

# Under Lock & Key



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## Red Onion State Prison: Obstruction of Justice

by a Virginia prisoner  
August 2007

*"Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people, by its example. Crime is contagious. If the Government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for the law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself."* *Olmstead v. U. S.*, 277 U. S. 439, 485 (1927)

In April 2007, Richard Rowlette became the new Assistant Warden at Red Onion State Prison (ROSP). Rowlette had previously worked at ROSP in the position of Security Chief from the time that the prison opened in 1998 until December 1999. During that time he was a principal administrative player and ringleader in the racist abuses that won ROSP its reputation for prisoner mistreatment. He was instrumental in helping ROSP gain national notoriety as one of the country's most abusive prisons.

Since his promotion to Assistant Warden, I have filed an official complaint with Rowlette concerning ROSP officials refusing me telephone contact with two attorneys who had offered me their professional assistance. I presented a request to Rowlette to allow me to call these two lawyers.

Months before, both of these lawyers had verified their credentials and their intent and efforts to advise and assist me in litigation against various ROSP staff, including my assigned counselor John Sykes and the chief warden Tracy Ray. One of these lawyers is Mr. Malik Shabazz. Upon being informed of my ongoing experiences of abuse at ROSP (abuse which is a response to my political activism and continuing exposure of abuses at the prison), Mr. Shabazz decided to support me. Mr. Shabazz happens to be the Chairman of the New Black Panther Party (NBPP), an organization with which I have no affiliation.

Rowlette's response was that if he had anything to do with it I'd never talk to a lawyer. When I pointed out that this was a basic constitutional right, he responded, "Your people have no rights." I am New Afrikan (Black) so his meaning was obvious. I filed a complaint. I also filed a complaint about being denied contact with my lawyers for months, despite their repeated attempts to arrange legal calls with me. Rowlette responded to my complaint with a memo stating that my request to have confidential legal calls to these lawyers was "DENIED."

*Continued on page 6*



## Announcing MIM(Prisons)!

You are receiving this newsletter from the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons - MIM(Prisons). In the past year the Maoist Internationalist Movement has taken some security hits and has changed its organizing strategy as a result. One of the significant changes relates to cell-based organizing. In September 2007, MIM spun off the prison ministry into an independent cell. The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons or MIM(Prisons) upholds the MIM cardinal questions and political line. We distribute MIM Notes and MIM Theory and recommend these independent media outlets as well as the MIM web site at etext.org as sources for correct news and theoretical analysis. We carry forward the work of the MIM in the fight against the criminal injustice system.

Some of you receiving this have written to us in the past year and received no response. We are in the process of catching up on mail and therefore have included general introductory information in this issue of Under Lock and Key. If you are receiving this then you are on our mailing list for a free prisoner subscription.

*Continued on page 2*

**Write us at our new Address:**  
**MIM(Prisons)**  
**PO Box 40799**  
**San Francisco, CA 94140**

## Gender Oppression in US Prisons

by MIM(Prisons)  
September 2007

### Sexual Violence in Prison shows Gender not about Genitalia

In 2004, pictures released from u\$ prisons in Iraq showed amerikan bio-wimmin warding over primarily bio-male Iraqis in acts of rape and sexual assault. This incident helped substantiate MIM's long-standing line that gender is not based on genitalia and that amerikans with female genitalia are in fact gendered male. The male gender, by definition, being the dominant group in gender relations under the patriarchy.

MIM had already suggested that prisoners in the united States might be gender oppressed before the Abu Ghraib pictures came out. This was due to the control of the sexuality and leisure time of prisoners by the state. In particular, Black men as a group are prevented from having consistent sexual relationships. This of course affects the family structure of the oppressed and therefore is a form of national oppression as well.

To help sort out the gender status of biomale prisoners, a recent Department of Justice report gives us the surprising statistics that, "In State and Federal prisons, 65% of inmate victims of staff sexual misconduct and harassment were male, while 58% of staff perpetrators were female". (Here we are discussing the 52% of reported sexual violence in prisons where the captor assaulted captive. The rest were inmate-on-inmate assaults, addressed more below.) (1) In the general population 97% of sexual violence reports are wimmin victims and the perpetrator is generally male (around 98%). The instance of female perpetrators is actually a higher rate in instances of assaults on males, estimated at around 14%. (2) Much higher than female assaults on wimmin, but nowhere near the 58% of assaults on prisoners of any biology.

With 93% of the u.\$ prison population being male, we would expect a much higher percentage of assaults to be against males than females, even if rates of assault for wimmin was higher. But assuming 97% of victimization is of bio-wimmin as it is on the street, you'd only get 29% of the absolute number of assaults being against men in prison. So we're seeing a ratio of male to female victims on the order of 2 times the general population. In other words, if wimmin are five times as likely to be assaulted in

*Continued on page 4*

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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 Aztlán, Puerto Rico and other territories of the U.S. Empire. MIM Notes is the newspaper 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 possible by building public opinion to seize power through armed struggle. Revolution is a reality for the United States as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony. [Note to prisoners and to mailroom staff -- MIM and its publications explicitly oppose the use of armed struggle at this time in the imperialist countries (including the united states). Our current battles in the united states are legal ones. We encourage prisoners to join these battles while explicitly discouraging them from engaging in any violence or illegal acts.]

## MIM Notes and Newsletters

MIM Notes has been published sporadically over the past two years and mailed only occasionally to prisoners. The irregular publication and mailing is a result of labor and funding difficulties. When MIM Notes is printed, we will continue to mail that to prisoners active on our mailing list. In addition, to fill in the void left by MIM Notes' absence, the MIM(Prisons) cell has begun publishing its own newsletter in 2007, entitled Under Lock & Key. This publication will contain the Under Lock & Key feature from MIM Notes, with news written by prisoners about struggles and repression in prison. It will also feature news articles linking the fight against the criminal injustice system to the larger anti-imperialist struggle. We welcome contributions from prisoners. Articles written by prisoners will also be featured on the MIM(Prisons) web site: [www.prisoncensorship.info](http://www.prisoncensorship.info). Please share this web site with your friends and family on the outside.

The MIM(Prison) newsletter is free to all prisoners and is mailed out to all prisoners actively engaged in correspondence with us when it is within our means to do so. You have been added to our mailing list but the only way to ensure you stay active on our mailing list is by working with us and corresponding regularly. If we do not hear from you for 6 months we will drop you from the mailing list, and if mail we send to you is rejected by the prison we will inactivate your subscription until we defeat the censors. If you have trouble receiving our mail

please help us help you overcome this censorship by notifying us of any rejection notices the prison gives you (and sending us a copy if possible). When you write to us, also let us know what newsletters, literature and other mail you have received from us so that we can confirm that our mail is getting through.

## United Struggle from Within (USW)

United Struggle from Within (USW) is an organization of anti-imperialist prisoners, led by MIM(Prisons) and is a place for anti-imperialists to organize from within the prison system. USW comrades contribute writings about prison conditions to Under Lock and Key, circulate MIM literature within prisons, conduct study groups, and generally take some practical leadership in educating (through strictly legal means) about prisons as an aspect of u.s. imperialism. This is something to think about if you are interested in activism to expose the Amerikan prisons system and in organizing as part of a general anti-imperialist movement.

We are building the tools to educate prisoners and people on the outside about the oppression of prisoners. And we are doing this in a way that emphasizes anti-imperialism. Through organization it is possible for regular people to build independent institutions (like MIM Notes and Under Lock & Key) that can take on the imperialists' institutions. Without Under Lock & Key and MIM Notes, the masses would have to rely on other news sources for coverage of prisons issues. So, to paraphrase Fred Hampton, we don't just talk about the fact that the Chicago Sun-Times doesn't cover prisons well, we build our own newspaper to help fill the void.

Similarly, through our newsletters, website and large network of comrades, we can promote and distribute information about various campaigns against oppression within the injustice system. It is up to prisoners in USW to study their conditions and help realize the needs of the masses where they are at. What sort of things are oppressing the people and holding back the struggle the most? Those are the issues we want to be addressing. In general, we also want to focus on the group level, rather than campaigning for individuals or deals for a small group. MIM(Prisons) is always actively working with comrades in USW to develop, execute and promote such campaigns.

## Free Books for Prisoners

MIM(Prisons)'s Free Political Literature to Prisoners Program is a Serve the People (STP) program founded on the model of the Black Panther Party's Breakfast for Schoolchildren and other STP programs, and on the basis of Mao's emphasis that Communists should serve the people in everything we do. The purpose of the Free Political Literature for Prisoners program is to do what we can to help prisoners turn their time under lock & key into a time to develop their politics and to build with us toward the beginnings of a more just and productive society. We collect and send out political, le-

gal and historical books primarily (we also have some dictionaries and other reference items that are useful for writers), to give prisoners tools to study the conditions under which they are living and to turn their knowledge into political organizing.

The Free Political Literature to Prisoners program is not a book of the month club. The books are free because we know that many prisoners cannot afford any money contributions to MIM, and this should not be a barrier to organizing. Education is a necessary part of organization. But because our purpose is to organize we expect that comrades in prison will exchange work for the books we send. This article details many options for ways you can get involved and political work you can do. Prisoners should write articles for Under Lock and Key, create revolutionary art, form study groups with other comrades and work through the study group to educate and organize, share our literature and expand our mailing list, lead campaigns against local examples of oppression, or come up with other ways to contribute to the struggle. If you can afford donations of stamps or money, we can always use them to get you more books or to help other comrades who cannot afford to pay for their books.

