

# COME HELL OR HIGH WATER

## A HANDBOOK ON COLLECTIVE PROCESS GONE AWRY

### —BOOK REVIEW—

For those of us who have been involved, will be involved or have been turned off by collectives, this 127-page book is a must read. Come Hell or High Water a Handbook on Collective Process Gone Awry, by Delfina Vannucci and Richard Singer, with the help of AK Press, outlines the good the bad and the ugly, with most focus on the bad and the ugly trials and tribulations, of participating in a collective. The book, divided into three sections, includes topics like truth, kindness, power-sharing, pariahs, character assassinations, skepticism, respect for differences, due process, free speech, banning and the like. It can be a painful read for those of us who have behaved poorly in collective situations; read this just to check yourself. But this can be an uplifting read to see you might be doing or have dealt with issues well; read this to congratulate yourself. Most readers will experience both humiliation and humility. Whether you are new or old to collectives, this is, hands-down, an essential handbook that offers ideas and warnings on the ins-and-outs, the ups-and-downs of the collective process. With hilarious comics courtesy of Strangers in a Tangled Wilderness ([www.tangledwilderness.org](http://www.tangledwilderness.org)), and collaboration



of great publishers and writers, Come Hell or High Water should sit on the shelves of all collective libraries. Available at [www.akpress.org](http://www.akpress.org) (on sale right now for only \$7.50!).

# State of Disunion

NUMBER OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES in the Grand Valley in 2010: 26	NUMBER OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES in the Grand Valley in 2008: 0
NUMBER OF ARRESTEES at the 1/16 anti-Arpaio march in Phoenix: 5	NUMBER OF GRAND JURY CASES against Arpaio currently in federal court: 1
PERCENT OF COLORADO PRISONERS in private prisons: 24	PERCENT INCREASE of Colorado's population since 1980: 59
NUMBER OF LAWSUITS FILED against Sheriff Arpaio 2004-Nov.2007: 2150	PERCENT INCREASE of Colorado's prison population since 1980: 604
NUMBER OF ISSUES PUBLISHED by The Red Pill: 76	NUMBER OF FAMILIES ON WAITING LISTS for affordable housing at GJ Housing Authority: 2400

\* Sources for the State of Disunion can be found at [www.gjredpill.org](http://www.gjredpill.org)

## CALL TO ACTION

The Red Pill is looking for volunteers: graphic designers, writers, poets, cartoonists, artists, and photographers are needed. Get your work published now. Help distribute The Red Pill in your community, church, and school: contact us at [gjredpill@hotmail.com](mailto:gjredpill@hotmail.com). You can also do your part to keep us in print by donating time, paper, film, copies, and of course money (it doesn't print itself).



The Red Pill is collectively produced by Confluence Media Collective, with the aim of publishing stories and ideas that the mainstream media won't cover. It is distributed free, collects no advertising, and is completely staffed by volunteers. All materials are copyleft, no rights are reserved. **PHOTOCOPY AND DISTRIBUTE AT WILL!**

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE

GRAND JUNCTION,  
COLORADO

# The Red Pill



POWER TO

THE PEOPLE

FEBRUARY 2010

VOL. 8 NO. 2

## UNITY AND REPRESSION: PHOENIX PD AND THE DO@ BLOC

January 16th saw an unprecedented level of unity between diverse groups, fighting diverse struggles, who came together for a march against the racist Sheriff of Maricopa County, Joe Arpaio. The march was organized by immigrant rights groups to bring attention to Arpaio's civil rights abuses, racial profiling, and his cooperation with Immigration Customs Enforcement. Over 20,000 people participated in the march.

Arpaio is nationally infamous for his tough-on-crime antics. Immigrant rights groups have likened Arpaio to Bull Connor, the racist police official in Birmingham, AL who fought civil rights activists with attack dogs and strong water hoses. Arpaio's practices include housing inmates in a tent city, making prisoners wear pink underwear, and, now, engaging in sweeps through Latino neighborhoods in an attempt to round up anyone who might be an undocumented immigrant. These raids

target people based on race and many who are here legally are swept up in the raids and locked up in his notoriously punitive jails.

