

MIM Notes



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Anti-American attacks explode in Iraq

Protestors condemn ongoing Iraq war

ONE YEAR AFTER LATEST INVASION, SIGNS OPPOSITION IS DEEPENING

By MIM and RAIL comrades
San Francisco, March 20—Tens of thousands of people protested on the streets of San Francisco today, marking the one-year anniversary of the American invasion and occupation of Iraq. This rally was the largest since the immediate aftermath of the invasion. Momentum in the anti-war movement waned in the



Anti-war protestors in San Francisco and Baghdad.

many months since the militant outrage of the people shut down the streets of San Francisco last year. But this large rally showed that many people are still paying attention and speaking out against American imperialism.

Comrades from the Revolutionary Anti-



Imperialist League (RAIL) joined the pre-rally march in San Francisco's Mission district. Groups representing oppressed nations were there, including the Filipinos for Global Justice Not War Coalition (FilsGlobe) and Students for Justice In

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The March 30 killings of four Americans in a military convoy turned into an anti-American protest for the Iraqi people in Falluja. Crowds of Iraqi people burned, mutilated, and then dragged the Americans' bodies through the streets, providing a violent and clear declaration of the Iraqi people's desire for the American occupation to end. The Americans who were killed, reported everywhere in American media as "civilians," worked for Blackwater Security Consulting, a mercenary group hired by the American military. They were fully armed and part of a military convoy.(1)

Iraqi attackers ambushed the SUV carrying the Americans and took off after killing them. This is when a mob of Iraqi people, including children, swarmed the wreckage, burning the bodies and dragging the corpses through the streets. This story disproves the American claim that it is only a handful of insurgents who oppose the American occupation. It is a lie that the Iraqi people welcome American military presence.

March was the second-deadliest month for American troops in Iraq since President Bush proclaimed major combat operations were over last May. [As we go to press, initial reports claim at least ten American soldiers died in fighting on the first Sunday in April.] At the same time, Bush's former anti-terrorism chief, Richard Clarke, testified to the commission investigating the September 11 attacks. He provided insider information about the Bush administration's fixation on invading Iraq regardless of the evidence.

It is imperialist militarism that presents the greatest threat of violence and destruction to the peoples of the world. Thin excuses for invasions and military-backed coups attempt to cover American imperialist aggression throughout Latin America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. But the people in these countries see the American (or American-backed) occupying armies for what they are: the military might behind national oppression.

American leaders claim they will return civilian authority to Iraqis in three months. If this actually goes down, it will be a sham handover. Students of American history know America will allow only obedient lackeys to take power; it will retain neo-colonial control over Iraq, its people and its resources.

In the face of all the killings of American military personnel in Iraq,

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Kosova violence breaks out

MIM TO EX-YUGOSLAVIA, EX-SOVIET BLOC: IMPERIALISM HAS NO ANSWER

by International Minister
Violence between ethnic Albanians and Serbs flared in ex-Yugoslavia on March

17th. Rioters killed 28 Serbians, injured hundreds, burned hundreds of homes, dug up graves and destroyed Serbian churches hundreds of years old. Serbs burned mosques in Belgrade in retaliation. Two or three Albanian boys depending on the report also drowned in the turmoil.

The short-run cause appears to be some maneuvering leading up to a referendum or UN considerations in 2005 regarding Kosova—spelled "Kosovo" in the old Yugoslavia days and still referred to that way by Serbs. Others believed that the short-run cause was that Serbian men

had chased two Albanian boys who ended up drowning in a river, an event preceded of course by another event in which Serbians believed a drive-by shooting was

done by Albanians. MIM will say bluntly it is not interested much in this "we said/they said" detail. By now everyone should know there are murderous backward nationalists running about in eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

Former Finnish prime minister and head of the United Nations organization in Kosova Harri Holkeri says that both Serbia-Montenegro's government and Albania's government agreed that the violence should cease.(1) On the 23rd, the Finns acting for the UN arrested Shukri Buja, a former commander of the KLA—an organization using a name not unlike famous liberation armies of the past. Shukri Buja is also a leader of the second-largest party there, the PDK.(2)

Meanwhile, the Foreign Minister of Serbia-Montenegro accused Germany of blocking the way in the Security Council for action on the outrages in Kosova. Goran Svilanovic said that Germany favors Kosova's independence from

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Letters

What's up with Ho and Castro?

I'm curious as to what MIM's position on Ho Chi Minh and Fidel Castro is, as there is nothing regarding them in the FAQ [MIM's Frequently Asked Questions webpage]. I'd like to see such entries in the FAQ, if you guys would do so.

Also, I do find your website to be quite thought-provoking, though I'm not certain as to whether or not I agree with you or not. At any rate, I do give my appreciation for your efforts and will continually re-evaluate my own positions and become more thoughtful in my actions. If nothing else, I thank you for making me think.

—An internet reader

mim@mim.org responds: Probably the best summary of our views on Ho Chi Minh can be found in our review of a recent biography (<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/bookstore/books/asia/duikerho.html>).

On the one hand, Ho Chi Minh was a relative success in ousting imperialists from his oppressed nation, without succumbing to narrow nationalism. On the other hand, he failed to recognize Khrushchev's revisionism: the danger of capitalist counterrevolution masquerading as "Marxism." This caused major problems internationally.

Ho Chi Minh once told an interviewer that he left ideological questions to Mao Zedong. There is both truth and trouble

in this statement. In Lenin's and Stalin's day, they called people like Ho "practicals." These are people who are good at particular tasks but who do not follow ideological arguments. In many ways, Ho was just a "practical" like early Stalin; Ho and Stalin both had talents in many, many areas. In Stalin's case, those concerns eventually drove him into theoretical debates. To the extent that Ho was still fighting U.S. occupier troops when he died, it was correct for him to focus on practical matters regarding the national question. Yet as a communist, Ho contributed greatly to confusion in the international communist movement.

The communist movement suffered a huge wound when Khrushchev spit on Stalin; yet, the true descent into eclecticism, Liberalism and eventual post-modernism took the advent of people like Ho, Kim and Castro who put geopolitical calculation first and the universal truths of communism second. The real unity of the communist movement can never come about through Liberalism or treating all opinions as if they were equal. We communists are obliged as Marx pointed out in the "Theses on Feuerbach" to unite in the "this-sidedness" of reality. Khrushchev was irrelevant in the new communist upsurge of the 1960s in the United States, but the people fighting for their lives in Vietnam were heroes. As a result, Ho Chi Minh's line had more influence than Khrushchev's. No one did more to divide the fledgling U.S.

communist movement than Ho Chi Minh.

For specifics on Castro, we recommend MIM Theory 4, which contains a chapter on Cuba. We reiterate the basics of our position on Cuba here. 1) The Cuban Revolution was a blow against U.S. imperialism, which had a choke-hold on the Cuban economy. 2) As the Cuban Revolution developed and brought some gains for the Cuban masses, especially relative to other societies oppressed by U.S. imperialism in Latin America, it eventually replaced U.S. imperialism with Soviet social-imperialism. 3) It is important to note that the Cuban military strategy of "focoism" has succeeded no

where else and has in particular brought tremendous losses in Latin America. 4) Cuba is a state-capitalist country. 5) Currently, Castro is a lackey without a master. MIM doubts that he can lead the transition to independent development. 6) Such independent development was possible in Cuba's case. Had it pursued socialist development, Cuba's revolution would have been in a better position than Albania's socialist revolution, which started from an even weaker economic position than Cuba did. 7) Like all Third World countries oppressed by imperialism, Cuba must be defended against imperialist attack.



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

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MIM Notes

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MIM Notes is the bi-weekly newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement. MIM Notes is the official Party voice; more complete statements are published in our journal, *MIM Theory*. Material in *MIM Notes* is the Party's position unless noted. *MIM Notes* accepts submissions and critiques from anyone. The editors reserve the right to edit submissions unless permission is specifically denied by the author; submissions are published anonymously unless authors insist on identification (prisoners are never identified by name). MIM is an underground party that does not publish the names of its comrades in order to avoid the state surveillance and repression that have historically been directed at communist parties and anti-imperialist movements. MCs, MIM comrades, are members of the Party. The Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL) is an anti-imperialist mass organization led by MIM (RCs are RAIL Comrades). MIM's ten-point program is available to anyone who sends in a SASE.

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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 human 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.

Bush keeps prison state number one moving

A large portion of Bush supporters are Republicans who actually think they are moderate libertarians. However, the Bush administration continues the accelerated pace of imprisonment that long ago made the United States the number one prison state in the world per capita.

Judge Dineen King of the Fifth Circuit US Court of Appeals has complained about the Bush pace—not because the United States already locks up too many people, but because there is not enough money in the budget to hire enough judges to handle all the cases. The cause in the increase in activity: “drug and immigration prosecutions along the US-Mexican border and Attorney General John Ashcroft’s order last year that federal prosecutors should seek the severest charges and penalties.” (Boston Globe, 17 Mar 2004)

Although MIM favors a “dictatorship of the proletariat,” we would not be imprisoning people for border or visa violations and we would not be having people in prison for drugs. With the incentive to make profit on a black market gone, the drug problem will dry up after some stern enforcement on a few big profit-makers—just as it did in China under Mao.

MIM is seeking help in spreading the word about the overall situation. We are having success but need more outlets, volunteers to struggle, and even more money to spread the word.

We have had success with articles roughly like this one below minus the link and call to distribute the article. Several Internet forums have deleted this article and moved toward banning MIM.

Americasdebate.com’s moderator posted the following message: “question to debate is vague or missing” before americasdebate.com deleted the post.

Nonetheless, there were a number of positive responses to articles similar to the one below. Here is one: “I have always laughed and joked with my friends about how so many people are put in prisons over the stupidest things here in the US, but truly, that piece of insight right there is extremely frightening. And eye opening.”

Another response was simply: “astonishing.” When MIM received the typical non-response that the article is “hate America crap,” MIM responded as follows: “I didn’t hear you answer the question. Do you love Amerikkka because it’s the most criminal nation on earth or because the politicians running the government say it’s the most criminal on earth?”

“If it’s possible—and I admit this to be in the realm of speculation—I believe this guy hates Amerikkka more than me. I at least believe Amerikkka can change after a solid generation of revolution or I would not be here. I have a feeling this guy goes for the ‘crack down on crime’-build-more-prisons hatred of Amerikkkans every time. I’d like to know which politicians this guy does support.”

MIM has found that when we are allowed to post the facts, the debate goes our way. The enemy ends up neutralized. What we need is duplication of this effort.

The article is reprinted here.

Question for love-it-or-leave-it types: Amerikkka most criminal nation on earth or most misgoverned?

The United States leads the world in imprisonment percentage-wise and even by total prisoners. So my question is whether love-it-or-leave-it patriots love Amerika 1) because it is the most criminal nation on earth? or 2) because its government treats the people like the most criminal on earth or 3) because of gratitude toward the politicians don’t have the guts to tell patriotic voters the truth about any of this?

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. In 2000, 1.5% of U.S. male convicts had rape convictions, the second highest percentage reported by 30 countries reporting statistics, <http://www.unece.org/stats/gender/web/database.htm>

5. Atlantic Monthly December, 1998.

From: <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/faq/freecoun.html>

Study the above link. Distribute this article far and wide!

California youth prisons brutality exposed Activists demand CYA be shut down

April 1

A film of guards brutally beating two young men in a California Youth Authority (CYA) facility was released to the public today, the evening after activists held a public meeting to demand the CYA be shut down. The meeting was well attended by media, activists, former CYA inmates and family members of youth in the CYA.

Senator Romero, chairwoman of the Senate committee on prisons, released the tape in an attempt to force the state to do something about the ongoing brutality in the CYA. This tape, which apparently was made and saved without the knowledge of the guards, was the only evidence of this incident. The guards filed false reports charging the youth with assault, and the youth were afraid to come forward for fear of reprisal. If it were not for the tape, this incident would have been like others that happen every day in the CYA, where guards brutalize youth and no one finds

out. In spite of the tape and a 40-page internal affairs report released in late March detailing the attack and concluding that six CYA officials should be prosecuted for their role in the brutality,(1) no CYA employees have been charged with any crimes.

This tape bolsters the reports released in January from eleven independent experts, which found that the CYA failed to meet expected criteria for operation in 21 out of 22 categories evaluated. The report came out to the public in February after two young men were found dead in their CYA cell. But this information is not new. For years people have been fighting the abuses in the CYA and nothing has changed. MIM applauds Senator Romero for taking steps to move beyond committee meetings and hearings. Information about prisons-system abuses must be made public so that the people can become outraged and force change.

The public meeting condemning the CYA as “Bad for Youth” was organized by two local activist organizations: Let’s Get Free and Books not Bars (BNB). A BNB speaker opened the meeting proclaiming that the beating captured on the tape “is an outrage that happens all the time.” Speakers at the event described the brutality in CYA. CYA facilities force youth into gangs, both as a classification formality and for self-defense. They put youth on drugs to keep them quiet, or drive them to take drugs to cope with the torture. Families who visit are strip searched, and many times are turned away for ridiculous reasons like having a bobby pin in the hair or wearing a shirt that is tight. There is virtually no education or other programming, and youth are taught that they will be failures in life and have no hope of accomplishing anything.

The CYA costs \$80,000 per incarcerated youth per year. The total CYA budget is \$385 million per year. The

BNB speaker declared the goal of their campaign to shut down the 10 CYA prisons and force the state to invest that money into real rehabilitation for youth. Underscoring the message from all the speakers that the CYA cannot be reformed but must be torn down she declared “this is not an aberration, it is a systematic problem.”

The father of one of the two young men found dead in their cell, Durrell Feaster, spoke about his outrage at the system that killed his son. He explained that Durrell died because “in order to shut him up they had to kill him.” Mr. Feaster was aware of the torture his son was undergoing in CYA. “They were beating him down, locking him up, macing him, they were killing him.” But in spite of this information, Mr. Feaster found what many parents of youth locked in CYA learn: it is dangerous for their children if they speak out against the system. “Every

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MIM TO EX-YUGOSLAVIA, EX-SOVIET BLOC: IMPERIALISM HAS NO ANSWER

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Yugoslavia.(3)

When imperialist troops landed with UN sanction, they simultaneously told the Serbs that they would not sanction independence and they told the Albanians they would keep the Serbian military forces away from Kosova. Because the Serbs had an objectively better military situation on the ground for this sort of ethnic cleansing, the NATO intervention objectively aided the Albanian ethnicity, but now the Albanians are chafing under international occupation. Because we supported the only party of Serbians and other ex-Yugoslav people opposing Serbian great nationalism—the Partija Rada—we now feel justified in condemning narrow nationalism among Albanians.

