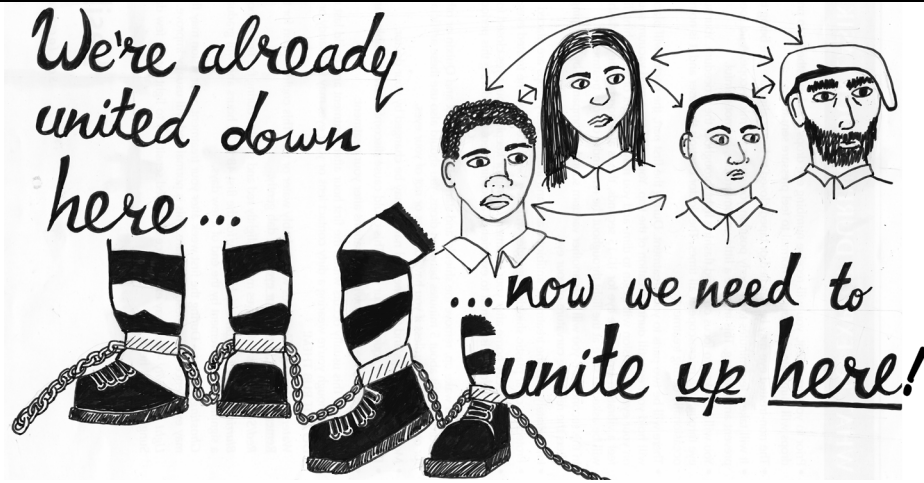




Under Lock & Key

Español
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Lumpen United Front: Its Basis and Development

by cipactli of United Struggle from Within
November 2010

The basis for unity among lumpen is *class*. The lumpen are the disenfranchised who derive from the economically depressed areas - the Barrios and ghetto projects - and are for the most part oppressed nations people. The lumpen are known to the oppressor nation as the 'criminal element' which is code word for persyn of color. The lumpen usually come from a lumpen organization that the oppressors call a 'gang,' or survive as some type of parasitic hustler. Although we do make choices, often times in imperialist society our choice to engage in crime is a logical one due to the national oppression we endure.

Building United Front, Surrounded by Enemies: Case Study of the U.S. Housing Market Decline

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
August 2010

United front is the theory of uniting different groups across class lines for a common goal or interest, while maintaining independence where those groups disagree. The application of united front theory is about recognizing different contradictions in society and utilizing them in the interests of the international proletariat. The primary united front is the Anti-Imperialist United Front, which is made up of the majority of the world's people whose material interests lie in defeating imperialism. This is a strategic united front based on the principal contradiction.

In this article we will address a couple of contemporary issues in the United States and analyze their potential for united front work. We'll see that many of the big conflicts in a First World country are between the enemy classes, but that does not always mean we sit on the sidelines. Some forms of united front are tactical and require fast action based on thorough knowledge. To successfully navigate the potential for united front in the First World that serves the interests of the Third World proletariat we must first have a correct analysis of our conditions. The first section of this article provides a quick background to get us started.

Land, Housing and the Settler Nation

One of the arguments made against the labor aristocracy thesis is that corporations have no interest in sacrificing profit to pay First World workers more, and there is no corporate conspiracy to enforce such a policy. This is based in the theory of free market capitalism, or only reading the beginning chapters of Marx's *Capi-*

tal and treating that as an accurate model of reality in all places for all time. As a class, capitalists do depend on the labor aristocracy, not just politically, but economically as consumers and cogs in their growing pyramid scheme of finance capital. And there is at least one place where the U.S. imperialists can exert their will as a class (more and more these days) - it's called the U.S. government. The promotion of home ownership by the feds is one of the biggest examples of the imperialists consciously building a labor aristocracy within the heart of the empire.

Home ownership has been a staple of Amerikan wealth since the settlers stole this land from the First Nations and built their homesteads on it. The net worth of Amerikan families compared to First Nations and those descended from slaves in the U.S. is one legacy of this form of primitive accumulation. While land ownership among the earliest European invaders was 100% (that's why they came to the Americas), by the 1775 War of Independence, land ownership was still at 70% for the Euro-Amerikan nation.(1) Arghiri Emmanuel pointed out that Amerikan wages were able to stay so high in this early period of capitalist development, even as land ownership ceased to be universal, because the abundant "free" land stolen from the First Nations provided a fallback plan for European settlers.(2) This primitive accumulation through genocide was the basis for

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As communists it is our job to fully understand the laws of social development, and the lumpen are an essential part of these laws today, especially here in the imperialist stronghold. In Marx's theory of 'social relations of production' lies the question of ownership, that is what 'class' owns the tools and what 'class' uses the tools. In this imperialist society the lumpen neither own nor use the tools. We are excluded from production and live under the heel of capitalist relations of production. The propertied class has monopolized the productive forces. The lumpen play a crucial role in Amerika in the creation of new productive forces that will come into contradiction with the decaying social relations of production. The current economic crisis is helping to streamline this process.

The lumpen is a class, regardless of what nationality one comes from; we all have similar relations to the tools of society and the distribution of society's wealth. It is a group that experiences the same oppression and is fighting the same imperialist monster.

It is understood that as national oppression exists it is thus only natural for there to also be national liberation struggles to combat the unevenness in this society, and for revolutionary national struggles to work to bring safety to the people who live in a constant police state in areas of the oppressed nations. This is the correct stance in the face of any oppression. But we can't get caught playing the same dog-eat-dog game that the imperialists play on us and our fellow lumpen. We need an Aztlán Liberation Front that is in unity with the lumpen.

The lumpen in Amerika must begin to realize that we are a class and lumpen fighting

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What is Under Lock & Key?

Under Lock & Key (ULK) is the voice of the anti-imperialist movement within prisons in the United States. Fighting the injustice system is just one part of the anti-imperialist struggle, and it is important that comrades not lose sight of the connections to the larger battle. For this reason, in addition to news about prisons and prison struggles, we also publish more general news and analysis important to the anti-imperialist movement. We welcome support and collaboration from those who are focused only on prison issues, but we also challenge them to see the importance of carrying out their work as part of a larger anti-imperialist strategy.

ULK serves as a forum to develop and promote agitational campaigns led by MIM(Prisons) and USW. 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(Prisons) and its publications explicitly oppose the use of armed struggle at this time in the imperialist countries (including the United States).

ULK is edited and published by MIM(Prisons) and mostly written and illustrated by USW and other United Front organizations behind bars. *ULK* comes out every other month, with free subscriptions available for prisoners who cannot afford to pay. For people outside of prison, all issues of *ULK*, plus additional reports from within U.S. prisons, are available on MIM(Prisons)'s website: www.prisoncensorship.info

What is Imperialism?

Imperialism is an economic system that V.I. Lenin defined as "the highest stage of capitalism." It became well pronounced in the early 1900s and is defined by the globalization of capital, the dominance of finance capital and the division of the world into imperialist and exploited nations; the latter Maoists see as the principal contradiction in the world today.

As the economic system that dominates the world, imperialism determines much of the material reality that all inhabitants of planet Earth face today, including war, poverty and environmental destruction. This means that the status quo promoted by imperialist interests is the biggest hindrance to change. As the dominant imperialist power, both financially and militarily, the United States generally serves as the primary target of our attacks as anti-imperialists.

What is the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons?

MIM(Prisons) is a cell of revolutionaries serving the oppressed masses inside U.S. prisons. We uphold the revolutionary communist ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and work from the vantage point of the Third World proletariat. Our ideology is based in dialectical materialism, which means we work from objective reality to direct change rather than making decisions based on our subjective feelings about things. Defining our organization as a cell means that we are independent of other organizations, but see ourselves as part of a greater Maoist movement within the United States and globally.

Imperialism is the number one enemy of the majority of the world's people; we cannot achieve our goal of ending all oppression without overthrowing imperialism. History has shown that the imperialists will wage war before they will allow an end to oppression. Revolution will become a reality within the United States as the military becomes over-extended in the government's attempts to maintain world hegemony.

Since we live within an imperialist country, there is no real proletariat -- the class of economically exploited workers. Yet there is a significant class excluded from the economic relations of production under modern imperialism that we call the lumpen. Within the United States, a massive prison system has developed to manage large populations, primarily from oppressed nations and many of whom come from the lumpen class.

Within U.S. borders, the principal contradiction is between imperialism and the oppressed nations. Our enemies call us racists for pointing out that the white oppressor nation historically exploited and continues to oppress other nations within the United States. But race is a made-up idea to justify oppression through ideas of inferiority. Nation is a concept based in reality that is defined by a group's land, language, economy and culture. Individuals from oppressed nations taking up leadership roles within imperialist Amerika does not negate this analysis. The average conditions of the oppressed nations are still significantly different from the oppressor nation overall.

As revolutionary internationalists, we support the self-determination of all nations and peoples. Today, the U.S. prison system is a major part of the imperialist state used to prevent the self-determination of oppressed nations.

It is for this reason that we see prisoners in this country as being at the forefront of any anti-imperialist and revolutionary movement.

MIM(Prisons) is our shorthand for the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons. Our name stems from the legacy of the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM), and their party based in North America that did most of the prisoner support work that is the focus of what we now do. When that party degenerated, the movement turned to a cell-based strategy that we uphold as more correct than a centralized party given our conditions in the United States today. Our focus on prisoner support is not a dividing line question for us. In fact, we believe that there is a dire need for Maoists to do organizing and educational work in many areas in the United States. We hope some people are inspired by our example around prisons and apply it to their own work to create more Maoist cells and broaden the Maoist movement behind enemy lines.

MIM(Prisons) distinguishes ourselves from other groups on the six points below. We consider other organizations actively upholding these points to be fraternal.

1. Communism is our goal. Communism is a society where no group has power over any other group.

2. Dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary. In a dictatorship of the proletariat the formerly exploited majority dictates to the minority (who promoted exploitation) how society is to be run. In the case of imperialist nations, a Joint Dictatorship of the Proletariat of the Oppressed Nations (JDPON) must play this role where there is no internal proletariat or significant mass base that favors communism.

3. We promote a united front with all who oppose imperialism. The road to the JDPON over the imperialist nations involves uniting all who can be united against imperialism. We cannot fight imperialism and fight others who are engaged in life and death conflicts with imperialism at the same time. Even imperialist nation classes can be allies in the united front under certain conditions.

4. A parasitic class dominates the First World countries. As Marx, Engels and Lenin formulated and MIM Thought 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 so-called workers. These so-called workers bought off by imperialism form a new petty-bourgeoisie called the labor aristocracy; they are not a vehicle for Maoism. Those who work in the economic interests of the First World labor aristocracy form the mass base for imperialism's tightening death-grip on the Third World.

5. New bourgeoisies will form under socialism. Mao led the charge to expose the bourgeoisie that developed within the communist party in the Soviet Union and the campaign to bombard the headquarters in his own country of China. Those experiences demonstrated the necessity of continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The class struggle does not end until the state has been abolished and communism is reached.

6. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China was the furthest advancement toward communism in history. We uphold the Soviet Union until the death of Stalin in 1953, followed by the People's Republic of China through 1976 as the best examples of modern socialism in practice. The arrest of the "Gang of Four" in China and the rise of Khrushchev in the Soviet Union marked the restoration of capitalism in those countries. Other experiments in developing socialism in the 20th century failed to surpass the Soviet model (ie. Albania), or worse, stayed within the capitalist mode of production, generally due to a failure to break with the Theory of Productive Forces.

What is United Struggle from Within?

United Struggle from Within (USW) is a MIM(Prisons)-led mass organization for U.S. prisoners. USW is explicitly anti-imperialist in leading campaigns on behalf of U.S. prisoners in alliance with national liberation struggles in the United States and around the world. USW won't champion struggles which are not in the interests of the international proletariat. USW will also not choose one nation's struggles over other oppressed nations' struggles. USW should work independently, but under the guidance of MIM(Prisons) to build public opinion and independent institutions of the oppressed in order to obtain state power independent of imperialism. Members don't have to agree with MIM(Prisons)'s cardinal points (see above) but they can't consciously disagree with any of them.

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...Housing Decline

wealth that the Amerikan labor aristocracy enjoyed as industrialization transformed more of the settlers into wage laborers.

