

# THE FACTUAL

## TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

By: Brutus

Believe it or not, there was a time in Massachusetts when prisoners had the right to vote. Incarcerated persons were still stuck behind walls seperated from their loved ones, and serving countless years repaying their debt to society. Society understood that their time and seperation from their communities was the punishment for their crimes. Considering that 95% of people incarcerated return back to society and will again have a say in the administration and policies of their respective towns, it made no sense to disconnect them from their inalienable right to vote while incarcerated as another punishment stacked atop the rest. The right to vote in our republican government is what seperates America from the rest of the world. Our forefathers fought a war of independence almost solely for that inalienable right; to ensure everyone would have representation of their interest in the seat of government. Henceforth, even convicted felons, repaying their debt to society still had representation, atleast that was the consensus up until the year 2000.

As our founding fathers articulated, the only way a republican government would truly succeed was if the electorate was well informed and performed their civic duty. It was the turn of the 21st century when people caught in the mass incarceration machine in Massachusetts realized their potential and became well informed and civically active. They organized political action groups

(PAC's) centered around issues concerning their interest; a truly republican ideal. This scared the political insiders at the State House because the mass incarceration machine had created a large demographic that if it became politically cohesive, would be significantly influential electorally. Scared of its political power, the politicians disregarded the founding fathers principles and turned voting rights into a "tough on crime" issue; using scare tactics to remove the voting rights of a group of people that they saw as their political enemies.

When creating this government, Madison once wrote that the only way to protect against the interest of the few against the many was to have so many represented interest, that no one could dominate. Therefore, compromise was always needed. The politicians in 2000 took heed to this truth and protected their few interest by eliminating others. They effectively violated the spirit of the Constitution and what America stands for, and did what Madison tried to protect against.

If the idea of excessive punishment or the tearing of our republican fabric doesn't sway your opinion, maybe an issue that is deeply ingrained in this State's identity will: Taxation Without Representation! When the right to vote was stripped from the incarcerated, what wasn't taken away was the benefits that the state and towns receive when the incarcerated are still counted on the census. Prison town residents are benefiting from the prisons, yet the prisoners' interest are not being represented when it comes to funding received from the census numbers. Taxpayers should be enraged by a town beefing up their population size (by a prison or two) and being allotted an unfair

portion of taxpayer funding, effectively stripped from their own towns without their interest being represented.

Does anyone remember the Boston Tea Party? The king of England kept taxing the colonies without providing for equal representation within government. The state of Massachusetts is notorious for its refusal to put up with such injustice. Hence, Bostonians threw a shipment of tea overboard. Taxation without representation was one of the major grievances that led to war and gave birth to this great nation.

In the first step to bring about change for this injustice, the Criminal Justice Policy Coalition (CJPC) is trying to create awareness through its Voting Project 2016. The Coalition is seeking volunteers to partner up with incarcerated people to symbolically give these men and women behind the wall their vote during the upcoming elections. In essence, the volunteer will be a proxy vote for the incarcerated person come election time. This is a very important first step in bringing back the voting rights of the disenfranchised. If you're behind the wall and are interested in participating, write to CJPC 549 Columbus Ave. Boston MA 02118. If you are not incarcerated and wish to volunteer, you can go to <http://bit.ly.2bflm60> Or you can find the link on the Facebook page [thefactual94](https://www.facebook.com/thefactual94). Excercise your civic duty!

# The interview

Our interview section continues with another inspiring conversation. Many men were aware of the protest/march that occurred July 14-18 outside of MCI-Norfolk. There was a lot of misunderstanding as to what the march was about. The Factual had a chance to sit down with a participant in the protest just to give our readers an accurate account of the march. Here's how the conversation went...

T.F. Good Afternoon.

R.C. Good afternoon to you.

T.F. What is your name and job title?

R.C. My name is Rachel Corey and I am the Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Policy Coalition (CJPC).

T.F. A lot has been said about the march outside of the Norfolk Prison, can you clear up for our readers and tell us exactly what the march was about.