Any literature that you receive from us is made possible by the Free Books for Prisoners program (like back issues of MIM Notes, MIM Theory, donated books, etc.) There is no set list of books available as we rely on donations and used bookstores to fill our stock. You can request specific books but it is better to request general topic areas so that MIM can fill your order with what is available. Again, lack of funds will not keep you from getting literature, but lack of political work will. We will ask you to help us build MIM(Prisons) and USW through your own work in exchange for the books. If you would like to receive books from MIM(Prisons)'s Free Political Literature to Prisoners program, please let us know the subject areas you are interested in, and also the types of political work you are interested in doing.

## Fight Censorship

MIM Notes, MIM Theory, MIM/Prisoner correspondence and even books like dictionaries have been censored by state and prison officials ever since we've been organizing on behalf of prisoners. If your MIM(Prisons) correspondence is censored, the first thing you need to know is that you are not alone in working to get your mail and reading materials, and that we can provide assistance in helping you to get your letters and literature. You will need to be prepared to do the work yourself (making copies of rejection notices, filing grievances, sending copies of these documents to us), but we can give you instructions on how to do this.

These are some basic steps we recommend all prisoner comrades think about and keep in mind:

1. Find out now what the prison rules say about your right to mail and reading materials.

*Continued on page 4*



## CA Prisons Ban MIM

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has instituted a ban on educational material within prisons, categorically censoring all literature sent by MIM's prisoner education program. This ban was mandated by Scott Kernan, Director of the Division of Adult Institutions for California, in a memorandum issued December 13, 2006 "directing an immediate ban on the receipt, possession, or distribution of literature/publications from MIM to or by inmates in the custody of the CDCR." This ban has been interpreted by prisons to include dictionaries and history books as well as MIM's own magazine and newspapers. In some prisons the ban has been interpreted to also include all letters written by MIM.

This censorship is in direct violation of legal precedent which requires review of mail for content that violates prison policy. Systematic rejection of all mail from an organization based on disagreement with the sender's politics is not legal, even within the prison system's own rules and regulations.

Neither Kernan nor the prison administrators applying the ban have ever supplied any evidence that MIM literature (much less, letters, dictionaries and other books MIM sends to prisoners) present any threat to the institutions. Kernan's letter contains a review of the MIM political line as supposed evidence that MIM represents some danger to California prisons. The California Code Of Regulations (CCR) Title 15, sec: 3135(b) states: "Disagreement with the senders or receivers apparent moral values, attitudes veracity, or choice of words will not be used by correctional staff as a reason for disallowing or delaying mail. Correctional staff shall not challenge or confront the sender or receiver with such value judgments, nor shall such value judgments be considered in any action affecting the correspondents." Further, in *Procunier v. Martinez*, the Supreme Court upholds the right of prisoners to receive mail, regardless of the prison official's opinion of the mail content, as long as there are no legitimate restrictions from the prison related to correctional purposes.

There is a strong correlation between educa-

tion and imprisonment. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (the U.S. Department of Justice's own organization) latest study on 1997 population data, 41% of State and Federal prisoners had not completed high school. This compares with 18% of the general population age 18 and older.<sup>(1)</sup> Things look even worse among prisoners age 20 to 39 showing that the trend is towards more prisoners without a high school education as younger prisoners are even less educated than older prisoners. Other more recent studies have shown this trend continues. The likelihood of ending up in prison is tremendously higher for young Black men who drop out of school before getting a high school diploma. And a college degree is further protection against imprisonment.

On the other side of education, in-prison education programs have repeatedly been shown to reduce recidivism by helping prisoners to find jobs and opportunities once they are released. Individual and meta studies repeatedly conclude the same thing: "Since 1990, the literature has shown that prisoners who attend educational programs while they are incarcerated are less likely to return to prison following their release. Studies in several states have indicated that recidivism rates have declined where inmates have received an appropriate education. Furthermore, the right kind of educational program leads to less violence by inmates involved in the programs and a more positive prison environment."<sup>(2)</sup>

California already has one of the highest recidivism rates in the country, with an astronomical 70% of released prisoners ending up back inside within three years. And in recent years we have seen education programs, visitation, and even mail cut back so that prisoners are left with very little to do behind bars and a virtually impossible task of going straight from prison to the streets with no education or transitional services.

Implementing a state-wide ban of educational material from MIM is one more way to keep prisoners locked up. Prisoners who read our literature frequently tell us they learn to channel their time into productive activities rather than participating in violence behind bars. And the education helps them have a better chance at staying on the street once they are released. We get letters pleading for reading materials like this one all the time: "I'm an inmate at Salinas Valley State Prison and am

on a yard that's been on lockdown off and on for approximately 4 years. Therefore I'm unable to get to the library here. I've read every 'floater' here. I would be very grateful for any soft back books you could send. Anything you send will be read and reread by many inmates." Surely the CDCR knows there is a demand for reading materials in the prisons, but they don't even bother to fill this void with fluff novels. They prefer to spend their large budget on higher salaries for brutal guards and legal defense for their illegal activities like setting up prisoner fights for sport.

Of course, the CDCR does have reasons to ban MIM from the prisons. Educating prisoners is counter to their goal. With education comes consciousness, and while prisoners working with MIM report avoiding violent confrontations (both with their peers and with guards), they are also more likely to take up legal and administrative appeals, and to educate and organize their fellow prisoners to stand up for their legal rights. As one California prisoner wrote to us in October of last year:

"In extending my respects to all, I would also like to convey my heartfelt appreciation to everyone working at, working with and/or affiliated with Maoist Internationalist Movement for all that you do and the services you provide. Especially, in regards to prisoners. Speaking from personal experience I can say that in receiving and reading your newsletters, it's both a major source of motivation and encouragement. To say that your MIM Notes have served me well does not cover any specifics, but I can say that your notes have been a potent ingredient towards my transformation: and your free books to prisoners program has nurtured and fed me like a baby at his mother's bosom. The books you have been so generous to send have taught me to respect and value the importance of an education...an education that has taught me that with knowledge comes enormous responsibility. The responsibility that arises from not just knowing the difference between what is said to be right, or wrong, testing an deciphering, truth and lies, but knowing and acting in accordance with what is consistent and progressive in the exercise of self determination and self defense."

We will continue to pursue the fight against this ban in California, working closely with our comrades behind bars to challenge this action in court if necessary. We encourage the CDCR leadership and California state politicians to step forward and overturn this illegal ban before they are forced to waste money needlessly in a legal battle that will only further expose their disregard for Rehabilitation, the welfare of prisoners, and the very laws they claim to uphold.

*1. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report: Education and Correctional Populations, January 2003* 2. *Journal of Correctional Education*, v55 n4, p297-305, December 2004. See also *The Nation*, March 4, 2005: "Studies have clearly shown that participants in prison education, vocation and work programs have recidivism rates 20-60 percent lower than those of nonparticipants. Another recent major study of prisoners found that participants in education programs were 29 percent less likely to end up back in prison, and that participants earned higher wages upon release."

### Three Main Points

**MIM differs from other communist parties on three main questions:**

\* 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.

\* MIM upholds the Chinese Cultural Revolution as the farthest advance of communism in humankind's history.

\* 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 Canada, Quebec, the United States, England, France, Belgium, Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Israel, Sweden and Denmark.

"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.

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If you don't have or have not read the prison's or DOC's prisoner mail policy already you should read this policy carefully and get a copy of it for your files is possible. You can also send us copies of the rules to post on our website at [www.prisoncensorship.info](http://www.prisoncensorship.info).

2. Find out what the prison's implementation of these policies is like

3. To keep our correspondence going, write to us every 3 months. If you're writing us every three months and are not getting any correspondence from us, there's a problem with your mail delivery. Do not assume we're ignoring you.

4. If your correspondence with us is censored, it is very important that you keep copies of all the paperwork, (rejection notices, grievances, etc.) and send us copies of these as well. Sometimes this is the first way we find out that our correspondence and literature has been censored. Once we know our correspondence with you is being censored we will work with you to help get it going again.

## Translate into Spanish

If you write Spanish or would like to translate Under Lock and Key articles written in Eng-

... Continued from page 1

prison than they are on the street, then men are 10 times as likely.

Unfortunately, the study does not breakdown the statistics of female on male vs. female on female assaults. But even if we assume that all of the 35% of staff sexual assaults on wimmin in state and federal prisons are perpetrated by wimmin, that leaves another 23% of the perpetrators who are females attacking males (assuming on-to-one incidents, which was the vast majority). Even if you want to argue that no male guards ever sexually assault female prisoners, you see a significantly greater rate of bio-wimmin engaging in sexual violence against males in prison compared to the general population. Since female assaults on males in the general population are much higher than female assaults on females, we would be better off assuming the opposite. If we assume a proportional breakdown you'd be comparing 58% female perpetrators against bio-men in prison against the 14% on the street. If that weren't bad enough, we must factor in that females are still only a minority of prison staff, accounting for 22% in the federal system. (3) So that 58% of assailants is coming from maybe a quarter of the staff that happen to be bio-wimmin. These are the statistics that back up our line on Lyndie England that it could have been any amerikkkan womyn sexually assaulting Iraqi bio-men. And if we acknowledge that Iraqis under occupation are much more powerless and oppressed than amerikan citizens, then these statistics speak even louder to say that amerikan bio-wimmin are the enemies of the oppressed.

