

Under Lock & Key

November/December 2011, No. 23 Publication of the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons

THE REAL PERCENTAGE\$

Amerika

the Corporations

VS.

13%

\$48 trillion in total wealth (2008)

- richest nation in the world
- 5% of the world's people
- 312 million people
- top 13% by income (most in top 10%)
- consume 25% of world's resources
- occupy stolen land



Sources for this graphic on page 16...

The middle class is too BIG to fail!

\$40 trillion in total worth (2008)

When the Amerikan middle class demands more, the imperialists take it out of the Third World, where people suffer and die from lack of food, clean water and basic medicine. Real income redistribution requires the destruction of the privileged imperialist nations.

80%

- consume 23.4% of world's resources
- 1.6 billion have no electricity
- 1.1 billion lack adequate water
- 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation
- 28% children in poor countries are underweight/stunted
- 8 million children die from poverty each year

COMPARING ANNUAL INCOMES	
Global Median	\$850
Richest 20%	\$1,835 +
Richest 10%	\$25,000 +
U.S. Median	\$26,364
Equal Distribution	\$8,400

CDCR Responds with Group Punishment, Isolation, Gang Charges

by MIM(Prisons)
September 2011

As thousands of prisoners wrap up day five of round two of the California Food Strike, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has stepped up its repression and propaganda in response to prisoners' demands for basic human rights. They have even declared it a punishable offense to peacefully campaign the state for these rights by refusing state-issued food.

The bourgeois press has been repeating the CDCR's ridiculous claim that if prisoners went on strike again it might delay reforms in the SHU system. Their audacity is laughable. We

all know the strike is nothing but a scapegoat, and not the cause of their "delay."

Meanwhile, they have indicated that they will make conditions worse on three main points of the original Five Core Demands. All three points address the systematic repressive nature of the whole California prison system.

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Newsflash: Amerikans are the Top 13 Percent

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
October 2011

Recent demonstrations in U.S. cities have claimed to represent "the 99%" opposed to the greed of the richest 1%. MIM(Prisons) supports a more equitable distribution of the world's resources. What most Amerikans don't realize is that a true redistribution of wealth would mean less for them as they are all part of the richest 13%.

In 1970 an action similar in form to Occupy Wall Street! (OWS!) occurred in response to the

Continued on page 5...

What is Under Lock & Key?

Under Lock & Key (ULK) is the voice of the anti-imperialist movement within prisons in the United States. Fighting the injustice system is just one part of the anti-imperialist struggle, and it is important that comrades not lose sight of the connections to the larger battle. For this reason, in addition to news about prisons and prisoner struggles, we also publish more general news and analysis important to the anti-imperialist movement. We welcome support and collaboration from those who are focused only on prison issues, but we also challenge them to see the importance of carrying out their work as part of a larger anti-imperialist strategy.

ULK serves as a forum to develop and promote agitational campaigns led by MIM(Prisons) and USW. Our current battles in the United States are legally permitted. We encourage prisoners to join these battles while explicitly discouraging them from engaging in any violence or illegal acts. MIM(Prisons) and its publications explicitly oppose the use of armed struggle at this time in the imperialist countries (including the United States).

ULK is edited and published by MIM(Prisons) and mostly written and illustrated by USW and other United Front organizations behind bars. *ULK* comes out every other month, and is free for U.S. prisoners. For people outside of prison, all issues of *ULK*, plus additional reports from within U.S. prisons, are available on MIM(Prisons)'s website: www.prisoncensorship.info

What is Imperialism?

Imperialism is an economic system that V.I. Lenin defined as "the highest stage of capitalism." It became well pronounced in the early 1900s and is defined by the globalization of capital, the dominance of finance capital and the division of the world into imperialist and exploited nations; Maoists see the latter as the principal contradiction in the world today.

As the economic system that dominates the world, imperialism determines much of the material reality that all inhabitants of planet Earth face today, including war, poverty and environmental destruction. This means that the status quo promoted by imperialist interests is the biggest hindrance to change. As the dominant imperialist power, both financially and militarily, the United States generally serves as the primary target of our attacks as anti-imperialists.

What is the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons?

The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons, MIM(Prisons), is a cell of revolutionaries serving the oppressed masses inside U.S. prisons. We uphold the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and work from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat.

Imperialism is the number one enemy of the majority of the world's people; we cannot achieve our goal of ending all oppression without overthrowing imperialism. History has shown that the imperialists will wage war before they will allow an end to oppression.

As revolutionary internationalists, we support the self-determination of all nations and peoples. Today, the U.S. prison system is a major part of the imperialist state used to prevent the self-determination of oppressed nations. It is for this reason that we see prisoners in this country as being at the forefront of any anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement. While our organization focuses on prisoner support, we believe that there is a dire need for Maoists to do organizing and educational work in many areas in the United States. We hope people are inspired by our example around prisons and apply it to their own work to create more Maoist cells and broaden the Maoist

movement behind enemy lines.

MIM(Prisons) distinguishes ourselves from other groups on the six points below. We consider other organizations actively upholding these points to be fraternal.

1. Communism is our goal. Communism is a society where no group has power over any other group.

2. Dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary. In a dictatorship of the proletariat the formerly exploited majority dictates to the minority (who promoted exploitation) how society is to be run. In the case of imperialist nations, a Joint Dictatorship of the Proletariat of the Oppressed Nations (JDPO) must play this role where there is no internal proletariat or significant mass base that favors communism.

3. We promote a united front with all who oppose imperialism. The road to the JDPO over the imperialist nations involves uniting all who can be united against imperialism. We cannot fight imperialism and fight others who are engaged in life-and-death conflicts with imperialism at the same time. Even imperialist nation classes can be allies in the united front under certain conditions.

4. A parasitic class dominates the First World countries. As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM Thought has reiterated through materialist analysis, imperialism extracts super-profits from the Third World and in part uses this wealth to buy off whole populations of so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy; they are not a vehicle for Maoism. Those who work in the economic interests of the First World labor aristocracy form the mass base for imperialism's tightening death-grip on the Third World.

5. New bourgeoisies will form under socialism. Mao led the charge to expose the bourgeoisie that developed within the communist party in the Soviet Union and the campaign to bombard the headquarters in his own country of China. Those experiences demonstrated the necessity of continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The class struggle does not end until the state has been abolished and communism is reached.

6. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China was the furthest advancement toward communism in history. We uphold the Soviet Union until the death of Stalin in 1953, followed by the People's Republic of China through 1976, as the best examples of modern socialism in practice. The arrest of the "Gang of Four" in China and the rise of Krushchev in the Soviet Union marked the restoration of capitalism in those countries. Other experiments in developing socialism in the 20th century failed to surpass the Soviet model (i.e. Albania), or worse, stayed within the capitalist mode of production, generally due to a failure to break with the Theory of Productive Forces.

What is United Struggle from Within?

United Struggle from Within (USW) is a MIM(Prisons)-led mass organization for U.S. prisoners. USW is explicitly anti-imperialist in leading campaigns on behalf of U.S. prisoners in alliance with national liberation struggles in the United States and around the world. USW won't champion struggles which are not in the interests of the international proletariat. USW will also not choose one nation's struggles over other oppressed nations' struggles. USW should work independently, but under the guidance of MIM(Prisons) to build public opinion and independent institutions of the oppressed in order to obtain state power independent of imperialism. Members don't have to agree with MIM(Prisons)'s cardinal points (see above) but they can't consciously disagree with any of them. See page 12 for info on active USW campaigns.

United Front for Peace in Prisons- Statement of Principles

The basis of any real unity comes from an agreement on certain key ideas. This statement does not grant authority to any party over any other party. We are mutually accountable to each other to uphold these points in order to remain active participants in this united front.

★ PEACE: WE organize to end the needless conflicts and violence within the U.S. prison environment. The oppressors use divide and conquer strategies so that we fight each other instead of them. We will stand together and defend ourselves from oppression.

★ UNITY: WE strive to unite with those facing the same struggles as us for our common interests. To maintain unity we have to keep an open line of networking and communication, and ensure we address any situation with true facts. This is needed because of how the pigs utilize tactics such as rumors, snitches and fake communications to divide and keep division among the oppressed. The pigs see the end of their control within our unity.

★ GROWTH: WE recognize the importance of education and freedom to grow in order to build real unity. We support members within our organization who leave and embrace other political organizations and concepts that are within the anti-imperialist struggle. Everyone should get in where they fit in. Similarly, we recognize the right of comrades to leave our organization if we fail to live up to the principles and purpose of the United Front for Peace in Prisons.

★ INTERNATIONALISM: WE struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people. While we are often referred to as "minorities" in this country, and we often find those who are in the same boat as us opposing us, our confidence in achieving our mission comes from our unity with all oppressed nations who represent the vast majority globally. We cannot liberate ourselves when participating in the oppression of other nations.

★ INDEPENDENCE: WE build our own institutions and programs independent of the United States government and all its branches, right down to the local police, because this system does not serve us. By developing independent power through these institutions we do not need to compromise our goals.

How to join the United Front?

★ Study and uphold the five principles above.

★ Send your organization's name and a statement of unity to MIM(Prisons). Your statement can explain what the united front principles mean to your organization, how they relate to your work, why they are important, etc.

★ Develop peace and unity between factions where you are at on the basis of opposing oppression of all prisoners and oppressed people in general.

★ Send reports on your progress to *Under Lock & Key*. Did you develop a peace treaty or protocol that is working? Send it in for others to study. Is your unity based on actions? Send us reports on the organizing you are doing.

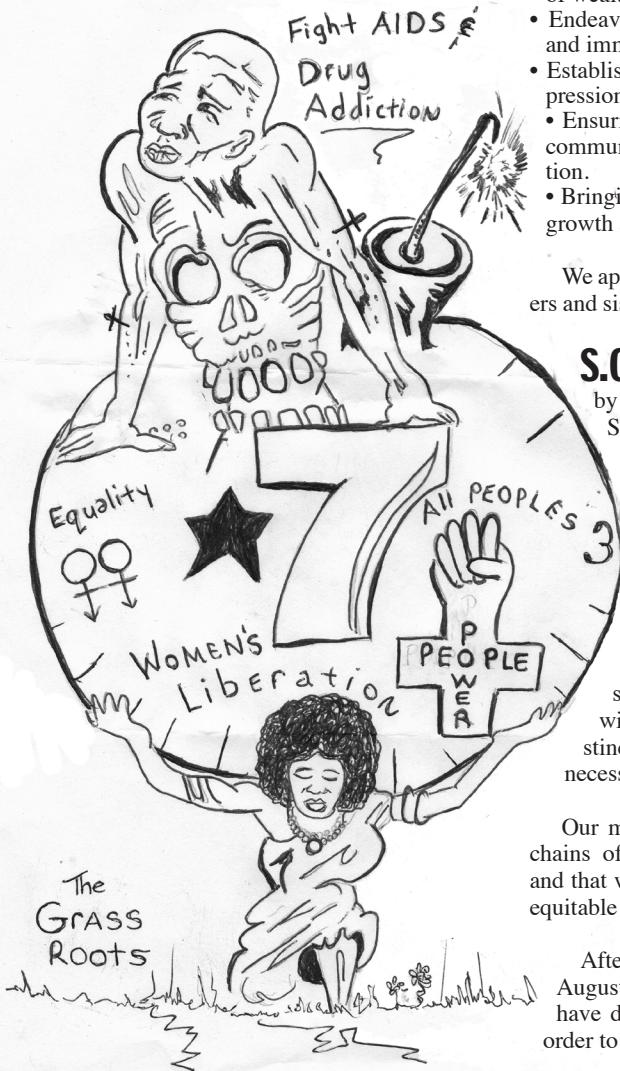
★ Keep educating your members. The more educated your members are, the more unity you can develop, and the stronger your organization can become. Unity comes from the inside out. By uniting internally, we can better unite with others as well. Contact MIM(Prisons) if you need additional materials to educate your members in history, politics and economics.

United Revolutionary Movement Joins United Front for Peace

by a Florida prisoner
September 2011

We, the United Revolutionary Movement, will join with the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons in the United Front to continue the struggle against imperialism and the injustice system. The United Revolutionary Movement's mission is to speak out against imperialism, racism, capitalism, police brutality, fascism, and poverty. We do agree with the United Front for Peace in Prisons statement of principles. We agree with MIM(Prisons)'s cardinal point number one: "Communism is our goal. Communism is a society where no group has power over any other group."

