

L.A.'s #1

IF YOU WONDER WHY WE'RE DYING, CHECK OUT HOW WE'RE LIVING

[photographic images and illustrations border the top, left, and bottom of the poster, depicting issues discussed in the text: Cartoon showing Affirmative Action window closed, Preferential incarceration open; a photo of two small boys; a handgun; a person in a facemask with a helmet that says "WHITE POWER"; an adult and a child both looking scared; a detail of a "PORN MOVIE" poster; an image of Arnold Schwarzenegger as the Terminator; a photo of a gang tattoo; a child skeleton cartoon; Los Angeles County Courts building in Compton; buildings being demolished; a person sleeping on a bench; men in detention; a photo of a child behind the cardboard "bars" of a sign that reads "CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE?"; graffiti of LOS ANGELES with a prison tower; people working in sweatshops; a photo of people bleeding on the streets, with police in attendance; a LIFE magazine cover; a gas mask. In addition, there are several images of bullet holes.]

[two inset maps of Los Angeles County, with a text banner underneath] INTERSTATE 5 POSTERS EXPOSE JUVENILE INJUSTICE IN L. A. COUNTY. MORE PRISONS AND JAILS ARE LOCATED OFF INTERSTATE 5 THAN ANY OTHER ROAD IN THE WORLD. FOR MORE COPIES OF THIS POSTER, OR TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE WORK WE DO, CONTACT THE YOUTH JUSTICE COALITION AT: 323-235-4243; BY MAIL AT P.O. Box 73688, L. A. Cali, 90003; OR BY e-MAIL AT freeLAnow@yahoo.com.

[banner across the bottom of the poster] POLICE LINE – DO NOT CROSS (REPEATED)

- (1) L. A. County has the youngest population of any county in the U. S. with 28 percent of the residents – nearly three million people – under the age of 18. It is also the U. S. County with the largest gap between rich and poor. One-third of L. A.'s children are living in extreme poverty – representing both the U. S. city and county with the highest number of poor children. More than half of all children in L. A. County live in households with incomes below \$15,000 a year. , with the County's average income at \$20,683. Inequality in L.A. County is directly related to race and place of birth. Seventy percent of L. A. County, and 84 percent of L. A. City are made up of people of color. Thirty-six percent of the County's population were born outside of the U. S.; and 54 percent of the County's households have a primary language other than English. Worldwide, L. A. County has the most El Salvadorans, Mexicans, Hondurans, Guatemalans, Iranians, Cambodians, Koreans, Pilipinos, Armenians, Palestinians and other Arabs living outside their home countries. U. S. Census and United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- (2) The area made up of eastern L. A. County and neighboring San Bernardino and Orange Counties manufacture and distribute more cheap hand guns than any other region in the world. Gun manufacturers in the area are known by advocates as the "Ring of Fire" due to the high volume of gun production and distribution. The majority of the guns are produced by several companies owned by the members of a single extended family – the Jennings. Six guns made by Ring of Fire firms are on the ATF's list of the ten guns most frequently linked to crime in the U. S. Nearly 16 children a day die in the U. S. as a result of gun homicide, suicide, or unintentional shooting. Nationwide, handguns are used in 80 percent of homicides, nearly 70 percent of suicides and

nearly all accidental shootings. Denver Post; L. A. Times; Hearst Publications; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF)

- (3) L. A. County has experienced more riots/civil unrest than any other U. S. city – all of which were either directly cause by, or sparked in response to police brutality: the Chines Massacre of 1871; the police riot on striking dock workers in 1923; the Zoot Suit a.k.a Sailor Riots of 1945; the Watts Riots of 1965; the police riot on the Chicano Moratorium in 1970; and the L. A. Uprising in 1992.
- (4) Of the 13 primary drug markets nationwide, Los Angeles is the only primary market for the import, export and purchase OF ALL FIVE major illegal drugs: cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin and MDMA (ecstasy). This is due in part to the fact that L. A. County's ports are the third busiest in the world and the busiest in the U. S. The region shared by L. A., San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties produces more methamphetamine than any other region of the world, including more than 450 labs and dump sites and more than 30 superlabs producing over 20 tons of meth a year. This represents 70 to 90 percent of the meth produced in the United States. More than 80 percent of all meth labs seized are found in homes, garages, apartments, motels, or mobile homes where children are often present. These labs, stocked with toxic chemicals and at high risk for explosions, expose children to highly dangerous living conditions. For every pound of manufactured drug, 7 pounds of toxic sludge is left behind. Of roughly 2,000 lab sites found yearly in California, the average cleanup cost is \$2,450. Remediation of surrounding buildings and the environment costs much more and can take years. Chemical from large sites are so toxic, they have destroyed large trees, contaminated streams and killed surrounding vegetation. Pets and livestock who drink water runoff outside the labs, grow sick and die. L. A. High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HDTA); L. A. County District Attorney's Office
- (5) In the late 1800's, the political and economic elite of L. A. planned for the "whitening" of the region with a goal of creating an all-white city by 1900. At that time, L. A. had the highest number of lynchings of any U. S. city – both by vigilante mobs and "legal" hangings by law enforcement. Most lynching victims were people of color. In 1926, the Ku Klux Klan led a campaign to annex the city of Watts into Los Angeles to guarantee that no city in the area would have an African American city council. To this day, L. A. County has the highest concentration of white supremacy groups of any region of the U. S. California State Department of Justice.
- (6) The first groups in L. A. to be labeled by law enforcement and policy makers as gangs were Mexicans who banded together to protect or reclaim land and property after the U. S. annexation of California in 1848. Today, L. A. County has more alleged street gang members than any other city or county in the world – with more than 1,000 separate street gangs and individual members at approximately 150,000. L. A. gangs have now migrated to most states in the U. S., Mexico, and much of Central America. In South Africa, youth have named their street associations after L. A.'s Crips and Bloods. The County's highest number of gang homicides occurs in Watts, Compton and South Central, the area served by the nation's busiest trauma unit at King Drew Medical Center. The Trauma Center was just closed extending by 30 minutes the ambulance travel for trauma victims in the area. Community residents report that several people have already died due to the longer trip. U. S. Attorney's Office; LAPD; LA County Sheriff's Department; L. A. Times