So first we saw that the vulnerability of men to sexual assault increases twice as much as wimmin after incarceration. On the flip side, we see bio-wimmin working for the state greatly increase their rates of assault compared to wimmin on the street. They go so far as to overcome

lish into Spanish, this helps the development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism among the Spanish-speaking peoples of the world, particularly the internal semi-colonies of the U.S., who are a fast growing segment of the prison population. If you want to do translation, let us know. If you want to submit articles in Spanish, go ahead.

## Share Literature and Recruit Subscribers

Let others read the literature we send you. Talk to potential comrades about our politics and work and have them write in to get put on our mailing list. We always want to be expanding the number of people we reach.

## Administrative Details

Correspondence requirement: To stay active on our mailing list you need to write to us at least every 6 months. Because of the overwhelming amount of censorship in prisons, and the rate at which your captors move you around, we need to know where you are at to continue and expand our work with you. Also please send donations of stamps or money to the same address if you can help cover the cost of sending you literature.

Releases: To keep working with comrades after you get out of prison, we need to know if you are looking at a (possible) release date at any time in the next two years. Please let us know as soon as you have a possible release scheduled. Please also let us know your expected address on release. Even if it is only the address of a relative who you think will be in the same place for a while, this could be the difference between losing contact and staying in touch and politically active after you are released.

Your personal papers: Please do not send us legal papers that pertain to your case unless you have checked with us first. We strongly encourage comrades to write articles about the political implications of their situation or case, but in general we cannot do anything with your legal papers as we do not have the resources to get involved in individuals' cases. Please do not send us your only copies of artwork, articles or other writings unless you are certain that you will not need them in the future. Comrades have requested that we make copies of their work and send these copies back. Doing this takes up time that would otherwise go to filling book requests, fighting censorship and answering letters.

## Gender Oppression in Prisons (continued)

men at the state and federal levels. In local jails the stats were closer to life on the streets, with 80% of the victims of staff sexual assault being female and 79% of perpetrators being male. (1) But even there a 20% rate of victimization of bio-men and 21% rate of assault by bio-wimmin is a noticeable difference.

## Prisoners More Vulnerable than Wimmin?

While it is important to move away from one-on-one relationships in trying to understand gender systematically, incidents of sexual violence remains a widely accepted and useful indicator of gender oppression. The DOJ study showed sexual violence to be reported by prisoners at a rate of 2.9 per 1000 (it is not broken down by biology). This is about the same rate that 16-24 year old people, the age group with the highest rate, report sexual assault in the general population. The overall rate of reported sexual assault in the United States is 0.8 per 1,000 according to Department of Justice statistics. Only counting wimmin, the rate is 1.4 per 1000. Going back to prisoners, if we only look at state prisons the rate was 3.75 per 1000. All of these statistics are based on reported cases, and there could be reporting discrepancies between these groups. However, the statistics for prisoners are reported by the prisons, whereas the other stats are reported directly by the individual to the survey. Therefore, incidents not reported to police may be captured in the general population data, while they will not be reflected in the prisoner data.

So, it seems that prisoners (of both genders) and youth (of both genders) are reporting more sexual assaults than wimmin over all. If being young or incarcerated is really twice as risky as having female genitalia as the report rates sug-

gest, then not only are there other considerations to determine someone's gender status, but there are factors that are much more important than what genitalia a person is born with. Below we will see how age and incarceration intersect to create one of the most gender oppressed groups in the United States.

MIM has established the basis for gender as purely gender in a person's physical development, age and health status. Therefore, when nation and class are not major complicating factors, such as within the American labor aristocracy, these are the basis for gender differences.

However, the greatest differences in gender are found between the imperialist nations and the Third World people. Therefore when we talk about the spectrum of gender oppression we place most First Worlders on the male end of the spectrum, regardless of biology. We have demonstrated how First World bio-wimmin benefit by the patriarchy elsewhere. (4) The picture of bio-wimmin as sexual assailants in prisons above only adds to this argument. Now let's continue to look at how bio-men in the internal semi-colonies suffer under patriarchy via the criminal injustice system.

## Are Black Men Gendered Female?

MIM circles have suggested that Black men could be gendered female due to their high rates of incarceration and historical vulnerability to whites who accuse them of rape. In other words, their gender power is limited by white hysteria around the Black rapist, and Black crime in general, in the context of a white-dominated society. The recently released statistics on sexual assault in prisons help to support this argument.

Among staff perpetrators in prisons and jails, 71% were white; 20%, black; and 7%, "Hispanic" and these averages were pretty similar to jails and prisons taken alone. (1) It's hard to argue that the 71% is a disproportionate number of assaults by white staff, as that is close to the representation of whites in the general population. However, in most service or otherwise undesirable fields of work, whites are becoming less common. It is a contradiction of our times that Blacks and Latinos are doing more of the footwork of the criminal injustice system than ever before. In the federal bureau of prisons whites make up only 57.2% of the staff. This number likely varies greatly among state prisons and local jails. Many states are still working on the good 'ol boy network, but some more prosperous states have taken the neo-colonial approach.

Among inmate victims, 80% were white; 14%, Black; and 5%, "Hispanic" in local jails, while 54% were white; 32%, Black; and 12% "Hispanic" in state and federal prisons. (1) In this data you see once again that whites are disproportionately the victims, even if they are slightly more likely to be the perpetrators. A couple explanations for this are suggested below. Even using the state and federal prison data, whites are 1.5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted than average, while Blacks and Latinos are below average for the prison population.

However, if you create an index based on the general population and not on prison populations you'll see that the u\$ prison system results in Black bio-men facing much more sexual assault than other bio-men, especially whites who now have an index below average at 0.78 (see figure 1). By comparing these indexes between Blacks and whites one can see that when someone is born in the united \$tates, this persyn's chances of being raped in their life would be 3.3 times greater if they are Black as opposed to white, ignoring other factors.

The identity politics crowd takes a mechanistic approach to oppression, giving the Black gay wimmin the pedestal of the most oppressed. They often put the straight Black man and straight white womyn on a similar level as each having one strike against them. But not only have Blacks historically been at the bottom of the national hierarchy in the united \$tates, in the realm of gender they can compete with the white womyn pretty well for the title of oppressed. In general, all u\$ citizens are gendered male anyway though. Just as the Black man is torn between his position as an amerikan citizen and an oppressed national, he is able to taste great gender privilege as well as oppression.

## But Prisoners are Rapists Too

The Bureau of Justice reports that 48% of the incidents of sexual violence reported by prisoners were perpetrated by other prisoners. The idea that prisoners rape each other is nothing new to amerikans. It is probably more surprising to cop-loving amerikans that 52% of the incidents were actually perpetrated by prison staff, despite research that has shown the tendency of people to mistreat others when they have control over them in an oppressive prison environment.

One question that comes to the forefront in looking at prisoner-on-prisoner rape is whether these instances parallel lines of national oppression, with the oppressed being disproportionately victimized in gender relations. However, the prisoner perpetrators of sexual assault according to the reported incidents are approximately representative of the prison population by nationality. Meanwhile, the victims of rape are 72% white, when whites only make up 35% of the general prison population. As mentioned above, the accusal of rape against Blacks and other oppressed nations has been a tool of both national and gender oppression. It is possible that some of this statistic is an exaggeration based on white hysteria. But there are also reasons to believe that whites may face greater threats of sexual assault, such as the decline of white street organizations and the association of whites with the power structure. Franz Fanon and Eldridge Cleaver both talk about the socio-political motivations behind the pursuit or rape of white wimmin by Black men. In the all-male prison environment the white man can step in to play this symbolic role. If anything, gender is used as a counter-balance to national oppression among prisoners more than an extension of white power. It is on the systematic level that Blacks are facing significantly more gender oppression as explained above.

One area there seems to be a significant difference in rates of victimization is between different agegroups of prisoners. MIM sees age as part of the gender strand of oppression, so this seems intuitive. In the last two years of data, victims were on average younger than perpetrators. The latest data from 2006, show that 44% of victims were age 24 or younger, while 81% of perpetrators were age 25 or older. Unless 44% or more of the prison population are under age 24 (U.\$ Dept of Justice does not seem to publish this data), the most vulnerable age group to sexual assault appears to be disproportionately more vulnerable once put in prison. Another source indicates that youth in adult prisons are 5 times as likely to be sexually assaulted than if they were in a youth prison. (6)

	Black	white	Latino
U.S. Population (2000)	12.32%	69.13%	12.55%
State/Fed Prison Population (2002)	43.91%	34.72%	18.26%
Sexual Assaults in Prison (2005)	32%	54%	12%
<b>Sexual Assault Victims by Nationality Compared to Population</b>			
% of Assaults / % of prison pop.*	0.73	1.56	0.66
% of Assaults / % of general pop.*	2.59	0.78	0.96

\* an index of 1 indicates a perfectly proportional representation based on population. Greater than 1 means a group faces a disproportionate percentage of assaults.

Some 82% of the victims in inmate on inmate sexual assaults were male. Where assaults are almost exclusively same-sex this is merely indicative of the significantly greater propensity for men to rape. But we cannot ignore the fact that 82% of the victims are bio-men as well. It is clearly a case of population dynamics. In this sense prisons are a perfect example to prove that gender relations are not dependent on having certain genitalia. By eliminating bio-wimmin, sexual assault does not disappear, in fact it increases for a variety of reasons in prison. And we see factors such as age, health status and physical development more clearly define a persyn's gender status. The young, physically small, mentally ill but physically healthy are the primary targets for gender oppression. (7)

In some ways the patriarchy within prisons is just a reflection of the greater society and in others it is a more extreme microcosm of power dynamics. This is indicative of the two levels on which fighting gender oppression in prisons must be conducted. The first level requires the transformation of the prison system to one that builds communal values rather than being a tool of oppression and punishment. The second requires combatting the eroticization of power in society in general and the dismantling of the patriarchy. Both require the revolutionary dictatorship of the oppressed to become realistic.

