

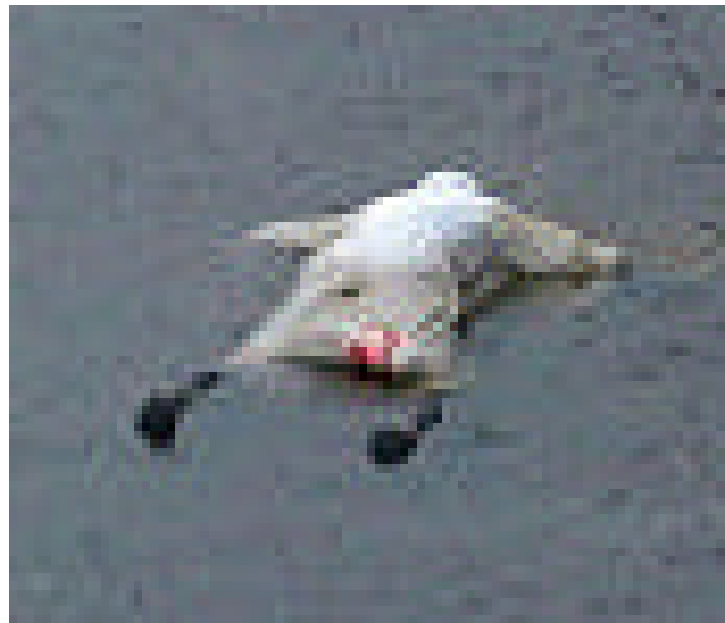


U.S. guilty of Katrina devastation

DO THE MATH: 'POOR' WHITES MORE LIKELY TO EVACUATE THAN POOR BLACKS

By HC116, September 3, 2005
From mimnotes.info

It is well-known that the people stranded in New Orleans after the order to evacuate were disproportionately Black, not just that they were mostly Black, like the New Orleans city population. (Although, this is something that the vile racists criticizing mimnotes.info don't even understand (either that or dismiss) when they say that the tens of thousands Blacks who were stranded in New Orleans somehow got themselves in that situation, but somehow the whites didn't.) Less acknowledged is that even poor whites were more likely than poor blacks to be able to evacuate, taking the government's definition of poverty. This difference, which can be measured, reflects national oppression by showing that even oppressor-nation poor people have privileges compared with oppressed-nation poor people. ("Poor" can be understood in different ways, some of them unscientific, like the U.S. government's definition of poverty, poverty status, etc.) Darryl Pinckney, writing in the Guardian Unlimited



The united States spends hundreds of billions of dollars on militarism and waging imperialist wars instead of preparing for natural disasters.

(September 3, 2005), asks where did the large poor white population in Louisiana go. There is more truth to this statement than Pinckney reveals at first, suggesting early on that poverty is the only reason why mainly Blacks were stranded in New Orleans. "Those with money, white and black, got out." The reality is that even many poor Euro-American people got out, and some non-poor, non-disabled Black people did not get out.

The oppressor nation has little interest

in systematically keeping track of refugees' "race" at this time, so we have to make do with what is available. So, according to Jordan

Flaherty, who visited a refugee camp in New Orleans, at most 10% of the people in one refugee camp were non-Black.(1) Clearly, this is not the impression one gets from photographs and video of refugees in and from New Orleans, if not interviews of people displaced by the flood devastation (the media seems to be paying a disproportionate amount of attention to Euro-American evacuees' and refugees' stories)—the number of non-Black refugees stranded in New Orleans was closer to less than 5% non-Black. Even so, an assumption of 10% poor whites for those who were stranded in New Orleans (certainly an exaggeration, an overestimate) is still disturbing.

The ratio of below-poverty-level whites ("not Hispanic or Latino") to below-poverty-level blacks was greater than 1 poor white persyn for every 9 poor blacks

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HURRICANE KATRINA ILLUSTRATES NATIONAL OPPRESSION OF BLACKS

By HC116, August 31, 2005
From mimnotes.info

On August 28th, the entire city of New Orleans was ordered evacuated as Hurricane Katrina approached. The hurricane and resultant flooding have displaced thousands people in the States of Louisiana and Mississippi and affected many other people in Alabama and Florida; hundreds of people, at least, in New Orleans alone are estimated to have died. About 326 thousand Blacks were living in the City of New Orleans itself. Therefore, 0.94%, almost 1%, of the people of the Black nation have been displaced, based roughly on Census 2000 data, and that isn't even looking at the Greater New Orleans area, in which half a million Black people lived. Refugees have gone as far west as Houston, hundreds of miles away, and as far north as Tulsa, Oklahoma, almost seven hundred miles away by road. Virulent white nationalists, the same who are hostile to indigenous and Latin American migrants, are already complaining about Black refugees from the disaster areas.

The media is concentrating on intimate persynal stories about lives and homes ruined by a so-called "natural" disaster, which has left mostly disabled, homeless and low-income people, almost all Blacks, remaining in New Orleans; the media neglects to point out that the united States spends hundreds of billions of dollars on militarism and waging imperialist wars instead of preparing for natural disasters.

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Letters

Freedom in Amerikkka

I full heartedly believe that it is quite impossible to be mentally free while at the same time being physically confined, restricted, restrained and/or bound at the hands of others, totally against your own will. I refuse to acknowledge freedom simply as a feeling or divine mental state. Freedom should more properly be defined as a way of life.

A large amount of people in our society today are under the equivocation, by way of imperialistic propaganda, that we are in fact living in "the land of the free." But how can my ancestors, the former black slaves, call what they were given freedom? Granted, many were physically set free at one point, but mentally and psychologically, they were still taught to be inferior to the white man. And when they were being told that they were just as free as the white man, integration was heavily and vehemently frowned upon.

As far as this day and age goes, Amerikkka is constantly coming up with laws and regulations further contradicting the so-called freedom one has while residing on "their" land. If everyone in Amerikkka is entitled to freedom, it should not be paramount to a chosen few, but to the same degree for all, should it not? And if this is in fact the land of the free, why does it no longer belong to my ancestors, the Natives of the land ("Indians")? And is it simply coincidence, or just ironic, that every single president of the united States

of Amerikkka has always been a white man?

After, and while the natives ("Indians") were deceived, robbed, raped, and murdered for their land. My brothers and sisters were brought from Al-Kebulan (Africa) to sacrifice blood, sweat, and tears in order to help build the imperialistic nation we now know today as the united States of Amerikkka. So fuck Amerikkka and their so-called freedom.

- a California prisoner, August 2005



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MIM Notes

The Official Newsletter of The Maoist Internationalist Movement
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What is Mimnotes.info?

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Mimnotes.info publishes news articles and culture (media, movie, music, video game and other) reviews from the standpoint of the world's exploited and oppressed under imperialism, capitalism, and patriarchy. Inspired by the Maoist Internationalist Movement, mimnotes.info ("MIM notes dot info") opposes all group oppression, including the oppression of gays and lesbians, wimmin, and youth. The imperialist-patriarchy is full of horrors and misery for the world's oppressed majority. Mimnotes.info aims to build public opinion for revolutionary change. Nothing short of revolution can end this messed-up system.

Knowing the world and conditions inside the belly of the beast is key. Equip yourself with mimnotes.info and write for mimnotes.info.



We must strive to unhook the minds of the people by liberating the heart.



<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/rail/impkills.html>

What is MIM?

The Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM) is the collection of existing or emerging Maoist internationalist parties in the English-speaking imperialist countries and their English-speaking internal semi-colonies, as well as the existing or emerging Maoist Internationalist parties in Belgium, France and Quebec and the existing or emerging Spanish-speaking Maoist Internationalist parties of Aztlan, Puerto Rico and other territories of the U.S. Empire. MIM Notes is the newspaper of MIM. *Notas Rojas* is the newspaper of the Spanish-speaking parties or emerging parties of MIM. MIM upholds the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and is an internationalist organization that works from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat. MIM struggles to end the oppression of all groups over other groups: classes, genders, nations. MIM knows this is only possibly by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle. Revolution is a reality for North America as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony. MIM differs from other communist parties on three main questions: (1) MIM holds that after the proletariat seizes power in socialist revolution, the potential exists for capitalist restoration under the leadership of a new bourgeoisie within the communist party itself. In the case of the USSR, the bourgeoisie seized power after the death of Stalin in 1953; in China, it was after Mao's death and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four" in 1976. (2) MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution as the farthest advance of communism in humyn history. (3) As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM 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 oppressor nation so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy. These classes are not the principal vehicles to advance Maoism within those countries because their standards of living depend on imperialism. At this time, imperialist super-profits create this situation in the Canada, Quebec, the United States, England, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden and Denmark. MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principles and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

"The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases, but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution."

- Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 208.

Hurricane Katrina: further evidence that imperialism is a public health disaster

By a MIM comrade,
September 5, 2005
From *mimnotes.info*

An article in the December 2004 issue of the American Journal of Public Health shows that almost nine hundred thousand deaths of Black people could have been prevented between 1991-2000 had Blacks had the same health care and other conditions as Euro-Americans.(1) In fact, the article's authors find that eliminating the disparity in death rates between blacks and whites can save more lives than developing better drugs among other things. This is just one small piece of the national oppression-related disparity in care that exists in the American health system and under imperialism in the United States. And this is a reminder that no one should be surprised that Blacks in New Orleans are disproportionately affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Public health is the field of study that focuses on the health of the public in general, as opposed to individual medical care. As a field of study, public health leans towards materialist politics by considering groups of people rather than thinking about individuals and their illnesses in isolation from what caused them in the long run. In New Orleans, many people are now calling the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina a "public health disaster" because of the long delay in getting aid to those stranded, leading to likely virulent outbreaks of contagious and infectious diseases. The standing water is a breeding ground for these diseases. And the dehydration caused by many days without drinkable water, lack of sanitary facilities, and inadequate food and medical care, only compound the problem.

Many "experts" are being quoted in mainstream media comparing the situation in New Orleans with the Third World. This is an important comparison (even though others are using "Third World"-like conditions as a pretext for the military repression of so-called looters). Among the reasons people think America should not look like the Third World is the health care system in the United States. Irrational as private medical care is, with all the wealth in the United States, American citizens receive much better health care

than Third World countries with few exceptions—such as Cuba, which recently offered to send the Henry Reeve Brigade consisting of more than 1,500 doctors to the United States to help victims of Hurricane Katrina, but has so far been ignored by arrogant U.S. authorities who apparently would rather see more Black people die than accept help from a supposedly socialist country.(2)

About two-fifths of the world's population lives in "high-mortality" Third World countries. According to the World Health Organization, "[a]bout one-sixth of the entire disease burden in these countries is attributed to underweight, with a substantial additional proportion attributable to micronutrient deficiencies. The burden resulting from these risks alone approaches that of the entire disease and injury burden in industrialized countries."(3) In addition, unsafe water accounts for about 5% of the disease burden in these countries. Overall in the Third World, the top six leading health risks are: underweight, unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene, indoor smoke from solid fuels, and unsafe sex. This is contrasted to First World countries where alcohol, blood pressure, overweight, cholesterol and tobacco are the leading risks to health.(3)

The differences in health are illustrated most starkly in the avoidable deaths statistics. "Underweight," meaning insufficient food and nutrition, accounts for more than three million childhood deaths each year in Third World countries. According to the WHO, "[a]t the same time that there are 170 million children in poor countries who are underweight—and over three million of them die each year as a result—there are more than one billion adults worldwide who are overweight and at least 300 million who are clinically obese. Among these, about half a million people in North America and Western Europe die from obesity-related diseases every year."(3) So, in the Third World we see people dying from lack of sufficient food, and in the wealthiest imperialist countries we see people dying literally from too much food.