The National Albanian American Council issued a press release March 19th saying: “Nothing justifies acts of retribution or burning of churches and mosques.”(4) At the same time, even this positive statement asking for “maturity” said that the Serbs’ political statements were worse than the violence.

The violence in March, 2004—five years after the last war—led the imperialists to dispatch another 2000 Italian, German and other troops to the scene.(5) These same imperialists denounce Stalin for the hard line he took on the small nationalities between Germany and the Soviet Union and north of Iraq, but now they also face the same need to send troops for a crackdown to keep ethnic bloodletting from happening.

The difference between the UN/imperialist crackdown and Stalin’s is this: the economy is going nowhere as these small nationalities fight. That adds to the bitterness. The United States is Serbia’s biggest foreign investor and the U.S. economy is going nowhere. Under Stalin, the whole Soviet Union and its allied countries moved forward economically. Furthermore, under Stalin, even if people had to migrate thanks to Stalin’s iron hand, they still all belonged to the same country and had the same citizenship rights to visit Moscow and so on. In the worst circumstance, internally deported people cooperated with each other at a distance. Now in Kosova today, we have all the same violence and problems that Stalin also encountered in similar regions he controlled, but the repressive violence by supposed peacekeepers ends up in another round of ethnic cleansing! Imperialism does not have any other answer. Now Kosova has had 80% of its Serbs kicked out and it is more ethnically pure than even the rest of Europe with its restrictive immigration policies. In both Stalin’s case and NATO’s case, there was terrible repressive violence, but only in Stalin’s case was there any hope of advance from that.

If no internationalist authority cracks down in this whole Balkan region and ex-Soviet bloc territory extending down into Baku and further, the ethnicities trade ethnic-cleansing actions. Today, Albanians attack minority Serbs in Kosova. The next day Serbs retaliate against mosques in Belgrade or somewhere else and so on down the line, because no geographic areas are ethnically “pure,” as if there could be such a thing anyway. The same thing happened between Azerbaijan and Armenia when hotheads in one province called Karabakh leading the break up of the Soviet Union evicted Azeris only to face retaliation by Azeris against Armenians in the rest of Azerbaijan. The actions of some nationalists ended up creating millions of refugees on both sides.

Yugoslavia and its leader Tito were the darlings of all mushy “socialists” opposed to Stalin’s rule in the Soviet Union after World War II. Tito brought “market socialism,” subsequently adopted by the revisionists in China and the Soviet Union. In Tito’s version of “market socialism” there was also “local control;” thus he gained the support of various half-baked “anarchists” as well.

Today, all the petty-bourgeois advocates of the Yugoslavian model are nowhere to be found, except in total stupor in younger generations. There are no mea culpas coming forward from any of the people who found Tito preferable to Stalin. In the sense that potential advocates of “local control” are so lacking in seriousness that they do not know Yugoslavia was a model of what they wanted, there is even another generation of unconscious Titoites arising.

Now we see clearly where “local control” of the economy leads. Each ethnicity retained its own economic interests and never learned what centralized cooperation should be. Workers of each ethnicity never understood concretely how they were damaging each others’ interests, if at all. In fact, in Yugoslavia’s case, the lack of centralized contact bred suspicions and illusions of damage from other ethnicities when it was really imperialism robbing Yugoslavia with Tito’s blessings. Hence, without centrally coordinated economic contact among workers, real damages and illusions of damages may accrue in relations among nations. Not surprisingly as a result, when Western Liberalism swept eastern Europe, Yugoslavia had the biggest explosion of ugly ethnic violence, right out of Hitler’s game plan from World War II. Even in the words of one nationalist supporter of the ethnic Albanians, “there were no good guys” in the conflict: it was that ugly. The recent term “ethnic cleansing” started with ex-Yugoslavia.



Stalin’s legacy

Greece and Albania are two places where Stalin has had a stronger influence than in other countries, because of the negative example of Tito staring those countries in the face. Nowhere is the influence of Stalin greater outside of Georgia and Russia than Albania, but even there we see that Stalin has been tossed aside. As ex-Yugoslavia nicely encapsulates all the problems of our current international communist movement, and because Stalin is such an influence still, we hope our readers will pardon us as we go into the details.

After Mao died and Albania’s leader Enver Hoxha broke with China, Hoxha took to preparing Albanian nationalism. While he was alive he had think tanks doing nationalist research on Albania and he prepared the ground for what we see today—people claiming to be communist and yet favoring ethnic cleansing in Kosova for “democratic” reasons—tryanny of the majority no different from that in Iran’s theocracy today. Nonetheless, while Hoxha was alive, he did not implement the kind of things we see today. We can only guess that Hoxha was still calculating that a Stalin figure might arise in Russia or China that he might be able to get along with. When Hoxha died, the Albanians including his right-hand in the party, did not wait anymore. They went for capitalism outright.

This was a big blow to the part of the “communist” movement that opposed Mao and upheld Enver Hoxha. It happened just as Mao said, by the hands of a bourgeoisie right in the party. Hoxha’s hand-picked successor restored open free market capitalism.

Most of the Hoxha-supporters quit their parties and degenerated politically, some even going for Gorbachev before totally abandoning politics. Nonetheless, the influence of Stalin and Hoxha in Albania did not completely disappear.

As a result, Albanian nationalists have

For us scientists in the legacy of Lenin, ‘imperialism’ is a scientific term, not a slur we throw whenever we need some opportunist camouflage.

now appropriated Stalin as favoring a liberation struggle in Kosova; even though there is no basis in Stalin’s writings for that notion. One writer on the Internet going by the name of “Tovarish Spetsnaz” has written thousands of articles in one forum alone while purporting to defend Stalin. According to “Tovarish Spetsnaz,” (TS) which is a phrase meaning something like “Comrade Special Forces,” Serbia is a “mini-imperialism.”(7)

MIM responded to this charge that Serbian chauvinism is “imperialism,” as if imperialism were a cultural practice and not an economic system. “Where are the Fortune 500 banks in Serbia that make Serbia an exporter of capital and hence an imperialism?”

“For us scientists in the legacy of Lenin, ‘imperialism’ is a scientific term, not a slur we throw whenever we need some opportunist camouflage.”

TS had issued this charge of “mini-imperialism” in response to a quote from Stalin on nationalism: “This does not mean, of course, that the proletariat must support every national movement, everywhere and always, in every individual concrete case. It means that support must be given to such national movements as tend to weaken, to overthrow imperialism, and not to strengthen and preserve it. Cases occur when the national movements in certain oppressed countries come into conflict with the interests of the development of the proletarian movement. In such cases support is, of course, entirely out of the question.”(8) Needless to say, “Comrade Special Forces” denied that fighting imperialism is first priority unless Yugoslavia is counted as imperialism.

Not all defenders of Stalin in the world take the line that Stalin somehow endorsed the kind of conflict we see today which cleared the way for outright imperialist occupation in ex-Yugoslavia. Nonetheless, there are other organizations claiming to defend Stalin hideously fanning the fire.

The central quote in all this comes from

some writing of Hoxha's about his meeting with Stalin that says the people of Kosova have self-determination. Hoxha published the rather bland quote on self-determination after Stalin died and could not rebut Hoxha. The Hoxhites now say that Stalin favored letting the Kosova people decide their future and use that as justification for inter-ethnic violence. In the exact same document by Hoxha, Stalin also said this: "The Yugoslav communists and the Yugoslav people must attend to that matter; it is up to them to solve the problems of the present and the future of their country. It is in this context, also, that I see the problem of Kosova and the Albanian population living in other parts of Yugoslavia. We must not leave any way for the Titoite enemy to accuse us later of allegedly waging our fight to break up the Yugoslav Federation. This is a delicate moment and needs very careful handling, because by saying, 'See, they want to break up Yugoslavia,' Tito not only gathers reaction around him, but also tries to win the patriotic elements over to his side." (9) In other words, Stalin knew that if Kosova left Yugoslavia, Serbian "patriots" might take it the wrong way and rally to revisionism.

With NATO troops on the ground, MIM would say Stalin's warning is still relevant. Stoking narrow nationalism was the wrong way to try to get independence and can do nothing good for Balkan relations.

The late Bill Bland then residing in England published by the "Communist Party Alliance" said that imperialists will not grant freedom. His conclusion was that Kosova people should seize their nation with arms—in the midst of imperialist intervention. He supported the Kosova Liberation Army. (10) Yet Bill Bland's article also contains no relevant quotes from Stalin. His article is a call for inter-ethnic violence, a slaughter among proletarians and farmers.

One pro-KLA "Marxist-Leninist" wrote in favor of imperialist intervention for the Kosova people. He said after all that Stalin called for the intervention of France and England against Germany! (11) This utter confusion of an imperialist country like Nazi Germany with ordinary non-imperialist countries like Serbia is typical of much eastern European false consciousness and most Hoxhism as it exists today. MIM repeats: the only countries east of Germany and west of Russia that should be considered imperialist are Sweden, Norway & arguably Finland—not Iraq, not Yugoslavia, not Armenia, not Azerbaijan, not Georgia and not even Turkey.

Others in the confused Hoxha camp referred to Serbia as a colonial power: "During the Tito years the region has always been exploited in a colonial way, being a producer of raw materials, by the bourgeoisie of the Federation richer regions." (12) Most of Hoxhism died with the open capitalist restoration in Albania, but 90% of the remnant of Hoxhism would be no where without this sort of Albanian nationalism which finds no home anywhere else in the



Krushev.

international communist movement. There is no home for it, because it is not Leninist in regarding Serbia as an imperialist power.

It goes without saying if the "communists" are coming up with lunacy regarding Serbian "imperialism," then the Albanian nationalists are just straight-up lynching Serbs. The sad truth is that we could change the names of the ethnicities and our statement would still be true in much of the rest of the same region. A few years from now, these same junk nationalists will be clamoring to join the European Union and crossing each others' borders at will in search of the perfect Gucci handbag—or so they dream. MIM is not sure that imperialism is going to be able to extract enough from the Third World to integrate all the eastern European peoples successfully, but 2 million people in Kosova should be no problem, less than the size of one U.S. county. If Kosova does manage to join the European Union plunder-machine on equal terms, the inter-ethnic violence of today is still going to look backward.

Russian revisionism

Russian revisionism plays a scandalous role in ex-Yugoslavia. It was Khrushchev who abandoned Stalin and a principled position on the national question. It was also Khrushchev who looked to nothing more than the size and economic strength of Yugoslavia as a reason to abandon principled relations with Albania and cosy up to Tito.

When we see extreme actions of ethnic cleansing or rioting, as in ex-Yugoslavia, we can be sure that small nations are writhing in pain from the punishment of bigger nations. Once Khrushchev abandoned Stalin on the national question and allowed for corruption to enter the party in the name of opposing dictatorship of the proletariat, all the nations smaller than Russia knew that bourgeois self-interest was the new watchword of the day. Instead of viewing imperialism as the source of economic problems, ex-Soviet people since Khrushchev have increasingly looked at their neighbors as the source of economic problems.

It was Khrushchev who looked to nothing more than the size and economic strength of Yugoslavia as a reason to abandon principled relations with Albania and cosy up to Tito.

Imperialist country revisionism

The evil of imperialist country revisionism and its contribution in this situation cannot be underestimated. Many of the ex-Soviet bloc looked on in admiration at Yugoslavia's standard of living and this furthered the pro-Tito illusions propped up with billions in Western loans. To this day, we can be sure that a large portion of Albanians see Serbians as "relatively privileged."

Albanians are defending themselves against charges that they are the spawn of privilege in the Ottoman Empire. The story goes that the Turks gave Albanians a special deal to push Serbs out of Kosova. (13)

In return, the Albanians accuse the Serbs of some kind of special privilege. For example, the Serbs have a company in Kosova and the Albanians accuse it of the following: "While only a handful of Albanians, mainly in low key jobs in the administration, still retain their jobs, the Serbian regime has used the Kosova company to boost an image of economic prosperity in Kosova." (14)

So it is when President Rugova issues a press release condemning "colonial exploitation," he is completely upside-down: "The Serbian press has reported high-profile contracts the Serbian regime has closed on behalf of the Kosova company with Greek and American firms, most notable of which Mitilineos Holdings and Trafiguro.

"President of the Republic of Kosova Dr. Ibrahim Rugova has warned foreign governments and economic interests against closing deals with Serbs on the Kosova public economy, currently under Serbian control. 'Such deals will be treated null and void', the President emphasized." (14) When Rugova says "colonial exploitation," he's not talking about Western companies operating in Kosova. He's talking about their signing contracts with the wrong lackeys, Serbian lackeys instead of Albanian lackeys.

As usual, the tendency in the ex-Soviet bloc territory is to look at the neighbor and assume it is the source of poverty, when in truth, the only suspicions of that sort should fall on Russia or the NATO

occupiers. That's why it is absolutely crucial that more people get on-board with the MIM agenda and show the people internationally and concretely what causes wealth and poverty in this world, what the sources of economic development are, and how much in reparations from imperialism to the oppressed are necessary. Without the correct understanding of this scientific question, the people will continue to kill their best business partners.

There are hundreds of millions of people in the West who could show these Serbs and Albanians what "special privilege" is. The Serbs' and Albanians' arguments about the Ottoman Empire or the measly Serb company in Kosova are way off the mark. The Albanians and Serbs need to study international political economy and realize that Amerikkans, British, French, Italians etc. do not work so much harder than them. Quite the contrary, the imperialist country populations work less and have less motivation.