One of the four principles of the United Front is internationalism. We struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people. While we are often referred to as "minorities" in this country, and we often find those who are in the same boat as us opposing us, our confidence in achieving our mission comes from our unity with all oppressed nations who represent the vast majority globally. We cannot liberate ourselves when participating in the oppression of other nations.★



Ghost Guerilla Mafia Signs on to United Front

by a Federal prisoner
October 2011

To my comrades of the United Front for Peace in Prison, I give the services of the Ghost Guerilla Mafia to bring together those comrades who are lost in the primitive battles of who's blue, red, yellow or green. As "G's" we give our full effort to establishing unity, peace, and independence amongst the comrades we encounter. Having first accepted the task of fulfilling the aims of the Ghost Guerilla Mafia, and now the task of serving the people, we recognize our true enemies for what they are. Our battles are not with the people, for we do not do the dirty work for the scum of the U.S. bureaucracy. The goals of the Ghosts are as follows:

- Unifying resistance forces, especially among our youth, for the preparation of the overthrow of unjust dictatorship and what we call imperial-democracy in the U.S.
- Educating the masses to the political struggles inside and outside the institutions and gulags of amerikkka, and to the past and future struggle of the common people here and abroad.
- Standing on the side of impoverished and otherwise oppressed people in their struggles for freedom, justice, respect, and fair distribution of wealth.
- Endeavoring for harmony of all indigenous and immigrant minorities in this country
- Establishing institutions for learning and expression for the people of our communities
 - Ensuring the protection and security of our communities from oppressive/insurgent action.
- Bringing the poor to power, peace, strength, growth and liberty.

We appreciate the efforts of all of your brothers and sisters and we are behind you 1000%.★

S.O.B. Joins United Front

by an Illinois prisoner
September 2011

I am writing on behalf of Soldiers of Bondage (S.O.B.). We are a movement within the Illinois State prisons that fights the oppression by our government.

We fight obscurantism, opacity, and refuse to abnegate to our oppressors! Like any real movement we fight with every resource that we possess; instinct, intelligence, conviction, and (when necessary) violence.

Our mission is to free everyone from their chains of bondage so that they may be free and that we, as a unified people, can live under equitable conditions.

After reading and digesting the July/August 2011 issue of *Under Lock & Key* I have decided to unite with my comrades in order to better achieve the goals of S.O.B.★

...Continued from page 1

...CDCR

• MORE GROUP PUNISHMENT - Not only has the CDCR threatened that reforms will be slowed down by another round of hunger striking, but they have implied that non-striking prisoners will also lose their programming as a result. This is in direct contradiction to the first demand.

• MORE SECURITY THREAT GROUPS - While the prisoners have demanded an end to the arbitrary and secretive system of giving people endless sentences in the Security Housing Units (SHU, long-term isolation) for "gang affiliation," the CDCR has publicly discussed broadening the "Security Threat Group" category to include street organizations. This will mean more people in SHU for indeterminate sentences.

• MORE LONG-TERM ISOLATION - The third demand calls for an end to the torturous practice of long-term isolation. While the state has continued to assert that these practices are constitutional based on court rulings, they have promised to send more prisoners to Administrative Segregation and SHU just for participating in the hunger strike!

As laid out in the Five Core Demands, these are parts of a system of oppression that affects all prisoners. While comrades in SHU have the drive to put it down hardest because of their living conditions, the CDCR is making it clear that the implications will affect the whole system.

Even the reforms offered in the Gang Management Policy Proposal of 25 August 2011 allow the continued practice of keeping the most progressive and politically active prisoners in isolation indefinitely. While this would put California more in line with what is done in most other parts of the country, it is hardly progress. This proposal highlights the political nature of the injustice system.

Even the 8 Short-term Action Items affecting prisoners in Security Housing Units listed in a 27 September 2011 CDCR memo may not be granted to prisoners refusing to eat state-issued meals. They hope that by granting the more petty demands that they can break up the unity of California prisoners, convincing some to give up while they are ahead. The unreasonable actions of the CDCR during this whole conflict should convince any prisoner that such a move would be a mistake. There is no indication that California will be reducing its repression, and every indication that it hopes to heighten Amerika's war on oppressed nations.

Round 2 Roundup

October 2011

Below we will summarize the information we have on the second round of the California hunger strike to improve conditions in the Security Housing Units (SHU). See other articles in this issue for more details. California prisoners should have already received a collection of dozens of additional reports from us in mid-October.

Continued on next page...

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...CDCR

On September 29 the CDCR reported 4252 prisoners had not accepted food trays since September 26 when round two of the food strike began. They listed participating facilities as: Calipatria SP, Centinela SP, CSP-Corcoran, Ironwood SP, Pelican Bay SP, CSATF-Corcoran, San Quentin SP, Salinas Valley SP. This count excluded a number of prisons where people were participating, and at least some of which had refused all their meals. It also excluded a number of prisoners who had been transferred to Arizona, Mississippi and Oklahoma who participated. Information we've gathered indicate we can at least add the following California prisons to the list: Kern Valley SP, North Kern SP, CRC in Norco, Pleasant Valley SP, West Valley Detention Center and CIM-Chino.

The highest, and most inclusive, number reported was 12,000 prisoners participating in the strike between September 26 and 28 according to the federal receiver's office. Hundreds of prisoners in Pelican Bay and Corcoran SHU fasted until October 13. Close to a hundred in Calipatria reportedly went until October 15. About 15 comrades in CIM-Chino went until Pelican Bay stopped. Comrades in Kern Valley State Prison went 6 days in solidarity. As we go to press we have not heard from any participants as to why the strike ended this time around. One of the lawyers appointed as an outside mediator stated that the CDCR was going to "review" everyone's SHU sentences. The CDCR reported that no changes had been made to their existing plans to "reform" the SHU system. A handful of comrades were still not eating after October 15. We cannot confirm that all have stopped refusing food.

Political Repression of Strikers

"After we stopped the first strike in July all we got was harassment, cold food and laundry messed with even more. [At least one comrade was reported to have been beaten down by COs.]" - Calipatria

"Today, September 30, while at yard in our cages, the police came and retaliated at the south siders in the strike. They denied yard and came in their cells and took magazines, books, toothpaste, deodorant, and shampoo. The police are inhumane and this proves it." - PBSP

"As of September 29 2011, CDCR removed all representatives in the short corridor as well as the organizers of the hunger strike. They were all placed in Ad-Seg (that's the story CDCR is giving). No one has access to them. We don't know what their condition is, because they are also on the hunger strike." - PBSP

"On September 29 2011, Pelican Bay staff started pulling prisoners out of their cells, so they could take all food out of their cells; even from those prisoners who couldn't participate in the hunger strike because of poor health and serious medical needs. Their canteen and food was taken away as a result of the hunger strike."

"At the conclusion of the hunger strike the COs in General Population at PBSP initiated

a 90 day lock down for no specified act or incident from the prisoners."

As of October 11 no liquids had been received by the 15 comrades transferred from PBSP SHU to Ad-Seg.

"They (cops) came and took every single thing we had in our cells. It will be easier to tell you what we were left with, they left us with state issued clothes, and nothing else; no toothbrush, no books, absolutely nothing. I was fortunate enough to come across this one piece of paper and envelope. Also remember that we haven't even received the write up yet, but our property was illegally taken three days after we began our HS." - PBSP prisoners already in Ad-Seg waiting for room to open in the SHU

"I received an official 'rejection' notice for a legal letter which stated 'disallowed letter that encourages inmates to form a hunger strike and plan to disrupt the order of this facility.' ... If this was indeed a legal letter, from a legitimate attorney, how did they know what was inside the envelope unless they illegally opened it outside my presence?" - High Desert Prisoner

Statements from Strikers

"My viewpoint on this hunger strike is that these material items such as sweats, photos, colored pens, etc., are not what we really want, but rather are items that should have been part of the established curriculum for the SHU all along." - PBSP SHU

"Last time CDCR retaliated by not giving us our liquids (milk/juice), we 602ed [grieved] it and won. This time around they were forced to give us our liquids. Not much but it's progress. We're supporting the Bay's 5 core demands, but we also have our issues here. We're SHU prisoners therefore entitled to SHU privileges: TVs, radios, shoes, etc. Here we're given nothing. We've argued, demanded, 602ed, and yet we have nothing. CDCR's run around and usual response, 'we'll look into it,' or plain denials is all we get." - Calipatria Ad-Seg

"Things have to change. The current cycle of abuse and the systematic way in which it's

applied is more than any human spirit can take. It's a miraculous accomplishment that so many of us still housed here at Pelican Bay SHU still have our sanity." - PBSP SHU

Solidarity

A statement from The Campaign to Free Ahmad Sa'adat drew important connections between the oppression of settlers in Israel and settlers in the United States. They wrote, "Across the world, prisoners stand on hunger strike, demanding dignity and justice. The Campaign to Free Ahmad Sa'adat salutes the California hunger strikers, expresses our deepest solidarity, and joins in their demands for dignity and justice." From their background info: "Ahmad Sa'adat is the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council. One of nearly 10,000 Palestinian political prisoners, he has been sentenced to thirty years in Israeli prisons for a range of 'security-related' political offenses. These charges include membership in a prohibited organization (the PFLP, of which Sa'adat is General Secretary), holding a post in a prohibited organization, and incitement, for a speech Sa'adat made following the Israeli assassination of his predecessor, Abu Ali Mustafa, in August 2001."(1)

Even after round two was over, solidarity demonstrations have occurred inside and outside California, with prison activists piggy-backing on the Occupy Wall Street movement (see page 1).

And we know that participants will not soon forget this struggle. Subscriptions to *Under Lock & Key* in California prisons are at an all time high following this summer's activism. We have also seen the response in the number of reports we have received from comrades, both old and new, especially around the second round of the strike. We look forward to continuing to build with everyone in solidarity with the struggle to put an end to long-term isolation. ★

Notes:
1. <http://www.freeahmadsaadat.org>

On Prisons & Prisoners

MIM(Prisons) seeks to build public opinion against Amerika's criminal injustice system, and to eventually replace the bourgeois injustice system with proletarian justice. The bourgeois injustice system imprisons and executes a disproportionately large and growing number of oppressed people while letting the biggest mass murderers -- the imperialists and their lackeys -- roam free. Imperialism is not opposed to murder or theft. It only insists that these crimes be committed in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

All U.S. citizens are criminals -- accomplices and accessories to the crimes of U.S. oppression globally until the day U.S. imperialism is overcome. All U.S. citizens should start from the point of view that they are reforming criminals.

MIM(Prisons) does not advocate that all prisoners go free today; we have a more effective program for fighting crime as was demonstrated in China prior to the restoration of capitalism there in 1976. We say that all prisoners are political prisoners because under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, all imprisonment is substantively political. It is our responsibility to exert revolutionary leadership and conduct political agitation and organization among prisoners -- whose material conditions make them an overwhelmingly revolutionary group. Some prisoners should and will work on self-criticism under a future dictatorship of the proletariat in those cases in which prisoners really did do something wrong by proletarian standards.

Corcoran Represses Strikers: Denies Salts, Sugars, Liquids

by NCTT - Corcoran SHU
October 2011

I am writing from 4B1L C Section short corridor isolation unit. It is October 9, day 13 of the second hunger strike in support of our 5 Core Demands and the abolition of SHU torture units as a means of manufacturing informants, crushing progressive political ideas, and maintaining the status quo for the prison industrial complex.

At this writing all New Afrikan and "southern" Mexican prisoners in this isolation unit are fully participating in the hunger strike, while our "northern" Mexican and white brothers are providing their moral support. We have not eaten since September 25 and the administration here has unleashed an unprecedented wave of retaliatory reprisals against us, aimed at breaking the hunger strike and provoking a violent reaction. This of course would undermine the non-violent basis of this peaceful effort, and they have thus far failed.