And it is this contrast that explains the focus of the American medical system

and the focus on developing better treatments instead of eliminating disparities in treatment: Americans have the luxury of care for cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and cancer, because people live long enough to develop these problems, and many people live decadently enough to cause these problems. (But we also cannot ignore the relatively poor, mostly oppressed-nation people in America who suffer from malnutrition because of "overconsumption" of cheap fast food, yet another expression of national oppression.)

Furthermore, on the question of sanitation, the WHO states: "About 1.7 million deaths a year worldwide are attributed to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene, mainly through infectious diarrhoea. Nine out of ten such deaths are in children, and virtually all of the deaths are in developing countries."(3) This is exactly why conditions in New Orleans looked like the Third World. Nowhere in the United States or other imperialist countries today do we have an example of such dangerous unsanitary conditions.

In New Orleans the public health problems arose in large part because some people did not have the money or other resources to get out of the city before the hurricane struck. This is not a "natural" disaster; this is a known (not just predictable, but also ongoing) and avoidable disaster. Just like the people in Third World countries dying from preventable lack of food and unsanitary conditions, and being concentrated in low-lying areas prone to flooding, many Black people in New Orleans have died from similar causes. We won't know the true number for quite a while, and it is unlikely that American officials will give an honest assessment of the causes of death for those whose deaths could have been easily prevented. (This is probably one side effect of various commentators' discouraging people from talking about "race" and class issues in the immediate aftermath of Katrina and telling them to just focus on helping "Americans." The opportunity to accurately keep track of refugees' characteristics may have been lost.)

We know that 1.7 million deaths a year could be prevented with a small investment

in clean water and sanitation systems. We know that three million deaths a year could be prevented with a more equitable distribution of the food currently grown in the world. And we know that the deaths of many of the Black in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina could have been prevented. All of these come down to priorities in public health and distribution of resources. Medical care professionals are reporting that government bureaucracy is stopping them from helping people in need of care. Both individual doctors and entire hospitals are unable to find their way through the government mess.(4)

The real solution to the public health problems in New Orleans and around the world is getting rid of governments whose first priority is profit rather than serving the people. Capitalism has proven itself a global failure, and for oppressed nations, both within U.S. borders and around the world, it is a catastrophic failure that adds up to millions of deaths each year. The only logical solution is a system that puts the needs of the world's people first. The urgency of ending the imperialist system and having proletarian leadership is starkly evident in the numbers of easily preventable deaths each year.

Notes

1. Steven H. Woolf et al., "The Health Impact of Resolving Racial Disparities: An Analysis of US Mortality Data," American Journal of Public Health 94, no. 12 (2004): 2078-2081.

"Need to correct racial disparities in health," 8 December 2004, <http://www.news-medical.net/?id=6783>

2. Lucia Newman, "Castro: U.S. hasn't responded to Katrina offer," 5 September 2005, <http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/americas/09/05/katrina.cuba/index.html>

3. World Health Organization, World Health Report 2002 : Reducing Risks, Promoting Healthy Life, <http://www.who.int/whr/2002/en/>

4. Robin Wallace, "At Shelters, Katrina health crisis continues," 5 September 2005, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,168519,00.html>

'POOR' WHITES MORE LIKELY TO EVACUATE THAN POOR BLACKS

From p. 1...

in New Orleans city in 1999, according to Census 2000 (Summary File 3) data, which is to say that the percent of those stranded in New Orleans who were white "should" (with no difference between Blacks and whites) have been greater than 10%, assuming that all the people stranded were poor and only black or white. (This wasn't the case, but I'll get to the problems raised in a minute.) The ratio

of poor whites to poor blacks was about 1.1 poor whites for every 9 poor blacks, which is leaving out some poor blacks who were prisoners since the U.S. Census doesn't determine poverty status for prisoners. So, if we were to use these data, it would appear at first glance that below-poverty-level whites were more likely to be able to evacuate New Orleans than below-poverty-level blacks since clearly whites were less than 10% of the people stranded in New Orleans,

while 90%-plus were Black. The fact that some non-Black persons stranded in New Orleans were Asians, Latinos, as well as self-identified black migrants who were not necessarily part of the Black nation, is only further proof of this article's argument.

According to rough data from the small-sample 2003 American Community Survey, the ratio of below-poverty-level whites, "not Hispanic or Latino," to below-poverty-level blacks was even greater

than 1 poor white for every 9 poor blacks ("Income in the past 12 months below poverty level"). In fact, about 19% of the people stranded in New Orleans, according to this writer's calculations, "should" have been white—clearly not the case in reality—assuming only black or white poor people.

The question arises, however, what if most of the Blacks stranded in New

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World citizens, not just “Americans,” need disaster relief—and national liberation

By HC116, September 4, 2005
From mimnotes.info

Commentators and politicians, as the social disaster unleashed by Hurricane Katrina continues to unfold, are saying that there should have been better disaster protection or faster relief efforts since Blacks are also “Americans.” Some have used this as a pretext for more military troops in the New Orleans, which would potentially militarize the city further. Prior to recent reports of military troops killing unarmed people in New Orleans(1), New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin in an interview with radio station WWL-AM on September 1st said: “I need reinforcements, I need troops.” “Don’t do another press conference until the resources are in this city. And then come down to this city and stand with us when there are military trucks and troops that we can’t even count.” The day before, CBS, CNN, NBC and others were saying that New Orleans looked like a war zone.

The sentiment that Blacks are Americans, too, and should for that particular reason be aided, has been repeated many times on TV and in the newspaper media. But why Blacks have been among the hardest-hit by the hurricane and flood devastation in the first place is a question that needs addressing. Those who think legal equality means real

equality and liberation need to wake up and realize that just living within u.S. borders is no guarantee of getting the same help as Euro-Americans—not before the hurricane, not now, and not in the foreseeable future. This is because of national differences and national oppression within u.S. borders. Many Blacks, particularly lumpen-proletarians, are expendable from the viewpoint of the Euro-American nation. And not only that, oppressed-nation people in the united States are more susceptible to disasters due to economic aspects of national oppression.

A Latino migrant, whom this writer talked with about Katrina and New Orleans, said that refugees from the Hurricane Katrina disaster areas should be helped not just because they are Americans, or documented persons living within u.S. borders, but because they are “people.” This person was rightfully suspicious of individuals, not just Black leaders but also influential Euro-Americans in the media and the government, pandering to First World chauvinism. This same chauvinism in other contexts can easily turn into hostility toward oppressed people, including Haitian, Jamaican, Nigerian and other migrants who aren’t necessarily part of the Black nation. It is not necessary to be opportunist and lie about Blacks having

Those who assert a reactionary Amerika-first line to garner support for relief efforts should think about the recent flood devastation in China and realize some commonalities, between the u.S. internal semi-colonies, and oppressed nations in the Third World.

the same social status as Euro-Americans in order to get relief aid. Proof of this is the Southeast Asia tsunami relief efforts, directed toward many oppressed-nation persons in the Third World, by some imperialist-country people; although, this aid is still inadequate.

While the imperialist media was paying much attention to Katrina victims in the united States, another social disaster was going down, in imperialist-dominated China, precipitated by Typhoon Talim. Those who are essentially putting forth a reactionary Amerika-first line in the name of garnering more support for relief efforts should think about the recent flood devastation in China to put things into perspective and realize some commonalities, between the u.S. internal semi-colonies, and oppressed nations in the Third World.

According to BBC News, at least fifty

people in China have died due to flooding and landslides caused by Typhoon Talim. “About 40 died in the province of Anhui when Talim made landfall on Thursday [September 1st], and 14 died in the city of Wenzhou, China’s Xinhua news agency reported.”(2) “Up to a million people were moved from low-lying coastal flood plains in Zhejiang and Fujian provinces, Xinhua said.”(2) The u.S. mainstream media (including CNN anchor Carol Costello on the early-morning “CNN Daybreak,” and the Seattle Times) were mentioning Typhoon Talim as early as August 31st. English-language information about the disaster situation in China after the typhoon is sparse, but Anhui is a rural province, one of China’s poorest provinces, with a large agricultural sector and has been struck

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‘POOR’ WHITES MORE LIKELY TO EVACUATE THAN POOR BLACKS

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Orleans were above the poverty level. This is ridiculous and fanciful, but it is conceivable that this was the case. This could have resulted in poor whites’ being more likely to have evacuated than poor blacks. Still, we can say this is extremely unlikely because it would suggest that white stranded refugees were more likely to be poor than Black stranded refugees. The virtual independent media blackout makes it difficult to be conclusive, but this is highly unlikely since blacks in New Orleans had a poverty rate that was a multiple of the poverty rate of whites. If anything, many of the white people who stayed in New Orleans (some to protect their property, others because they had a disability) were not poor, which means that even fewer poor whites remained in New Orleans compared with poor Blacks. Undoubtedly, some non-poor blacks living in poor black neighborhoods were unable to evacuate, which means a lower count of poor black people (and an increase in the number of poor whites compared with poor blacks). But not only is this more proof of this article’s argument about national oppression, it is inconceivable by most accounts that more poor blacks were able to evacuate than rich blacks. (I am using “poor” and “rich” rather loosely. In

the united States in particular, we really should be talking about different bourgeois and petty-bourgeois strata, and lumpen-proletarians.)

This is a rather detached way of looking at things. We can break things down further and get complicated with the math, but the truth is obvious. The numbers are partly for the reactionaries who insist that the Katrina social disaster has nothing to do with national oppression, and the white-worker chauvinists who assert it only has to do with class but not nationality.

The social disaster was not just a result of inadequate preparedness or a lack of funds for flood protection. The disaster was waiting to happen, like it was, and still is, in oppressed-nation communities throughout the country—and the world, as Typhoon Talim illustrates in China.(2) The problem was with basic social relations. If an asteroid from outer space suddenly came out of nowhere and hit the planet at a random location (presumably, there would be nothing that could be done to mitigate the damage barring some kind of deflection away from certain areas of the planet), oppressed-nation people would still be most affected. The inadequate disaster

response, particularly in New Orleans, reflects racism, like many have said, but fundamentally the problem is national oppression. Getting the oppressor nation’s government to allocate more money, or beef up its military or military-style agencies’ preparedness, for disaster protection is ultimately not going to fix this. In fact, it may contribute to more military crackdowns in the future on so-called looters in disaster areas. U.S. soldiers, some from Iraq, in New Orleans reportedly have shoot-to-kill orders.(3) The oppressed must have their own independent aid organizations.

