



# Under Lock & Key

Español  
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## A Victory for Prisoners' First Amendment Rights

by a California prisoner  
September 2012

[The following article begins with excerpts from an article by a California prisoner, which gives a detailed historical account of relevant case law, and was originally published by the San Francisco BayView. The full article and full court opinion are available through MIM Distributors for comrades fighting this battle in California.]

Greetings. The struggle is long and arduous, and sometimes we do etch out significant victories, as in the case of our brotha in *In re Crawford*, 206 Cal.App.4th 1259 (2012).

It's important to emphasize that this victory is a significant step in reaffirming that prisoners are entitled to a measure of First Amendment protection that cannot be ignored simply because the state dislikes the spiel. New Afrikan prisoners have a right to identify with their birthright if they so choose, as does anyone else for that matter -- Black, White or Brown. ...

[California prison officials] have gone so far as to boldly proclaim that the term New Afrikan was created by the Black Guerilla Family (BGF) and that those who identify as or use the term are declaring their allegiance to the BGF, which has been declared a prison gang. They have sought to suppress its usage by validating (i.e. designating as a gang member or associate) anyone who uses the term or who dares mention the name George Jackson. ...

Our brotha's case *In Re Crawford* was filed June 4, 2012, and certified for publication June 13. In a brilliant piece of judicial reasoning, a panel of justices in a 3-0 decision finally reaffirmed a prisoner's First Amendment right to free speech and expression, stating:

*Freedom of speech is first among the rights which form the foundation of our free society. "The First Amendment embodies our choice as a nation that, when it comes to such speech, the guiding principle is freedom -- the unfettered interchange of ideas -- not whatever the State may view as fair."* (Arizona Free Enterprise Club v. Bennett (2011) 131 S.Ct. 2806). "The protection given speech and press was fashioned to assure unfettered interchange of ideas for the bringing about of political and social changes desired by the people ... All ideas having even the slightest redeeming social importance -- unorthodox ideas, controversial ideas, even ideas hateful to the prevailing climate of opinion -- have the full protection of the guaranties, unless excludable because they encroach upon the

## On Security, Correct Leadership, and September 9

by ULK Editor of MIM(Prisons)  
September 2012



limited area of more important interests." (Roth v. United States (1957) 354 U.S. 476, 484.

The programs embodied in the New Afrikan Collective Think Tank, New Afrikan Institute of Criminology 101, the George Jackson University and the New Afrikan ideology itself are inclusive programs emphasizing a solution-based approach to carnage in the poverty stricken slums from where many of us come. The CDCR Prison Intelligence Units (PIU) have sought to suppress these initiatives simply because they do not like the message. They have marched into court after court with one standard line: New Afrikan means BGF and these initiatives are promoting the BGF. *In re Crawford* continues,

*As recently noted by Chief Justice Roberts, "[t]he First Amendment reflects 'a profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open.' [Citation.] That is because 'speech concerning public affairs is more than self-expression; it is the essence of self-government.' [Citation.] ... [S]peech on public issues occupies the highest rung of the hierarchy of First Amendment values, and is entitled to special protection."* (Snyder v.

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This issue is going to production on the heels of the first countrywide action engaged in by a yet-unknown number of members of the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP), representing many political, religious and lumpen organizations and hailing from the prison systems of Nevada, North Carolina, Florida, New York, California, Texas, Missouri, Pennsylvania and the Federal system. Initially called for by UFPP signatory SAMAEL, MIM(Prisons) promoted the call for the Day of Solidarity on September 9 in our last issue of *Under Lock & Key* as something we felt embodied what the united front is about. In this issue we summarize what we know so far, but we expect to learn more in the coming weeks and will continue to report on this important action.

For our part, MIM(Prisons) made a strong effort back in July to directly contact all other prison rights organizations and activists on the outside to let them know about the Day of Solidarity. We also promoted it generally online and handed out fliers with the five principles of the UFPP on them at many events related to prisons and peace on the streets. Other media outlets that promoted the call included the San Francisco BayView Newspaper, anti-imperialism.com and NorthBay Uprising Radio (89.5 KZCT in Vallejo, CA), which did an extensive interview with a comrade about the day of solidarity, the united front and the prison struggle in general. Other articles in this issue discuss some of the repression faced by prisoners and MIM(Prisons) leading up to the action.

All that said, the primary focus of the day was the organizing of prisoners. To facilitate this we distributed updates to everyone involved about the plans of other groups participating, similar to what we did during the California strikes. One story we distributed from New York was from a handwritten kite a comrade passed to another brother at his facility: "Bro. - Please pay close attention to the article 'Call for Solidarity Demonstration September 9' on page 3. Let me know what you think. I've decided to fast on Sept 9th." The response was written on the same paper: "Yes I will fast on that day, it looks better when we all go to chow but we just don't eat. Thanks for that information." (This was what the 800 Attica comrades did on August 22, 1971 in honor of George Jackson, who was murdered the previous day.) The original organizers got this report and adjusted their own plans to go to chow and dispose of meals as outlined in their cheat sheet (see p.5). This cheat sheet was passed on to the comrades in Florida

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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 prisoner 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 legally permitted. 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, and is free for U.S. prisoners. 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](http://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; Maoists see the latter 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?

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.

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.

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. While our organization focuses on prisoner support, 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 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 (i.e. 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. See page 12 for info on some of the active USW campaigns.

## United Front for Peace in Prisons- Statement of Principles

The basis of any real unity comes from an agreement on certain key ideas. This statement does not grant authority to any party over any other party. We are mutually accountable to each other to uphold these points in order to remain active participants in this united front.

★ **PEACE:** WE organize to end the needless conflicts and violence within the U.S. prison environment. The oppressors use divide and conquer strategies so that we fight each other instead of them. We will stand together and defend ourselves from oppression.

★ **UNITY:** WE strive to unite with those facing the same struggles as us for our common interests. To maintain unity we have to keep an open line of networking and communication, and ensure we address any situation with true facts. This is needed because of how the pigs utilize tactics such as rumors, snitches and fake communications to divide and keep division among the oppressed. The pigs see the end of their control within our unity.

★ **GROWTH:** WE recognize the importance of education and freedom to grow in order to build real unity. We support members within our organization who leave and embrace other political organizations and concepts that are within the anti-imperialist struggle. Everyone should get in where they fit in. Similarly, we recognize the right of comrades to leave our organization if we fail to live up to the principles and purpose of the United Front for Peace in Prisons.

★ **INTERNATIONALISM:** WE struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people. While we are often referred to as "minorities" in this country, and we often find those who are in the same boat as us opposing us, our confidence in achieving our mission comes from our unity with all oppressed nations who represent the vast majority globally. We cannot liberate ourselves when participating in the oppression of other nations.

★ **INDEPENDENCE:** WE build our own institutions and programs independent of the United States government and all its branches, right down to the local police, because this system does not serve us. By developing independent power through these institutions we do not need to compromise our goals.

## How to join the United Front?

★ Study and uphold the five principles above.

★ Send your organization's name and a statement of unity to MIM(Prisons). Your statement can explain what the united front principles mean to your organization, how they relate to your work, why they are important, etc.

★ Develop peace and unity between factions where you are at on the basis of opposing oppression of all prisoners and oppressed people in general.

★ Send reports on your progress to *Under Lock & Key*. Did you develop a peace treaty or protocol that is working? Send it in for others to study. Is your unity based on actions? Send us reports on the organizing you are doing.

★ Keep educating your members. The more educated your members are, the more unity you can develop, and the stronger your organization can become. Unity comes from the inside out. By uniting internally, we can better unite with others as well. Contact MIM(Prisons) if you need additional materials to educate your members in history, politics and economics.

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...September 9

whose report appears below, who also adopted the tactic:

*On 9 September 2012, at Everglades Correctional Institution in Florida, individual members of The Blood Nation honored the soldiers of Attica by doing one or more of the following: fasting, boycotting the canteen/commissary, accepting chow hall trays and dumping them, and explaining why. Also participating individually were one or more members of the following groups (in alphabetical order): Black Gangsta Disciples, Crip Nation, Insane Gangsta Disciples, Almighty Latin King Queen Nation, Nation of Islam, Spanish Cobras, Shi'a Muslim Community, and Sufi Community. My apologies to anyone I missed. It was a small step at a spot with no history of unity, but even a single drop of water in a dry glass makes it wet. Respect to those who made the sacrifice, those who joined us midday, and those who expressed interest the day after. I'm as human as anyone, but let's TRY to remember who the enemy is!*

Good work comrades! Seems like organizations in Florida are open to solidarity as another comrade from that state reports: "Being that today is September 9 and a day of solidarity and peace, all sorts of nations (organizations) got together here in the rec yard and had a jailhouse BBQ and lived in peace just for the day here at Cross City, Florida."

