

MIM Notes



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The Official Newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM)

Free

Abuse of Iraqi prisoners and U\$ prisons

MIM SCOOP: TORTURE OF NAKED PRISONERS ORIGINATED IN PENNSYLVANIA PRISON

by MC17 & MC5

On May 5 President Bush told the world that the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib prison is not typical Amerikan behavior. He said the soldiers who carried out the torture "don't represent America" and stated "This is a free country. We do not tolerate this kind of abuses." Bush made these statements in an interview aired on Al-Arabiya, a station widely viewed by Arab peoples. He also did an interview on the Amerikan Arabic propaganda station Al-Hurra, stating, "What took place in that prison does not represent the America that I know."(1)

But what took place at Abu Ghraib does represent Amerika. It is happening daily in prisons across the country, the country that has the highest imprisonment rate in the world. These statements by President Bush are exposed as nothing more than public image cleanup when we look at the conditions in Amerikan prisons.

Two of the first seven soldiers caught torturing Iraqis in Abu Ghraib prison worked as U.\$ prison guards before going to Iraq. Staff Sgt. Ivan Frederick learned how to torture prisoners at Buckingham Correctional Center in Dillwyn Virginia, after working there six years.(2) MIM Notes reported limitations of prison visitation and thefts of prisoner property in Buckingham in 1997. However, Virginia has imposed censorship on MIM before and we do not have as many details about prison conditions as we would like. Again, it's the same old story of cover-up.

Charles Graner, another of the seven caught torturing Iraqis worked in the

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NAKED HUMILIATION: The Amerikan torture tactic on display in Iraq (above) -- and following the suppression of the Attica prison uprising in New York in 1971, when prisoners were paraded around naked in the mud (below right) and forced to lie prone for hours (above right).



AMERIKAN TORTURE OF IRAQIS EXPOSED

by MC12 and MC206

In the run up to the Amerikan invasion, in February 2003, President Bush declared: "The first to benefit from a free Iraq would be the Iraqi people themselves. Today they live in scarcity and fear under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war and misery and torture."(1) Today, they live in scarcity and fear under a FOREIGN dictator who has brought them nothing but war and misery, and—we can now confirm—torture.

Despite valiant efforts by quick-acting politicians and media apologists, it has not been possible to make the torture practiced by the Amerikan military in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq out to be the work of a few lone, "sick" individuals. The story broke when the CBS news program 60 Minutes released photos of U\$ soldiers gloating over naked and hooded Iraqi prisoners. However, the most detailed description (to date) of torture, abuse and humiliation at the hands of Amerikan soldiers, contractors and intelligence agents comes from a U\$ army report on Abu Ghraib, which was leaked to the New Yorker magazine.(2)

The report details how soldiers humiliated some of the prisoners by forcing them to simulate sex acts. A photo included in the report shows an Amerikan womyn "giving a jaunty thumbs-up sign and pointing at the genitals of a young Iraqi, who is naked except for a sandbag over his head, as he masturbates." One soldier testifies, "I saw two naked detainees, one masturbating to another kneeling with its [sic] mouth open." Although this soldier claims he refused to participate in the abuse—"I just didn't want to be part of anything that looked criminal"—he repeatedly refers to Iraqis as "it" and did little to stop the abuse (he told his superiors, then assumed "the issue was taken care of").(2)

The army report makes it clear that the

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Imperialists spell relief: D-R-A-F-T

Amerikan occupation keeps looking to the future for relief

by MC5 and MC17

May 4—Amerikan Pentagon officials announced recently their plan to keep Amerikan troops in Iraq at the current level (about 135,000) through at least the end of 2005.(1) Originally the United States had claimed it wanted to reduce Amerikan occupation forces by 20,000. Uncle Sam believed the transition to a pseudo-autonomous Iraqi government on June 30th, 2004 would allow this.

Amerikan troops are needed to keep the Iraqi population from rising up and

taking back their country. And Amerika is willing to use whatever force is necessary to a c h i e v e domination of Iraq.

The increased

U\$ "force structure" in Iraq is an accomplishment of the Iraqi proletariat and oppressed launching armed struggle, without so much as the benefit of a Maoist vanguard party (as far as we know).

Since the time we have written articles on the draft, "Secretary of Defense" and nutcase Donald Rumsfeld has reiterated opposition to the draft and said that he will find a way to rotate the 1.4 million people in the Amerikan military to find 135,000 soldiers for combat in Iraq.(2) Many of the 1.4 million are office and technical back-up personnel.

MIM reiterates that Rumsfeld (or a like-minded successor) might be able to pull that off. The United States is not in England's position yet,(5) which is why this will be a protracted war against U\$ imperialism best handled by pan-Arab nationalism and proletarian internationalism over a long haul. We must steer away from seeing U\$ imperialism as about to fall, but also we must fully credit the damage already done by the Iraqi fighters fighting consciously and

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Letters

Amerikan workers both bought-off and exploited?

I was reading your revolutionary definitions page. Let me start off by saying thank you for making the definitions easy to understand without “talking down” to readers. However, I have one question, or perhaps reservation, considering your definition of a labor aristocracy. While I agree completely that workers in the United States benefit from imperialist exploitation abroad, and unfortunately this corrupts their consciousness, I have a question regarding the statement that they are therefore no longer exploited. Isn’t a portion of the surplus value of their labor still exploited by capitalists in the United States? In other words, aren’t they still exploited even though they benefit from imperialist exploitation, even if this exploitation is to a lesser degree than the exploitation experienced in the third world. Perhaps it is the contradiction of US workers being both an exploiter and exploited? Just a thought. I look forward to your response.

—An internet reader

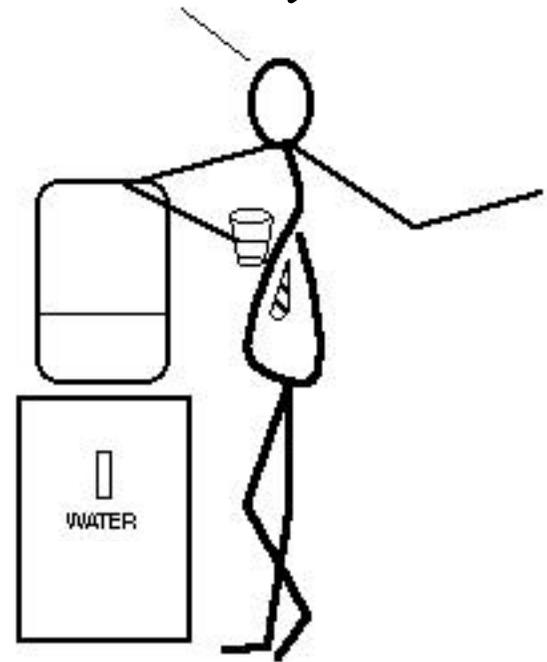
MIM responds: There’s one quick answer to the question of whether Amerikan “workers” are still exploited, even though they do receive a part of the surplus value the imperialists rob from the Third World: the majority of Amerikan “workers” are in non-productive jobs. They do not produce anything and hence

cannot produce surplus value. They are “necessary” only because the capitalists need guards, advertising experts, salespeople and lawyers to keep making profits. As J Sakai points out in “Settlers: the Mythology of the White Proletariat,” already in the 1970s around a third of Amerikan workers were police, prison guards, or employed by the military.

The key to understanding unproductive sector workers via surplus-value is that they can only preserve or appropriate it; they cannot expand it. Without salespeople, capitalists can certainly blow their chance at obtaining surplus-value, but no matter how good or how many salespeople one employs, there is a limit to the price of a good. Without the commodities produced by the productive sector, the sales staff have nothing, even in the most elementary conditions. If everyone were a guard, soldier or lawyer, everyone would die of starvation and exposure. Life without any guards, soldiers or lawyers, however, is certainly possible.

According to the definitions used by the COMINTERN, the majority of imperialist-country “workers” are at best “semi-proletarian.” COMINTERN documents clearly consider the “urban petty bourgeoisie and broad layers of the so-called middle class, of office workers etc.” to be non-proletarians. Of course,

‘Hey, it’s not as easy as it looks...’



--MC12

the majority of Amerikans is (and sees itself as) “middle class.”

For those Amerikan workers in productive sector jobs, we have extensively documented that the amount of surplus value transferred to them from the exploited Third World exceeds the value of their labor. Of course, on the whole the capitalists must pay workers less than the value of their product—but they can afford to bribe a small minority of workers, and, as Lenin’s Imperialism points out by quoting Cecil Rhodes, such

bribery helps secure the imperialists’ interests in the “home country.” Any Amerikan workers who are truly exploited are so few and isolated so as to not constitute a class.

We recommend those interested in these questions read MIM Theory 1, “A White Proletariat?” J Sakai’s “Settlers,” and our “Imperialism and its class structure, 1997,” which is available free online: <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/mt/imp97/index.html>.

Editor, MC206; Production, MC12

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.

The paper is free to all prisoners, as long as they write to us every 90 days to confirm their subscriptions. There are no individual subscriptions for people outside prison.

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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 humyn history. (3) As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM has reiterated through materialist analysis, imperialism extracts super-profits from the Third World and in part uses this wealth to buy off whole populations of oppressor nation so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy. These classes are not the principal vehicles to advance Maoism within those countries because their standards of living depend on imperialism. At this time, imperialist super-profits create this situation in the Canada, Quebec, the United States, England, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden and Denmark. MIM accepts people as members who agree on these basic principles and accept democratic centralism, the system of majority rule, on other questions of party line.

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

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

Spain, Honduras, Dominican Rep. send their troops home

by mousnonya, April 20, 2004

Spain has decided to withdraw its troops from Iraq as quickly as possible.(1) However Spain has also declared itself willing to send “humanitarian” relief to Iraq.(2) So Spain is a two-faced imperialist. However, despite the fact that the imperialists are treacherous, the international proletariat is patient. Iraqi resistance leader Muqtada el Sadr has called on his troops not to attack Spanish soldiers and to allow them to return home safely to their families where they belong.(3)

Sadr’s action contradicts US propaganda which calls Iraq’s resistance “bandits.” The recent release of Japanese hostages by the Iraqi resistance also contradicts US lies. These facts should make people question whether Uncle Sam is a lying hypocrite or merely deluded. MIM sees a practice and pattern of US lies and calls it like it is: “your” government, the capitalists, regards you as expendable. They will lie to you. They will tell you to kill. And if you die fighting the rich man’s war he will celebrate your making him rich with a 21 gun salute.