Notes

1. Jordan Flaherty, “Notes From Inside New Orleans,” 2 September 2005, <http://neworleans.indymedia.org/news/2005/09/4043.php>

2. “Dozens die as typhoon hits China,” 4 September 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4212636.stm>

“Death toll from typhoon Talim rises to 44 in Anhui,” 4 September 2005, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-09/04/content_3440883.htm

“Rainstorms and heavy flows of mud and rock also destroyed 17,200 residential houses, damaged 61,100 houses and affected more than 130,000 hectares of

cropland in the province, according to the official with the Anhui Provincial Disaster Relief Office. The province evacuated 168,100 people to avoid typhoon Talim.”

“Nearly 600,000 evacuated in China as Typhoon Talim approaches,” 1 September 2005, <http://www.forbes.com/home/feeds/afx/2005/09/01/afx2200694.html>

“Floods claim 1,024 lives across China this year,” 30 August 2005, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6FRGCU?OpenDocument>

“The widespread floods have affected the lives of 150.78 million people, destroyed over 10 million hectares of farmland and about 900,000 houses in 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities across the country, incurring 102.8 billion yuan (some 12.6 billion US dollars) in direct losses, the statistics show.”

3. “Troops given shoot-to-kill orders in New Orleans: Gunfire, blasts precede Bush visit,” 3 September 2005, <http://www.dawn.com/2005/09/03/int1.htm>

“New Orleans rocked by huge blasts,” 2 September 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4207202.stm>

KATRINA ILLUSTRATES NATIONAL OPPRESSION OF BLACKS

From 1...

(On-site independent media reports are scarce. There urgently needs to be more independent reporting.) And predominantly Euro-American voices in the media, such as CNN news anchors, have wondered aloud about how “primitive” New Orleans has become after the flooding, juxtaposing their comments with images of impoverished and devastated Blacks (and the occasional white persyn, to which a disproportionate amount of attention is paid), some of whom were undoubtedly homeless before the hurricane and flooding. Various commentators have said that New Orleans now looks like a Third World place and something that one wouldn’t expect to see in Amerika. This is what people were saying about the tsunami devastation in Southeast Asia that started several months ago as if there weren’t substantial national differences within the united States. Amerikans are now claiming Hurricane Katrina as their “tsunami” even though both devastations have disproportionately impacted oppressed-nation people.

The racist media on television, in addition to portraying Katrina as a natural disaster without a profound social dimension, is alternatively focusing on showing images of “looters” and awkwardly trying to achieve the “right” balance between sympathy and condemnation—probably because the appearance of some middle-class Blacks supposedly “looting” stores for food, water and tissue paper is confusing to First World chauvinists who aren’t used to seeing truly impoverished middle-class people. Others, including ordinary Amerikans regretfully, are occupied with worrying about the hurricane’s impact on the price of oil.(1) The media is also giving voice to potentially harmful disparaging criticisms blaming people who stayed in New Orleans after the evacuation was declared. Meanwhile, one of the largest and most rapid mobilizations of Blacks has taken place and is still going on, a fact that has so far been rarely reported.

U.S. Census Bureau reports came out on August 30th showing that the u.S. official poverty rate has increased over the past few years.(2) Some have been quick to use these reports, which suggest a poverty increase under Bu\$h’s watch, as a backdrop for criticisms of Bu\$h’s handling of the Hurricane Katrina disaster response since many of those most affected by Hurricane Katrina are poor, a reality that is independent of the U.S. Government’s unscientific definitions of poverty. However, the overall u.S. “black” government-defined poverty rate did not increase significantly between 2003 and 2004 (according the Census Bureau’s definition of significance). The “White, not Hispanic” official poverty rate, on the other hand, increased 0.5 percentage points between 2003 and 2004, a significant increase; and 2002 and 2003 American Community Survey data (which are imprecise) show an increase in the

white poverty rate in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes, but a decrease in the black government-defined poverty rate. The poverty rate in Louisiana apparently declined between 2001 and 2002, based on Census Bureau data that is dated December 2004 (these Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates are also imprecise), but the poverty rates in Jefferson Parish and the predominantly Black Orleans Parish increased slightly between 2001 and 2002. Strangely, it would seem then that the Hurricane Katrina disaster and the disaster response have been reflective of the oppression of low-income whites, if we were to take this crude approach. Yet, not only were most of the below-poverty-level people in New Orleans Black in 1999, the New Orleans City black poverty rate was more than three times that of whites. Even in Jefferson Parish, which was not predominantly Black, the black poverty rate was almost four times that of whites. Children in New Orleans have a poverty rate of 44% according to the United States Conference of Mayors’ December 2004 Hunger and Homeless Survey (<http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/hungersurvey/2004/online-report/HungerAndHomelessnessReport2004.pdf>).

In other words, some so-called leftists are papering over the national differences revealed by Hurricane Katrina and exploiting the devastation in New Orleans to reinforce the privileges of white workers (who are prone to supporting fascist repression against migrants after all the latest stories about rising white “poverty” in Amerika), when in reality it is disproportionately Blacks who have been displaced from New Orleans and are suffering the brunt of the martial law the New Orleans mayor has declared purportedly to repress “looters” (even though people might not be let back into the city for months). This martial law comes at the expense hundreds of police who could have been used to continue their search-and-rescue operations.(3)

People are being routinely searched, including for drugs and guns. Portraying refugees as violent, authorities have appeared on TV saying that too many refugees packed into stadiums wouldn’t be able to be kept under control. At the same time, some refugees have reportedly not been allowed to leave the Louisiana Superdome by themselves, and refugees in the Superdome are going to be bused to the Astrodome in Houston. Some are calling for allegedly armed persyns to be disarmed wherever they are. White news correspondents are stirring up fear about Black people with guns and automatically branding them “looters.” Police brutality will likely ensue from the martial law in New Orleans; just recently there have been reports of police brutality in New Orleans that took place before Hurricane Katrina reached the coast.(4) The New Orleans police department has a reputation for being one of the most brutal in the united States.

Agreeing with a police officer, CNN

correspondent Chris Lawrence brazenly called for “military action” against so-called looters on Wednesday. Nancy Grace on Wednesday evening asked whether “there [is] any indication that the military can actually stop the unrest in New Orleans.”(5) CNN correspondent Anderson Cooper said: “I was with some FEMA troops, some search and rescue officers, and they needed protection because they were intimidated by what was going on around them. And we’re seeing that all over here in southern Mississippi. It’s a very tenuous situation.”(5) CNN was lending support to stepping up the militarization in Mississippi and in New Orleans—to control what Joe Scarborough has flippantly called “Third World” “anarchy.” The same evening, Joe Scarborough on MSNBC’s “Scarborough Country” called for zero-tolerance against “looters” and said Rudy Giuliani would do a better job at dealing with the “looters”; former New York mayor and security consultant Giuliani is internationally known for his brutal and vicious tough-on-crime policing tactics, often targeting oppressed-nation people. National Guard troops are already in Mississippi and Louisiana. Scarborough said: “New Orleans officials, State officials basically threw their arms up in the air, said there was nothing they could do about looters. I don’t think Rudy Giuliani would have ever taken that position.”

Almost a third of New Orleans’s population is white, but most of the refugees seen on TV for instance, amid the so-called Third World anarchy supposedly needing to be repressed, are Black. There is a reason for this in addition to disability or financial inability to leave the city. Most of New Orleans is below sea level, but Blacks are concentrated in the lowest areas, such as the low-lying Lower Ninth Ward, making them particularly susceptible to flooding. Authorities have known about the sea-level and flooding problem for a long time, and had repeatedly seen its consequences before, which is why the inadequate levees were in place, but much of the housing in the areas below sea level is less expensive, and some residents are compelled to live there despite the flood risk. Although, it is not just poverty that has led Blacks to concentrate in these areas, but also on-going forced segregation and other factors.

Notes:

1. Phyllis Furman, Lore Croghan, and Daniel Dunaief, “It’s a pain in the gas tank,” 31 August 2005, <http://www.nydailynews.com/business/story/342191p-292165c.html>

Judy Green, “Some suspicious of price increase, but gas up anyway,” 1 September 2005, <http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/ibp8-5&mid=1&tab=54&submid=2&wid=2>

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Satellite?pagename=JPost/JPArticle/ShowFull&cid=1125454957732

2. “New on the site,” http://www.census.gov/newonsite/archives/2005_08.html

3. “Nagin orders police into the streets to stop looting,” 31 August 2005, <http://www.katc.com/Globa1/story.asp?S=3791621>

4. Meredith Mendez, “Police Brutality Allegations,” 1 August 2005, <http://abc26.trb.com/news/wgnopolicebrutality0812005070930storyofwgn-news-1>

5. Nancy Grace et al., “Looting and general lawlessness reported breaking out in New Orleans. Can the military restore order? And are these really opportunistic looters or just people trapped in a destroyed city trying to feed their families?” “NANCY GRACE 8:00 PM EST” 31 August 2005, 083101cb.h01.

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7. Howard Witt and Michael Martinez, “New Orleans could be empty for months, officials say,” 31 August 2005, <http://www.sanluisobispo.com/mld/sanluisobispo/news/nation/12528957.htm>

8. Robert D. McFadden, “Higher Death Toll Seen; Police Ordered to Stop Looters,” 1 September 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/01/national/nationalspecial/01storm.html>

9. “Anger rises among Mississippi’s poor after Katrina,” 31 August 2005, <http://www.leadingthecharge.com/stories/news-0066227.html>

“ ‘Many people didn’t have the financial means to get out,’ said Alan LeBreton, 41, an apartment superintendent who lived on Biloxi’s seaside road, now in ruins. ‘That’s a crime and people are angry about it.’ “

Did you know? There are more than 200 back issues of MIM Notes available on the MIM website? Not only can you browse more than 15 years of the newspaper, you can also keep up with the very latest on MIM agitation campaigns, prisoner news, all the latest on the U\$ war, and much more. MIM’s website is an indispensable tool for the revolutionary

What's New @ MIM's Homepage

World citizens, not just “Americans,” need disaster relief—and national liberation

From p. 4...

by devastating floods in the past, and Wenzhou city is an Open Coastal City, similar to China’s Special Economic Zones for imperialist exploitation.