Many of our supporters are suffering in long-term isolation, so the opportunity for mass organizing is greatly limited. A report from Missouri read:

*Today is September 9, 2012. My comrade (my celly) and I are participating in the mass stoppage of work and fast for our comrades who fell in Attica. Although we are in Ad-Seg we have chosen to sacrifice: no food, no [petty stuff], no arguing out the door, only working out four times for one hour each time, reading, studying and talking politics. For me fasting is something I do once a month, but today is the first time I've worked out during my fast. My comrade is pushing me and I'm not stopping. From midnight to midnight is how we're moving.*

This white comrade also reported that he received *ULK* 27 announcing the Day of Solidarity, while his Black comrade's was censored. They report this is a common form of discrimination in Missouri.

The Minister of Justice of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party reported from California:

*The young comrades and I did build and protest by fasting and study on September 9, 2012, in solidarity with the comrades of the Attica prison uprising in 1971, and we organized in unity and peace without any problems.*

*Many of the young comrades did a MIM(Prisons) study group assignment as well as readings from Under Lock & Key. We had a very positive 2 days of study and building. I was very pleased with the young comrades and to see them in love and unity with respect.*

And right before finishing production we got this report straight from Attica itself where hundreds of prisoners participated:

*For the morning meal the mess hall was virtually empty. For the noon meal there were approximately 120 prisoners in attendance. Usually, when they serve baked chicken and rice there are some 360 prisoners in attendance. A lot more prisoners turned out for the evening meal. Overall there was a low attendance for meals.*

*Next year things will be different and better organized. I'm in the process of obtaining two articles dealing with the Attica rebellion. I'll have copies of the articles run off and give one of each to the entire prison population. This can be accomplished within a year's time.*

Another great success occurred in Nevada where SAMAEEL led the organizing of a good cross-section of prisoners representing about 30% of the population.

The progress represented by prisoners across the country acting in solidarity as a class took place in the context of the many other strikes and mass actions prisoners have led in the past year or more that have built off of each other as cipactli writes about in the next article. This progress is exciting on the subjective level. And we can look at periods of mass uprising to see what happens when times are "exciting." They tend to be crazy as well. People are confused, trying to figure things out and the enemy is working hard to confuse them more and divide them. So it is of the utmost importance that as the new prison movement emerges that we take time to study questions of security and correct leadership.

There is the question of security at the individual level, and how we judge someone by putting politics in command, as discussed by PTT in relation to Richard Aoki on page 6. In the belly of the beast, where there is so much wealth and privilege, security at the group level is very tied up with our class analysis. As our Nevada comrade points out on page 7, most people in this country will actively support imperialism without directly getting a paycheck for it, and this is true for a portion of the prison population as well.

One thing that sets communists apart from other revolutionary trends is our stress on the importance of correct ideological leadership. Putting politics in command can guide us in dealing with all challenges we face, not just security. We recognize that the truth will come from mass struggle, but that it will not always be recognized by the masses when they see it because everyone needs to learn to think in a scientific way first. In order to pick the best leadership, we must all be well-studied to think scientifically about both history and our current conditions. As we point out to the comrade who suspects we might be CIA on page 7, you should be able to judge the correctness of *ULK* and to struggle with us where you think we are wrong to decide whether the risk of subscribing is worth it.

Our comrade in BORO puts the September 9 Day of Solidarity in this context well when s/he writes: "Through the lens of a dialectical-materialist, we must see history as a never-ending stream of past events that gave and constantly give birth to present realities. This chain of historical events is constantly moving us forward into the ocean of endless possibilities. We must use this view of a 'living history' as a source of defining who we are and the direction we're heading as a people." (see p. 11)

This September protest wasn't just to spend a day sitting quietly honoring the past; it was a time to learn from the past and apply lessons to address our current conditions. The day was a success, but it was only one step in developing a class-conscious prison movement that can change conditions. In the coming weeks we look forward to hearing of more successes and accomplishments that organizers achieved on September 9.

We hope that some of the articles in this issue can push forward among the masses the question of recognizing correct leadership to avoid the traps of the state and its sympathizers. For those who want to learn, MIM(Prisons)'s Serve the People Free Political Literature to Prisoners Program and correspondence study groups operate year round, not just in August. ★

## Prisoner Uprisings Foretell Growing Movement

by cipactli of Brown Berets - Prison Chapter June 2012

Recently prisoners have begun to rediscover their voice and power in some of the most vile dungeons in Amerika. On May 22, 2012, the latest development has come from Red Onion State Prison in Virginia, where prisoners rose up and defied the oppressor. This refusal to be passive in the face of brutality seems to occur more and more often these days. Red Onion shares the same oppression as Pelican Bay SHU prisoners and others across Amerika who face many of the same forms of abuse, cruelty and neglect.

There are over 90 thousand people in Amerika being held in solitary or segregation of some sort. Most of these 90 thousand are Latino or Black, making this mass imprisonment also a manifestation of national oppression.(1) But national oppression is also tied to the economic relations as today's developments with the world economies and social unrest point to the exhaustion of capitalism. This exhaustion coupled with the changing demographic where more than half of all babies born in the U.\$ are non-white(2) is unleashing a mass imprisonment of Latinos and New Afrikans in unprecedented numbers. These are basically internment camps for the internal semi-colonies.

This rise in oppression is not simply in imprisonment; there has also been an economic offensive to go with it. Indeed, states comprising Aztlán and New Afrika have seen a more than 20% rise in poverty between 2007 and 2010.(3)

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Phelps (2011) 562 U.S. \_\_\_ [131 S.Ct. 1207, 1215].

*In re Crawford* is a very important ruling because the justices said these protections apply to prisoners as well. ...

George Jackson cannot be removed from the fabric of the people's struggles in this society any more than Malcolm X can or Medger Evers or Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or Harriett Tubman or Sojourner Truth or Ida B. Wells, Rosa Parks or Frederick Douglass, or the countless others who've fought and struggled for a brighter future for generations to come.

What CDCR and its PIU are trying to do is make a run around the First Amendment by shielding their suppression activity under the guise of gang activity, just as they've done historically, which gave rise to *Pro-cunier v. Martinez* (1974) 416 U.S. 396, 413.

In *In re Crawford*, CDCR argued for an exception to the Martinez test for validated gang members. The court declined to make such an exception, holding: "Gang related correspondence is not within the exception to the First Amendment test for censorship of outgoing inmate mail."

The fact that they even argued for such an exception shows their mindset. Their intentions are to suppress that which they believe to be repugnant, offensive and that which they believe a prisoner ought not be thinking! In their minds we have no right to think or possess ideas, concepts or vision beyond that which they believe we should possess.

Until *In Re Crawford*, these highly educated judges were sanctioning this nonsense with twisted, perverted rulings permitting a news-

### ...Free Speech

paper article or magazine layout or book to be used against a prisoner for validation purposes [to put them in torture cells - editor]. They issued twisted rulings like those in *Ellis v. Cambra* or *Hawkins v. Russell* and *In Re Furnace*, where the petitioner was told he has no right to his thoughts and the First Amendment only protects a prisoner's right to file a 602 [grievance form].

These kinds of fallacious rulings ought to be publicized so as to show the skillful manipulation of the law by those sworn to uphold it. *In Re Crawford* reestablishes that First Amendment protections apply to prisoners and that we too enjoy a measure of free speech and expression. We ought not be punished with fabricated notions of gang activity for merely a thought!

**"Even prisoners who are gang members retain rights of expression and those rights cannot be taken away by a governmental agency simply speculating, without any evidence whatsoever"**

**- California Appeals Court**

However, if we are to continue to meet with success, we need our professors, historians and intellectuals to step up and provide declarations that we can use in our litigation, defending our right to read, write and study all aspects of a people's history, like Professor James T. Campbell did in *In Re Crawford*. This is the only way a prisoner can challenge the opinion of a prison official. ...

Much work remains to be done, like stopping the bogus validations based on legitimate First Amendment material. We know that many individuals are falsely validated simply for reading George's books or a newspaper article, for observing Black August or for simply trying to get in touch with one's cultural identity.

These legitimate expressions should carry no penalty at all. You're not doing anything wrong, and a lot of brothas who've been validated simply shouldn't be. Nor should folks be frightened away from reading or studying any aspect of history simply because the state doesn't like its content. Judges who issue fallacious opinions

permitting prisoners to be punished for reading a George Jackson book or researching your history should be exposed.

Literary content and cultural and historical materials are not the activities of a gang; they are political and social activities that we have a right to express, according to the unanimous decision in *In re Crawford*.