MIM sees the pull-out of Spain as probably the first imperialist rat deserting the sinking ship of the US occupation of Iraq. Honduras, one more Spanish speaking country with a history of being attacked by US imperialism, has also declared that it will withdraw its soldiers from Iraq.(4) Then the Dominican Republic pulled out its 300 and Thailand says it may be next. Imperialists of various stripes are calling for NATO (5) or the UN (6) to take over the occupation of Iraq. But who wants to take over? No one. Because any other imperialist coalition would face the same fate as the US, being bogged down in an unpopular bloody war.

[mim3@mim.org interjects: The UN is already taking a greater role in forming

the puppet regime that comes to power June 30th when the US colonial regime ends in favor of a neo-colonial regime. Despite the UN role, it still looks like other major powers such as Russia, India, France and Germany have not received a good enough deal from Uncle Sam to send in their own troops. We have to distinguish between troops and diplomats. The situation with troops on the ground has not changed and that’s what is important to the political climate in Iraq. People should not be confused by the meaning of the June 30th date Bush is talking about. Troops in

Germany and Japan have never left since World War II. Probably the best thing that could happen to America is that the Iraqis hand America such a stunning military defeat that Bush pulls out the troops June 30th or shortly thereafter. The Iraqis will no doubt try to make it happen, but we are still counting on a protracted struggle running into the next Bush or Kerry term.]

Each defection of a US ally is a major victory for the anti-imperialists because it makes the illegal US occupation of Iraq all the more difficult. MIM does not expect a UN takeover of Iraq. In fact, some neoconservatives probably wanted to use Iraq to destroy the UN which they saw as no longer useful in extending US imperialism. Germany and France, both NATO members, will likely oppose using NATO (supposedly a defensive alliance) to occupy a country far from Europe. The US imperialists have painted themselves into a corner.

We’re sure the US imperialists are mad. MIM dares to ask something the mainstream press and imperialists are too gutless to say out loud:(7) When will other US allies in Iraq such as Poland, Italy, Japan, Australia, and Britain send their troops home? Britain also produces oil. Japan is oil dependent. So even though

Japan has seen its hostages in Iraq released we expect to see Japan continue to lick the b.s.-encrusted cowboy boots of American imperialists. Reactionary Anglo solidarity will increasingly be stressed by “realities on the ground.” The United States will find itself increasingly isolated and overextended. This is exactly one of the preconditions MIM sees as necessary to a revolution in America. The truth is and will become increasingly obvious: imperialism means only death for you and me and riches for large corporations.

Meanwhile US atrocities continue: US imperialists killed two more journalists in Iraq.(8) “[A]t least 26 Iraqi and foreign journalists and media workers have been killed” so far in Iraq.(9) So it’s no surprise that Hosni Mubarak, US puppet leader of Egypt, is even saying the US is now hated more than ever in the Arab world.(10)

Once again, MIM is willing to use scientific materialism to reach the painful truth that no one else recognizes let alone says: the continuing murder of journalists in Iraq is no accident. The imperialists want the press to report what is good for imperialism and ignore the ugly truth. MIM calls on mainstream journalists unwilling to be censored or to tolerate the murder of their colleagues: Avenge your colleagues’ deaths. Refuse to be intimidated. Write for MIM Notes.

Notes:

1. Spain withdrawal from Iraq deals new blow to US coalition Sun Apr 18, (AFP) [http://de.news.yahoo.com/040419/3/3zpbu.html](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=1515&ncid=1515&e=2&u=/afp/20040418/wl_mideast_afp/iraq_worldwrap; Spanien beginnt mit Truppenauszug aus dem Irak (German Press Agency) April 20, 2004, <a href=); L’Espagne prépare le retrait de ses troupes présentes en Irak, Andrew Marshall (Reuters) 19 April 2004 <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/040419/85/3r41p.html>
2. Spain to Offer U.S. Non-Military Aid in Iraq, Sun Apr 18, (Reuters) <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=topNews&storyID=4856690>
3. El Sadr fordert Stopp von Angriffen auf Spanische Soldaten April 19, 2004, (AP) <http://de.news.yahoo.com/040419/12/3znz8.html>; Sadr veut épargner les Espagnols, qui accélèrent leur retrait French Press Agency (AFP) <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/040419/202/3r5n5.html>
4. Honduras to Pull Its Troops Out of Iraq Gustavo Palencia (Reuters) [http://de.news.yahoo.com/040420/3/3zpfb.html](http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/nm/20040420/wl_nm/iraq_honduras_dc&cid=574&ncid=1480; Auch Honduras zieht Truppen aus Irak ab April 20, 2004, (German Press Agency) <a href=);
5. L’OTAN pourrait jouer un rôle dans la sécurité en Irak, selon le ministre australien de la Défense April 20, 2004, (AP) <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/040420/5/3r5t1.html>
6. Michel Barnier et son homologue russe appellent à l’intervention de l’ONU en Irak. AP, April 20, 2004.
7. Colin Powell craint que plusieurs pays ne suivent l’exemple espagnol et se retirent d’Irak April 20, 2004, (AP) (Colin Powell fears that several countries will follow the Spanish example and withdraw from Iraq) <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/040420/5/3r5t0.html> MIM asks the reader: Why can’t you read this in English?
8. GIs Kill 2 Workers of U.S.-Funded Iraq TV Mon Apr 19, 2:44 PM ET (AP) http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=540&ncid=736&e=10&u=/ap/20040419/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iraq_journalists_killed
9. See note 8.
10. Mubarak: Arabs Hate U.S. More Than Ever 20 April 2004 (Reuters) http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&cid=574&ncid=721&e=1&u=/nm/20040420/wl_nm/mideast_egypt_usa_dc

Preparing for the all-round dictatorship of the proletariat

COMBATING SUBJECTIVISM IN ALL ARENAS

This is the second in a series of articles. The first (in MN310) covered drugs, music and art; future installments will address the topics of tone, sectarianism and chauvinism.

I’m going to talk about subjectivism and its relationship to our communist goals by giving a bunch of examples of subjectivism—the belief that what one feels or likes is true or supreme. What’s most important is not the individual evils of subjectivism, but understanding the overall approach that we as Maoist scientists apply to everything. We at MIM are not saying we have some long list of behaviors that we tack on to the end of the “Ten Commandments.” It’s not our point to bring attention to hypocrisy in individual behavior—and this is something that we from Christian, Jewish and

Islamic cultures have to watch out for. (Buddhism has a little better intellectual material to work with on this question.) We Maoist scientists are interested in the underlying causes of behavior.

In all likelihood, the revolution will be successful only through the efforts of “hypocrites” envisioning future generations growing up with better social influences than they had. Understanding this is part of understanding materialism, as when Lenin said revolution is always made with the imperfect social material at hand, not by divine perfection of humyn consciousness first.

No one is a 100% pure. Hence, MIM has acted to push aside the politics of putting lifestyle first. Whoever comes up with the idea that a party should set up a list of lifestyles to condone or not condone

is setting up a huge Liberal fight to divide the party. We have to come up with a list of bad things, but our attack has to be on the causes, not the bearers of those bad lifestyles. With these warnings, I turn to several examples of subjectivism.

IV. Love

Now let’s look at love. Many see it as the one refuge from corruption all around. Too many wimmin are looking for love only from lone individuals instead of the international proletariat. People in love hope they won’t see their love stolen for a pack of cigarettes, a bit of crack, a man who has a higher paying job or a womyn with bigger breasts. Ah, but here is the sad part: for all the people who are looking at this question, “love” itself is usually thought of as a refuge of two people. Yet, where do all these challenges to love come from? People in love or pursuing love but who do not ask this question are already guilty of another kind of subjectivism. The sources of problems in

love come from society. If we can question what is going on between two people, we can also extend that to the question of love in the whole society.

V. Sex

For the sake of having a definition of romance culture we’ve said that sex is a component of romantic love. Going back hundreds of years poets and even preachers have said that womyn is a creation to remind men of God’s power and what Heaven could be. Milton was even talking about the question of how men tempted by Satan would worship wimmin. While some people say it is music, some say the rush they got from a particular drug—probably even more men would say that there is nothing more subjectively profound than the experience of seeing naked wimmin and then having sex.

Again, MIM has no need to deny that there is a portion of society is that would

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Abuse of Iraqi prisoners and U\$ prisons

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infamous SCI-Greene Prison in Pennsylvania holding Mumia Abu Jamal. Graner is the guy smiling with arms folded in the torture photos. SCI-Greene also prohibits MIM Notes. On August 15, 1998, MIM reported this about SCI-Greene in Pennsylvania: "As a result of result of the brutal beatings inflicted upon prisoners (back here in the hole at SCI Greene) by guards, the grand wizard warden, Ben Varner had been terminated from his prestigious and luxurious position. Unfortunately the same people who removed him from office decided to relocate him to another prison within Pennsylvania. So now he's on the eastern side of the state implementing the same dirty tactics. Only now he's been demoted back to Deputy Superintendent."(3)

Thus, in 1998, we already reported the important facts of life in Amerikan prisons: get slapped on the wrist and there is always another prison willing to take you and if you don't like that, then there is always the U.S. Armed Forces which will take you for torture abroad.

MIM reported what appears to be the disciplining of someone referred to as "Grainey" by prisoners in 1998. That's not definitely a connection to "Graner" and prison authorities say privacy rules prevent them from saying if Graner was disciplined in 1998.

On August 15, 1998, we reported the following about SCI-Greene: "Plus, according to the television news, 40 guards/predators are supposed to be FIRED! They have recovered videotapes of inmates being beaten down while NAKED! The inmates/POW's never did anything to cause these pernicious predators to assault them." Thus, the naked video thing came from SCI-Greene and has now been exported to Iraq! Graner worked at SCI-Greene from 1996 to today where he is still employed there.(4)

Perhaps if SCI-Greene had not censored MIM Notes in 1997(5) and given us such a hard time and if the imperialist media were not so pig-headed reactionary, we could have struggled successfully to prevent the 1998 events in SCI-Greene—and maybe even Graner's role in Abu Ghraib, but the facts are that the U.S. prison authorities make it extremely difficult for MIM to do its work. To this day, SCI-Greene is censoring MIM. Documents from prison authorities at SCI-Greene justifying this cover-up and isolation of prison conditions can be found at our website. There are about 50 different documents on SCI-Greene at the MIM website thanks to all the horrors there.(6)

In fact it should be no surprise that Abu Ghraib prisoners were tortured, as this is common in the Amerikan prison system in general where beatings, long term isolation, medical neglect, sexual assault, and humiliation are all part of a system that doesn't even pretend to offer

rehabilitation or education.