In the meantime, the extremes of amerikan prison life serve as an educational tool for the masses. It is much easier for a group to accept the "all sex is rape" line when they have been on both sides of patriarchal oppression, when they've been the victims of the extreme power dynamics of prison life, and when many have had their own gender privilege taken away for doing what every one else is doing and just calls sex or love. It is in these ways that we take some positive lessons from these statistics for the future building of a proletarian feminist vanguard among lumpen youth in the united \$tates.

The clearer lesson we take from all this is the negative lesson of the alliance of amerikan bio-wimmin to the patriarchy. The group that is traditionally considered the greatest victim of patriarchy by the white nationalist left is behind 58% of sexual assaults in u\$ prisons. That just doesn't add up.

(1) U.S. Department of Justice. *Sexual Violence Reported by Correctional Authorities*, 2006. August 2007. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/svrca06.htm>

(2) Whealin Ph.D., Julia M. National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Fact Sheet: Men and Sexual Trauma.

(3) <http://www.bop.gov/news/quick.jsp>

(4) How does the gender aristocracy benefit? <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/gender/garistocracybenefits.html>

(5) <http://www.sentencingproject.org>

(6) Stop Prisoner Rape. <http://www.spr.org/en/factsheets/basics.asp>

(7) Human Rights Watch. *No Escape: Male Rape in U.S. Prisons*. [http://hrw.org/reports/2001/prison/report4.html#\\_1\\_24](http://hrw.org/reports/2001/prison/report4.html#_1_24)

\*\*Read MIM Theory 2/3: Gender and Revolutionary Feminism for more background on this subject



... Continued from page 1

In this memo he rationalizes denying me legal calls by claiming that no attorney-client relationship exists between me and these lawyers.

The memo states that unless I prove that they are actively representing me in litigation pending in a court of record in Virginia, I will be denied legal calls. It specifically states that a letter from a lawyer stating she is representing me "will not suffice." The memo also states, "Your request is further DENIED in regards to Mr. Malik Shabazz due to his involvement with the New Black Panther Party. To allow unrecorded phone calls between you and the President/Founder of the New Black Panther Party would present an unacceptable risk to the Security of this Facility."

Rowlette's memo breaks a barrel full of criminal laws. In Virginia it is a crime for any person to interfere with the relationship of confidence and trust that must exist between a lawyer and her/his client. It is also a crime for any one not licensed to practice law to present himself as qualified to give legal opinions. Both of these acts constitute the crime of "unauthorized practice of law."

Rowlette has no legal training or authority to define the attorney-client relationship. He certainly cannot use any such unauthorized definition to block confidential communications between a lawyer and client. Indeed, the Virginia Supreme Court itself has defined what constitutes an attorney/client relationship. The court's definition is quite different from Rowlette's. In the U.S., it is the function of the courts to define and interpret the laws and the functions of executives (including prison officials), to enforce and apply those laws.

In its definitive document "Practice of Law in the Commonwealth of Virginia" (PLCV), the Virginia Supreme Court defines the attorney-client relationship as follows:

*"Generally, the relation of attorney and client exists and one is deemed to be practicing law whenever he furnishes to another advice or services under circumstances which imply his possession and use of legal knowledge or skill.*

*"Specifically, the relation of attorney and client exists, and one is deemed to be practicing law whenever (1.) One undertakes... to advise another... in any matter involving the application of legal principles to facts or purposes or desires. (2) One ... undertakes, with or without compensation, to prepare for another legal instruments of any character...(3) One undertakes, with or without compensation, to represent the interest of another before any tribunal judicial, administrative, or executive..."*

Rowlette's memo presumes to overrule the high court's definition of the attorney-client relationship. Using his unlawful definition, he has barred me from confidential contact with these lawyers. The bigger absurdity is the obvious Catch-22 in Rowlette's position. A lawyer must be able to consult with a client in order to gather

the information necessary to file a lawsuit for him/her. If I am blocked from confidential communications with lawyers, then they will never be able to bring litigation on my behalf. This is the real intent behind Rowlette's game.

As for Mr. Shabazz's NBPP membership, Rowlette presents no evidence that this affiliation threatens prison security. As a federal lawyer, Mr. Shabazz is foremost an officer of the courts. If his private organizational affiliations conflicted with his professional status, Mr. Shabazz would not be permitted to maintain his legal license.

Furthermore Rowlette has directed ROSP mailroom clerks to intercept, open, read, and refuse to send out mail that is clearly identified as "legal mail" intended for lawyers. These mailroom officials, based upon Rowlette's position, refuse to treat or process mail to and from lawyers as confidential legal mail in blatant violation of VDOC mail policy. This is a federal crime, obstructing U.S. mails,<sup>2</sup> and violates my constitutional rights to free speech and to privacy in my legal mail.

### History of Abuse at Red Onion State Prison

When ROSP first began operating in 1998, it developed almost instantly a nationwide reputation for racism and abuses of its predominantly nonwhite prisoner population by its near exclusively white staff.

In response to receiving a flood of letters from ROSP prisoners complaining of unjustified transfers to ROSP and of frequent and widespread racism, brutality and general abuse, Human Rights Watch (HRW) attorney Jamie Fellner conducted an independent investigation into conditions at the remote Virginia prison. Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC) officials refused to cooperate with the investigation.

Ms. Fellner's findings were set out in an April 1999 HRW report entitled Red Onion State Prison: Super-Maximum Security Confinement in Virginia.<sup>3</sup>

This report touched on the various abusive conditions and treatments suffered by ROSP prisoners and found that many of those assigned to the prison did not meet the criteria for "super-max" confinement. Actually almost none did. Seven pages of the report focused on incidents and practices in the "Use of Force" at the prison. One incident described in that section stands out and is particularly relevant here:

*"One inmate told HRW that immediately upon arrival at Red Onion in September 1998, he and other inmates were told to strip and permit a visual body search, including by spreading their buttocks. Female staff were present—indeed one was taking a video of the proceedings—and the inmate was reluctant to do as ordered in front of them. A captain shot him with the taser in the presence of the warden, associate warden and a major. After the inmate had been tasered, the major screamed in his ear, 'Boy, you're at Red On-*

*ion now" and then told the other officers to "get that nigger out of here." The inmate filed a grievance because he felt—correctly—that he should not have had to submit to a visual body search strip in front of female staff.*

*"The inmate's grievance was denied. The warden acknowledged that a taser had been used because the inmate hesitated to strip and thus 'was failing to obey instructions.' The denial was upheld by the regional director without comment 'based on the information provided.' There was no effort to suggest that application of physical force was warranted by any possibility of danger or that nonphysical effort to persuade the inmate had been attempted and failed. The use of the taser appears more likely to have been a deliberate and malicious excessive use of force calculated to intimidate new arrivals to the facility.*

*"In denying the inmate's grievance, Warden George Deeds stated that post orders at Red Onion permit females to work at any post in this case, assignment to the video camera. It is widely recognized, however that cross-gender strip searches violate inmates' 'Individual dignity and right to privacy'. The warden's policy at Red Onion ignores basic correctional principles and international standards prohibiting cross-gender strip searches unless in an emergency." (pp. 21-22)*

The prisoner who was the victim of this abusive strip search and unwarranted attack was XXXX XXXX. Indeed, most every prisoner assigned to ROSP during that time, including myself, were subjected to this cross-gender strip search process, during which it was often demanded that we repeatedly manipulate our genitals and spread our buttocks.

These searches were conducted under threat of being immediately tasered. A taser was trained on us throughout the strip search process. We were bodily subdued and searched by force by a mob of guards who were always present and dressed out in full riot armor. We were then escorted to our new cell assignment. Most were literally dragged stark naked through the prison while being observed nude by multitudes of guards, both male and female, as well as by other prisoners.

The entire process was calculated to humiliate and terrorize new arrivals and convey the message that at ROSP we would comply without hesitation with any staff demands, no matter how abusive or arbitrary. If we failed to promptly comply or questioned the demands, we would be met with immediate overwhelming force and further humiliation.

To convey this message these officials deliberately created a situation (for example the cross gender strip searches) calculated to provoke our resistance or hesitation and thereby justify the premeditated intent to use overwhelming force.<sup>4</sup> Before Abu Ghraib there was Red Onion.<sup>5</sup>

### Richard Rowlette: Crime Time at ROSP

The Major who was personally present and supervised most of these intake strip searches, the very same major that screamed in XXXX's

ear and told guards to “get that nigger out of here,” was Richard Rowlette.

XXXX subsequently filed and won a lawsuit concerning the incident. The court found that the officials had violated his constitutional rights, which is a federal crime.<sup>6</sup> XXXX was then transferred away from ROSP and hasn't since returned. However, the multitudes of other prisoners who were subjected to the same treatments and worse, including myself, were granted no relief.

In the wake of extensive bad media, the HRW report, and a U. S. Department of Justice investigation, Rowlette was assigned to another VDOC prison in Powhatan County, but not before he acted to settle a long standing vendetta he had against me.

On December 6, 1999, the day before he left ROSP, and in a departing last show of power, Rowlette attempted to force me to talk to him at my cell door. I ignored him. I generally refuse to engage him in conversation. This enrages him, as he believes he can intimidate prisoners to do whatever he demands under threat of having them attacked by guards.

