

Prisoners in the short-corridor Group D control unit in Pelican Bay State Prison (PBSP), Crescent City, California are planning a food strike to protest inhuman conditions of isolation. These prisoners are locked up in long term isolation, often on false gang validations as punishment for political organizing or refusing to snitch on others. They are cut off from contact with their families, not even able to send photographs, or talk to them on the phone. Their food strike begins July 1 2011. Their demands include an end to group punishment for individual actions and an end to the bogus debriefing process, more visitation and interaction with family members, and adequate food.

Pelican Bay is where many politically influential prisoners in California are sent, which is in fact the reason why the unit was built in the first place. The construction in 1989 was part of a conscious campaign to crush prison activism and the inherently anti-imperialist politics of the incarcerated oppressed nations, following the strong prison movement that peaked in the 1970s in California.

The Security Housing Units (SHU, also known as Control Units) were developed to isolate the most capable leaders among the prisoners. The groups that weren't crushed were outlawed. Through the process of "gang validations," the control unit in PBSP is used to limit the organizing abilities of members of oppressed nations. The more politically active and revolutionary-minded a prisoner is, the more they are targeted by the state for transfer to Pelican Bay or another SHU. People are not isolated because of violent acts they commit, or even for having plans of committing violent acts; they are isolated because it is *illegal* for them to interact with their own people.

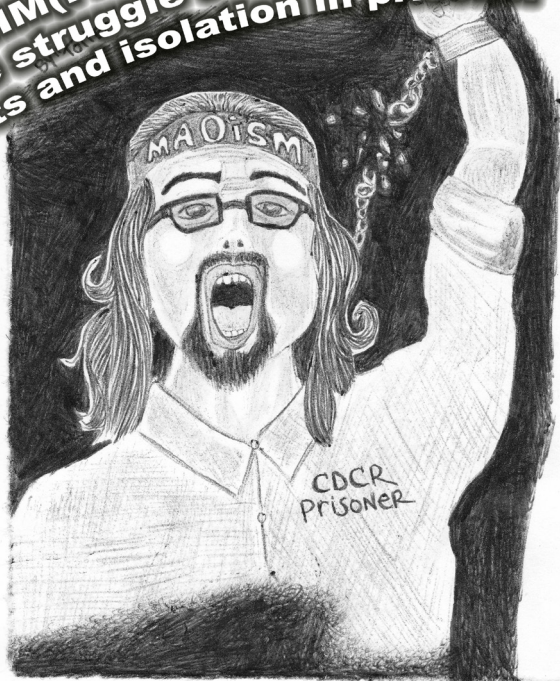
That it is illegal for oppressed people to organize with each other, for any reason, is obviously a method of ensuring the supremacy of the American nation in North America, yet it is presented by legislators, politicians, prison administrators, and the corporate media as a way of saving the streets from criminal organizations. In *Under Lock & Key issue 7*, MIM(Prisons) and many prisoners explained that when prisoners are not allowed to organize for their own interests as oppressed peoples, violence actually increases in prisons and then spills out onto the streets. The talking heads could easily recognize this contradiction, but choose not to because it does not serve their interests. Amerika wants divisions between, and violence amongst, oppressed nations peoples, because it keeps the oppressed distracted from their common enemy.

How does staff determine that someone is a gang member? Playing a game of chess with a validated person, receiving a greeting card from a validated person, or even just talking to a validated person can get you validated, too. "Confidential information" is often used to validate someone, which may be falsified by someone trying to save themselves from these inhuman conditions, or may not exist at all.

Prisoners in PBSP are forced to "debrief" (snitch) if they want to get out of the SHU, whether they have real information on someone or not. The prevalence of snitching is an indicator of the current state of disunity within prisons. But snitching doesn't necessarily come from personal vendettas; people say what the administration wants to hear, or what the administration tells them to say, and it is accepted as evidence by the very same administration. The snitch is then ostracized for obvious reasons. That extreme isolation, torture, violence, and denial of privileges are used to extract this "information" shows that the administration is the real enemy here. If the administration let up their torture tactics, we believe most snitching would stop.

Oppressed people should be allowed to organize freely, even in prisons, and we are not content with a "more transparent" validation process, or a validation process conducted by a third party. The conditions in Pelican Bay State Prison reflect the state of the criminal injustice system across the United States. Prisons are used as a tool of social control, and this has resulted in the largest prison population in the world (relative to population size), and the locking up of large portions of the Black and Latino nations. It is no surprise that this system leads the oppressed nations to organize themselves behind bars. Self-defense against a system that is literally burying people alive would demand no less. This leads to an ever worsening cycle of repression and isolation within Amerika's prisons. The only real solution is an end to the entire criminal injustice system. While we fight for that revolutionary change, MIM(Prisons) supports the demands of striking prisoners on short-corridor Group D in Pelican Bay State Prison.

MIM(Prisons) supports the struggle to end control units and isolation in prisons!



Support the food strike in Pelican Bay State Prison to protest inhuman isolation!

Strike Begins July 1, 2011

Send letters to the addresses below, or make noise in your own way (by hosting a candlelight vigil, a demonstration, etc.).

Warden Greg Lewis
Pelican Bay State Prison
P.O. Box 7000
Crescent City, CA 95531-7000

Internal Affairs CDCR
10111 Old Placerville Rd, Ste 200
Sacramento, CA 95827

CDCR, Office of the Ombudsman
1515 S Street, Room 540 North
Sacramento, CA 95811

Send copies of your letters to:
MIM(Prisons)
P.O. Box 40799
San Francisco, CA 94140

Example Letter:

Dear Warden Lewis,

I am writing this letter to you to express my concern for the prisoners held in Pelican Bay State Prisons's short-corridor Group D. It is my understanding that these people have no disciplinary charges, but are being held in extreme isolation, unable to send photographs to their families or speak to them on the phone.

I am concerned that these prisoners, who are under your responsibility, are being denied their Constitutional right to due process. Not only do these prisoners not have any disciplinary charges, but IGI is intimidating and harrasing them into fabricating information to avoid false gang validations. This is illegal and upsetting. As a citizen of the state of California, I fund your paycheck, and I expect more from a state employee than to allow these gross violations of the Constitution to happen right under your nose.

Studies prove time and time again that prisoners who have contact with their family are able to rehabilitate much better than those who are isolated. They are better able to adjust to society when they are released, and avoid being sent back to prison. It is completely irresponsible that you would permit IGI to cause this potential damage in a person's life, when they are supposed to be allowed these privileges.

Since you are the Warden of Pelican Bay State Prison, I am asking that you intervene in these illegal and irresponsible practices going on in short-corridor Group D. Please allow the prisoners held their their full privileges according to CDCR policies, and end the harrasment and intimidation of prisoners, especially ones who have no information, and no disciplinary actions.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I also thank you for your future efforts to resolve this problem.

Sincerely,
Your Name Here

**[FOR MORE INFO OR TO SPREAD THIS CAMPAIGN VISIT
HTTP://STOP.PRISONCENSORSHIP.INFO/CAMPAIGNS/CA]**