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ENG 100

Assignment Paper #2: Research Paper

"21st Century Slavery"

"They use wordplay and deceive the public about what really goes on inside the system, and we want to expose these things." Is what an anonymous prisoner says in an article by The Intercept that describes the way prisoners are being treated in a Florida prison. These prisoners are put to hard work for up to twelve-hour days and get paid less than fifty cents an hour. Many corporations have invested in these private prisons to gain a free labor force, and BP oil is a prime example of this. BP oil invested a large sum of money into private prisons, so they could have access to a cheap labor force to clean up the oil spill in April 20th, 2010. This cut many labor workers out of a job and cause an uproar for many families who needed the money to stay afloat. BP oil is not the only company that uses prison labor according to an article by "Caged Bird Magazine" companies like McDonalds, Whole Foods, Victoria Secret, AT&T, and many more use prison labor for a cheap work force. Leaked documents were found by the American Legislative Exchange Councils (ALEC) and how they are hiding corporate profit from private prison systems as well as a plan to expand the private prison system in three ways. First is to promote greater use of private prison and services. Second way is to promote the use of prison labor, and the final example is to increase the size of prison population. Sounds like an evil villain from a movie to be honest,

but this organization plans on expanding definitions on existing crimes, create new crimes, and enhancing enforcement of existing crimes all in the name of profit.

In the documentary "Where to Invade Next" Michael Moore says "Yes, white America had inadvertently figured out a way to bring back slavery. And master knew that the way to get rich was having all that free labor. Today's master have found our prisons to be the perfect places to make their products for as little as 23 cents an hour. Yes, that burger you're eating, that airline reservation you've made, the software you're using to watch the pirated copy of this movie, your child's back pack with its five hours of homework. I always wondered what Victoria's secret was. And now I know. It's one of many companies that have used 21st century slaves." The corrections department said that prison labor was responsible for 3.15 million hours of labor that estimated around 38 million in the state of Florida. Though this is a huge number and a large sum of money prisoners get less than 10% of these gains nationwide. Though many prisons give these inmates a shorter sentence time for working labor for them Jacqueline Aziz an attorney with the Florida chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union said, "A lot of times people will work in order to get time deducted, and then the prison guards and officials will find ways to punish someone for what the prisoners are saying are made up reasons that then extend the person's time." This can even be referred to how the ALEC are trying to maintain prison inmates and increase incarceration. Some will think why they need to get paid anyway they already have 3 meals a day and a bed to sleep in they don't need any money to function. This is true, but Many prisoners have a fear that when they are released and with no income to support them when they get out it will result in them just becoming a criminal again. Florida has one of the highest

prisoner pay but even that is only fifty cents, and some states like Texas don't pay inmates at all for labor.

The 8th Amendment says, "states that that punishments must be fair, cannot be cruel, and that fines that are extraordinarily large cannot be set." Prisoners who are put to work are forced to work 12-hour days in savage working conditions for months. This could be classified as a form of cruel punishment for the inmates. In the film "Where to Invade Next" Michael Moore goes to Norway and takes a look on the prison system there. The way they treat their prisoners and the conditions they live in it's almost looks like a collage dorm instead of what we see from the prisons here in our state. They believe in rehabilitation not rehabilitation not incarceration and want prisoners to come out of prison a changed person ready to help their community. America does not do this instead from most media and news American prison is extremely brutal and melancholy place to go. An article from The Intercept says "Deaths in Florida state prisons — including homicides and a spate of suicides — have skyrocketed in recent years, soaring from 191 in 2000 to 356 in 2016." Having people work just to throw them back into a cell and then do the same labor again seems almost inhumane.

In 1861-1865 after the Civil War a way of hiring out prisoners became a method for continuing with a new form of slavery. Around this time many African Americans were getting arrested for petty crimes such as thievery and most cases the thief wasn't proven. These African Americans would get caught up in the prison system then would be put to work in a field, railroad work, or even mining. An article by Vicky Peláez in the "Global Research" organization said that from 1870 to 1910 in the state of Georgia 88% of labor

convicts were black around other states was about the same amount. Though time has changed and many Americans live in peace with one another one prison guard says “Today, a new set of markedly racist laws is imposing slave labor and sweatshops on the criminal justice system, now known as the prison industry complex.”

America holds five percent of the world's population, but it holds twenty-five percent of the world's inmates. Prisoners are being put into free labor against their own will and not rewarded with much or any pay. The term of slave is a person who is the legal property of another and is forced to obey them. Prisoners are called property of the state and are put to work against their own free will. Many willing to work but want the pay in order to have an income while in prison. These basic freedoms of treating everyone humanly are what America needs to reconsider for their prison system. We need to take a step back and realize that all humans make mistakes and have a right to serve their respected time and then become functioning members of society again. Having prisoners work for barely any income only helps the companies and not the community. These companies want more prisoners and a bigger labor force in order to make more profit for less.

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