Others joining the bloc wanted to broaden the debate. In Arizona 14,000 Dine' people (Navajo) face mass forced relocation so that multinational corporations, such as Peabody Coal, can continue to rape the land of its natural resources. The Tohono O'odham people have had their lands stolen and now face militarized border patrols and

border walls dividing their reservation, which straddles the Mexican-American border. Many Arizona anarchists and anti-authoritarians oppose dislocations and evictions of foreclosed homes. These three distinct groups came together under the banner of the DO@ (Dine, O'odham, Anarchist/ Anti-authoritarian) bloc. The logic of capitalism and brute force underlies the struggles of these groups; deportations of



The bloc leaves Falcon Park  
Photo credit: Phoenix Class War Council

**"DO@ MARCH" ON PAGE THREE**

## FEAR AND CANNIBIS IN GRAND JUNCTION

I could start this article detailing my chronic back pain, my addiction to Vicodin, or other jumping off points. A lot of it is Oprah/Dr. Phil shit and is best avoided. I'll start my article, instead, with me and my two-and-one-half inch medical record waiting in the marijuana doctor's office.

The doctor flipped silently through my record for several minutes, then he started out with the questions. They were pointed and personal, but what do you expect? This guy had the power to turn me from being a pot-smoking common criminal into a respectable medical marijuana patient.

The whole thing happened kind of quickly. The next thing I knew, he was handing me my temporary medical marijuana registry paperwork. No throat swabs, no x-rays, no finger in the butt. Thank God for small favors, I was legal in a moment; no waiting period. The doctor reminded me that I should keep the temporary license on me at all times. "But I'm medical marijuana" doesn't go far without showing your license.

I literally live across the street from a dispensary, so the choice was easy. It was Mesa Alternative Health and Wellness, on the corner of 6th and Grand. I was a bit nervous because I didn't know what to expect. Here's what happened.

After much scrutiny of my paperwork, I was led down a hallway. When the door opened, I was in Cheech and Chong's playroom. Lush, green marijuana plants grew along one wall. Pictures of plants and marijuana decor decorated the showroom. And on some shelves along one wall sat about 22 mason jars, neatly labeled, full of gooze green ganja.

The sheer amount of reefer and all it's varieties sizzled my brain. I picked out some of "Sour Diesel" and the attendant expertly grabbed the jar, weighed out an eighth of an ounce of the weed, then put it in a plastic bag with a sticker proudly announcing it "Sour Diesel For Medical Use Only."

I went home and smoked. Like I said, I'm not a cannabis virgin, but smoking heeze on a schedule was, well, it all seemed so medical. While high, I thought of a million questions. Then the epiphany: don't I write for The Red Pill? Can't I just go back as a journalist of sorts? Of course I can. Of course I'm high.

I made an appointment with the owner for an interview. As per usual, I made a list of questions in advance. As per usual, I ignored

them during the interview and went raw.

**TRP:** What's your name?

**GD:** Gregg Davis

**TRP:** Where does all the reefer come from?

**GD:** It's all grown in Colorado.

**TRP:** "Mountain grown for a better stone" I guess. What all varieties do you have?

**GD:** I've got ten sativas and twelve indicas. Sativa is more of a light, heady buzz. Indica is strong in the body, good for chronic pain.

**TRP:** What do people come in for?

**GD:** Mostly chronic pain, but also MS, cancer, AIDS, etc.

**TRP:** I noticed you are handicap accessible.

**GD:** Yeah, we've got seven or eight patients in chairs.

**TRP:** You're a licensed caregiver; for how many people?

**GD:** 450 people. Figure there's about 1500 in the Valley.

**TRP:** Any police interaction?

**GD:** Yeah, but strictly positive. A couple of cops were visiting at the house behind us. I struck up a conversation and ended up inviting them in the store. They were respectful and enjoyed the visit.

**TRP:** How come it seems like dispensaries popped up a year ago?

**GD:** Obama's attorney general, Eric Holder, issued a statement stating the feds will no longer be involved in the investigation or prosecution of any states' medical marijuana program.