The poverty of the Balkan region stems from getting off the road of Lenin and Stalin and then getting connected to an imperialist web in which international finance capital robs the entire world. Virtually all the so-called Marxist parties of the West are really advocates of the parasitism of their own "working classes." They cannot be counted on as reliable sources of information. The "workers" there are not "exploited." Of special note in this right now is the modern day Amerikan version of Karl Kautsky, Bob Avakian, the leader of the RCP=USA ("Revolutionary Communist Party"). According to Avakian, the international proletariat of each country should target 10% of its population as enemies. That's according to his slogan of the "two 90/10s." Not surprisingly, the people of Kosova are carrying out the Avakian line protecting Amerikkkan privilege by attacking the company owners and relatively privileged workers known as Serbs. Kosova's people have "advanced" the struggle so far that they have nearly kicked out all the "exploiters."

That's where the chauvinist line opposing MIM leads. On a global scale, the English worker making minimum wage legally-speaking is in the top 10.1% of the world by income. The chauvinist reply to the facts is that income is not class.

For RCP=USA and the rest of the exploiter country revisionists, class is something relative, not something based in the labor theory of value. That is why according to the RCP=USA's official line there is an enemy of 10% of the population in every country including the USA. The philistines are counting on people not realizing that anyone with assets generating less than the minimum wage of Amerikkans may be rich in their country, but they are at most petty-bourgeoisie internationally, something that should be called "national bourgeoisie" in the oppressed nations. Yet it is this petty-bourgeoisie making under \$10,000 a year that Avakian and company believe constitutes the majority of the enemies of the international proletariat! That is

Continued on page 8...

Protestors condemn ongoing Iraq war

Palestine (SJP). Speakers condemned Amerikan imperialism, but also emphasized education as a human right (many of the marchers were students). The march was led by SJP, which carried a life-size wall reading, "Stop U\$ Aid to Israel's Apartheid Wall," as well as a tank and many flags. The pre-rally march ended in a park in the Mission district where, after an hour of speeches, the crowd marched through the city to the Civic Center. Once there, people walked among the many tables of political literature and listened to more speakers. Around 2 p.m. about a thousand people left in another march that was soon targeted by rioting police, who beat protestors and innocent bystanders. An estimated 80 people were arrested, with at least one person beaten bloody and one broken arm reported.(1)

This protest brought out many more people with homemade signs than previous ANSWER-led demonstrations, which were dominated by signs created by the organizers. The creativity of the protestors reflected carefully-thought-out political positions on the war, a good sign that people are still paying attention a year after the invasion of Iraq. Signs that MIM liked included "Preemptive war is invasion," and "Terrorists out of the white house." A number of signs focused on "Bush's lies," implying that because of his lies people are dying. But, as MIM has been pointing out for years, Amerikan imperialism has been killing people and invading countries since its inception, and the lies, like the president himself, are incidental to the system of militarism which requires this plunder.

MIM and RAIL brought a contingent to the protest with our own improved banners and signs. We distributed close to 1000 copies of MIM Notes, gathered many signatures on our petition to shut down the Security Housing Units in California prisons, and accomplished our goal of setting ourselves apart from the multitude of sectarian and single issue groups at the rally. With so many self-

labeled "communist" and "socialist" organizations distributing newspapers, it is hard for people to know what is worth their time to read. MIM wants to get our newspaper into people's hands, and we want to give them a reason to read it, to stop and talk to us, to buy our theory magazines, and to think about getting involved in anti-imperialist organizing. At this rally we displayed some RAIL anti-election posters on large poster board next to our literature table. (These posters are available at the RAIL page on MIM's website.) Some RAIL comrades also turned one of these posters into t-shirts to wear at the protest. Our posters and banners got a lot of attention.

We met a number of people who were surprised to learn we didn't think it worth their time to vote in the imperialists' presidential elections. One of the posters we displayed reads: "Yahoo, it's another Amerikan elekshun, Wherein the planet's premiere parasites pick the current presidential face of imperial terror and global plunder. Or simply put, the enemy chooses a leader." This sums up our position on the elections well. While older people in the crowd wearing Howard Dean or Dennis Kucinich or even John Kerry t-shirts or buttons were generally not friendly to our message, many younger people were impressed with our anti-elections message.

This contrasted to the theme of several speakers at the rally. One early speaker, Leilani Dowell, is running for Congress on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket, backed by the Trotskyist Workers World Party. Dowell ended her speech with the cry "We will win!" Although she was not referring directly to her campaign for congress, she was talking about the struggle in this country. MIM finds electoral campaigns run by self-proclaimed socialist organizations to be misleading the people. We need to be honest that we cannot win in the imperialist-dominated elections at this point in history. Telling people that it matters when they go vote for a candidate who will definitely lose is what MIM calls defeatism. We tell people they should not waste their time standing in line at the polls, and that their time is better spent organizing.

Another speaker at the rally, Dolores Huerta, famous for her organizing of migrant workers, proclaimed to the crowd, "the most important day of your life is election day." This once again misleads people to think they can effect

change by going to the polls once a year (or once every 4 years) to pick who will lead the plunder of the world. Even San Francisco couldn't elect a Green Party mayor (not even an anti-imperialist candidate) to run its domestic affairs. So we can't fool ourselves into thinking that the majority of Amerikans would vote for a candidate that opposes imperialism.

This is the second message that MIM put out to people taking our newspaper and stopping at our literature table. When asked what we are about, we explained that MIM is different from other organizations at the rally because we are honest about where the wealth in this country comes from. We know that people in this country enjoy a high standard of living from the super profits extracted from people outside of U.\$. borders. And that is why a majority of Amerikans support the war and their elected leaders. Many people who had never encountered MIM before were impressed with this analysis and agreed that we should call on Amerikans to oppose the imperialism because it is in the interests of all of humanity to stop our movement towards global destruction.

On the other hand, a Trotskyist organizer invited us to support the Safeway workers in an effort to be "non-sectarian", to which a RAIL comrade responded by pointing to our poster which reads, "Imperialism: The majority of the world's people can't live with it, you can't live without it." That is our analysis of Amerikans as a whole. Sectarianism means serving your organization rather than the interests of your cause. Refusing to fight for more super-profits for Amerikans is committing ourselves to the struggles of the oppressed, not sectarianism.

Speakers at the rally demonstrated the need for this MIM analysis including Woody Harrelson, a famous actor who read a poem he had written for the rally. His poem questioned why people would support fascism, and why it worked in Germany. This is an important question for activists to think about, but Harrelson gave the answer so many Amerikan activists like to give: miseducation. He concluded that Amerika has Clear Channel (the media conglomerate) and so that's why the people are fooled into supporting wars and even fascism. MIM disagrees. It is true that the mainstream media in this country works hard to build support for imperialism, serving as a mouthpiece for the government. But

Amerikans are not just fooled into complacency and support for their government. Amerikans have a strong material interest in imperialism as the Amerikan government has shared the profits of plunder with its citizens to buy their allegiance.

Clear Channel may bring us speeches by warmongers in the white house justifying their actions, but it also brings us images of the people dying in countries around the world as the Amerikan military invades. And with access to the internet and alternative media sources, Amerikans do have the opportunity to read between the lines in the mainstream press. But the majority chose to turn their heads away from anti-imperialist news and accept what the government tells them. Not because they are stupid but because they want to continue to live the Amerikan life.

The parallel to Germany that Harrelson raised is appropriate. After World War I Germany was deprived of all its colonies, and the wealth it was bringing home from colonial plunder was cut off. The German people were thrust into poverty. And it was not hard for Hitler to convince these people they deserved their former wealth, at the expense of colonial peoples around the world. National chauvinism finds fertile ground among Amerikan workers when they feel their wealth threatened, just as it did among Germany workers. This is why we have to be honest with Amerikans about where the profits are coming from.

Notes:

1. www.indybay.org.



What questions do YOU have?

Wasn't Mao a butcher? Why do you spell it "Amerika"? Shouldn't you try non-violence first? What is internationalism? Isn't hating white people reverse racism? Why don't you leftists work together? Why don't you tone it down? What is a cardinal principle? What is your program? What is necessary to join MIM? What concrete actions can I take? How do I write articles for MIM? What is your copyright policy?

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and get real answers to these and other questions.

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 movement. Get involved!
www.etext.org/Politics/MIM

What's New @ MIM's Homepage

Shut Down Control Units in Prison

A Pamphlet from the Maoist Internationalist Movement

This pamphlet describes the history and use of Control Units in Prisons in Amerika as an inhuman tool of repression. We focus on the Control Units in California prisons called Security Housing Units (SHU) because of our active campaign in that state to shut down the SHU, but the information about the SHU is applicable to similarly named programs across the country. MIM has been leading struggles against the Criminal Injustice System across the United States for years. At the same time we run political programs to educate and organize prisoners behind the bars. We hope this pamphlet is educational, but we also hope it inspires people to take action and join the fight to shut down the control units throughout the American prison system.



What is a Control Unit?

Control Units are prisons within prisons. They are isolation units where people are confined to small cells for long periods of time. Control units are a common tool of repression throughout the American prison system, frequently used to target prisoners who are actively fighting for their rights. They target Black, Latino and indigenous people who are a disproportionate part of control unit populations.

Control units have various names such as Adjustment Center, Security Housing Unit (SHU), Maximum Control Complex (MCC), administrative maximum (ad-max), Intensive Management Unit (IMU) and administrative segregation (ad-seg). Prisoners spend years of isolation in tiny cells, usually 6 by 8 feet for 22 - 23.5 hours a day. In some cases the long term isolation is complete, in others it is small group isolation; both conditions are tremendously damaging to humans. The short time that they do spend outside their cell is within a cement or chain link "dog pen" that lacks any kind of equipment and proper space for physical exercise. Participation in programs including religious services, educational programs, work and job training, congregate dining and exercise are all prohibited. Medical care is also greatly limited.

Prisoners are placed in control units for extended periods of time. Prisoners are usually placed in control units as an administrative measure, with no clear rules governing the moves. This makes it virtually impossible for prisoners to challenge their placement.

A History of Control Units in Amerikan prisons

In the late 18th century, the Walnut Street Prison in Philadelphia, PA, became the first penitentiary in U.S. history to experiment with the use of long-term isolation. This was based on the "Quaker theory" that without social interaction, a prisoner could not be influenced by fellow inmates and that a religious conversion would occur during the years of enforced meditation and result in the individual's reformation.

This theory had monstrous effects upon those incarcerated between its walls. Some fell into a condition from which it was almost impossible to arouse them. Others became violently insane, some to the extreme of committing suicide. Those who underwent these isolating conditions were generally not reformed. In most cases individuals did not recover sufficient mental activity to be of any service to the community. It would seem that after such experimentation, that this type of treatment would be eliminated by prisoncrats. Instead the practice of confining prisoners to small cells for long periods of time is still in full force.

In modern times the U.S. penitentiary at Alcatraz became notorious for holding the most dangerous criminals within the U.S. penal system. In reality it became the first "control unit prison" used as a mechanism to enforce control over prisoners and society. More recently the super-max penitentiary in Marion, Illinois became the new "End of the line" for both state and federal prisoners who prisoncrats considered to be "institutional problems" or "too dangerous" to be housed in any other institution.

The idea of Marionization spread rapidly throughout the American prison system because prison officials cried that their institutions were unsafe and control over the convict in every way possible was desperately needed. The truth behind the reasons these control units are needed is they are a means of political, economic and social control of oppressed and disenfranchised people. These include especially African, Latino and indigenous people who are a disproportionate part of control unit populations.

These torture units go beyond the usual constraints of maximum security prisons. Better defined as a prison within a prison, these control units are used to defeat prisoners' revolutionary attitudes, organization, militancy, legal and administrative challenges; and anything else the prison administrators deem objectionable. These control units have various names, every prison possesses the label control unit status if long-term punishment and/or isolation are used.

While conditions vary from prison to prison, the goal of these units is always to achieve the spiritual, psychological and physical breakdown of the prisoner. Once prisoners are confined to a control unit, gross

human rights violations take place on a daily basis.

The most damaging aspect of control units is the physical and mental torture that is imposed upon their victims. Physical torture is inflicted: Forced cell extractions by militarily attired, baton-wielding guards are constantly used without cause or warning. These guards violently beat, choke, and kick already-shackled prisoners. Sometimes these cell extractions are so abusive that prisoners require extensive medical attention. Devices such as tazer guns, pepper spray, maces and manacles are used and four-point restraints and hog-tying are routinely overused, despite the fact that such instruments have caused bodily harm and death.

Another cruel practice is "caging". This is where scantily clad or naked prisoners are held in outdoor cages for hours in cold and rainy weather. The systematic use of firehosing shackled prisoners while in their cells, with high-pressure cold water, then leaving standing water in the cell, usually accompanies a prisoner being put in "strip cell status." While frigid temperatures make it impossible to sleep or even lay down, a bright light shines upon the cell 24 hours a day.

For those who can endure the physical cruelty, the mental torture can surely affect one's sanity. One example of this is sensory deprivation. This is when the prisoncrats forbid prisoners to have books, televisions,

The U.S. is #1 (in prisons)

The United States is world's leading prison-state per capita. The U.S. imprisons more Black people than did apartheid South Africa of the era before Mandela was president. The majority of prisoners are non-violent offenders and the U.S. Government now holds about a half million more prisoners than China; even though China is four times our population. In this so-called "free country" freedom is imprisonment. Like the rest of the country, people from oppressed nations are imprisoned in California prisons at a disproportionate rate. In this context, the existence and rapid growth of prison control units across the country is an urgent issue that deserves our attention and activism.

radios and contact visits, including those with lawyers. In some control units it is impossible for prisoners to communicate amongst themselves. Verbal harassment containing derogatory or racial statements are made by the guards. Mail is misplaced, delayed, destroyed or censored. Threats are made against family and visitors. The passing of false confidential information to foster paranoia and fights between convicts is utilized to weaken any unionization between prisoners. Legal access is another area that is greatly violated. This includes the censoring of lawyer and court mail, guards monitoring attorney-client phone and visit conversations, and the hindering of access to legal books and materials.

Control Units are designed to administer the very most in sensory deprivation and dehumanization of inmates.

For more information check us out on the web:
<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons>

or contact us at:
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to order bundles of this pamphlet for distribution
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California SHU Brutality exposed

In California, and across the country, Security Housing Units principally target oppressed nations. In 1998 the California Department of Corrections (CDC) reported that 34% of the population in all CDC institutions was Latino, and 31% was Black. The population of the Security Housing Units (SHUs) is even more disproportionate. 82% of people in SHUs were non-white, and 52% of those in SHUs were Latino. This compares to a California population that was 32% Latino, and 7% Black in 1998. The population appears to be about the same today but exact statistics are not published by the CDC for the public.

