm writing to thank you for the privilege of submitting some additional literary materials to your publication / online. I suspect you were satisfied with the latest article I mailed to you for submission consideration, "Against All Odds".

Additionally, I find myself curious about your thoughts in re: collaboration and/or exchange of trade with @InmateOrgans. Please advise at your earliest convenience. I trust you'll like my material re: President Trump. As in every opportunity granted me to get my thoughts on paper, I do my best to get down to business. Okay then, let's fill up the lanterns and burn some midnight oil.

I struggled for clarity in your directions as if this were a simple Q&A, so asto inure to each of our benefits, I will answer each question embodied within the article format. As follows.

Q: How do you think you, your community, and imprisoned people will be impacted by the upcoming Trump regime?

A: As discussions on overhauling the nation's criminal justice system have gained much-needed attention in recent years, The American Civil Liberties Union has decidedly called for an enormous (50%+) reduction of the national prison population by 2020, by and through a comprehensive overhaul of sentencing laws.

President Trump campaigned on a message which described Washington as "broken". Our bloated, ineffective, and unjustly harsh criminal justice system is cut from that same lousy cloth. Oddly enough, a 2007 National Bureau of Economic Research study found that prison terms exceeding 20 months in duration had little or no effect on reducing commission of certain crimes upon release. Beyond those trees lay a forest of imprisonment whose sole task it is to bear witness to a "criminogenic" effect often leading people criminally astray.

Far and wide, prison used as a one-size-fits-all punishment for crime, routinely destroys family fibers and local communities. So too, sanctions for serious crimes only serve to yield lengthy incarceration, however sentences in earnest are best served once properly calibrated to err on the side of public safety while deterring recidivism.

My firsthand knowledge as it relates to working alongside law makers and Senators alike with InmateOrgans.org enables me to recommend that state legislatures and Congress pave the way for two separate changes to sentencing laws; 1.) eliminate incarceration for low-level crimes in their entirety, barring extraordinary circumstances; 2.) and work to formally reduce curent sentence guidelines to lengths proportionally worthy to the crimes committed. As such, spring boarding a conversation in relation to implementing specific reforms that are audacious enough to remain on the minds of Republicans when they dare consider walking away from the controversial cause, especially now that we're about to crash-land in Trumpocalypse chaos. Perhaps we should be thankful that should Trump elect to reform criminal justice systems, he'll do so in the interest of fostering economic growth. Surely, there must be some benefit to the functionality of a formidable crime justice reform.

Q: Given this political moment, what are methods of resistance to repression that could be made inside and out of prisons?

A: The first priority of any government is to keep their citizenry safe. Violent, dangerous criminals belong in prison, and many agree that the costs associated with their respective incarceration is money well spent. Fortunately, President Trump is already equipped with the necessary tools to lower recidivism, increase public safety, and shave certain costs to the taxpayers. By acquainting himself with the in-place policies and laws previously implemented by Congress, we can finally attain some financial freedom while working to reverse our apathetic overuse of incarceration. "How", you ask? By championing legislation which altogether alters the flow of federal subsidizations. Seems the old paradigms are no longer working.

With 2.3 million people in prison, mass incarceration might very well be the greatest moral and racial injustice of our time. We need to pull out all the stops and accept nothing less than a verifiable systemic solution.

With my humble hat in my hand, I'm proud to say that for the past several years I was able to make an invaluable contribution as the co-founder of InmateOrgans.org alongside a fluid team of Ivy League educated lawyers, criminologists, tech gurus, and statistical researchers whose sole priority was to analyze criminal codes, convictions, and various other lurid aftermaths associated with judicial fallibility --- an ascent from hybrid enterprise infancy, beyond my ability to ignore --- skillsets beyond my wildest imagination.

President Trump's administration, with Sen. Jeff Sessions as attorney general, is likely to be unfriendly on criminal justice. There is however, strong trans-partisan agreement, among politicians, law enforcement, advocates, and academic circles that there are entirely too many men and women in prison. Approximately 39% of the national prison population (600,000 people) is beyond bars with little or no public safety rationale --- most of whom are low-level offenders who'd be better served by creative alternatives to incarceration. Releasing these prisoners promises to save \$20 billion annually, enough cash to gainfully employ 270,000 new police officers, 360,000 probation officers, and/or 325,000 school teachers, all while reducing the disproportionate impact on communities of color and the futures of many. Public safety should be the primary reason we incarcerate. Penalties should pave way for the most effective, proportional, and cost-efficient sanction to achieve that (and related other) goals.

Q: What can be done on local levels to build self-defense, serve the people, or develop alternate structures of care and governance?

A: Where were you when crime exploded in the 1980's and 90's? Officials responded with harsh sentencing laws that had little impact and may have actually made things worse. Suppose we decided to shift the narrative and remodel how America punishes people who break the law -- abolishing parole, punitive policies and mandatory minimums, etc. America has become the world's number jailer.

According to the Brookings Institute's Hamilton Project, the crime fighting benefits of incarceration diminish with the scale of the prison population on hand. The nation's existing sentencing fiasco largely serves as a reckless knee-jerk reaction to crime, not grounded in any scientific rationale. Whether viewed through a lens of justice, fairness, victims' rights, and more, the U.S. prison system unnecessarily warehouses millions of people, one after another like little cash cows --- an unsustainable level of spending to the tune of \$35,000 per inmate per year. A problem riddled with epic proportion, needs a bold solution. From what we hear, "the *Good Ship Lollipop* sailed away into fair winds and following seas.

Michael [REDACTED]
San Quentin State Prison (Death Row)

@inmateorgans