The First Amendment campaign continues to forge ahead, although we still don't have a lawyer. The campaign still exists, and we anticipate even greater successes in the future. ... We've cracked one layer of a thick wall. Now all prisoners should take advantage of this brilliant ruling and reassert your rights to study your heritage, Black, White or Brown.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** The issue in this case was one that we have experienced first-hand as well. For example, in 2008 a letter from a comrade in California was censored before it could reach us because it discussed the New Afrikan Collective, which allegedly was a code word for the Black Guerrilla Family.(1) But in reality, the New Afrikan Collective was a new political organization in New York focused on bettering the conditions of New Afrikans as a nation, with no connections to any sort of criminal activity.

The first thing that strikes us about this case is a quote from the proceedings cited by the author above, "Gang related correspondence is not within the exception to the First Amendment test for censorship of outgoing inmate mail." Unfortunately this is not part of the final opinion explaining the decision of the court, and it is specific to outgoing mail from the prison. Nonetheless, it would logically follow from this statement that anything that can be connected to a gang is not automatically dangerous or illegal.

"Gang members" have long been the boogeyman of post-integration white Amerika. The pigs use "gang member" as a codeword to excuse the abuse and denial of constitutional rights to oppressed nation youth, particularly New Afrikan men. And this has been institutionalized in more recent years with "gang enhancements," "gang injunctions" and "security threat group" labels that punish people for belonging to lumpen organizations. Often our mail is censored because it mentions the name of a lumpen organization in the context of a peace initiative or organizing for prisoners' humyn rights. While criminal activity is deemed deserving more punishment with the gang label, non-criminal activity is deemed criminal as well.

As the author discusses, it becomes a question of controlling ideas to the extreme, where certain words are not permitted to be spoken or written and certain symbols and colors cannot be displayed. So the quote from the court above is just a baby step in the direction of applying the First Amendment rights of association and expression to oppressed nation youth. Those who are legally inclined should consider how this issue can be pushed further in future battles. Not only is such work important in restoring rights to people, but we can create space

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### 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.

## Dept. of Public Safety Opposes Efforts to Stop Fighting

by MIM(Prisons)  
September 2012

North Carolina's so-called Department of Public Safety has joined a number of state agencies in openly sabotaging efforts to prevent prisoners from fighting in their facilities.

MIM(Prisons) and our readers in North Carolina have received multiple notices of censorship of *Under Lock & Key 27*, most of them citing page 3, which contained the Call for Solidarity Demonstration on September 9. In their doublespeak, they justify this with reasons such as that it promotes "violence, disorder, insurrection or terrorist/gang activities" and that it "encourages insurrection and disorder." This was in reference to a call for 24 hours with no eating, working or fighting, where prisoners only engaged in solidarity actions and networking to build peace.

Many other states censored *Under Lock & Key 27* for threatening the security of the institution (including New York, California, Wisconsin, and Illinois). Wisconsin Department of Corrections later claimed that *ULK 27* "teaches or advocates violence and presents a clear and present danger to institutional security." So there you have it. Prisoners coming together, for whatever cause, is a security threat to them. Making it clear what they are trying to secure, which is the prevention of the self-determination of the oppressed nation lumpen. This has nothing to do with the personal safety of humyn beings, which the Call for September 9 was clear in promoting.

Folsom State Prison in California went so far as to say that *ULK 27* was censored for "advocating civil disobedience in prisons." Even this claim is a stretch, unless fasting and not working for a day, a Sunday no less, is disobeying the law in some way. Texas seems to think so, as they censored many copies of *ULK 27* with the consistent reason that it "advocates hunger strike and work stoppage." Well we know Texas is big on unpaid labor in their prisons. And we suppose it's not breaking news that peaceful civil disobedience is a crime in the eyes of the state of California.

Despite the more honest justifications given by some state employees in California and Texas, safety and security concerns remain the number one reason given by states to censor MIM(Prisons)'s mail to prisoners. To call these agencies on their bluff, MIM(Prisons) proposes that organizations within the United Front for Peace who are working to build off of September 9 focus on promoting safety in their agitational and organizational work. From the countless painful letters we get from U.S. prisoners who fear for their life everyday in these places, we are pretty sure that working together we can do a better job of creating a safe environment than they can.

Comrades should brainstorm ideas of how

## Solidarity and Peace Demonstration Builds, Guards Retaliate

by a Nevada prisoner  
September 2012

Approximately 30% of the population of this unit is committed to participation in the Solidarity Demonstration on September 9, which inevitably results in "leakage." On August 25 I was interrogated by two investigators from the inspector general's office about the food petition and then about organizing an uprising or disturbance in the dining room. While this was going on, two COs were destroying my cell. Upon return my legal work and papers were all over the cell, as was my cellmate's. Nothing was taken except for one document which I cannot be certain is in their possession, but I must assume it is. Then they got a second prisoner out and repeated the process. One prisoner was taken about two hours prior to this episode for "different reasons."

Yesterday (28 August 2012) 17 COs, led by a Lieutenant, came into the unit and searched the entire unit. Two reasons were proffered: 1) Retaliation for grievances, 2) Suspect "gang" is being organized. Nothing was found relating to September 9, "gangs" or anything else.

It is evident that they are aware that something is going on, and they are uneasy about the level of apparent coordination and secrecy.

### September 9 Cheat Sheet

1. Go to chow hall, accept food, go to clipper room window, render tray/sack inedible, go directly to seat
2. Go to chow, refuse tray go directly to seat
3. Unless directly confronted by CO ignore all comments, provocation and questions
4. Repeat at dinner
5. If directly confronted by CO about what is going on, politely tell them: "I am fasting." If you are asked why, tell them: "In support of my fellow prisoners..." and/or "because I am tired of..." and state your complaint.
6. Nothing more needs to be said

Important: Do not become belligerent, combative or antagonistic. Do not provoke a confrontation. More than 70% of major prison disturbances start in chow hall. By not provoking the COs we preserve the integrity of the action, and we protect each other. Most important, we do not give them our day.

to launch a campaign to change the conditions that the state creates that lead to unsafe conditions for prisoners. Often unsafe conditions for prisoners are potentially unsafe for staff as well. Either way, an effective campaign to make prisoners safer should bring around new recruits.

Can we get enough stories of comrades working to help each other out and improve each other's well-being to make *ULK 29* an issue focused on creating safer prisons in the U.S.? And you artists out there, any ideas on how to promote issues of safety and security that speak to the prison masses?

Let's see what we can do with this. And look out for each other in there. ★

They are fishing right now, but this has been predicted and prepared for.

Aside from the obvious, there is some opposition to the September 9 action from segments of the prisoner population, which is the only apparent threat to its success. This has appeared in the form of disinformation and criticism of both the action and the integrity of persons involved in it. Predictably this segment is predominantly white power who always object to prisoner unification. ★

...Continued from page 3 ...**Growing Mvmt**

We see that it's not simply a case of a couple crooked cops, or some faulty prison administrators that cause us to be held in miserable conditions. It is much bigger and much deeper than that. What we experience is a long legacy of oppression unleashed on the people since the first settler stepped foot on this continent. This legacy can now be traced up to the highest levels of the ruling class, and sometimes reveals itself. But for the most part, the oppression we face is drenched in secrecy and washed in legalese to the point that laymen cannot grasp it even when experiencing it directly.

At the same time many prisoners are beginning to break through the shell of settler propaganda to see our oppression for what it is. We can see that when corporate media says prisoners are "gang members" they are simply attempting to cover up our brutal treatment. When it reports on a "riot" it is really an uprising. But prisoners, whether in California, Virginia or even the secret prisons, are all being oppressed with the same intent by the state: to break our resistance! This was revealed most recently on a news program where a self-described CIA operative Jorge Rodriguez described torturing suspected-Al Qaeda prisoners. It was in this interview where he described psychological torture inflicted to "instill a sense of hopelessness."(4)

Such was the intent of the solitary confinement: leaving prisoners naked, physical abuse, and the use of what he called "dietary manipulation," which is starving a prisoner with skimpy trays or rotten uncooked food -- sound familiar? This was all done intentionally to instill this sense of hopelessness in order to force the prisoner to cooperate with the state. These methods are not materialized spontaneously but are designed from years of study in military and intelligence schools for psy-warfare. What we are experiencing in Amerika's superman prisons is a long legacy that is drenched in blood. Yet we are not victims, but survivors of capitalism. Our survival baffles the oppressor who cannot grasp that the people don't need profit to propel us, to motivate us on our path to freedom. Our drive is mysterious to the oppressor whose only action is brought on by profit.

Prisons will continue to have uprisings as more and more are now conscious and aware that things don't have to be the way they are, and torture does not have to be tolerated. Marx

Continued on page 15...

