

CALIFORNIA CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

In California there are two competing forces claiming leadership as the primary voice of California society and in particular, the voice of crime Victims-Survivors of violent felonies: i.e. murder, rape, child molestation, and the rapacious Three Strike career criminals. Violent and serious felonies also include burglary, armed assault, arson, stalking, using a gun and so many other "lesser," felonies, strangely considered "non-violent."

A whole menu of truly vicious felony crimes are labeled "low level or non-violent," as if it is just bad boy stuff. Really, ask the mother of a four year old child being stalked what she thinks..."non-violent?" You are kidding, right?" Or a senior citizen held up at gun point then knocked down and their money stolen..."low level?" Really?

This competition also includes the debate over how California should treat criminals, the nature and classification of crime, appropriate prison punishment and terms of parole. Each side says it represents and speaks for the victims of crime, and, each claims it advocates for a "just" punishment of convicted felons. How about a "just" decision for the victim-survivors.

The two groups have diametrically opposite opinions of the seriousness of crime: felony vs misdemeanors; criminal rights vs victim rights; tough prison sentences vs relaxed sentences with lots of loopholes, tough parole standards vs relaxed parole.

BASICALLY IT GET DOWN TO THIS: Which group has the best interest in the victim-survivors?

The hundreds of vicious crime victims-survivors groups throughout California

OR

The recently emerging pro-criminal, soft on crime organizations funded by huge liberal foundations, charities, organizations, criminal trial lawyers, the ACLU, wealthy super-rich individuals and more in this vein.

The two groups are:

...Crime Victim-Survivors and their organizations and supporters.

Victims-Survivors are VICTIM FOCUSED and are strongly anti-criminal, pro public safety, strongly against lax frivolous punishment especially for violent and career criminals.

These victim groups were initially formed during Jerry Brown's first two terms as Governor in the 1970s (a heyday of crime in California) in response to Brown's active promotion of pro-crime, pro-criminal legislation, his Rose Bird Supreme Court, appointment of liberal and soft judges to Superior Court, soft parole boards and District Attorneys who would go along to get along

In the 1970s, the citizens of California had enough. The Victim-Survivors instigated a citizen's revolt passing many anti-crime, anti-criminal measures, via legislation and/or ballot approval, with excellent results up thru 2008 with the passage of Marsy's Law - now part of the California Constitution that specifies a victim's bill of rights throughout the entire criminal justice system.

What was the effect of victim-survivors action? The most dangerous criminals and career criminals, the 3-strikers, received long sentences, they were removed from civil society. California crime dropped every year, society was safe.

...Pro-criminal groups are CRIMINAL FOCUSED.

Under Proposition 47 – 2014 and the up-coming Proposition 57 - 2016 these criminal focused groups support the immediate release, via out-right release or parole to County Sheriffs, of convicts imprisoned for so called "non-violent and non-serious crime": the goal is to empty the prisons; softening the criminal justice system (dumbing down crime) to award criminals the least time in prison.

Net effect. California is now in a crime epidemic in almost all cities and counties.

1. **Organizations of Victims and Survivors of violent crime**. These organization's primary objective is to aid, assist, succor and comfort victims and survivors through the damaging, life altering effects of the crime on their lives and their families, and, the heartbreak suffered through the rigorous judicial process that focuses on the criminal, not the victims-survivors. Victims-Survivors are sentenced to a life sentence of sorrow, loneliness and health problems, and in too many cases, loss of income, jobs and financial problems.

These groups insist on justice for the victims-survivors, and, their legal standing in the criminal justice process. Victim-Survivors want tough, meaningful sentences for convicted career criminals, murderers, child molesters, rapists, arsonists, aggravated assault, burglars, crime with guns and a wide variety of violent felony crimes. The goal is to keep criminals out of civilized society for as long as possible.

The victims-survivor groups include all income, cultural, and racial demographics. Victim organizations are mostly 501(c) (3) status, meaning they are forbidden to engage in political activity, to endorse, as a group in order to maintain tax deduction status of contributors. Victims-Survivors are loosely organized state-side, there is no central command. Their activity and influence is mostly local, by county. Their organizations are almost a cottage industry, scraping donations from members; pancake breakfasts; golf tournaments and such; anti-criminal private donors; and associations of District Attorneys, Sheriff's offices and police departments. Their prime influence is local, by county.

2. **Organizations of criminal advocates** truly believe there are too many convicts in prison. The overwhelming number of convicts are hapless victims of a corrupt legal system that just wants to lock them up and throw away the key. All the bad people need is some love, rehabilitation and a chance for a wonderful new life.

Their 2016 ballot objective is voter approval of Proposition 57, authored by Gov. Brown. Prop. 57's goal is to free a whole new tier of felony convicts who committed even more dangerous-more violent crimes that are, strangely, all considered "lesser" violent crimes. They want to redefine crime from felonies to misdemeanors...reducing the seriousness of violent crime in order to empty prisons. 2/3 of released convicts' recidivate, commit more crime, and within three years, are back in prison. The focus is the

welfare of the criminal and criminal rights. The welfare of victims-survivors, whose lives have been torn apart by these criminals are not their concern.

Simply, they want to dumb down crime and release even more criminals into a society undergoing a serious crime wave created by Prop. 47. Prop. 57 triples down the misery

The public, government, judges and politicians do not consider the lifelong effect of crime on the victims-survivors. Only the welfare of the criminal is considered.

The effect of crime on victims:

...loss of income

...loss of health, medical costs

...loss of family,

...expenses of the victim to participate in the criminal justice system

...AND, the exorbitant societal cost of crime and the criminal justice system. The cost of crime to society is billions upon billions every year, much greater than the cost of prisons and building new prisons.

These groups include, Californians for Safety and Justice (CSJ), the ACLU, trial lawyers & their associations, convict unions, academic theoreticians, extremely wealthy liberal foundations and individuals; public unions and teachers unions among others.

CSJ is a new player in California. They are generously funded by left wing, very rich, foundations. In fact, George Soros is one key contributor. CSJ is well organized and capitalized, like a business, a marketing company, and have the funds to spend on promoting pro-criminal actions. They are selling a product: freedom for convicts. Like the cynical character Lonesome Rhodes in the movie A Face In The Crowd, CSJ is huckstering a fake, a phony, a disastrous message to California voters. CSJ works at many levels:

...at state and local government,

...ballot propositions,

...state legislation

...state-wide glitzy-glamour extravaganzas for law enforcement, academic seminars and much more.

CSJ claims to be the new voice of victims while seeking early release of convicts who harm the victims they claim to champion.

The mantra is “rehabilitation at the local level vs prison time.” We will find out how that works out. Since the release of thousands of Proposition 47 convicts, California is now having a large crime wave throughout the state.

CSJ has financial impact to influence voters. In 2014, CSJ and their gaggle of associates spent \$8.5 million on Prop 47. For 2016, they will spend \$10.3 million for Prop 57.