**TRP:** What should people know about you?

**GD:** We're totally legal and legit. If any one has any questions, they can stop by the store at 6th and Grand or call 424-5264. •

## "HONDURAS" FROM PAGE FIVE

As though all has returned to normal, the state proceeds to lay the environment to waste. The current government annihilated a bill just days away from Zelaya's signature, granting land to 300,000 small farmers engaged in a 40 year struggle for land rights. The golpe also destroyed the free zone, which Zelaya instated to direct taxes from tourism to local municipalities, diverting money from anti-poaching and alternative livelihood programs for fishers to the military. Tourist cruises along with overfishing destroys the coral reef and pollutes the water as Honduras continues the global march to ecocide. During the most heady days of resistance, the government set up a cyanide canon pointed at an elementary school as a warning, an ironic statement considering that cyanide from open-pit, cyanide leach mines has poisoned the land and people for years, meeting the critical eye of Zelaya just before the golpe. Goldcorp states intentions of pulling out of Honduras completely now, but during the military clamp down, the Canadian

company shipped workers from the mines to the streets in order to march in pro-coup demonstrations. In a similar vein, the golpe reversed Zelaya's actions sending military units into the forests to fight illegal logging, moving the army into the cities to battle seas of peaceful protesters. An activist in the anti-logging campaign, the priest Tamayo, received death threats from timber giant Sansone, while Micheletti's government revoked his citizenship and ordered his deportation. Goldcorp continues to work in the nation of Guatemala to persecute hundreds of Mayan Mam indigenous miners demanding human rights, and its actions in Honduras have only just begun. The timber industry, whether legal or illegal, is backed by the current government, and devastates the nation with impunity. The golpe appears complete. However, the people continue to resist. Activists are on speaking tours of the US and Canada to spread information about the golpe's environmental destruction and the resistance movement against the current regime. Contact [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org) or [johanneswilm@gmail.com](mailto:johanneswilm@gmail.com) for more info. •

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The label "conspiracy theorist" is a handy attempt at discrediting someone or shutting them up. There have been rumors over the years of concentration camps being built in America for suspicious purposes. I am asking Red Pill readers and anyone who is willing to view the following video, which was on the national guard's own

website and later taken down (fortunately someone copied it and reposted the video on youtube), and ponder the implications of this exiting new employment opportunity. Then tell someone else about it and spread the word. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVM-hv6A4-0&feature=related>  
sincerely,  
splurge •

## "17 YEARS" FROM PAGE THREE

allocated for support services for paroled felons. Of that money, most will be dedicated to enhanced surveillance. Very little of it will be spent expanding housing assistance, mental health treatment or job training. By contrast, over \$641 million will be spent on incarceration in state prisons alone, slightly more will be spent on higher education for the whole state. According to the Coalition, more than half of the state's 22,000-plus prisoners are already past their parole eligibility dates, and many, like Jack, pose little risk to the community. Nor do long and costly sentences, imposed for what basically amounts to non-compliance with conditions of release, do anything to drive down a parole recidivism rate currently at nearly 70%.

Parole violations now account for 41% of all DOC admissions according to the CCJRC,

and with the cost of housing prisoners like Jack now at \$30,000 a year, the total cost of his incarceration may reach close to half a million dollars by the time he reaches his statutory release date. That's assuming, of course, that he doesn't 'escape' again. •

*Convict writer Tom Gomez is serving four years in prison for the commercial burglary of a pharmacy in Telluride, CO. Tom needs your help to keep publishing on Indymedia. If you can help by typing up and posting some of his articles, or if you would like to correspond with him, he can be reached at: Tom Gomez*

*#144219  
Unit CH 1/Tier B/Cell 16  
Box #6000  
Sterling, CO 80751*

*Please enclose a self-addressed (not stamped) envelope with your letter.*



# MARIJUANA PLANTS EARN PRISONER 17 YEARS ON 2 YEAR SENTENCE

~BY TOM GOMEZ~

Jack was charged with cultivation of marijuana in 2000 and sentenced to 2 years of community corrections. That was 9 years ago, and it will be the year 2012 before he is released from prison (if he serves his full sentence), and 2017 before his parole ends.