Following the inter-imperialist struggles of WWI, the United States became the dominant imperialist power. The influx of wealth that came with this allowed for the integration of southern and eastern European immigrants into the white nation leading up to the Great Depression.(1) From 1900 to 1950, home ownership rates in the United States averaged about 45%, with the lowest rates in the Black Belt South and the highest in European dominated northwest states.(3) After the economic recovery that came with the spoils of WWII, the United States embarked on the suburbanization of Amerika with numerous incentives from the federal government to bring home ownership above 60% again.

Since 1960, home ownership has stayed above 60% for U.S. citizens as a whole.(4) This rate was above 70% for white Americans in recent years, but the census does not have comparable statistics by race going back very far. Blacks and Latinos are just under 50% for rates of home ownership, even though national oppression has ensured that they currently face foreclosure disproportionately.

Emmanuel's theories in *Unequal Exchange* demonstrate how the significantly higher incomes of people in the First World actually transfer wealth to the imperialist countries from the Third World, reinforcing their economic advantage. Similarly, the oppressor nation has equity and is able to increase wealth in ways that the internal semi-colonies have not been able to do despite access to exploiter level jobs. All of this fits with the general trend of capitalism, which is the accumulation of capital. The more you have, the more you tend to get.

Collapse of the U.S. Housing Market

The left wing of white nationalism (whether self-described anarchists, socialists, Maoists or Democrats) has been saying that the increase in home foreclosures is an indication of the heightening contradictions between the Amerikan proletariat and the capitalists. These people defend the stolen land that was the foundation of wealth for settler Amerika, and the modern home ownership pyramid scheme that is the foundation of the Amerikan dream today.

Not only have millions of people lost their homes to foreclosure in recent years, but fear-mongers point out that the "2008 sub-prime mortgage market resulted in the disappearance of \$13 trillion in American household wealth between mid-2007 and March 2009... on average, U.S. households lost one quarter of their wealth in that period."(5) Such alarmists ignore that Americans gained \$10 trillion from 2006 to 2007 to reach an all-time high, and that net worth of the country's citizens has generally gone up at increasing rates since WWII.(6) The bigger ups and downs in all financial mar-

kets are certainly signs of crisis, but to act like Americans are being sunk to Third World conditions in 2010 is ludicrous. If only these activists would cry so loud for those who really have had to live in Third World conditions for their whole lives and for generations!

Most, if not all, of the loss in Americans' net worth is accounted for by stock portfolios and values of homes (which are bought and sold like stocks these days); in other words losses in finance capital. Traditionally, the petty bourgeoisie in Marxism was not exploited, nor did it significantly exploit others. To claim that those who reap profits from investments of finance capital are anything less than petty bourgeoisie is a rejection of Marxist definitions. With home ownership around 68% in recent years, that is a solid two thirds of people in the United States who fall squarely into the category of petty bourgeoisie or higher, including 50% of Blacks and Latinos (minimum). This group is 210 million people, or only 3% of the world's population in 2010, yet they hold more net wealth than the total market capitalization of all publicly traded companies in the world.(7)

Our critics point to the great wealth inequalities within the United States as reason to organize Americans for revolution. So let's just look at the bottom 80% of Americans, who owned 15% (a mere scrap from the table if you will) of the net wealth in the United States in 2007 (and this was a 15-year low for them).(8) While their share has decreased a few percentage points since 1983, total net worth in the United States has increased by almost 5 times. Therefore the lowest 80% of Americans went from about \$2.2 trillion in net worth in 1983 to almost \$10 trillion in 2007. (Two trillion dollars could eliminate world hunger for the next 66 years, until 2076.(9)) "Middle class" Amerika has assets that are greater than the GDP of China,(10) the world's industrial powerhouse representing about 20% of the world's population. That's comparing just the Amerikan "middle class" and "poor" to the whole nation of China, including its well-developed capitalist class.

Since the proletariat, by definition, has negligible net worth in the form of assets, let's look at their income.(11) Income generally increases proportionately with net worth across the globe. (12) Almost half of the world's population lives on less than \$1000 per year. That is 3.14 billion people living on less than \$3 trillion in a year. (13) Now before we condemn Americans' huge assets, let's make sure that they just aren't better at saving and investing their money than the proletariat. In 2005, the wealthiest 20% of the world accounted for 76.6% of total private consumption. The poorest fifty percent accounted for only 7.2% of consumption.(13) A conservative estimate leaves us with Americans, on average, consuming at least 27 times the average person in the poorest half of the world.(14) So money management skills cannot explain Amerika's huge net worth.

A just, sustainable humyn society requires the Amerikan labor aristocracy to be brought down to consumer levels much closer to the

Third World. But this little exercise demonstrates that this is far from happening, despite the alarmists' cries.

Ultimately, the contradiction we're describing is between the labor aristocracy and the imperialists. The imperialists, in particular finance capital, are a dynamic, opportunist class. In contrast, the labor aristocracy benefits from stability of the status quo. The finance capitalists were able to make quick profits by selling the labor aristocracy short, so Americans are pissed. While perhaps pushing the labor aristocracy towards fascism, the finance capitalists are also undercutting the consumerism of Americans that their system depends on so much. What we are witnessing is an internal contradiction in the imperialist system playing out. Both groups control trillions of dollars in super-profits from the Third World, and the Anti-Imperialist United Front has no interest in one of them getting more than the other. We need to keep sitting this one out.

Migration to the United States

As discussed above, high wages and ballooning housing values reinforce themselves in our current economic system, making the rich richer. However, neither could be maintained without erecting a border outside of which these two things cannot flow. Therefore, keeping wages and housing values high is directly linked to the battle over increasing repression of migrant laborers within U.S. borders. The contradiction in this struggle is between oppressed nations who are trying to gain access to jobs in the United States and the oppressor nation that is trying to keep them out. This challenge to imperialist country privilege indicates that the battle for migrant rights is part of the anti-imperialist struggle.

While Third World people and some Amerikan youth faced Amerikan labor aristocrats on the streets, it was the U.S. District Court that put in place an injunction on most of the provisions of Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 (SB1070), in light of a lawsuit filed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) against the state of Arizona. The DOJ held that immigration was under federal jurisdiction, and that they had a plan for the whole country to balance its various interests related to immigration that Arizona would not be allowed to mess up.

The interest of the bourgeois internationalists is in having free access to markets and labor, not to mention international relations. This camp includes the federal government and their finance capitalist backers as well as smaller businesses that only operate in the United States, but depend on migrant labor. Their conflict is with other bourgeois interests and the bourgeoisified majority of Americans whose position of privilege stems from the elitism of who is allowed to enter their fortress of jewels.

There is effectively a united front between the internationalism of the mass resistance to

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Independent Leaders

by a Pennsylvania prisoner
October 2010

After reading the article from our comrade in Pennsylvania titled "Stand Up for Real Causes" in the *Sept/Oct 2010 Under Lock & Key* I felt obligated to respond in hopes of giving some practical direction in seeking to revolutionize the prison's slave order of operation. When we examine the history of all those who organized and took action for a real cause we will learn that it was always initiated by the few, never the majority. Numbers help, but courage, loyalty, and discipline are much more important than numbers and must be without compromise the foundation in order for any unified resistance to exist, and most importantly be effective. Trust me soulja, I know first hand how frustrating and sick it can be when we see others around us willingly accept being oppressed, used up and abused. Most of them usually accept such humiliation with a big ol' Chicken George grin, in which you can almost hear "yeas sir boss!" squeezing through their teeth.

The prison's kitchen is in my opinion the easiest operation to boycott and the fastest way to bring about attention from the administration. You don't have to chase the mentally dead prisoners, they can go to work all they want but when half, or more, of the population is not going to the kitchen to eat, the administration is going to want to know why.

In 2007 I was involved in a kitchen boycott in one of Pennsylvania's state prisons and it was successful. Over half of the population didn't go to the kitchen to eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner for a week straight. The administration started going around on each block talking with so-called block reps as to why and what. The boycott was initiated due to kitchen sanitation and food preparation concerns, and the prison administration made changes ASAP from our demands. However, the prisoners became comfortable and in the process things slowly but surely went back to the same poor conditions.

What made that boycott so effective was that the administration couldn't pinpoint any specific organizers because there wasn't any to pinpoint. Prisoners can't be given misconducts or lose his/her prison job, parole, outside clearance or any other privilege that they may have gained for not going to the kitchen to eat; that's our choice. There was a buzz put in the air as to why a boycott was going to happen and when it was going to happen, but trying to pin point where the buzz originated is like trying to pinpoint the very first piece of rice that was poured from a big sack bag into a pot of boiling hot water. You don't need to run around and give orders and instructions as to boycotting a prison operation, that type of thing will get you and others locked down under prison policy. The buzz itself will create a certain energy. And when that day comes and the cell doors open, people will not be looking for confirmation from each other. At that very moment a boycott will be born or aborted.

Keep Fighting Gang Validation

by a California prisoner
September 2010

I would like to comment on the "Legal Tips to Fight Gang Validation" article that was printed in *ULK 16*. This comrade's tips are greatly appreciated and will help a lot of prisoners who are not familiar with our rights in the validation process. Here's the thing though, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is aware of such due process rights and we get a 114-D lockup order, a chance to reboot our validations, and to be put up for the Security Housing Unit (SHU) by classification. However, it's all just a big charade without any meaningful review given at any time and no matter what we say or what evidence we present to show the source items are insufficient, unreliable and can't be used as source items per the Title 15 and relevant authority, we are ignored at every level.

I 602ed [grieved] my validation and clearly showed why my validation is false on all levels but was just given a general response at the 2nd and 3rd levels, as all prisoners are, saying

MIM(Prisons) responds: We appreciate this letter, because we get more letters than we can print from comrades saying "things here aren't like they are in that state or this prison." These letters come from all sorts of places in every state. Of course there will be uneven development, and some places will advance quicker than others, but leaders are by definition a small minority. Leaders will recognize the self-interest prisoners have as a group in organizing themselves, but we cannot expect a spontaneous mass consciousness to take hold. This takes time to develop through education and participation. It is the job of the leaders to recognize when local conditions are changing and to push them to develop. ★

I'm wrong and my validation meets the department's requirements. CDCR refuses to follow their rules and is just rubber stamping prisoners' validations and going through the motions that are nothing more than a front in an attempt to dupe the courts into believing we got our due process.

Now in my optimistic attitude I thought the courts would see the arbitrariness of my validation and actually, you know, follow the law. But when I sent in my *habeas corpus* to the Lassen County Superior Court it took them all of 6 days to deny my petition without holding any hearings, which is the only way the court could have determined that my source items showed "some evidence" and were reliable as they stated. So I sent my *habeas corpus* to the court of appeals hoping I can get a real review, which I have yet to receive. My case is no different from all other prisoners being validated here at High Desert State Prison and it won't change until we shed light on this dark process. So my question is, what do we do when the officials and courts that swore to uphold the law are disregarding it without a second thought? We all will continue to 602 and petition the courts about our fake validations for they can't ignore us forever.

Another case that is vital for validated prisoners to get their hands on to study and apply to their situation is the *Lira v. Cate*, No. C-00-0905 S1 (N.D.Cal. Sept. 30, 2009) which is regarding a former validated prisoner who challenged his gang validation and lack of due process and won.

MIM(Prisons) responds: They can't ignore us forever if we team up. As pointed out, people are facing the same situations all over. Legal battles are an important tool in the struggle, but we know the whole system, including the courts, is set up to oppress certain groups. Part of these struggles is making connections and working together. With enough unity around the right issues our reliance on the courts becomes less and less necessary. ★

Under Lock & Key not enough?

If one ULK every 2 months isn't enough political education for you, join a Maoist study cell through MIM(Prisons)! Level 1 starts every 3 months and has 2 assignments. Level 2 starts every 6 months and studies the pamphlets "What is MIM?", the basic introductory pamphlet to the Maoist Internationalist Movement's foundation and political line and Mao Zedong's "On Contradiction," which introduces us to the philosophy of dialectical materialism (how we study history).

To sign up, write in and send \$5. If you don't have \$5, you can trade work for study. Just send the articles, art, poetry, etc. that you want to trade. Participants must be able to receive the study materials via mail and respond to each assignment on time.

Or start your own political study group in your prison! You don't need any fancy books or special knowledge to do this. Start by studying and discussing the content of this issue of ULK. Write to us and let us know what questions come up and we'll get you some more reading materials to help answer those questions.