The five official California SHU's - Pelican Bay State Prison SHU, Valley State Prison for Women SHU, California State Prison at Corcoran SHU, California Correctional Institution at Tehachapi SHU and Corcoran SATF - are the lynchpin for the CDC's prison system. They are the most brutal prisons in the system and principally target those prisoners who show the most resistance. They are designed to break inmates' spirit. The SHU is a threat which hangs over the head of all CA prisoners.

At Pelican Bay prisoners are kept in windowless cells for a minimum of 22 1/2 hours a day. There is no education, no job training, no work, no religious services, or hobby materials. Prisoners are subject to strip searches upon departure from and return to their cell when they have not come in contact with any other individual. Conditions at Pelican Bay were found unconstitutional in 1995 by a federal court, which ruled that prisoners were subjected to gratuitous and racist beatings and that medical facilities were inadequate. Prisoners, and

now even the mainstream press, report that little has changed since this ruling.

Corcoran prison is infamous for its daily "gladiator fights," staged between 1988 and 1996. Guards would manipulate exercise schedules so that known enemies would be in the handball-court-sized recreation area at the same time. Fights were basically certain, and guards bet on the outcome. After a fight had gone on for a while, guards would break it up by firing wooden bullets at the prisoners. Hundreds of prisoners were injured in these fights - including seven murdered by guards.

These are only a few of the tortures and terrors implemented by the CDC. Transfer to and from a SHU depends on the whims of a classification committee. Prisoners are not allowed legal counsel before this kangaroo court. The CDC claims that the SHUs house "the worst of the worst," who are kept in lockdown because they pose a danger to other prisoners. However - as is the case in other control units throughout the u.s. - many of the prisoners in California's SHUs are there because they are jailhouse lawyers, or have filed too many grievances.

The CDC also uses the policy of "snitch, parole, or die" to justify further repression and turn prisoners against each other. Prisoners can be transferred to the SHU - regardless of good behavior or their sentence - if "confidential informants" label them gang members. Prisoners are not allowed to confront their accusers or defend against the allegation of gang membership, so many of those sent to the SHU under this policy may indeed be innocent of the so-called crime of gang mem-

bership. Once in the SHU, these prisoners can only leave if they inform on another "gang member," are paroled, or die. This is clearly a policy aimed at creating a need for SHU space and fanning the flames of the anti-gang (read: anti-oppressed nation youth) hysteria.

Other CDC policies regulating even the most mundane aspects of prisoners' lives are designed to provoke prisoners and pave the way for further prisons expansion and crackdowns. Since the end of 1997, the CDC has (a) prohibited long hair and beards among male prisoners - some of whom wear their hair long for religious reasons, (b) taken away the \$1 million budget for the prison law library, and (c) taken away prisoners' weights, restricting their already limited recreation and increasing hazards to their physical health.

As history teaches us, "oppression breeds resistance." In one example, on New Year's Day 1998 over 1,000 prisoners in Folsom State prison rebelled by throwing burning toilet paper over the tiers, banging on cell doors, and refusing to eat. In the words of a San Quentin prisoner, "We do have a little bit of life in here, debased as it is, but there's stuff to do. [The grooming restrictions are] just too much." In October 2002 prisoners in the Corcoran SHU waged a hunger strike to protest the brutal conditions. Resistance behind the bars continues and we have a responsibility on the outside to support these struggles.

CA senate hearings on the SHU: we can't reform torture

September 15 — Hearings on Security Housing Units (SHU) in California prisons, were held in Los Angeles by Senator Romero, Chair of the Select Committee on the California Correctional System. In this era of "tough on crime" rhetoric, it is unusual for a government official to even question prison programs, and in this context we can hope to effect some improvements in the lives of prisoners.

MIM and RAIL activists attended these hearings with no illusion that the California congress can legislate substantial change in the criminal injustice system. As a part of our campaign against the SHU in California, and control units across the country, we attended the hearings to put forward the perspective that the SHU must be shut down, not just reformed into kinder gentler torture.

Outside the hearing at 8am a small crowd gathered to protest the SHU. Led by the Barrio Defense Committee, MIM and RAIL joined activists and relatives of prisoners waved signs and chanted demanding the SHUs be shut down.

At 9am when the hearing began attendees were passed through a metal detector and forced to leave all signs, food and water outside. There were at least six cops outside the main entrance, eight more up front in the large hearing hall guarding the area where the senator and her witnesses were to sit, two or three more around the sides and back of the room against the walls, and an uncounted number more guarding the side entrances to the hall. In a large hall that could seat hundreds about 100 opponents of the SHU gathered along with a small crowd of ten or so CDC administrators mixed with a few more cops seated in the corner with their crowd. The level of security was astonishing and suggested that the state government considers friends and family of prisoners quite dangerous.

Senator Romero questions SHU system

Senator Romero opened the hearing with an overview of the California SHUs, explaining that there are 3 male SHU prisons and 1 for women, together housing close to 3000 people. She described accurately the conditions in the SHU which include 23 hours/day lockdown in the cell, prisoners getting out only for occasional exercise and showers, and no programming (educational, work or otherwise). One point that the hearings misrepresented was the expansion of the SHU system. Although the number of SHU beds has not officially expanded, the CDC continues to build new "administrative segregation" units inside prisons throughout the state. This is just another name for control units. Many states use this tactic to overcome legal or political challenges to their control units, changing the name and pretending they have implemented a different system. One such unit was opened in Soledad recently.

Romero criticized the CDC for failing to provide her with exact information on the cost per prisoner of

incarceration in the SHU and presented the estimates they gave her of \$37, 662 per inmate excluding health care, making the point that she believes the actual cost is significantly higher than this. While it is no doubt true that it costs more money to house prisoners in isolation units than in general population, MIM doesn't care about this point. Unless we are talking about putting money into more programming for prisoners, better food and medical care, and better legal services, we don't care if the state is wasting money on expensive cells, wasting money on guards salaries, or wasting money paying for a recall circus election. Our opposition to the SHU is not based on rallying taxpayers to better use their prison money to build more cheaper cells because this is a losing point of propaganda.

Romero went on to explain that the SHU houses two groups of prisoners, first there are those in for determinate sentences who have supposedly committed violent acts. The second group is those labeled "validated" gang members. The SHU population is split roughly evenly between the two groups. Romero stated "I have some very serious concerns about the validation process...[and the] lack of oversight of the process by which it is determined if a prisoner remains an active gang member or associate." Romero went on to suggest that she would like to see the CDC move to a more "behavioral based criteria" for gang validation rather than using "status" criteria. This is a good criticism of the SHU process, but it focuses on how to better select prisoners for torture rather than addressing the torture itself.

It is also important to point out that the label "gang" is in and of itself a problem. Gangs are loosely defined to identify any group of people those in authority see as a threat. Usually this is any group of oppressed nation people getting together for their betterment, self-defense, education or other activity, not always including illegal activities. MIM has been labeled a "gang" or "security threat group" for our political education programs for prisoners. And prisoners are given "gang" classifications for their association with us and other political organizations.

Romero also provided some useful facts, noting that, in response to criticism, the CDC has carried out a self-audit of the SHU validation process. She rightly pointed out that this process is suspect as it involved no independent oversight. Further she noted that there

have been 403 paroles directly from the SHU since 2000 with a recidivism rate of 78%. The recidivism rate for inmates in general population in California is 66%. As Romero herself stated "even that normal recidivism rate is extremely abnormal." MIM agrees and we understand that prisons in America are not about rehabilitation at all, they are an industry and to remain in operation they have an interest in continuing to build their population. There is no effort put into giving prisoners opportunities to live a better life after prison. Romero expressed the concern that community members are not safer because of SHUs if they are leading to more crime when prisoners are released.

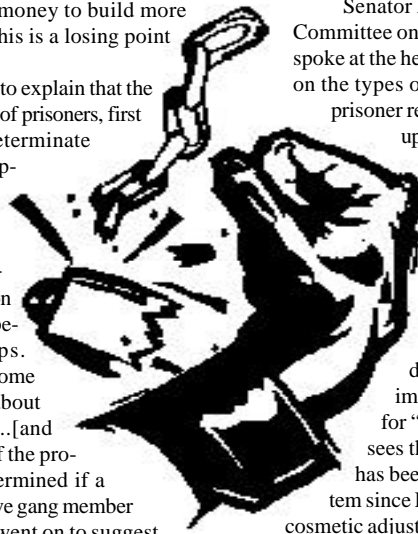
Senator Polanco, the former chair of the Joint Committee on Prison Construction and Operations, spoke at the hearing first. He went into further detail on the types of SHU sentences. For a violent act a prisoner receives a determinate SHU sentence of up to 6 years. For being a "validated" gang member or associate a prisoner gets an indeterminate SHU sentence of 6 years up to life with the only way to get out being to parole, snitch or die. He too objected to the lack of behavior based criteria for gang validation.

Under his leadership some programs for reform of the system were developed which he noted had yet to be implemented. He gave praise to the CDC for "progress" but said it has slowed. MIM sees this as just political lip service as there has been virtually no change in the SHU system since Polanco began his investigation except cosmetic adjustments to pretend that prisoners have a way to get out of the SHU by remaining free of gang activity for six years. Putting a prettier face on torture and oppression is far from a goal of MIM's and we are wary that congressional actions like those taken by Polanco can do more harm than good for the oppressed.

Polanco noted that the CDC had sent people to study the control unit systems in other states, looking for models of how to run things better. His complaint was that none of the examples they had seen were implemented. MIM looks around the country at the control units in other states and does not see a model for the CDC to follow. This is one case where MIM agrees with the CDC Director Alameida; he pointed out that most states are doing the same kinds of things California is doing with control units.

CDC pigs defend torture

In some of the most interesting testimony of the hearing Ed Alameida, Director of the CDC, took the stand along with David Tristan his Chief Deputy Director of Field Operations and James Moreno, the chief of the CDC gang unit. For Alameida and his men this hearing was a process of justifying their policies so they could get back to work and avoid cuts in funding, but a



Hearings on SHU continued...

few useful facts did come out amid their evasions and cautious phrases.

Alameida began his testimony by giving some background stating that prison gangs began in the late 1950s and early 1960s and vehemently labeling them an organized crime syndicate involved in criminal activities in the prisons. More than once he brought up drug and weapons dealing in the prisons. Romero never challenged him on this but MIM wants to point out that these things only happen when someone lets drugs or weapons into the prison. Prisoners do not have any way to do this themselves so CDC employee complicity is a must.

In 1971 Governor Reagan established the gang unit in the California prisons. This timing coinciding with the harsh crackdown on revolutionary movements in the United States and the dramatic skyrocketing of the prison population as the government started rounding up oppressed nationals and herding them off to prison in an attempt to squelch any revolutionary activity.

Moreno described the process of gang validation in detail. Gang "behavior" according to him, can be a violent act, a tattoo, communication with validated gang members or associates, photographs with gang members or associates, confidential information from debriefs or other sources, letters written to validated gang members, Christmas cards, and other material. Romero questioned him extensively on the non-behavior criteria asking how a Christmas card or conversation in the yard could be evidence of gang membership. Moreno tried to claim that cards and letters always have secret messages that the CDC can't see and so it doesn't matter what the content is. This kind of status based criteria is what has allowed the CDC to put many prisoners in the SHU who have never associated with a "gang" in their lives. It is also conveniently easy to validate prisoners with "confidential" evidence, allowing the CDC staff to target prisoners who are politically active for SHU isolation.

The CDC staff went on to describe the validation process which includes review of "evidence" by the Institutional Gang Investigator and review by the Validation Review Committee. Prisoners supposedly are given a copy of all evidence against them and have the opportunity to rebut it. Although it sounds rigorous, a number of people testified to the lack of training by the review committee, the divergence of staff interpretation on how to validate gang members, and the reality of the system which rarely shows the prisoners the evidence against them or gives them any chance to challenge it. This translates into prison staff making arbitrary decisions to send people to the SHU without needing any real evidence.

Romero recently visited Pelican Bay prison, a notorious SHU prison in California, and interviewed several prisoners. She said she repeatedly heard stories of prisoners who had joined gangs to avoid being assaulted and she asked "what is the role of [the CDC] in setting up conditions [that require this of prisoners]?" This question correctly looks at the state as the real source of safety problems in the California prison system. Romero went on to say outright "Rehabilitation is absent from the mission of the CDC".

Senator Romero seems to clearly see the contradictions within the criminal injustice system, and she seems to genuinely want change, but she is caught within the system and so on the one hand she recognizes its failure but at the same time she is calling for cosmetic reform that will do little more than cover up the problems. While MIM hopes to take advantage of this opportunity to push forward some changes that will improve the lives of prisoners in the CDC, we can't expect the dismantling of the SHU programs without significant public protest and organizing.

Witnesses against the SHU

Attorney Don Specter testified against the SHU with a compelling response to the CDC administrators. He noted that by their own testimony there are 40,000 to 60,000 gang members in California prisons. The SHU houses approximately 1500 "validated" gang members. So even with the SHU full there is no chance it is removing the gangs from the general population. The argument that the SHU units are keeping other prisoners safe from gangs is ludicrous.

He noted that the CDC rules on confidential informants are meaningless because they decide that if any part of the information provided by the informant is true the CDC will consider all the information true. And if the informant was considered reliable in the past

all his information in the future will be trusted. This invites informants to give false testimony. And this is not to mention those "validated" gang members who were never associated with a gang and have no real information to provide but who want to "debrief" to get out of the SHU. They have to make up information to get out.

Charles Carbone, a lawyer with California Prison Focus, was another invited speaker at the hearing. He provided some good evidence of the lies told by the CDC administrators about the validation process as well as the effects of the SHU on prisoners and their families.

Carbone is working on a court case right now challenging the constitutionality of the SHU validation (Castillo vs. Alameida) which is scheduled to go to trial in 2004. Through depositions for this case he has learned that the people in charge of validating prisoners have virtually no training, that about 60% of source items are confidential (making challenges by prisoners impossible) and that in many cases debriefs by prisoners just involve naming names, not even recounting actions.