An Army investigation that resulted in criminal charges against six military police officers found a number of specific abuses at Abu Ghraib prison. Below we describe the findings and explain the similarity to daily conditions in prisons across this country.

Soldiers punched, slapped, kicked and otherwise physically beat Abu Ghraib prisoners. This is typical day to day activity for prisons across Amerika where guards regularly beat prisoners and then file false reports accusing the prisoners (often shackled and held down by several guards) of attacking the guards to avoid any criminal charges for these actions.

Abu Ghraib prisoners were left naked for days at a time. Some were videotaped and photographed. Some were arranged in sexually explicit positions or to perform sex acts for the photos. Prisons in Amerika have video cameras throughout, taping prisoners with and without their clothing on. Leaving prisoners naked is common practice, especially locked in solitary confinement, but also outside in cold temperatures. Full body cavity searches are also daily practices in Amerikan prisons serving only to humiliate and degrade prisoners.

One naked Abu Ghraib prisoner was forced to stand on a box with wires attached to his fingers, toes and penis. While we can't describe specific instances of this same form of torture in other Amerikan prisons, the idea is the same everywhere, it is only the tools used to torture prisoners that vary.

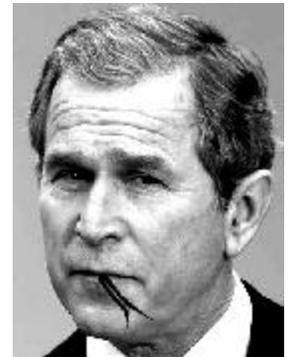
At Abu Ghraib a male police guard had sex with a female prisoner. Sexual abuse by guards and by other prisoners is common in Amerikan prisons. Guards set up situations where prisoners will be raped by another prisoner, if the guards themselves do not commit the rape. This happens in both male and female prisons.

These are just the abuses the military is willing to admit to in a report. Additional accounts of torture at Abu Ghraib include: Guards threatened prisoners with guns, beat them with brooms and chairs, sodomized one with a chemical light, poured phosphoric liquid on prisoner, and allowed military dogs to bite them. Again these are all common practices in Amerikan prisons. The form of torture may differ from one prison to the next, but the physical and mental abuse by the guards is common practice throughout this country's prisons.

In California recent reports on the prisons have exposed conditions very similar to what was found at Abu Ghraib. These reports have even reached the mainstream media, with frequent stories appearing in the Los Angeles Times and San Francisco Chronicle describing the cover-up at the top of the California Department of Corrections that stopped investigators from looking in to brutal prison guards at Pelican Bay State Prison among others. This brutality has resulted



For President Bush to claim that Amerikan doesn't tolerate the kind of abuses that happened at Abu Ghraib is a boldfaced lie.



in severe physical and mental injuries to many prisoners and even some deaths. A recent film from the California Youth Authority shows guards there brutally beating and kicking kids locked up in a facility there. And this guard brutality is on top of the standard conditions in Amerikan prisons which include control units where prisoners are locked in solitary confinement for years at a time in conditions that have been condemned by the United Nations as torture.

For President Bush to claim that Amerikan doesn't tolerate the kind of abuses that happened at Abu Ghraib is a boldfaced lie. The criminal injustice system in this country is built on a solid foundation of torture. It is used as a system of social control. Whether trying to extract confessions or information, or just trying to degrade and break the will of prisoners, the tools used by the system include torture, humiliation, and degradation. Stories about these abuses can be found in the pages of MIM Notes every two weeks, in a section written by prisoners called Under Lock and Key. Occasionally they reach the mainstream media where politicians scramble to explain away the abuse as atypical and the fault of a few individuals (who often escape punishment as soon as the publicity dies down).

What is unusual about Abu Ghraib is not the torture of the prisoners there but that the torture was exposed and that Amerikan officials are now forced to disavow it and even punish some individuals for what happened there. But punishment of individuals will not change the criminal injustice system. The more than two million people locked behind bars in this country know the truth of the daily torture that Amerika endorses as a condition of imprisonment. It will not change until we dismantle imperialist system that uses these prisons as a tool of social control.

Notes:

1. MSNBC, May 5, 2004
2. USA Today 7May 2004, p. 6a.
3. www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/cal/Waynesburg.txt
4. <http://www.thejerichomovement.com/charlesgraner.html>
5. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/ulk/ulk/ulk150.html>
6. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons/censor/archive/> To read detailed accounts of abuses of Amerikan prisons across the country visit: <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/prisons>.

A picture worth 10,000 words about gender

Female biology but gender oppressor: Lynndie England

The photo below shows U.S. military reservist Lynndie England mocking a row of naked Iraqi men with a leer on her face. In the other photos, the men are forced to perform sex acts for the cameras.

A lot of people have a hard time thinking of gender as anything but biology. When MIM calls Amerikan females-by-biology “men,” we get a lot of blank stares and snickers. Yet the proof is that Lynndie England is no one special in Amerikkka. Any female-biology adult of the right age could have volunteered to take her place in the Amerikan Army. That’s the proof that it is a group thing about gender in Amerika.

On the other hand, it is the Iraqi people with penises being gender oppressed in these pictures. Other phrases you will hear used for this is that Iraqis here are “social females” or “socially wimmin.” Lynndie England will be referred to as “socially-speaking a man” and other variations on the idea.

There will be a lot of speculation whether the smile on Lynndie England’s face comes from something deep down in female biology or whether she is just going along in comradeship with her male peers in the U.S. Army. That’s a discussion for another day. For this once, MIM will let the pictures do the talking for why MIM is the only party of any kind with a line addressing how this got to be.



U\$ atrocities in Iraq guarantee U\$ defeat

by mousnonya, April 16, 2004

This story was written two weeks before the Amerikan abuse of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib became common knowledge. It goes to show that Abu Ghraib is not a case of a few bad apples, as nutcase Don Rumsfeld and his posse of generals would have us believe. Further, it says something about the degree the U\$ media toadies up to the Amerikan government. If Amerikan abuses have been so obvious since the occupation began last April, why are they only reporting about them now? How many atrocities go unreported? Outside of the coastal cities where magazines like the New Yorker are actually read, how successful is the Pentagon in selling its line that these incidents of brutality are just that: isolate incidents?

MIM has been reporting on Amerikan crimes committed in the name of the “war on terror” since September 2001 (and we’ve been reporting on the atrocities committed in Amerikan prisons since we started publishing MIM Notes). With your help—financial and/or practical—we can make MIM

Notes into a voice that the bourgeois media has to reckon with.

U\$ forces are indiscriminately killing even more Iraqis than usual in the wake of the 80+ U\$ soldiers killed last week. It is not surprising that the U\$ press is ignoring this fact. Since the imperialists are bickering about how best to exploit the Third World, the foreign press is not reluctant to report some of the facts. For example, the Agence Presse France notes that “At Fallujah, after more than a week of bloody combat, young marines are not hesitating to kill Iraqis to ‘avenge their comrades’” (1) — killing innocent people for no reason at all other than their brown skin.

MIM credits AFP for pointing out the beating death of one Iraqi by U\$ soldiers.(2) Why did the soldiers kill Salem Hassan? Because he refused to remove a picture of a cleric Moqtada Sadr from his car. These people call themselves the forces of freedom. MIM calls them lying parasites.

Some bourgeois journalists claim to be concerned by mercenaries (a.k.a. “contractors”) in Iraq. However the fact is all imperialist soldiers are mercenary vampires feeding off the blood of the Third

World. The AFP does not say whether it was the U\$ regular army, the national guard, marines or private armies who killed Hassan. To MIM it does not matter which imperialist hatchet men bludgeoned Hassan’s skull to pulp. The fact is: imperialism in its death spasms pointlessly kills even more people. The imperialists’ murderous rampages only hasten imperialism’s doom. Expect more and more resistance in Iraq, more and more repression from the United States and ultimately a defeat in Iraq—just like Vietnam.

We are witnessing today a straight out power grab: U\$ imperialists bet that they could seize Iraq’s oil. They bet they could buy off the Iraqi ruling class. And they hoped to be able to threaten any other oil-dependent imperialist country like France or Japan by cutting off the Arab oil. The fact that the war in Iraq is about oil should be obvious to anyone who thinks. U\$ imperialism has already lost this gamble: the Iraqi ruling class is not going to be bribed. Not only that, OPEC has reacted: oil has gone over \$35 per barrel. Even after devaluing the dollar from 80 Euro cents to 1.20 euros (a devaluation of at least 20%) oil still

remains so high that more recession is just about guaranteed—unless the U\$ can squeeze oil out of Iraq or overthrow the government of Venezuela (the last time the U\$ tried that it failed). Since capitalism guarantees recession it also promises us more pointless wars and more needless death. These needless deaths are inherent in imperialism, capitalism’s highest stage.

Arab states are gambling that they can max out oil profits and justify it as resisting U\$ imperialism. European imperialists are gambling that they can expand eastward into the Caucasus and thus at least avoid energy dependency and possibly also come to denominate oil contracts in Euros instead of dollars—which would drive the value of the dollar down by as much as 40%.

Notes:

1. 15 April, 2004 AFP, <http://fr.news.yahoo.com/040415/202/3qwhc.html>

2. Iraqi ‘beaten to death’ by US troops, AFP April 14, 2004 http://news.com.au/common/story_page/0,4057,9282015%25E1702,00.html

AMERIKAN TORTURE OF IRAQIS EXPOSED

Continued from page 1...

Amerikan torturers were acting at the direction of the CIA and military intelligence agents who ran part of the prison. The abuse was intended to “loosen up” the prisoners for interrogation. Although perhaps the most graphic case to come to light so far, this report should be seen in the context of widespread civil rights violations since the so-called “war on terror” began. Already in October 2001 we reported, “the FBI has been hinting it wants legal authority to use torture tactics on ‘recalcitrant’ suspects.”(7)

Not that there aren’t sick individuals involved, including Staff Sergeant Ivan L. Frederick II, known as “Chip,” who previously worked for six years as a prison guard at the Buckingham Correctional Center in Dillwyn, Virginia.(3) In the photos, Frederick is shown leering at naked Iraqi prisoners who are set in humiliating sexual poses. Of course, “sick” needn’t mean “unusual.” Any average Amerikan Joe could have volunteered, taken “Chip’s” place, and done more or less the same. In fact, the exception in this case was the soldier who blew the whistle on the beatings. That says something about the consciousness of Amerikans as a group.