## Snitch-Jacketing Aoki

by PTT of MIM(Prisons)  
September 2012

On August 20, 2012 an article was released alleging that Richard Aoki, a Japanese national and early Black Panther Party (BPP) member, was an FBI informant. This claim was made by journalist and author Seth Rosenfeld, whose book *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Reagan's Rise to Power* was conveniently released on August 21. On September 7, 2012 Rosenfeld published a follow-up article, with 221 pages of "newly released" FBI documents which he believes further implicate Aoki as an FBI informant.(1)

Let's start with Rosenfeld's political worldview, because we know no journalist is truly unbiased. Rosenfeld's opinion on liberation struggles is revealed in his characterization of the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), that Aoki organized in, as a violent student movement.(2) He blames the violence of the 1968-69 strikes of the TWLF on Bay Area college campuses on the strikers themselves, not the pigs. Yet the students did not initiate violence, and in fact were sprayed with so much teargas by the pigs that the trees in Sproul Plaza on the University of California at Berkeley campus were still irritating students' eyes even into the following school year. Coming from this perspective we must question Rosenfeld's assessment of the FBI right off the bat.



Aoki in confrontation with police at a protest near UC Berkeley.

Influencing the Party greatly from its beginning, Richard Aoki is most famous for supplying the BPP with their first guns. According to his biography, Aoki helped shape the early ideology of the Panthers through his relationship with Bobby Seale and Huey Newton at Merritt College by suggesting reading material and engaging with them in political debate.(3) Besides his work with the BPP, Richard Aoki also did much organizing and protest work with the Third World Liberation Front via the Asian American Political Alliance. Aoki remained politically active and revolutionary-minded even

until his death in 2009. Surprisingly, Rosenfeld is from San Francisco and has been doing research for this book since 1982, yet it wasn't until 2002 or 2003 that he learned of Richard Aoki.

Understandably, Rosenfeld's claim has sparked a lot of debate on the internet and radio as to whether it is true or not. While we are open to the possibility of nearly anyone being an agent of the state, MIM(Prisons) agrees with those who have held out for clear proof before we will consider denouncing Aoki's legacy. Objectively, the current evidence supporting this claim is inconclusive at best. The original article was highly sensational, focusing on vague, chopped up, and misquoted sound-bites of a 2007 interview with Aoki that the author interprets as admissions of guilt. Besides these sound-bites, the only other evidence offered are ambiguous FBI documents, citing Aoki as providing "unique" information not available from any other source, and the testimony of former FBI agents, of whom the only one that supposedly knew Aoki is also dead.(4) Yet none of the documents say *what* information Aoki supposedly gave the FBI; it has all been redacted.

On the radio program APEX Express, Harvey Dong, a close friend of Richard Aoki, offered the listener a thorough reading of the relevant parts of the FBI documents cited by Rosenfeld (as well as excerpts from Aoki's college term papers).(2) The only information which allegedly came from Aoki in the first set of FBI documents is about Aoki himself and could have been obtained using a wiretap (or informant) on Aoki. Assuming the released FBI documents are real, the set released on September 7 does establish that Aoki was giving information to the FBI from 1961 to 1977, but very little about that relationship is revealed.

The fact that the FBI redacts all names of individuals and organizations that Aoki allegedly provided information on makes it impossible to speculate on the nature of his interactions with the Bureau. Rosenfeld's follow-up article pulls many quotes from the 221 pages of documents indicating that Aoki provided valuable information, but any details that might substantiate these statements are redacted or absent. Despite this release of new documents, there is still no information on what intelligence he allegedly gave to the FBI on the BPP or other groups. While we should always be prepared for the possibility that a trusted comrade is an agent, we need to see evidence of harm done to the movement to condemn someone who did so much to advance the cause.

It is very conceivable that the FBI is snitch-jacketing Aoki to discredit his work as a Third Worldist revolutionary activist, discredit the Panthers as pawns of the FBI, and more simply to sell copies of Rosenthal's new book. One of the lessons we learned from the Panthers, and other political movements of the 1960s, is the importance of security. The COINTELPRO attacks on the Panthers led MIM to develop as a semi-underground organization that keeps comrades at arm's length, centering around political, rather than personal, relationships.

Interestingly, on August 20 the FBI had yet to release about 4,000 pages of documents on Richard Aoki, and was claiming to have no main file on Aoki himself. This cannot be true considering how politically active and outspoken he was. Rosenfeld and others saw the FBI withholding these documents as indicative of Aoki's status as an informant, assuming these were reports given by Aoki.(4) Then supposedly some time between August 20 and September 7, the FBI released at least 221 pages of documentation just on Richard Aoki. With all the heated debate, we note that the FBI chose a very opportunistic time to release these documents, which causes us to further question their legitimacy. Why would the FBI release documentation that says Aoki *didn't* provide valuable information? This controversy is feeding right into their agenda to undermine revolutionary activists and movements.

The distrust that has evolved surrounding this claim is classic, and a perfect example of why the BPP often quoted Mao by saying, "No investigation, no right to speak." This Aoki "scandal" should be a reminder of how snitch-jacketing can impact our anti-imperialist movement, and our prison organizing especially. One of the principles of the United Front for Peace in Prisons, UNITY, addresses this very concern.(5)

This is a lesson we've unfortunately had to learn time and time again. A claim that everyone on SNY or Protective Custody is a snitch, or a rumor on the yard, is not sufficient evidence to call someone out as an agent of the state. Sometimes comrades suggest that we require USW members to submit their files from the Department of Corrections to determine whether they are compromised in any way based on charges, and where they've been housed in the past. They tell us we should ask the state who we should let into USW. Not only is this ridiculous in theory, but we know of at least one case where an informant was given doctored files and released back onto general population to be a Lieutenant in a prominent LO in California. A piece of paper from a government agency should only be considered as one piece of evidence, not the sacrosanct truth.

*Continued on next page...*

### 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.

## CIA Front Organization or Revolutionary Group?

by a Texas prisoner  
July 2012

I don't want to sound rude or suspicious about MIM but I have to be straight up with you about how I feel pertaining to your activism. I am concerned you have been already infiltrated or you're a CIA front organization claiming revolutionary organizing. I hope I'm just assuming things, because I have been corresponding and studying with you for several years. A lot of strange suspicious things happened to me like the prison guards and other staff trying to cross me out or set me up, or maybe the COINTEL-PRO is trying to discourage me. How come every time somebody gets involved with MIM it seems like that person gets either killed or in big trouble? Seems to me someone infiltrated your movement.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** It's important that everyone approach security and organizing as carefully as this comrade does. We know that revolutionary movements are infiltrated all the time, from Lenin's COMINTERN to the Black Panther Party to MIM and beyond. The best we

...Continued from previous page

...Aoki

The state is already putting a lot of energy into making us suspicious of our fellow revolutionaries; we should not make their job any easier. Instead we should be communicating with each other directly if we suspect unprincipled divisions are being fomented. Our struggle is too important to get caught up in rumor mongering and sectarianism.

Even if evidence does eventually come out which proves Aoki was providing the FBI with information that actually helped them attack the liberation struggle, we will still not be devastated. While we don't agree with Fred Ho's subjectivist methodology of defending Aoki overall, we do have unity with his perspective on the consequence of truth in the allegation. "If Aoki was an agent, so what? He surely was a piss-poor one because what he contributed to the movement is enormously greater than anything he could have detracted or derailed." (6) This view is right in line with our view on how to maintain security within the anti-imperialist prison movement; don't give a pig the opportunity to do more damage than good. Distributing information on a need-to-know basis and applying high standards to different levels of membership will help ensure people contribute more to the cause than to the enemy. ★

Notes:

1. Center for Investigative Reporting 7 September 2012, *FBI files reveal new details about informant who armed Black Panthers*, Seth Rosenfeld

2. APEX Express, 23 August 2012 "On Richard Aoki, Ramadan, and Maui Water Rights Thursdays 7pm KPFA

3. Diane Fujuno, *Samurai Among Panthers: Richard Aoki on Race, Resistance, and a Paradoxical Life*; University of Minnesota Press, 2012

4. San Francisco Chronicle 20 August 2012, "Activist Richard Aoki named as informant", Seth Rosenfeld

5. See page 2 of ULK

6. SF BayView 21 August 2012, "Fred Ho refutes claim that Richard Aoki was an FBI informant", Fred Ho

can do is force our comrades to demonstrate their correct line in practice, and never take people's word for their revolutionary commitment. If someone claims to be a comrade but puts forth a dangerous line (i.e. pushing people into armed struggle that will get them killed and set back the movement), or talks a lot but never does any work, we should view them with suspicion.

Similarly, it's good to question why repression comes down on you after association with an individual or organization. In prison, unfortunately this could just mean you are working with a genuinely progressive outside group, as the authorities can read all your mail and will punish you for working with such groups. We have countless examples of progressive organizations being labeled "security threat groups."