“Serious flooding throughout southern and eastern China this summer has killed more than 1,000 people and left hundreds missing, presumed dead.”(2) This is spread out, but in terms of deaths and missing persons, this sounds similar to the disaster situation in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

The effects of Typhoon Talim are supposed to be weaker than the effects of Hurricane Katrina, but floods in the past year throughout China have destroyed almost a million houses, typically near coasts and river/lake banks, where agricultural and manufacturing workers are concentrated, according to the Xinhua News Agency.(3) The Black nation today has a large section of petty-bourgeois workers, many of whom are in what Marxists call the unproductive sector (the Euro-American nation has even more petty-bourgeois workers and workers in the non-commodity-producing unproductive sector), but the Black nation is also oppressed by imperialism, and this is manifested geographically.

A newly released study by the Charlotte Observer, reported on by the Chicago Sun-Times, shows that “even blacks with incomes above \$100,000 a year were charged the high rates more often than whites with incomes below \$40,000.”(4) This sort of discrepancy is not a new finding, but this new study is further confirmation that Blacks as a whole, compared with Euro-Americans of the same classes, face conditions that can’t be attributed to outright racism by individuals or even simple mortgage redlining, but which reflect sharp, widespread and lasting differences. The Charlotte Observer, summarizing its study, reported on August 28th:

“Overall, about 1 borrower in 10 was charged a high interest rate. Among white borrowers, 6 percent paid high rates. But among Hispanics, 14 percent did, and among blacks, it was 27 percent—more than one in four borrowers.

“Black borrowers got high-rate home purchase loans much more often than whites with similar and even smaller incomes.

“Higher-income blacks living in white communities got high rates much more often than their white neighbors.”(5)

The Charlotte Observer claims: “It’s hard to prove pure race bias, because other factors also influence mortgage rates.” But it also notes that “decades ago bank lending practices were blatantly biased, and many blacks today don’t trust banks. They’re more apt to use independent mortgage brokers, who make

the bulk of the high-rate mortgages, and many of whom advertise heavily in low-income neighborhoods.”(5) This is not necessarily racism, but an economic form of national oppression carried out by profit-seeking mortgage bank monopoly capitalists and those who invest with them, including many Euro-American so-called workers. In the study report, the Charlotte Observer paraphrases Financial Protection Law Center director Mal Maynard as saying: “Lenders are targeting black neighborhoods for the sale of high-rate loans, he said.”(6)

The Charlotte Observer also reports: “The gaps increased with income. Among lower-income families, blacks received high-rate loans 3.3 times more often than whites. Among higher-income families, blacks received high rates 4.8 times more often.”(6)

In this context, moves by financial institutions to forgo some mortgage payments for Hurricane Katrina refugees may just be making up for past mortgage-lending inequality (in addition to benefiting Euro-Americans who have smaller mortgages for the same or better houses).(7) “The Mortgage Bankers Association, an industry trade group, estimated that 360,000 single-family mortgages in the four states were affected by the hurricane and its floods.”(7) The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. has asked banks to help customers get loans until they get insurance proceeds. Of course, many Blacks in New Orleans had no insurance and have nothing to collect insurance for, but the reported inequality in mortgage lending, which is not just a legacy of past segregation, illustrates differences between Blacks and Euro-Americans with the same income.

Another difference, pointed out in a New York Times article today and particularly relevant to the unfolding of the social disaster in New Orleans, is that even among poor people, Blacks are less likely than whites to have a car. Oppressed-nation people have less mobility than oppressor-nation people in general; although, many oppressed-nation people in the United States have faster or better means of transportation and more mobility than the oppressed in the Third World. According to figures attributed to Queens College Professor of Sociology Andrew A. Beveridge, cited by the New York Times and which are based on 2000 Census data, 59% of black “households in poverty” in New Orleans had no car, compared with 34% of white “households in poverty.”(8) (See the graphic entitled “The Reach of Poverty in New Orleans.”) Something that the New York Times did not report, but which is also interesting, is that even among workers (16 years or older) who had a car, truck or van in New Orleans city, blacks were twice as likely

as whites (“not Hispanic or Latino”) to carpool to get to work, 26% and 13% respectively, according to Census 2000 (Summary File 3) data. This indicates fewer white workers per vehicle, or more vehicles per white worker, and fewer vehicles per black worker.

Notes

1. “CORRECTED - Rapes, killings hit Katrina refugees in New Orleans,” 3 September 2005 (“03 Sep 2005 22:52:27 GMT”), <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N03464940.htm>

2. “Dozens die as typhoon hits China,” 4 September 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4212636.stm>

3. “Floods claim 1,024 lives across China this year,” 30 August 2005, <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/d b 9 0 0 S I D / V B O L - 6FRGCU?OpenDocument>

4. “Blacks pay higher mortgage rates,

study says,” 4 September 2005, <http://www.suntimes.com/output/news/cst-nws-mort04.html>

5. “Truth in lending,” 28 August 2005, <http://www.charlotte.com/mld/observer/news/opinion/12497143.htm>

6. Binyamin Appelbaum and Ted Mellnik, “The hard truth in lending,” 28 August 2005, http://www.charlotte.com/mld/charlotte/business/special_packages/lending/12496753.htm

7. Aleksandrs Rozens, “Banks give reprieve to stricken homeowners,” 2 September 2005, http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D8CC5D00.htm?campaign_id=home&rank=1

8. Jason DeParle, “What Happens to a Race Deferred,” 4 September 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/04/weekinreview/04depa.html>



What is militarism?

Militarism is war-mongering or the advocacy of war or actual carrying out of war or its preparations.

While true pacifists condemn all violence as equally repugnant, we Maoists do not consider self-defense or the violence of oppressed nations against imperialism to be militarism. Militarism is mostly caused by imperialism at this time. Imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism—seen in countries like the United States, England and France.

Under capitalism, capitalists often profit from war or its preparations. Yet, it is the proletariat that does the dying in the wars. The proletariat wants a system in which people do not have self-interest on the side of war-profiteering or war for imperialism.

Militarism is one of the most important reasons to overthrow capitalism. It even infects oppressed nations and causes them to fight each other.

It is important not to let capitalists risk our lives in their ideas about war and peace or the environment. They have already had two world wars admitted by themselves in the last 100 years and they are conducting a third right now against the Third World.

Even a one percent annual chance of nuclear war destruction caused by capitalist aggressiveness or “greed” as the people call it should not be tolerated by the proletariat. After playing Russian Roulette (in which the bullet chamber is different each time and not related at all to the one that came up in previous spins) with 100 chambers and one bullet, the chance of survival is only 60.5% after 50 turns. In other words, a seemingly small one percent annual chance of world war means eventual doom. After 100 years or turns of Russian Roulette, the chances of survival are only 36.6%. After 200 years, survival has only a 13.4% chance.

Amerikans occupied with worrying about gas prices after Katrina

By HC116, September 1, 2005

From on mimnotes

Ridiculous politicians, most prominently Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, have drawn comparisons between the social disaster precipitated by Hurricane Katrina, and the utterly preventable and reactionary atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945, which instantly killed tens of thousands of people. The atomic bombing and the social disaster unleashed by Hurricane Katrina were both caused by imperialism, but the similarity ends there.

On the flip side, others seem to be more concerned with the hurricane's impact on gasoline prices after it resulted in the shutdown of oil rigs, refineries and pipelines along the Gulf Coast. As if Amerika as a whole were a victim of Katrina, rather than the people displaced from and stranded in the disaster areas, the fearmongering media continues to talk about people "brazenly" "looting" establishments in Biloxi and New Orleans and supposedly needing to be repressed with military tactics, while describing the areas as "Third-World" and "chaotic." Voices in the media are also disparaging those who were allegedly too "stubborn" to evacuate New Orleans, thus portraying those remaining in the city as undeserving of rescue and aid. This is in stark contrast with the media's treatment of the mostly Euro-American people who died in the 2001 World Trade Center attack, and also in sharp contrast to fretful, sympathetic news coverage of the destruction of houses, owned largely by Euro-Americans, in areas prone to wildfires and landslides. Various commentators feel compelled to tell readers that "we are all Americans" in pitiful attempts to make up for consequences of the national oppression, within u.s. borders, that the devastation in Louisiana and Mississippi so plainly revealed. Hurricane Katrina supposedly "brought out the worst" in so-called "looters," but it also highlighted the usual stunning indifference of chauvinist Euro-Americans to the conditions of those whom they oppress.

U.S. oil and natural gas production are severely reduced. The average gas price country-wide at the time of this writing is nearing \$3 a gallon and may rise even higher than that; although, the average gas price in several European countries is much higher. There is some irony here since thousands of the people who were stranded or abandoned in New Orleans could not evacuate because they did not have a vehicle that ran on gas. But instead of reflecting on this situation and the reality of imperialist privilege, many Amerikans, not just in the media, are already voicing complaints about rising gas prices in connection with Hurricane Katrina. Amerikans as far away as Washington State are angrily accusing gas station owners of taking advantage of

publicity of the hurricane and flooding to increase gas prices.

The Associated Press reports on a recently conducted poll of Amerikans' priorities:

"With gas prices soaring toward \$4 a gallon and fuel supply lines crippled by Hurricane Katrina, 24 percent of those polled listed fuel prices as their chief concern, second only to the war in Iraq. . . About one-fourth of adults younger than 65 named gas prices as the top priority, while 14 percent of senior citizens felt that way."(1)

The poll was conducted on August 29-31, 2005.(2) 24% responded "energy and gas prices" "should be the highest priority for President Bush and the U.S. Congress in the next few months." 14% said "the economy and jobs." 9% said terrorism. There is a potential for these three concerns to fuse together and turn into support for yet another imperialist war against an oppressed-nation people.

August 29th seems too early for Amerikans to be worrying about Hurricane Katrina's impact on gas prices, but in fact the Washington Post reported on August 25th: "Oil prices surged, closing up \$1.61 at \$67.32 a barrel on concerns about Tropical Storm Katrina, which could hit production sites in the Gulf of Mexico, and a U.S. government report that showed a decline in the nation's gasoline supply. Natural gas futures also rallied on the storm fears, even though forecasters anticipate a weak hurricane."(3) Paul Kangas on the "Nightly Business Report," which airs on PBS, reported on August 24th: "Tropical storm Katrina fueled a run-up in oil prices today, sending October crude futures up over a buck to a record high \$67.32 a barrel. But Katrina wasn't the only worry in the oil market."(4) Other news sources, including mainstream TV media, were talking about Katrina's likely or actualized impact on gas prices before August 29th. The mainstream media has been paying special attention to gas prices all summer and their impact on Amerikans' vacations. The media of course was also talking about gas prices in the context of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, whose assassination zany televangelist reactionary Pat Robertson recently called for, to the embarrassment of more scrupulous reactionaries. Since then, Chavez has offered to help a country that is hostile to him; the aid offered includes "cheap fuel, humanitarian aid and relief workers."(5) The U.S. Government has arrogantly been reluctant to embrace any foreign aid, particularly from Venezuela. "The State Department did not comment on Venezuela's offer but several officials smiled at the gesture from Chavez, who on Wednesday called Bush a 'cowboy' who failed to manage the disaster."(5) (This is not surprising because much of



the aid presumably would not be going to the imperialists themselves. Days before Hurricane Katrina reached the Gulf Coast, Chavez was coincidentally offering gas at a discount to poor people in the united States.)