Jack's story is not uncommon. It illustrates the failure of sentencing laws meant to keep Jack and others like him, mostly non-violent offenders whose crimes were drug and alcohol related, out of prison and promote rehabilitation over incarceration. Instead, as Jack illustrates, they have often done the opposite of what the legislature intended, and have left thousands of prisoners like Jack in the criminal justice system—sometimes for decades—for petty offenses. With the Colorado State Legislature expected to address the issue of sentencing reform later this year, many prisoners hope that stories like Jack's prompt the state legislators to rethink the 'escape' statutes.

No one here in the prison really expects the legislature to decriminalize escape. But the large and growing number of cases like Jack's point out what's wrong with the existing law. Sentenced in 2000 to serve in one of the state's 34 community correctional facilities (aka halfway houses), Jack escaped

by simply walking away from the facility. Several months later, he was recaptured and given 4 years for the escape, plus his remainder on the original charge for a total of five years. He served 3 of those 5 years before being paroled into homelessness in 2004. Colorado is one of only a handful of states with mandatory parole, and while Jack's original charges carried one year of mandatory parole, his new charge of escape carried 3 years of mandatory parole.

Given Jack's prior history, he was placed in Intensive Supervised Parole, or ISP, which monitors released felons considered to be at 'high risk of re-offending' using ankle bracelets and GPS monitoring systems. An offender that removes the ankle monitor can be charged with escape, a charge that can be enhanced under Colorado's habitual offender statute to 4 times the statutory maximum. That ultimately is what happened to Jack, a 50 year old man who, by his own admission, "likes to drink" and "doesn't like to be told what to do".

The Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition notes in its quarterly newsletter, the Colorado Justice Report, Fall 2009 edition, that while 1/4th of all prisoners will parole into homelessness, only \$2 million will be

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## ACTIVIST CALENDAR

Every Tuesday • 1:30PM

Housing First! No More Deaths! meets to devise creative grassroots solutions to homelessness, and prevent homeless related deaths.

Whitman Park

Friday, February 19th • 4-8PM

Open House celebration for the regional office opening for various Immigrants rights groups.

Region 10 Enterprise Center,  
300 N. Cascade Ave, Montrose

EVERY OTHER SUNDAY • 1:30PM

Get Involved with Confluence  
Media Collective

For more info: 245-3720

February 11th-15th • 2010

Earth First! Organizers Conference/Winter Rendezvous  
Mountains of Santa Barbara

www.2010oc.com

EVERY TUESDAY & SATURDAY • 4:00PM

Solidarity Not Charity meets at Whitman Park to serve free food for free people.

For more info: 245-3720

February 12th-14th

Sweater Fest - Live Music, Presentations, Documentary  
Screenings and much more. Potluck on Sunday.

For More Info: [legiragge.net/sweaterfest](http://legiragge.net/sweaterfest)  
719-201-4170

### RED PILL LOCATIONS

You can pick up your copy of The Red Pill at the following locations: Planet 9, Planet Earth, The Kleen Sting, Roasted, Contemporary Glass Works, Orr's Trading Post, Coffee Muggers, Triple Play Records, Dream Child Entertainment.

Download the Red Pill at: <http://www.gjredpill.org>

Become our friend on myspace.com @ [http://www.myspace.com/gjam\\_theredpill](http://www.myspace.com/gjam_theredpill)

### "DO@ MARCH" FROM FIRST PAGE

immigrants, the forced relocation of native people, and the evictions of families from their homes. It's also the same agents of capitalism that carry out the deportations/evictions/relocations, namely the police.

This Red Pill felt privileged to march in solidarity with such a bloc, which represents the unity of diverse people resisting state power.

Immediately, the bloc encountered police harassment and violence. It was apparent that the Phoenix police had become aware of this unity, and the state, fearful of the people standing together, felt a need to repress us in an attempt to destroy our unity. Despite violent attacks by the police, and their attempts to arrest targeted activists, the bloc stayed calm and didn't react, except to prevent people from being arrested. The Phoenix PD flanked the march with bicycles and horses, occasionally punching marchers in the face and ramming people with their bicycles.