Witnesses at an Army hearing also testified that Frederick repeatedly beat prisoners under his command. Taking a page from the playbook of Nazi concentration camp officers during their war-crimes trials, Frederick’s uncle William Lawson told the Associate Press, “They’re trying to portray him as a monster ... He’s just the guy they put in charge of the prison.”(3)

For Frederick’s defense, his lawyers have released letters he previously sent to his family, telling them that military intelligence and the CIA were behind the torture acts he was performing.(2) The letters are arguably a self-serving attempt to create a paper trail that could be used to pass blame up the chain of command. While we find his tale credible, that does not exonerate him. Others who joined the Amerikan military (perhaps for naïve reasons like tuition money or “for a challenge”) have refused to serve once they come to realize their role as oppressors.(8)

Frederick supposedly wrote: “I questioned some of the things that I saw ... such things as leaving inmates in their cell with no clothes or in female underpants, handcuffing them to the door of their cell—and the answer I got was, ‘This is how military intelligence (MI) wants it done.’ ... MI has also instructed us to place a prisoner in an isolation cell with little or no clothes, no toilet or running water, no ventilation or window, for as much as three days. ... [The military-intelligence officers] encouraged and told us, ‘Great job,’ they were now getting positive results and information.”(2)

In his letters, home, he also described

a man beaten to death and smuggled out of the prison without ever being registered in the prison’s records: “They [CIA or its contractors] stressed him out so bad that the man passed away. They put his body in a body bag and packed him in ice for approximately twenty-four hours in the shower. ... The next day the medics came and put his body on a stretcher, placed a fake IV in his arm and took him away.”(2)

The Abu Ghraib prison was a notorious site of torture under the formerly-US-backed dictator Saddam Hussein. The Amerikans put the prison back into operation, detaining thousands of Iraqis with no due-process rights. In some cases prisoners were not even registered in official logs.(2)

The prison was ostensibly run by Brigadier Gen. Janis Karpinski, the highest-ranking Amerikan womyn Iraq. She’s now claiming that military intelligence officers were in charge, and she didn’t even know what was happening in the prison.(4) She had no trouble claiming credit for the prison, though, in an interview she gave to the St. Petersburg Times last December, when she said that her prisoners found that “living conditions now [in Abu Ghraib] are better in prison than at home. At one point we were concerned that they wouldn’t want to leave.”(2)

That interview was right around the time Karpinski was interviewed on 60 Minutes, in which she insisted prison conditions were better at Abu Ghraib now than they were under the Iraqis. She claimed that no one was held in the prison without charges and that prisoners were allowed visits from family members and their lawyers. When given contradictory details on an individual case, however, she admitted that some prisoners were denied all visitors and there were not formal charges against everyone, but, she said, “there’s nobody being held for no reason,” referring to suspects who may have committed “crimes against the coalition,” whatever that means.(5)

Some Amerikan politicians and the media were up in arms about the torture reports — because they hurt the Amerikan image, and the battle for the “hearts and minds” of the Iraqis. Democratic Senator Joseph Biden, expressing this outrage, “This is the single most significant undermining act that’s occurred in a decade in that region of the world in terms of our standing.”(6) Boo hoo — poor Amerikan image. Before this, it was going so well!

MIM is quite willing to pass blame up the chain of command, from Frederick and Karpinski up to the CIA and beyond. We’ll pass it all the way up to the imperialist system, which is ultimately the driving force behind Amerika’s latest grab in the Middle East. We didn’t need proof of Amerikans reopening the “torture chambers” that Bush and so many others decried in the build-up to the invasion to



This Iraqi man was killed during interrogation, then smuggled out of the prison disguised as a medical patient, according to the Taguba report.

know that this is another war of aggression waged by US imperialists in their continued quest to bring the labor, land and resources of the world under their control. That doesn’t exonerate the people with blood literally on their hands in this case (or others, like in the Virginia prisons), but it’s what we need to understand if we are to successfully combat this system.

Notes:

1. NYTimes 27 Feb. 2003, p. A 10.
2. New Yorker 10 May 2004; posted 5

May 2004 on newyorker.com.

3. Associated Press 29 April 2004.

4. NYTimes 2 May 2004, p. A1.

5. 60 Minutes, 4 Dec. 2003 (<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/12/04/60minutes/main586841.shtml>).

6. Associate Press 2 May 2004.

7. MIM Notes 246. See also: <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines01/1022-01.htm>.

8. E.g. “AWOL youth challenges Amerikan military” in MIM Notes 280 and “Iraq war conscientious objector sentenced to prison” in MIM Notes 288.

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.

Labor aristocracy sends children to die for the SUV

by mim3@mim.org

On April 12, the campaign to elect George W. Bush president ran ads on network television in New Hampshire pointing out that opponent Senator Kerry voted to raise taxes on gasoline in the past. A number of papers reported that Bush ran the same ad in 19 states. The ad showed quaint footage of someone pushing a car without gasoline.

This is very significant. Bush is obviously worried that the labor aristocracy is going to blame him for the obvious rise in price of gasoline at the pump, now setting records (in nominal terms, not inflation-adjusted prices). The public will not be able to help wondering if the price rise is connected to Iraq or angering the other Arab countries.

Bush's solution consistent, with his ideology, is to point to how his opponent supported raising gasoline taxes—even though the price rise we see now is not connected to taxes.

Meanwhile, astonishing figures show that fully one in twenty Amerikkans mention gasoline prices as the number one issue facing Amerika today. That is what they offered in an open-ended question, when they could pick anything they wanted. Others picked "war," "terrorism" and the "economy." (1)

Another poll by CNN/USA Today/Gallup "finds nearly 7 in 10 Americans saying the cost of gasoline represents a crisis or major problem for the United States." (2) That poll shows that gasoline is the biggest single issue in 2004 for Amerikkans and one of the biggest overall in the last 10 years.

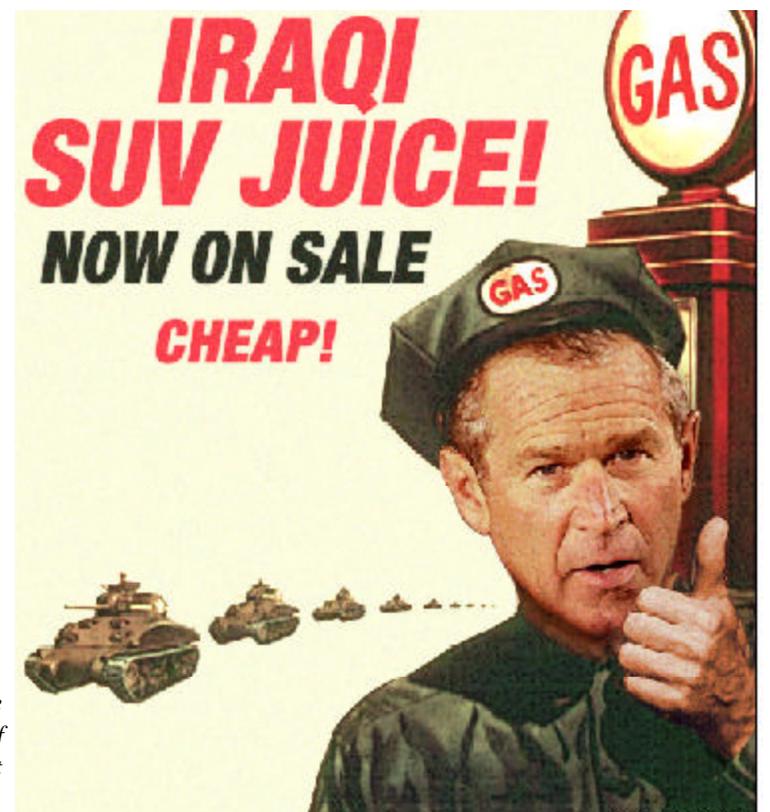
Thousands of Iraqis and hundreds of Amerikkans had died and were in the process of dying when the bourgeoisie

conducted the polls, and still gas prices were the top concern out of all issues for five percent of the public. We know that presidential campaigns do not spend their campaign money on television advertising unless they have tested the ad and believe it to work to change the minds of significant numbers of voters. It says a lot about Amerikkans at this time that gasoline is such a big issue.

Here's the ad's message to the voters: support the Iraq War or else you may end up pushing your car. This does succeed with rural voters who are going to have to decide if they can get their gas any other way. Arkansas for instance, "uses more gasoline per capita than all but one or two other states. That's because of the farm-to-market culture and the absence of mass transit in the population centers where people drive to work one human being per every SUV." (3)

MIM is one of the few parties calling itself communist in Amerika willing to take on the pickup-and-SUV driving crowd of the rural areas. It is not a good idea for the communists and anti-war movement to oink with the Amerikkans about gasoline prices. It's an example of how the economic demands of the petty-bourgeoisie allied with imperialism are a dead-end. Not all popular economic demands are good ideas. Even when we offer solar energy or whatever alternatives, we should not complain about gasoline prices and stir up people already in an impossible bind.

Too racist to drive small cars they believe are from Japan and too practical to want cars that break down (like Amerikan ones), the rural labor aristocracy chose wholesale to buy ever-bigger vehicles that Amerikkkan



From the collection of posters at www.whitehouse.org

manufacturers dominate.

"In an unprecedented blitz [six months after 911] the auto industry set out to terrify rural America, claiming that if fuel-efficiency standards were increased, SUVs and pick-ups would vanish from their production lines. Enough voters were panicked to produce the requisite 'flood' of telephone calls to senators from rural states." (4) It's just another example of how capitalist advertising found a ready-made audience in Amerikkka.

We find nothing admirable in the labor aristocracy's driving ridiculous vehicles while sending their children to die in Iraq. None of these SUV drivers can say for

sure that the imperialists would have succeeded in justifying the war without the rural racist lifestyle dependent on gasoline.