Campaign Update from Missouri

by 1st Crown of Black Order Revolutionary Organization
October 2010

Censorship Campaign Update

In April 2010, we embarked upon a legal campaign to protest the Missouri DOC's decision to place a blanket ban on all CDs and tapes which carry a parental advisory label. We suggested that prisoners send in a complaint to DOC and government officials, and other prisoners' rights organizations.

On 29 June 2010 the ACLU of Kansas and Western Missouri responded to the letter I sent to them. In short order, they said they couldn't represent "me" in the complaint set forth in Our complaint letter, although I stressed that this was an issue that affected the entire class of prisoners in this state.

On 13 July 2010, Natania Gazek, Special Litigation Section of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department responded to Our complaint and letter. Her response was that the U.S. Justice Department would not get involved in "individual" cases, but does have the authority to initiate civil action in the name of the United States against state and local officials

to remedy conditions of confinement which violate the constitution.

We shouldn't be surprised by these responses. These officials represent the interests of the state, which is imperialist in word and deed. However, what surprised me was that I wrote to over 40 organizations and groups which have memberships in these prisons including but not limited to the NAACP, NOI, Missouri CURE, Human Rights Watch, Critical Resistance, rcp=USA, ASPS, the Fortune Society and not one of these groups had enough respect for Our struggle to even respond to Our call for help.

From this you should take that it is exceedingly important that we support groups such as MIM(Prisons) and USW who have shown in their actions that they support our struggles. We must withdraw all moral and financial support of groups and leaders who don't give a damn about our repression, yet want our membership dollars.

Legal Work

I have current federal litigation filed that alleges that the censorship policy is a violation of Our 1st and 14th Amendment rights. This case deals specifically with DOC officials' censor-

ers and now they have us packed in like animals. Single cells were made to house two men in quarters designed for one. 24-man units are now 48-man units with only four shower heads, and we are only allowed to shower from 3 pm to 9 pm.

I tried to get a few dudes to come together to file grievances on this issue but only three of us actually filed. The admin simply used an old memo by a former governor about a water drought which ended two years ago. We lost on that issue.

Since we changed over, the food service can't seem to order or cook enough food to feed the whole population. Every day the kitchen runs out of food. Every single day! Everyone complains and cries to each other but no one is willing to stand up for change. I went to the operation office and asked for 200 grievance forms and they gave me 300 without a question. I put myself out there once again and went to each block to hand out grievance forms about the food. When it was all said and done, only 8 grievances were filed and once again they counted on us not to unify.

There are many other examples I could express, but like I said, these prisoners are so passive, all they care about is being able to watch lame ass weekly TV shows. If they took the TVs in every day room these clowns would write the Governor.

What really gets me is I witnessed what unity can do in NJ state prison. I've seen tyrant Sergeants get reassigned. I've seen change come

ship of issues of *Under Lock & Key* and other MIM publications.

What will strengthen this case and the new case that I'm preparing is if those of you in Missouri have had issues of *ULK* and other literature from MIM Distributors censored would write out declarations or affidavits stating when and what was censored and send them to the MIM(Prisons)-led Prisoners' Legal Clinic, who will send them to me. I will present this evidence to the Asst. Attorney General as proof that these illegal actions are happening in other prisons and it is not just me as an "individual" who is suffering.

In all, the lesson here is that we can't expect "justice" from our enemies and that we must organize ourselves and build independent institutions that speak to our needs. Rest assured that our enemies know full well the social implications of their policies. A persyn can only proceed as far as their knowledge will carry them and they plan to keep prisoners ignorant, addicted and coming in and out of prison as a constant source of income.

Ups to all of those who took the time, energy and efforts to send in complaints, file grievances and educate fellow prisoners on these issues and others. If you have other ideas, suggestions or strategies please send them in. Keep your heads up, stay strong, unite and organize. ★

when we stand up and unite without violence.

Just a few months ago I wrote *ULK* about the pigs here waking us up every 30 minutes to assure we were alive, and not only did I write to MIM(Prisons), I also filed a grievance on this issue. My story was published in *ULK July/Aug* story titled "Sleep Deprivation to Control Oppressed." My efforts were not fruitless. As a result of my grievance and persistence this policy was changed and they no longer deprive us of sleep in GP or the lock up unit (H-Block). When this injustice occurred I advised everyone on the lockup block to join me to change this policy, but once again I was the only one who raised hell and even then the result was change, so I know it works. ★

On "Objective" Reporting

Under Lock & Key relies on our comrades behind bars to report on conditions and events inside prisons. We track the history and reliability of our writers and, when possible, we double check facts in the articles. But there will always be some facts we cannot verify before printing. Our readers are encouraged to let us know if they have information that contradicts what they see in *Under Lock & Key*. Yet, recognize that no matter how much the bourgeoisie tries to pretend, reporting is never completely objective or devoid of political content. MIM(Prisons) will always report from the perspective of the international proletariat and on the issues that best serve their interests.

Fighting Back Works

by a North Carolina prisoner
October 2010

I would like to comment on the story written by a Pennsylvania prisoner titled "Stand Up for Real Causes" printed in *ULK 16*. First let me say the situation you describe is all too common. Unfortunately, I'm currently a ward of the North Carolina department of corruptions and housed at Hoke Correctional Institution (aka Toke Correctional). My point is this, these cats here are the most passive dudes I ever jailed with. I'm from Jersey and unfortunately I spent 9 years and 9 months in prison in NJDOC and the shit I see go on here in NCDOC would not go down there. Like you, I've tried to get these so-called convicts to stand up for change and correct some of the unjust B.S. here at Hope Correctional.

On Feb 2, 2010 this unit changed custody levels from medium to minimum custody and to a medical institution with little modification. Unfortunately, I was one of the few prisoners who were allowed to witness the transition from medium to minimum custody, and I believed all the lies the administration told us. The first thing they told us was that we would be given transfers to other facilities which would grant us custody level promotions with the privileges of work release and home passes if we stayed and trained the new incoming prisoners on how to run the kitchen and occupied certain jobs until they could be filled. Well, lo and behold, we were tricked and suffer daily. Prior to the custody level change this facility held 260 pris-

Private Prison Scandal in AZ Legislature

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
October 2010

By aligning Amerikans' immediate interests with their long-term interests, the militarization of the U.S./Mexico border has become a machine that will not likely slow down on its own. This machine is propelled by the imperialist politicians, imperialist businessmen (often the same people), and the Amerikan labor aristocracy. This collusion of interests at a time when Amerikan hegemony is fragile spells danger for the oppressed nations, in particular for Aztlán.

National Public Radio (NPR) released a report this week exposing financial and political connections between the Correctional Corporation of America (CCA) and those behind Arizona's oppressive SB1070 law.(1) The law, which is still under judicial review after being put on hold, legalizes racial profiling and empowers state police to enforce federal immigration laws in the process. The scandal, now being denied by the bill's sponsor Senator Russell Pearce and others, is that they passed the law to increase their income and the profits of their corporate backers.

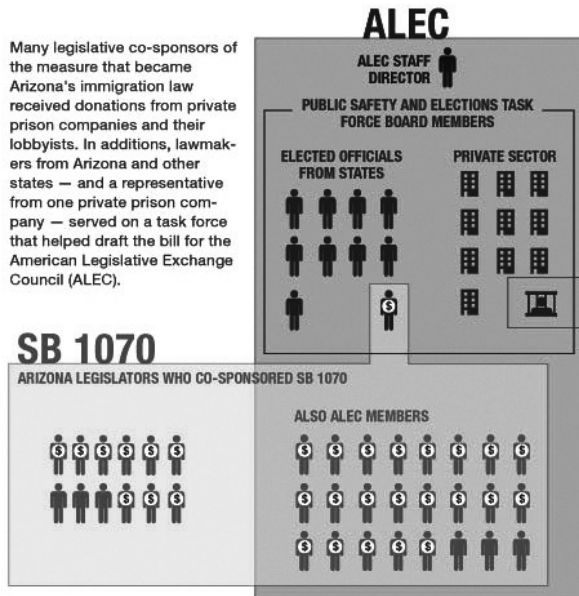
Without SB1070, CCA was getting an estimated \$117 million a year from the federal government for imprisoning migrants. Meanwhile, Wackenhut/G4S, the next largest private prison company, has a \$76 million a year contract to bus migrants around the border for the U.S. government. Of course, both of these sums are chump change compared to the \$3.6 billion budget for Border Patrol in 2010.(2) All of this is federal money going to the oppressor nation to do its thing - oppress.

The essence of what is going on is Amerikans getting paid a lot of money to make sure Amerikans get paid a lot of money. That's why the border exists and why it must be militarized. If it is not, the masses whose labor value has been stolen and exported to the United States would come here to benefit from the fruits of their labor. Without closed borders, we can't keep the wealth inside.

The NPR report exposes the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), an organization of state legislators and powerful corporations that get together to draft and propose laws (see figure). The companies pay tens of thousands of dollars to attend such meetings with those who make the law. And according to NPR, the number of legislators who sponsored SB1070 was almost unprecedented and 30 out of the 36 received contributions from prison companies or prison lobbyists in the 6 months following SB1070's passage. Meanwhile, two of Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's top advisers are former prison lobbyists. (1) All of this makes CCA's and Sen. Pearce's denials of corporate influence look silly.

None of this is new to CCA, which was founded in Nashville, Tennessee by former chairman of the state Republican Party, Tom Beasley and his former roomy from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Doc Crants. Initial investors included the governor's wife, Honey Alexander, and the Speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives, Ned McWherter.(3) Ever since then, their business model has relied on close political ties just as most military, defense and security business does. Apparently, CCA agrees with MIM(Prisons)'s assessment that migrants are and will continue to be the fastest growing prison population in the United States. But while we are fighting this trend, CCA is doing all they can to foster it.

When imperialism reaches the point where the arms of oppression are major sources of profiteering, and the people are dependent on these operations for their paychecks and standards of living (i.e. where oppression and the oppressors' financial interests become one in the same), we will see the national contradictions within imperialism heighten rapidly. This leads to increased repression both in laws and in actions but also the opportunity for raising consciousness and resistance among the oppressed nations. Even those Latinos who supported imperialist politics had to think twice about the Arizona law as it could impact their personal safety if they visit that state. The imperialists expose their blatantly chauvinistic goals with these reactionary laws and the alliances that create the laws and it is our responsibility to point out the contradictions and organize against imperialist national oppression. ★



Time for Peaceful Revolution

June 2010

Editor's Note: We receive many letters critical of lumpen organizations (LOs) from prisoners across the country reflecting the contradictory aspects of the lumpen class. Some are from alleged former members, wishing to do exposés of these organizations. For the lumpen to be internally critical is a necessary step for the development of a proletarian consciousness among the oppressed inside U.S. borders. However, to print public criticisms without providing real alternatives and leadership does more harm than good.

Our task is to develop a united front among those groups of people who have an interest in opposing imperialism. We must work with the material given us and not disregard the masses because of their backwardness. Not working for the pigs is a start, but we only print parts of this critique to allow our comrade to respond and illustrate a better approach for all who are facing similar situations.

A New York prisoner writes: It's time for a peaceful revolution here in the state of New York Department of Correctional Services because with violence we are not going to accomplish anything. Especially with all these rats running around who will sell their souls for an extra tray or a roll (cigarette). Speaking about rats, let's start with the ALKQN. The reality here is that this organization was founded in 1939-1940 by Lord Gino Gustavo to stop the abuse and terribly degrading way us Latinos were being treated in Chicago by the pigs inside and outside of the walls of lost souls, to stand up as people against the unjust government that was oppressing us and pouring drugs into the Latino communities. The ALK (ALKQN is for NY only not Chi-town) was a revolutionary movement; a strong radical group of men who seriously believed in their people as a whole made up of Blacks, Latinos, and peoples of all races and ethnic backgrounds.

Nevertheless, here in NYS DOCS the ALKQN has become a major joke. These infidels work for the facilities' administration and closely with the pigs. This has been a trend for these pig-loving maggots in Attica CI. These so-called revolutionary dudes cut, stab, steal, rob, and intimidate prisoners just for the pigs. In return these pig-lovers get TVs, radios, or beat overdose tickets for their cooperation.

I don't understand where these dudes went wrong but one thing for sure is simple. They need to stop working for the pigs and administration and really rise up and make a positive stand for what we as a whole are supposed to be about: respect, honesty, unity, knowledge, loyalty and most of all love.