In response to this second effort, on September 29 CDCR revised its medical evaluation policy for hunger strikes to minimize the amount of medical data gathered and maximize the chance of serious injury or death to those on hunger strike by ceasing the taking of vital signs (blood pressure, heart rates, temperature) altogether and only weighing us twice a week -- unless it appears you need it. It was only because myself and another prisoner have lost so much weight since this began (over 10% of our body weight from the first weigh in on September 30) that our vital signs have been taken. Others who've requested it or asked in connection with complaints of dizziness, weakness, light headedness, etc., have been told to "put in a sick call request," which will cost \$5.

Canteen purchases for hunger strikers have been restricted to hygiene and stationary items only; no food or drink. On or about October 3 they raided 4B1L C Section and removed all food and drink items (even coffee and salt

On "Objective" Reporting

Under Lock & Key relies on our comrades behind bars to report on conditions and events inside prisons. We track the history and reliability of our writers and, when possible, we double check facts in the articles. But there will always be some facts we cannot verify before printing. Our readers are encouraged to let us know if they have information that contradicts what they see in *Under Lock & Key*. Yet, recognize that no matter how much the bourgeoisie tries to pretend, reporting is never completely objective or devoid of political content. MIM(Prisons) will always report from the perspective of the international proletariat and on the issues that best serve their interests.

packs) from the cells of hunger strikers. A short time later this warden and her entourage arrived in our section, laughing and joking like it was a day at the fair, and ordered sandbags placed in front of each of our cell doors to prevent any fishing [sharing between cells]. This was an attempt to prevent non-hunger strikers from getting coffee or Kool-Aid to those on hunger strike.

Human rights attorneys were barred access and we have been denied access to yard, and the law library. The warden even directed IGI [the "gang" unit] to open and/or confiscate legal mail for hunger strikers here. They have been dismissive and outright verbally disrespectful to some hunger strikers in a blatant attempt to provoke us. Earlier this week, pursuant to a 1030 confidential informant chrono alleging that two of our "southern" Mexican brothers here "ordered the hunger strike," those two brothers had their visits taken by the administration for 90 days. This is an absurd and blatant abuse of power clearly designed to provoke a violent reaction.

This is a peaceful human rights initiative supported across racial lines. It is impossible for any single group, let alone individual, to "order" anything. We are all participating of our individual free will guided by a collective desire to see an end to this systematic torture and industrial profiteering at our expense.

MIM(Prisons) adds: This statement from NCTT went on to express support and solidarity with the "Occupy Wall Street!" (OWS!) movement currently taking place across the United States. OWS! is essentially a movement to save the Amerikan dream, which is a nightmare for most of the world's people. In most parts of the country this movement has regularly appealed to cops as being "one of them." They call themselves the "99%," when in reality Amerikans are all members of the top 13% of the world in wealth; a position they maintain at the expense of the exploited Third World peoples.(see page 1)

While more progressive elements participating in OWS! in California have proclaimed support for the prisoner hunger strike, this mostly serves to Black/Brown-wash a movement that is openly about the enrichment of a group of people who built their wealth on the exploitation of Black and Brown people. From day one the Amerikan nation has been a supporter of colonialism and later imperialism, which in turn depends on Amerikans to expand its exploitation among other nations. For the oppressed people of the world, the awakening of Amerikans to action should be worrisome, as their demands for more translate into further tightening around the necks of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where their wealth is extracted from. ★

...Continued from page 1

...13%

assassination of students at Kent State University. In response, a local union rampaged through the street beating the students and attacking state offices. Reflecting on this event, a radio host implied OWS! was evidence of progress, measured by the union support it has received.

The material conditions of the U.S. invasion of Vietnam forced Amerikan youth at that time to take a more progressive position than today, leading them to come at odds with white nationalist unions. The OWS! actions are even more within the realm of white nationalism than the so-called "Battle in Seattle" in 1999 where anarchists and environmentalists linked arms with unions to oppose the World Trade Organization. Only the likes of MIM and J. Sakai recognized the reactionary white nationalism that anti-WTO sentiments were being focused into within the Amerikan context.(2) Yet, at least the anarchists had a healthy dose of internationalism motivating them back then.

With OWS! the principal cry is "defend the Amerikan middle class." While anarchists are attracted to the form (spokes councils and consensus open to "the people") the content is hopelessly white nationalist. It is the exact type of rhetoric that the social democrats of post-depression Europe spit that led to the rise of fascism in many countries.(1) When the privileged nations of the world feel their privilege is threatened they become uncharacteristically politicized in their demands for more. They attack the ultra-rich in order to create the illusion that they are poor in comparison. But facts are stubborn things, and the interests of Amerikans lead them to cry for the ultra-rich to defend Amerikan jobs and back the massive lines of credit they have taken out. Both demands are incompatible with the struggle for migrant rights, which has been in vogue among the white nationalist left in recent years.

MIM always said if real economic hard times hit the imperialist countries, we would see a rise of fascism more than an interest in Maoism. We say this not to instill fear and emotions but to promote a realistic assessment of conditions. Amerikan youth are the ones who put their bodies on the line in Seattle and now in New York and elsewhere. Because of the decades of life they have ahead of them, young people have more interest than their parents in transforming this world to a more equitable one. But to do so they must see things for what they are and get behind the real forces for progressive change. ★

Notes:

1. see H.W. Edwards. *Labor Aristocracy, Mass Base of Social Democracy*. Stockholm: Aurora, 1978.
2. *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Global Capitalism*. A MIM Study Pack.

Special Literature Offers
Ask for it when you write us!

Spanish: Old MIM lit en español.

MIM Notes: Old MIM Notes, the defunct newspaper of the Maoist Internationalist Movement.

Censorship: Epic Battle in PBSP

by cipactli of United Struggle from Within
September 2011

I have recently been hit with censorship of your mailing sent on 9 September 2011. I did receive prior to that the letter you sent to activists, but then on September 9 I got two 1819 forms indicating disapproval of mail. I have previously won two 602s [grievances] on this very issue, yet they cite the old 2006 memo [a ban on MIM's mail that was overruled years ago].

What happened is the regular Correctional Officer (CO) already been 602'd by me and has seen the 602 granted at the Director level, but he only works five days a week. The other two days a floater works and is not aware of my granted 602. The floater sends it to Institution Gang Investigations (IGI), who says to deny me. I guess the temporary CO is not very fond of MIM. Anyhow, I am sure I'll win the 602 I am submitting, but I know if I do it will take months. If possible, can you send whatever it was again? It seems I'll be having problems getting my mail from MIM Distributors on the regular CO's days off.

I showed my previous 602 that was granted, but was told by the temp "I don't know. They tell us one thing and tell you another. We need to get it straight." This is obviously B.S. because when a 602 is granted, especially at the Director level, it is obviously "straight."

This is a constant barrage of censorship. It's nonstop. I get a 602 granted and then someone comes who don't like MIM literature and then I'm forced to wait months appealing this and missing out on my studies. It is a protracted effort to censor MIM. But nothing MIM(Prisons) says is bad; it's political literature! And why send it to the gang unit when it's political? In Amerika this is how political literature is handled; by labeling it "gang material." This only confirms what MIM(Prisons) says, that there are no rights in Amerika, only power struggles! What happened to the so-called "freedom of the press?"

This prison's population has just gotten done with a three-week hunger strike and now it seems, as one of the participants, I'm now being retaliated on by censoring my political science correspondence course. But I thought the administrators from Sacramento came saying they would work on bettering our conditions if we stopped striking and ate? And now this is the repayment -- censoring the ability to think outside this cell, controlling my thoughts, and preventing me from learning anything besides the state's perspective. I can get all the *Forbes*, *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, *USA Today*, etc. that I want, but let me get something that speaks in the interests of poor people and I'm deprived.

This does not surprise me one bit, and I know how to go about the process of appealing. What pisses me off is thinking of all the prison-

The System Fails Us, but We Stay Committed

by 1st Crown of Black Order Revolutionary Organization
March 2011

On 4 February 2011, I received a Memorandum and Order regarding the Motions of Summary Judgment on the suit that I filed on two issues of *Under Lock & Key* (February 2008 and September 2008) that were censored, and four pamphlets from Kansas Mutual Aid (KMA). In short, summary judgment was granted on the two *ULK* issues.

On the February 2008 issue, the court ruled that "the first article in the publication discusses the rate of imprisonment across the United States for different races. Other articles highlight how the prison system is otherwise unfair to African-Americans and promotes 'modern day slavery.'" On the September 2008 issue, the court concluded that "the publication does appear to encourage prisoners to 'fight back' and 'unite against the injustice [sic] system.'" Of course, the court took these statements out of the context in which they were written and implied.

When the order was received, I was doing a 30-day hit in Administrative Segregation without any of my legal materials and didn't have the opportunity to file a notice of appeal. At the same time, the Federal 8th Court of Appeals has consistently ruled against us on these issues and most likely would have upheld the lower court's ruling and hit me for another \$455 for filing the appeal.

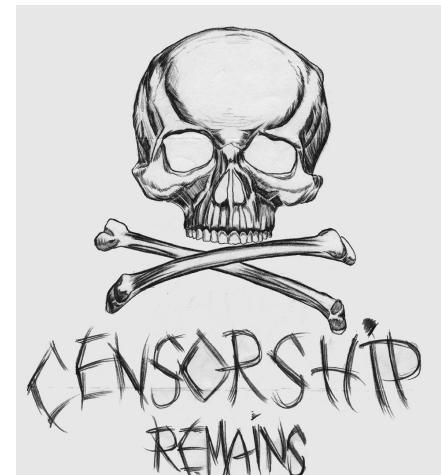
Their Motion for Summary Judgment on the four KMA booklets was denied without prejudice and they were given the option to file another pending further information. They have subsequently filed said motion and, because of the way the courts have already ruled, I expect that the court will grant their motion. I really don't expect this case will proceed further, although I am going to file a motion in opposition to their motion for summary judgment.

A tactical victory would have certainly been a good thing. On the same token, a lesson still comes out of this -- that comrades must not be thinking and acting as though we are really protected by the U.S. Constitution, state and local statutes, and the myths and lies fed the settlers and colonies of the empire about Amerikkkan "democracy" and other such nonsense.

I will however continue to fight any new instances of censorship that may arise and continue to agitate, educate and organize on this and other issues.

MIM(Prisons) Legal Coordinator responds: Here the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals -- which governs the states of Missouri, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Arkansas, and the Dakotas -- has protected a censorship incident which might otherwise be deemed illegal in another Circuit or at the Supreme Court. *Thornburgh v. Abbott*,

★Lessons



490 U.S. 401 concluded that "Wardens may not reject a publication 'solely because its content is religious, philosophical, political, social[,] sexual, or . . . unpopular or repugnant,' . . ." In the 9th Circuit, "Prison authorities cannot rely on general or conclusory assertions to support their policies," *Walker v. Sumner* (9th Cir. 1990) 917 F.2d 382, 385, and "Unsupported security claims couldn't justify infringement on First Amendment rights," *Crofton v. Roe* (9th Cir. 1999) 170 F.3d 957. Facts in *Under Lock & Key* on the reality of the Amerikan prison system are no different than what one would find in any halfway decent mainstream newspaper. Any connection one might claim between these facts and a "threat to the security of the institution" is absolutely unsupported, conclusory, and based on gross generalizations.

Anyone who has read one full issue of *Under Lock & Key* knows that the reason given by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals for denying the February 2008 issue is taken completely out of context, like this comrade says. MIM(Prisons) is constantly putting forth the line that armed struggle under unfavorable conditions should be avoided if at all possible; any fighting back we may advocate is only within legally acceptable means, like lawsuits. More clearly explained in *Under Lock & Key issue 7* (March 2009),

"MIM(Prisons) only engages in and promotes legal means of combating injustice. When the prison staff represses every educational and legal outlet for prisoners to redress their complaints then it is clear what kind of strategies they are promoting. In those prisons, we predict there will be violence, and they cannot blame it on us because they have kept us out. This is similar to what we say about all struggles for justice around the world. We believe violence is necessary to end injustice because history has demonstrated that the oppressor never stops oppressing any other way. We do not want or promote violence, we are merely stating our conclusion from reading history. In every case of revolutionary war, it was up to the oppressor to decide whether violence was used or not. History shows that the same has been true in the prison rights

Learned ★

FSP Prisoners Unite for Rec and Against Brutality

by Polo Blue of United Struggle from Within September 2011

On cell block one, prisoners were being denied outdoor exercise. In 2003, prisoners won a class action civil suit (titled *Osterback v. Singularity*) where the court made the ruling that it was against the 8th Amendment to deny Close Management Unit prisoners outdoor exercise.