One of the reasons we encourage organizing in a cell structure is to limit comrades' exposure to others. You can do good work with people at arm's length, forming cells with those you know and trust. But in most cases, we recommend comrades in prison stay in touch with

## Fighting Enemies in the Prison Movement

by a Nevada prisoner  
July 2012

On July 7, 2012 a kite was passed to me, and it read as follows:

*"I might be in some trouble. You don't know me and this is going to blow your mind. If I die in the next day Sr. Menendez in Unit 11 is responsible and probably the warden too. They are going to use inmates to do it. I threatened the warden with letters to the health department about blatant violations in the culinary and the way they do laundry and other things they are getting away with in here. If you hear of an inmate dying in the next couple of days don't let my death go in vain."*

Without addressing the veracity of this communication, it is disturbing for a number of reasons (aside from the obvious). First and foremost is the specter of the state's use of inmates (and I use "inmates" here in the most specifically derogatory and anti-revolutionary sense of the term) to do their bidding. That a prisoner who sought to expose an evil visited upon us all would then have to fear reprisal from fellow targets of the evil, at the direction of the oppressor, is treachery of a singularly despicable character. (This is nothing new. But its nature has become more dominant, as is discussed below.) This is aside from the actual violation of our most fundamental constitutional and human rights, the subsequent retaliation for exposing this malfeasance of prison officials and the complete and utter disregard and contempt for human dignity.

This "tool" culture is becoming increasingly prevalent. Today, not only do we revolutionary and activist prisoners have to combat the oppressors themselves, but we must overcome their minions within the ranks of the oppressed

MIM(Prisons) (and others), despite the risks, because of the need to access both theoretical and practical information to help you organize.

The danger of infiltration wherever we are is why we disagree with many who say we should only work with prisoners in general population and we should isolate SNY prisoners. In our article "Security in the Prison Movement" from *ULK 13* we argued "We see this as a line struggle. Anyone can pretend to be USW inside, just like anyone can pretend to represent MIM(Prisons) or Maoism. If they uphold the line set forth by the vanguard organization and/or movement, then they're out there working to advance the struggle."

Everyone should approach working with groups claiming revolutionary politics with caution. It is possible the CIA is producing *Under Lock & Key* or other publications like it, just to identify the "trouble maker" prisoners. But if you read the pages of *ULK* you should be able to determine if the line and actions of our members and supporters are correct. In the end, if the CIA really was behind this good publication and its good work, we might be getting more out of that infiltration than they are. ★

as well -- we must be ever vigilant against their agents among us. Not in the ordinary sense of infiltrators and narcs, but a whole culture of puppets, sympathizers and panderers intoxicated by imperialist fictions. What is truly frightening about this new breed of traitor is this fact: they want no recompense for their treachery. They believe in the rightness of the betrayal. They believe in the rightness of their loyalty to the oppressor, the enemy. These "people" are not seeking gain. They are an enemy cadre, steeped in enemy thought and ideology. They are (in the truest sense) patriotic Amerikkans.

Doubtless, the state creates deprivations and uses these deprivations as bargaining chips to enlist the aid of petty snitches and unsavories of all types. That is never going to change in or out of prison. That is not the same animal. What is named here is a devoted enemy, an unrecognized and unofficial extension of the state in both thought and deed.

We must be aware of this counter-revolutionary element and be prepared to deal with them as they arise. There is increased urgency for A) the unification of all revolutionaries and activists regardless of race, religion, gender, custody, set or hood; B) critical analyses of the battle field without set mentalities; and C) application of the principles and theory which arise out of critical analyses. We must rethink our strategies and possibly our associations and act based upon what we have been taught by our conditions, not by what we feel or desire. The local conditions as applied to the global struggle should advise us -- not predilection.

The only reason why we have remained oppressed is the enemy's effective and continuous infiltration and dis-empowerment. It is the enemy's ability to disunite and exploit this disuni-

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## Olympics = Global Village = Globalization = Imperialism

by USW C-4 of United Struggle from Within  
July 2012

The 2012 London Olympics have come and gone, and now we take a close look and see that the Olympics are in all actuality nothing more than bourgeois propaganda; a multifaceted cultural and ideological weapon of the international bourgeoisie in which they pretend that the world isn't divided into oppressor and oppressed nations. Through the institution of the Olympics the international bourgeoisie seeks to make us believe that the entire humyn species is all living in harmony as equal members of one big happy family, and that the nations of the world co-exist peacefully as if all are members of one big "global village" with the exception of some "rogue states." Nothing however could be further from the truth! Part of that truth being that the Olympics are really just another synonym for this "global village" construct, a construct used to white-wash reality.

The term and concept of what the petty-bourgeois ideologues have deemed "global village" and what the big bourgeoisie have in turn labeled more correctly as "globalization" can be more appropriately elaborated and defined as "...a supra class, supranational and universalist process of irresistible all around homogenization of the world under the auspices of monopoly capitalism, through the multilateral agencies (United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB/IBRD) and World Trade Organization (WTO)) and the multinational or transnational firms and banks."(1)

But this ain't no nit-wit critique of the process of globalization per the mythical "99%," who aren't 99% of anything but more like part of the top 13% of the richest people in the world!(2) No, this is a critique of the "global village" construct which has its origin rooted in petty-bourgeois ideology, just like the "99%," and which is but a rephrasing of that same process of "globalization" from the international bourgeoisie, as if both the exploiters and exploited are all in the global struggle for humynity together! But we communists know this construct and its material reality by its original name: imperialism!

As previously stated, the Olympics don't just serve to gloss over national and class contradictions on a global scale. They also serve as an extension and propagation of bourgeois ideology a la "human nature," i.e. that always inherent drive to compete.

Indeed, the Olympics serve to keep both the masses of the world and the more progressive wing of the enemy population distracted from the harsh reality of imperialist society (as do professional sports in general). The reality is that the imperialists are on a global rampage in which they're voraciously and ruthlessly raping and plundering the oppressed people of the world and their national territories, i.e. Latin America, Africa and Asia (the Third World). The lie that is the concept of the "global village" exaggerates "...the coherence of the world capitalist system to the point of glossing over the

distinction of national modes of production"(1) and its main proponents are in the oppressor states: the industrialized and ethnologically developed countries, the First World, principally the United States.

Furthermore, "globalization"/imperialism pretends that the dismantling of national barriers to the operation of capital markets and finance capital brings progress to the Third World or "developing economies" whilst the idealistic and naive petty-bourgeoisie of both the imperialist countries and the Third World believe it. But the truth of the matter is that the "...counterproductive character of neocolonialism is the result of imperialist financing for the overproduction of raw materials and some manufactures for the consumption of the capitalist countries and the upper classes in the underdeveloped countries since the 70s."(1)

On top of this, the popularization of the global village concept isn't just done by the bourgeoisie. This fake global concept is even propagated by so-called "communists" principally in the First World thru the guise of revisionist trickery!

On the one hand we have the barefaced bourgeoisie who uses these concepts to deny Lenin's formulation of imperialism and proletarian revolution, saying that it belongs to the past and that the current neocolonial system is a "post-imperialist phenomenon," as if imperialism and all its tools of oppression and exploitation have all but withered away!

On the other hand we have the so-called and sometimes self-proclaimed "Maoists" in the First World who are really nothing but crypto-Trotskyists that spread the false notion, correctly criticized by MIM, that "...the world proletarian revolution can only be the result of a simplified struggle between a globally united monopoly bourgeoisie and the world proletariat and that the total collapse of the unified imperialism is impending despite the current state of the subjective forces of the revolution in the world."(1)

We must take the time to study and analyze the world around us and its history thru the historical materialist perspective and from the point of view of the oppressed and exploited

Third World masses. We need to look at the two great socialist projects of the 20th century. The first was born from the First World War and strong proletarian leadership, and the second was born of the Second World War and strong peasant backing which gave further credence and elaboration to the importance of national liberation and the correct theory that socialism can only be accomplished one country at a time, of which the establishment of the USSR should have proved to the muddle-headed. This study makes clear that the global village/globalization concept that the bourgeoisie uses to deceive the masses and the world is the same theory the revisionists use to accomplish the aims of their bourgeois brethren.

So when you're watching the Olympics remember two things: 1) The world isn't one big happy family. It is divided into oppressor and oppressed nations. This is the principal contradiction on a world scale, while the fundamental contradiction on a world scale is the bourgeoisie vs. the proletariat. The Olympics are nothing but the vain attempts of the international bourgeoisie, and imperialist states to whom they are bound, to cover up national and class contradictions and to white-wash reality so that we will confuse the true prize of national liberation, self-determination and complete emancipation from the imperialists for gold medals. 2) Just as the global village construct of the petty-bourgeoisie that dominates that class is a myth and a lie, so is the global village thesis of the crypto-Trotskyists (simultaneous world revolution) which they've specifically tailored to their purposes. It is an ideological weapon of the revisionists used to fool the oppressed nations within U.S. borders into believing that we need not seek national liberation and self-determination for ourselves because according to them all nationalism is bourgeois in essence and "the whole world comes first!"