ECC.1:1 for ALKQN/PLF responds: In response to the above critique of the particular lumpen organization (LO), the question still remains as to whether or not this is an honest attempt at revolutionary criticism in the spirit of Maoism, or more blatantly just a simple expression of mummified discontent.

Political Statement from the ECCO

by East Coast Consolidated Crip Organization
March 2010

The ECCO has taken it upon itself to confirm and clarify what the ECCO is as well as our purpose, which is defined by examination and analysis on the dynamics of our main organization, so that an understanding of us is built within other Crip affiliates, and political and non-political lumpen organizations and individuals. ECCO is the East Coast Consolidated Crip Organization, an anti-imperialist cadre that works in conjunction with the internationalist united front against imperialism. We propose that the main organization adopt the acronym Community Revolutionary Internationalist Party.

ECCO is a prison-orchestrated, clandestine movement that acknowledges and utilizes a doctrine of reformism as a tactical maneuver necessary within our organization to help advance the individual and collective direction of our organization. We accept reform within our organization to better fight the oppressive system and ignorance overwhelming our ranks; we do not apply reform as unprincipled class collaboration with our enemies. We advocate the value of reformist concepts as a tactic in overall revolutionary struggle, understanding that we only do so because on one level no revolutionary situation in respects to armed struggle exists at present within the United States, and on another level because our organizational structure is flawed in numerous ways and a revolutionary war cannot be entered, managed, maintained and won without addressing the contradictions within us and other external complications affecting us.

We function under the ideology of Neo-Cripism, engendered from within the ECCO to help attain the goal of injecting political, socio-economic and revolutionary consciousness into Crips' core, along with one centralized belief to govern the whole of the organization. Recently, an ideology was non-existent within this state, at least one that was correct and effective. What existed was and still is an eclectic collection of ideas incorrectly adopted and bastardized from our 1993 alliance with the Gangster Disciples. Is this to say that the Disciples' concepts are wrong? No. This is to say that our "leaders" took on a system that wasn't based on the specifics of our organization's characteristics and socio-economic conditions; city-to-city, state-to-state. In doing so, they stunted the development of Crip and each of our organizations individually.

An ideology is the systematic, scientific, cultural, economic, political, social and moral values of a people. It enables the organization and/or movement to coordinate its set aims/goals through its organized activities/social practices via the ideological indoctrination of its members as it relates to concrete conditions that define the organization. Without an ideology an organization or movement will fail in the primary factors it claims to represent.

For the Crips to exist in this state as in other

areas it has to be understood that a doctrine needs to be established in every area that complies with all internal and external activities of the organization so it functions. It's not possible for the Crips to truly aggregate (become whole) with no common organizational structure created for them. Those of us who are conscious of the contradictions within our organization, who seek to develop a genuine concept for the organization without fear of internal repression, opt for the ECCO and Neo-Cripism - an ideology established with the revolutionary-internationalist influences of scientific Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, Frantz Fanon, the Black Panther Party, The New Afrikan Black Panther Party- Prison Chapter, George L. Jackson and the Black Liberation Army.

Our goal is not simply to establish a new design into the Crip history books, but to make it a common belief within our organization that we hold an extreme amount of revolutionary potential as a multinational lumpen organization comprised of the oppressed New Afrikan, Latino, Samoan, Asian, poor white and Indian races to name a few. This gives us an advantage in our resistance to oppression, white supremacy and imperialism.

No change within the reality of the Crips or the society around us is possible without those of us who step forward, risking suppression and taking the initiative upon themselves to bring that change about. We err in this state by not creating a system to go with the conditions here and fail again in denouncing our East Coast Crip identity. To identify ourselves as West Coast Crips because a number of the Crip gangs we belong to in this state migrated from California is an overplayed concept that is unrealistic and based in subjectivity.

All thought within the ECCO is put forth from universal objective observation and rationalization to understand situations in every aspect and angle. Our reality as an urban counter-cultural paramilitary unit and pro-community organization is our own to uphold. If we fail to advance then it's from our own failure to seize the time and shape the reality to our desire and uplift ourselves from the multiple layers of oppression we're faced with.

"The mistakes of the past must be exposed without sparing anyone's sensibilities, it is necessary to analyze and criticize what was bad in the past with a scientific attitude so that work in the future will be done more carefully and done better... In treating an ideological or political malady, one must never be rough and rash but must adopt the approach of curing the sickness to save the patient, which is the only correct and effective method."
- Quotations from Chairman Mao, p.263

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade is applying the strategy of "unity from the inside out" as developed by MIM(Prisons) and United Struggle from Within (USW). Unity among progressive forces must begin from within. Dif-

ferent organizations cannot unite on principles if the organizations themselves have no principles. Therefore we encourage others to work with USW and MIM(Prisons) to develop unity within themselves and with each other as part of the Anti-Imperialist United Front.

In this statement, the ECCO applies the word "race" to address the multinational character of their organization. Races do not exist, and race is a concept created by the racist oppressor nations. Nations do exist, and there are many oppressed nations within the borders of the United States. MIM(Prisons) sees the principal contradiction within U.S. society to be between the oppressor and oppressed nations. At the same time, the oppressed nations themselves have been more integrated and bourgeoisified than at any other point in history. While history has shown the usefulness of nation-specific parties and organizations, the lumpen class often finds itself organizing across national lines in spite of the strong divisions that the state has encouraged. What form future revolutionary movements take will depend on the development of the different contradictions along both class and national lines.

The concept of "reform" presented here by ECCO is related to the question of the nature of a contradiction. There are antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions. Contradictions among the oppressed are non-antagonistic, because ultimately their interests are the same. The contradiction between the oppressed and imperialism is antagonistic, meaning you cannot reform imperialism to serve the oppressed. But you can reform an organization of the oppressed to serve the oppressed as is proposed here. This does not mean that it is always possible or that it is the most effective path. Often times, organizations are entrenched in their ways and new ones must be formed. It is up to the comrades in each situation to determine whether internal reform and unity from the inside out is the fastest route to mobilizing the oppressed around them for anti-imperialism.

As Lenin best explained, without a scientific vanguard party a revolutionary movement cannot reach the point of overcoming the status quo. So as MIM(Prisons) works to develop unity with other organizations we will also struggle with our most advanced comrades to join or form vanguard elements that are distinct from the mass movements that most of us start out in. This is an application of the law of unequal development. ★

NEW AFRIKAN MAOIST PARTY

NAMP has released a statement replying to MIM(Prisons)'s self-criticism from ULK 16 related to our work together. Comrades in MIM(Prisons) and USW have addressed it, and our official reply is available on our website. We plan to publish more of this debate in future publications that are more focused on theory.

Lumpen Loyalty Dividing the Struggle

by a California prisoner
September 2010

My question to MIM(Prisons) is this: how could you consciously and intently continue to give known rats a forum or conduit to speak and voice an opinion as if he was an honorable or principled man? When has it been right in history to accept traitors? Never!

Let's keep shit non-fiction. Everybody who betrays their own can never be trusted. MIM(P), you're setting a dangerous precedent that should not be emulated in any regard. Those that will compromise all their beliefs and yet find a voice to be heard shows the weakness of the cadre. Real folks see them for who they really are: parrots, poison and cancerous cells. When one practices deceit long enough they begin to believe it. The truth and lies reverse roles. A coward dies a thousand deaths, a real one only once.

What separates the best from the rest is the loyalty, honor and dignity one has for self as well as those of like stature.

MIM(Prisons) responds:

"It is scandalous to Christians to think of a world without timeless moral values such as loyalty, honor and integrity -- characteristics that God supposedly places in each of us once and for all time, especially in the more hard-line Protestant religions upholding pre-determination. These moral characteristics are then referred to by the Christians as our 'moral character.' The Stalinists' opposition to such an ideology leaves the Christians aghast and hence we 'Stalinists' appear as 'amoral' to those who claim timeless values."

--MC5. Anna Larina. MIM Theory 6: The Stalin Issue, p.53.

Ironically, this quote comes from an article that defends Stalin for overseeing the killing of innocent people in an effort to eliminate spies and infiltrators during the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. Today we are in much different conditions in our discussion of spies and snitches, but "honor" and "loyalty" are still used to attack us. We would say that even the concept of being "principled" is dangerous. Principled is too often viewed as picking a position and sticking to it no matter what, right or wrong. But Stalin only stuck to one principle, and that was to serve the people by building socialism. Everything else is determined by a scientific analysis of conditions.

In Stalin's conditions, the principal contradiction was the fascists versus the first socialist state in modern history. Spies could have brought the destruction of the Soviet Union. In the U.S. prison movement, the principal contradiction we face is the conflicts between the lumpen themselves. Without resolving these conflicts and building unity around the mutual interests of the imprisoned population, there is

Continued on next page...

... Continued from page 3 ...Housing Decline

SB1070 on both sides of the Mexican border and the U.S. government acting on behalf of bourgeois internationalism. For now, it is the imperialists who are really throwing a wrench in the works for Americans, even though the contradiction at its base is between oppressed nations and the oppressor nation.

A majority of Americans in a number of polls supported SB1070 or a similar law. The highest percentage listed in one article, 79%, did not agree that "illegal aliens are entitled to the same rights and basic freedoms as U.S. citizens." (15) This is the definition of American chauvinism. At best, one fifth of U.S. citizens don't think they deserve more than other humyn beings by virtue of being born in the United States. This is why we even keep an eye on the imperialists for glimmers of internationalism in the First World.

With Latinos, we can see how quickly this consciousness develops by tracking the percentage of coconuts in the population over time. A *Latino Decisions* poll found that 12% of second-generation Latino voters in Arizona supported SB1070. By the fourth generation it had increased to 30% supporting the coconut position. (16) Amerikanism is an insidious disease that has claimed significant portions of the internal semi-colonies of the United States.

Unite All Who Can Be United

While many dogmatists still criticize Mao for allying the Chinese Communists with the national bourgeoisie, we can take united front theory even further and come up with examples of progressive forces allying with the government of the imperialist superpower of the world against an oppressor nation. This goes to show that we cannot let ultra-left ideas of purity prevent us from allying with those who might help our cause.

The rightist errors in applying united front theory happen when we have incorrect lines elsewhere. Not recognizing a united front as

working with an enemy class, or becoming convinced that other contradictions have been resolved, and not just pushed to a secondary position, are the main forms of rightism to guard against. Mao had to fight much rightism from other communists who thought the communists and national bourgeois forces should merge into one, where inevitably the reactionary bourgeoisie would lead because of their relative power. Rightism in the United States looks like people getting caught up with legislative battles over migrant rights. Without national liberation, there is no freedom for oppressed nations under imperialism. The imperialists will always oppose that, just as the Nationalists fought the Communists in civil war once the Japanese were forced out.

We do not seek unity for the sake of unity. We seek unity that utilizes all the forces possible to tackle the principal contradiction, or battles that push the principal contradiction forward. When we find strategic unity with others, the united front also provides a basis for unity-criticism-unity, which advances the struggle and deepens the unity of revolutionaries and all oppressed people for a better future. ★

Notes:

1. J. Sakai, *Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*, Chicago: Morningstar Press, 1983, p. 10.
2. Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade*, Paris: Monthly Review

Notes continued on page 16...

KKKlinton Strikes Again

by a New York prisoner
October 2010

Twice now in two years, the pigs at KKKlinton have allegedly restrained a convict and murdered him. In the early morning hours of 3 October 2010, Leonard Strickland, a 44-year-old Black male in general population was killed. Of course these cowards will be fighting each other, cutting, stabbing and yet there's no resistance to these corrupt corrections staff.

Just last night, while returning from the SHU shower Sergeant Marciel and CO Stuart told me that the prisoner died of an overdose or bad heroin brought into the prison that weekend. Officer Decoteau told me that it was the plastic bag treatment, meaning that once again they've placed a bag over a prisoner's head. I have spoken to another prisoner who had this done to him.

MIM(Prisons) adds: The NYS DOCS has accused Mr. Strickland of assaulting staff and admit that he died shortly after being subdued by staff. We hope our comrades in New York will help us investigate what really went down and start developing means to ensure better protection of the imprisoned population as a whole. This protection starts with the mobilization of a conscious prison population who are watching for abuse and will unite in protest of these acts of brutality. ★



Political Activism Killed by Religion in Louisiana

by a Louisiana prisoner
October 2010

I have begun to receive *ULK* and I have not had any problems with censorship. There are not very many politically active people/groups here now, such as in California, so the mail-room is not hyperaware of radical political publications.