Notes:

- [1. http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2004/04/14/concerns_over_war_rise_poll_says/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2004/04/14/concerns_over_war_rise_poll_says/)
- [2. http://www.gallup.com/content/?ci=11257](http://www.gallup.com/content/?ci=11257)
- [3. http://www.arkansasnews.com/archive/2004/04/04/JohnBrummet/170847.html](http://www.arkansasnews.com/archive/2004/04/04/JohnBrummet/170847.html)
- [4. http://www.tompaine.com/feature2.cfm/ID/5258/view/print](http://www.tompaine.com/feature2.cfm/ID/5258/view/print)

Imperialists spell relief: D-R-A-F-T

Continued from page 1...

unconsciously against exploitation and oppression.

Afraid that the public and youth in particular will wake up and oppose the war, the Bush administration has thrown out a new bone of hope. After elections in 2005, they muse, Iraqis will simmer down and U\$ troops can scale back somewhat. MIM counsels the youth to ignore the illusions spread by Democrats about the UN and the Republicans about elections. The time to oppose this war is now.

Donald Rumsfeld's analysis of the Vietnam War has offended many Vietnam veterans. According to Rumsfeld, draftees "added no value, no advantage, really, to the United States armed services over any sustained period of time, because (of) the churning that took place. It took (an) enormous amount of effort in terms of training - and then they were gone." (3) This despite the deaths of 20,000 draftees.

Addressing these criticisms is Senator Chuck Hagel of Nebraska, who is also the Republican Senator most critical of

Rumsfeld over the Iraqi torture matter. According to Hagel, the United States should fight a protracted war against the world and draft everyone in their late teenage years for two years, perhaps with one year for training as some suggest: "this is a generational—probably 25-year—war." (2)

To be sure, Rumsfeld's position is popular among Republicans, as it is merely an extreme statement of Reagan's position. It won't be effortless for the Bush administration to turn to the draft, but we can expect that loving sympathy for a senile ex-president will not prevent them from forwarding their sinister plans for world domination through a massive draft.

There is no doubt that the prison debacle in Iraq has strengthened Senator Hagel's hand and thus sped up the possibility of a draft: "What is our policy? What are we doing? What is the possibility of us winning? That's all still in question," said Hagel, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. (4)

Republicans and military media are

starting to get in on the act of criticizing Rumsfeld. That's not to mention the unity of the Democrats and New York Times in calling for Rumsfeld to step down. There is even a leak from the Bush administration that Rumsfeld is not a personal friend of Bush who he will keep at any campaign cost. (4) All this means that Rumsfeld will be politically weaker and the chances for a draft increased just by that.

76% of Amerikkans polled in October 2001 favored the draft to get tough in the "war on terrorism." Only 18% opposed. Now 52% of registered voters oppose the draft, which is why MIM said in its MIM Notes 301 article that both Bush and Kerry will sidestep the draft this year, with ample leeway through the reshuffling of 1.4 million troops that Rumsfeld is talking about. The fact that support for the draft is now down to 41% proves that it is important to link the draft to Iraq. On the other hand, it also shows that the rulers may adjust tactics or come up with another war to whip up U\$ public opinion.

The question of the draft is political—whether one believes that the rulers of the United States will settle down at the current level of its military aspirations. Even if U\$ imperialism stands still, the oppressed nations learn to fight better each year, so we see the draft coming.

Notes:

- [1. Pacifica News, March 30, 2004; see also, http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/05/iraq/main615669.shtml](http://www.pacificanews.com/news/2004/03/30/iraq.html) on the change to 135,000
- [2. http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-04-22-rumsfeld-draft_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2004-04-22-rumsfeld-draft_x.htm)
- [3. http://www.newsday.com/news/opinion/ny-vppag203764923apr20,02339687.story?coll=ny-viewpoints-headlines](http://www.newsday.com/news/opinion/ny-vppag203764923apr20,02339687.story?coll=ny-viewpoints-headlines)
- [4. http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/09/iraq/main616398.shtml](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/09/iraq/main616398.shtml)
- Namely, not having enough troops to fight all the battles they are currently engaged in. See MIM Notes 290, 1 Nov 2003.

Supreme Court hears “enemy combatant” and civil liberties cases

ACTIVISTS FEAR COURT-SANCTIONED FASCISM

By MC32 and MC206

The US Supreme Court recently heard three major cases related to the “war on terror”.

The first oral argument, heard on April 20, 2004, was the case of *Rasul v. Bush*, brought on behalf of 16 detainees at Guantanamo Bay. The issue in this case was whether so-called “enemy combatants” are entitled to any due process in either a US civil court or a military tribunal. The plaintiffs are from Britain, Australia, and Kuwait. The Bush administration—assuming what has to be proven under the American “innocent-until-proven-guilty” legal system—argued that these detainees have no due process rights because they were waging war against the United States and were not following the rules of the Geneva Convention and international law.

The other two cases, *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* and *Rumsfeld v. Padilla*, were heard on April 28, 2004. Yaser Hamdi and Jose Padilla are both citizens of the United States. The issue in these cases is whether the president has unchecked executive power to detain US citizens as “enemy combatants” with no access to lawyers or the courts. Jose Padilla got a favorable ruling from the 2nd Circuit federal court, which the government then appealed to the Supreme Court.

The ACLU, along with many other civil liberties organizations, filed “friend of the court” briefs in all three cases. While MIM has some fundamental disagreements with the ACLU on matters of American “democracy,” we applaud its efforts to hold Bush and his cronies responsible for the massive assaults on civil liberties since September 11, 2001.

Guantanamo case

Formally, the Guantanamo case may turn on the issue of jurisdiction. Substantively, the case is about whether American “liberty and justice” really is “for all,” or just whomever the president thinks deserves it.

Although Guantanamo Bay is technically within Cuban borders, it is leased to the United States. The lawyers for the detainees argued that this lease effectively means that the prisoners—held there under American authority—should be given the benefit of American due process. The Bush lawyers argued that the United States is at war, and granting the Guantanamo detainees rights to prove their innocence then every “enemy” would want that right.

The “friends of the court” brief in this case pointed out that the detainees claim that they “never engaged in hostilities against America.”(1) “They say they are innocents caught up in the fog of war, and they have now been imprisoned for more than a year and a half. Yet according to the Court of Appeals, [for the D.C. Circuit] no court has jurisdiction

to hear their claims. ... According to the Court of Appeals, the principle is: the Executive can do what it wishes to aliens abroad—even innocent aliens—because no law protects them and no court may hear their pleas.”(1) The brief correctly goes on to emphatically reject this “stunning proposition.”

The brief notes that “in addition to the Petitioners’ claims of non-combatancy, it is clear that some detainees were apprehended far from battlefields [contrary to government claims]. For instance, Guantanamo holds six Bosnians and Algerians who were arrested by Bosnian police in Bosnia and then handed over to U.S. troops at the request of the United States.”(1)

Paul W. Butler, special assistant to Donald Rumsfeld, spoke to the Boston Globe about the detainees at Guantanamo, and acknowledged that “[m]ost of the 595 suspected terrorists detained by the United States at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, will be held indefinitely, even though there is not yet enough evidence to charge them with crimes...”(2) Unless the US Supreme court intervenes in its decision in the *Rasul* case, the Bush administration plans to continue to hold these prisoners as they have been for more than two years. Only two of the 595 prisoners have been actually charged with crimes to date.(2)

Posters in Arabic with sayings like, “Daddy, please tell them what you know and come home” adorn the interrogation stations at Guantanamo. The government rates the detainees according to intelligence value, threat, and potential for prosecution.(2) The government continues to try to “gather intelligence” (i.e. use physical and psychological torture to get any information) about “terrorist” activities, and then decides what to do with these prisoners. The ones who have been milked of all useful information, or deemed to be less dangerous, may be sent back to their countries of origin. But the US government wants assurance from these other governments that the Guantanamo prisoners will not then be released in their home countries. The US either tries to insist that the prisoners be detained in those countries, or at least tried there.(2) The irony is that the closer the legal system in those countries is to the American system (including Miranda-type rights, rules about evidence gathering, due process, etc.), the less likely it is that those prisoners will be prosecutable with the information gathered at Guantanamo.

Padilla and Hamdi

The American government has held Jose Padilla for more than two years and has yet to charge him with a crime! He was arrested in Chicago, held in the custody of civilian authorities, and then transferred to military detention in June 2002. He is currently held in near isolation in a military brig in South Carolina.(3) The government has publicly accused Padilla of planning to detonate a radioactive “dirty bomb” in the United States but has not

formally charged him. Until shortly before the argument at the Supreme Court, he never even met with his lawyers. The US monitored and tape-recorded that meeting, leaving the attorneys no choice but to give their client a lesson on the laws at issue, while avoiding all discussion of any facts or evidence in Padilla’s favor.

Yaser Hamdi was arrested in the weeks after 9/11, and the government says he was fighting with the Taliban against American forces in Afghanistan. He was born in Louisiana and is a US citizen. Hamdi also did not have access to an attorney until shortly before his case went to the Supreme Court. Shortly after Hamdi was arrested his father filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus, asking that Hamdi be allowed to appear before a tribunal to rebut the evidence against him. The district court that received the petition did not grant the writ but did order Hamdi to have access to counsel. The government appealed that order, and the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit (among the most reactionary of the federal courts) said that the case had to be sent back to the district court for it to consider the “implications of allowing Hamdi to meet with counsel...”(4)

In other words, a federal circuit court was saying that a US citizen should not even be allowed to see a lawyer, let alone confront his accusers! Not that MIM completely agrees with the solutions Amerika’s “founding fathers” came up with, but at least they saw the problem with this sort of thing. Perhaps the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit needs to go back to school to learn how to read; we suggest they start with the Sixth Amendment to the US Constitution.

The more decadent, parasitic, and exploitative American imperialism becomes, the more it is forced to turn its back on the anti-colonial and anti-monarchical principles of the original American revolutionaries. All fair-minded people, and especially political activists, should be very alarmed by the government’s latest moves to do away with bourgeois democratic rights. In practice, the American government can now detain whomever it wants, call him or her an “enemy combatant”, and throw away the key!

“If the government’s position were accepted,” argued Padilla’s lawyers, “it would mean that for the foreseeable future, any citizen, anywhere, at any time, would be subject to indefinite military detention on the unilateral order of the president.”(3)

A few of the Supreme Court justices asked questions during the arguments of all three cases that suggest they are concerned about letting Bush continue to have the power to hold so-called “enemy combatants” for as long as he says Amerika is “waging war on terror”. As the justices pointed out, no one has any idea how long that will be, and the government is asking to hold these prisoners at Guantanamo and military brigs in the United States indefinitely. The

Supreme Court is expected to issue rulings in all three cases by June or July, and MIM will continue to report new developments.