The U.S. Government pretends as if it doesn't need help, which it doesn't with all its imperialist loot stolen from oppressed nations particularly in the Third World, but leaves it mainly to private organizations to come up with relief funds. The inadequate disaster response has nothing to do with a lack of resources, but with the majority of Euro-Americans' willingness to deprive Blacks of the means to evacuate during emergencies and their refusal to admit that this deprivation is even happening. Both the governments of Bu\$h and former President Bill Clinton have been accused of neglecting to fund flood-protection in New Orleans (contradicting the notion that the lack of preparedness was just one imperialist's fault), but the more general problem is that many people in the internal semi-colonies of the united States do not have enough resources to respond to evacuation orders, whereas even low-income whites in the united States have privileges compared with low-income Blacks due to being located in petty-bourgeois or bourgeois white neighborhoods that are prioritized during evacuations, relief efforts, as well as reconstruction efforts. Blacks are also more likely to be located in environmentally hazardous areas generally, not just in low-lying areas prone to flooding.

While Amerikans are fretting about the

price of a gallon of gas, and some are whining about the price of premium gas for their SUVs, thousands of people displaced by the flooding are being shut out of the Houston Astodrome, said to be too full, and being relocated to other facilities; thousands may already be dead, some from waiting for aid; and a military-style crackdown on so-called "looters" in New Orleans is still going on. On Thursday, Bill O'Reilly on "The O'Reilly Factor" called for so-called looters to "be immediately identified and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law" and for even more Blacks to be imprisoned "for taking TV sets." O'Reilly called for "thugs" and "gangs" with guns to be disarmed. O'Reilly supported an even more vicious, federal government-sanctioned martial law in New Orleans. "I don't know why that [martial law] isn't in effect. You know, martial law, shoot looters on site."

It is Black workers and lumpen-proletarians who have been most affected by the flooding, and it is mainly Blacks who are being repressed. Some have gone so far as to call for reparations to predominantly Euro-American workers for price gouging by energy companies. Reparations are really due to oppressed nations, particularly oppressed nations in the Third World, but also the Black nation and other oppressed nations within u.s. borders.

Some commentaries on the hurricane and flood devastation in Mississippi and Louisiana, while quick to argue that the devastation is a punch in the stomach to all American workers, are strangely out of touch with reality and joining the

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Amerikans worry about gas prices

imperialists in saying almost nothing about how Hurricane Katrina is reflective of Black national oppression or even racism (not just in the racist oppressor-nation media's portrayals of re-"primitivized" Black people and "Third-World" "anarchic," "chaotic" "looters" needing to be repressed militarily). There were many white people below poverty status in New Orleans, but most of them were able to evacuate. Reactionaries taking the perspective of privileged white workers, denying the relevance of nationality, and exploiting the flood devastation to justify reinforcing the privileges of bourgeois workers, should take notice of the fact that New Orleans is certainly no exception to the pattern of poor whites' being scattered in wealthy neighborhoods and poor Blacks' being concentrated in poor neighborhoods. A cursory analysis of Census 2000 data, for 1999, serves to illustrate this in a general way. Joe Scarborough on "Scarborough Country" last night, sparing no opportunity to take a cheap shot at the masses' revolutionary struggle, mocked an out-of-context quote attributed to Joseph Stalin about a million deaths being a statistic, but statistics can be unsettling, too.

In the Census data, census block groups (CBGs) correspond roughly to neighborhoods in many cases. The majority of the New Orleans city population was Black, but there were still disproportionately more CBGs in which most black residents were below poverty level (97), compared with CBGs in which white residents were mostly below poverty level (35). 1,358 of 13,708 (9.9%) below-poverty-level whites were in these types of CBGs compared with 42,456 of

110,215 below-poverty-level blacks (39%), suggesting that black poverty is more concentrated than white poverty. The average poor-white CBG (defined in this peculiar way) had 39 whites, but the average poor-black CBG had 438 blacks. Poor-white CBGs and poor-black CBGs overlapped in only 10 cases (an indicator of the lack of integration of poor blacks and whites into multinational working-class or lumpen neighborhoods), and only one of these (tract 121.02, group 1; around Broadway and Oak, and extending around the university campus) had more below-poverty-level whites than below-poverty-level blacks. This 80%-plus "not Hispanic or Latino" white CBG was around Tulane University of Louisiana, and many of the residents were young, single white college students. Tellingly, the average below-poverty-line white persyn in New Orleans lived in a CBG where the median white household income was \$36,150, whereas the average below-poverty-line black persyn lived in a CBG where the median black household income was \$18,404, almost half of the figure for whites.

The point of this excursion is that, even in terms of the government's definitions of poverty (and nationality, which it calls race), we can begin to see that national oppression is important and relevant to how the social disaster unleashed by Hurricane Katrina unfolded, not just a legacy of past discrimination or segregation. Of course, these numbers don't tell the whole story.

Millions of Black people throughout the united States have family or friends from the disaster areas in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, or know someone who

does, another reflection of national differences within the united States. This writer talked with a Black womyn in California who may have lost a brother and niece in New Orleans. She denounced Bu\$h for doing too little, too late to help people, but also criticized local "stuck-up" white people for being indifferent. "This is who you're praying for," she said, pointing to a photo of her niece. This is just one story out of millions. The need for independent aid organizations, instead of relying on the oppressor nation's military for help, cried out. Unfortunately, it is difficult for most people in the united States to imagine anything other than militarization as a solution for future disaster responses. This status quo is unacceptable. Oppressed-nation people throughout the united States can learn a lesson from the white nation's so-called aid to the survivors of Hurricane Katrina and national oppression.

People using rising gas prices as a pretext for reparations to already bourgeoisified Euro-Amerikan workers need to wake up and realize that the reparations need to be going to oppressed-nation people, especially in the Third World. Those calling for reparations for gas price gouging might as well be supporting lawsuits by Amerikan POWs and 9/11 victims' families for millions and even trillions of dollars in oppressed-nation assets, paid for with the blood and sweat of super-exploited Third World workers. It is just a shifting around of profits between exploiters. The vast majority of Euro-Amerikans are already exploiters of Third World workers. The imperialists sell overpriced goods to Third World countries all the time. It's an aspect of monopoly

capitalism, and imperialist-country populations, particularly the dominant oppressor nations, benefit from this and benefit from imperialism in other ways.

Many gas station owners accused of engaging in price gouging aren't even monopoly capitalists, yet many denunciations of gas price gougers do not distinguish between oil conglomerates and individual gas station owners. Vague calls for Bu\$h to punish gas price gougers are in effect calls for Bu\$h to crackdown on small-time-capitalist gas station owners, some of whom are oppressed nationalities. Rather than unite with people like Bill O'Reilly, who also wants "looters" in New Orleans to be shot, and call for Bu\$h to crackdown on local gas station owners, people should condemn the whole imperialist system and support reparations for people in the u.s. internal semi-colonies and particularly countries such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India, for social disasters caused by national oppression.

Notes

1. "Public wants gas prices a top domestic priority, 1 September 2005, <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/9161357/>
2. "AP/Ipsos Poll: Worried public wants president, Congress to make gas prices the top domestic priority," 1 September 2005, <http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/pressrelease.cfm?id=2762>
3. "National briefing," Washington Post, 25 August 2005, D02.
4. Paul Kangas et al., "Nightly Business Report," "NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT 6:30 PM EST," 24 August 2005, 082401cb.118.
5. Sue Fleming, "Foreign governments line up to help after Katrina," 1 September

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Unlock the Box

An Organizing Conference to Shut Down Prison Control Units

Unlock the Box is a product of many years of struggle to shut down the Security Housing Units in California. During this time, the United Front to Abolish the SHU was created as a forum to coordinate the actions of everyone involved in this campaign. Since its creation, the United Front has continued to expand in membership and in the number of people we reach with our message. This conference is a step in the process of building more unity with groups all over the country and the world who are engaged in the struggle to end this torture.

The goals of Unlock the Box include increasing communication between groups over a wider geographic area, coming up with plans of action that we can agree to work on as a whole to help strengthen those connections and strengthening our cause thru mass participation. The event will be a combination of presenters with vast experience in this struggle and working groups to come up with plans of action, with performances and food in between. As the date approaches we will be contacting everyone with a more specific schedule and plan. Until then, we welcome your input, help and donations to make that happen.

**Saturday, October 8, 2005
9:30 am - 6 pm Cell Space
2050 Bryant Street (near 18th street)
San Francisco, CA**

The United Front to Abolish the SHU includes: Maoist Internationalist Movement, Barrio Defense Committee, Justice for Palestinians, Chicano Mexicano Prison Project, Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League, African People's Socialist Party, Committee on Raza Rights, California Prison Focus, African People's Solidarity Committee and other concerned individuals

Other Endorsers of Unlock the Box include: Break The Chains prisoner-solidarity organization (Eugene, Oregon USA), Idriss Stelley Foundation, DeBug (the online magazine of the South Bay), Proyecto Common Touch, Campaign for Justice for Rudy Cardenas, Justice Action (Australia), Black August Organizing Committee, Families to Amend Three Strikes (FACTS)- San Jose, Books Not Bars, South Bay Committee in Solidarity with Cuba

Reviewing the AM radio news on Katrina on the East Coast

Amerika was thinking about baseball and football

by a MIM comrade
September 6 2005

Hurricane Katrina exposed many truths about capitalism and Amerikkkan capitalism in particular. The night and morning before the disaster of August 29 2005, MIM reviewed the long-range AM radio stations including some in the South.

By Sunday afternoon before the storm hit Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama it was known that Katrina had winds of 175 miles per hour and it had been known before that that it was heading for New Orleans.

The night when everyone needed to be escaping the Gulf Coast with the help of federal aid that did not come, two New York wimmin talk show hosts were running down Black men on New York radio explaining how they like Lance Armstrong and Mark McGwire but not Barry Bonds—in relation to steroid abuse. Then they ran down Snoop Dog for lacking suburban savoir faire in forming his own baseball little league. The sad part is that prior to midnight before Katrina's landfall that was the sort of so-called news available in general. Such family-friendly news played well in the white suburbs no doubt.

After midnight it seems that the radio hosts became much more realistic and less fluffy—probably because there are so many fewer advertising dollars at stake while people are sleeping. At 12:40 am EST the Drudge report on AM radio was one of the few stations talking about the coming disaster. Drudge was one of the first sources the Bush family checked the night of the election in 2004, such are its conservative credentials.