Still, we were constantly being denied. The prisoners were griping. Another comrade and I decided the conditions were right to direct the people. Thus we set out on a "grievance campaign," forming a nucleus of seven. We enlisted five other prisoners to each make 2 copies of exemplary grievances (that me and the other comrade pre-wrote), all with different language. This was necessary because the people themselves would not have spent one minute to place pen to paper.

Altogether a good 25 grievances were written by the core body. They were passed on for the people to sign and date, and for others to copy. A good 30 prisoners participated.

On the next designated day of outside exercise, the pigs went from cell to cell asking if anyone desired outside exercise. It was a small victory (however temporary), but it showed what can be accomplished if conditions are ideal and leaders take initiative to direct a movement.

More recently, during exercise time at the outside dog kennels, a prisoner was pulled from his cage and punched in the mouth while in restraints by a sadistic pig. The prisoner requested that the pig remove the handcuffs. The prisoner was then grabbed in a choke and his head was rammed into the cage, carving a deep gash in his head, and knocking him unconscious.

The pig then plotted with his co-workers that they would say the prisoner tried to slip the cuffs. They said that there is no surveillance cameras, therefore nothing can be proven.

Because of the incident they tried to take us back on the cell block, but we refused, and demanded to see a higher ranking official. When the white shirt came we stated the facts. Further, everyone united together and initiated grievance procedures for the victimized comrade.

Three months earlier this same pig bashed another prisoner's head in the wall twelve times and caved that side of his face in. The prisoner was taken to an outside hospital. This sort of police brutality is an everyday occurrence here at Florida State Prison. It has a history for it. ★

Hunger Strike Strategy: Tactical Retreat or Advance?

by Loco1 of United Struggle from Within October 2011

Our leaders will be targeted, so we must prepare others to lead when they fall.

So we now have the attention of the state, what is it that we will do with it? We have shown the ability to logically comprehend the repression that we're up against, and the strength to take a stand against the common oppressor, but what's to be done after we're standing?

After we've shot that bow across, or at, that battleship, known to some as the CDCR and to others as the oppressive state of California; what is to be done next? Do we continue advancing on the enemy or do we retreat in the face of a failed tactic? This is the true question to be answered by the leaders of our movement.

Recently CDCR put out a memo of what it is they'd like us to do; they want us to retreat. And if we don't, "disciplinary action" will be taken against us.

So there you have it. For the arrow that was shot at the state, at a time when we need to be concentrating our energies into resolving the contradictions within the prison population dividing us, CDCR has fired back with its canon to not only discourage participation and leadership in peaceful protest, but has begun to set the stage for punishment for such protest.

They call it a disturbance to the safety and security of "their" established institutional order; our mass actions disrupt the everyday program of the department. Give this a little time to ferment and it will become, for every leader of such activities, disturbing the peace officer and obstructing duties. This is a felony offense that I am being prosecuted for in a state court as I write.

Do we retreat or advance? I personally believe that at this stage comrades should retreat. We should fall back and focus on the divisions that are the primary reason for low participation of prisoners. Most will feel that because we fall back we stop in this struggle, but they are wrong as our struggle is a protracted one.

This was a great shock therapy experiment. Now we must learn from yesterday, live for today and plan for tomorrow. In this war we must pick battles big enough to matter, yet small enough to win.

Let us not forget that although our civil disobedience is one of a peaceful nature it is still disobedience and can result in greater repression and punishment. Yes we are willing to die for a change of the current conditions, but are the masses willing to keep the movement alive after we're dead? Because the masses aren't even yet trained in such civil disobedience, the answer is no, they won't keep the movement alive. We can't expect them to do anything less than die out once their leaders die, and the state has begun its disciplinary actions against them. They have their lights on us for real now, so there isn't much to cloak our activities under.

We haven't trained our people in the effective art of hunger striking, how they must drink more water than usual to continue standing strong, how they must develop specific reflex mechanisms to respond in swatting away the urges of all officials, who have only one interest in the matter, which goes against the interest of the strike, and who will be like flies trying to get participants to take a sack lunch, or maybe even have an extra tray convincing them that they will not accomplish anything through striking. Amerikkka doesn't negotiate with terrorists (at least not in public), and they see the leaders of this action as such, no? Shouldn't our participants be trained in these and other methods in order to be more effective?

We leaders are responsible for ensuring that all participants will anticipate the repression that will come as a result of mass action, as well as what shall be done when these repressions take place. Have we done this? No.

It is more correct to re-evaluate our actions now to more progressively advance the demands of the prisoners. In this re-evaluation we shall address the key issues at hand that cause prisoners to be divided. In doing so we will be better fit in establishing the necessary communication with various organizations that can initiate the unity process for prisoners to engage in mass protest demonstrations. We will not be going backwards by doing this. It will actually prove to be forward progress for the prisoner liberation movement.

In *ULK 21* BORO called out numerous LOs in their position of where it is that they stand in this struggle. As a USW member/leader I will follow suit in regards to my fellow captives in California: OG Flower and Ronny Brown of the Guerilla Family, where y'all at? Coco from Two PS United Blood Nation where you at? Big Coup of Blood Line what's poppin dawg? Trech and Evil followers of the Blue Notes, here it is cuz? Hoover D and Big Owl of CCOs, EME Structured Sura, where y'all at? Where them NF comrades at? How about them NLRs? We either gonna go hard or go home, cause the state ain't even started yet. Y'all better take a look at Syria, and Libya. We all gone get it, so we all got to get involved.

The above organizations have leaders in the SHU who still fly kites to the line. They still have representatives in other areas. If they can enforce upon their members to engage in this as well as other non-antagonistic activities then I'm sure they can enforce upon their member population to struggle.

As I've said before, this is a good place to begin United Front work, but we must first resolve the contradictions of ourselves before we really begin *outright* battles with the state. Don't feel that we can't stop now because we've already

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MIM(Prisons)'s Re-Lease on Life Program: helping prison activists stay active on the streets

by Release Coordinator of MIM(Prisons)
November 2011

MIM(Prisons) has spent years trying to build the Re-Lease on Life Program for prisoners coming back to the streets. Our goal is to help prisoner activists stay politically active when they are no longer incarcerated. An important component of this is helping our comrades to set up stable life situations that won't lead them back to prison. As most of our readers know, this is very challenging, demonstrated by the recidivism rate of 43% within the first 3 years post-release in Amerika.(1)

While in prison, people have a unique opportunity of having much time on their hands to study and engage in political organizing. While prison oppression certainly interferes with daily life, the structure of prison and this same oppression enables and in fact encourages political activism. When prisoners are released they face the difficulties of meeting their basic necessities, and dealing with people in random and complex settings, often after years of isolation. And with discrimination against people with a prison record, things like housing and a job can be very difficult to find. Consumed with day to day life issues, it becomes much more difficult for former prisoners to stay active on the streets.

As hard as those challenges are, the primary barrier to reaching our goal is preparing people mentally to deal with these challenges and prioritize serving the people. Even those with a stable home and support on the streets struggle to stay politically active. They are often pulled back into street life with their LO. Other times, their free time is taken up by friends and family who have an expectation of consuming free time with destructive behavior like alcohol, drugs, or just wasted time watching TV.

Part of MIM(Prisons)'s Re-Lease Program involves reaching out to prisoners well before they are expected to hit the streets, and working with them to build a study program and a release plan. If you hope to stay out of prison and support the struggle after you get released, having a strong political education is a vital piece for staying on track.

It is never too early to start preparing for continued activism outside the walls. We've seen too many solid politically active comrades disappear once they get out and are faced with the realities of getting by on the streets.

MIM(Prisons) has very limited resources and we cannot offer the kind of release support that is needed in the United States. Instead, we focus on working with our comrades who are active behind bars and who show a commitment to stay politically active when they hit the streets. This means we want to work with you now, both to satisfy some general study requirements, and put together a release plan that will help ease the transition to the streets. If you want our support, we need yours.

Requirements for participating in MIM(Prisons)'s Re-Lease Program include:

- Creating a realistic post-release plan for both practical living needs and political involvement
- Participating in required study programs behind bars
- Undertaking political work while in prison
- Planning for both contact and political work once on the streets

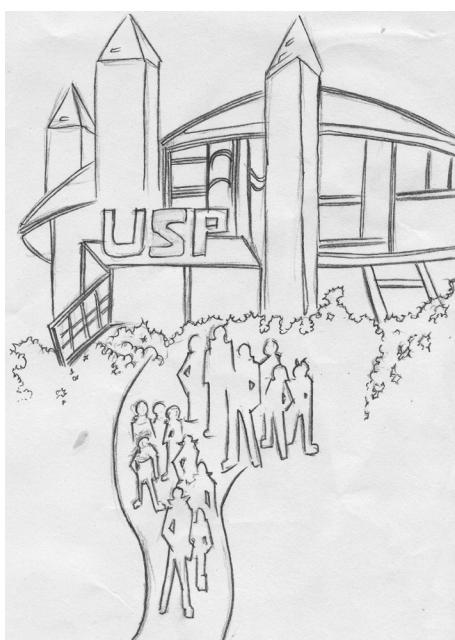
Prisoners who do these things are offered our resources and support to help stay politically active and focused on the streets. Keep in mind that we can't offer housing or a job, but we can provide support, help finding resources, and most importantly a strong tie to maintain political sanity and activism.

We work with our comrades to develop a plan for what sorts of political work can be done after release. On the outside there is a lot more freedom to do political organizing, but it's also harder in some ways. There is no longer all the free time there was in prison, and there is not the same level of political interest among the people on the streets. And we know it's hard to walk away from the temptations or difficulties of street life.

This program needs help to expand. We need people who are expecting release in the next few years to get in touch with us to work on a release plan. And we are collecting stories from our comrades who have been out and back in about the challenges they faced trying to stay politically active on the streets. This will be the focus of an upcoming issue of *Under Lock & Key*, so send in your submissions soon! ★

Notes:

1. *State of Recidivism, The Revolving Door of America's Prisons, Pew Center on the States, April 2011 Report on recidivism for prisoners release in 2004.*



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...Retreat?

started the movement, because this assessment of our klass conditions is really a step forward in strategic advance, but a tactical retreat. Remember, you can retreat and lead the enemy into an ambush.

MIM(Prisons) adds: While MIM(Prisons) did not lead or initiate this hunger strike, we do firmly support it and other progressive non-violent protests by prisoners demanding livable conditions in the context of the fight against the criminal injustice system. The strikers were prepared in building support and communications sufficient to execute an action that got the attention of not just the prison administration but people across the state of California and around the world. Actions like this are learning experiences for leaders and participants, while building unity and demonstrating the potential for such movements. However, we do agree with Loco1 on the need to evaluate both the successes and failures of these protests, and build on them for the future.

The hunger strike itself has already served as a uniting force, with thousands of prisoners standing together for a common cause. While Loco1 may be correct that this is a small portion of California prisoners, this demonstration was unprecedented in its size. We did receive some reports of differences in participation along national and organizational lines, and even more of the pigs trying to foment such divisions. With the strength of some of the LOs in California, overcoming these divisions could happen quickly under their leadership. But it requires putting the petty stuff, the things that currently dominate prison culture, aside for bigger goals. The original Five Core Demands of the hunger strike are an example of big goals (see *ULK 21*). While some argued that these only affected SHU prisoners, any prisoner can become a SHU prisoner in the blink of an eye. So the demands represented a blow against torture for all California prisoners.

We do not want more people in SHU. Control Units exist to control the oppressed nations and anyone the state sees as a threat to their interests. It is one of the most overtly political forms of repression we see in the United States today. And we agree with USW leaders who have pushed for a more explicit demand to end long-term isolation altogether.(see HS article on page 9)

We agree that successful hunger strikes and similar actions require great unity and discipline, which the masses of California prisoners did not have going into this. But the strikers worked around this problem of unity and communication. The SHU prisoners pledged to fast til the demands were met, and only asked that others showed solidarity in whatever ways they best could. For many, that meant fasting for a determined length of time.