- (7) For the past two decades, L. A. County has had the highest number of homicides in the nation, and has scored the highest murder rate per capita more often in history than any other U. S. city. The homicide rate in the city of Los Angeles has doubled in each of the last five years. Last year, there were 350 "gang related" homicides alone. The LAPD no longer keeps statistics on those wounded, maimed or terrified by gunfire. Even in the 1800s, L. A. was known as the nation's most violent city. If L. A. had the same murder rate today that it had in 1870, 600,000 people a year would be killed. At that time, the city was so violent that the French government sent troops to L. A. to protect its citizens living there. Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime Stats Division.
- (8) L. A. County leads the nation in school overcrowding. Within L. A., Unified School District, 14 high schools have more than 4,000 students – Roosevelt is the largest high school in the U. S. L. A. County students score in the lowest 1/3 of the nation at most grade levels, and only 62 percent of high school students graduate with their class. Harvard University Civil Rights Study; United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- (9) L. A. County has the highest concentration of sweatshops in the U. S. with more than 140,000 workers and 5,000 contractors. Many of L. A.'s garment workers are paid well below the state minimum wage. In 2000, when California's minimum wage was \$5.75 per hour, the Census reported the average wage for garment workers in the United States as \$5.18 per hour. However, average wages are even lower, because workers in underground factories are forced to work long hours, and undocumented people are often paid less than other workers.
Sweatshop Watch
- (10) L. A. has the largest runaway/homeless youth population in the U. S. with between 11,000 and 15,000 youth living on the street. (This does not include thousands for young people who are homeless living with their families.) In L. A., 50 percent of homeless youth have system experience with foster care, group homes, juvenile hall or prison. Twenty-five to 40 percent of the homeless youth population in large cities are LGBT2A youth. Nationwide, there are 200,000 homeless youth and 500,000 children living with homeless families. My Friends Place; Children's Defense Fund; Coalition for the Homeless
- (11) L. A. County has the nation's largest number of youth living in foster care – 48,455. Countywide, one child in ten is being raised by someone other than a parent – either other relatives or non-relatives. Public Counsel: L. A. County Department of Children and Family Services
- (12) L. A. County has the highest arrest rate in the nation and administers 540 courts. Each year, 180,000 people are processed through 8 county jails; and more than 15,000 youth through three juvenile halls. Youth Justice Coalition from L. A. County Department of Probation, L. A. County Sheriff's Department, and L. A. County Courts.
- (13) Los Angeles County also incarcerates more youth and adults than any other county or city jurisdiction in the world. When compared to nations, the U. A. is #1 in the number of prisoners, China with one-third of the world's population is #2, and California is #3 – with people from L. A. making up 30 percent of California's incarcerated population. (The U. S. makes up 5 percent of the world's population, but has nearly 30 percent of the world's prisoners. The total U. S. population is about 296 million, while China's is 1.3 billion. The U. S. prison population grew by 1.9 percent in 2004 – people in federal, state, local and other prisons now total nearly 2.3 million, while China has 1.5 million prisoners). Critical Resistance: Youth Justice Coalition:

California Department of Corrections; U. S. Department of Justice; International Center for Prison Studies at King's College in London

- (14) Los Angeles – Specifically the San Fernando Valley – is #1 worldwide in the production and distribution of pornography. The region is home to most of America's pornography industry – videos, websites, phone sex businesses, and magazines. The San Fernando Valley also has the largest sex toy industry worldwide. The past five years have seen record profits for the porn industry, as video and computer technology opened the doors to hundreds of millions of potential customers around the world. Pornography generates more than 10 billion dollars a year in U. S. sales, making it more profitable than professional basketball, football and baseball combined. Youth under the age of 18 are regularly exploited by the porn industry. L. A. Weekly; L. A. Times.
- (16) L. A. County deports more people than any other county in the U. S. This is also an historical reality dating back over a hundred years, During the Depression, the LAPD set up "bum blockades" on the Arizona border to stop people migrating into L. A. from the East, and also illegally deported to Mexico thousands of people born in the U. S. as well as documented immigrants. Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
- (18) L. A. uses more gas than any other county in the nation. Worldwide, China is #1 in the use of gasoline; the United States is #2; California is #3; and L. A. County is #4. Due to our reliance on automobiles, the size of our ports, several toxic industries, and our natural geography that creates an inversion layer between the sea, the mountains and the desert, L. A.'s air quality, and resulting asthma, emphysema and cancer rates have always been among the worst in the world. National Public Radio; Communities for a Better Environment
- (19) L. A. County has contributed more to the rise of the political right than any other region of the country, including leadership – Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and Arnold Schwarzenegger, and policies – gang suppression tactics including gang injunctions and gang databases, Proposition 21, Three Strikes, anti-immigrant and English-only initiatives, and the massive expansion of the prison industrial complex.

[cartoon image of a male child dressed in gang attire in lower right hand corner]