Lenin, Stalin and Mao all took clear positions on the national question which was liberty at its core; so why can't the First World "communists"? Ask yourself this, go into deep thought, study the question and you will be enlightened ten-fold. ★

Notes:

1. *On Monopoly Capitalist 'Globalization', MIM Theory #13.*
2. *Newsflash: Americans are the Top 13 Percent, Under Lock & Key 23.*

## Staff Retaliating Against Prisoners in Florida

by a Florida prisoner  
August 2012

I would like to bring something to your attention that's going on here at Union Correctional Institution with staff attacks and starvation tactics. In April I was assaulted by prison staff. Upon grieving the issue at the institutional level, I was immediately retaliated against, choked with security waist chains, placed on strip status butt naked, property taken and destroyed, and placed back into cold cell 40/50 degrees with AC blowing for nine days straight without clothes. I had no sheets, no comfort items,

no property, no toothpaste, no toilet tissue, no socks, no mattress, no nothing, just sleeping on a concrete bunk.

I was set up with all kinds of weapons, income tax forms, gang letters, bogus urine test, etc. These staff are out of control. I'm constantly being verbally threatened after I have already been assaulted. Security staff have orderlies empty food trays and pour chemicals and spit in the food after they starve us for 7 or 8 days straight, knowing prisoners will eat anything after not being fed for that long. Medical staff here

*Continued on page 13...*



## The Failure of Spiritualism to Fight Oppression

by a California prisoner  
September 2012

This missive is directed to those who have taken up the responsibility in leading the masses up the road to absolute spiritual consciousness.

How can any individual choose work in guiding the misguided or unconscious to the discovery of the eternal truth, but at the same time instruct people to turn away from the world and only focus on themselves? If we are one in spirit, then wouldn't helping the world be a righteous practice of helping oneself? I have learned that the only way I can really help myself is by rejecting the interests of the individual desires and submitting my will to the interests of the world.

The value systems which dominate the world in this current era of imperialism are philosophies propping up the values of the powers of the world. The perpetuation of ideas like economic "survival of the fittest," and economic competition in a "free market" are but subtle justifications for the exploitation and oppression of others. These philosophies come from individualism (selfishness) which, if analyzed deeply enough, will turn out to be an illusion for the fact that every person's given situation is the result of what the world has put into motion.

Matter is the physical manifestation of the spirit, so how do we ignore the lessons of history which provide us the ability to precisely analyze the spirit through the material which it produces? A spiritualist can only conclude that the current force which dominates the world is the negative, so the ideas which are applied to overcome the negative force must be put into practice in material reality to give the future a clear understanding of what has proven to be effective and what has not. Our practice is our dialogue with the future.

We can effortlessly project the message to the misguided and unconscious that selfishness, lust, and hate are the epitome of evil, but what good does this do when we ignore the current physical manifestations of these evil forces in material reality? For the oppressed nations who suffer under the full pressure of the physical world, it must be understood that the struggle to end oppression is not an illusion but the natural continuance of the spirit. Spiritualists who reject this eternal fact may have good intentions but inevitably create the duality which divides and isolates the spirit from matter to create the illusion of "mental oneness" with the spirit while ignoring the spirit in matter.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This is a good example of uniting all who can be united in the anti-imperialist struggle. There is much in the theory and writings of popular religions that is amenable to the struggle for justice and equality, so there is room for unity between materialists and idealists there.

But as materialists, we do not agree with the idealists that "matter is the physical manifestation of the spirit." Materialists recognize thoughts and ideas (such as religions) as prod-



White markers indicate locations of protests against the anti-Muslim film produced in the United States.

## Cultural Imperialism Triggers Global Protests Against U.S.

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)

15 September 2012 -- Tens of thousands of people in dozens of cities and slums across Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and parts of Europe and Australia have demonstrated in recent days in response to a film made in the United States attacking the Prophet Muhammad. Protests primarily targeted U.S. embassies and other symbols of imperialism including an American school, a KFC restaurant, and a UN camp.(1) The latter was one of many locations where authorities shot at protestors with live ammunition. Many have died so far. Some common unifying symbolism of these actions has been burning of American flags and chants of "Death to Amerika!"

The first protest that got the world's attention was in Libya, where U.S.-backed forces recently overthrew the decades-old government there. Timed to occur on the anniversary of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States by Al Qaeda, rebels grabbed headlines by laying siege to the embassy, killing as many as a dozen people, including the new U.S. ambassador. Since then protestors have attacked imperialist embassies in Tunisia, Yemen and Sudan without firearms.

While incumbent U.S. President Barack Obama has been making plenty of mention of his role in the assassination of Al-Qaeda's former leader Osama bin Laden in campaign speeches, hundreds of protestors in Kuwait chanted outside the U.S. embassy, "Obama, we are all Osama." Osama's vision of a Pan-Islamic resistance to U.S. occupations and economic interference in

acts of the physical world we live in and interact with, as this comrade hints at above. And as monists, we do not believe in a spirit or essence that stands apart from a thing itself, including humyn beings. These basic pieces of our philosophy will determine what conclusions we make and what actions we take.

Materialism has already proven to be more correct than any brand of religion in the results it produces in the real world. And once the masses

the Muslim world has reached new heights this week.

The Amerikan media has tried to play it off as a small group of trouble makers protesting, while Amerikans are shocked that they can be blamed for a fringe movie they have never seen and think is a piece of crap. At the same time, Amerikans seem very willing to condemn the protestors as ignorant, violent, low-lives -- just as the movie in question portrayed Muslims. But the trigger of these protests is far less important than the history of U.S. relations to the people involved. The most violent reactions occurred in countries that have all been under recent bombing attacks by the U.S. military, two of them for many years now, and the other had their whole government overthrown. Cocky Amerikans won't recognize that the ambassador was targeted as the highest level representative of the U.S. puppet master in Libya.

MIM has held for some time that Muslim organizations have done more to fight imperialism in recent years in most of the world than communists have.(2) And while there are plenty of ways communists could theoretically be doing a better job, they are not. As materialists we must accept and work with the people and conditions we are given. And we do not hesitate to recognize that Islam has brought us the biggest internationalist demonstration of anti-imperialism we've seen in some time. ★

Notes:

1. <http://goo.gl/maps/GXpQA> - aggregated map of protests with news clips
2. Osama Bin Laden and the Concept of "Theocratic Fascism", 2004 MIM Congress.

of the oppressed have grasped materialism in practice by taking their own destinies in their hands and throwing off the yoke of oppression, they will have no use for religious thinking and we will set about educating everyone in materialism. As scientific thinking advances and becomes the norm, the class interests of the oppressors that keep religion alive to serve their interests will be eliminated and we expect belief in religions will slowly fade away in the transition to communism. ★

## Texas Guards Encourage Oppressed Nation Fights

by a comrade of New Afrikan Black Panther Party  
September 2012

On or around 31 July 2012 there was a small scale race riot on the Estelle Unit which is located in Huntsville, Texas. Sad to say it was Brown on Black and a New Afrikan prisoner was killed. As a member of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party I hate to see two oppressed groups going at each other while the oppressor remains unscathed and ignored.

Nevertheless, the extremely reactionary prisoncrats took this opportunity to show us what they're all about. About one week after the incident we were placed on a special disciplinary lockdown and fed "Johnnies" seven days a week. These weren't any normal "Johnnies," they were concentration camp like rations. An example of one meal that actually sparked a group demonstration across all color and race barriers was: 1 corn dog, a small biscuit with a sliver of peanut butter and jelly and 10 or 12 raisins! I myself wrote a letter to the Assistant Warden, Steven T. Miller, shedding light on the sub-par meals and asking him if the administration was using food (or the lack thereof) as a means to torture prisoners or as a draconian behavior modification tactic.

Once the administration became aware that the focus was now on them they immediately prepared and delivered more food and I have never ever seen that response before. However, I must say the meals being served were way beneath the caloric intake requirements set forth by the ACA (American Corrections Association). This particular incident took place on 15 August 2012 and it was the last meal served that day.

There is an ugly under-current of racism that exists here in Texas prisons. Many white male officers take pleasure in seeing Brown men and Black men attack each other. As conscious people in struggle against prisoncrat imperialists, we must realize we do ourselves a great dis-service by attacking each other. It is not just about white male officers in Texas; it's about all of them that wear these confederate-army-gray uniforms. They beat us, degrade us, dehumanize us, and refuse time and time again to set us free. Who is the real enemy?