"The federal government has planes. Do you think the government should have sent planes?" asked the Drudge host of a caller. His caller did not answer, but the Drudge talk show host said he did not think the public would allow blame on

Bush for the damages. He raised the question of socialism as for why he opposed sending planes to pick up people in New Orleans before Katrina hit. Let there be no mistake: the reactionaries in the circles of power in the federal government knew full well what Katrina was packing and they chose to do nothing with justifications about how government's role should be limited. The Drudge Report is an example of how these people think.

For some outside u.s. borders, the Democratic Party is often referred to as "socialist" by the Republican Party reactionaries of the united States, because Amerikkkans in general are not capable of much more in their political analysis. Any time the government does anything it is called "socialism" by these primitives who constitute the bulk of Bush's political support. In other countries there would be a more thorough discussion about how government intervention bolsters profits, or how it intertwines with corrupting business interests, but in the united States, discussion can be very simplified and ideological for tens of millions of people.

The caller to Drudge pointed out that "some" of the private airlines had stopped services the Saturday before the Monday storm. Thousands of travelers had to stay in hotels stranded because of the airline decisions. Left unstated was that since the private airlines had stopped operating a full 48 hours before the storm hit, perhaps the federal government should have stepped in to evacuate people. Even the caller and Drudge fan said one "just hopes" that the private airlines know what they are doing; even though, the weather seemed fine enough to him to evacuate the people of New Orleans by plane.

The most serious discussion occurred when a talk show host had the sense to get a weather expert to call in in around the 1 am to 2am time slot and talk at length. The expert spoke exactly of how

levees might break if Katrina maintains its current course; although a slight turn to the east and slight weakening was a hopeful sign. This caller pictured New Orleans as potentially flooded and carrying toxic wastes and sewage in the water that flooded. The caller pointed out that evacuation of New Orleans was only 75%, so inevitably a certain percentage of people was stuck. At the time of this story, it is now more than a week later, and still it would be news to find out that more died from the storm than 911. The attention span of the government and media that monitors it is that weak.

Before Katrina hit land, there was at least one talk radio show predicting that the death toll from Katrina would be a multiple of the death toll from the World Trade Center attack. It is by no means true that "no one knew" how bad Katrina would be before it hit. The government and weather people did know as did some after-midnight radio listeners.

At 6:30 am the radio stations were still waiting for the storm to hit land the second time. (The first time was in Florida with less damage.) Yet, a run through the dial revealed not one station saying where exactly the storm was, just occasional repeats of the prior night's news. The news was back to fluff.

At 8:30 am there was only a syndicated talk show Howard-Stern-imitator talking about the storm in general, still no details such as where the storm was exactly. That's two syndicated stations out of 30 AM stations tried. Meanwhile numerous stations were covering the baseball scores

and the football trades and football training tribulations.

At around 10 am there should have been some solid information coming in from New Orleans and the neighboring region, but it took two runs through the dial to find something on any of 43 stations tried. Thanks to the record for oil prices set that morning, Bloomberg, the financial news station of New York mentioned more details on Katrina than anyone else.

Around 11 am a sports-only station claimed that the levees in New Orleans had broken and that New Orleans was in fact under 15 feet of water as the worst-case scenario had spoken of in the wee hours before landfall. Other than Drudge, there was one call-in AM station who went on at length on how the storm would kill several times as many people as the September 11 2001 events, but such voices were still generally not to be found in daytime radio.

As the day went into early afternoon of Monday, some details came in at WCBS. The Superdome was the choice for where New Orleans put its people too poor to leave the storm. The top news item was how pieces from the Superdome roof had fallen in. Estimates ranging from 10,000 to 35,000 people in the Superdome had appeared through the night. A federal government study on whether the Superdome stadium could survive a hurricane and serve as a shelter was not done yet. This much the public had known several hours after a mortally dangerous

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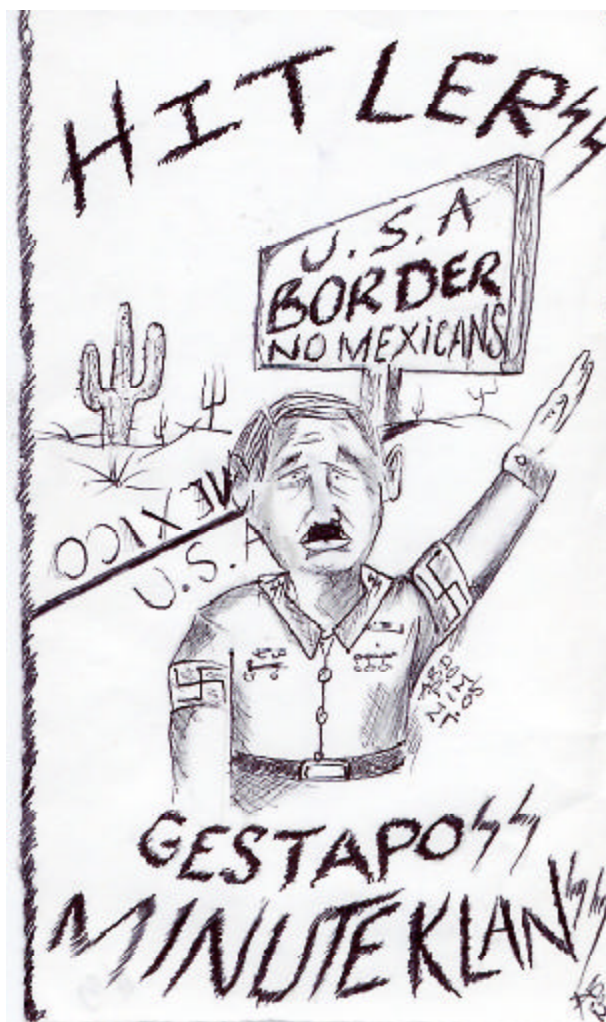
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Cartoon by a prisoner.

Go to mimnotes.info for news updates and polemics on the fascist Minutement movement.

Prisoners in Oregon organizing against worsening conditions

I am glad to report of three instances of substance in which convicts came together in all races and affiliations in attempts of influencing DOC decisions.

The first happened one year ago at OSP. All nations came together (pathetically only around 6 brothers) to boycott the newly installed phone system. No one made phone calls for almost two weeks- barring a misunderstanding over one weekend. The new system already was really inconvenient- requiring pin numbers and a maximum of 15 attempts to call a day. We organized the boycott when DOC announced a requirement that we could only call 25 different #'s, had to submit the #'s to be put on a list and could only submit 3 in a month.

20-plus people went to seg for enforcing and advocating the boycott- 7 sent to IMU [Intensive Management Unit are long term isolation cells]. We came to agreements for the phone the second week. Along with the phones, the canteen was also boycotted for outrageous prices and lack of variety. In a 6 month period in 2001 the canteen profited %1.6 million by offering many items that were sold to them (DOC canteen) discounted because of factory defects. Also some items were DOC issued to be given to the population, but instead were sold on the canteen. That was also settled adequately.

The third occurrence I wish to mention is only the update that I have received news that the boycotts resumed since I left (about mid-June) for the costs the phones bill our people and canteens renig of last years agreement.

The second occurrence is the rise in the level of faulty write-ups (DR's) being issued. I read of similar and worse scenarios in MIM Notes happening in Cali more often, but I feel it is important to make note that such is becoming more common place in Oregon also.

There are 8 different convicts of 4 different affiliations, who by separate STG officers- making it an obvious blanket policy- have been given DR's of 4-6 sentences claiming they are extorting, assaulting and recruiting (unauthorized organization) other inmates. When they have gone to their hearings, they are denied formal investigations- any whatsoever- in the citing that all information is confidential. They are all sentenced to 180 days seg and undoubtedly a trip to IMU. They deny being involved in any of the accusations but not only is there no access to the informants to have the investigator question them, there isn't even a disclosable event to call witnesses for or affirm or deny the defendants whereabouts. They basically say something happened but they won't tell you what, where, with who or when. So any old snitch can vindictively write a fictitious communication on someone and warrant that person 6 months hole time and possibly 12 plus months IMU.

But the convicts conveyed their disgust here in seg by staging the largest disturbance (in any seg in ODOC) ever, with 53 cells and 76 inmates extracting. The only other time I've seen such unity in my 8 years down. I thought such rare acts deserved to be noted.

Sincerely, your ally for a common cause,
— an Oregon Prisoner, August 2005

Lock down in Arizona

At present I am housed in a Special Management Unit (SMU). On average I am locked-down continuously 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, excepting three showers and three one-hour recreation periods. That is if I'm

Under Lock & Key

News from Prisons & Prisoners

fortunate and the staff don't invoke the ever-ready pretext of "institutional management concerns," canceling these invaluable activities without leaving us remedy or recourse.

— an Arizona prisoner, August 2005

Forced labor in Washington

I got a job working in the kitchen a while back, and the problem is, I don't want to work at all. I'd rather spend my time studying or writing, or just thinking - being productive and engaging in activities that fulfill me and challenge my capacities. But the Department of Corrections requires me to work against my will. If I refuse to work, then they'll punish me and keep me in closed custody for another year.

This is straight up forced labor, not to mention the fact that I am not fairly compensated for my work. Minimum wage? Forget about it. I work 8 hours a day for 5 days a week. That's 40 hours a week and roughly 160 hours per month. I get paid \$35 per month. How can this be tolerated, how is it even legal? If they didn't force me to work then that would be different, but I have no choice in the matter. Can you believe this? Of course, the actual capital/labor relationship in regards to prison labor is probably worse in other states, but this whole scenario is despicable, period. We have to fight this injustice.

- a Washington Prisoner, July 2005

MIM responds: This comrade asks, "how is it even legal" to work for just over \$0.20 an hour? Well, it is. We should remember that after the abolition of slavery on plantations in the south, the practice was kept legal in prisons where many freed slaves were soon rounded up and sent to. Section 1 of the 13th amendment reads, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction."

To this day, there are two places where people are exploited, or paid less than the value of their labor, within u\$ borders. One is in prisons. The larger is among the growing populations of undocumented immigrants (many of whom are actually indigenous to lands stolen by the united States) who are not guaranteed wages by u\$ law either.

No real options out of prison

I disagree with numerous things in this corrupted system and political society the government has built over the years, blinding many with lies and promises never fulfilled according to signed treaties on civil rights. I know what I did to get me placed in prison has no excuse. But what led me to continue down the wrong path when I had gotten free the first time was that society refused to accept me for what I am, not what I was. As a young Mexicano, tattooed, many places closed their doors to me. I couldn't find a job. Schools didn't want to know how many credits I was short of for graduation, they only wanted to know about my incarceration at the age of 14. So I resorted to crime with no other choice, except to be homeless or a

beggar on a street corner with a "Will Work for Food" sign.

