

Dear btb readers,

Hello, it's been quite some time since I last posted. I've spent the better part of the last year and a half fighting in court attempting to have my sentence for drug possession reduced in inlight of the 2010 retroactive changes to the federal sentencing guideline. Unfortunately my efforts have been unsuccessful, the court use a line of legal reasoning that did not apply to my legal situation to deny my motion for sentence reduction. Not in reflection of my efforts to improve myself of the last decade, not because of my prison record, not for any reason other than they have the power to refuse.

Recently in the news a member of the United States House of Representatives from Florida was sentenced to one year "misdemeanor probation" for buying 3.5 grams of cocaine from an undercover DEA agent and possession of another 2 grams of the drug in his Washington D.C. apartment. This sentence has struck me like a physical blow, since for possessing a similar amount of cocaine-6.3 grams I was sentenced to a 20 year mandatory-minimum term in federal prison of which I have served 12 years. For those who may not know, the federal prison system in the United States offers no parole so at this point I have a release date for 2022.

As of todays date 11-22-13 there are 221,000 prisoners in the federal prison system. More than 40 percent of those prisoners are addicts or small amount dealers, non-violent

drug offenders many of whom have served decades in prison at this point. When one considers the annual cost of 30,000 per prisoner for a total 6.6 billion annually the question then becomes who is profiting?

I can honestly tell you that I've had the same uniforms for more than seven years, I pay for my own shoes, phone calls, and a co-pay for medical attention. I say this not in lamentation, but for factual accuracy.

People who've never been exposed to prison are often under the impression that everything in here is provided at the tax payers expense, this could not be further from the truth. Prisoners and our families carry a huge financial burden, some would say "Good," but to those individuals I would ask how much of a debt to society does one owe? There comes a time when society has to realize that the United States criminal justice system as it is today is not and does not work in their best interest.

There are large corporate interests who derive enormous consistent profits from the mass incarceration industry. For a country that prides itself for being a defender of human rights, this is a glaring failure here at home. In support of International Human Rights Day, I wanted to inform the public from the prospective of a prisoner on the inside, about systematic abuse of human rights that is mass incarceration, this is the direct result "War on Drugs" that the United States has declared on its own citizens. The human cost of what I bare witness to everyday is incalculable, the equivalent of thousands of wasted years, billions of wasted dollars, and the destruction of families and communities. All

for the continuing profits of government contractors. I want to say that as long as the world turns a blind eye, the injustice of the War on Drugs and mandatory minimum sentencing will continue.

Thank You, I look forward to your comments:

Opollo.