Lastly, one of the main keys to maintaining the peace amongst oppressed groups is respect! We can't talk to each other any kind of way, and we can't treat each other any kind of way! Remember that violation of the rules of respect among human beings can be deadly.

Would you believe that one month prior to this race riot and death white male officers were caught encouraging prisoners to make "shanks"?! The New Afrikan prisoner was killed with a homemade shank! These officers in Texas are very wicked.

*Continued on page 16...*

## Trayvon Martin Case Relevant to Fighting Oppression in Prison

by a California prisoner  
August 2012

I received issue 27 of *ULK* along with *MIM Theory 13*, thank you. I've already read the *ULK* and I appreciate all the articles. A few months back you sent out a letter to the warden here over an issue of *ULK* I did not receive. Although I never received the issue, I did talk to a lieutenant who claimed that MIM was banned. I didn't pursue it because I had passed the time limitation to raise the issue, but I've since received the most recent issues after that. I believe it was issue 25 I didn't get. Your letter got their attention.

Other than that it's business as usual with the oppressor. Just last week the pigs slammed a young Black male (22 years old) to the ground and charged him with assaulting a "peace" officer. The prisoner was attempting to enter the housing unit when one of the pigs asked to see the watch he was wearing.

The young man being a rebel without a cause chose to ignore the pig and proceeded to walk into that building. The pig and his cronies blocked the door and told him he wasn't going anywhere until he showed them the watch. The young man backed off and requested to speak to a sergeant. This simple request pissed the pigs off. They proceed to escalate the situation immediately.

As the sergeant was making his way across the yard one pig rushed the guy and slammed him to the ground. This caused some of the prisoners to act out verbally and tell the pigs that the force was unnecessary. The whole thing was a set up from the start. While one pig was con-

fronting the guy another was on the walkie talkie reporting something (most likely a lie), and then two pigs came out of the building and the only Black pig out of the crowd of six or seven pigs chose to slam the young Black male. When I read the article "Trayvon Martin National Oppression Debate" it hit home when Soso stated: "Every persyn in this country sees the stereotypes of Black youths as hoodlums..." as a result any "unarmed Black youth can be killed by cops and vigilantes while the imperialist state does nothing."

Here lately the pigs have seemingly been trying to incite the masses. It's summertime and out here in Imperial County, California it's extremely hot. Triple digits regularly, the pigs have been forcing us to wear state issue clothing to the chow hall and the shirts must be tucked in. When it was winter and cold we were not allowed to wear thermals to the chow hall. Now that it's hot they're forcing us to wear stuff that will make you hotter. Furthermore, they have launched a campaign of constant harassment. Searching cells everyday which is causing folks to complain. As of yet no one has written a 602 [grievance form] and me personally I don't have any grounds to write one as I have not been harassed. I try to lead by example and share the literature with the brothers of the struggle.

It seems as if we've lost a generation or two. There's a shortage of revolutionaries, at least here at this place. Only time will tell if the masses wake up. I often imagine myself coming up in the era of George Jackson and the like. I attempt to put myself in those guys' shoes, and I try to emulate what I picture them being. ★

## Continuing the Debate on the Need for New Organizations

by an Oregon prisoner  
August 2012

I'm answering the article in *ULK 26*, "Debating the Need for New Organizations: Cell Structure and United Fronts."

The author wrote: "So often there's 'new' groups popping up, and I only laugh." I ask myself, why put it like that? Okay we do live in an era where there's many beliefs and points of view on different politics or outlooks. I think there was too much written for just too little. Start uniting, stop dividing. Come together as one people in one struggle doing one work to overcome those who oppress us.

Paraphrased, MIM(Prisons)'s response was that it's true on one hand; you agree with this comrade on the importance of not forming new groups just for the sake of recognition or self-aggrandizement. The writer fails to address the need to lead by example, as well as showing others by organization for our struggle within, and leading by positive actions.

If you arrive in an environment that lacks structure or recognition and there's so many

bright strong minds, but they fail to see how they should be fighting for a united front, you are not just going to stand around and let it be. You should strive to maintain positive communications not by bringing negative attention but by doing it correctly. At this current stage of struggle within imperialist Amerika, there is a practical need for organizing and structure in a cell where regional independence provides security. Demonstrate your work with even the best in your organizations claiming to uphold Maoism. We hold everyone to a high standard of work and don't just look at the names and labels they choose.

Another thing, a person can't force people to comprehend. We are here to show by example, learn, and study the value of communism. I'm with whoever is building peace in prisons. As I do time in this state, it's really not as unorganized as it's said to be. As time passes, progress builds. I'm not even from this state but since I'm doing my time here that makes it my home. I myself am learning and truly interested in our movement and will always strive to stay positive, uniting for what's right. Comrades, keep on pushing, stay strong mentally, and lead by example. ★

# Black August and Bloody September,

## Stand Up and Remember on September 9

by a Crown Prince of Black Order Revolutionary Organization  
August 2012

Today we stand on this crest of time as we reach through the recess of our minds and commemorate, honor and salute our collective struggle as a people and our daring revolutionary heroes.

The month of August and September -- Black August and Bloody September as it is referred to by many New Afrikan comrades, cadres and revolutionary organizations -- are both months rich with our blood, our struggle, and our resistance as a people. During August and September we focus our energies around the discussions of New Afrikan revolutionary political education, progressive actions and revolutionary history.

As progressive revolutionary thinking men and women, we do not view history through the lens of the bourgeoisie, who separates history into sub-parts. Under the Eurocentric bourgeois thought process history is a dead relic, a souvenir or memento of past events to be waved at with fleeting thoughts and no real or concrete links to the present.

The bourgeois power structure uses the disconnection of the past from the present as a tool or weapon of divide and conquer. The divide and conquer strategy has never been more effective than it is today: cut them off from their past, make them feel alienated, alone and separated from a collective historic past, and you weaken them enormously. This moment of weakness gives our enemies great power to maneuver us into the corner of political, social, economic and cultural inaction.

But through the lens of a dialectical-materialist, we must see history as a never-ending stream of past events that gave and constantly give birth to present realities. This chain of historical events is constantly moving us forward into the ocean of endless possibilities. We must use this view of a "living history" as a source of defining who we are and the direction we're heading as a people.

A tree without roots is dead, and so is a people who is not rooted in their history. So let's use Black August and September as months of mental reflection as we unearth and trace the glorious and bloody footprints of our past as a people. Let this reflection galvanize us forward into a new level of political struggle and resistance.

### Historical Overview

The 1960 and 70s liberation struggle and movement gave birth to New Afrikan revolutionary heroes such as Malcolm X, George Jackson, Jonathan Jackson, Huey P. Newton, Sundiata Acoli, and many, many others. Historically then, as it is now, the United States judicial arm was used as a weapon of repression and

class subjugation.

Men such as Malcolm X and George Jackson went to prison as colonial criminals. But within those prison walls the alchemy of human transformation began to take place. Inside the deep dark confines of a United States concentration KKKamp they both began to turn the cells that held them into libraries and schools of liberation. George and Malcolm both unceasingly strove to create new social relations and social realities in the world around them by and thru revolutionary transformation. They both knew to create a new world that they themselves had to be representations of this new being, this new man, in word, thought, actions and deeds. So as their cells became classrooms, they internalized the most advanced ideas about human development.

George Jackson stated: "I met Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Engels and Mao...they redeemed me. For the first four years, I studied nothing but economics and military ideas. I met the Black Guerrillas, George 'Big Jake' Lewis, James Carr, W.L. Nolen, Bill Christmas, Tony Gibson, and many others. We attempted to transform the Black criminal mentality into a Black revolutionary mentality."

George Jackson and his comrades became living examples and inspiration for organized resistance for prisoners across the country. On August 21, 1971, George Jackson and two other New Afrikan prisoners were killed (along with three prison guards) in a gunfight inside one of California's maximum-security prisons called San Quentin.

To many, George Jackson was the embodiment of the New Afrikan man. George was fearless, upright, daring, self-educated and intelligent with revolutionary style. He took the lead with his brains and muscles.

In response to the murder and assassination of George Jackson, prisoners in one of New York's prisons called Attica immediately responded. On August 22, 1971 some 800 prisoners went into the chow hall not saying a word as they sat with black arm bands as a tribute to George Jackson. As one set of events leads to the next, 19 days later Attica prison went up in a revolt. The September 9, 1971 prison uprising and revolt in Attica led to the colonial captives controlling parts of the prison. In an address to the Amerikkkan people, the rebels stated: "We are men! We are not beasts and do not intend to be beaten or driven as such."