One of the major lessons of this hunger strike is the need for a unifying organizational

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Learn from the Hunger Strike and Build

by cipactli of United Struggle from Within
October 2011

I want to extend a raised fist and reflect on the second round of the hunger strike here in Pelican Bay. As most know, prisoners once again attempted to achieve some sort of sense of humanity, if such a thing is possible in SHU. The demands were not fully met in the original strike, and this combined with the state's propaganda offensive pushed many of us captives into another push of resistance! This is what I attempt to give perspective on in this writing.

We need to review the entire process of any effort in order to learn from it. This is the process of evaluating the action (or inaction) and using these lessons to help us in future life choices. I'm not just speaking of this most recent effort but also anywhere else in Amerika where this same injustice presents itself.

We must remember the torture and abuse suffered and understand that torture will not stop from a peaceful protest. Torture in imperialist Amerika will always exist in one form or another so long as this system of state sanctioned white supremacy exists. So long as the oppressed nations are hunted down like Third World people, just as the Afghani villager flees when s/he hears the sound of helicopters, knowing it is the NATO occupiers, so too do the oppressed Brown and Black peoples understand when the helicopter comes over our neighborhoods, we too are its prey.

The SHUs are but another expression of what the people live with psychologically in the barrios and ghettos across Amerika. We are locked physically in these concentration kamps, told what to read, what to look at, what to listen to and what to think. People out in society are also experiencing this control but on a more subtle level, and in our communities we are hunted down lethally. In Amerika our task force 373 (kill squad) is the pigs where as in the Third World it is the U.S. military who go into Third World nations when Third World people raise their objection.

Today the corporate media announced that

Gaddafi was killed and as they showed his corpse, and as Obama made a speech about how Gaddafi was a "mad dog" for not respecting the human rights of all Libyans, I sit in solitary confinement with no sunlight, no human contact, and all the oppression that comes with being in SHU. The truth is Amerika doesn't see Brown or Black people as worthy of human rights. This is why millions of us are criminalized; why we are shot dead unarmed in the streets and prisons by the pigs. This is why we are not given work and suffer a new caste system of being branded a felon, and it's why mothers and fathers are ripped apart from children and deported as "illegals." Illegals! Who are the real illegals?

The second hunger strike erupted September 26 but unlike the previous strike there was no negotiating teams, no attorney visits to work as mediators, no coverage in the corporate media and so many people here did not know a strike was happening until later in the effort. The numbers I got were approximately half the SHU participated in this second effort, which was fewer than last time, but I also heard more participated in prisons across Amerika and even some county jails.(see *Round 2 Roundup*, page 3) This proves my theory that the longer these efforts take place the more they will be supported. Prisoners get used to the idea of struggle. It brings to the forefront the everyday issues that affect every prisoner, particularly the issue of state repression. This of course is the state's worse nightmare.

I continue to believe that an effort prepared well in advance is far more effective and would be more supported and last a longer amount of time. I think the first strike lasted three weeks because it was prepared for properly. To just announce you're going to do something and do so will get many to participate, but if an effort is ill prepared it won't be as lasting and may not be as effective.

I myself was very angry after the first strike because I didn't feel the demands were essential to a mass effort. Things like shut down all SHUs, end the three strikes, end the death penalty, are things I think are worthy of demands. These are issues that affect every prisoner, not just some. I

am very proud of the California prison population for its awakening and learning to stand up en masse, yet we should look deeper into our demands and make sure they reflect the true causes of our oppression.

We can see California prisoners are on the move. It took the many years of groups like MIM(Prisons) along with prison revolutionaries working on the inside to raise the consciousness to see this oppression we live with in these dungeons. MIM(Prisons) once said "Lenin always insisted that change does not occur in straight lines, despite our wishes. And like all Marxists, he stressed historical materialism, which means that ideas come from material reality and not vice versa. We can imagine the world we want and wish it into existence, but that will not make it so. What Marxists do is look at the contradictions in humyn society and study the forces that make them up in order to understand how to resolve them."(1)

I think California prisoners are indeed looking at the contradictions we live with and finding ways to resolve them. This by no means is going away. More and more prisoners are taking notice and coming to support the Pelican Bay SHU battles while raising their own demands wherever they reside in Amerika's concentration kamps. Let the demand for human rights for prisoners reach every cage in this imperial empire. Power to the people! ★

Note:

1. MIM(Prisons). *Uniting with National Liberation Struggles. Under Lock & Key issue 1 September 2007.*

...Continued from previous page

...Retreat?

structure through which action can be coordinated and goals and information can be formulated and shared. The United Front for Peace in Prisons (see page 2) provides this opportunity by bringing together LOs and individuals who understand the importance of unity against the common enemy. As the announcement of the United Front stated:

We fully recognize that whether we are conscious of it or not, we are already "united" -- in our suffering and our daily repression. We face the same common enemy. We are trapped in the same oppressive conditions. We wear the same prison clothes, we go to the same hellhole box (isolation), we get brutalized by the same racist pigs. We are one people, no matter your hood, set or nationality. We know "we need unity" -- but unity of a different type from the unity we have at present. We want to move from a unity in oppression to unity in serving the people and striving toward national independence.

We look forward to summaries of the successes and failures of the hunger strike in future pages of *Under Lock & Key* and encourage our comrades to send your stories on how you are building on this movement to greater unity and strength. ★

Under Lock & Key not enough?

If one ULK every 2 months isn't enough political education for you, join a Maoist study cell through MIM(Prisons)! The intro study group is split into 2 levels and studies articles written by MIM(Prisons); a pamphlet on the basics of MIM(Prisons)'s political line; and Mao Zedong's "On Contradiction," which introduces us to the philosophy of dialectical materialism (how we study history).

The whole study course costs \$5, but you can trade work for study if you can't pay. Participants must be able to receive the study materials via mail and respond to each assignment on time. Write in today to sign up for the next group.

Or start your own political study group in your prison. You don't need any fancy books or special knowledge to do this. Start by studying and discussing the content of this issue of ULK. Write to us and let us know what questions came up and we'll get you some more reading materials to help answer those questions.

Getto Children

by Loco1
of United Struggle from Within
October 2011

Verse 1] Freedom/ And justice for humanity/ To all my/ Sunburned children of Third World kountries/ All stand together til forever/ Or whenever we receive/ Our given right to human decency/ Cause...

Chorus] There/ No be no other way/ To go about/ It/ If/ We want to better ourselves/ We must confront/ Him. Me'll/ Be di won in di/ Front from di belly of di beast/ With dem burral of mi/ Pump lying right between him teeth/ Screaming, I/ Will ride for him people/ No matter what/ Then all that dem rightfully deserve/ I/ Will ride for him people/ No matter what/ Comes me way at all

Verse II] This is a special occasion/ For all the strugglin Haitians/ You'll forever be remembered/ Just like them northern Asians/ Caucasians from Ireland/ And people of Palestine/ Camel riding niggas baring arms for a little/ Land. The struggle to survive/ Is a struggle to survive/ So your vision is my/ Vision, we'll all struggle to survive/ I grew up in the/ Projects, Third World conscience/ Killin niggas for that mean green mind/ Set. Battle of the rich and poor, I'm posted up with/ The poor, advocating/ For some social justice and the end/ of WAR. On all/ Of my people. Ain't we all equal? Black/ White, Yellow, Red, Brown, WE all/ Equal! Til we make/ It, catch me at the/ U.S. borders knockin walls/ Down. For my/ Border brotha. Like them northern Brothas, I'm re/ Forming brothas to stop shootin/ Brothas [Chorus]

Verse III] Everyday/ Mi see di struggle/ Of mi poor folks trying to si-vive/ Keeping i'float/ In di sea of destruction/ No progression in site/ Babies killing/ Babies, hostile social attitudes/ Stocking up on/ Human cattle just to get one/ Buck/ Or two. What has/ Our most beautiful world come/ To? Di democratic imperialistic world/ View. Capitalist/ Pile nukes to di stars/ But dey can't get/ Di equipment to get into di heart/ Of yi hunger/ Citizen cast out by society/ Living in/ Poverty where's dem democracy [Chorus]

Verse IV] Shot's been/ Fired. Out goes yo night/ Lights children of di sun bring the flame to di street/ Life -- The world/ Starvin but rich people eatin/ Call me Robin Hood cause we about to start eatin/ You seen Amerikkkan Gangsta? I'm Frank Locus -- Handin/ Chickens to the FOLKS grassroots/ Movement, seven/ Twenty-six Growth and Development/ Three sixty/ Two times we remain relevant/ Power to the/ Who? -- I'ma let the people finish/ It, cause you ain't really/ Shit if you ain't got support from none/ Of them. Grindin and Bustin, shinin and hussalin/ BPP!/ That's the end of discussion [Chorus] ★

REVOLUTIONARY CULTURE

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Strategic Confidence

by USW461 of United Struggle from Within
October 2011

Forty years today Attica rose up
Since then 600 million children starved to death
Pelican Bay comrades we've had enough
A revolution sparked by refusing pig lunch
Cover this one up, oppressor
We've had enough
Supermax solitary choke-holding Attica's sons
Gray-faced and pale captives dying alone
Bricks and steel sucking the life out of everyone
Clench-fisted against imperialism we die as one
Bring in your army and mow us down
Manufacture a coverup you plutocrat clowns
Each one of our body bags more heavy
And sacred
Than a billion of your cracker small towns
Red flags draped over true soldiers' coffins
Reminiscent of those buried beneath Kremlin gates
Red dams rising like earth under stampeding buffalo
Another empire crushed poetically
Like the Greek goddess of fates
Forty years today Attica rose up
And for the first time ever today
One captive voice echoed the world over
As one
One lung
We've had enough ★

Civil War

by Killer Mike
from Immortal Technique's
mixtape "The Martyr"

Crip niggas, Blood niggas, Eses, Asians
Why the fuck we war'n with each other's population?
If devil wanna damn all our population.
People and Folk Nation,
Why the separation?
Why we got Jamaicans
hatin'
on Haitians
when the British and French raped both nations.
Mexicans and Blacks kill each other straight
hatin'.
While the government profits from prison population.
If you on the bottom, be you Anglo or Asian
You gotta recognize the realness in what I'm saying.
You gotta recognize another G ain't the enemy.
When the police ride and kill us frequently.
We gotta make the youth see,
where the truth be.
If you a G, then grow and develop, GD.
Fifty years of gangs and our people still poor.
If we really run the streets, we should really
end war.★

Throw Your Fist in the Air!

by a Pennsylvania prisoner
October 2011

Let us return to the acquiescent essence
Where our people were taught life's lessons
Now let us fast forward, from Gabriel Prosser
And Nat Turner to when Marcus Garvey stood on the Corners, calling for UNIA, National Consciousness, And for our people to be returned to our own land Elijah said we must have a place to be ourselves. While Malik moved our peoples' learning towards social innerstanding
Within the context of this capitalist white man's nation Their words would help give shape for our struggle today Give us, us free like Cinque!
This thought was given motion by Malik Shabazz who preached Arm yourselves with AKs for each His ideology was studied, because his ideology he would teach To comrade Huey, and the rest of the Panthers that roamed the streets
Protecting the Black man from the white man's feet Power to the people, I recall their feats Socialism and political education were the things that They would teach As K9 dogs jumped out of their seats To attack our people who were trying to meet And protest the injustice of capitalism calling For communism throughout the streets!
I see it so clear... Yet, to this day it's still not fair Some gave up, some murdered, some overwhelmed and some Placed here (the new Jim Crow), prisons And the Amerikkkans just don't care But I still hear that Panther roaring in my ear And there is nothing I won't do, to get this message Once again through to you I will fight without fear Until this message again becomes completely clear Power to the motherfuckin people! Throw your fist in the air! ★

Fertilizer

by a Florida prisoner
October 2011

I wake up early in the morning, I look around and ask why
Then I take a few minutes, 2 decide if I wanna live or die...

Could da other side be worse, Could it be more drastic
I'm already buried alive, In this concrete casket...

My mind declaring war, My spirit yearning for peace
I got pushed out of the belly, Into the ass of the beast...