As the bloc approached the County Jail, police in full riot gear lined either side of the march. Suddenly, the police tried to grab a middle-aged indigenous woman from the crowd. Then a female officer rode her horse into the middle of the crowd,



A police officer takes a random punch at a marcher.

Photo credit: AZ Indymedia



Infiltrators and police officers arrest someone in the melee. Photo credit: Phoenix Class War Council



Police infiltrators try to arrest a marcher  
Photo credit: AZ Indymedia

pepper-spraying everyone, including small children. I got pepper sprayed at close range when I tried to prevent people from being trampled by the officer's horse. I turned to get away from the ensuing melee and

ran blindly into a line of riot cops. I headed to the left, toward the rest of the 20,000-person march and knelt down to begin washing the pepper spray out of my eyes, when suddenly one of the riot cops sprayed me at close range with

more pepper spray and told me to move. It was an ambush; they had planned on attacking our group well ahead of time. The police made ridiculous statements about how the crowd attacked them and mainstream media repeated these unsubstantiated claims. Later photographic and video evidence surfaced that proved statements from the police were pure bullshit. In Arizona there is a state law forbidding police to participate in undercover work in political activities, but police infiltrators were caught on film attempting to arrest targeted protesters.

They tried to break our unity with pepper spray and arbitrary arrests (5 people were arrested, some on felony charges), but it only made us stronger and more unified. Violence perpetrated by the state is what we were there to expose, and the police did that for us. Long live the DO@.

## THE LABYRINTH OF SOLITUDE

—POETRY—

BY QUINTEN COLLIER

I see you now brother  
As for the first time,  
You tend to your shadows  
As I tend to mine.

We have served all our days  
As men in the dust  
Masters we now see as  
Prisoners like us;

Men chained to the flesh  
And time they can't keep,  
The difference between us:  
We starve and they eat.

We've been beaten so long  
And forced not to speak  
We yearn for the whip now,  
Horde our silence with greed.

Remember the plaza  
Where we called the sun,  
Stampeding there fearless  
Like children with guns?

We slandered our captors  
To live for a day:  
A violence of colors  
In primal display.

The carnival was bright,  
The cannons were loud,  
We died there for nothing  
To learn of ourselves.

We looted the temples,  
Ripped flesh on the gates,  
We danced on the flags where  
Our mothers were raped.

As our hearts exploded  
Like rockets of blood,  
We lived in a decadence  
Of truth without love,

Laughing mad and joyless  
At those down in hell  
Where every gate opens  
Into a new cell.

When the music expired,  
Our nakedness played,  
We regathered our masks  
And revowed our shame.

I see you now, brother  
As for the first time,  
You tend to your shadows  
As I tend to mine.♦

## A SAGA OF BLOODSHED AND WASTE: HONDURAS, A TEAR SHED IN THE WILD

~BYS@SH@~

Six hundred years, and the death toll rises still. Of colonial violence and total destruction of the wild, a new branch emerges from the bloody tree of Latin American history. In June 2009, the military of Honduras crushed the elected government of Mel Zelaya, exiling him and instating a viciously repressive military regime, led by the corporate puppet, Micheletti. Hardly a populist leader, President Zelaya voted in favor of the environmentally atrocious Central America Free Trade Agreement and comes from a wealthy ranching family. However, as his presidency wound up, Zelaya began to challenge the ruling oligarchs of Honduras in the government and in civil society. Appealing to the 60% of Honduras that lives in abject poverty, Zelaya gestured toward land reform at the expense of the rich, and began to crack down on illegal deforestation as well as the worst polluters of the mining industry. In an ill fated move, Zelaya attempted to poll Honduran civil society on the question of reforming or rewriting the constitution—an act strictly forbidden by the constitution, itself. Since the military dictatorship of the 1980s wrote the constitution in accordance with the needs of the financial elites, it stipulates that the President of Honduras can not achieve a second term, effectively banning any institution of