This was not always the case. Louisiana State Prison (Angola) in the 60s, 70s and 80s was a hotbed of political activism, primarily with the Black Panther Party. It was also considered one of the bloodiest prisons in America. Since the 90s it seems political activism/education has evaporated. This is mostly due (in my opinion) to the prison becoming admittedly more safe, the aging and death of the older inmate population (as the 60s and 70s were a universally more politically active time across America), and the current Warden. Warden Burl Cain has quite effectively turned the prison into a church, with even a 5-year seminary college funded by the Southern Baptists of America.

This has had an enormously detrimental impact on the prison population. There is no longer any prisoner solidarity (beyond the individual self-serving prison clubs and organizations) or any real political movement. Most (though not all) prisoners now play the religion game as a ticket to move up within the prison society and garner favor with the administration. In fact, to essentially get in any position of prisoner power - such as a club president or to work for the prison magazine *The Angolite* (which came to prominence under Wilbert Rideau) -- you must be an active professed Christian.

The true harm in all of this is that there is no real rehabilitation or education within the prison now. Louisiana does not have parole for people sentenced to life and 90% of the 5000+ prisoners here at Angola will die in prison. This is a proven statistical fact even admitted by Louisiana DOC. The only option for lifers in Louisiana is the possibility for a sentence reduction by the pardon board. This is not a legitimate option though. It is extremely rare (once every 10-15 years) that they recommend a lifer for a sentence reduction and the governor signs it. *Continued on page 13...*

Torture in SHU for Being a Crip

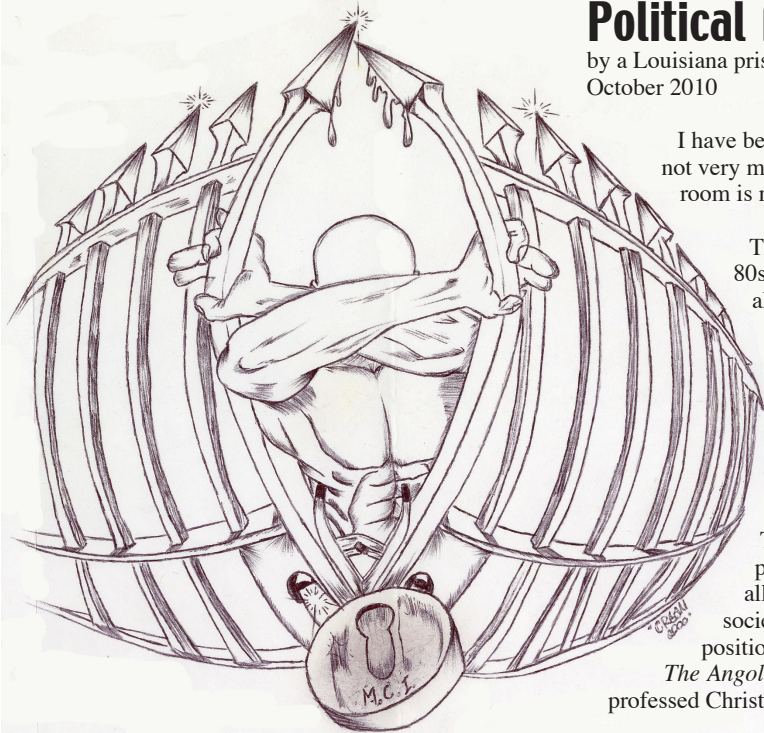
by a North Carolina prisoner
July 2010

I just got a letter from you a couple days ago and I think that y'all movement is really what I am into and what I stand for and that is putting an end to all oppression. I am locked in prison at this moment and I am also a part of a gang that Tookie Williams put together, which is the real reason why he got the death penalty.

I'm in a Security Housing Unit (SHU) right now for watching a fight between two prisoners. Just because I'm in the system as a Crip they took me to SHU where I have been going on two years. A couple of days ago I was maced for not letting the CO throw a Rasta Crown away. I asked them to let me send it home if I could not have it but they told me that sending it home was not an option. So I told them to go get the higher rank. The assistant unit manager told me that I have no rights to be requesting to talk to anyone, so they left my cell door and came back a few minutes later with 8 or 9 COs threatening to come in my cell to beat me up and spray me with mace if I did not give up my Rasta Crown. So I told them that if they were going to throw it away then I was not giving it to anyone and they popped the trap on my cell door open and shot mace in my cell and left me in there where I couldn't breath. Then after six minutes in a cell with a lot of mace everywhere they took me out and stripped my cell to the point that I had not even a roll of restroom paper. They left me like this for 72 hours; no socks on my feet, nothing to keep me from being cold. It got to the point where I was throwing up blood so I put in a sick call. When the time came for me to see the doctor they would not let me go.

I will not stand and let these COs think that they are getting the best of me. These people who say they are here to stop the crimes or violence behind the wall are really the ones who are beating on people and doing anything to oppress. And they are the justice system, prison system. They hate to see a Muslim, Rasta, gang banger sticking together to overcome this oppression that these people are coming at us with. They hate to see a Black man reading a book about Huey Newton and the Black Panther Party or anything to learn about your Black history. They are willing to do whatever to make you dumb so that you will never know about where you came from. The only people in SHU are Black and Latino; no white people are in SHU here.

MIM(Prisons) responds: To clarify, Tookie was murdered because he was a Crip *and* he truly reformed himself to serve his people, as explained in *ULK 16*. ★



...Continued from previous page

...Loyalty

no prison movement to speak of. So we must combat ultra-leftism that prevents broader unity.

We know Special Needs Yards (SNYs) are not full of scientific revolutionaries, because that's not true anywhere in the U.S. prison system today. We know that many prisoners use snitching as a way to get more for themselves. Yet as more and more people go to SNY to opt out of the bullshit warring that the pigs have promoted, the pariah status given to SNY prisoners is playing right into the hands of the state's divide and conquer strategies. As long as general population insists on playing by the pigs' rules, SNY will continue to be an outlet for those who don't want to be pawns in the game.

Despite the rhetoric of honor and loyalty, it is a minority who really live by these ideals. Perhaps that minority are more reliable comrades in the revolutionary struggle. On the other hand, we are trying to mobilize the prison population as a whole on behalf of the interests of the oppressed, and we believe that through education people can change their character.

Of course, there is a reason why not working with the pigs is a common principle among certain populations, while most Americans turn to them whenever they need help. No good can come for the oppressed from working with the pigs, but we must apply this principle in a way that best pushes struggle forward.

The lumpen have an ideology of self-sacrifice and dedication that comes from their experience as oppressed people. While we often print articles that reinforce this lumpen morality when it reinforces the unity of the oppressed against the oppressor, we must also address its weaknesses. When the idealism of the masses holds back progress, we must push hard for the acceptance of scientific truth. ★

SMU Federal Forced Psychological Treatment Program

by a Federal prisoner
October 2010

Do you realize, it is not wise, your actions are absurd!
You know from history, there is no mystery, haven't you heard!
It's been tried again and again, successful it has never been,
you want to change reality!
Only an idiot would believe it, your report concludes the
opposite, but it's your story!

To follow a flawed plan, of a foolish man, is no less idiotic!
Federal SMU, they don't have a clue, their leader must be
psychotic!
Contractors keep on bribing, congress keeps on buying, greed
takes over the atrocity!
Employees union denying, administration outright lying, sacri-
fice integrity for the money!

International courts condemn the practice, you must be ac-
tors, lied to congress to get your wish!
You claim it's beneficial, in actuality it's detrimental, how do
you explain this!
Community communication, through human isolation, the
theory is ridiculous!
Add antagonization, mental manipulation, makes the hypoth-
esis preposterous!
Where'd you get that data, like indicting a potato, the truth
you will always withhold!
It's a program, run for the sons of sam, one of the biggest
bullshits ever told!

Your stated objective, must be defective, the strategy is
really old!
Institutionalization, of the entire nation, seems to be your goal!
A laboratory experiment, who gives a shit, about some
federal convicts!
Just some lab rats, Stanford's second act, use them
for your benefits!

So what if they go crazy, ignorant and lazy, signed the
consent to make it authorized!
The ones who try to get wise, hasten their demise, to
keep the others terrified!
Keep it on the low, nobody needs to know, the true nature
of your enterprise!
When you get exposed, the doors will be closed, now it's
you being ostracized!

What you don't understand is any flawed plan, that tortures
your fellow man, must come to an end!
Just as before, those that work the store, shall face
their victims via pistol or pen!
Don't see the danger, that's the masses' anger, you
must have made a mistake!
Thought they were tame, better think again, your life
they come to take!

Now that change is here, no need to shed a tear, your
path is set in stone!
No you cannot hide, before the foolish man by your side,
now he has left you alone!
But you knew all along, that it was wrong, yet you
assisted in the deed!
I too cry, because now you lie, lifeless, heartless,
fertilizer for planted seed! ★

REVOLUTIONARY CULTURE

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Self-Respect

by a Florida prisoner
August 2010

Our history is a mystery
Four centuries in captivity
We were set free with no identity
So we adopt and adapt
Rejects living under stress
Free but oppressed
Unravel our mystery
We've been shaped by history
Four centuries of slavery
Who could blame us for being crazy?
Time is of the essence
We're dying, it's urgent
Yes, it's pressing!
At present, "how can I make a difference?"
That's the question
But no one's listening!
From calamity, we can't hide
Life's a compromise
Stages, phases and expression
We ride the tides
Along the waves we learn lessons
How does one wake up the mentally dead?
For so long we've been misled
Don't we know, we've been predisposed
To have the views we hold
My people die for the lack of knowledge
It's tragic, our struggle turned savage
Hardship makes us callous
For the rich we hold malice
And wish we could just ravage
Bring them down to average
Who can blame us for being communist?
To the few of us trying to salvage
The dignity we have left
Do your best
Remember to start off with self-respect ★

Silent Accusation II

by USW461
October 2010

Give us rest, give us time
To sort out why our country doesn't
realize
Torture laws and racism exist
And there's more to life than
Those Seinfeld reruns you missed
As long as you have a Mazda Miata
With a full tank and a pack of
smokes
You couldn't care less about
500,000 dead Iraqi children
Less names to intrude on your
child's
Santa Claus naughty or nice list!?!
folks?
A dead man hangs from an air vent
As a bunch of cowards laugh at
him
But this man's dying breath
Pleaded for me to seek justice for
him
And the justice will multiply a thou-
sand fold
Because my strength is endless
I've chosen to pick up a revolution-
ary cause
And the world's vendettas
Against my supposed country
I'll carry the progressive red flag
And you overweight greedy
Amerikkans
Will finally understand the meaning
of sad
It's a true emotion that bubbles
from within
Totally opposite your sugar come
down
And more human than your bullshit
"sin"
Ring around the rosey and pop
goes the weasel
Is that spittle on your lip Mr Veg-
etate?
Dialectics is jet fuel to your racist
diesel
Give us rest, give us time
To sort out this mess we've made
of our lives
Give us a chance to pay for our
crimes
You have our bodies, some of our
minds
What more do you want?
More pain and some fines!
Take his rigid body and cut it down
Call him worthless, call him clown
I called him friend, his mother's son
Look at his face, look what you've
done★



Otomatik Attak by FLATTBUSH

by PTT of MIM(Prisons)
November 2010



Flattbush's newest album *Otomatik Attak* (Koolarrow Records) is a prime example of form meeting content to create a superior piece of cultural art. A metal/grind band out of Los Angeles founded by two members originally from the Philippines, Flattbush keeps a "fuck the system" tradition alive with themes of atheism, revolt, and anti-capitalism. These comrades scream for liberation in English, Tagalog, and Kapampangan, accompanied by guest vocals in Spanish. They go the distance lyrically by focusing on U.S. fascism and imperialism in the Philippines, calling on the people to stand up against the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo dictatorship in people's war.