Now I'm invisible, like passed gas, Known only by my scent
Digested and turned 2 waste, My captors call me a piece of shit...

They wanna flush me down the toilet, And hope none would be the wiser
'Cause they know if I ever hit the turf, I'm a turn 2 fertilizer... ★

Prison Themes Central to New Planet of the Apes Story

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
August 2011

Rise of the Planet of the Apes is the second remake of the original *Planet of the Apes* movie series. It is an origins story, replacing the *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* story which was fourth in the original five part series. *Conquest* was released in 1972 and depicted a storyline clearly intended to parallel the Black liberation movement that had just peaked in the United States at that time, but with an actual successful revolution. *Conquest* and the final part of the original series, *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*, presented clearly revolutionary themes. Even the first couple movies of the original series did more to challenge white nationalism than this recent remake. This difference is due to the stage of struggle in the United States at the time.

Today, the first movie (released in 1968) is easily dismissed by the oppressor nation as a commentary on the "distant" past of slavery, rather than what were modern social injustices. When that film was redone in 2001, it did not live up to its predecessor's social relevance. Based on that disappointment, we expected a stronger effort to dilute the origins story for another hollywood blockbuster. Instead, we were pleasantly surprised to find that *Rise* actually maintained the revolutionary origins story, and even linked it to the modern prison struggle in relevant ways.

This movie probably won't be making the rounds in too many prisons due to the blatant themes of prisoners educating themselves and building unity to escape their abusive conditions. But there's nothing to learn from this movie that one couldn't get easily, and of course more usefully, from picking up any issue of *Under Lock & Key*.

Rise was pretty formulaic in story and form. It contains lots of fast battle scenes and loud music, and followed the predictable story line with flat characters. There were plenty of quotes from the original movie series thrown in as well as recognizable character names.

The good aspects of *Rise* were also simple, but surprisingly relevant. The strongest positive message we saw in this film was the need for self-determination and the struggle against integrationism. Caesar, a chimpanzee, and the hero of the story, refuses an opportunity given by his former benefactor to leave prison and return to the humyn world. In a few days or weeks Caesar develops an affinity for his fellow imprisoned apes, which trumps his many years living with humyns. He turns his back to Dr. Rodman and stays in prison to continue building and organizing with fellow apes. This is a very relevant point to the imprisoned population, especially in a day when the oppressed nations have reached high levels of integration into Amerika. With people shuffling in and out of prison and jail, it is easy to choose an Amerikan identity over that of the oppressed. We also see many who work tirelessly to get themselves out of prison, without ever joining the larger prison movement.

Caesar is clear that alone apes are weak, but together they can be strong. This is a very simple yet relevant refrain to our current situation in the prison movement today.

An orangutan responds to Caesar's comments on unity by saying that apes are dumb, not unlike what many prisoners who write MIM(Prisons) say about their peers. The solution to this in the film, and the material origin of apes taking over humyn society, is in a virus produced by a bioengineering project. This allows ape brains to develop intelligence that they never could before. In real life, the imprisoned and oppressed do not face a material disadvantage in intelligence, but are set back by the oppressor's conditioning through both the carrot and the stick. In real life the ALZ 112 and ALZ 113 viruses from the film are instead Marxism-Leninism-Maoism: the tool that can give the oppressed the intellectual material they need to organize effectively.

As part of his organizing efforts, Caesar allies with a silverback (dominant) chimpanzee and puts him in a position of leading the group in sharing and developing a group consciousness, without the silverback really understanding at first. It was a good lesson in leadership within a United Front and how we might work with those who are recognized as leaders for their dominant roles within the group, but don't yet possess the leadership skills and revolutionary understanding to lead the oppressed down the road of liberation.

Just like in U.S. prisons, the apes educate each other in secret because they know that they will be targeted for special repression if seen. The interactions between the imprisoned apes and humyn captors is crude, accurately reflecting the basic relations in U.S. prisons for humyns today. In this way, *Rise* could play a small role in building consciousness among viewers that would make them more likely to be sympathetic of prison resistances such as those organized across California and Georgia in recent months. While the majority of the audience will find itself rooting for the apes while watching this film, in real life most will follow their own self-interests in the situation and root for the state in repressing any group that challenges the status quo.

The role of Buck the gorilla gives us an important lesson in revolutionary suicide. In the final battle scene that takes place on the Golden Gate bridge in San Francisco, he takes a bullet for Caesar just before taking down the last humyn left standing who threatened the lives of other apes in the battle. He recognizes the unique capabilities of both himself and of Caesar and puts the interests of the ape liberation struggle above his own life to guide his actions. At this stage in the struggle we are not engaged in protracted war, but revolutionary sacrifice is still relevant to how we decide to spend our time and organize our lives, and even in peaceful struggles lives are sometimes taken by the oppressor. Buck's revolutionary suicide is an example of a sacrifice that had to be made in order

Fighting False Validations for Colors and Tattoos

by a Texas prisoner
October 2011

I agree with the Texas prisoner on page 14 in *Under Lock & Key* 22 that the COINTELPRO is still alive in disguise.

At the Smith Unit, Gang Intelligence (GI) tags mostly everybody as gang members. I have a five point star on my neck that says "rising star" because I have a vision of being a celebrity. For this the GI labeled me as a confirmed Blood gang member, and put me on file as such. Also another prisoner had red in his "free world" tattoo with no indication of gang affiliation and still was tagged as a Blood. They confiscated one brother's pictures just because the brother was wearing blue clothes and tagged him as a confirmed gang member. The GI on Smith Unit is out of control.

On the other hand, for all you comrades who are being denied *ULK* and other political publications from MIM(Prisons), don't forget to appeal to the Director's Review Committee, and write a grievance for violation of your First Amendment constitutional right to have access to the media. If you have free world support, use it by having them call and talk to the warden of your unit and the mailroom supervisor. If more people use this line of defense it will make these pigs think twice about violating our First Amendment rights because it exposes them to the public eye and word spreads like wildfire. Similarly, if the GI illegally tags you as a gang/security threat group member, file a step one and step two grievance so you can have some paperwork backing you up. It's called insurance.

MIM(Prisons) adds: This comrade makes an important point about fighting censorship and false validations. If you experience censorship of any political material, you need to let us know, and file an appeal. We have a guide to fighting censorship available to all prisoners who want to help with this important battle. ★

for the ape struggle to continue.

In the end of the film, Dr. Rodman again plays the role of liberal integrationist asking Caesar to come back and live with him, saying "this is not the way." Caesar speaks a full phrase for the first time and says "Caesar is home" referring to the population of just-liberated apes taking up residence in the forest. Of course, in real life the consciousness of the oppressed internal semi-colonies leans much more heavily in the direction of integration than Caesar, who has actual biological differences from the humyn species. In the movie, differences between apes and humyns had just begun to weaken, whereas the socially imposed differences between the oppressed and oppressor nations inside the United States have eroded over many decades. Even if Caesar tried to integrate, he could never live the lifestyle of a humyn, in contrast to the large proportion of the internal semi-colonies that enjoy the comforts of imperialist exploitation.★

- UNITED STRUGGLE FROM WITHIN -

Under Lock & Key is the main organizing tool of United Struggle from Within (USW). This page details some of the active campaigns that USW is involved in. Those who want to push the revolutionary struggle forward from behind bars should get involved in USW by working on these campaigns, or initiating their own.

SPREAD UNDER LOCK & KEY

The most basic task someone can do for USW is get people to subscribe to *Under Lock & Key*. If you know someone who likes this newsletter, have them write to get their own subscription. People are moved all the time in prison and it's better to get in contact when our address is available than to lose it in a move. You can also ask other prison publications to run free ads for *Under Lock & Key* and MIM(Prisons)'s Free Books for Prisoners Program.

SHUT DOWN CONTROL UNITS

Control units are used as a tool of political repression to alienate and torture anyone who works for change from within prisons. Control units can be generally described as: Permanently designated prisons, or cells in prisons, that lock prisoners in solitary confinement for 22 or more hours a day with no congregate dining, exercise or other services, and virtually no programs for prisoners. Prisoners are placed in control units for extended periods of time.

Research - We have the most complete data on control units available published at www.abolishcontrolunits.org. Help keep it updated by writing to MIM(Prisons) at the address on page 1 to get a survey for your state.

Spread *Unlock the Box* DVD - Let your contacts on the outside know about this important 2 hour documentary on long-term isolation cells and the struggle to abolish them. Send them to the website: www.abolishcontrolunits.org/movie

WE DEMAND OUR GRIEVANCES ARE ADDRESSED

Comrades in California, Texas, Oklahoma, and now Arizona have developed petitions against the corrupt grievance process in their state. If you are experiencing problems with your grievance process, you should join this campaign.

Sign and Mail Petitions - If you are in California, Texas, Arizona, or Oklahoma, write in to get the petition for your state. If your prison's policies allow, donate stamps or envelopes to your comrades inside to send out the petition. Be sure you ask us for extra copies if you plan to distribute the petition and can't make your own.

Spread This Campaign - If your state is not currently covered by the grievance campaign, but you are experiencing a similar problem, volunteer to rewrite the petition to work for your state.

EXPAND STUDY GROUPS

Form a study group in your prison. Start by discussing this issue of *Under Lock & Key*. Choose what to study next based on what stumps you in this issue. If you want help from MIM(Prisons), it is best to come up with a general topic you're interested in, and we can suggest reading material and maybe a study pack. We can also help get the reading materials through to your comrades. As you study, you should compile study questions to create a study pack for future groups who want to study the same material. MIM(Prisons) runs Maoist study groups, but an in-persyn group may be better for those whose mail from us is being censored, or to reach people who wouldn't join our group.

FIGHT CENSORSHIP

Everyone should be sure to send MIM(Prisons) copies of your censorship documents for denied issues of *Under Lock & Key* and other mail from MIM Distributors.

Missouri - "On 1 February 2010 the Director of Adult Institutions signed a censorship policy, instituting a blanket ban on all musical recordings which carry a parental advisory label. For a number of years now they have been arbitrarily denying any books or literature of a historical, social, political or religious nature that they don't agree with." - a Missouri comrade. Prisoners in Missouri are spreading a petition against the ban and censorship, write in to get it! Like with all petitions, try to make your own copies, share them, and help others out with envelopes and stamps if your prison's policies allow it.

California - We are in an ongoing battle with prisons in California that have banned MIM Distributors, citing a defunct memo from 2006. Send us copies of your documentation and grievances you've filed against it.

BECOME A ULK FIELD CORRESPONDENT

The first thing we tell comrades in prison to do when they ask how they can help is to write about conditions where they're at. If you've written us a letter, then you have all the skills you need to become a *ULK* Field Correspondent.

Many prisoners write about the horrible things happening to them with the mindset that once the outside world finds out, their problems will be over and the perpetrators punished. This expectation is a myth, but it is still important to report on conditions through *ULK*.

Due to space restrictions, many of the reports we get don't make it into *ULK*. Instead they are available on our website, which serves as an archive tracking the behavior of prison staff over years. This is part of our scientific method, collecting empirical data in the field. When you complain about some pig throwing your mail in the trash and people don't listen because they think it was probably just an accident, we have documentation of hundreds of "accidents" by the same staff, proving that it was no accident at all. Your reports back up others' reports.

In a real world example, when the Abu Ghraib scandal broke, the star of the original photos was Charles Grainer. When MIM searched through their *ULK* archives, they found that years before a prisoner in Pennsylvania reported that Grainer, who was a prison guard at SCI Greene prior to Abu Ghraib, was abusing people, calling them niggers, etc. Today that comrade is outside of prison documenting the reports of abuse from current prisoners, and leading campaigns to hold the DOC responsible for its regular abusive behavior. Being a *ULK* Field Correspondent lays the groundwork for more of this kind of research and agitational work. These reports provide a resource for non-prisoners to learn more about what's going on in the criminal injustice system and to rally support for our struggles.

When reporting on conditions, details are good, but keep it short. Not only does someone have to type all these articles, but remember that it is not your one report that's gonna make a difference, it is the accumulation of reporting from across the country and the connections we make between those struggles. So leave room for others to tell their stories, which strengthens your own.

