

## U.S. Prisons Are Slave Labor Factories

<http://educate-yourself.org/cn/prisonslavefactories25jul05.shtml>  
July 25, 2005

Forward courtesy of Rick Stanley

History teaches us that slavery was abolished in the United States after the Civil War. History has taught us wrong. **Slavery was never abolished in the United States.** Go ahead, take a look at the Constitution. The 13th Amendment reads as follows: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted shall exist within the United States." **That means that if you've been convicted of a crime, you are legally allowed to be a slave.**

The prison industrial complex is big business in this country, and the U.S. government and corporations are reaping the rewards. Private companies are not only operating prisons but are also using prisoners as workers without paying wages, a practice known as slavery. The largest private prison operator is called **Correction Corporations of America**; it operates over 30 prisons nationwide (a number that will soon double when every state prison in Tennessee goes private).

Prison bonds provide a lucrative return for capitalist investors. The following are just a fraction of the companies using slave labor: **IBM, Motorola, Compaq, Texas Instruments, Honeywell, Microsoft, Boeing, Revlon, Chevron, TWA, Victoria's Secret, Eddie Bauer, K-mart, J.C. Penny, and McDonald's.** Products bought by the U.S. government are bought from UNICOR, which is the trade name for Federal Prisons Industries. Yes, prisoners even build desks for members of Congress. UNICOR proudly displays on its web site that it is "where the government shops first." This isn't about making the streets safe; **it's about money and a never-ending supply of cheap labor.**

State corrections agencies are advertising their prisoners to the corporations: "Are you experiencing high employee turnover? Worried about the costs of employee benefits? Unhappy with out-of-state or offshore suppliers? Getting hit by overseas competition? Having trouble motivating your workforce? Thinking about expansion space? Then Washington State Department of Corrections Private Sector Partnerships is for you." When Reagan became president, there were 400,000 prisoners in the United States. Today the number stands at over 2 million. Before you start thinking about those "violent" people, listen to some facts: In federal prisons, only 2.4 percent of the prisoners are there for violent crimes.

It took 150 years for California to build 10 state prisons. But the state has built 21 prisons in the last 10 years alone (only one state university has been built in that time) and this trend isn't stopping.

With the three strikes law in effect, the state estimates it will have to build 20 more prisons over the next 10 years. Where does racism come into view? Seventy percent of those being sentenced under the three strikes law in California are people of color. And nationally, 39 percent of African American men in their 20s are in prison, on probation, or on parole. White people make up 82 percent of the nation's population, yet prisons house 72 percent people of color. ***What we need to do is wake up and realize that there aren't 2 million people in prison to "make the country safe." They're there to provide a service - their labor. Let's call them what they are: slaves.***

--

No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.1.392 / Virus Database: 268.5.6/337 - Release Date: 5/11/2006

6/6/2006