Because I wouldn't talk to him, Rowlette had two extraction teams of some 10 guards assembled at my cell in full riot armor, with two 50,000 volt electric shields and a 36 ounce canister of gas. Under his direct supervision and direction I was gassed for an entire hour while the entire canister was emptied into the cell. This level of gas was far in excess of the 6 grams that

federal courts have found to be an “estimated lethal dose” when sprayed into a small closed-in cell.<sup>7</sup> He then had me sprayed with more gas from a smaller canister that guards generally carry on their sides. This was a clear attempt to torture and murder me by asphyxiation.

I was then met with violent attack by the two teams of armored guards. After being restrained and strapped down to the bunk in 5-point restraints<sup>8</sup> for 48 hours (in the still contaminated cell), I was electrocuted repeatedly. For the entire two days in restraints I was denied water, meals, medication, and restroom breaks. This is all documented and on record in the U.S. District Court in Roanoke.<sup>9</sup>

Rowlette had remarked that he had hoped I'd refuse to talk to him and that the attack he'd orchestrated was his “going away present” to me. His spell away from ROSP was merely a “cooling off period” and a token move by VDOC officials to create a public appearance of responding to abusive conditions at ROSP. Indeed, there was little effect on abuse levels after he left.

### Promoting Official Criminals as the Norm

Rewarding criminally inclined prison officials in Virginia is the norm. For example, one guard, David Allen Taylor (a prior captain at ROSP), has been found guilty in several prisoner lawsuits of involvement in beatings and abuses of Black prisoners. In one such case, a prisoner YYYY YYYY, won a monetary judgment against Taylor. The state not only paid the

judgment for Taylor (your tax dollars at work), but he was promoted in the meantime from lieutenant to captain. Just this year, he was promoted again, to major, at one of the VDOC's new prisons.

Another guard, William Wright, is widely known for assaulting Black prisoners at ROSP while they are fully restrained. His attacks have resulted in broken bones, dislocations, lacerations, and other serious injuries. Wright was recently promoted from corporal to sergeant.

Indeed an unmistakable pattern and longstanding trend in the VDOC is to promote guards who are being sued by prisoners for abuses while they have litigation pending against them. This is a ploy to bolster the professional image of abusive guards in order to create bias in their favor. Furthermore, the state defends abusive guards against prisoner litigation no matter how obvious their guilt and no matter what their offense. And as occurred with David Taylor, the state pays any monetary judgments awarded, no wonder there is no fear of consequences for abuses.

Most of the abuses at ROSP are captured on videotape, but those records are routinely erased, which is a crime in Virginia.<sup>10</sup> So where do the illegalities end and “justice” come into play? Rowlette won't be prosecuted for his crimes. This contributes to the cavalier attitude of officials towards the very laws they are sworn to uphold. Indeed what is a man like Rowlette doing running a prison? Ain't prisons in Amerika supposed to exist to punish and deter criminals? Where are all the tough on crime politicians when you need them?

Power to the People!

Notes;

<sup>1</sup> In Part 6 Section II of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, “Introduction,” the Supreme Court states: “any person practicing law without being duly authorized or licensed is guilty of a misdemeanor.” The statute under which this crime is enforced is Code of Virginia section 54.1-3904. The Supreme Court has promulgated a set of Unauthorized Practice Rules (UPR) which outline some specific acts which constitute a criminal unauthorized practice of law. Rowlette's actions violate the following UPR's:

“UPR 3-101. Attorney Client Relationship”: (A) An agency shall not disrupt the relationship of confidence and trust which must exist between a lawyer and his client.

“UPR 9-101. Holding Out as an Expert”: (A) A non-lawyer shall not hold himself out as authorized to furnish another advice or service under circumstances which imply his possession of legal knowledge.”

Prisoners also have a constitutional and civil privacy right to confidential telephone calls to their attorneys. See [i]Tucker v. Randall. 948 F 2d. 388, 391 (7th Cir. 1991).

<sup>2</sup> It is a federal crime to obstruct or delay delivery or processing of U.S. Mails. See Title 18 United States Code sections 1702-1708. Prisoners have a constitutional right to privacy in mail to and from “any identifiable attorney either representing or being asked to represent a prisoner in relation to any criminal or civil problem.” [i]See Taylor v. Sterrett, 532 F 2d 462,

## CAMPAIGNS

**Unlock the Box:** MIM has been leading an ongoing battle to shut down the Control Units in prisons across the united States. We can use audio and video of testimonies and hearings related to long term isolation. We can use artwork. And we need researchers on the ground. We want to know the names of the Control Units in your state, when they opened and how many people they hold, as well as details of the abusive conditions within them.

**Stop the mail ban in California:** In December 2006, the state of California banned MIM from sending mail to people in its prisons. Comrades are writing letters, conducting a postcard campaign and talking to allies who have challenged similar restrictions in the past. Letters can be sent to: James Tilton, Secretary, CDCR, 1515 S. Street, Sacramento, CA 95184 (see article on p.3)

### **New York Prisoners defend the 1st Amendment:**

In New York, prisoners have been charged with violating Prison Rule 105.12 for possessing materials from the New Afrikan Maoist Party (NAMP) and MIM. Rule 105.12 does not apply to outside organizations, and denial of the right to communicate and affiliate between prisoners and those on the outside is a blatant violation of the Constitution's First Amendment. Prisoners in New York can help build a class action suit being led by NAMP by submitting an affirmation in relation to this case. Write us for the details on how to get involved.

The campaigns section of Under Lock & Key will help us promote and build support for ongoing campaigns to improve the conditions in prisons in various parts of the united States. Write us with information about campaigns that you are involved in or want to start. We will promote the campaigns that we get involved in on our website at [www.prisoncensorship.info](http://www.prisoncensorship.info) where people can download fliers, petitions and information.



474 (5th Cir. 1976).

<sup>3</sup> The entire report can be read and downloaded at the Human Rights Watch website at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/redonion/>

<sup>4</sup> The U.S. Constitution's 8th Amendment protects prisoners from "cruel and unusual punishment." The federal courts have ruled that officials violate the 8th Amendment when they deliberately "provoke an incident so as to allow" them to attack a prisoner "under guise of maintaining order or defending" themselves. *Miller v. Leathers*, 913 F. 2d 1085, 1088 (4th Cir. 1990).

<sup>5</sup> As XXXX's incident exemplifies, the abuses at ROSP cannot be dismissed as the actions of a few unsupervised low-level staff, but rather was approved by the VDOC's highest administra-

tors. The torture, sexual degradation and abuses at Abu Ghraib were dismissed as the acts of a handful of "renegade" soldiers acting without authority. These soldiers, when targeted for prosecutions, contended that they were doing as instructed by high level military officials, which likely they were, just like at ROSP.

<sup>6</sup> Under 18 United States Code, sections 241 and 242, it is a crime for prison officials to violate prisoners' civil and constitutional rights.

<sup>7</sup> Based upon tests of pharmacological experts, the federal courts have found that caustic gas is lethal in doses of just 6 grams "in the confines of a small cell." See [i]Williams v. Benjamin[i] 77 F 3d 756, 764 (4th Cir. 1996).

<sup>8</sup> 5-point restraints is a process where a prisoner is handcuffed and leg shackled to the frame of a

steel bunk inside a cell spread eagle on his/her back. A thick strap is then secured across his/her chest to prevent the body from being able to raise up or move.

<sup>9</sup> See case file of [i]Kevin Johnson v. Page True, et al.[i]

<sup>10</sup> Under Code of Virginia section 18.2-472 it is a crime for any "public officer" to make any false entry into or destroy any government record. Under this statute any such offense committed by an officer "shall" result in the permanent forfeiture of his office and he shall forever be barred from holding any public office in Virginia ever again.

## Uniting with National Liberation Struggles

### The Lumpen Show Relative Progress Compared to Amerikkans

by MIM(Prisons)  
September 2007

[The following letter is from a prisoner in New York who generally likes what MIM Notes has to say. It is an example of what communists are up against in terms of uniting the oppressed within u\$ borders against imperialism. Most of the criticisms in the letter are answered in the original article, and some answers are repeated in brackets within the letter. Below we discuss this letter in the context of the greater public opinion battle among the lumpen class.]

I am writing in response to an article that was featured in the April 2007 issue of MIM Notes (#343) entitled, "War Criminals Kill Saddam Hussein." I was shocked and disappointed by the author's description of the executed reactionary dictator Hussein as "... a martyr for Third World independence." The author went on to assert that "He [i.e.. Saddam Hussein] followed his two sons... and grandson... to the grave in the fight for Iraqi independence." Although I found other statements in the article to be both accurate and poignant (such as the author's reasoning that Hussein could not be put on trial for the bulk of the slaughter he performed "...because the evidence for U.\$ and British complicity would have come out..."), the aforementioned eulogy of Saddam cannot be deemed as anything except ridiculous, the product of ignorance, and a slap to the face of all oppressed "Third World" peoples who are suffering under and standing against U\$-supported lackey regimes like that of former Iraqi resident Saddam Hussein.

[MIM: In the second sentence of the article, "War Criminals Kill Saddam Hussein", MIM mentions that Hussein killed thousands of communist-minded Iraqis before stating that he put his life on the line for an oppressed nation. So the reader's claim that the author is not aware of Iraqi history is clearly due to his own poor attention to the original article. Yes, Hussein killed thousands of communists and he died in the struggle for national liberation. We said it again. MIM is also part of the tiny minority in the united \$tates who actually cared that the united \$tates was funding the Baath regime before the imperialists

turned on it. Meanwhile, the vast majority of amerikkans did nothing to stop their government from funding the slaughter of Iraqi communists in the 1960s nor from their own people going to Iraq today to slaughter Muslims, which no one can claim ignorance of. So for amerikkans to turn around and use the fact that he was u\$-funded against Hussein after he died defying u\$ occupation of Iraq is ludicrous.]