R.C. The main goal of the march was to bring attention to and stop new construction of pipelines that would carry fracked gas, specifically Spectra's "Access Northeast" pipeline. The march was designed to follow the proposed pipeline's route.

T.F. How did you and CJPC get involved?

R.C. CJPC got involved because I used to work in the same office space as Better Future Project (BFP), which works on climate change issues. When BFP realized they were going to walk by MCI-Norfolk, they reached out to myself and Black & Pink, a national organization that's based in Boston that works specifically with LGBTQ and HIV+ people who are incarcerated. It is explicitly a prison abolition organization that sees the prison industrial complex as further harm to LGBTQ and HIV+ people. BFP wanted to make sure that they made the connections between environmental racism and mass incarceration.

T.F. In addition to the groups that you've already mentioned, what other groups participated in the march?

R.C. Besides BFP, CJPC, and Black & Pink, 350.org (the volunteer arm of BFP), Resist the Pipeline, which opposes the construction of a pipeline in West Roxbury through civil disobedience, UU Mass Action, which is a group of Unitarian Universalist that organize for social justice and others were involved with the march.

T.F. What was the total distance of the march?

R.C. The march totalled 43 miles. We only marched from the Norfolk town library to MCI-Norfolk.

T.F. How did the residents respond to the march, and did anyone participate?

R.C. We only marched a short distance and a few homes had signs in their yards against the pipeline. Also, a very nice woman offered us water.

T.F. What's next for the CJPC?

R.C. What's next is a big question. CJPC is still collecting voter forms from people who are interested. We're looking forward to the Walk for Inclusion October 23, 2016 1-4pm starting at Ramsay Park in Dudley Square and going to the State House.

Within the Coalition for Effective Public Safety (CEPS) we're gearing up for the upcoming legislative session that begins in January with regards to solitary confinement, parole, and medical release. We're also a part of Jobs Not Jails Coalition that works on sentencing reform and reducing the number of barriers to reentry. Earlier this year we sent a survey to a number of our liasons regarding Jobs Not Jails priorities so that was helpful to learn what people who are incarcerated want to see happen. We're monitoring the Council of State

Government's Justice Center "justice reinvestment initiative" to see what comes out of that, and what gaps they'll leave. We are also hiring a person to work with people convicted of sex offenses. This is definitely a divisive issue. Re-entry is difficult for everyone, in particular for people returning to society with sex offense convictions. The public sex offender registry disuades employers and potential landlords from housing and employing people convicted of sex offenses. I in no way am trying to excuse the actions of people convicted of sex offenses, I am just recognizing the current system is not creating public safety and accountability, as is the case in so much of our criminal justice system.

T.F. What can men and women behind the wall do to be more involved?

R.C. This is a really difficult question. It sounds like you guys are doing a lot of great work. I think a huge way to make more change in the criminal justice system is to get your loved ones on the outside active and involved, and also connected in the fight for changes to our criminal punishment system. Also you should share and collect stories of your experiences from the inside.

T.F. We appreciate you for speaking with The Factual today. The fight for criminal justice needs more people like you. How can readers get involved with CJPC?

R.C. If you're interested in getting involved, please contact me at:  
Rachel Corey CJPC  
549 Columbus Ave. Boston, MA 02118  
617-807-0111 director@cjpc.org

T.F. Thank you Rachel.

R.C. Thank you!

WE THE PEOPLEDoes White America Really Want  
Liberty and Justice For All?

By: Publius

In the United States of America, everyone knows about the history of slavery and racism. Yet for some inexplicable reason, We the (white) People seem to devalue the modern day experiences of people of color by justifying it as isolated incidents by people who are bad apples, or we argue that the bad stuff happened before we were even alive. Well, it's time for white people to wake up, stand up, and truly fight for Liberty and Justice for all.

If you love America and the freedom and Liberty it stands for, then why aren't you furious over the injustice of how people of color are being treated right now? If you have not heard, people of color, more specifically black people, are being killed by police disproportionately to other groups.