Carbone followed the vein of others testifying by suggesting reforms to the SHU system including changing the classification to behavior based, implementing more frequent reviews of prisoner's SHU sentence, offering more programs, and providing greater protections before validation. While MIM does work for reforms within the system as a part of our organizing work to bring down the system, we think it is irresponsible to call for these reforms without pointing out the fundamental flaws in the system. Particularly when the reforms are focused on a how to improve a system that is fundamentally torture.

Public comments condemn SHU

After the formal testimony the many audience members were given a chance to speak during public comments although they were restricted to 2 minutes each. Parents, brothers, sisters, in-laws, grandparents, and children of prisoners as well as former prisoners all stood up to speak about the injustice of the SHU. Many family members had a hard time finishing their testimony as they were moved to tears recounting their experiences with the CDC.

Family members testified to visitation processes that made it virtually impossible for them to see their family, keeping them out for wearing the wrong colors, restricting mothers with more than 2 children from bringing all of the kids at once, having visits denied by the prison after a family member has traveled across the state and confirmed the appointment by phone, the denial of contact visits, and other humiliations and degradations.

The daughter of a prisoner spoke about her attempts to visit her father where they made her change clothing twice and then told her the visit was not scheduled. A mother of a prisoner spoke about her attempts to see her son in Pelican Bay. After traveling from Los Angeles all the way to the northern tip of the state, spending \$500 for the trip, she was denied visits because a guard had miscounted the prisoners. She explained that it is not only the prisoners, "families are also violated by this system."

The health problems of many of the prisoners in the SHU were detailed by their family members. Some

have serious mental health problems after years of long term isolation. The skin color of SHU prisoners turns yellow after extensive denial of exposure to the sun. Many prisoners have developed serious physical health problems from the confinement, lack of activity and poor medical care.

The unfair and random validation process was criticized by many. Family members described bogus evidence used to validate their loved ones including get well cards. One mother of a prisoner spoke about his validation a year ago after which he tried to file an appeal. After he filled out the form wrong and it was returned to him and he was told he had lost his chance to appeal. Another person spoke about a man who had been in the SHU for 15 years. After six years he got his validation reviewed but was denied based on evidence that included a condolence card he sent to a friend whose mother had died and a political letter he had written. Another woman recounted her husband's denied appeal of his SHU status because of his participation in a 1999 peaceful protest where the whole housing unit of many different nationalities united and withheld their dinner trays to protest the treatment they were receiving. Several prison activists also spoke about the men they work with who have been wrongly classified as gang members in retaliation for political organizing.

A man who works with a politically active SHU prisoner who was recently assaulted by his cellmate noted that the cellmate had two weapons when he entered the cell, and they were not crude weapons. These weapons had to come from somewhere. Again and again testimony like this pointed to not just a broken system that needs fixing but systematic oppression.

A RAIL speaker described the work MIM and RAIL is doing with California prisoners and the pattern we see of the CDC putting politically active prisoners in the SHU, pointing out that these are some of the least threatening prisoners, the ones helping others file lawsuits and working for unity among prisoners. This speaker presented Senator Romero with more than 500 petition signatures calling for the SHUs to be shut down, noting that along with the many others we had mailed to her this brought the total petition signatures submitted to her by MIM to almost 2,500.

A MIM speaker discussed the failure of the hearings to address the fundamental problem with the SHU which is long term isolation, a form of torture condemned even by the United Nations. This speaker pointed out that comparisons to other torture programs are meaningless because reforms attempting to make torture programs better can not succeed in changing the fact that these programs are still torture. Putting this in the context of larger society the MIM speaker asked people to consider the problems with the criminal injustice system as a whole and what in the CDC is causing them. We should not be talking about better systems for determining who should be put in torture units, we need to talk about how to eliminate these torture units.

Join the protests to Shut Down the Security Housing Units

Activist groups in California have initiated a United Front to shut down the Security Housing Units. Organizations and individuals have come together to coordinate our actions and raise the struggle against the SHU. The United Front has held meetings and protests that include the Barrio Defense Committee, the Maoist Internationalist Movement, the African People's Socialist Party, Aztecs of North America Inc, African People's Solidarity Committee, the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League, Studies for the Liberation of Aztlan and Latin America, Justice for Palestinians, Zami! Cooperative, and California Prison Focus. Participants also include family members of SHU prisoners and former prisoners themselves.

In cities across the state, participants in the United Front will be holding protests the first Saturday of every month. We are collecting petition signatures and educating people about the SHU torture and why it must be shut down. Participants in this United Front see the fight against the SHU as part of a larger battle against the criminal injustice system as a whole. And many participants also have an understanding of the corrupt system of American imperialism that uses prisons as a tool of social control and national oppression. We bring these lessons to the people on the streets as we build this movement to shut down the SHU.

Protests are held the first Saturday of every month at the following locations:

San Francisco: Corner of Powell and Market (Noon to 2pm)
Los Angeles: Silver Lake Farmer's Market at Sunset & Griffith Park Blvd (11 to 1pm)
San Jose: Contact us for location
Santa Cruz: Contact us for location
Oakland: Contact us for location

Contact us at mim124@mim.org or 415-267-4879 for more info

An Alternative to Control Units

While campaigning to abolish Security Housing Units (SHU) in prisons, people frequently ask us, "What's your alternative?" This question usually comes from people who know that there is a lot of violence in prisons. So they argue that the SHU provides security to help avoid petty confrontations.

In practice however, it is the prison system and the Correctional Officers who promote and even create violent situations rather than preventing them. This is the product of a system that is set up to be every man for himself, where snitching is rewarded and violence is promoted as the way to solve problems. It's the same old divide-and-conquer technique. When the people in an institution are there against their will, facing repression and inhumane conditions, the minority running the institution doesn't want them organizing against their captors.

When addressing the question of abolishing the SHU we have to make it clear that MIM is not a reformist organization. We are fighting this campaign within the context of overthrowing the whole system and replacing the current criminal injustice system with justice for the people. Our goal is to transform society to eliminate the social causes of crime. Our long-term answer to the question of what to do with violent criminals is to build a system of re-education, reform and reintroduction to society for those who previously posed a threat to society.

In the short term we must fight to limit the oppression of the current system and abolishing the SHU is part of that fight. We know that the SHU is used for political repression. We know that everyone in the SHU suffers mentally and physically regardless of why they are in there. Therefore we often point out to those who are reluctant to sign our petition to abolish the SHU that these people are usually going to get out of prison some day and will only be more maladjusted than when they entered as a result of the isolation and torture they faced. Prisons can be made safer under the current system, but this goes counter to the interests of the prison administration to keep power over the imprisoned. Therefore until the proletariat decides who goes to prison and how the prison system is used there will be torture and violence in prisons.

When it does come time to build a new justice system in the interests of the people, we look toward the model of the prison system in socialist China (i.e. China under Mao). People who were successfully reformed through that system include two Amerikan students (Allyn and Adele Rickett) and the last Emperor of the Manchu dynasty, Pu Yi. All three of them have written about their experiences and provide some great insights into the socialist prison system. In our review of the Ricketts' book, *Prisoners of Liberation*, we wrote, "a psychological approach to antisocial behavior takes agency away from the individual and the masses, and has as its goal teaching people to learn to adjust to their oppressive conditions (or their role as an oppres-

or) rather than struggling for political change." (3) Individualism leads bourgeois society to use psychology to explain and then treat crime rather than the sociological viewpoint of class struggle. By focusing on the societal sources of humyn problems we can actually eliminate their source.

The difference between our plan for prisons and the current prison system is that we see prisons as a means of re-education not punishment. When we bring up re-education under socialism suddenly liberals get indignant. This violates their individualist value system that considers people static rather than ever-changing products of society and their own experience. Because re-educating people to interact better with other people is taboo in Amerika, we are left with the option of punishment to deal with those who don't play the game or who aren't allowed to play.

Curiously, isolation and physical torture do not provoke the same indignation from many liberals as any mention of 're-education' does. This can largely be explained by the fact that it is oppressed nations who are disproportionately suffering at the hand of the current punitive system. Especially in extreme instances of repression like the SHU we see the targeting of Black nationalists, Spanish speakers, members of lumpen organizations like B.L.O.O.D. or ALKQN, or others whose behavior is outside the norm set by white society. Meanwhile the biggest criminals in the world are living it up within U.S. borders with no fear of reprisal by the current system. To talk about replacing this system with one that reeducates people to work together in a socialist economy turns the tables, making white Amerikans the biggest target. While the Black man selling rock on the street will be quick to give it up for a means of supporting himself by building his community rather than destroying it, the white man making millions by allowing that product to enter the country in the first place will be a lot more reluctant to change his ways. And he sure as hell doesn't want the economy socialized.

But some people are just crazy

We often hear this line on the streets. Certainly it is prevalent in the bourgeois media. It may be true that some mentally ill people commit crimes because of their illness. But to quote the band Propagandhi, "Ordinary people do fucked up things when fucked up things become ordinary." In other words, behavior is relative to the material conditions of a society.

We can say with certainty that the vast majority of people who have committed crimes against other people are not crazy and can be reformed. Evidence that crime can be largely eliminated can be seen in a comparison of violent crimes committed in the world today. Amerikans are willing to accept the idea that there are all these incorrigible crazies out there because our society has succeeded in creating excessive violence in individuals and the media turns around and feeds that to the populace as a scare tactic. A quick

glance at an Amerikan prison yard will tell you something is not right when the vast majority of the people are not white, while white people still make up a majority of the US population. Unless one is a racist then one must admit that there are social factors involved in who goes to prison.

The same individualism that leads people to be more concerned about some static idea of identity than about physical abuse and mental torture is what allows people to act against the norms and interests of the society that they live in. Communists favor class struggle over the psychological approach. For example, "Rather than giving moralizing sermons, China strove to create in individuals a social conscience." (3) In this way we can combat all sorts of social ills, from drug addiction and eating disorders to violence and other neuroses. Rather than brushing these problems under the rug, by trying to lock their victims up in prison and isolate them, we can involve those people in building a better society so that they understand the importance of their lives and the negative effects of their former behaviors. (3)

A prerequisite to eliminating antisocial behavior is to accept that we in fact live in a society that sets norms for how we behave. In fact, much of what is labeled 'antisocial behavior' in our society today is actually encouraged by our society; it does not exist because of some innate humyn characteristics. Amerikans look at how they think and see that their friends think the same. They've all been taught by the same school system, the same media, the same culture. And then they assume that that is how all people behave at all times. As Mao said, "what [petty-bourgeois intellectuals] call human nature is nothing but bourgeois individualism." (4)

So for all who want to know what our alternative to the SHU is, it is building a communist society where no one has power over other people, where people see their importance as a part of a society rather than seeing every persyn as an island, and where social problems are addressed and reconciled rather than repressed and locked away to fester.

Notes:

1. MIM Theory 9: Psychology and Imperialism, p. 39
2. MT9, p.36
3. For more on this read "Psychological Practice in the Chinese Revolution" in MT9
4. Mao Zedong, "Yenan Forum on Art and Literature," in Selected Works, op. cit., Volume 4, p.90

Petition to shut down all Control Units

Control Unit prisons confine people to small cells in isolation for long periods of time. These prisons were first officially used in Alcatraz and then in 1972 in Marion, Illinois to house prisoners who were "institutional problems" or "too dangerous." Since then the idea has spread, and control units have become a common tool of repression throughout the Amerikan prison system.

These control units are used for the political and social control of prisoners already locked in secure They target Black, Latino and indigenous people who are a disproportionate part of control unit populations (relative to their already disproportionate representation in prisons in general). Control units go beyond the usual constraints of maximum security prisons. Better defined as a prison within a prison, control units are used to defeat prisoners' revolutionary attitudes, organization, militancy, legal and administrative challenges, and anything else the prison administrators deem objectionable. While conditions vary from prison to prison, the goal of these units is always to achieve the spiritual, psychological and physical breakdown of the prisoner.

Control units have various names such as Adjustment Center, Security Housing Unit (SHU), Maximum Control Complex (MCC), administrative maximum (ad-max), Intensive Management Unit (IMU) and administrative segregation (ad-seg). Prisoners spend years of isolation in tiny cells, usually 6 by 8 feet for 22 - 23.5 hours a day. In some cases the long term isolation is complete, in others it is small group isolation; both conditions are tremendously damaging to humans. The short time that they do spend outside their cell is within a cement or chain link "dog pen" that lacks any kind of equipment and proper space for physical exercise. Participation in programs including religious services, educational programs, work and job training, congregate dining and exercise are all prohibited. Medical care is also greatly limited.

Control units may vary from prison to prison but they can be generally characterized as: 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. Prisoners are usually placed in control units as an administrative measure, with no clear rules governing the moves. This makes it virtually impossible for prisoners to challenge their placement.

Control units are designed to administer the very most in sensory deprivation and dehumanization of inmates. The United Nations has put forward clear documents outlining acceptable treatment of prisoners. These documents reaffirm that prisoners retain fundamental human rights. The Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners (1990) states: "Except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and, where the State concerned is a party, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto, as well as such other rights as are set out in other United Nations covenants." The United Nations Human Rights Committee has further stressed the obligation of the state to treat prisoners with dignity and allowing them all rights set forward in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which the United States signed in 1977).

Control units are physical and mental torture and they very clearly violate the humyn rights of prisoners. They systematically target prisoners who are challenging the legal system and other manifestations of state authority. We, the signatories of this statement, condemn these units and demand that the United States abide by the UN principles it claims to uphold. We call for the elimination of all control units in prisons in the United States.

Send your signature to mim124@mim.org or MIM, PO Box 40799, San Francisco, CA 94140

Protesters target Bechtel to mark anniversary of shut down

By a RAIL comrade
San Francisco

On March 19, hundreds of people came out at 7 a.m. to commemorate the anti-war protests that shut down the city last year. While smaller than the 2003 demonstration, this year's protest gathered strong support and concluded with protestors blockading Bechtel Corporation's headquarters.