— a Michigan prisoner, 17 July, 2005

Censorship: rules changed

I recently had my appeal for the censorship of MIM Theory #2 and 3 heard. I totally blew their false excuses out of the water. Once I proved that the theory journal wasn't sent in by a private party, the individual conducting the bogus hearing automatically switched up and came up with a different excuse to withhold the journal. Apparently she saw some things in there that she felt were somewhat "questionable." When I questioned her as to what it was that she found "questionable," she was unable to answer me.

So now I have to see what the captain says. Which of course more than likely he'll lie and deny it as well. I swear, they can't stand to lose at their own game! And believe it or not, 95% of the time we win, but 100% of the time they change the rules on us to further ensure we never win. So the battle continues against these oppressive bastards. I just wish the public could see for themselves how these bastards waste millions and millions of dollars on stupid and unnecessary bullshit!

[A few weeks later we got this update:] I have a bit of good news. Last week I won my appeal concerning the censorship of MIM Theory 2/3. So the mail room had to give me back the journal. There was never any doubt in my mind that they were wrong. It was just a matter of pure "assholeness" on their part.

- a prisoner at Pelican Bay in California, August 2005

Handicapped prisoner tortured

On June 8, 2005, my cellmate, out of frustration of being denied yard, law library, showers, transfer, etc., busted out the windows in the cell we occupied together. This was done with his bare hands.

On June 9 staff came and told us both to cuff up and exit the cell. At this time an argument began between my cellmate and the officers. During this argument I remained on my bunk. Corrections Officer (CO) Thomison called a cell soldier, while encouraging my cell mate not to cuff up so that he could forcibly enter the cell. CO Thomison told my cellmate that he was going to see how tough he was when they came inside the cell to get him. This enraged and manipulated my cellmate who is a mental health patient.

Not wanting to further incite my cellmate, and possibly cause him to become violent with me within the cell, I remained quiet. I recently had a stroke and was in a coma for several days. This has left me partially immobile and unable to defend myself if attacked.

As the cell extraction team approached the cell, I continued to stay on my bunk, as they utilized OC spray, the effects forced my cellmate to cuff up as ordered. I was then ordered to strip out. However my limited mobility made this extremely difficult and painful. The extraction team staff were aware of my injury, and disregarded this, and made me stripped out. I was then ordered to turn around to cuff up, I attempted to follow this

order but due to my injury, I couldn't.

Lt. Biaginni then ordered my cellmate to lay on the bunk, the door was opened and staff placed restraints on my wrist and legs. I was then lifted off the ground, and told to walk. However, I am unable to walk without the assistance of the medically assigned walker. And even with this walker, I can not walk at a normal pace, the pain is too severe. Staff disregarded this and began to drag me towards the shower, while lifting my injured arm up towards the back of my head, causing me to suffer extreme pain. I tried to inform these officers that I was in pain but they disregarded my complaints and continued to drag me in this manner.

I was taken to the shower where staff slammed me to the floor and placed their knee in my back. I began to scream out in pain. At this time other inmates began to scream out for the officers to stop assaulting me, and for the camera to be placed on the officers who were assaulting me. These COs then lifted me up, and began to carry me out of the building and away from the other inmates view. After several inmates began screaming at the officers that I could not walk, I was laid on

MIM on Prisons & Prisoners

MIM 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 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.

the floor, and staff went to retrieve a wheel chair to use to escort me out of the building. During this entire incident I was coughing from the OC spray.

I was seen by the MTA, concerning the effects of the OC spray, I informed this medical staff that my legs and arms were numb and continued to hurt and jump on their own. I was given no treatment nor were my injuries examined. This medical staff informed staff that I was clear to be returned to my cell.

Several hours later a CO and a Sergeant came and informed me that I would be placed back into the cell with my cellmate. I informed both officers that I did not want to return to the cell, and that I wasn't the one who wanted to get cell extracted. These officers informed me that I had no choice, and that I would be placed back in the cell.

I again informed these officers that I would not go back to the cell. I was then pushed back to the cell, and placed inside with the same cellmate against my will. The staff kept my walked, and instructed me to get up. I informed then that I couldn't. These officers then left the plastic shower ADDA wheelchair in the cell with me.

On June 10 a Sergeant came to my cell and told me to give up the wheelchair. I informed him that I could not get around in the cell to use the restroom without. He told me that was not his problem and for me to give up the chair or that he would cell extract me again, and come in and take it. At this time I tried to inform him that I had had a stroke and could not walk without assistance. He then walked away from the cell telling other staff to prepare to extract me.

I then asked a CO to see the mental health staff and medical staff, and I was taken to see the nurse. I was then brought back to the same cell, where I told the officers and Lt. Bennett that me and my cell mate were not compatible. Lt. Bennett told me that I was going in the cell. Staff then cuffed my cellmate up and took him to the shower. I was then rolled into the cell, and tipped over and caused to fall on the floor. Several officers came in the cell and jumped on me. I was socked in the body area and told to stop resisting. During this entire incident I was cuffed, and could not resist due to my injuries.

These officers then took the hand restraints off, but continued to hold me down. Staff began asking each other if they were ready. I was then let go, and OC sprayed by several officers for no reason. These officers continued to spray me while I was on the floor, as they backed out of the cell ordered the door to be closed. I was left on the floor, soaked in OC spray for 10-15 minutes. I could not breath nor get up to wash the spray off. I began calling for help. A CO came to my cell and told me to get up and decontaminate. Other inmates began to scream that I could not walk, and to get me out of the cell, some time after I was taken out of the cell.

These officers used unnecessary and extremely excessive force and chemical spray on me when it was not called for. I did not resist these officers in anyway, other than telling them that me and my cell mate were not compatible. These staff were also deliberately indifferent to my medical needs, and to my personal safety. This was done maliciously and to cause me harm.

I request that the Internal Affairs be summoned to conduct an investigation into this matter, during which the video tape is reviewed and my medical file is reviewed. I also request that ad-seg staff be instructed to place disability signs on cell doors and that special training be required to instruct staff on how to handle ADA prisoners in these type of situations.

- a prisoner in California (Soledad), July 2005

Punishment in California for prisoners refusing to double cell

Officials at Pelican Bay State Prison have implemented an "underground" policy and practice whereby prisoners who refuse to double-cell are arbitrarily and capriciously removed from their housing units (cages) in the general population (GP) and locked up in the state of "limbo" in the ad seg/overflow/orientation/contagious disease unit for an indeterminate period of time without being afforded due process and the procedural safeguards required by CCR Title 15 (the Rules and Regulations of the Director of Corrections).

These prisoners (including myself) are not being charged with a rules violation, and therefore are not issued a write-up (CDC-115) nor a lock up order (CDC-114-D). As a result, technically we are not removed from GP and placed in ad-seg as a threat to persons and/or to the security of the institution, and that allows prison officials to circumvent the due process and procedural safeguards that are required whenever a prisoner is placed in administrative segregation.

Similarly, we are not new arrivals to the institution, and therefore do not fit into the category of being in orientation, while at the same time we are being held in a section that has been partly designated an orientation unit. That is significant because orientation prisoners are not allowed any property or privileges of any kind until they have appeared before the classification committee for screening and been cleared for release to the GP that is a process that normally takes between 10-14 days.

Since no personal property is allowed in the orientation unit (including legal materials), all of our personal property is confiscated when we are moved from GP and confined to this hybrid, makeshift unit. Likewise, all of our privileges are terminated (no yard time, no outdoor exercise, no canteen, no packages, no special purchases, no phone use, no library access, no TVs – just lock-down 22 hours and 45 minutes a day). Normally, for one's

privileges to be restricted, he would have to appear before a classification committee who must then act to reduce our privilege group to group "c". But even privilege group "c" doesn't lose everything. For instance, privilege group "c" retains their personal property and are allowed canteen access. However, by locking up GP prisoners in this hybrid unit, prison officials again circumvent the due process and procedural safeguards we're entitled to and deprive us of all privileges on the grounds that we're in an orientation unit.

What is more, there are no time constraints for how long we can be held under these punitive conditions of confinement which are, in fact, more harsh than even ad-seg and SHU, because as bad as it is for them, those prisoners at least get outdoor exercise, personal property, packages, special purchases, canteen and library access.

Again, orientation prisoners can anticipate being released from these conditions in 10-14 days. There is no time limit for mainline prisoners locked up under these conditions, thereby making it an indeterminate period of confinement for all intents and purposes.

Also, we are not in this unit for reasons of quarantine, as are some of the prisoners. They have been diagnosed as being infected with Staph disease and isolated in this unit from GP prisoners until the infection is cured. They are then returned to the mainline. In the interim, healthy prisoners locked up in this unit for refusing to double-cell, as well as new arrivals to the prison, are exposed to catching this contagious disease by virtue of being confined with infected prisoners with whom we share the same showers and have other contact with (trade books, food, and get placed in a cage that a recently infected prisoner was just released from).

There are a number of reasons that more and more prisoners are refusing to double-cell, one of which is that there is a large number of prisoners who have become victims of the state's propensity to sentence us to ridiculously long prison terms, and have succumbed to mental and emotional psychosis, and the use of psychotropic drugs which makes them unpredictable in close living quarters.

Another is the understanding that taxpayers pay \$30,000 per year for every prisoner confined to a state prison. That means that every prison cage that confines two prisoners is worth \$60,000 to that institution. By refusing to double cell, these prisoners see themselves as depriving the prison of that extra \$30,000 for that cage. Perhaps they (PBSP) are feeling the financial pinch, and that, in part, accounts for their implementation of the above described "underground" policy.

In any event, we recognize the tactics of the oppressors, and we want the readers of MIM Notes to know, that we have engaged the struggle on this front, and support the struggle on all other fronts.

- a California prisoner, August 2005

Join the fight against the injustice system

While we fight to end the criminal injustice system MIM engages in reformist battles to improve the lives of prisoners. Below are some of the campaigns we are currently waging, and ways people behind the bars and on the outside can get involved. More info can be found on our prison web site: <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons>

Stop Censorship in Prison: Prisons frequently censor books, newspapers and magazines coming from MIM's books for prisoners program. We need help from lawyers, paralegals and jailhouse lawyers to fight this censorship.

Books for Prisoners: This program focuses on political education of prisoners. Send donations of books and money for our Books for Prisoners program.

End the Three Strikes laws: This campaign is actively fighting the repressive California laws, but similar laws exist in other states. Write to us to request a petition to collect signatures. Send articles and information on three strike laws.

Shut Down the Control Units: Across the country there are a growing number of prison control units. These are permanently designated prisons or cells in prisons that lock prisoners up in solitary or small group 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. These units cause both mental and physical problems for prisoners.

Write to us to request a petition to collect signatures. Get your organization to sign the statement demanding control units be shut down. Send us information about where there are control units in your state. Include the names of the prisons as well as the number of control unit beds/cells in each prison if that is known. Send us anti-control unit artwork.