The author makes mention of the "stupid liberals on NPR," but at least NPR has been intelligent enough to recognize and report (quite vigorously) on the U\$ all-out support for Saddam and his Baathist regime before their "foxy-proxy" relationship went sour- or the atrocities that grew from and were enabled by that support - on programs such as Amy Goodman's "Democracy NOW!"

[MIM: What we were criticizing the stupid liberals for was failing to recognize that Arabs ranked Hussein as the fourth most respected world leader, tied with bin Laden. A fact our reader also chooses to ignore from the original article being critiqued.]

Hussein's decision not to flee Iraq during the invasion was hardly one based upon any revolutionary principles (incidentally, he did flee Iraq once early in his political career following a botched assassination attempt of a political opponent). He was a power monger/ mega-parasite who was unable to even imagine living without the ability or means to impose his will upon others. Moreover, he had created so many enemies throughout the planet and from every class of society that surely he knew that he could not have survived for long outside of Iraq.

Addressing the Second National Congress of Workers and Peasants Representatives in 1934, Chairman Mao stated: "I earnestly suggest to the congress that we pay close attention to the well-being of the masses, from the problems of land and labour to those of fuel, rice, cooking oil and salt." Neither Saddam Hussein, his

profligate and vicious sons, nor anyone else who comprised the brutal cadre that commanded the pseudo-socialist democratic Baathist regime's government (the history of which the author is invited to research in depth) ever upheld or intended to uphold such a critical and revolutionary ideal - not during the time of U\$ patronage, not during or after the Gulf War, not during the embargo, and not at any time during the U\$ invasion and current occupation.

[MIM: Clearly our reader has not done much research into the current conditions in Iraq, nor compared them to Iraq in the past. Things like "fuel, rice, cooking oil and salt" are no longer readily available in Iraq as they were during the Baath Party rule. Remember how the u\$ bombed water treatment facilities and knocked out the power grid upon its invasion? Not only have the u\$ occupiers taken away the basic necessities of the people, but they have more than doubled the number of unnecessary deaths in the country, while bringing in u\$-style prison operations. (1) Since we last reported on these facts, the bourgeois press has reported a 50% increase in the number of Iraqis held in u\$ prisons over a six month period. (2) However, these numbers ignore the majority of prisoners who are in Iraqi-run jails, making it hard to know how close they are to achieving amerikkkan-level imprisonment rates. But reports from a Big Noise Films reporter indicate that in parts of Anbar province "everyone" is in prison, leaving only children and the elderly in the streets begging u\$ military persynal to return their families. So while we don't have the complete numbers, the trend is clear: lock up the oppressed. According to U\$ General Petraeus, supervising this growing prison population was one reason for the increase in troops needed this year. (3) Perhaps amerikkkan prison guard unions will push to increase the troop and imprisonment surge in Iraq.]

Chairman Mao stated: "The bourgeoisie, as a rule, conceals the problem of class status and



carries out its one-class dictatorship under the “national” label.” Hussein and his henchmen were pure petty bourgeois- and truly traitors to the Iraqi people in allowing the Iraqi nation to be used by the US as a proxy serving its own imperialist/ neocolonialist interests in the middle east.

Chairman Mao said:

*“All men must die, but death can vary in its significance... To die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work for the fascists and die for the exploiters and oppressors is lighter than a feather.”*

Saddam Hussein, who was an Arab Fascist at best, who exploited the ethnic and racial divisions and the resources of the Iraqi people to consolidate and augment his own power and status, who oppressed the Iraqi people with the aid and at the insistence of his neocolonial/ imperialist masters, died a humiliating death at the hands of these very same masters that was lighter than the feather of a humming bird.

**MIM discusses this further:** The lumpen in the united States are struggling to get a scientific hold on the principal contradiction. On the one hand you have people rapping about the Taliban, Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden as being hard, rebels against the white power structure. You have Muslim wimmin speaking out in favor of modesty to beat back the war cries of the white nationalists using Islam’s gender line as a justification for invasions for more superprofits. And you have those who see the fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan as being on the righteous side of a holy jihad.

On the other hand you got people rapping about Bush and bin Laden being “two separate parts of the same seven headed dragon.” You got people putting religion as principal, and as an absolute tool of the oppressor. And you’ve got people pushing a purity line, as the reader above, who will not make strategic alliances with someone who has done things they disagree with.

We can see we have more of the former here among the lumpen than we do among the u\$ population in general, and that is something. Integration may have bought off and brainwashed many, but not all. What makes the struggle more interesting is that it is those who identify as revolutionaries that are more likely to stumble on the petty bourgeois obstacles to unity of the oppressed nations. It is people who are rapping about sex and drugs half the time that are saying, “al Qaeda be Black men’s best friend” and “I’m half Saddam, half bin Laden, that equals full time ridin.” It seems to be those who pick up the Koran instead of the New York Times that are more likely to recognize that the Iraqi fighters are contributing the most to overthrow the very system that is responsible for this war and so much suffering thru economic deprivation.

When the Nation of Gods and Earths (NOGE) came out with a statement proclaiming their right to affiliate and practice their beliefs in prisons they attempted to draw a clear line between themselves and “religious” Islam that is

associated with “terrorism” in the minds of the oppressors. While righteously calling amerika out for alleging to support religious freedom in Afghanistan while persecuting Five Percenters, they deem the liberation fighters in that country terrorists. Their statement reads, “The fact that the Father fought for this country in the Korean War showed that he was a true patriot. To go to war for your homeland on foreign soil is the greatest sacrifice a man can make.” The Father of this group took up arms against socialism and self-determination of the Korean people.

This caught the attention of one God who responded to a struggle among members over this article by saying:

*“How are you going to encourage Black men and womyn to fight in Amerika’s army to ‘protect freedom and democracy’ and against oppressed nations fighting for liberation? See point 6 in the Black Panther 10 point program and contrast with what Born King Allah espouses. How are you going to distance yourself and Black people from the liberation struggles in the Middle East, labeling the Arab Muslims ‘terrorists who worship a spook God’- to which I say, so what! The Arab, spook God worshipping Muslims have done more in 6 years to undermine and overthrow imperialism than the NOGE has done in its 40 plus years of existence! How are you going to tell our people that the greatest sacrifice one can make is to give one’s life for this country? this is madness!”*

The sad thing is we don’t even need to go to the Panthers to find a better line on this question, we can go to the guy who self-proclaimed revolutionary MC Immortal Technique claims to be part of the “same seven headed dragon” as George W. Bush: Osama bin Laden. On the sixth anniversary of 9/11, bin Laden issued a statement in which he once again placed responsibility for the genocide in Iraq and Afghanistan on the amerikkkan people. He even went so far to put capitalism at the root of the problems in the world today. He has done more to unite the oppressed against u\$ imperialism than a million amerikkans and their lackeys chanting “No to Bush, No to Islam.”

Now some comrades are having a problem because they are struggling against the idealism of NOI or NOGE style Islam at home within the greater context of the imperialist war targeting Muslim’s globally. There is a need for Maoists to distinguish ourselves from the Nation of Islam, the Nation of Gods and Earths and other cultural nationalist groups. We all make claims to liberating the Black nation. One of us has a better plan than the others. But now is not the time for broad attacks on religion. In a feudal kingdom, such broad attacks would be progressive. But it is questionable whether they will be useful to the oppressed again in a modern capitalist state. As long as we are combatting religious ideas among the oppressed then we are dealing with contradictions among the people. These must be dealt with from the standpoint of unity-struggle-unity, not from the standpoint of defeating an enemy.

One revolutionary hip hop group has a song about jokes that says, “I’d like to see a boxing

match between them all, Colin vs. bin Laden and Bush vs. Saddam, rig a pound of dynamite to the ring and kill ‘em all.” Despite incorrectly equating Saddam and bin Laden to Bush and Powell, they get it right in a later joke that goes, “An atheist and a Catholic priest on top of a building. Well there used to be a Muslim, but they ganged up on him and pushed him.” See it ain’t even about religion, it’s about white people teaming up on the oppressed.

We don’t pretend that we don’t wish there was a communist party playing the role that bin Laden is playing right now. That would mean we were probably closer to putting an end to imperialism and oppression. But that is a subjective wish, and our actions can only be based on objective facts. Anyone who reads us for more than a minute will know that we differ from the Islamic fundamentalists, even though we are on the same side. Those who are attacking Islamic fundamentalism in the name of communism right now are dividing the oppressed and uniting the oppressors.

Throughout history Marxists have dialogued with and critiqued many political trends. Often times those criticized were those deemed most close to the Marxist perspective. In the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat, ushered in with Lenin in 1917, revisionism soon became the primary target. Once the people had been largely won over by socialism, it was only the wolf in sheep’s clothing who could stand a chance in challenging communist ideology. Similarly today, it is often those who appear closest to us, usually the revisionists, who we must criticize most to raise the consciousness of the masses. For all the times people have asked MIM how we are different from the rcp=u\$a, I don’t think anyone has ever asked how we are different from the Baath regime in Iraq. And despite his condemnation of capitalism and support for the liberation of the oppressed nations, people don’t confuse MIM with Osama bin Laden.