From "Dear Uncle Sam,"
*the sadistic american imperialists
they are always at war and they always
dictate
so they can maintain their self interests
but uncle sam we are not afraid of your
high tech warfare and atomic bombs
uncle sam
fuck you uncle sam
it is necessary to take action
it is necessary to oust the u.s. gloria fascist
regime
if not now
then when?*

And from "Otomatik Attak,"
*automatic attack
on the people
the strike of the fascist
to wipe out
the solution to their attack is to counter
attack
people's war*

Flattbush hopes to expand their cultural work to the Philippines in the near future, live! To show solidarity with the peasant masses, the lead vocalist often performs in a conical straw hat and plain jacket, similar to a Mao suit. Supporting his powerful and compelling vocals, the bassist, guitarist, and drummer are all phenomenal players. On stage they are humble, not pausing for applause between songs. This album would satisfy anyone into metal for the music, or anyone who is fighting intensely for revolution. ★

Professional Sports = Passion of Decadence

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
November 2010

1 November 2010, The San Francisco Giants won the World Series, and in addition to the tens of thousands of fans in the stadium, an estimated 12 million people watched the game on TV (not counting the millions watching in sports bars, restaurants and other public venues). As in other winning cities in years past, the city of the winning team erupted into "joyful mayhem," as the *San Francisco Chronicle* calls it, with tens of thousands of people taking to the streets in drunken celebration that included property destruction, traffic disruption, and violence.

In classic bourgeois press form, pretending neutrality, a *SF Chronicle's* headline article was titled "SF Giants Series celebration is Joyful Mayhem" and stated: "On Market Street, the celebration quickly turned wild and unruly, with an estimated 7,000 revelers in the streets, some jumping on cars, rocking Muni buses, tossing beer bottles, lighting fireworks and blocking traffic at Seventh Street." A much smaller article, hidden on the *Chronicle* website, also mentioned "In the Mission, there have been reports of fires, broken windows and an alleged stabbing." Compare this with the same newspaper's January 8, 2009 report on the Oscar Grant protests. The article was titled "Protests Over BART Shooting Turn Violent" and gave a negative review of the protest which "mushroomed into several hours of violence Wednesday night as demonstrators smashed storefronts and cars, set several cars ablaze and blocked streets."

We see that the same street violence is condoned when it's in the name of professional sports. Police wandering the streets after the World Series were friendly, often clapping and cheering, and shutting down streets to help out traffic while enabling the celebration. During the Oscar Grant protest the cops showed up in riot gear and attacked the crowd.

While we're no fans of imperialist elections, the World Series victory happened the night before election day and begs the comparison: people are more passionate about baseball than they are about the political future of their country/state/city. This is no surprise to those of us familiar with the decadence of Amerikan imperialism. Amerikans don't need to worry



When people react this way to a Black man being murdered execution-style by the pigs, the city of Oakland blamed it on "outside agitators."

about politics – the government is working in their interests to secure resources at the expense of Third World peoples to maintain wealth at home.

Sports passion includes a remarkable number of fans cheering "we did it!" and "we won!" as if they had anything to do with the team that won the game. In reality the SF Giants, like all professional sports teams, are made up of players from across the country, who are paid a ridiculous amount of money to wear a jersey for this team. Their allegiance to the city lasts only as long as the paycheck continues. In fact people point to statistics about the Giants' last World Series victory 56 years ago when they were based in New York as if that team had something more in common with the SF Giants than the font they use for their logo.

MIM(Prisons) would like to take all the sports passion in Amerika and turn it against imperialist violence or world hunger. We'd even call it progress if people get off the couch and play sports rather than get drunk watching millionaires play. Perhaps the improved circulation would help people think a bit more rationally about politics and the relative importance of professional sports. ★

[On November 5, 2010 Johannes Mehserle received a sentence of 2 years, with time served, for executing Grant. Hundreds of people demonstrated in downtown Oakland in protest. In the end 152 remaining demonstrators were arrested for "unlawful assembly" for merely standing in the street as a group]

FREE POLITICAL BOOKS

Under Lock & Key is free to all prisoners. MIM(Prisons) also runs a Books for Prisoners Program through which we mail prisoners political theory and history books and magazines in exchange for political work. Prisoners requesting books need to tell us what work you want to do, or just send in the articles, artwork, poetry, report on a study group you formed, etc. For many prisoners, the easiest way to start is by writing about what is going on at your prison.

Our Books for Prisoners Program relies on donations of books and money. If you have any contacts on the outside who can donate to our program, or who can hook us up with dictionaries, Mao or Lenin, or other political books, please tell them to contact us at the address on page 1. When requesting books it is best to ask for general topic areas and let us send you whatever we have on hand.

...continued from page 1

...Lumpen UF

lumpen does nothing to liberate any oppressed nation. On the contrary, lumpen-on-lumpen crime will only strengthen the imperialist vice grip on our necks! This is why unity amongst the lumpen is the first step to liberation of all oppressed nations in the United States. We don't have to agree on everything, but we must have unity and work together with the full realization that we are up against not just the same monster but one that happens to run the world militarily.

It is essential for the lumpen to come together in a united front in order for liberation to ever be a reality on these shores. The function of the united front for the oppressed nations and *ULK* should be 1) to practice peoples' power within the prison system and thoroughly politicize the U.S. prison system, and 2) to practice peoples' power within the Barrios and ghetto projects out in society and thoroughly politicize these oppressed nation areas. These functions should be done with the idea of preparing these grounds for future insurrection.

Unite with the International Proletariat!

The basis for unity between the lumpen and the international proletariat is again class-based. The lumpen are connected to the international proletariat by their common oppression by the imperialists and their popular resistance to this oppression. What we must keep in mind is the imperialists think and act on a global scale so we must do the same. Just as many have used the saying "don't show up at a gun battle with a knife," we don't want to show up with a "not in my backyard" mentality when the imperialists show up with an international colonization mentality. We must think of the big picture. Of course we must first work in a particular area, as MIM(Prisons) works primarily with the prison population, to start from there and eventually expand to include larger or multiple fronts of struggle. All our efforts should be with the intention of chipping away at imperialism.

Regardless of one's oppressed nation, it really is the same struggle against the same opponent. Currently this is seen unabashed by the imperialists' mega-prison system housing millions of Brown, Black, Red and Yellow people. It is seen in people of color hunted down in urban communities by the police and shot dead as if there were safaris in the inner cities. It is seen in the unequal treatment that has been festering in Amerika for over 500 years, the lynching of the body and the lynching of the mind. Therefore, it is not just understandable or justified but damn right necessary for these oppressed peoples to struggle for national liberation. Until New Democracy is achieved, as Mao spoke of, and we finally achieve equality for all in all aspects, the oppressed nations should continue to struggle for self-determination.

As communists we should always maintain focus on our goal of international communism rather than degenerating to simply Brown capitalism or Black capitalism, etc. This is why our unity must be with the international proletariat

in mind as this will be our moral compass. Some may say or think "If I can liberate *my* people in this or that country why would I care about countries in another part of the world?" Well, as I've said before, we are all up against the same monster that cannot be defeated by one group of people, and even if one could somehow liberate one group of people, the imperialists worldwide would smash this isolated nation. We saw it happen in Grenada.

When Marx and Engels put together the theory of communism, it was with internationalism in mind as they saw even back then that the bourgeoisie would not sit back and allow the people to begin liberating themselves. We must always work in unity with the international proletariat in order to rise from lumpen to true revolutionary. Only then will we liberate our people. *La Lucha Continua!*

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade did a good job of stressing the importance of internationalism in the united front, and in particular pointing out that the international proletariat must be our moral compass. The question we need to ask though is to what degree the imperialist country lumpen's interests are united with the international proletariat, and therefore how they fit into the united front as a class.

MIM(Prisons) sees the lumpen in the United States as a bourgeoisified lumpen, in that the whole country benefits from imperialism in the form of basic needs like food, clean water, electricity, etc. as well as in the form of cheap consumer goods. The latter allows the lumpen to own small amounts of capital, creating a spectrum of wealth where a minority in the lumpen organizations are at the level of national bourgeoisie due to their relations to production, distribution and ownership. Even for the relatively poor majority of the lumpen class, a combination of state welfare and the drug game have allowed for access to the material benefits of imperialism the proletariat do not have.

We are watching closely the efforts of the white nation to take away welfare and local drug markets from the lumpen (see page 15 article), as well as jobs from the undocumented. Even if these trends are successful, we see compradors among the lumpen and a popular desire for and belief in the American dream. While the lumpen are a class forced into criminality, there is a class consciousness and culture that derives from this criminality that is individualistic and parasitic. As this comrade alludes to, there is a transformation that must occur to replace the lumpen mentality (in particular its capitalistic elements) with a proletarian one. No national liberation struggles can succeed in this country without tackling this great challenge.

In addition, a growing lumpen class due to imperialist crisis will also touch the white nation. As we wrote about in *ULK 14*, a declassified white population is the makings of fascist foot soldiers. History has shown this to be the case for oppressor nations. So we agree with the author's alternating use of lumpen and oppressed nations in most cases, but disagree when s/he

Activists in SHU Still Face Total Censorship

by a California prisoner
October 2010

I want to send a fraternal embrace to everyone. I am writing from the Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit (SHU). I write this letter in response to some stepped up repression that seems to have increased here starting last year in 2009. It is important to understand when these restrictions occur so as to see more broadly if such occurrences are random or a wider campaign. I have within the last year had "returned to sender" eight pieces of mail from MIM(Prisons). I was never notified from the prison, and I had no idea of these returns or rejections until MIM(Prisons) notified me of these refusals.

I was receiving literature and Maoist books from MIM for several years while on the "mainline" general population and I delved into those works so many times that even though I am currently subjected to censorship of political correspondence from MIM(Prisons) I have a strong understanding of the society we live in and the need for political power. It is situations like what I am currently undergoing that really drive home the need to liberate oppressed nations. Here in the SHU, Raza cannot even learn or read about their ancient pre-Columbian languages as the state says this is gang related. Now political science, the ability to theorize and have ideas of a society outside of what currently exists, is denied us.

Occupation is done on many levels all over the world. In some countries occupation may be more subtle but if you look close enough the similarities are there. When the Japanese occupied Korea after the war the Korean language was banned, the Korean people could only speak Japanese. All Korean history and political literature outside Japanese imperialism was censored. We must learn from history, not just our specific history of our particular country of origin.

It is because contemporary ideas and revolutionary theory in general and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism in particular is essential for future struggles and because of the current "awakening" of oppressed nations people in prisons that CDCR has begun a program of censorship particularly in its control units, i.e. SHUs where it is no coincidence that the most politically advanced are held captive. Getting the independent press, such as *ULK*, in the hands of the imprisoned masses is of extreme importance.

The people are fighting to educate the political prisoners, uplift the consciousness of prisoners, and bring politics to the prison houses

Continued on page 16...

says the lumpen have the same interests regardless of nationality. Only if the oppressor nation lets go of its white privilege would this be true. This is an even stronger reason why a thesis that the lumpen in general in the U.S. are a progressive force does not hold true. ★

...Continued from page 9

...Religion

In the farce of this hopelessness, the warden has pushed the panacea of religion both to fight hopelessness, as well as the idea that if you garner enough favor and play the religion game well enough, you will be lucky when you go before the pardon board. The warden has made moves to place himself as an "advisor" to the pardon board to give recommendations as to who should be given a pardon (sentence reduction) and who not. This means you either toe the warden's line - be Christian, not exercise your rights, make no waves, become an informant to show you are "reformed" - or you essentially have no hope whatsoever of ever being granted relief by the pardon board. This includes those prisoners with lesser sentences who go before the parole board. The pardon and parole boards are one and the same.

All of this is a preamble to my real reason for writing this letter to you. I am attempting to re-energize a political base among the prisoner population. The most possible form this may take is by labor unionizing. Angola is one of the last great prison farms (18,000 acres for crops and cattle), along with places like Parchman in Mississippi. A good many of the prisoners here still perform agricultural labor. This food is primarily sold for private profit, not fed to us. This prisoner labor saves the state (and earns it) million of dollars, while prisoners receive little or no "incentive pay" or wages. Field workers earn 4 cents an hour or less, half of which (up to \$250) must go into a "savings account" the prisoners may not use (except for a few narrow reasons) even if the prisoner is a lifer and will never get out to use his "savings." This money sits instead, in perpetuity, earning interest in DOC bank accounts for the state.

The only practical political force prisoners here may exert is by unionizing. Not only to work towards better living/working conditions in prison, but towards more just sentencing laws. Unionization as well creates a solidarity movement younger prisoners may never have experienced before which can prove fertile grounds for Marxist/Maoist education. It would be fitting to see such an agrarian Maoist movement take hold and grow here. Unionization and the educational benefits of a labor movement create the grounds for producing politically aware cadres, some who will remain in prison, but many who may return to their communities to expand the movement.

