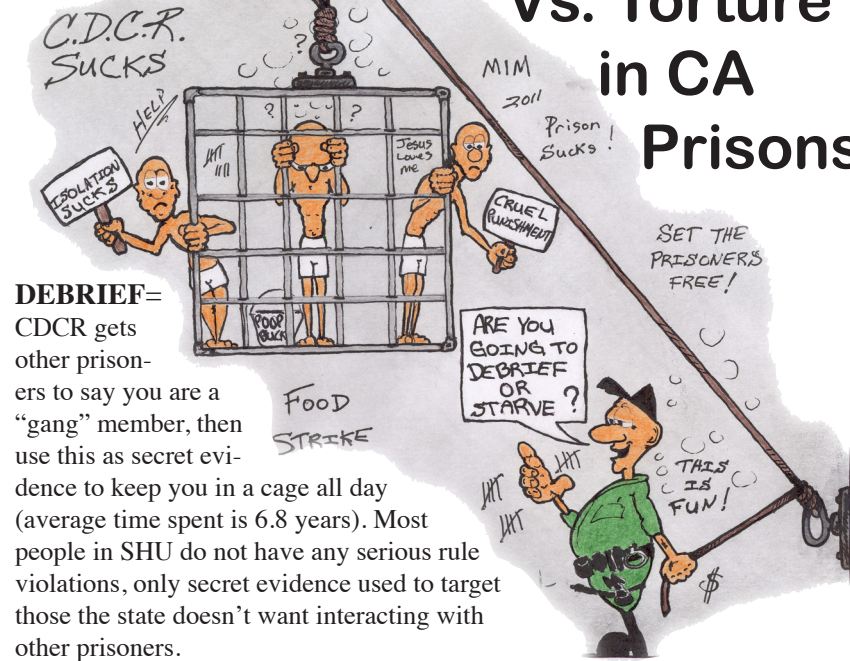


Support Strike Vs. Torture in CA Prisons!



DEBRIEF=
CDCR gets other prisoners to say you are a "gang" member, then use this as secret evidence to keep you in a cage all day (average time spent is 6.8 years). Most people in SHU do not have any serious rule violations, only secret evidence used to target those the state doesn't want interacting with other prisoners.

UPDATE: Fed's report 12,000 Prisoners participated in Week 1. Lawyer and family visits have been stopped, cutting off communications with the outside. Work with us to help prisoners organize!

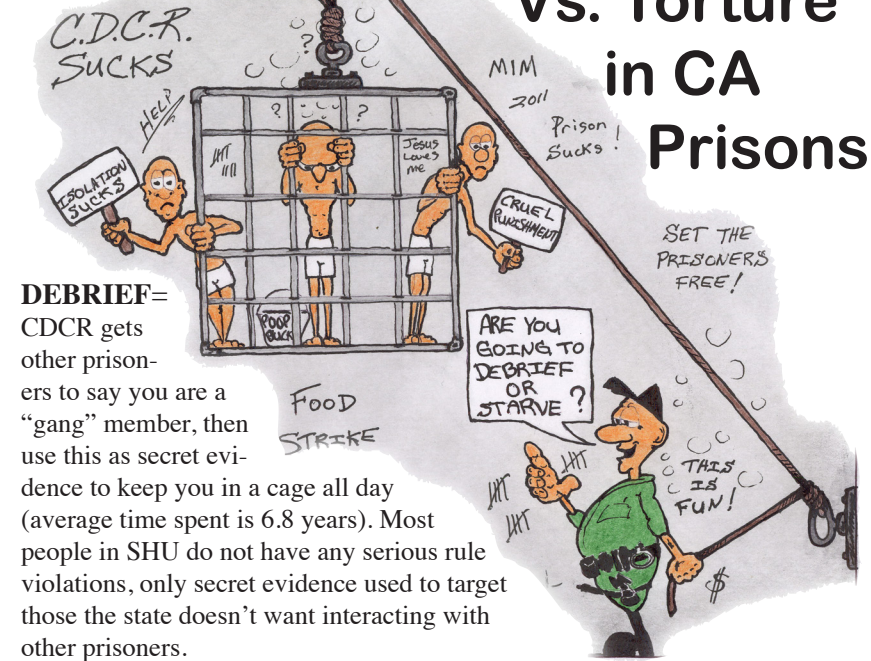
On September 26, prisoners in Pelican Bay State Prison resumed their indefinite hunger strike after 2 months of hiatus. The strike began on July 1, sweeping across California, and was put on hold by organizers on July 21 after the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) promised the 5 demands would be met, but that they needed 2 to 3 weeks to comply. A few of the minor demands have been granted, but there have been no changes around the most important demands, including an end to long term solitary confinement and a change to the policies (such as debriefing and secret evidence) used to force so many people into solitary confinement (torture chambers called Security Housing Units), were not addressed.

Prisoners received notices that they will face "progressive discipline" for refusing food this time around. In typical repressive fashion, the state responds to complaints of torture committed by state employees by outlawing any form of protest by the victims.

In response to our work around the strike, our mail to Pelican Bay prisoners is now being censored (again) as a threat to security. As much as they want to label us a "security threat group" for doing it, MIM(Prisons) continues to struggle for our right to support prison-based organizing. For it is the prisoners who have the drive and determination to make the changes that need to be made to end this oppressive system.

Wanna Help? Spread the word. Write/phone officials. Work with MIM(Prisons) to build organizing networks on the inside. Help us fight censorship in CA. see attached, and stop.prisoncensorship.info

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Prisoners in the short-corridor Group D control unit in Pelican Bay State Prison (PBSP), Crescent City, California organized a food strike in July 2011 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 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. Read a full list of their demands here.

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 Amerikan 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 persyn, receiving a greeting card from a validated persyn, or even just talking to a validated persyn 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 persynal 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.

The Smallest Thing You Can Do to Support the Prisoners is Write/Call the Governor:

Governor Jerry Brown
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-2841

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

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