popular power. Although the constitution does not forbid polling the people, Zelaya's environmentalist and popular moves set the elites on edge, such that, on the emergence of a conversation on the constitution, they brought the military to depose him. The military dictatorship (called golpe in Spanish) reached international condemnation immediately, but the righteous indignation of even the United States obscured the tacit support that Micheletti's regime received. One month before the golpe, a coalition of corporate interests and right wing institutions formed, calling itself, the Democratic Civil Union of Honduras, formed under the secretive funding of USAID. US ambassadors appointed to Central American countries shortly before the golpe include Robert Callahan, Stephan McFarlan, and Robert Blau, all experienced profiteers of Latin America's military and paramilitary powers and colonial economics. Otto Reich and John Negroponte, both powerful US officials responsible for previous incursions against Leftist regimes in Latin America, have also dug in against Zelaya over the past two years. While the US officially revoked the visas of the military officials, John McCain, among other senators and congressional representatives of the Republican Party,

“HONDURAS” ON NEXT PAGE

## INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN ACTION

The power of independent media is hard to overstate. We at The Red Pill obviously believe in the power of truth and the pen, or we would never have kept publishing this little rag for over six years now. In that time we have broken more than a few stories that later made it into the mainstream and have made positive changes in the lives of people that are being exploited or abused. Hands down, the biggest story that The Red Pill and Confluence Media Collective have ever broken is the story of the abuses suffered by H2A Visa workers in Colorado's sheep industry.

In 2008, Jacob Ripple-Carpenter began going into the field with Mesa State Spanish Professor, Thomas Acker, to document first hand the conditions H2A workers face everyday. The results were startling: long stretches of solitude, little pay, no days off, abusive bosses, lack of medical care, lack of basic amenities i.e. showers, toilets, refrigeration and nutritious food.

The Red Pill published two pieces in 2008 (see Vol. 6 No. 3 & 10) and produced four short documentary films on the subject (see <http://www.youtube.com/user/gjredpill>).

Since then, Ripple-Carpenter has stayed on the story and now his efforts are starting to get

results. One year ago, The New York Times published a feature length piece on the plight of these exploited workers (see [www.nytimes.com/2009/02/22/us/22wyoming.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/22/us/22wyoming.html)).

This January, Ripple-Carpenter published a feature piece in The Denver Voice about the abuses faced by these herders. The same month, his footage was used in a Colorado PBS round-table discussion on the issue. On January 14th, the story of working conditions in the Colorado sheep industry was picked up by the Associated Press, The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The Denver Post, The Washington Post, ABC Nightly News, and literally hundreds of papers and media outlets throughout the country and the world.

This national media attention has produced an awareness of the problem, to the point where the industry and the political powers-that-be are having to react. Daniel Kagen, a Democrat Representative to the Colorado State House, from Denver is proposing a bill that would protect herders' basic human rights. We at The Red Pill would like to thank Jacob Ripple-Carpenter along with Colorado Legal Services, Colorado Immigration Rights Coalition, and Thomas Acker for their tireless efforts to bring this hidden story to light.

Thank You.♦



“HONDURAS” FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

payed them informal visits. A US law firm, Orrick, Herring, & Sutcliffe, provides legal representation to the top financial backers of the golpe, operating under the auspices of the Business Council of Latin America, and their top lawyer happens to be the former US ambassador to El Salvador, Lanny Davis. As Micheletti's grip tightened on the state of Honduras, resistance swelled in the streets. Involving blockades by University students, daily marches including thousands of protesters, and workers' strikes throughout the country, the movement to oust the golpe met with ferocious oppression. Disappearances, torture, and murder mark the golpe's historical place within Latin America's terrible lineage of US-

trained military dictatorships. The resistance climaxed as Zelaya clandestinely re-entered the capitol, Tegucigalpa, finding asylum within the Brazilian embassy. Negotiations ensuing between the golpe and Zelaya's government, mediated by the wealthiest man in Honduras, exposed the disintegration of all political solutions. In November, the military government held an election, unrecognized by Zelaya and international solidarity groups, bringing Porfirio Lobo to the presidency. Micheletti has since been declared Senator for Life (the same title auspiciously conferred on August Pinochet after Chile's murderous military coup) and President Lobo has called for amnesty for the golpe leaders.

“HONDURAS” ON PAGE SEVEN