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**Worthless lives: Hell in The Hell**

By: Arnaldo Musa / Cubasí

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It is being said that civil and police violence rates against citizens have dropped after the outbreak in the US, heart of evil, “leader” in both infected citizens and deaths, in official abandonment of precautionary measures to counteract the pandemic and in campaigns to blame others of its own negligence.

While the virus is affecting most of the population in that nation, areas where there should be strict health lockdown are being opened by the government — to avoid the inevitable unemployment as well as a notorious drop in production and economy in election year — deaths have jumped by five in prisons, most of them owned by private companies.

But torture to compel inmates to obey the prison system and accept inhumane working conditions abound, and all is happening amid a disease that is killing them quickly.

For instance, the twelve-foot windows of the prison cells in Pelican Bay, California, exceed all international security standards for a single inmate. The only way to get out is through a perforated steel door leading out to a concrete wall.

Except for an uncertain number of inmates who have cellmates, there is no contact among inmates and the contact with guards is almost nonexistent. Meanwhile, they are controlled through cameras in a closed circuit; doors are opened with remote switches and food is delivered through small slots in the door.

Disobedient inmates, or those who are not to the liking of guards or the prison warden are separated from the rest and do not have access to rehabilitation programs. They are only allowed to do exercises once a day, within a concrete room in which they can see a small sample of the sky.

According to state officials, the average sojourn in solitary confinement ranges from six to eight years. Hence, it is common that inmates usually opt for hunger strikes. They will be only out of this “hell” whether they get infected by coronavirus or they “are” lucky to die.

The suicide rate is one of the most stunning we have, reported International Amnesty, and added that those inmates who endure solitary confinement without committing suicide suffer "psychological damage due to the experience."

As inmates have no right to vote — for different reasons, millions of Americans have no right to vote either — individuals in jail do not represent any major concern for the current President, who seeks re-election in November.

Not to mention he is much less concerned about inmates in solitary confinement, who represent 2% of the total prison population, but 42% of them have committed suicide in the last five years.

But this is not new and it only represents the resurgence of the wrongdoing of a system that corrodes the American society, especially in prisons, all with a majority of black population.

That is why hunger strikes due to solitary confinement and tortures in US prisons suddenly skyrocketed in the current administration, especially after Trump, in the former electoral campaign, accused Obama of dividing the country, but hid the ruling system had already the seeds of the present situation since this nation was born.

And this is just a small sample of a greater evil, worse than Covid-19, this is the nation that blackmails the world with the constant threat of its destruction.

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSí Translation Staff**

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