MIM's Re-Lease on Life Program: This program provides support for our comrades who have been recently released from the prison system, to help them meet their basic needs and also continue with their revolutionary organizing on the outside. We need funds, housing, and job resources. We also need prisoner's input on the following survey questions:

1. What are the biggest challenges you face being released from prison?
2. How can these problems be addressed?
3. What are the important elements of a successful release program?

Facts on US imprisonment

The facts about imprisonment in the United States are that the United States has been the world's leading prison-state per capita for the last 25 years, with a brief exception during Boris Yeltsin's declaration of a state of emergency.(1)

That means that while Reagan was talking about a Soviet "evil empire" he was the head of a state that imprisoned more people per capita. In supposedly "hard-line" Bulgaria of the Soviet bloc of the 1980s, the imprisonment rate was less than half that of the United States.(2,3)

To find a comparison with U.S. imprisonment of Black people, there is no statistic in any country that compares including apartheid South Africa of the era before Mandela was president. The last situation remotely comparable to the situation today was under Stalin during war time. The majority of prisoners are non-violent offenders(4) and the U.S. Government now holds about a half million more prisoners than China; even though China is four times our population.(5)

The rednecks tell MIM that we live in a "free country." They live in an Orwellian 1984 situation where freedom is imprisonment.

Notes: 1. Marc Mauer, "Americans Behind Bars: The International Use of Incarceration 1993," The Prison Sentencing Project, 918 F. St. NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20004 (202) 628-0871 Reference: SRI: R8965-2, 1994

2. Ibid., 1992 report.

3. United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Report 1994,:" Oxford University Press, p. 186.

4. Figure of 51.2 percent for state prisoners there for non-violent offenses. Abstract of the United States 1993, p. 211.

5. Atlantic Monthly December, 1998.

Las Chepas to be razed

By HC116, August 28, 2005
From *mimnotes.info*

Reuters is reporting that New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Chihuahua Governor José Reyes Baeza have reached a “compromise” over Richardson’s initially unilateral proposal to bulldoze Las Chepas, a populated Mexican village close to Puerto Palomas, and the New Mexico town of Columbus. Egged on by anti-migrant activists, politicians and voices in the media to take action against so-called broken borders and what some have hostilely termed the “immigrant problem,” Richardson proposed bulldozing the village a day before he declared a state of emergency along half of New Mexico’s border with Mexico. There were already hundreds of Border Patrol agents in New Mexico, and the Migra pigs were already watching Las Chepas with camera equipment. Governor “Reyes said his government [instead of razing the entire village] would identify and destroy abandoned buildings believed to be the centres for illegal activities.”(1) Strangely, the August 27th Reuters article avoids saying outright that Las Chepas is populated even after several reports have claimed many people live there permanently.

Regardless of Richardson’s intentions (some have suggested that Richardson declared the state of emergency for reasons relating to political campaigning and grandstanding), the plans to destroy “abandoned” buildings illustrate that what is called “securing the border” actually means further encroachment into oppressed-nation territory and

consolidating Euro-American settlers’ domination of the stolen territory comprising the united States. It is unclear how destroying Las Chepas’ abandoned buildings, reportedly roofless, doorless and uninhabitable, is supposed to stop undocumented migration or drug smuggling. The ineffectiveness of razing parts of one Mexican village near the border will likely be used as a pretext for more destruction and more policing, if not in Las Chepas then elsewhere.

A Las Chepas store owner, quoted by Reuters, seemed to hit the nail on the head: “One store owner said whatever illegal activities were going on in Las Chepas were minor compared with those in larger border cities. . . . ‘Why don’t they tear down Juarez?’ he asked, referring to Ciudad Juarez, which is across the border from El Paso, Texas, about 70 miles (112 km) east of Las Chepas.”(1) Almost 1.5 million people live in Ciudad Juárez.

Contradicting media commentators and others who have portrayed Columbus as a victim of so-called illegal aliens, a town devastated by them, even the mayor of Columbus reportedly disagrees with razing Las Chepas. So does a police chief. “Tearing down Las Chepas, said Michael Carrillo, police chief of nearby Deming, N.M., would be tantamount to ‘an act of war.’”(2) But the Dallas Morning News quotes a spokesperson for the New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau (<http://www.nmfb.org/>) as saying: “I think we would all be better off if that town was bulldozed.” In other words, fearmongering American farmers are even quicker to support razing a community in Mexico than a police chief.

About thirty thousand undocumented migrants reportedly were apprehended last year around Las Chepas “between this area of Chihuahua and New Mexico.”(2) If there were about a million

Border Patrol apprehensions of undocumented migrants in 2004 total, that crudely suggests razing the equivalent of about thirty towns or villages like Las Chepas. On the other hand, destroying only select buildings seems unlikely to reduce migration. A Las Chepas resident, quoted by the New York Times, said demolishing Las Chepas would have no effect.

“Others in the town said they were upset that they were hearing of Mr. Richardson’s plans from reporters and not their own government. . . . ‘People here don’t know what’s going on,’ Francisco Apalaca Ruiz said. . . . Espifanrio Ruiz, who runs one of the town’s three stores, acknowledged that hordes of migrants come through the town, but said the area was not much of a draw. . . . ‘There are no hotels here,’ Mr. Ruiz said.”(3)

Thus, according to the New York Times, the u.s. imperialists and their comprador lackeys in the Mexican government have left Las Chepas’ own residents out of the decision-making regarding the fate of their own village. This is for the sake of going forward with what is ostensibly a “war on drugs” right on the united States-Mexico border; Bill Richardson and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, who has also declared a state of emergency along the border, have cited drug smuggling as a concern. In reality, drug smugglers’ alleged impact on New Mexico and Arizona’s borders is nothing but an excuse to further militarize the united States-Mexico border, step up repression against migrants, and legitimize the repression of liberation fighters in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, now in the name of combating drug smugglers’ “devastation” (as Richardson put it) of American border communities.

Notes:

1. Sito Negron, “Buildings to be bulldozed in Mexican border town,” Reuters, 27 August 2005.

2. Alfredo Corchado (Dallas Morning News), “N.M. governor wants to raze Mexican town,” 27 August 2005.

3. “Governors Say They Will Raze Border Town Used by Smugglers,” 28 August 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/08/28/national/28newmexico.html>

“The governors of New Mexico and its southern neighbor, the Mexican state Chihuahua, agreed Friday to bulldoze or board up buildings in a semi-abandoned town just inside Mexico that is a haven for would-be immigrants and smugglers.”

4. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/bal-te.border27aug27,1,7554180.story?coll=bal-nationworld-headlines>

“But in Douglas, senior government leaders, federal agents and many residents are hard-put to identify the emergency conditions. Borane said the city of 15,000 was in generally good shape and had learned to live with the annoyances that accompanied the flow over the border. . . . Crime has been dropping, and the city hasn’t recorded a homicide in a couple of years, Police Chief Charles E. Austin said. Women in town say the streets are safe to walk at night.”

5. “New Mexico governor, Mexican counterpart agree to bulldoze or board up parts of lawless town,” 27 August 2005, <http://www.picayuneitem.com/articles/2005/08/27/news/09bulldoze.txt>

6. Alicia A. Caldwell, “N.M., Mexico Agree to Raze Lawless Town,” 27 August 2005, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-border-bulldozing,1,3649815.story?coll=chi-news-hed>

7. Nicholas Riccardi, “Transience Is the Only Fixture in Las Chepas,” 27 August 2005, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/politics/lan-smuggle27aug27,1,2937978.story?coll=lanews-politics-national>

8. Horacio Carrasco Soto, “Consensuarán demolición en Las Chepas,” 28 August 2005, <http://www.diario.com.mx/portada/juarez/nota.asp?notaid=b7f327c27f8f52a4edd46d8659518d4b>

Reviewing AM radio

From p. 9... storm landed.

The next most mentioned bit of news about New Orleans the day of the storm itself was the 1 million in barrels per day in oil refining capacity shut down by the storm. A financial futures station pointed out that corn and similar items from the Midwest flowed down the Mississippi river for export and so futures bulls were taking positions expecting to profit from the shortages caused by the port disruption.

To bring home the message the radio professionals were so desperate that they pointed out that 27% of the short-term supply of coffee sits in New Orleans warehouses.

“In the meantime America will pray,” we heard Bush say by the afternoon of the day. Meanwhile, one radio dj asked whether the government should shut down the oil market for two days until the storm subsided.

By 1:55 PM the stock market index called Dow Jones industrial average was up over 50 points. By the end of the day it was up over 60 points. Word had it that the oil damages would not be as great as

expected and then in the following days Bush talked down the price of oil by talking about releasing federal stockpiles.

Under the joint dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations inspired by the principles of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao, the Director of Homeland Security Chertoff would be shot for failure. He would take such a position not because of the salary or the perks of power, but out of a sacrifice for his country and upon failure he would know the price would be his execution. Gone would be the oversupply of resume-padding opportunists loaded in responsible positions and gone would be the politics of irresponsibility covering for them. This much we expect the American public to contemplate almost spontaneously from the events unleashed by Katrina.

Another point that needs scrutiny is that American “choice” is an ideological delusion. The “choice” to be poor, elderly or handicapped and drowned in Katrina flooding is not a choice that should exist—to hell with that “freedom.” To hell with the “freedom” to own a TV set and VCR and then have no money to escape the storm, because the government failed in its duties. For that matter who can say that people who should have been paying

attention to Katrina and doing their duty were not listening to these AM radio stations blather on about sports. The problem with Katrina is that there was too much “choice” and no good choices for the oppressed. Yes, there was a great deal of so-called freedom of so-called choice in the AM radio stations. It was up to every executive of every journalistic company whether to talk about Snoop Dog for the ratings or relay important information.

The bourgeoisie calls it “freedom” for the people needing evacuation that they might have turned on the TV or radio and found nothing important to know just as the storm was about to hit. It’s freedom that no organized federal forces roused every individual from the Gulf Coast.

The attitude of the bourgeoisie toward risk is thoughtless. Radio stations everywhere in the uSa should have informed people adequately so that they could check on friends and family and tell them to leave the Gulf Coast. Although most people did leave the Gulf Coast, a minority did not get the message. Indeed, reactionaries blaming the victims called right-wing radio talk shows the next day to say the people who stayed in New Orleans should be fined for not following

the mayor’s orders, as if those orders had even reached everyone in a country of such “choice.”

Under the joint dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations:

1) The order to leave New Orleans and similar places would be federal and actual with government forces carrying out the evacuation and with no question that there would be a means to get out. Likewise the entire people would have the right to expect that no one “stayed behind,” so there would be no need for blaming the victims afterwards.

2) No media companies would be profiting from covering baseball instead of Katrina.

3) No oil or gas companies could be suspected of price gouging since there would be no production for profit.

4) Resume-padders calling daily press conferences without accomplishing anything would at least have no reason to expect future profits from holding executive positions obtained by the fame of having claimed to have done something about Katrina. People in responsible positions would have no phony motivations, and a real fear that failure could bring the death penalty.