For the print version of *ULK*, we look for news and articles with theoretical and anti-imperialist content. We also want to feature articles that show how to organize against these conditions, and not just document them. MIM(Prisons) offers resources and opportunities to help you develop as a writer, including a Writing Guide and, for those who complete some of our study courses and become regular contributors to *ULK*, a *ULK* Writing Group. So get started today!

Hunger Strike First Step in Building United Front

by a California prisoner
October 2011

So much is going on right now with the hunger strike reactivated. Here at North Kern State Prison we received a memo stating that whoever participated in the new hunger strike will be severely punished. Wow! They can only make us stronger, so every race is refusing one meal a day to show our solidarity.

My main comment is in response to the so-called comrade calling everybody in Special Needs Yards (SNY) a snitch. S/he was very wrong. As you stated in *Under Lock & Key* 21, 13 prisons supported the hunger strike initiated in Pelican Bay State Prison in July. CCI Tehachapi is predominately SNY, and all of R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility and Pleasant Valley State Prison is SNY. SNY is 3-to-1 over the very overrated general population (GP), and we don't get validated by SNYs; we get validated by GPs. Unity in the masses is needed. How can you question someone else's loyalty when the very same individual could go to SNY one day? We GPs created SNY, and not all SNYs are bad. A lot of my comrades who are still solid Crips went SNY to get release dates. I can't be mad at that, or anyone willing to debrief to leave the SHU.

In this hunger strike the unity is with us all starving ourselves for the better treatment of our beloved comrades who are stuck in the back willing to die for a righteous cause. I support that! We are all trying to bring a United Front with all structures in the California prison system; not just with a hunger strike, but it's a start. True, the pigs are the enemy and we've let them divide us. We can stand together against them as long as leaders lead right with the positive influence to cease all grudges and stress why the unity is needed. And that's all prisons across the country, and anything that's of the lumpen.

MIM(Prisons) adds: Every oppressed persyn should know that there is nothing to gain by talking to the police. But without proper training, and when facing years in a torture cell, many will not know how to respond in a way that serves their interests in the short and long-term. Yet, the hunger strike is so important because of the role the SHU plays in repressing the organization of the oppressed. We want to keep people out of there. And while debriefing is generally translated as snitching, a Corcoran prisoner describes:

"A debriefer who was briefly in this individual's cell told IGI, the individual spoke of the merits of socialism, the history of political resistance to racism in America, and the validity of the socio-economic and political views of Frantz Fanon, Ho Chi Minh, and George Lester Jackson. The IGI told the debriefer this was 'BGF education,' to which the debriefer quickly agreed, framed it in those terms, and parroted what his IGI handler told him to."

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NY Bar Association Report: Supermax Isolation = Torture

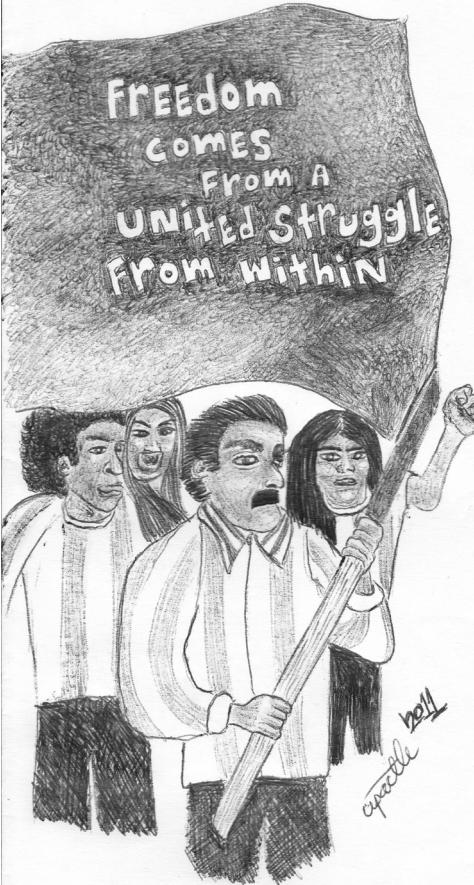
by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
October 2011

"The Brutality of Supermax Confinement"
New York City Bar Committee on International Human Rights
September 2011

This report addressed the dramatic growth of "supermax" confinement facilities in the United States over the past three decades and highlights the conditions of torture and violations of domestic and international law. As an introduction to long-term isolation in U.S. prisons, and an overview of relevant laws and cases, this report is an excellent resource.

The report cites estimates that 80,000 prisoners "...endure conditions of extreme sensory deprivation for months or years on end, an excruciating experience in which the prisoner remains isolated from any meaningful human contact." Articles in *Under Lock & Key* regularly testify to this torture that prisoners face in long-term isolation. The authors point out that estimates are widely varying and total numbers of people in supermax is not known. MIM(Prisons) has conducted our own survey to collect statistics on prisoners in control units and we estimate there are close to 110,000 prisoners currently in long-term isolation.

The authors correctly conclude about these torturous conditions: "The policy of supermax confinement, on the scale which it is currently being implemented in the United States, violates basic human rights." Though MIM(Prisons) would question how this policy would be ok



if the scale was smaller. This "scale" caveat is possible because the authors fail to address the system that determines who gets locked up in isolation and why they are put there.

As a part of an overview of relevant legal cases and laws, the report notes that the courts have failed to address this torture, which the authors consider a violation of the Eighth Amendment: "As long as a prisoner receives adequate food and shelter, the extreme sensory deprivation that characterizes supermax confinement will, under current case law, almost always be considered within the bounds of permissible treatment." They demonstrate some of the legal difficulties in proving an Eighth Amendment violation, including the added legal burden of the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) which requires prisoners to show physical injury before bringing an action for injury suffered in custody.

The authors describe how supermax confinement violates international law based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention Against Torture, among others. They note that international law has not been a factor for U.S. courts in these cases and call for change in this regard.

The report concludes with the following recommendations:

1. The provision in the PLRA providing that inmate plaintiffs may not recover damages "without a prior showing of physical injury" should be repealed;
2. Prisoners with serious mental illness should never be subjected to supermax confinement;
3. Conditions of extreme isolation and restriction should be imposed only when an extremely serious threat to prison safety has been established, and even in such circumstances supermax confinement should be for the shortest time possible and inmates should be afforded due process, and an opportunity to contest the confinement and appeal;
4. Any form of segregated housing should provide meaningful forms of mental, physical and social stimulation; and
5. A national task force should be established to promptly report on the numbers of inmates being held in supermax confinement in state and federal prisons and their conditions of confinement, and to propose further legislative and administrative reforms.

As humynists, we say long-term isolation is torture and it should be abolished immediately. And as we've discussed elsewhere, we disagree with point 2 as a campaign in that it justifies the use of torture against the strongest resisters while misconstruing the real relationship between long-term isolation and mental illness.

If implemented, the Committee's recommen-

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Not All SNY Prisoners Debrief

by a California prisoner
October 2011

I'd like to speak in regards to the Special Needs Yards (SNY) situation. It's synonymous with the plight of my comrades, relatives and brothers detained in Pelican Bay, Tehachapi and Corcoran Security Housing Units (SHUs), from which I was released in 2010.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Institutional Gang Investigations (CDCR IGI) squad uses insidiously foul tactics, involving "validating" or "associating" an "active" [gang member] who isn't really active. Somewhere within my 16.5 years on this joke, many, including myself, lost our sense of direction and consciousness. Because we've lost our direction, the CDCR has found flaws in our infrastructure as a collective.

All of the tactics you hear about to validate or get homies to debrief are true. After being detained for an assault on a faulty comrade, a SHU term was assessed and completed. After numerous incidents on Corcoran's integrated yard, and relationships with individuals of other acknowledged sects, IGI tried to seize their opportunity with interrogations. They were met with my defiance, then, they manifested a "packet".

What was troubling is that these silly goons were adamant of an alleged association with a sect that literally would be treason, had I been linked to them. Now my existence is in jeopardy.

After consultation with a selected few of my infrastructure, I had to denounce my legitimate association with whom I truly move to subterfuge the fabricated trash the IGI spawned. Pride was hard to swallow, but the flaw in their system relegated me to fall back without compromisin' comradz.

The procedures to become SNY depend on the administration at each institution, and it's at their administrative discretion. For me, in Corcoran SHU, I denounced my legitimate gang association without debriefing in order to rebuke a false alleged association. Once the process begins you are infected like a plague, whether you've debriefed or not. So I chose to drop out without debriefing, but the outcome is the same: SNY. With that label, the assumption is that I've either snitched/debriefed or I am some kind of "victim." There are now many prisoners in the SHU who are SNY and pending or are validated because someone on SNY can join the Enhanced Outpatient Program (EOP) for mentally ill prisoners, and get his SNY status revoked to be re-integrated into the EOP/GP program. EOP basically was SNY prior to the implementation of SNYs.

There seems to be a plague, a misconception that all are debriefing on SNY -- no! Nor is it legit for the validated homies to only have the lesser option to debrief in order to obtain civil-

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...Isolation

dations would certainly reduce the number of prisoners suffering in long-term isolation, and are therefore progressive recommendations for a Bar Association that works within the injustice system that uses supermax confinement as a tool of social control. But this very system, which they point out has demonstrated its willingness to ignore the law and act outside of standards of common decency set out by the Eighth Amendment, certainly cannot be trusted to determine "when an extremely serious threat to prison safety has been established."

The authors ignore the broader context of supermax confinement and its use in the United

...Continued from page 6

...Committed

movement; the struggle for prisoner rights has only become violent when the state initiated such violence."

Regarding the censorship of the September 2008 issue for calling on prisoners to unite against injustices: anyone who has read a few issues of *Under Lock & Key* knows that unity against the injustice system is the quickest way to reduce violence in prisons and on the streets. The article *Peace in the Streets*, also from *ULK issue 7*, shares a bit of the history of the many efforts made by lumpen organizations to join together for peace, and the efforts of the pigs to shut it down. In 2006, the Pelican Bay State Prison Peace Talks were underway in Crescent City, California; "I was able to bring all relevant parties to the table, a peace plan was adopted and a cease fire was implemented." There, also, the pigs undermined the unity.(1)

More recently, comrades all across the country have come together to develop and sign on to the United Front for Peace in Prisons.(see page 2) This United Front (UF) is an effort to stop the unnecessary killings and divisions in the prison environment which lead to our destruction. Interestingly, one of the points of unity of the UF is Growth, with emphasis on education. The pigs don't recognize this, but we know from experience and our study of history that political education leads to peace amongst the oppressed. Far from being censored, *Under Lock & Key* should be distributed widely to prisoners in the United States, because it will have a direct impact on the safety and security of the actual people in the prisons every day, including the guards.

This comrade has adopted a positive and correct attitude in the face of disappointment and censorship. Even though s/he is unable to receive these two issues of *Under Lock & Key*, s/he has not lost h commitment to apply science to strategy; h Plan B isn't to lash our or give up. More of us should follow h example and put science and the study of correct strategy, not emotions, at the forefront of our political work.★

Notes:

1. A California Prisoner. Support the Pelican Bay State Prison Peace Talk. *Under Lock & Key* May 2006.

States. As we report in an article on the history of control units: "The truth behind the reasons these control units are needed is they are a means of political, economic and social control of a whole class of oppressed and disenfranchised people. These include especially African, Latino and indigenous people who are a disproportionate part of control unit populations." Prisons in the United States are a breeding ground for resistance to the system that unjustly locks up segments of its population, and supermax units are required to further control the inevitable education and organizing that takes place among those who come face to face with the criminal injustice system.

While this report is useful for both the legal citations and the study of the harms caused by long-term isolation, it is important that we put it in the broader context of the criminal injustice system and understand that supermax torture cannot be reformed away within this system. We hope to make some significant improvements which will have a particular impact on the lives of our politically active comrades behind bars who are targeted for lockup in these isolation cells. And in that battle we unite with the NY Bar Association and many others who clearly see the injustice and inhumanity of supermax isolation.

Prisoners interested in a copy of this report should contact the New York City Bar Association at 42 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036. ★

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...First Step

The author of this quote, who was validated, is quick to condemn SNY prisoners, describing them as the most violent and discussing the gangs they have formed to work directly with the pigs. While it is true that many LOs work with the pigs, that is not limited to SNY. And while many in prison have given real information to the pigs, the above example begs the question, what do we have to gain by condemning snitches when all they are doing is parroting the pigs? Aren't the pigs in control, going so far as to tell them what to say?