If you are as outraged as MIM is about the American government’s assault on civil liberties, get involved and join us in our fight against the injustice system! Visit our civil liberties agitation page on the web (5) for news, flyers and petitions!

Notes:

1. ACLU, et al amicus brief in *Rasul v. Bush*, 03-334, pp. 5, 7, 9, 23-24, at <http://www.aclu.org/court/court.cfm?ID=14741&c=261>.
2. The Boston Globe, 25 April 2004, http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2004/04/25/us_to_hold_detainees_at_guantanamo_indefinitely/
3. http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20040428/ap_on_go_su_co/scotus_enemy_combatants_7.
4. ACLU, et al amicus brief in *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, 03-6696, at <http://www.aclu.org/news/NewsPrint.cfm?ID=15039&c=261>.
5. (<http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/civlib/index.html>).

Straight from the horses’ mouths

We couldn’t make this shit up—imperialist bigwigs’ and mid-level lackeys’ own words indict them.

“If you have no idea what’s going to happen to you, that’s extremely stressful. ... But if the mission is to collect intelligence and get information that is beneficial to our side, then despair and depression may be a good thing.”

—John VanNatta, warden of a maximum-security prison in Indiana, serving at Guantanamo and describing the prisoners’ high rate of suicide attempts there.(1) In case there was any doubt that the incidents at Abu Ghraib were not exceptions...

“The sessions are not videotaped or tape recorded. ... The interrogations are designed primarily to yield intelligence, not evidence for a court. ... taping ‘causes us legal problems.’ Detainees might gain access to tapes through court proceedings. ‘Then, it becomes exculpatory.’”

—US Army General Geoffrey D. Miller, until recently the commander of the detention operation at Guantanamo.(1) Heaven forbid the detainees use these “interviews” to prove their innocence...

“What I’m saying is that there is a large percentage right now who are either high threat or high intelligence value, that right now there’s no intention to try them before a military commission. ... [W]e have a responsibility, both to our forces ... and the rest of the world, to not let those people back out.”

—Paul W. Butler, special assistant to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.(2)

Notes

1. The Washington Post, 2 May 2004.
2. The Boston Globe, 25 April 2004.

Preparing for the all-round dictatorship of the proletariat

Continued from page 3...

say some kind of sexual experience is the most profound, emotion-stirring experience. Still, whether this pleasure is 100% natural or if it is totally constructed by for-profit pornography or something else social, MIM asks, is it good for wimmin? Would we rather live in a society in which pornography was not such an overwhelming subjective experience for many men?

What heroin does to people is also “natural.” It takes advantage of something in humyns’ biological wiring. That does not mean it is necessary and good. We can conquer heroin and we should.

Just as “art for its own sake” is poison, so too is “sex for its own sake” when raised against the party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In the communist future they may be able to have both or maybe the very thought of both will disappear, but right now and for a foreseeable stage of time, the subjectivism of art or sex for its own sake is a weapon in the arsenal of the enemy.

We had a womyn quit the party’s circles solely on the basis of the line that monogamy is second-best to asexuality. She claimed to agree with every other single line of the party, but wanted multiple partners. She asked us to change the line. The womyn recruiting her came back with this sad news to the party and pointed out, yeah, but if she would break with us “just for that,” she could not have been serious about the rest. Indeed, that’s how we look at it: the stands on subjective matters relative to the party often tell us a lot about ourselves and our overall line.

Supposing that for this womyn, the most profound subjective experience in life—more profound than the subjective thrill of everything else MIM stood for—was having multiple sexual partners. Then we might think that what MIM was doing to her with this monogamy line was “depressing.” This is actually a very important point. The truth may hurt and be depressing. It does not mean we can afford to do without the truth of oppression and exploitation. We have always said that if people do not find the current reality depressing and hurtful, then there is something wrong with them. They need to be taken out of the “Matrix.”

What is worse, of course, in theory the party can make mistakes and worsen that depression and hurt for some people. A comrade wanting multiple sex partners might think that having the line in her face all the time would make her a hypocrite, because she did not feel it emotionally. Yet it’s guaranteed that we are all hypocrites, because the party can never be 100% in line with people subjectively.

Another troublesome issue is what to do with comrades when they fail in practice in their lifestyles. We’re not going to get into all of it here, but merely avoiding MIM, because one line or even several would make someone a hypocrite subjectively speaking is wrong. It would

be like the smoking parent who gave his/her kids cigarettes to avoid being a hypocrite.

Since the 1980s, we’ve had multiple comrades disappear out of embarrassment over sex questions. We even had one comrade disappear for something no one was opposed to! In most cases, MIM does not cast people out of our circles for sexual practice out of synch with our line. What happens is people treat it like Christianity as if the lifestyle itself were the goal and since they failed the supposed goal, they should give up politics they imagine. This is wrong and we must fight to expunge Christian, Jewish and Islamic thinking on this from our circles by an active fight. And by the way, our challenge stands to any comrades who left in the midst of sexual embarrassment to come back to party circles. Just send us a letter or even join our struggle anonymously as many do. The struggle against gender oppression does not advance by people giving up politics. If the People’s Wars have to use bullets and bombs to feed, clothe and shelter the people, we in the imperialist countries can stand a little embarrassment with each other over subjective trifles.

It could even be the case that what is hurtful for one persyn is uplifting for another because of how subjectivities are constructed currently. That’s why Mao called it steering and they used that “helmsman” image in China. A party can never steer in such a way as not to depress somebody. Individualists can try to adjust everything in their private lives, but scientific bodies including vanguard parties have to take votes and go one way or another. Trotsky and the Liberals try to make it appear contrary, but it just isn’t true. It is better to make decisions in the open through a vanguard party vote than by individuals in private life or corporate boardrooms.

It is well known that MIM is willing to take “extreme” stands by US public standards. We even appreciate some of what Gandhi said that first people ignore you; then they laugh at you; then they imprison you and then they join you. Black bourgeois Nelson Mandela even experienced the last part of this where the white rulers put him in prison and then decided capitalism will survive if it has a Black face leading it.

Countless opportunists have asked us why we are willing to take such a public opinion beating on our position that “all sex is rape.” Of course we know it is unpopular. However, there are two kinds of unpopularity in politics relevant to MIM: 1) lost popularity because the road to communism is difficult 2) popularity lost because we surrendered our political credibility. No matter what anyone might say, the two reasons for surrendering popularity are not the same.

Anybody with the “all sex is rape” line is not going to be elected president of the United States any time soon. Reflexive and hardened reformists are going to dismiss us on that account alone. The truth

is that it is much better to be an amorphous character that serves various corporate interests to win elections. For a Maoist party, the question is different, because we’re not saying the solution to gender oppression is for the masses to abstain from sex. The masses can’t abstain from their jobs and end exploitation either. We’re saying that for party members, we expect them to put aside their persynal feelings about social behavior and dig to their causes. Otherwise, they can’t join and have a vote on scientific matters. If people think sex in society in general is above the dictatorship of the proletariat, because s/he thinks it’s the most profound and best subjective experience as is, then we don’t want them in our party. We can’t let anything get in the way of our mission to end oppression and exploitation.

If an “illegal alien” migrant farm-worker says he had a “nice day at work” picking oranges or tomatoes, OK, that’s his subjectivity for the day. It does not mean he was not super-exploited, whether he thinks so or not. If someone experiences pleasure in sex, it does not mean there is no gender oppression interconnected with that. MIM is definitely going to lose some support for saying that, but so be it. We are communists and we only want people voting in our party who are going to put science of ending oppression above the subjective experiences of all kinds. The only proper way to oppose the party line is with evidence for entire groups of people, not by persynal experience alone. If someone wants to provide evidence that pornography improved the reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammar of both girls and boys exposed to pornography in high school—such being a fanciful assumption but raised to illustrate a point of principle—then the party would have to consider that. The fact that pornography has completely taken over the last two generations of men in the United States and that men like it is not an argument against having no pornography corporations under socialism. That would be supporting the subjectivism of patriarchy.

When it comes to the party pointing the road to revolution, the task has to be conceived differently. The “all sex is rape” line lays it down hard and firmly, and to be blunt, especially for men who are hopping hot for sex, that there is nothing, nothing at all that MIM holds above analytical scrutiny. And when we get done taking down the profit system, it’s going to be the same way: we’re going to be there looking at what it takes to get done with battering, rape and even just hurt feelings, because Marx said that when the species takes over its destiny people will know not even to fall in love with the wrong persyn and thus avoid hurt feelings. Granted, that’s quite a while down the line, but the point is that we communists are relentless in nailing down the underlying problems in society and moving forward to a happy and harmonious one.

VI. Friends

Another one of those subjective areas is friends. Mao already addressed this in “Combat Liberalism.” Who in the United States does not have high school classmates as friends that did not later go on to be police or serve in some country killing people? No, the point is not that 100% of the cops and military personnel we all have as neighbors in the USA are “bad.” Nonetheless, when it comes time for a communist party, we need to know that politics goes above those old classmates. The fact that we like our friends can be another source of reticence and paralysis on the behalf of revolutionaries, because we are the underdog and more often than not people will not be able to take their ordinary friends from apolitical circles and have things work out OK for revolutionary politics. So we have to be objective about the sources of some feelings around the USA. As Sakai pointed out, it’s virtually impossible to be white in Amerika and not know some police-affiliated neighbor. Then when we consider the millions who have gone through the armed services, a picture adds up. People we knew as kids are now active agents of the state. That’s not to say there is not revolutionary struggle in the Army. There most assuredly is. On the whole though, veterans of an undefeated imperialist military power are a negative political influence—something that even the bourgeois revolutionaries and veterans of 1776 recognized.

**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
US 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

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

California Prisoner

Governor Schwarzenegger campaigned on the platform of cleaning up how politics are conducted in California. Due to a budget deficit of \$14 billion, no state agency will be able to escape across-the-board cut-backs. However, corrections has an unholy advantage over all other segments of state government.

The California Department of Corrections (CDC) is an unmanageable conglomerate of 32 state prisons, with a \$5.3 billion budget. The Schwarzenegger administration has offered a number of cost-cutting ideas—from releasing inmates early, revamping the parole system, and closing down prisons.