So not only are the fake Maoists on the wrong side of the principal contradiction, while bin Laden and Hussein are/were on the right side. The fake Maoists also serve to create more confusion among the oppressed by preaching idealism in communist rhetoric, rather than an openly religious philosophy as bin Laden does.

To respond to the reader above in kind, let us quote Mao as well,

*“The middle bourgeoisie constitutes the national bourgeoisie as distinct from the comprador class, i.e., from the big bourgeoisie. Although it has its class contradictions with the workers and does not approve of the independence of the working class, it still wants to resist Japan and, moreover, would like to grasp political power for itself, because it is oppressed by the Japanese imperialists in the occupied areas and kept down by the big landlords and big bourgeoisie in the Kuomintang areas. When it comes to resisting Japan, it is in favor of united resistance; when it comes to winning political power, it is in favor of the movement for constitutional government and tries to exploit the contradictions between the progressives and the die-hards for its own ends.” (from Current Problems of Tactics in*

*the Anti-Japanese United Front)*

You see, we never claimed that Hussein's decision not to flee Iraq was based on revolutionary principles. We don't know or care about his persynal motivations. (In fact, we have no way to claim to know the psychology of Hussein as the reader claims to know). As the reader stated, there were many material reasons that may have caused Hussein to stay in Iraq. But these motivations do not change the fact that he stood up to u\$ imperialism and died as a martyr for Iraqi liberation. In the quote above, Mao distinguishes between the national bourgeoisie and the comprador class. Hussein was a comprador of u\$ imperialism for many years. Not a home-grown Arab Fascist as the reader suggests, but an arm of u\$ fascism. That is the thing about fascism in the Third World, when finance capital pulls out the whole thing changes. We go so far to say without finance capital, there is no fascism. And a former puppet of fascism suddenly finds himself in the national bourgeoisie again, fighting against his former puppet-master side-by-side with the masses of his nation.

Lenin always insisted that change does not occur in straight lines, despite our wishes. And like all Marxists, he stressed historical materialism, which means that ideas come from material reality and not vice versa. We can imagine the world we want and wish it into existence, but that will not make it so. What Marxists do is look at the contradictions in humyn society and study the forces that make them up in order to understand how to resolve them. It is in the resolution of contradictions that we can reach goals like peace and putting an end to hunger and oppression.

notes:

(1) MC5. Which one is worse for Iraq? A comparison of G.W. Bush & Saddam Hussein. <http://www.etext.org/Politics/MIM/agitation/iraq/bushvshussein.html>

(2) Shanker, Thom. With Troop Rise, Iraqi Detainees Soar in Number. *New York Times*, August 25, 2007.

Also of note in this article. Of the 24,500 detainees, 280 are from outside Iraq and none are Iranian despite claims of active agents and intervention by Iran from the u\$ state department.

(3) Pincus, Walter. U.S. Expects Iraq Prison Growth. *Washington Post*. March 14, 2007.

## Terminology: Prisoners, inmates or captives

from a California prisoner  
September 2007

Please, comrades at MIM, I have one small favor to ask. Please do not address us as "inmate" or "prisoner" or a number. We are "captives". Please address us as "captives."

An inmate is one who is brainwashed to believe he or she is still part of the U.S. An establishment that bows down and conforms and obeys the pigs and snakes and dogs, who hopes and dreams of being part of the USA system again. An inmate has a parole date within 5 to 10 years, with half time, and is totally controlled

by his or her parole date.

A prisoner/number is one who believes and is brainwashed by some kind of prison gang and believes this gang is looking out for his or her best interest. One who does nothing to better themselves or educate themselves. One who sports an Amerikan flag on his or her coffee cup, roots for some u.s. corporate football/baseball/basketball team, who speaks and thinks the typical cretin prisoner mentality.

A captive informs him or herself, educates him or herself, understands the power of strong unconditional unity, always resist and fights to defeat their nazi-plutocratic pig captors, one being exploited by his or her captor to extort profit.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** The Prison Ministry has long had a policy of using the term "prisoner" and not the term "inmate," so we have agreement there. Many have made the same distinction between the terms that this comrade makes.

We have always used the term prisoner because it makes clear the captive relationship between the imprisoned and those doing the imprisoning. In fact, we consider all prisoners political prisoners, precisely because of the political nature of the criminal injustice system that makes political distinctions between arrests, trials, juries, laws and sentences to disproportionately lock up oppressed nations.

We can generally agree with the break down of prisoners into three groups, those allied with imperialism, those opposed to it and those who are stuck in a lumpen mentality and potential allies to either of the first two groups. However, as an extremely oppressed group of people there is much potential for the revolutionary awakening of the imprisoned lumpen. And as one of the few groups in the united States that are potential allies to liberation struggles as a group, we can refer to them as "prisoners" and mean it to designate prisoners as being of the "masses." The degree that we need to divide the group we call "prisoners" will change as the struggle advances and it will be useful in certain contexts, but generally they are "prisoners" and therefore potential allies, if not explicit allies. We are not convinced that the term "captive" does a better job clarifying this than the term prisoner. We welcome feedback on this question from our readers as we are always working to refine our language to serve our political purposes.

## From Pollution to Prisons: It's Profit over People

from a New Jersey prisoner  
September 2007

Revolutionary Greetings!!

Before I begin my explosive announcement. I want to thank MIM for their Theory Journals and papers, also the other valuable materials I've requested to build and organize POWs that are

confined behind the wall. Right now we are on lockdown at East Jersey State Prison due to retaliation on a female officer yesterday who was beaten and two prisoners fighting on Saturday visit, all in one day. This caused outside help like State Police, Gang Task Force and CID of officers suited up with sticks and dogs to come in. A bunch of gang members were removed from the prison Saturday due to the serious incidents that occurred.

All this does is strengthen me in knowing that a struggle must start within, it's time for change. Hopefully, the lockdown should be over this week before the family day event.

However, my topic is from the latest journal sent on environment and revolution which deals with pollution problems all over. Where I reside at now in New Jersey there is a mass consumption of pollution and multi-million dollar corporations (kapitalists) who make toxic products and distribute large quantities to different parts of the world. But we have a former Governor of New Jersey Christie Todd Whitman who now is the head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under Pres. George Bush's administration.

Mrs. Whitman messed up a lot of things for prisoners upon leaving office as governor of New Jersey. Everything the old revolutionaries fought and died for in Trenton State Prison to make it better for the next generation was taken away slowly without a fight excluding the street clothes but most importantly, including certain programs, food packages, boxing tournaments, etc.

Mrs. Whitman does not know too much about the environment where she was elected governor, just look at the poor neighborhoods where Blacks and Latinos live at infested with waste plants and steel & toxic plants that are a source of money for big CEO's who keep polluting minority communities. So she really has not cleaned up her act. Here in New Jersey this is having dramatic effects on the earth's atmosphere and climatology.

On channel 7 news she was interviewed by news casters about what did she do about the 9/11 situation when the downtown of Manhattan was saturated with debris, heavy smoke and fire and her not knowing that bodies were still decaying underground near the train and subway stations. Mrs. Whitman turned absolutely cold.

Her husband, Mr. Whitman, has a company that is tied to the Department of Corrections that distributes commissary store items for all the prisons in the state of Jersey. He has a big contract with the prisons. But they're all corrupt taking profits for economic gain for the Whitman klan.

...Thank you, and donations will be coming soon for your outstanding support. Thank You!!

**MIM responds:** This comrade brings up some good examples of how capitalism, national oppression and environmental degradation



are all connected. These examples fit nicely into the thesis of MIM Theory 12 (Environment, Society & Revolution) that the root cause of environmental problems is capitalism. The so-called "EPA" of the leading imperialist country can be headed by someone who made her political career on capitalist profiteering at the expense of oppressed people within her state. Those expenses were felt in the forms of a toxic environment and an increasingly repressive prison system where an increasing portion of the oppressed are ending up.

The dumping of the toxic waste of amerikkkan consumerism on the oppressed is far bigger than the industrial wasteland of the Jersey Turnpike. Right now China is responsible for providing vast amounts of products to amerikkkan consumers at prices only a vast exploited population can provide. Not only do amerikkkans swim in the wealth of Chinese workers in the form of commodities, but they get to leave the toxins required to produce these commodities behind on the opposite side of the world. That's even better than dumping them in the air and water surrounding Newark ghettos or in open pit mines and landfills on First Nation lands.

Of course, environmental degradation can only be contained to an extent. With global systems being knocked out of whack by the uncontrollable nature of capitalist development, no one is really safe from the effects. Yet amerikkkans as a whole still favor protectionism and even more extreme retribution towards China for the perceived lack of safety in Chinese commodities that their own system has allowed to develop. Those serious environmentalists in the First World need to take a look at what anti-imperialism and socialism have to offer. To get started, pick up a copy of MIM's "Environment Society Revolution" at amazon.com.

## Response to "On Prison Leadership"

from a New Jersey prisoner  
April 2007

On MIM Theory #13, there are many good articles that I have gotten to read at this point. There was one article that was dwelling on me, page 16 "on Prison Leadership". I must agree that many prisoners take up leadership positions and have no type of influence. But I must say that this dilemma is not only happening inside prison, this should also pertain to leadership outside as well. Yes a lot of leaders tend to blame others for not being able to move forward and disregard that the ones at fault is the leadership itself. I myself belong to a group in which is considered to be a security threat group to the system. I would say I belong to the Latin \_\_\_\_\_. The rest I will not document on paper due to the fear that the pigs will intercept this letter and charge me.