If you believe justice is equal no matter your race, or that you have nothing to fear from the police if you're doing nothing wrong, here are the numbers. According to ProPublica, people of color are 21 times more likely to be shot by police than their white counterparts. In the same analysis, in only a two year period from 2010 to 2012, black males of the age from 15 to 19 are killed by police at a rate of 31.17 per million, while the same age range of whites is 1.47 per million. Considering that African Americans make up only 12.6% of the population according to the 2010 census, and whites make up 63.7%, these numbers are even more staggering! These reported number of deaths are thought to be well below the real numbers because the Justice Department allows our 17,000 law enforcement agencies to self-report fatal

police shootings, and go figure, most agencies never do. Simply, the government does not want us to know how many people are truly killed by police. This fact alone challenges the held belief of freedom and justice for all, not just for people of color, but for anyone who holds the police to a higher standard and counts on their duty to "protect and serve". For the people in the know, this is not a recent phenomenon. Organizations like the Black Panther Party as well as the Move Project have fought for decades to bring awareness and attention to a serious American issue. Its citizens are being murdered by the exact organization that We the People entrust to protect us. Over the years, there have been many courageous people that have spoken out and even sacrificed their lives to promote positive social change. And while it's true that progress has been made, We the People should not be satisfied. Not even close!

This social problem is not a problem for people of color to solve. The responsibility lies with white people! Would you blame somebody's wife for being physically abused by her husband? No! So why do We the People expect the oppressed to fix the problems of the the oppressors? Just like it's men's responsibility to stand up and oppose the unequal treatment and abuse of women, it is white people's responsibility to stand up for the people of color, our fellow citizens, who are being murdered under the guise of state sanctioned lethal use of force.

Recently the Black Lives Matter movement was born to advocate for the hundreds, if not thousands, of unarmed young black men who have been killed by police. For all of the confused people out there who say "No, all lives matter" or "Blue Lives Matter" sadly, you are

missing the point. No shit all lives matter, but "all lives" are not being systematically targeted by a deep culture of discrimination and racism by the police in this country. Black lives are! They are threatened everyday by the negative stereotypes perpetuated by We the People, and then infused into our criminal justice system of the police and the courts. White people have the luxury of not having to worry about whether or not you or your children will make it home that day. For black people, their lives are on the line.

In addition, the idea that if you don't support the Blue Lives Matter movement, you are either unamerican or you somehow condone the murder of police, is just ridiculous. most people would agree that retaliatory violence against police is not an effective solution to bridge the cultural divide that exist between the law enforcement community and that of people of color. But again, while it's a horrible tragedy that police officers have been targeted by oppressed people pushed to their limits, they are not being killed in disproportionate numbers like black people.

As We the People sit back in our complacency, or maybe our mild irritation, at the media's exploitation and sensationalized murder of our citizens by an organization that we empower to protect and serve us, people of color are being targeted and murdered. As a white person, I reject the idea that We the People cannot do anything about these social injustices. Are you telling me that in the richest, most innovative society the world has ever seen, this is the best We the People can do? And for those who suggest that "it's not that bad", or "these are just isolated incidents", I'm sorry to

have to tell you that you're wrong. You don't get to define the experiences of black people in this country. They do.

If We the People sincerely wish to promote Liberty and Justice for All, then let us continue the dialogue amongst each other to inform all our citizens on the challenges we face together as we move forward into the future. That way, We the People (all people) get to shape our narrative for future generations...

E PLURIBUS UNUM

STAY TUNED FOR  
NOVEMBER'S ISSUE:

◦ Norfolk's debate team battles Boston College. Who will win?

You can contact the editors at our email: [thefactual94@gmail.com](mailto:thefactual94@gmail.com)

Be sure to check out and like our Facebook page @thefactual94 Where you can find the online issue and upcoming events.

Do you care about the issues that you've read in The Factual, or wish to contribute to upcoming issues, or help out the cause in any way? Please contact our email. Our voices will be heard!