There are two opposing schools-of-thought on the issue of drugs, crime, and public safety in California. On one side are the bipartisan proponents of the drug war and prison industrialism. They are dogmatic in their support for all manners of unforgiving criminal justice precepts, no matter how ill-conceived or ineffective. These advocates of heavy-handed punishments are well-funded and lead by the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA). They are brilliant in their tactics by investing in candidates on both sides of the political spectrum. With their annual \$20 million war chest, they have no equal.

On the other side of the debate are the anti-drug war, pro-human rights opponents of the American prison phenomenon—i.e., those of us locked-up, our loved ones, and a very small number of dedicated prisoner-advocates. Our allies are generally volunteer activists who operate on shoestring budgets.

On its face, the CCPOA is simply a union looking out for the interests of their constituents. However, their successes have created a power-vacuum. Corrections is an industry lavishly rewarded for a generation of miserable recidivism rates, scandals, and controversies. They have been allowed to expand and grow despite their failures.

The contemporary criminal justice ideology of punishment over rehabilitation relieves prison administrators from the burden of being required to manage in a results-oriented atmosphere. This has allowed the prison system to concentrate its resources on their guards, as opposed to the inmates.

Points to consider:

- From 1984 to 1994, twenty-one state prisons were built and only one state university.
- College fees are raised every year and education budgets for students K-12 always get hit hard.
- Prison guards are paid better than all state educators, including tenured CSU professors.
- Prison vocational classes were virtually eliminated when the CDC had to lay-off workers. It was determined that correctional educators—CDC employees who actually provide a meaningful service—not guards, were expendable.
- The CCPOA negotiated a 34 percent pay raise in 2002 when the state was in the middle of a fiscal crisis.

As far as corrections go, the CDC is too

large and the union representing the 29,000 prison guards too powerful. A number of things have to happen if the CDC is ever to assume their place alongside, not above, other state agencies.

1. All nonviolent drug offenders, including second and third strikers, need to be placed in community-based treatment facilities. Incarcerating drug offenders in \$30,000 a year prison beds for lengthy and life sentences needs to come to an end.

2. Change the state's recidivist sentencing schemes so that lengthy and life sentences are only given to violent criminals and sexual predators.

3. Permanently close-down a number of prisons in response to these moves. Begin with the older, dilapidated prisons—but don't stop there. The sweetheart deals the CCPOA received for generous campaign contributions need to be identified and undone. These are inexcusable quid pro quos.

Case in point, CDC overtime: Recalled Governor Gray Davis was unconditionally indebted to the CCPOA for million in campaign contributions. In addition to giving the guards a \$1 billion pay raise in 2002, he restricted a warden's power to discipline guards who abuse the process of calling in sick. The CDC was already a state agency depending heavily on overtime. Davis allowed the CDC to become even more so dependent on overtime by knowingly providing rank-and-file guards the power to write their own rules. Because the union runs corrections, not upper echelon administrators, chronic overtime abuses result in the department going over budget by half a billion dollars a year. This is how a prison guard is able to earn a salary of over \$100,000.

While the Schwarzenegger administration talks about inmate population cuts and prison closures, California is the recipient of a skewed state government. And the guard's power-base is still unmatched. A whole generation of CCPOA-owned lawmakers are still in Sacramento waiting to do the guard's bidding.

It is not my position that corrections is the only problem plaguing our society. Nor do I attempt to diminish society's justifiable concern with public safety. But the correctional special interests have been a corrupting influence for so long something drastic needs to be done. As an inmate I've lived under the reign of the CCPOA for over half a decade as a nonviolent three strikes drug offender. I see firsthand what society cannot. I see an army of overpaid correctional officers absolutely bloated on government funds. They own this state and think it's funny. They need to be placed on half rations, not us.

California inmates as a demographic have nothing else to give. We are forced to spend the rest of our lives in these Gulags of pillaged humanity. The guards have taken in all. It is through mismanagement and greed that a \$5.3 billion state agency looks to the inmate population when pressured by the legislature to trim costs. They extort us—we are the economic hostages. All the money we receive from our loved ones and the collect-only

telephone calls we place are both heavily taxed. Currently, 33 percent is deducted from all incoming moneys—which will increase to an astounding 55 percent in mid-2004. All of it under the guise of restitution. The telephone service providers have been awarded the lucrative California prison contract without even having to place a bid—with the CDC receiving tens of millions in kickbacks. We receive the worst deal imaginable due to this "no-bid" arrangement.

These are merely a few examples. Welcome to the world of the California state prisoner where cumulative injustices are inflicted on the entire population who simply have no voice, no rights, no representation.

As state prisoners in the California prison system, we are mere fodder. We are the king's peasants and treated accordingly. Taxation without representation has a renewed meaning for 160,000 of us and our loved ones. Oppression comes to mind.

This is not just about budget problems, pork barrel politics, and spending cuts—this is about people. This is about society. As a member of a voiceless population, I speak for all when I say: "Enough is enough. We have

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.

nothing more to give. You've taken it all. Give some of it back and leave us alone." When looking for some other miserable demographic to demonize—the prisoncrat should simply look in the mirror.

-A California Prisoner, January 2004

Short term USW goals

Greetings Comrades,

Here are a few suggestions for short term goals:

1. In order to double MIM subscribers in prisons, get other prison publications to run free ads for MIM's Books for Prisoners programs. We can establish a reciprocal relationship with these other prison publications, as well as other free book programs (Lucy Parsons Center Bookstore, Books Through Bars, Books to Prisoners, Open Door Books, etc.), by offering to run free ads for them in our publications. Also we may be able to establish like relationships with companies that offer services to prisoners selling audio tapes, electronics, clothes, etc. specifically geared towards prison populations. These companies are based in different states and serve different prisoners nationwide, which would be good for MIM.

2. The idea of producing pamphlets is very good. I believe that any USW leader at any facility should have the responsibility of soliciting articles for these pamphlets on specific(relevant) topics. Creating a title and table of contents page, as well as editing said articles. This solicitation of articles (and also artwork) can be an aspect of specific USW study groups, or any mandatory reading that the USW leader may establish for supporters. This will give supporters more of an active role. Leaders may even be able to use the submission of articles to be included in pamphlets as a reward each month for those supporters who show most devotion, thus creating an incentive. Competition of this caliber could prove beneficial.

3. I believe that solidifying USW leaders in each state is a process that should move forward with a degree of caution. Many of these leaders may very well have ulterior motives, and be using MIM (USW) as a means of garnering support for gangs, or non-revolutionary organizations. I believe that MIM should put more emphasis on establishing some sort of criteria in deciding its USW leaders and not just allot those positions to anyone who wants one.

4. I believe that a secure line of communication must be established between USW leaders in each prison in specific states. Due to security issues, it's nearly impossible for USW leaders to share ideas (even if they know each others identity). And this line of communication is also in regards to USW leaders and MIM contacts, as well as the people at RAIL that you (MIM) urge them to work with. How can they be worked with when they're not even known to USW leaders? By establishing this secure line of communication, it will allow USW to be more well organized and its coordinated works with RAIL to be more stable.

5. In identifying ways that like organizations, or individuals on the outside can support our battles, we have to first establish ways to be notified (in real time) as to what those battles are, specifically. This goes to establishing a real line of communication between USW leaders themselves, and USW leaders and MIM and RAIL- allowing everyone to be on the same page... But communication is important so that we'll all know what battles are being fought at a particular time, and exactly what kind of

support is needed.

Constant in the Struggle,

- A New York Prisoner, March 2004

MIM responds: The points on communication and leadership both bring up questions of organization and security. The fact is that comrades behind bars generally have to rely on U.S. mail to communicate with those on the outside. Without any direct contact there is always a limit to the amount of trust on either end. This is unavoidable. If a comrade steps up as a leader in a prison where there is no USW leadership, they automatically become the leadership. This is just how things develop. Being a leader does not grant anyone information that will make them a danger to our organizing.

There is always a threat of MIM/USW being misrepresented, but the best way to combat that is through our newspaper and other constant communication with the masses as to what we are about. The same thing can happen on the streets where anyone could pick up a stack of MIM Notes and claim to represent the party. But if they are spreading disinformation, a look at our paper or webpage will demonstrate this to the masses. So our best assurance of preventing misleadership is build our presence among the masses by spreading the paper and linking up leaders who do represent us.

The question of a more secure/faster communication also opens us up to disinformation campaigns by the pigs. While we certainly encourage USW leaders to communicate however they best can, the best way to do so is through MIM and by writing for Under Lock and Key. That way we can be accountable for where the information is coming from.

With the pamphlets that prisoners are creating, we can do dedicated issues of Under Lock and Key in MIM Notes rather than printing these up separately, when appropriate.

MIM looks to get our programs listed in resource directories wherever we can. Most organizations that provide programs for prisoners do not have publications, so there is no opportunity for ad exchanges. And there are already organizations out there doing a good job compiling comprehensive resource lists for prisoners. Rather than duplicating this work we refer our comrades to directories like the one put out by the Prison Activist Resource Center.

Corcoran cuts education and visits

Let me share or expose a little bite about Corcoran state prison on this four yard 180. This might help United Struggle from Within (USW). About one year ago they took the education and trades classes. A education channel is on television three hours a day but what about those inmates without a TV? They took one and a half days of our visits because they put level two prisoners in the gym on the same yard as us, and we can't come in contact with those inmates. So we have to suffer because these penitentiaries are over crowded. That's just a few of many things wrong around here in Corcoran.

- a California prisoner, March 2004

California segregates activists

I have received your recent letter. The letters are being funneled through mail room to the records department and then to my counselor Dixon who most likely over reads.

Due to them getting suspicious of my political activism. My mail is not being stopped but they are reading it. I am currently in the process of attempting to challenge them in their policy relating mail.

Currently I am in the administrative segregation in Correctional Training Facility. I have been passing out information in hopes to rally prisoners to get involved. I have reached another person and am talking with others, exchanging essays and thoughts. Since I am kept off the mainlines I do not know if there are other MIM activists in this prison. I am kept off the main line because they have set me up and labeled me a "gang" associate.

The administration has been corrupted and abuses authority since the 50s, working hand in hand with fascist groups and other groups of inmates to oppress other inmates and make money out of the deal. Since I started doing my own thing and educating myself the administration has labeled me a threat to the institution and keeps me segregated from other inmates.

Social change happened within the penal institutions a long time ago. The administration was no longer in control. So they made laws and rules to punish anyone who attempts to open the eyes of other inmates. They have created a system that racially profiles you. Automatically you are being discriminated for your race and punished. They call this "population control."

