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● A professor once asked me if I believed in evolution or history repeating itself. I leaned towards history repeating itself, after all evolution just seems to be the same all some ole with a few tweaks to make a thing modern. Take the U.S. history for instance, the slave trade ~~then~~ and indentured servants are today called prisoners. When the Fore Fathers hammered out the Constitution in that hot sweaty room they had to compromise. The southern states wanted to count their slaves in the population count so they may have more representatives in Congress; never mind the fact that slaves were not considered citizens, could not vote, and were deemed property. They come up with the $\frac{3}{5}$ compromise which counts $\frac{3}{5}$ slaves held in the southern states. After the abolition of slavery, the Reconstruction Era, and the civil rights movement we are still where we began.

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● One of the problems with slavery was everybody wasn't benefiting. The south held more slaves than the north and needed them to work the lands. I know you'd like to think the abolition of slavery was all morals, but if that were so we wouldn't have mass incarceration today. With mass incarceration everybody benefits except for the poor and minority people whose families are destroyed and communities down trodden. And as usual it has to be a revolution and many many grassroots

organizations, the real moralistic freedom fighters, to bring about change.

* I want to vote. Why is our government afraid of the prisoners vote? I'm 33 years old and have never been able to cast a ballot. I won't be eligible to vote until 2024. Not being able to vote is a reality for millions of Americans. What happened to "No Taxation without Representation"? Upon release if I am on parole I still have to pay taxes. Millions of people on parole and/or probation cannot vote, but pay taxes. Are we not Americans anymore? Who is to represent us when we have no redress to force representation through voting? We are effectively silenced. However, we are ~~still~~ still used as Michelle Alexander points out in her book "The New Jim Crow" "Under the Usual-residents rule, the census Bureau counts imprisoned individuals as residents of the jurisdiction in which they are imprisoned" Prisons are normally located in small predominately white counties who benefit from inflated population and with employment. The benefit is also shown during the redistricting process. Can you say 3/5 compromise? The Constitution keeps prisoners in bondage and working for free with language like "involuntary servitude". That means slavery. I've worked the "bee squad" with men and women sitting on horses with guns lording over me just like a scene out of an old slave movie. While some offenders see parole early because they

receive work time credit, most of us do not get this credit. Why is it that we fight for reasonable working wages and conditions for people in other countries, but not for all Americans? I've worked for 12 years for free and if my family does not send money I will not have deodorant, lotion, shampoo, nor a face cloth to wash with at this unit.

Other legislation bars felons from housing, being jurors, the right to have arms and protect our homes and property, and employment in certain fields. Prisoners and ex-prisoners do not have the basic rights of other Americans yet we are held to the same standards. All of the horrors we have been fighting against for over 400 years are still here just by another name. It's been modernized but it's still horrific, ^{and} it's bigger ~~too~~. The scheme is more elaborate and has a huge effect on our entire economy. Our government bailed out an automobile company because its downfall would ^{have} hurt our economy. Mass incarceration brings more to our economy than a car company. Consider the prison profiteers. Texas alone has over 100 prisons. How many correctional officers is that? What construction companies built these prisons? Medical staff, administrators food supply companies etc. Prisons are big business, but it's not just the south profiting, it's the entire U.S. The north isn't so against the south now is it? Mass incarceration stimulates ^{the} American economy yet again on the backs of the poor disenfranchised sub-human sub

Americans. In "The New Tom Crow" Michelle Alexander quotes a 2005 annual report of the Corrections ^(Securities and Exchange Commission) Corporation of America in a filing with the SEC that stated "Our growth is generally dependent upon our ability to obtain new contracts to develop and manage new correctional and detention facilities. This possible growth depends on a number of factors we cannot control, including crime rates and sentencing patterns in various jurisdictions and acceptance of privatization. The demand for our ~~services~~ facilities and services could be adversely affected by the relaxation of enforcement efforts, leniency in conviction and sentencing practices or through the decriminalization of certain activities that are currently proscribed by our criminal laws. For instance, any change with respect to drugs, controlled substances, or illegal immigration could affect the number of persons arrested, convicted and sentenced, thereby potentially reducing demand for correctional facilities to house them." In other words the ~~prop~~ publicly traded company is saying they need tough laws and people locked up in droves to turn a profit for their shareholders. Shareholders like former Vice President Dick Cheney that means strict judges, D.A.'s, P.O.'s and police as well as laws that ~~suppress~~ oppress and prevent the felon from objecting to these practices. The tax payers are paying to build all these prisons to make the wealthy weather while kids can't get decent books at schools, while teachers are underpaid and the cost of living is going up and people are

fighting for higher wages, the federal government is sending billions and billions of tax payers money to support prison profiteers. Our veterans aren't getting the help they need and taxes go to welfare because families are ripped apart and need help. You don't hear about this on any campaign trail. On the campaign trail you hear false promises about health care and employment. I could go on and on about this system of ours, but I know the solution to these issues already and being able to vote is a major solution. I want to force our representatives to put our resources to better use for my children and everybody else's children. I want to have a voice! But I guess the more things change, the more they stay the same.