Once again, the anarchist-led mass organization Direct Action to Stop the War organized the day. They have succeeded in offering an alternative to the permitted-march-and-rally routine of International ANSWER and United for Peace and Justice. This year's action included two marches to surround Bechtel, one of the leading U.S. firms extracting wealth and resources from Iraq. Protestors successfully prevented Bechtel employees from entering their offices for an hour or two.

The youth and students who largely led these direct actions wanted to do more than wave banners and sing songs. The police seemed to recognize this and allowed the demo to have the space it needed to do a little more, without actually threatening Bechtel, the city of San Francisco, imperialism, etc. Around 9 a.m. a large portion of the crowd left to occupy a squat that is scheduled to be demolished for condos. This cleared the block enough to allow police to take it over for traffic, leaving over a hundred people gathered on the sidewalk outside of the building.

Though their tactics are more fun and

confrontational, the anarchists do not provide an alternative to the chauvinism of the other mass demonstrations we've seen. In an attempt to define "empire," the original flier for this action stated, "transferring wealth from the majority of the people in the US and public services to big corporations and the wealthy." This statement is completely false. As MIM has shown, the majority of the people in the United States receive wealth transferred from the Third World. A later flier was edited to read, "transferring wealth from the majority of the people in the US (and the world) and public services..." The parenthetical acknowledgment of the rest of the world is almost more offensive. They didn't just forget about it, but they actually relegated it to a secondary consideration.

In addition to this, the demo was similar to ANSWER and UFPJ rallies in its calls for health care and education. (Though the students/youth makeup of the crowd left out the demand for jobs.) This is why the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist League (RAIL) recognizes MIM leadership. We see the road that other mass organizations have taken. Whether led by the anarchists, liberals or pseudo-communists, they all end up falling for American chauvinism.

Although there was no significant showing from the Black community, it was interesting to note a consistent difference between those in attendance and some of the white participants. When one man was chanting at the police about



Police confront protesters at Bechtel (sf.indymedia.org).

how they need to get out of the Third World and they're gonna get what's coming to them, one womyn encouraged him to show the cops respect so that they'll behave better. He responded, "Fuck the cops!" In a similar exchange, one student was attempting to persuade police to question their motives and not just follow orders. One man interjected that the cops there would kill us in a second if it came to it, and that there was a paycheck behind that allegiance. He went on that these are the same people who voted for the current administration, and they're willing to support it with force if need be. No one disagreed with him, and a RAIL comrade passed him a copy of MIM Notes asserting that we had a lot in

common.

The employees of Bechtel represented their class interests by claiming ignorance and innocence. As police escorted dozens of employees into the building, protestors attempted to block the way and chanted "shame!" One employee responded, "You've got the wrong people." Other employees said it's no use to get upset. Some protestors chanted things like "get another job." This also ignored the reality of U.S. imperialism. You don't have to work for Bechtel to be living off the exploitation of Iraq. Lifestyle politics is not the answer. Until we crush the whole imperialist system, blood is on the hands of all Americans.

California youth prisons brutality exposed

Continued from page 3...

time I spoke for him, he could get in trouble."

The mother of a boy in CYA supported this message. Her son tried to kill himself because he couldn't take the abuse in CYA. They didn't bother to tell her. She found out when she visited, and then CYA authorities told her that her son was just a mama's boy trying to get attention. She also explained that her son was classified as a gang member based on his nationality even though he had never been involved with any gangs. This is consistent with the practice across the California Department of Corrections in both youth and adult facilities, where new prisoners are immediately classified into a gang based on their nationality and where they are from.

A young man who was locked up in CYA for five years spoke about his experience. He explained that kids don't tell their parents about beatings because the kids don't want repercussions. He learned nothing useful in CYA, but "I learned every gang in the state thanks to YA." He explained why we need to eliminate the CYA: "you can't reform YA, you can't reform something that has a faulty foundation... It would be a crime

not to do anything about YA right now."

San Francisco's public defender, Jeff Adachi, spoke at the public meeting. Adachi is known for his progressive and dedicated work fighting injustice in the prison system. He not only spoke eloquently about the injustices in CYA and the need to shut it down, but also stayed after the meeting to hand out flyers about an upcoming juvenile justice summit being held by the public defender's office. This activism is worth recognizing in a country where most people believe that holding public office means only doing what is needed within the job and for the money.

Adachi explained the work he had done in recent months to get the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to pass a resolution declaring a moratorium on sending youth to CYA. This was the first county to take a stand against the CYA and eleven other counties state-wide have followed suit. Counties are now beginning to pass official bans on sending youth to CYA. Recently a team from the Public Defender's office began visits to CYA. They made the first trip to the Preston facility the day before this meeting. This team found conditions even worse than what was reported by the experts.

Adachi was clear that in spite of the

hearings and reports about CYA brutality, nothing has changed. He recalled a hearing 10 years ago where the same issues were discussed before the Senate. In an article he wrote for the San Francisco Chronicle, Adachi explained in detail the historical failure of the system even while it admits its failures. The best we have heard so far is that the new director of the CYA, appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger in December of 2003, pledged to begin phasing out his staff's use of iron cages to house youth. Adachi concluded his speech, "We have to create an unprecedented show of force now."

The public meeting closed with footage of Missouri youth rehabilitation centers. In 1983 Missouri closed their youth prison and replaced it with rehab centers that each house no more than 40 people, run by youth specialists. The conditions in these centers are far from prison-like. Rather than dehumanizing the kids, they focus on education and problem solving. Showers have curtains, youth get a closet to put their belongings in, a reasonable number of youth share a room, and extensive programming is offered to help the youth deal with their problems and build a better life when they get out. There

is a 3% recidivism rate among youth in the Missouri program, this compares with rates in California cited as between 40% to 80%. This program was offered up as a model by BNB.

MIM has not investigated the program in Missouri but we can agree with activists, the SF Public Defender, and State Senator Gloria Romero in calling for the complete dismantling and elimination of the California Youth Authority. Studies have repeatedly proven that people, and particularly youth, will learn from their environment. CYA teaches youth to be criminals. But a study several years ago of 15 "incorrigibles" selected by the CYA and provided with positive training, demonstrated tremendous improvement in recidivism, and success in education and the workplace relative to their peers in CYA.

We can also conclude that the money put into state-run youth prisons would be much better spent if it was put in the hands of independent community programs providing education and political activism for the youth of California.

Notes:

1. San Francisco Chronicle, March 25, 2004.

Anti-American attacks explode in Iraq

public opinion in Amerika has fallen to just over 50% supporting the war in Iraq. This is down from around 75% at the start of the attack. There are a few important lessons to take from these numbers.

First, the decrease in support appears to be directly correlated with impact on Amerikan lives, dead soldiers in particular. Few Amerikkans seem concerned with the death toll for the Iraqi people or their suffering under Amerikan occupation. This is dangerous nationalist sentiment

from the people of an imperialist country that suffers relatively few deaths compared to the peoples in the countries it attacks and occuppies.

Second, these numbers indicate that more than a year after the invasion, the Amerikan people still support an unprovoked attack on a Iraq, in spite of the complete lack of evidence that Iraqis were producing chemical or other dangerous weapons, harboring Al Qaeda

members, or carrying out any other actions that were a direct threat to the United States. This is a good indication of where the Amerikan people stand on the question of imperialism. Imperialist aggression that appears to further the wealth and well-being of Amerika is supported by a majority of Amerikkans, who rightly see these actions as advancing their material interests. We can't fool ourselves into thinking most

Amerikkans oppose the war in Iraq. And we have to demand internationalism from Amerikkans who do oppose the war. Only from an internationalist perspective, one that recognizes the right of the Iraqi people to self-determination, can we correctly fight against the global threat of Amerikan militarism.

Notes:

1. MSNBC, April 1, 2004.

IMPERIALISM HAS NO ANSWER

Continued from page 5...

right in the RCP=USA slogan of the "two 90/10s." This all stems from their refusal to acknowledge uneven development in the world caused by parasitism.

It is only MIM teaching that 90% of the enemy of the international proletariat is right in the imperialist countries. That's just dialectics, the law of uneven development.

The philistines at the RCP=USA and elsewhere depend on global ignorance concerning the minimum wage in the majority-exploiter countries. They don't want anyone to know that they actually believe these minimum wage "workers" and much richer "workers" constituting 90% of the imperialist country populations are actually allies of the international proletariat; even though, these same people are in the top 10% richest in the world. RCP=USA, the Trotskyists and social-democrats have all done this and in effect what they have done is take 9 out of 10 of the richest 10% of people of the world and say they are allies of the international proletariat. Meanwhile, the vast majority of people the RCP=USA and other revisionists are calling "enemy" have such impressive control of the means of production that their income is under \$10,000 a year. The RCP=USA's line is an Amerikkkan chauvinist line attacking a huge Third World enemy while letting the world's richest people off the hook.

That is why Yugoslavia brings all the issues of MIM's line together. Before the Communist Party of China let Mao talk so much about a "bourgeoisie in the party," Mao nonetheless explained this about Yugoslavia in 1963 in the essay "Is Yugoslavia a Socialist Country?": "[it is] possible for a working-class party to fall under the control of a labour aristocracy, degenerate into a bourgeois party and become a flunkey of imperialism before it seizes power." Furthermore, "Old-line revisionism arose as a result of the imperialist policy of buying over and fostering a labour aristocracy. Modern revisionism has arisen in the same way. Sparing no cost, imperialism has now extended the scope of its operations and is buying over leading groups in socialist countries and pursues through them its desired policy of 'peaceful evolution.'"

An assortment of police agents,

intelligence agents, zombies and the brain-dead are polluting the name of Stalin and Mao today. Hence, those calling themselves "communist" are all to blame for the situation in eastern Europe today. Yet it is of absolute urgency for survival that people dig deeper underneath all the decomposing revisionism to understand the true sources of prosperity and economic harmony.

Notes:

1. <http://www.helsinki-hs.net/news.asp?id=20040319IE7>

2. <http://www.helsinki-hs.net/news.asp?id=20040325IE1>

3. http://www.b92.net/english/news/index.php?&nav_category=&nav_id=27718&order=priority&style=headlines For MIM's coverage of how the German Greens were the lynchpin in the NATO intervention and other news, see: <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mn/kosovo/>

4. http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/040319/nyf089_1.html

5. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/worldlatest/story/0,1280,-3876657,00.html> <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2004/03/05a21927-82e2-471d-907c-fd1f429416e1.html>

6. <http://groups.google.com/groups?q=%2BKosova+%2BAlbania+%2Bprivilege&hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&edition=us&selm=2279f481.u8t20e.c9726-ulpiana%40ios.com&rnum=2>

7. www.politicsforum.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=8992

8. Joseph Stalin, Foundations of Leninism Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow, 1953, Works, Vol. 6, pp. 145-7.

9. <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hoxha/works/stalin/meet3.htm> Not all Hoxhaites took this quote the wrong way. Some have realized that a NATO attack on Yugoslavia was not what Stalin had in mind, e.g., <http://revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv8n2/ucpaintro.htm#1>. On the other hand, German Hoxhaites aligned with German imperialism stressing the dark days of life for Kosova under Yugoslavia. <http://www.mltranslations.org/Germany/stalin.htm>

10. <http://www.oneparty.co.uk/index.html?http%3A//www.oneparty.co.uk/html/kstrug.html>

11. <http://www.oneparty.co.uk/index.html?http%3A//www.oneparty.co.uk/html/kstrug.html>

12. <http://www.oneparty.co.uk/index.html?http%3A//www.oneparty.co.uk/html/kstrug.html>

13. <http://groups.google.com/groups?q=%2BOttoman+%2Bprivilege+%2BAlbania+%2BSerb&hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&edition=us&selm=2279f481.u8t20e.c9726-ulpiana%40ios.com&rnum=1>

14. Kosova Information Center

KOSOVA DAILY REPORT # 997 Prishtina, 25 October 1996 President Rugova's Press Conference <http://groups.google.com/groups?q=%2BKosova+%2BAlbania+%2Bexploitation&hl=en&lr=&ie=UTF-8&edition=us&selm=120%40kosova.demon.co.uk&rnum=6>



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.

'Free speech' under dictatorship of the proletariat

Excerpts from a resolution passed by MIM's 1999 Party Congress.

The public will enjoy greater "free speech" rights [under dictatorship of the proletariat] than they do under U.S. imperialism with the exception of those prisoners deprived of their citizenship rights.

1. Restrictions on public posting will be eliminated except on residential buildings.

2. Large and convenient bulletin boards will be placed on every block. Boards covered over will be evidence for the need to build more.

3. There will be convenient places to leave literature along with such bulletin boards.

4. There will be no arrests in any non-residential building or premise for quiet distribution of literature. The only exception will be for high government officials meeting and who face threat of assassination—the Central Committee and government officials above a certain rank.

5. Arrests for vocal discussion will be limited to places where there is a need for meetings and orderly work. Cafeterias, outdoor sidewalks and most indoor hallways will be legally required to allow vocal discussion.

6. Meeting halls of public buildings will be made available for meetings to the public. If necessary more will be constructed.

Government bureaucrats interfering with the "free speech" of the public will be transferred to jobs where they have no such possibility.

Restrictions

1. Those advocating opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat as defined at the top of the document will go to prison or re-education camp and thereby not enjoy all full public citizenship rights.

2. Sale of pornography will be forbidden. Distribution of nude photographs paid for by the photographer or persyn who signed a consent form to be displayed in photographs will always be legal, but government authorities may require a registration for financial bookkeeping purposes. Those publicly distributing nude photos of children 12 and under will be sent to re-education camp, whether money spent was their own or not.

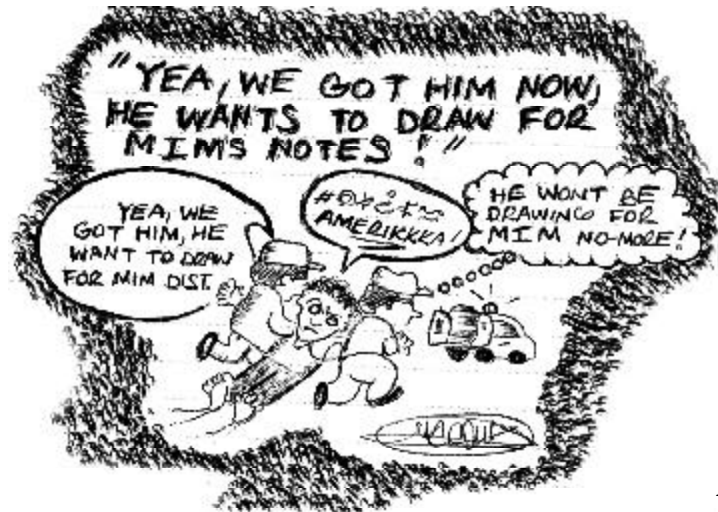
3. Any non-party literature or other device for public opinion building will be paid for by individual members of the public with money from salary and no outside capitalist money or stolen sources of wealth will be used to promote any opinion of the non-party public.