Consequently, it is my hope to recruit and develop a dedicated cadre of individuals here to research the possibility of a prisoner labor movement and further that idea by education and activism.

I have already circulated the introductory letter you sent to me describing MIM(Prisons)'s platform, as well as the first issue of *ULK* I have received. I further plan to enroll in your Maoist study cell. I have read and studied Marxism-Leninism for many years but am not as familiar with Maoism or how such Maoist principles may differ in form or function from Marxism.

As I have always generally understood, Marxism-Leninism applied to an industrialized (to a large degree) proletariat, where as Maoism was an agrarian movement. I'm sure this may be a huge oversimplification. For that reason, I wish to educate myself more, with your help.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We support this comrade's efforts to organize prison workers. Rather than a proletariat or peasantry, the U.S. prison population's relationship to production puts it squarely in the lumpen class, as we explained in a report on the U.S. prison economy (see *ULK* 8). Prison labor is used to save the state money, as this comrade points out, in its excessively expensive project of imprisoning this class of people that capitalism has no use for. Therefore organizing prisoners to heighten the contradictions of the state in fiscal crisis is of great value. And there is no doubt that this organizing serves an excellent educational purpose as well.

Maoism is an advance on Marxism-Leninism that still bases itself in the revolutionary class of the proletariat but also sees the peasantry as a key ally to the proletariat in countries like China where the system is semi-feudal and the population is so dispersed in the agrarian countryside. While we can't just take this theory and apply it to farming in the U.S. where conditions are very different, the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) is still very relevant today. The dialectical materialist method teaches us to learn from the best that history has to offer (MLM) and apply it to our conditions today just as groups like the Black Panthers and Young Lords did with the lumpen before us.

The history of prison labor organizing at Angola pre-dates the Panthers, and according to one blog, during a strike in 1951, 31 prisoners cut their Achilles tendons so that they could not be made to work on the farm. Acts like these distinguish those who really have "nothing to lose but their chains." Religious brainwashing can be effective at diffusing such resistance, especially when there are bribes involved, but the oppressed will gravitate towards Maoism as it represents their interests as a people and not just short-term individual interests. ★

On Prisons & Prisoners

MIM(Prisons) seeks to build public opinion against Amerika's criminal injustice system, and to eventually replace the bourgeois injustice system with proletarian justice. The bourgeois injustice system imprisons and executes a disproportionately large and growing number of oppressed people while letting the biggest mass murderers -- the imperialists and their lackeys -- roam free. Imperialism is not opposed to murder or theft, it only insists that these crimes be committed in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

All U.S. citizens are criminals -- accomplices and accessories to the crimes of U.S. oppression globally until the day U.S. imperialism is overcome. All U.S. citizens should start from the point of view that they are reforming criminals.

MIM(Prisons) does not advocate that all prisoners go free today; we have a more effective program for fighting crime as was demonstrated in China prior to the restoration of capitalism there in 1976. We say that all prisoners are political prisoners because under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, all imprisonment is substantively political. It is our responsibility to exert revolutionary leadership and conduct political agitation and organization among prisoners -- whose material conditions make them an overwhelmingly revolutionary group. Some prisoners should and will work on self-criticism under a future dictatorship of the proletariat in those cases in which prisoners really did do something wrong by proletarian standards.

... continued from page 6

...LO Criticism

The beginning paragraph starts off with both a call for "peaceful" revolution and a mutual denouncement of violence because, based upon the writer's logic, "with violence we are not going to accomplish anything..." As debatable as any theory of "non-violent" revolution may be in the pages of *ULK*, there is still 1) an absolute lack of any kind of historical reference upon which to build from in the author's writing and 2) an immediate diversion of the topic into one that appears to be an attempt to dichotomize the LO in question based upon either A) the ill-perceived "Chicago-New York Complex," B) what the writer would/may have the masses believe to be the general practice of the membership of the latter and/or C) a convolution of both.

In direct response to A), the attempt to dichotomize the LO in question based upon either city of locale or a feeble attempt at label differentiation is a prime example of the type of demagoguery that only serves to disunite and confuse both present and future generations and the masses as a whole. As to both B) and C), the indication that police collaboration is a problem unique to the New York brand of the LO in question is one based upon both fallacy and a disillusionment of reality. Police collaboration is a threat to *all* LOs, their respective branches, sections, sets, chapters, etc. It is a threat to *any* organized group, party, etc. that opposes U.S. policy, period!

Assuming the writer is/was an actual member of the LO in question, the proposed solution to "rise up and make a positive stand for what we as a whole are supposed to be about: respect, unity, knowledge, loyalty and most of all love" is a solution nowhere apparent throughout the entire critique itself.

Finally, if one does not understand (as stated by the writer where s/he wrote that "I don't understand where these dudes went wrong") then the study of the class structure of the internal semi-colonies of the United States is what one *must* understand. Three hundred sixty degrees of knowledge of revolutionary theory and practice. Anything else is just anti-King babble at its best, and pig work dividing the oppressed for the imperialists at its worst. ★

El Buro Federal de Investigación Arresto a un Hacedor de Paz

por MIM(Prisiones)
traducido por un@ prisoner@ de Washington
July 2009

Hace dos ediciones que "Bajo clavo y llave" publicó el número de "paz." Ahora estamos trabajando en una publicación sobre migrantes y no ciudadanos en las prisiones estadounidenses. El secuestro del director de "Homies Unidos", Alex Sánchez, por el FBI ayer demuestra la relación estrecha de las prisiones, emigración, represión y paz.

"Homies Unidos" se inició en El Salvador por 20 personas que fueron deportadas de los Estados Unidos debido a leyes de inmigración de la era Clinton después de cumplir penas de prisión. Alex Sánchez jugó un papel clave en fundar el capítulo de Los Ángeles dos años después, construyendo un importante vínculo al origen de los problemas de pandilla aquí en el estomago de la bestia.

El apuntamiento y arresto de Alex por el FBI es no más que un ejemplo más que soporta nuestro argumento en la publicación número 7, que el estado no quiere paz. Hay pocas quienes pueden decir que han hecho más para traer paz a algunas de las peores áreas mundiales afectada por las pandillas, sin embargo el estado lo mira como una amenaza.

En los 1980, la gente por todo Centro América se había unido por un nuevo sistema económico que servía las necesidades de la gente. Los Estados Unidos respondieron por medio de armar y entrenar escuadrones de la muerte para combatir esos movimientos. Ellos usaron el terrorismo, matando a las familias locales en el genocidio en masa, y haciendo brutalidades similares contra los partidarios de otros países para desentusiasmar el internacionalismo. Como la mayoría de la gente con quien "Homies Unidos" trabaja, Alex sí mismo se fue víctima del desplazamiento masivo de gente por Centro América causado por una década de intervención estadounidense. Este periodo de brutalidad fue seguida por políticas económicas que ofrecieron una opción de trabajo para las niñas de la guerra: corriendo producto para la economía de drogas multi-billonaria estadounidense.

Aunque la mayoría que viajaron a los Estados Unidos busca el trabajo, otras fueron traídas aquí por sus puestos en el mercado negro de intercambio de drogas. De cualquier forma, esos recién llegados son perseguidos por el encarcelamiento del sistema injusticia estadounidense, que ayudó a consolidar y reforzar la vida pandillera criminal como la única opción para casi todos los jóvenes masculinos. Al igual que los que vinieron antes que ellos, los salvadoreños en las calles y prisiones formaron grupos para defenderse de una sociedad quien les temía y atacó a los recién llegados.

El arresto de Alex es un ataque flagrante que forma parte del mismo sistema que ha atacado a millones procedentes del mismo lugar donde

el vino. Pero su apuntamiento ha sido muy específico y constante por sus esfuerzos para organizar la paz mediante el construir de alternativas a los delitos violentos como una forma de sobrevivir. Él apareció una amenaza demasiado grande para el sistema que controla a cafés y negros jóvenes en este país por medio de drogas y intensidad baja de guerra, mientras al mismo tiempo amenazando el flujo de drogas dentro del mercado más ricos del mundo.

Previamente, Alex fue perseguido por la unidad CRASH Murallas (Ramparts CRASH Unit) que condujo a la infame escándalo en el Departamento de Policía de Los Ángeles (LAPD), donde los policías trabajaban con el INS para deportar a los traficantes de drogas que no trabajaría con el LAPD. En ese momento fue amenazado con la deportación. Él respondió, tratando de obtener asilo debido a posición social en El Salvador, donde miembros de la principal organización lumpen allá son perseguidos por encarcelamiento y asesinato con más impunidad que ellos son en los Estados Unidos. Esto habría proveído una salida para millones de jóvenes atrapados en el ciclo violento. Pero las cortes americanas no irían por este argumento, y le concedieron asilo en la base de sus creencias políticas en su lugar.

Alex continuamente ha puesto su mismo en la línea por los intereses de la clase lumpen, que todavía no han devuelto el favor. Parte del desarrollo de conciencia de los lumpen es organizando la defensa (y apoyo) a los que están haciendo lo mayoría para servir a los lumpen.

Lección para la mente criminal

Hay dos posibles lecciones que miembros de la organización lumpen no política pueden tomar de esto. Hay el mensaje del FBI, que no hay esperanza trabajar contra los imperialistas estadounidenses, así que te encuentras mejor trabajando con el gobierno y sus operaciones de drogar y pacificar las comunidades oprimidas

y espera tu no seas golpeado por la violencia o adicción tu mismo. Este es el termino corto, punto de vista individualista.

Entonces hay la lección que MIM(Prisión) aprovecha de esto. Si es verdad quien haga el trabajo verdadero para ayudar los jóvenes lumpen mejorar sus vidas será perseguido por el gobierno estadounidense. Pero en vez de acudir a la desesperación y la capitulación, promovemos el mensaje que entusiasmo la gente a mirar a la foto grande y abandonar sus miedos como individuales. Esta lección nos lleva a reconocer la necesidad de varias estrategias. Una de estas estrategias es el cambiar del enfoque de las organizaciones lumpen para proveer verdadero apoyo para organizaciones independientes que están ayudando verdaderamente a jóvenes lumpen. Pero con eso vienen riesgos. Otra lección es que la criminalidad de los lumpen lo hace más difícil para los líderes para ayudar de lumpen como clase. En otras palabras, mejorando tu compartir lo hace más fácil para nosotros trabajar juntos.

En respuesta a los recientes arrestos, muchas estadounidenses ya ha condenado a Alex de los delitos imputados, porque según al idealismo burgués la gente se nace mala y no puede cambiar. Lo que pasa es que la gente quien se nace malo usualmente tienen piel más oscura. Tal idealismo es solamente consistente con una ideología de racismo.

Como MIM(Prisons) Homies Unidos hizo hincapié de la educación del lumpen de entender por qué están donde están, mientras trabajan para formar líderes para cambiar esa realidad. Los que se benefician de la opresión y explotación de otros no quieren que ese cambio tenga lugar. Se promoverá que los individuos escapar de la vida criminal como ejemplos que cualquiera puede tener éxito (si lo intentan) El lumpen sabe que esta es una mierda, pero el lumpen necesita estudiar para mirar cuáles son las verdaderas soluciones. ★

El MIM(Prisiones)

El MIM(Prisiones) profesa la revolucionaria ideología comunista del marxismo-leninismo-maoísmo y constituye una organización internacionalista que trabaja desde el punto de vista del proletariado del Tercer Mundo.

El MIM(Prisiones) lucha para acabar con la opresión de cualquier grupo por parte de otros grupos, clases, géneros o naciones. El MIM(Prisiones) está consciente de que la única manera de llevar a cabo dicho propósito es mediante una consolidación de la opinión pública a favor de la conquista del poder a través una lucha armada.

En el caso de EE.UU., la revolución irá convirtiéndose en realidad en la medida en que el gobierno amplíe el alcance de las fuerzas militares en un intento de mantener la hegemonía mundial.

El MIM(Prisiones) ha fundado una organización antiimperialista de prisioneros, Lucha Unida desde Adentro (USW), encabezada por el MIM(Prisiones); el propósito de ésta es organizar a gente antiimperialista dentro del sistema carcelario. Nuestros camaradas de la USW escriben artículos delineando condiciones de sus cárceles, distribuyen el Bajo Cerradura y Llave dentro de las cárceles, organizan grupos de estudio y, por lo general, asumen cierto grado de liderazgo práctico en cuanto a la educación sobre las cárceles como un aspecto del imperialismo estadounidense por medio de recursos puramente legales.