My Nation was built on the revolutionary mentality inspired by the writings of Karl Marx & Lenin. But sadly I must say that my Nation has long abandoned the political ideology of our

scriptures. This I blame directly on leadership & the lack of knowledge. Many so-called leaders take up these positions & have no type of knowledge of the political ideology of the movement. Leadership should be a commitment, not only to the group but to the people. Leadership should be equipped with the revolutionary mentality in order to teach & lead, not just a title being held for personal gains & recognition to benefit him/her self.

Another issue that the New York prisoner spoke about was the issue of being able as a group to come together & speak about problems at hand. I remember when I was in the gang unit, we did a project I believed was called "Combat Liberalism." Where it spoke of problems by members discrediting the function by spreading rumors, instead of bringing it to the group as a whole. I believe in communication, if this can't be done as a group, this will only create a division amongst members & this is something that should never be allowed. Being able to discuss issues collectively as a whole is a sign of unity & understanding amongst each other.

The New York prisoner also spoke about the silly acts of some prisoners, by cursing and spitting at the pigs. I do agree that those types of behaviors are not only silly but stupid. The only way that I believe that you can prove your revolutionary stance inside this oppressive hell hole is by organizing & waging war with the pen & paper.

A Clenched Fist to all in the struggle!!!

Palante!

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** MIM has always agreed with this comrades assertion that it is our responsibility in the belly of the beast to engage in the legal struggle against imperialist oppression. Yet, since the days when we first began providing free subscriptions to prisoners, we have been censored for allegedly posing a "threat to the security" of prisons across the country. Also note, Combat Liberalism is one of Mao Zedong's Five Golden Rays, one of many Mao essays available through MIM's Political Books to Prisoners Program.

## No access to legal materials or education

from a California prisoner  
August 2007

I am writing to let MIM comrades be informed on ever more injustice in our so-called system. As of today I have been awaiting trial almost four and a half years, since I was sixteen years old. At sixteen I was placed in a juvenile facility, then the day after my eighteenth birthday was placed in West Valley Detention Center for women in California.

There is not one program at this facility for those awaiting trial - we barely have a library that contains mostly old romance novels. I am not even convicted and have no access to any

legal or educational materials. The facility will only provide "Christian" religious materials so any other religions basically do without unless materials can be provided by the outside. We even have some of our religious materials sent back saying they are "gang-related materials" because they are not common beliefs.

How am I to defend myself if I can not get any law books, or educate myself with no real library or any programs? I am 20 years old and have been facing 25 to life since age 16. I now sit idle with my life in the hands of California's injustice system.

Those who have no financial support must also do without personal hygiene and writing materials as these things are not provided free to indigent inmates. Our canteen prices are so high you'd think they could pay to provide us with something! At least get rid of all the gnats, roaches and rats in our facility! Some prisoners here are even kept in ad-seg for their whole waiting process with no real infractions.

I am only one young female inmate and I need the help from my comrades to fight this ridiculous system. I hope to be able to help in this fight, but I can't do it alone.

## Maryland transferring prisoners to "sanitize"

from a Maryland prisoner  
March 2007

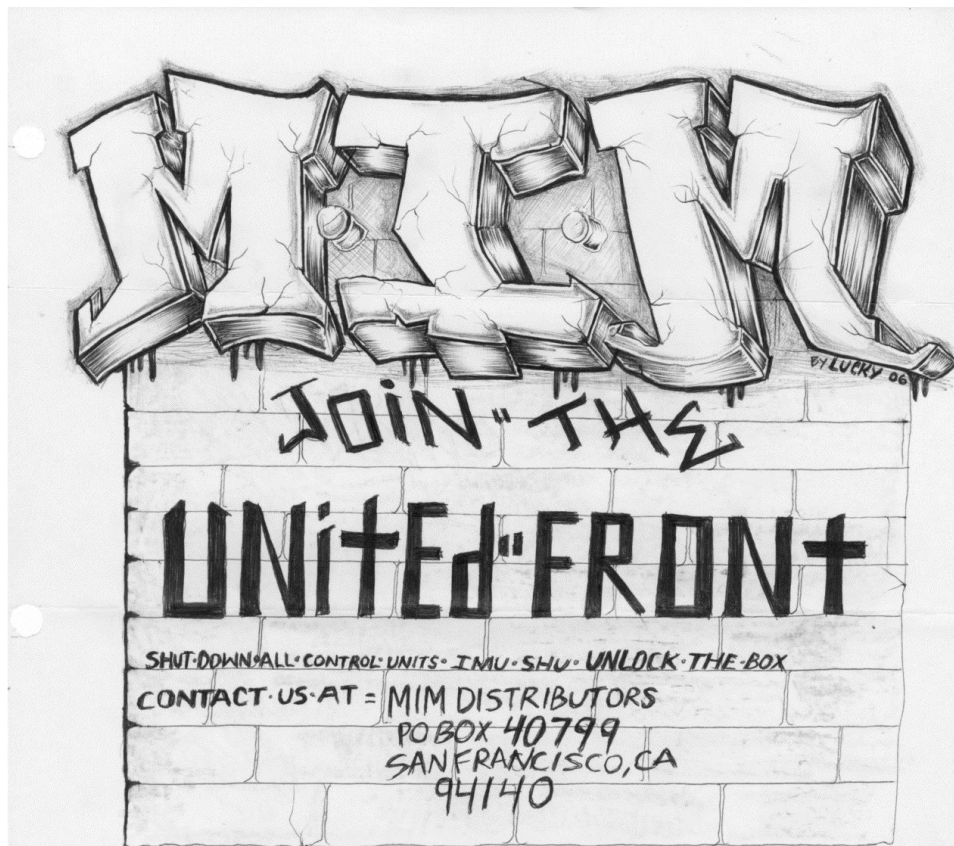
The MD prison system is currently going through some drastic changes. The new governor, M. O'Mally, is actively involved in the implementation of new tactics to stem the escalating violence (against correctional officers) in this system.

This past month, mass transfers have been conducted to and from the North branch facility in Cumberland, MD and the Supermax here in Baltimore.

MD is quickly becoming a "police state." Convicts are being snatched up 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning and sent to other max facilities and even out of state.

The MDOC is planning to "sanitize" its prison population by transferring all "influential convicts," gang leaders and so-called chronic trouble-makers out of state. A bus load of 20 have been shipped out to "Red Onion" in VA and to KY.

A new stage in the fascist movement? Predictably, as the fascist's tool, capitalism, is exposed to the harsh climate of maintaining its relevancy, it must speed up its pillaging and plundering. Nothing unnatural can long exist in a natural setting without creating basic corruptions in the environment.



## No useful education in the hole

from a Pennsylvania prisoner  
May 2007

I have been locked up here in the PA DOC for over 10 years. Four and a half of that has been served in the RHU "Hole" in retaliation for confronting the PA-DOC administration on a wide range of issues, healthcare, dietary, commissary and about having adequate material for general and law libraries, to name a few. The years I have been locked up I have seen things go from bad to worse to sickening in regards to the way prisoners are treated here in PA.

Less and less money is being spent on effective rehabilitation and educational programs. And the programs that are up and running may look and sound very good on paper when presented to the state legislatures in Harrisburg for funding and the general public. However, in all

actuality the programs that the DOC do make available to the prisoners are just a shell of what they should be. After securing Federal or State funding for a particular educational or rehabilitation program a major part of this money then gets diverted to things for the guards' new uniforms, the latest two way walkie talkies, new computers, more video security cameras, and the list goes on and on.

Here at SCI-Houtzdale, two of the educational programs that the administration likes to show off when people from the community or legislatures from Harrisburg come to tour the facility are the computer repair class and the computer aided drafting class. However, for a prisoner to get discharged from the DOC and try getting employment with what they were taught will be very difficult because the technique, computers and software they are learning on is 12 to 15 years out of date. The administration, staff, and COs are getting all the new equipment, not the prisoners. So factor this in when wondering why PA has such a high rate of recidivism.

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## Young prisoner ready to step up

from a California prisoner  
July 2007

Please allow me to briefly compliment you on both your program of the MIM - what y'all want and what y'all believe - and your political platform for ways of getting those wants and beliefs.

As a 19 year old brotha locked down by a system who cares for no one but themselves, I admire someone who is willing to step to the plate and educate the people about the wicked system which they are a part of. When I first wrote to your organization I was looking for someone who I could turn to and gain political knowledge on this so-called land of the free. Not only does it seem as if I've found that, but also someone willing to teach and give me the tools I will need to change this wicked system that not only takes place here in America, but world wide.

While reading your brief letter I took notice of your speakings on the United Struggle from Within. It is something that I would definitely like to know more about because it sound like something that I'd like to be a part of. Being a young brotha of the struggle within this prison system has made me a young brotha seeking for knowledge and truth about this world and the forces that rule it. I want to learn how to change those forces to make them work for me and the people instead of working against us.

I am one who fully understands and believes in the saying "the blind can't lead the blind anywhere, but into a brick wall or off a cliff." Now while having that in mind, I wish to attain knowledge and see and then lead, or attempt to lead the blind into a safe place of being.

With your help and your guidance I can make that attempt or we can make that attempt together. I've been incarcerated for the past four years and I have plenty more years to go with nothing but time. If given the opportunity I will work and also learn at the same time.

**mim(Prisons) has its own  
website at:  
[www.prisoncensorship.info](http://www.prisoncensorship.info)  
Friends, family and supporters  
can check us out online and get  
the latest news and campaign  
info from the anti-imperialist  
struggle under lock & key.**