Stimulation

1. MIM will not order the government to censor the INTERNET except on questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and party rule.

2. USENET groups such as talk.rape, alt.activism.death-penalty,

alt.politics.greens etc. will be permitted, partly for stimulation of the minds in imperialist countries, partly to bring to the surface bourgeois thoughts in need of professional proletarian refutation and partly because there will continue to be problems in all these areas under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The need for stimulation is especially great in the depoliticized imperialist countries. Many middle-class peoples will come under the dictatorship of the proletariat without ever knowing that the world's majority of people suffered threats to their survival on a daily basis.



Art by a prisoner.

Censorship at college

Although we do not agree with mainstream Americans on much, we do know that many Americans believe that colleges should be the last place censored. While students learn the very definition of various words and various theories and perspectives on life, it cannot be productive for colleges to censor discussion of capitalism and communism.

Yet, administrations everywhere tend to act like they own their colleges and that their property rights are more important than the students' rights to free information and the taxpayers' right to contact those students and others in college communities. MIM hands out our newspaper MIM Notes for free, but many colleges in the United States—probably most colleges—prevent MIM Notes distribution one way or another.

Student governments: If your college is listed here, we want to hear from you! We've been to Third World countries with no elections and open dictatorship that have better conditions on campus than many of the below colleges, simply because the student government leaders and the student body don't put up with anything from their administrations. We want you to issue a tough resolution with operational details based on the below on the problem of administration control over what you read. Contact us at mim@mim.org.

Also, if anyone believes his/her college is now better than that, let's collect some information and see if we can get official, written condemnations of official misdeeds of the past! Let's collect more data and update this page. If you send data for this page, please title your letter: "Notes on college censorship." Thank you.

MIM is looking at a number of factors in judging a college. For an event such as a symphony performance where only people with tickets can enter, MIM is not offering judgment, and neither is U.S. law. However, in any event where the public is invited or public money is spent, MIM does offer its special condemnations of

UNIVERSITY	SCORE ¹	NOTES
California		
Cal State Los Angeles	6	
Cal State San Diego	6	
Occidental College	2	Admin explicitly tries to shelter students
Pasadena City College	7	Requires permission to table (has never denied MIM/RAIL)
U.C. Berkeley	7	
U.C.L.A.	6	Official policy (spottily implemented) is to toss off-campus pubs
U.C. Santa Barbara	6	Only approved posters
Florida		
University of Miami	1	Free speech a total myth in Miami, FL
Massachusetts		
Boston College	5	Student paper censored.
Boston University	6	Boston and Cambridge ticket posters.
Brandeis University	5	
Harvard	7	Dorms mostly off-limits.
MIT	5	
Northeastern	4	Admin stops leafletting outside public events.
Smith	3	Open but sterile. Students' fault?
Tufts	5	
UMass Amherst	7	
Umass Boston	5	Arrests professor, not military recruiter. Staff caught throwing out MIM Notes
Wellesley College	3	
Williams	5	Aloof, secluded, sterile but radical hotbed. Go figure.
Michigan		
U. of Michigan Ann Arbor	6	Photographed removing demonstrators from in front of network TV cameras.
New Hampshire		
U. of N.H., Durham	2	Tax-funded administrator yahoo wrote to tell us he throws out MIM Notes.
Quebec		
Concordia	4	"Temporary" ban on politics renewed. Crackdown backfires though.
Wisconsin		
U. of Wisconsin, Madison	8	Student papers should learn from Madison.

¹MIM's overall judgement of the place ranging from 10=open to 1=sterile. This score also takes into account that sometimes an implementation is better or worse than the official policy.

hypocrisy within bourgeois democracy.

A more detailed table is available on line at <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/censor/colleges>. That table includes information on whether a university arrests literature distributors;

gives more access to credit card advertisement and other marketing than free political literature; whether the student newspaper is independent of the administration financially and editorially; etc.

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?

Under Lock & Key

News from Prisons & Prisoners

AZ prisoner: Down with Patriot Act II

As freedom fighters and revolutionaries who thrive on the ability to organize and protest the injustices of Amerikkka, the Patriot Act II is deliberately designed to not only disinterest us from doing so, but also to eliminate the limited liberties that we do have. Some of the things included in the act are the snitch-oriented "help us give you immunity" clause, which gives judicial immunity to businesses that provide info on suspected terrorists. This provides businesses with the incentive to hand over information to save their own tails, whether the info is factual or not, jeopardizing the integrity of business. [As in the case of John Ashcroft's failed "Operation TIPS," this clause would also encourage businesses like ISPs, telephone and cable companies to spy on their clients on behalf of the government. This is entirely inappropriate as these companies are not trained to respect — and under the Patriot Act II they would not be accountable for violations of — constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure.]

The Patriot Act II also promises to strip Amerikan citizenship from those who support even the lawful activities of organizations the government considers "terrorist." That includes some political activist groups. [This provision would eliminate the freedom of association guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.]

In a survey done by CNN, 31% of Amerikans would like to detain all Arabs in Amerika and place them in camps for no reason at all except to further prove that this is a hate-based nation. But the statistic fails to tell the other side. That number would triple if our incompetent president called on citizens to join in on the round up. This also translates to Amerikans going to drastic measures to convict people accused of dangerous crimes, guilty or otherwise. If this isn't enough to oppose such an act, you may fall under the alarming statistic of hate-bred Amerikan racists!

— an Arizona prisoner, 10 February 2004

MIM adds: We encourage readers who are concerned that we do not support "democracy" to consider this statistic carefully. Should any responsible communist really support majority rule in a country in which fully one-third of citizens support round-ups of minority nationalities? The same poll the prisoner quotes above revealed that 59% of Amerikans support indefinite detention without bail for those even suspected of terrorism! Such a population cannot be trusted to oversee its own governance. This is why MIM says that revolution will be necessary to bring justice to Amerika. And until then, we will fight the institution of fascist laws with the truth — that we refuse to let this majority exercise tyranny over the minority. Leave the platitudes about "freedom" and the Amerikan way to the Liberals and their friends who still think this is a free country.

Source: "Polls: Amerikans no 'freedom'-loving people," <http://anon.user.anonymizer.com/http://>

www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mn/sept112001/text.php?mimfile=nofreedom.TXT

Verbal Abuse in AD-SEG

In June 2003 I was placed in AD-SEG for attempted murder on a corrections officer. However, I was found guilty and given a SHU [solitary confinement] sentence for my so-called actions. Now all of a sudden, these crooked ass people at Pelican Bay State Prison are trying to validate me as a prison gang member. All of my so-called 1030 confidential information has me being a "member" of several different "gangs" but these so-called 1030's all contradict each other because none of their informer information is reliable to what the other said. If I did associate with a gang member, it was unknowingly because it's none of my business to ask people who they may or may not be associated with. A solid individual is going to embrace another solid individual regardless of their race or gang, this was one of the several ways Pelican Bay has tried to penalize me.

Last week, a c/o made some very racial remarks toward me and six other Afrikans during our AD-SEG walk alone yard. I had a reliable witness, another staff member who works up here. She also heard this "white" c/o say, "I'll hang your black ass by a tree or drag you by a truck like we do in Texas." If a non-white c/o said this to an Amerikan inmate, I truly believe the situation would've been handled.

We wrote staff complaints and 602's but they somehow keep getting overlooked.

— A California Prisoner, January 2004

California supermax = living death

We stand so that the other won't have to die in Pelican Bay a supermax living and graveyard units. This living death of physical and psychological torture is our tribe. We refuse to condemn other men to this tortuous place. Yet the CDC won't tell you that it is the political prisoners, jail house lawyers and the resisters of the CDC corrupt officials who are put here. They won't tell you that four hundred billion dollars is their budget to keep you from the worst of the worst, a failed policy, and maybe someday or even eventually we will be released from these walls. Without any education or rehabilitation, we just be thrown or like they say "introduced" back into society. There are no programs built on our independence that help our first step of torture outside these walls to adapt to something so unfamiliar to us.

That's what \$400 hundred billion dollars does. It creates the social illusion of supermax graveyard units. This is embedded in the conscience of society that you are being protected by \$400 billion dollars on prisons and they want you to believe that \$400 billion dollars are also being spent on education!!!

But they won't tell you that in 1820 the penitentiary of Philadelphia in which they believed in solitary confinement, stimuli deprivation, they believed that by torturing

prisoners it would lead them to feel remorse and rehabilitate. In 1830 Charles Darwin was invited to tour the facility. He observed that the prisoners seemed dead to all it's surroundings, self torture extreme bouts of paranoia a horrible despair. In 1840 Charles Dickens toured the prison and remarked "I hold this tampering with the mysteries of the brain this is immeasurably worse than any physical torture of the body. Dickens then writes the dull response and quiet that prevails is awful.

Over the head and face of each prisoner who comes into this melancholy house, a black hood is drawn, and in this dark shroud, an emblem of the curtain dropped between him and the living world. He is led to his cell from which he never again comes fourth, until his whole imprisonment has expired, He is a man buried alive to be dug out in the slow round of years and, in the meantime dead to everything and the horrible despair.

Now the black hoods have returned and it is now draped over us here, our only outlet to outside world is our TVs and radios. These maximum security prisons want to take them away and make the extreme even more

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.

extreme!! It's a scientific fact that the worse thing you can do to the brain is to deprive it of stimuli, if it becomes so deprived the brain then starts to stimulate itself and intern people start hallucinating, mutilating there on bodies. I have seen people kill themselves because of despair of being so isolated. You have a great psychiatrist against this program, it has not helped or made the state of California safer. These torture chamber have done the opposite: torture and kill humans in a slow process. But again California prison systems want just that, to take our only tool of stimuli and say it's to save money. But in reality it is just another way to introduce to there higher degree of physical and psychological torture.

They say that removing our electrical power will save us money, that policy is false because that would mean more staff, because now we will ask our families for more books and writing material and the mail and property rooms will be flooding. As it is it takes a month or two for us to receive our mail. Not only will the CDC hire more staff to accommodate the overflowing of mail. But if they take or Tvs we will now have much more time for intensive research on civil laws and, in turn they would have to hire more lawyers as a result of lawsuits.

As it is now with all the studying and research we have done ourselves show many violations the CDC has committed. The CDC today is a violation of our eighth amendment and thirteenth amendment.

— A California prisoner, March 2004

California prisoners beaten in cuffs

Things are still the same here in SVSP. Every change these pigs get they're beating on prisoners while we have cuffs on. The pigs talk shit to prisoners and when a prisoner talks shit back, they get high blood pressure and while they're walking you to the yard with cuffs on, they'll slam your head into the wall and slam you to the ground.

I have a cellie, a Crip I knew from the main line. We exercise and study together and the pigs hate that. When he first moved in, the pigs kept coming around, looking in the cell, checking out faces. One said, "You guys aren't fighting yet." We just looked at his stupid ass.

I go to every yard, even in the rain, and they don't even give us jump suits in the rain. We're all in the yard for three hours in the rain with our t-shirts, socks, and boxers on. A pig pointed his gun at me and smiled while he was over in the gun tower but that's to be expected. That's how bitches act while you're in the hole. I did cell extraction but that shit hurts me more. That pepper spray burns for 2 weeks, plus they take the little property that you have back here, even your

mattress.

— A California Prisoner, February 2004

California prisoner fighting repression gets moved to SHU

In your letter you asked me to breakdown my move. First off, the administration at Lompoc had been doing its best to agitate its SHU/hole [solitary confinement] prisoners over the past 12 to 18 months via: mail tampering, assaults, destruction of personal property, serving cold food, misplacing our canteen slips, not providing razors with the mandated thrice weekly showers, etc. Even though the aforementioned are usual prison protocol, Lompoc's overt acts stem from a couple of reasons.

Last January (2003), a number of prisoners (myself included) stood up on the staff as they intended to assault a prisoner. Our intervention negated this move which put all of us under pig radar as "militants." Although we went to SHU, the overall masses (multi-cultural) support forced the administration to release us back into general population in a month. At that time, the Capt. Roy (of Beaumont fame) and the A.W. Karem told us (3) that we were too influential and they didn't like us because of this.

In March, an Afrikan prisoner was stabbed by two neo-nazi prisoners. During the subsequent lockdown, approximately 10 of us prisoners were placed in SHU under some type of investigation! The Capt. says we "would've" maybe incited others to retaliate upon said nazis. All but 3 were released back to general population, the same 3 who stood firm on the kitchen stand-off. (That was just some background for you.)

After both the Southern Mexican gang and the nazi gang members (in 2 separate incidents) attacked kops the SHU became hell! We'd been slowly building up mass support to resist this treatment through food strikes, rec. lay downs, refusals to comply with their mandatory 21 day cell rotation moves. On December 5, my tier refused to move and they cell extracted us! At approximately 3 AM, a Lt. came and told me that I was being moved out of the facility! When I asked why, he replied, "You are doing too much agitating and organizing and you are a real threat to the safety of staff."

As of today I'm being told that I'm a hold-over awaiting re-designation to a SHU facility. As in A.D.X. Florence or Marion. They have the choice of accepting or rejecting the recommendation. Either way, I still stand firm in the spirit of resistance, USW.

—California Prisoner, January 2004

The truth about prison politics: License to kill

I'm writing to you concerning corruption, retaliation, assaults on inmates by guards, excessive use of force, the planting of drugs and/or weapons by guards, and their falsifying of reports to justify their actions. The law is being broken by those who are sworn to uphold the law.

I'm an inmate at C.C.I. Tehachapi. I'm a parole violator and I came here in March, 2003, with a nine month violation scheduled for release in August. However, because of the corruption, retaliation, and cover-up, I'll be here at least an additional year.