Rather than marveling at the lack of character of the current generation, we need to look at the reasons why so many prisoners are easily manipulated to play the pigs' game. There are material bases for the actions of the masses. If there's too much snitching, then why don't the LOs address the causes for that? What support can you provide your members to encourage different behavior? Because the current way ain't working.

In California, SNY, like SHU, has been used as a tool to break up oppressed nation organizing. But it has become so common that prisoners are questioning the SNY vs. GP split that the state created. We echo this comrade's recognition that California prisoners came together over the last 3 months across all lines, a good step towards expanding the United Front for Peace in Prisons, and we join this comrade in calling for LOs to continue to come together in this struggle.★

Frente Unida por la Paz en Prisiones – Declaración de Principios

por MIM(Prisiones)
traducido por USW C-4 de USW
Marzo 2011

La base de cualquier unidad verdadero viene de un acuerdo en ciertas ideas principales. Esta declaración no da la autoridad a cualquier partido sobre cualquier otro partido. Somos mutuamente responsables uno al otro a cumplir estos puntos para permanecer como participantes activos en esta Frente Unida.

• La Paz: NOSOTROS organizamos para terminar los conflictos innecesarios y la violencia dentro del ambiente de las prisiones estadounidenses. Los opresores usan estrategias de división y conquista para que peleemos entre nosotros en lugar de ellos. Nos pondremos de pie y nos defenderemos de la opresión.

• La Unidad: NOSOTROS nos esforzaremos para unirnos con ellos quienes se enfrentan a las mismas luchas como nosotros por nuestros intereses comunes. Para mantener la unidad tenemos que guardar una línea abierta de redes y comunicación y asegurar que dirigimos cualquier situación con datos verdaderos. Esto se necesita porque los puercos utilizan tales tácticos como rumores, ratas y comunicaciones falsas para dividirnos y mantener la división entre los oprimidos. Los puercos ven el fin de su control dentro de nuestra unidad.

• El Crecimiento: NOSOTROS reconocemos la importancia de la educación y la libertad de crecer en orden de construir la unidad verdadera. Apoyamos a los miembros dentro de nuestras organizaciones que nos dejen para abrazar otros conceptos y organizaciones políticas que están dentro de la lucha anti-imperialista. Todos deberían unirse donde se sientan cómodos. Semejantemente reconocemos el derecho de nuestros camaradas dejar nuestras organizaciones si fracasamos a cumplir con nuestros principales y propósitos de la Frente Unida por la Paz en Prisiones.

• El Internacionalismo: NOSOTROS luchamos por la liberación de toda la gente oprimida. Mientras que muchas veces somos referidos como "minorías" en este país, y muchas veces encontramos a ellos quienes están en el mismo barco que nosotros en oposición a nosotros; nuestra confianza en cumplir nuestra misión viene de nuestra unidad con todas las naciones oprimidas quien representan la vasta mayoría globalmente. No podemos liberarnos cuando al mismo tiempo participamos en la opresión de otras naciones.

• La Independencia: NOSOTROS construimos nuestra propias instituciones y programas independiente de los Estados Unidos y todos sus ramos, aun hasta la policía local, porque este sistema no nos sirve. En desarrollar el poder independiente por estas instituciones no necesitamos comprometer nuestras metas.

El MIM(Prisiones)

El Ministro Maoísta Internacional de Prisiones, MIM(Prisiones), es una célula de revolucionarios que sirve las masas opresas dentro de las prisiones de los EEUU.. Mantenemos la ideología comunista revolucionaria del Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoísmo y trabajamos del punto del proletariado del tercer mundo.

El imperialismo es el enemigo número uno de la mayoría de gente del mundo, no podemos obtener nuestra meta de terminar toda opresión sin derribar el imperialismo. La historia nos ha mostrado que el imperialista hará guerra antes de permitir un fin a la opresión.

Como revolucionarios internacionalistas, nos apoyamos la auto-determinación de todas naciones y gente. Hoy, el sistema de prisiones de los EEUU es un parte mayor del estado imperialista siendo usado para prevenir la auto-determinación de las naciones opresas. Es por esta razón que vemos a prisioneros en este país como manteniendo la delantera de cualquier movimiento anti-imperialista y revolucionario. Mientras que nuestra organización se enfoca en apoyo al prisionero, creemos que hay una necesidad grave de trabajo para el Maoísta en organizar y educar en muchas áreas en los Estados Unidos. Tenemos la esperanza que alguna gente se inspire por nuestro ejemplo alrededor de prisiones y que lo aplique a su propio trabajo para crear más células maoísta y amplíe el movimiento Maoísta detrás de las líneas del enemigo.

MIM(Prisiones) se distingue de otros grupos en los siguientes seis puntos. Consideramos que las otras organizaciones que activamente mantienen estos puntos ser fraternal.

1. El comunismo es nuestra meta. El comunismo es una sociedad en donde ningún grupo tiene poder sobre cualquier otro grupo.

2. Una dictadura del proletariado es necesario. En una dictadura del proletariado la mayoría explotada anterior dicta a la minoría (el que promovió la explotación) como la sociedad se debe conducir. En el caso de naciones imperialistas, una dictadura junta del proletariado de naciones opresas (JDPO) debe hacer este papel en donde no hay proletariado interno o una base significante de masas que favorece comunismo.

3. Promovemos una frente unida contra todos los que se oponen al imperialismo. El camino al JDPO sobre las naciones imperialista incluye unir todos aquellos que se puedan unir contra el imperialismo. No podemos pelear el imperialismo y pelear otras que están ocupadas en conflictos de vida o muerte con el imperialismo a la misma vez. Aun las clases de una nación imperialista pueden ser aliados en el frente unido bajo ciertas condiciones.

4. Una clase parasitaria domina los países del primer mundo. Como Marx, Engels, y Lenin formularon y la idea de MIM ha reiterado a través de análisis materialista, el imperialismo extrae super-ganancias del Tercer Mundo y en parte usa esta riqueza para comprar populationes enteras de supuestos trabajadores. Estos supuestos trabajadores comprados por el imperialismo forman una nueva burguesía pequeña - llamada la aristocracia de labor, ellos no son un vehículo para el Maoísmo. Aquellos que trabajan en los intereses económicos de la aristocracia de labor del primer mundo forman la base de masas para apretar el agarre de la muerte del tercer mundo por el imperialismo

5. Nuevas burguesías se formarán bajo el socialismo. Mao guió la marcha para exponer la burguesía que se desarrolló dentro del partido comunista en la Unión Soviética y la campaña para bombardear los cuarteles generales en su propio país de China. Esas experiencias demostraron la necesidad de revolución continua bajo la dictadura del proletariado. La lucha de clases no se termina hasta que el estado haya sido anulado y el comunismo se haya alcanzado.

6. La Gran Revolución Cultural del Proletariado en China fue el avance más lejano hacia al comunismo en la historia. Mantenemos la Unión Soviética hasta la muerte de Stalin en 1953, seguido por la República de la gente de China a través de 1976 como los ejemplos mejores del socialismo moderno en la práctica. El arresto de la "Pandilla de Cuatro" en China y la subida de Khrushchev en la Unión Soviética marcaron la restauración del capitalismo en esos países. Otros experimentos en el desarrollo del socialismo en el siglo 20 fallaron de sobrepasar el modelo Soviético (es decir: Albania) o peor, se quedó adentro del modelo capitalista de producción, generalmente por la falla de romper con la teoría de fuerzas productivas.

¿Como se junta a la Frente Unida por Paz en las Prisiones?

- Estudie y mantener los cinco principios de la Frente Unida
- Envíe el nombre de tu organización y una declaración de la unidad a MIM(Prisiones). Tu declaración puede explicar qué los principios de la Frente Unida significa para tu organización, cómo se pertenece a tu trabajo, porque son importantes, etc.
- Desarrolla paz y unidad entre las facciones donde estés tu en la base de oponer a la opresión de todos los prisioneros y a la gente oprimida en general.
- Mande reportajes de tu progreso a Bajo Clave y Candado (Under Lock & Key). ¿Desarrollaste un tratado de paz o un protocolo que funciona? Envíalo a nosotros para que otros lo estudien y posiblemente lo usen. ¿Tu unidad está basada en las acciones? Mandemos reportajes en lo que estás organizando.
- Sigue educando a tus miembros. Lo más educados que estén tus miembros, la más unidad que puedes desarrollar, y lo más fuerte que tu organización puede ser. La unidad viene de dentro para afuera. En unirnos por el interior, podemos unirnos con otros también. Si necesitas más materiales para educar a tus miembros en la historia, en la política y la economía, ponte en contacto con el programa de Libros de Política Gratis para prisioneros de MIM(Prisiones). ★



¿Quieres leer más en español?

Tenemos algunos libros y revistas revolucionarios. Escríbenos para pedir algunos. En cambio por la literatura gratuita pedimos que nos mandes algo de trabajo. Escríbenos un artículo, forma un grupo de estudio, mándenos algún arte, lo que puedas hacer para contribuir a la lucha revolucionaria.

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You must write to us every 6 months to stay on our mailing list.
Tell us what mail you've gotten since the last time you wrote so we can track and fight censorship.

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Under Lock & Key No. 23, November/December 2011

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ity and humanity in prison. That's not an option.

I now find myself in the eighth month of an 18 month SHU term. Initially, there was shame in my decision, yet I been kickin' dust from Calipat to the Bay; my gangsta, my manhood, my integrity is and always will be solidified. I'm still pushin' and movin', and was surprised to see many reputable comradz and relatives on SNY too! Don't let the fence in the middle misconstrue reality: it's us vs. them!

Do not lose consciousness, whatever side you're on. I agree, most SNYs are faulty. There's an influx of kids who tapped out without ever walkin' any line, even for a hot second! Real spill. Now, consciousness is lost when homies are unconsciously toten' "burners" and gettin' caught? Fumblin' missives? Harbin' hooks? Politicin' with emotions as opposed to rational thinking? C'mon, we've all done it. The infrastructure must be tightened. Why do you think all these young homies needed on the line are now on SNY?

Again, not everyone is faulty; they weren't groomed right. We are responsible for us, so as the homies in these SHU complexes hunger strike and resist, our lack of consciousness is inconsiderate to the struggle. The lack of consciousness only perpetuates the offensive of the CDCR.

...SNY

So, yeah, I've spoke on it. I am SNY, but don't think I ain't still active!

MIM(Prisons) responds: This letter is referring back to the long running debate in *Under Lock & Key* about SNY yards and whether or not we should work with people in SNY who want to get involved in the fight against the criminal injustice system. We agree with the author that we've come across good comrades who are doing good work in SNY. We judge individuals by their actions, not by their prison-imposed classification. However, we would not glorify the activities on the street that lead to prison. We do need to educate the youth, but kids coming to prison aren't going to be more political because they did more street crime. Our job is to turn that energy against the system, preferably before they are locked up by the system.

There are deep contradictions within the lumpen organizations (LOs) that are alluded to by this comrade in his calls for self-criticism and evaluation. He echoes our previous points that the LOs are playing a big role in pushing people into SNY. Right now the SHU prisoners are leading the way, showing how to gain power and respect without being predators on each other, or other oppressed people. Internationalism means not just looking out for your group or clique. When the oppressed unite internationally, then self-determination can be real and power will no longer be fleeting as it is in current U.S. prison culture. ★

...Continued from page 6

...Censorship

ers across Amerika who also get this Gestapo-like treatment and who won't know how to appeal, or become discouraged and don't try. This is what pisses me off the most. But I know I got to go back to the legal front and go in for another legal battle.

This censorship in prisons is part of the reason prisoners went on hunger strike. This is why people starved; because of the years and decades of not being able to read history books, not being able to take correspondence courses, not being allowed to grapple with ideas. And when prisoners do try to understand critical thought, we are repressed. And when we protest torture, we are repaid with further repression! A society that creates dungeons and employs sadists to unleash all their sick methods on captive poor people, to torture and experiment on with their psychological abuses, is a society that is warped and morally bankrupt. ★

Sources for graphic on page 1:

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