Then they have created a special set of officers to monitor your activities. If you are seen or believed to be working to undermine the administration's efforts to drag the people through the mud, then you are scooped off the mainline and placed in SHUs for "security reasons" to protect the interest of "penal corrections."

The administration is attempting to win the trust of the inmates by creating a committee that the inmates vote for you and then you can work with the administration to "attempt" to come to terms with regards to "conditions of confinement" and other "privileges and incentives." But a lot of the inmates see through their attempts to cloud inmates into thinking they are in control of their time. A lot of inmates have been scared for life and will never put their trust in the penal administration, they just literally raped, killed and extorted from inmates.

The inmates who are made aware of this and continue to do their own program are set up and labeled members or associates of gangs such as I have been. And they are kept in segregation: it's just a tool that is utilized by the administration to down play any person who tries to spread truth and keep them away from other inmates so that one can not expose their true intentions.

-a California prisoner, November 2003

Designing failures: rehabilitation in prison

When I first reached prison, I didn't understand why so many people come back after being here so many years. Now that I've been here a few years, I find that I know a great deal about this system but have no understanding as to why it's allowed to function as it does. I've just recently come to accept the bizarre idea that the prison system is not a failure. That it's doing what it has been fine tuned to do: create failures by insuring that a large majority of those released from prison will eventually return. The high recidivism rate is not an indication of failure.

It's proof that the system is doing its job quite well actually.

Just how bizarre is this idea, you ask? I don't have all the answers but I've come to see a few reasons why this type of prison system would be desirable. It lowers the unemployment rate. Consider that crime/prisoners create jobs: police, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, clerks, prison guards, prison medical personnel, prison administration, etc. Consider, also, that people in prison are not counted when unemployment statistics are collected. It creates a scapegoat class for the rich people and politicians to focus blame upon for the ills of society so that they can maintain power and control. Consider that poverty and racism, the lack of education (academic and education-vocational) and unemployment are the root cause of crime. Yet we blame the criminal instead of the conditions that created the crime/criminal. We do little to correct either. The prison system is a tool to control certain racial minorities in our society, as well as the poor.

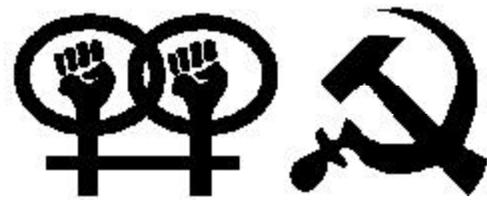
If this idea still seems bizarre, consider the fact that millions of dollars are made from the cheap labor of prisoners. Just think of what would happen if the state really started to rehabilitate prisoners instead of just warehousing them? Obviously, they would come out of prison looking for a job rather than looking to pull a job and would be less likely to return to prison. This would mean that California would have to stop building prisons and start closing them down. This would mean finding another purpose for those closed prisons. It seems to me that a lot of people have a vested interest in seeing that rehabilitation does not take place behind prison walls.

Dostoevsky got it right when he said, "The degree of civilization can be judged by entering its prisons." Prisons have been renamed and are now called "correctional facilities" because of the rehabilitation which is supposed to go on inside. Then when the public looks at the high recidivism rate or hears stories about parolees committing new crimes, they are led to believe that rehabilitation is a failure. That it isn't possible. But the truth of the matter is that no valid efforts are being made to bring about rehabilitation. From what I've seen, rehabilitation did not fail, it was not achieved because the system isn't interested in rehabilitating anyone. Most prison programs look good on paper but have little or no rehabilitation value. The only valid rehabilitation program the prison system ever had was the college program which significantly lowered the recidivism rate. In 1992, this program was taken away from prisoners. The saddest aspect of this whole matter is that prisoners are not only receptive to rehabilitation efforts and programs, but they are anxious—even desperate—for them. Instead of rehabilitation, they go through dehumanization and when finally released back into society, they are in worse shape than when they first entered prison.

The system can judge its success by how quickly the released return to prison. Its failures are those that some how manage to beat the odds to become law-abiding productive members of society.

- A California Prisoner, April 2004





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.

“Educación no Encarcelación”

Traducido por Células de Estudio para la Liberación de Aztlán y América Latina.

Las unidades de máxima seguridad son cárceles especiales dentro de una cárcel diseñadas para impedir la organización de los presos.

En California, el MIM y la LRAI están llevando a cabo una lucha prolongada para cerrar las unidades de máxima seguridad. Éstas representan un ejemplo de las condiciones más bárbaras que existen en el sistema carcelario de EE.UU.

En nuestras presentaciones abordamos el tema de dichas cárceles rindiéndoles a los estudiantes testimonios de abusos y privación sensorial que sufren los presos. Muchos de los estudiantes reconocieron que estas condiciones no tendrían ningún beneficio social cuando los presos salieran libres.

Muchos estudiantes también reconocieron paralelos entre sus vidas y las acusaciones en contra de “pandilleros” que se usan para meter a gente en las unidades de máxima seguridad. Un estudiante dijo que sólo bastaba que tres personas vestidas del mismo color se juntaran en una esquina para que la policía los molestara. Muchos otros contaron que la policía de la ciudad de Oakland siempre usa violencia excesiva como, por ejemplo, el apuntar el barril de una pistola contra la cabeza de un detenido.

Durante la manifestación subsiguiente, un invitado retomó este tema mencionando las leyes contra la vagancia y la holgazanería que existen en la ciudad de Oakland. Dijo que estas leyes equivalen a la reacción del estado frente a la liberación de esclavos africanos que dio como resultado una creación de una ola superflua de fuerza laboral desperdiciada en EE.UU. Una estudiante de la preparatoria contó que en su escuela ella había sido castigada de una manera injusta por discutir temas políticos. Además mencionó el hecho de que el año pasado el distrito escolar pidió ayuda al servicio secreto para investigar el caso de dos estudiantes que habían dicho que George Bush estaba loco.

Tomando en cuenta las pláticas y las manifestaciones en las que participamos, podemos concluir con confianza que esta semana valió la pena. Apoyamos a los jóvenes de las naciones oprimidas en California y respaldamos su demanda de que el dinero que hoy se usa para mandarlos a la cárcel se use para educarlos. Como dijimos en julio en nuestro informe sobre el foro educativo en Oakland: “El contenido revolucionario de esta campaña proviene del carácter de clase de los involucrados.

Pedimos que el dinero no se use para la represión y que se invierta en las necesidades básicas”(1).

En nuestro último informe también dijimos que “el impacto principal de tal campaña sólo será fuerte en conjunto con nuestros esfuerzos para que el dinero no sólo se use de otra forma sino para que también podamos decidir cómo utilizarlo.”

De las más de 200 personas que participaron en la manifestación en el palacio municipal de Oakland el día 19 de noviembre, casi todos venían de dos pequeños colegios independientes: La Academia de las Calles y la Escuela para la Justicia Social. Estos colegios existen dentro del sistema escolar público pero su organización y currículos son independientes, como si fueran colegios “Charter” (colegios que reciben fondos especiales (estatales) y operan bajo reglas diferentes a las de los demás colegios del distrito escolar). Aunque son parte del sistema estos colegios, sin embargo, parecen ser una fuente progresista y productiva entre los estudiantes de Oakland. No sabemos mucho sobre sus programas, pero los estudiantes que asistieron a la conferencia y en particular los que expresaron sus opiniones desde el escenario, pasaron todo el día hablando en contra de la violencia policial, el sistema carcelario y hasta en contra de los demás colegios del distrito de Oakland.

Los líderes estudiantiles de este movimiento saben reconocer las relaciones entre el sistema carcelario, el capitalismo y cientos de años de opresión. Y casi todos los estudiantes con los que hablamos sostienen una opinión negativa sobre el sistema carcelario. Pero cuando les preguntamos cuál sería la solución al problema de crímenes violentos, no supieron responder. La mayoría opina que los seres humanos seguirán violando y asesinando y que así son las cosas. Esto parece ser el obstáculo más grande para desencadenar un poderoso movimiento de jóvenes para transformar la sociedad. Cuando las Panteras Negras demostraron que el pueblo podía llevar a cabo el cambio, el apoyo que recibieron de su comunidad aumentó muchísimo. Debemos seguir el ejemplo de las Panteras Negras para organizar al pueblo sirviéndole bajo una estrategia que haga posible un cambio general del sistema.

Fuentes consultadas: 1. MIM Notes 286, Septiembre 1, 2003.

¿Que es el MIM?

El Movimiento Internacionalista Maoísta (MIM) es un partido revolucionario comunista que ejerce el Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoísmo. El MIM es una organización internacionalista que trabaja desde el punto de vista del proletariado del Tercer Mundo; es por esto que sus miembros no son americanos sino ciudadanos del mundo.

El MIM lucha para acabar con la opresión de todos los grupos sobre cualquier otro, naciones por naciones, clases por clases, y géneros por géneros. La revolución es una realidad para los Estados Unidos mientras su ejército continúa extendiéndose en su esfuerzo por asegurar la hegemonía mundial.

El MIM difiere de otros partidos en tres puntos básicos: (1) El MIM sostiene que después que el proletariado conquiste el poder estatal, existirá aún el potencial para una restauración de tipo capitalista, bajo la dirección de una burguesía nueva dentro del mismo partido comunista. En el caso de la Unión Soviética, la burguesía se apoderó del gobierno después de la muerte de Stalin, en 1953; y en China después de la muerte de Mao y del derrocamiento de la llamada “banda de los cuatro” en 1976. (2) El MIM sostiene que la Revolución Cultural en China es la fase más avanzada a la que llegó el comunismo en la historia. (3) El MIM afirma que la clase trabajadora blanca de los EE.UU. es primordialmente, una élite trabajadora no revolucionaria en el presente. Es por esto que no es el principal vehículo para avanzar el Maoísmo en este país.

El MIM acepta como miembro a cualquier individuo que esté de acuerdo con estos tres puntos básicos, y que acepte al centralismo democrático, el método de gobierno por la mayoría en lo que se refiere a cuestiones de línea del partido. El MIM es un partido clandestino que no publica los nombres de sus miembros para evitar la represión estatal dirigida históricamente contra los movimientos revolucionarios comunistas, y anti-imperialistas. Si Ud. desea una suscripción para cualquiera de nuestros periódicos o libros teóricos, en español o en inglés, por favor mandar dinero en efectivo o un cheque al nombre de MIM a esta dirección:

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