Nosotros proporcionamos herramientas para llevar a cabo la educación de los prisioneros y la gente afuera de las cárceles sobre la opresión de los prisioneros.

Si Ud. escribe en español o si les gustaría traducir artículos en inglés al español, Ud. puede ayudarnos con la publicación de las futuras ediciones de Bajo Cerradura y Llave. Este proyecto ayuda a divulgar el pensamiento marxista-leninista-maoísta entre los pueblos de habla hispana, y sobre todo, las semicolonias internas de EE.UU. Si Ud. es bilingüe de habla inglesa e hispana, avísenos aunque no quiera ayudarnos. Si quiere entregar artículos en español, hágalo (de todas maneras nos ayudaría recibir sus cartas en inglés, si es que Ud. sabe escribir en inglés).

California Ponders Marijuana Legalization

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
October 2010

[Editor's Note: On November 2, 2010, though Proposition 19 failed by 4%, 3.5 million Californians voted in favor of regulating marijuana use similar to alcohol. Its supporters pledged to continue the campaign.]

The November 2 elections promise some shuffling of the imperialist representatives in government, but as usual with elections where the choices are limited to different flavors of imperialist leaders, there will be no real change. One ballot initiative that did catch our attention is Proposition 19 in California which would legalize and regulate marijuana.

In an attempt to reduce support for Prop 19, on 30 September 2010 California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a law that changes the punishment for possession of less than an ounce of pot to just a fine. This reduces the potential impact of Prop 19 and should cut down on the number of people in prison for marijuana possession. But even arrests and convictions without a prison sentence have negative repercussions, so Prop 19 goes farther in limiting the reach of the state in terms of possession laws.

MIM(Prisons) supports any laws that will cut back on the number of people locked up in prison or otherwise controlled by the imperialist state. We know that drug laws (like other laws) are disproportionately prosecuted against oppressed nations within U.S. borders, resulting in huge numbers of Blacks and Latinos behind bars. For this reason we would support legalizing all drugs to take power away from the imperialist government and its criminal injustice system.

In 2009, just over half of the drug arrests were for marijuana (848,408 out of 1,663,583).(1) Marijuana arrests are growing as a proportion of total drug arrests in the U.S., up to 52.6% in 2009 from 39.9% in 1995. This is driven by arrests for simple possession, the percentage of arrests for marijuana trafficking has not changed much over time.(2)

Adding to these statistics on marijuana arrests is compelling information on the disproportionate use of marijuana laws against Black men in California. The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice reports:

"African Americans, just 6% of the state's population...comprise a staggering 45% of the 1,600 Californians imprisoned for marijuana, including more than half of those locked up for marijuana felonies. Blacks are nearly 4 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana than other races, a racial gap only slightly wider than for other crimes. But after African Americans enter California's 'Black marijuana system,' disparities multiply more than for any other offense. Seven in 10 Black marijuana arrestees are charged with felonies, compared to one-fifth for other races. Blacks convicted of marijuana felonies are 3 times more likely to be sent to prison than Nonblack marijuana felons. The upshot of these accumulating discriminations is that Blacks wind up being imprisoned for marijuana at 8 times the rate of Hispanics

and 18 times the rate of Whites. At older ages, the Black-Nonblack marijuana imprisonment gap soars to nearly 4,000%... No other offense (including violent, property, and other crimes) and no other drug (including heroin, methamphetamine, and crack) even remotely displays the huge racial discrepancies in imprisonment for marijuana."(3)

The new law would not completely eliminate marijuana arrests and prosecutions, primarily because it restricts the legal age to 21 and only allows possession of small quantities, but they would be greatly reduced. In addition, the federal government has promised to challenge the constitutionality of Prop 19 if it passes, and to enforce the federal laws in California regardless. Of course we can't look at these laws in a vacuum, the criminal injustice system will not cut back on the police force or shrink the prisons simply because one law changes. Cops will just find other reasons to arrest people, and those people will continue to be disproportionately Black and Latino.

Even worse, cities like Oakland will likely be using the new tax revenues to restore its recently cut back police force. The city stands to be one of the biggest beneficiaries if the law passes, as it is home to Oakland University, which will be licensing large growing and distribution centers under the new law. The financial interests behind Oakland University bankrolled the introduction of Prop 19 to the November ballot. Los Angeles campus chancellor Jeff Jones pointed out that support has come primarily from the jobs and tax revenue angle. He says that focusing on imprisonment rates gets little support from Californians.

While the imperialists run the global drug trade, here the state is partnering with corporate interests to take over the local industry, which has been the domain of the lumpen class. Following the national liberation movements of the sixties many in the ghetto who didn't see the American dream through integration were able to find an income through the drug economy. By the 1970s, Italians, Jews and others who dominated black markets, in particular drugs, had long been integrated into white America. Whites left the inner cities for the suburbs where they could become richer more easily by joining a growing financial sector, allowing for Black and Latino gangs to take over profitable street crime in their own areas. Organized crime, led by the CIA, backed the most individualistic and destructive emerging groups, while repressing Black and Brown power movements and flooding these neighborhoods with cocaine.(4)

Faced with economic crisis today, white America wants these jobs back. And the state is leading the charge, hoping to reach a new tax source to close huge shortfalls in paying their bureaucrat employees - especially their pigs, who account for 85% of city spending in Oakland (police & fire combined). (5) But whites aren't forming a new mafia (at least not exactly). Instead they formed a new university to train and certify workers in the industry and they have joined labor unions to ensure wages of \$25.75 an hour with pensions, paid vacations and health insurance.(6) In contrast, reports from the 1990s showed that most in the drug game in the inner cities made around minimum wage and worked long

hours (needless to say with no benefits).(7) So the state hopes to shrink the workforce in drug sales and production, pay a few trained workers a nice sum, and increase their share of profits from the sale of marijuana to pay cops and other state employees. In the process, the economic crisis will be passed along to the lumpen who will become ever more desperate to make ends meet. This will lead to more violence and problems, and make the need for self-determination more dire in oppressed nation communities that lack legal job markets.

While MIM(Prisons) supports the passage of laws that result in fewer people in prison, we are under no illusions that even full legalization of drugs in America will solve the drug problems here. As we have seen with alcohol, legalization of a drug does not make for safe use. American culture is alienating and leads to rampant legal and illegal drug abuse. According to a World Health Organization survey of 17 countries across the globe, the U.S. leads the world in users of both legal and illegal drugs. Drug use is correlated with wealth of a country with the richer countries having a higher percentage of drug users.(8)

It will take a revolution to create a culture that allows people to feel valuable, safe and empowered and not in need of the easy escape that can be found in drugs. After the revolution in China, the Maoist-led country basically eliminated drug addiction through community-based campaigns. Drug addiction, particularly to opium, was a widespread problem imported by the British. But after the revolution there was a strong focus on helping drug addicts get clean, and on giving everyone useful work and education as well as health care. This campaign, combined with a strategy of wiping out opium growing and distribution in favor of much needed food crops, virtually eliminated the drug problems in China by the early 1950s. Only with a government that serves the people rather than working to enrich its imperialist masters will we be able to eliminate drug abuse and the criminal injustice system. As we work towards such a system we will support laws that result in fewer people in prison, but we know the impact of these laws will be minimal at best. ★

Notes:

1. *Crime from Crime in the United States 2009*, FBI Uniform Crime Report (Washington, DC: US Dept. of Justice, September 2010), Table 29, and Arrest Table: Arrests for Drug Abuse Violations

2. <http://www.drugwarfacts.org/cms/Crime>

3. Mike Males. *Marijuana: California's Black "Criminal (In)justice System"*, 30 July 2010. Also note, that statistics for the country generally show marijuana use among Black youth is generally lower than for their white and Latino peers.

4. For background on the rise to power of Black and Brown street gangs in 1960s Chicago see: John M. Hagedorn, *A Genealogy of Gangs in Chicago*, Chicago: University of Illinois, May 2009, p. 8. Also see Sudhir Venkatesh, *Gang Leader for a Day*, New York: Penguin Books, 2008, p. 78.

5. *Police vs. City Council on Oakland budget cuts*, SFGate.com, 22 June 2010.

6. *Oakland: Medical marijuana growers join Teamsters union*, 22 September 2010

7. Venkatesh, 2009. Also see: Philippe Bourgois, *In Search of Respect*, Cambridge University Press, 2002. MIM(Prisons) is working on an up to date detailed class analysis of the oppressed nations and the lumpen class. If you can help research these types of questions, please get in touch.

8. reported by CBS News, July 1, 2008

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ATTENTION PRISONERS:

You must write to us every 6 months to stay on our mailing list.
Tell us what mail you've gotten since the last time you wrote so we can track and fight censorship.

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Under Lock & Key No. 17 November/December 2010

Special Literature Offers

Spanish: We have very few people registered as being able to read Spanish on our mailing list. Please let us know if you can read Spanish and refer your Spanish-speaking comrades. We especially need our comrades in the border states (CA, AZ, NM, TX) to reach out to our migrant brothers and sisters who are the fastest growing population in U.S. prisons. We will be doing a mass mailing of Spanish language newspapers soon, so get on the list!

MIM Notes: The defunct official newsletter of the Maoist Internationalist Movement, featuring Maoist coverage of international news, was the newspaper where *Under Lock & Key* got started. We recently received a donation of *MIM Notes* from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. Write to us to get a package *MIM Notes* as part of our free books for prisoners program (more info page 11).

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...Censorship

nationwide, and build the prison base for revolution. At the same time the ruling class sees the 2+ million potentially revolutionary prisoners behind bars and knows that every prisoner who takes up the struggle for a better society is another addition to resist their program. They understand that prisoners in general are becoming radicalized yet they know they can't shut down all so called "freedom of the press," so they spend their time and resources on what they feel are their prime target group or persons of influence which are what they label the people held in control units. By doing so they are basically isolating these comrades from correspondence, political literature or study material of any sort, even of basic contact with comrades on the outside.

The need for people who still have the ability to receive any papers, newsletters or literature from MIM(Prisons) to do so is of utmost importance, with vigor and hunger as if you will never get the chance again because once in a SHU you will be censored. The need to support independent press like ULK is on top of the priority list and should be done financially or any other way. It is times like now that I appreciate a crisp uncut publication like ULK; when only watered-down periodicals are allowed to reach me I see how precious ULK is.

I am embarking on another legal battle for the censorship here in Pelican Bay and I encour-

age others to do the same. United we will overcome this battle. ★

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...Housing Decline

Press, 1972, p. 337. His theory of Unequal Exchange is greatly simplified in this article.

3. U.S. Census Bureau, *Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division*

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homeownership_in_the_United_States

5. Arianna Huffington, *Third World America*, Crown Publishing, 2010.

6. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Graphic.png>

7. *This is the theoretical price to buy all publicly held companies. It was as low as \$40 trillion in September 2008.* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Market_capitalization Meanwhile, Amerikan homeowners went from \$65.5 trillion in 2007 to \$54.2 trillion in 2009. <http://srph.it/csOWKd>

8. G. William Domhoff, *Wealth, Income, and Power*, UC Santa Cruz, August 2010.

9. Munir Daya, *Commendable Philanthropy*. *The Citizen*, 7 August 2010.

10. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28PPP%29

11. *According to Wikipedia citations even the bottom quartile of U.S. citizens have no net wealth.* http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wealth_in_the_United_States#cite_note-GWUS-2

12. Davies, James B. *The World Distribution of Household Wealth*. 5 December 2006.

13. Anup Shah, *Poverty Facts and Stats*, March 28, 2010.

14. *While most Americans fall into the top 10%, all of them are in the top 20%, so to be conservative we will take 76.6 over 20 and compare to 7.2 over 50. We get a ratio of 3.83 : 0.144 or the average Amerikan consumes at least 26.59 times the amount of the average persyn in the bottom 50%.*

15. Daniel B. Wood, *Opinion polls show broad support for tough Arizona immigration law*. *The Christian Science Monitor*, 30 April 2010.

16. Peter O'dowd, *Some Latinos Support Arizona's New Immigration Law*. NPR, 25 May 2010.