On April 18, 2003, I received a threat from one Lt. J. Lundy in order to give me more time. I filed a complaint, sending a copies to Judge Frederick Wapner, L.A. Superior Court, and Attorney Ryan Okobe, Redondo Beach, as evidence in case he followed through with his threats. Eventually he did. On April 26, 2003, I filed another complaint against C.O. T. Valdez. Ten days later, I received a 115. I then spoke to Lt. Lundy and told him this was reprisal. He stated, "Reprisal is such a nice word. It's payback."

I continued to file complaints and they continued to harass and falsify reports against me. I filed a complaint with Kern County Superior, which was denied, stating that I didn't exhaust my administrative remedies although I clearly proved that my administrative remedies were inadequate. At some point, Lt. Lundy found out that I was seeking court action against him and his crew and on September 29, 2003, ordered that all of my materials (legal books, witness list, etc.) be confiscated.

I was told prior to this, "If you fuck with us, we'll fuck you over," and "If you fuck with one of us, you fuck with all of us." On October 1, 2003, Lt. Lundy moved me to an isolated corner of a cell-house and had me physically assaulted. He then falsified reports to justify their actions. By the standards of the law, this was attempted murder.

I've repeatedly asked for Internal Affairs Investigation and a polygraph examination consistent with their own rules and regulations but to no avail. They state, "[My] allegations are unfounded." However, because of the seriousness of my allegations, that should be enough to warrant such an examination. They know it's true but they won't go against their own for a convict.

The things that go on within this facility will shock the very conscience of society. We are placed here as punishment, not to be punished. Inmates are being verbally and physically abused and retaliation is taken against them if they complain. I've chosen to speak out and I've been physically assaulted, given more time, threatened, placed in

isolation, and had reports falsified against me.

Not only am I being cheated and used but so is society. Tax payers are paying extra to keep me here longer because the administration is allowing officers to abuse their authority. The city claims to be broke but it can't be that damn broke if it allows CDC to continue with this practice. What is happening here is going to end up like Corcoran: it starts with cover-ups. They spray inmates with pepper spray, never taking into account that an inmate may have a bad heart or extreme asthma. The bottom line is they don't care. They sit around and laugh about it as if it's fun. The officers themselves act like gang members, but it's worse because they have a badge and there's a code of silence amongst them so no one will step forward until they are caught with their hand in the cookie jar. For the most part, a lot of inmates don't complain because the vast majority of the inmate population is illiterate and officers take advantage of that.

Please keep in mind that a year has been added to my revocation because the officers sought revenge. I didn't break any law, it's all because I exercised a Constitutional Right to file a complaint - and there are others. Let's take away the license to kill and let's try to save a life.

—A California Prisoner, January 2004

In the SHU for fighting injustice

This so-called system will put me on high control parole cause I am a political prisoner who can lead a nation to rebellion. The captain came by to pay me a visit with two others dummies in suits and ties. All three were smiling when they accost my little cage (cell), but when they left, they were not smiling at all. I broke down the dynamics and ideology of this corrupt system. The captain had the nerve to tell me, "you know why you are in the SHU [Security Housing Unit]." I said yes, for using my mind to battle this injustice system.

—CA prisoner, October 2003

What is internationalism?

Internationalism is the ethical belief or scientific approach in which peoples of different nations are held to be or assumed to be equal. Internationalism is opposed to racism and national chauvinism.

We Maoists believe the nationalism of nations experiencing oppression of imperialism is "applied internationalism." We oppose nationalism of oppressed nations directed at other oppressed nations, because the economic content of such nationalism is intra-proletarian conflict. We seek a united front of oppressed nations led by the international proletariat against imperialism.

"I must argue, not from the point of view of 'my' country (for that is the argument of a wretched, stupid, petty-bourgeois nationalist who does not realize that he is only a plaything in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie), but from the point of view of my share in the preparation, in the propaganda, and in the acceleration of the world proletarian revolution. That is what internationalism means, and that is the duty of the internationalist, of the revolutionary worker, of the genuine Socialist."

V. I. Lenin, "What Is Internationalism?" *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1965), p. 80.

Facts on U\$ 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.

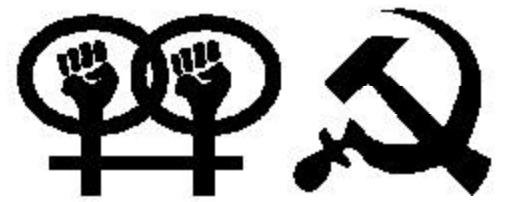
Notes: 1. Marc Mauer, "Americans Behind Bars: The International Use of Incarceration 1993," The Prison Sentencing Project, 918 F. St. NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20004 (202) 628-0871 Reference: SRI: R8965-2, 1994

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 prisiones de Tejas retienen comida, ayuda médica

No nos sorprende que los presos paguen desproporcionadamente cuando los presupuestos estatales de muchos estados en el país sufren grandísimas insuficiencias.

El MIM ha recibido muchas cartas de presos en el estado de Tejas indicando que este estado se ha empeñado viciosamente en eliminar los servicios básicos de comida y ayuda médica para poder ahorrar dinero. Un activista que lucha contra el sistema carcelario de Tejas nos informa que “muchas prisiones sólo ofrecen dos comidas diarias mientras que en otras cárceles se reduce el tamaño y el contenido calórico de lo que consumen los presos diariamente.”

Un preso nos escribe: “Las cosas han empeorado desde la última vez que les escribí. Aquí en el TDCJ (Departamento de Justicia Criminal de Tejas) se ha retenido la comida. Al principio hemos oído varios rumores al respecto, pero ahora los rumores se han hecho realidad. El postre se ha retenido tres veces por semana y ahora la cárcel produce su propio almíbar. ¡Guácala! Además, ahora nos dan el desayuno en una bolsita de papel. Pero lo más diabólico que se ha ingeniado el TDCJ es la violación de nuestros derechos religiosos. Ahora por razones presupuestarias no nos permiten mantener una dieta sin carne de puerco. Los musulmanes y otros que no comen carne de puerco no tienen la opción de sustituir la carne de puerco por otro tipo de comida (como frijoles, queso o pan). El menú general se aplica a todos los presos. El lema del TDCJ es: “Si no te gusta, no te lo comas.”

Un camarada de otra unidad nos cuenta que “el comedor está muy sucio. Yo no trabajo para el Departamento de Sanidad pero si ese fuera el caso, calificaría muy bajo al comedor. En la entrada del comedor hay charcos de agua estancada. Las paredes están cubiertas de insectos muertos. El agua gotea entre las grietas de las paredes quebradas. No nos dan los 20 minutos que tenemos garantizados para comer y las bandejas y los tenedores de plástico están bien sucios, con restos de comida pegados desde hace dos o tres días. Además, siempre se les acaba comida y no hay hielo en el comedor...”

Mientras los presos pasan hambre y siguen trabajando gratis por largas horas, los guardianes siguen viviendo una buena vida. Según el informe del activista, “el

hambre nunca llega al comedor de los guardianes. Ahí nunca faltan sopas, ensaladas, huevos, carne, condimentos, helado, tortas, pasteles y una gran variedad de otros postres que provienen gratis en cantidades ilimitadas para ser distribuidos entre los 40 mil empleados del TDCJ.” Y como el comedor de guardianes queda abierto las 24 horas todos los días del año, “algunos de los guardianes van a comer ahí en sus días libres para no tener que pagar por su comida en algún restaurante o para no tener que cocinar en casa.”

Resulta que la dieta especial de los guardianes es una violación de la ley estatal. El activista nos cuenta que la “sección 13 dice que el TDCJ puede proveer comida a los guardianes sólo después de que se hayan satisfecho las necesidades de los presos.” Pero las necesidades de los presos nunca se satisfacen porque a ellos nunca les toca la variedad de comida que se les da a los guardianes. Los guardias reciben lo mejor de todo y a los presos les tocan restos y migajas. La sección 13 también estipula que la comida que reciben los presos debe ser la misma comida que reciben todos los empleados. Los directores de las prisiones siempre creen que la ley no se les aplica a ellos y, por lo tanto, pasan por alto dicha parte de la sección 13.”

Nuestros camaradas de Tejas también nos han dicho los servicios médicos han sido retenidos a causa de los problemas presupuestarios. “Han eliminado a los trabajadores médicos y han despedido al técnico del laboratorio. Pasará mucho tiempo antes de que los presos tengan acceso a pruebas de SIDA, hepatitis y otros análisis de sangre. Yo sigo esperando una prueba de sangre para saber si sufro de una úlcera o no. Ya llevo tres semanas esperando y aún no me han hecho la prueba. Hombre, en este lugar se aplica la Ley de Herodes: o te chingas o te jodes.”

A los activistas que luchan contra el sistema carcelario no les sorprende el hecho de que los recortes presupuestarios sean dirigidos contra la población más pobre del estado, pero este hecho debería darnos rabia a todos. Les pedimos a todos nuestros lectores que se involucren en nuestras campañas en contra de las injusticias del sistema carcelario estadounidense.

HAITI: ¿Y QUE LUEGO DE LA SALIDA DE ARISTIDE?

Por: Eduardo Tamayo

El avance de las fuerzas paramilitares y la presión de Estados Unidos, Francia y Canadá dieron la estocada final al gobierno de Bertrand Aristide que el 29 de febrero huyó con rumbo a la República Centroafricana. Mientras el caos se había apoderado de Puerto Príncipe, la capital, y se multiplicaban los enfrentamientos que dejaron 10 muertos y saqueos en diferentes puntos de la ciudad, los embajadores de Estados Unidos y Francia, James Foley y Thierry Bukard, respectivamente, posesionaron al abogado Boniface Alexandre, presidente de la Suprema Corte de Justicia, como gobernante interino del país. Los jefes rebeldes Guy Philippe y Louis-Jodel Chamblain, que iniciaron las revueltas contra Aristide el 5 de febrero con la ocupación de la ciudad de Gonaives, entraron a Puerto Príncipe el 1 de marzo acompañados de decenas de hombres armados. El ex policía Guy Philippe, que participó en un intento de golpe de Estado contra Aristide en 2001 y es acusado de narcotráfico y numerosas violaciones a los derechos humanos, horas antes reconoció a Alexandre como el nuevo jefe de Estado y se mostró de acuerdo con la intervención militar de Estados Unidos.

Aristide, que en varios ocasiones había declarado que no renunciaría, se vio obligado a dimitir cuando el Departamento de Estado de Estados Unidos presionó por su salida, condición previa que habían exigido tanto la oposición civil, representada por el ‘Grupo de los 184’ liderado por el empresario Andre Apaid, como por la oposición armada que llegó a controlar cinco de los nueve departamentos que conforman el país. El secretario de Estado de Estados Unidos Collin Powell, en los últimos días les dio un reconocimiento inusitado a los ex tonton macoutes (policía represiva de la dictadura duvalierista), llamándolas ‘fuerzas armadas del norte’.

Sin embargo, Estados Unidos no podían permitir que la situación quedara en manos de los jefes paramilitares que en su momento apoyaron y contribuyeron a formar y entrenar. Cinco horas antes de que el Consejo de Seguridad Nacional decidiera el envío de una fuerza multinacional a Haití, Estados Unidos mandó un contingente de 200 infantes de Marina de un total de 1000 anunciado por Powell. A estos se sumaron unos 300 soldados y miembros de la policía antimotines de Francia y soldados canadienses. La misión de las fuerzas estadounidenses será, según la BBC, restablecer el orden, distribuir ayuda humanitaria y repatriar a los haitianos que se han echado al mar en precarias embarcaciones, buscando refugio en otros países.

Por el contrario, el analista Michel Chossudovsky señala que Washington pretende reinstaurar en Haití una colonia

plena estadounidense con todas las apariencias de un funcionamiento democrático. El objetivo es imponer un régimen títere en Puerto Príncipe y establecer una base militar permanente en Haití.

La administración estadounidense busca la militarización de toda la cuenca del Caribe. La isla Española es la puerta de entrada para la cuenca del Caribe pues está estratégicamente localizada entre Cuba al noroeste y Venezuela al sur. La militarización de la Isla, con el establecimiento de bases militares de Estados Unidos, no solo tiene el propósito de presionar políticamente a Cuba y Venezuela, sino que también se orienta a proteger el comercio multimillonario de drogas que pasa por Haití hacia Estados Unidos desde los sitios de producción en Colombia, Perú y Bolivia. Se estima que Haití es ahora responsable de un 14 por ciento de toda la cocaína que entra a Estados Unidos, representando miles millones de dólares de ingreso para el crimen organizado y las instituciones financieras estadounidenses que lavan enormes cantidades de dinero sucio. (Al respecto ver: ‘US sponsored coup d’etat. The destabilization of Haiti’ <http://globalresearch.ca/articles/CHO402D.html>)

Estados Unidos, por otro lado, culpabiliza a Aristide del caos y la desestabilización de Haití pero olvida fácilmente que la situación creada en este país, en mucho, es el resultado de la aplicación de los planes de ajuste impuestos por los organismos internacionales que están bajo control estadounidenses, esto es el Fondo Monetario Internacional (FMI), el Banco Mundial y el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Aristide -que triunfó democráticamente en 1990, fue derrocado por un sangriento golpe militar, y reinstalado en el poder en 1994, gracias a una intervención militar mayoritariamente estadounidense- pronto olvidó sus planteamientos progresistas y aplicó las recetas del Consenso de Washington para responder, sobre todo, a los intereses de los acreedores internacionales. Como producto de la aplicación de los principios del ‘libre mercado’, se desestabilizó la producción local agrícola sobre todo de arroz, azúcar y maíz, vitales, convirtiendo al país en un gran importador de alimentos. En el 2003, el FMI impuso la aplicación de precios flexibles en los combustibles, lo que trajo como consecuencia una fuerte espiral inflacionaria que incrementó el descontento popular hacia el gobierno de Aristide que ya había entrado en una etapa sin retorno de corrupción y autoritarismo. Ahora, la restauración del orden bajo égida estadounidense no es augurio de que el país más pobre de América pueda salir de su prolongada crisis económica y política.

(ALAI)

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(<http://www.eldiariointernacional.com/aristide103.htm>)