On September 13, after five days of a heavily armed siege, the NY Governor Nelson Rockefeller gave the order to the state troopers to retake the prison. The state swine opened mass fire killing 32 colonial captives and 11 prison swine who were held hostage.

So today as we reach our hands through time and space, connecting our past to our present, let's use Black August and Bloody September as

# Police Brutality in California, Again

by USW C-4 of United Struggle from Within  
August 2012

Pig brutality is once again on display for the world to see after outraged protests erupted following the murder of 25-year-old Manuel Diaz in the city of Anaheim, CA by police this weekend.

Pigs claim that the murder of Diaz was justified and only prompted by Diaz after he supposedly ran away from them and reached for his waistband. The neighbors and family members of Diaz who witnessed the execution tell a different story however. They say that while Diaz did indeed run away from police, at no time whatsoever did he reach for his waistband as police claim. No gun was even recovered from the scene, according to the pigs themselves.

This is the sixth officer-involved shooting for the Anaheim Police Department this year. That's including that second life to be claimed by Anaheim police not more than 24 hrs after the death of Diaz in which pigs stated that they indeed retrieved a gun near the body of the second victim of police violence, as if to say "See? We only shoot when we have to."

The neighborhood was justifiably outraged as they demanded answers and vented their anger on killer cops, but the pigs were having none of it. Feeling "threatened" as they always do, the pigs responded the only way they know how -- with violence!

When the protesters refused to disperse, non-lethal weapons were fired on wimmin and children, and an attack dog was set loose on an occupied baby-stroller. The pigs then had the audacity to claim that their dog "got loose" from the patrol car. The entire scene was caught on a camera phone if anyone cares to see.

Immediately thereafter, coconut lackey and self-proclaimed community activist Dr. Jose  
*Continued on page 16...*

a moment of reflection, study, observation and movement in the direction of striking terror in the hearts of our captors by unifying in principle and action. We're calling on all colonial captives/prisoners of war and political prisoners to stand up as a collective in a work stoppage. Our aim is to bring attention and awareness to our collective situation.

George Jackson stated: "You will find no class or category more aware, more embittered, desperate or dedicated to the ultimate remedy -- revolution. The most dedicated, the best of our kind -- you'll find them in the Folsoms, San Quentins and Soledads."

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** See the *MIM Notes* supplement "Lessons from the Attica Prison Uprising" for more historical information on this important event. One aim, one goal, one destiny.★

# - UNITED STRUGGLE FROM WITHIN -

**Under Lock & Key** is the main organizing tool of United Struggle from Within (USW). This page details some of the active campaigns that USW is involved in. Those who want to push the revolutionary struggle forward from behind bars should get involved in USW by working on these campaigns, or initiating their own.

## **FUNDING NEEDED TO FULFILL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

If you like this newsletter, we need you to help! Even if you don't have much, send us a few stamps whenever you can. Get your people on the outside to send stamps or money. Without your help we can't keep *Under Lock & Key* growing! **IMPORTANT:** We can no longer accept checks or money orders. If you can't send stamps, let us know and we can work it out.

## **CONDUCT LUMPEN RESEARCH SURVEY**

This is the last call for volunteers to conduct a socio-economic survey on U.S. prisoners as part of MIM(Prisons)'s research on the lumpen class in the United States. If several people don't step up to take on this task, we will have to cancel the survey for lack of a broad spectrum of data. If you are interested in administering the survey to prisoners in your area write in and let us know. We are also looking for other ideas on how USW can do research to develop a class analysis of the lumpen, if this survey is not going to work.

## **SPREAD UNDER LOCK & KEY**

The most basic task someone can do for USW is get people to subscribe to *Under Lock & Key*. If you know someone who likes this newsletter, have them write to get their own subscription. People are moved all the time and it's better to get in contact when our address is available than to lose your one contact who got it. It is also helpful if you ask other prison publications to run free ads or plugs for *Under Lock & Key* and MIM(Prisons)'s Free Books for Prisoners Program.

## **SHUT DOWN CONTROL UNITS**

Control units are used as a tool of political repression to alienate and torture anyone who works for change from within prisons. Control units can be generally described as: Permanently designated prisons, or cells in prisons, that lock prisoners in solitary confinement for 22 or more hours a day with no congregate dining, exercise or other services, and virtually no programs for prisoners. Prisoners are placed in control units for extended periods of time.

**Research** - We have the most complete data on control units available at [www.abolishcontrolunits.org](http://www.abolishcontrolunits.org). Help keep it updated by writing to MIM(Prisons) at the address on page 1 to get a survey for your state.

## **WE DEMAND OUR GRIEVANCES ARE ADDRESSED**

If you are experiencing problems with your grievance process, you should join this campaign. Based on a suggestion from a USW comrade in California, we have reformatted all the petitions for the grievance petition campaign. The new format makes it easy for prisoners to personalize each petition, and to provide clear examples of the experiences they've had with the broken grievance system in their state. These are details some prison administrators have asked for in their responses to the petitions they've received.

We also incorporated all addresses for who should receive copies of the petition right onto the petition itself. This way people don't have to worry about keeping track of two pieces of paper (one with the address, and one with their signature).

Besides these significant changes in the quality of information the petitions now provide, the campaign has spread a lot in recent months. New petitions have been created for Montana, Oregon, and Nevada, to add to the already active states of Arizona, California, Colorado, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Texas. Write in to get a copy.

**Sign and Mail Petitions** - If you are in the above-listed states, write in to get the petition for your state. If your prison's policies allow, donate stamps or envelopes to your comrades inside to send out the petition. If you can't make your own copies of the petitions, then tell us why and we can send you extras. Remember, you need to send them out to the administrators and politicians listed yourself. MIM(Prisons) doesn't have the resources to mail

out your petitions for you.

**Spread This Campaign** - If your state is not currently covered by the grievance campaign, but you are experiencing a similar problem, volunteer to rewrite the petition to work for your state.

## **EXPAND STUDY GROUPS**

Form a study group in your prison. To start, you can discuss this issue of *Under Lock & Key*. Choose what to study next based on what concepts stump you in this issue. If you want help from MIM(Prisons), it is best to come up with a general topic you're interested in, and we can suggest reading material and maybe a study pack. We can also help get the reading materials through the mail to your comrades if needed.

As you study, you should compile study questions to create a study pack for future groups who want to study the same material. MIM(Prisons) runs Maoist study groups, but an in-persyn group may be better for those whose mail from us is being censored, or to reach people who wouldn't join our group. If you already have an ongoing study group, send in periodic reports about what you've been studying and struggling over.

## **FIGHT CENSORSHIP**

Everyone should be sure to send MIM(Prisons) copies of your censorship documents for denied issues of *Under Lock & Key* and other mail from MIM Distributors.

**California** - We are in an ongoing battle with prisons in California that have banned MIM Distributors, citing a defunct memo from 2006. We've compiled a Censorship Guide supplement to help those affected tackle this problem. Send us copies of your documentation and grievances you've filed against it.

## **BECOME A ULK FIELD CORRESPONDENT**

Our next issue is going to be focused on the topic of safety in prison. We know the pigs make a special effort to make prisoners unsafe, via unsanitary living conditions, contaminated food, inadequate medical care, as well as the fomentation and imposition of physical violence. What tactics have you adopted to keep yourself and your fellow prisoners safe in these hazardous conditions? What can we do as a movement to ensure the safety of ourselves and each other in order to keep fighting the good fight?

If you've written us a letter, then you have all the skills you need to become a *ULK* Field Correspondent. Many prisoners write about the horrible things happening to them with the mindset that once the outside world finds out, their problems will be over and the perpetrators punished. This expectation is a myth, but it is still important to report on conditions through *ULK*.

Due to space restrictions, many of the reports we get don't make it into *ULK*. Instead they are available on our website, which serves as an archive tracking the behavior of prison staff over years. This is part of our scientific method, collecting empirical data in the field. When you complain about some pig throwing your mail in the trash and people don't listen because they think it was probably just an accident, we have documentation of hundreds of "accidents" by the same staff, proving that it was no accident at all. Your reports back up others' reports.

When reporting on conditions, details are good, but keep it short. Not only does someone have to type all these articles, but remember that it is not your one report that's gonna make a difference; it is the accumulation of reporting from across the country and the connections we make between those struggles. So leave room for others to tell their stories, which strengthens your own.

For the print version of *ULK*, we look for news and articles with theoretical and anti-imperialist content. We also want to feature articles that show how people have organized against these conditions, and not just document them. MIM(Prisons) offers resources and opportunities to help you develop as a writer, including a Writing Guide and, for those who complete some of our study courses and become regular contributors to *ULK*, a *ULK* Writing Group. So get started today.

## Diligent Grievance Petitions Expose Oppression in NC that Led to Strike

by a North Carolina prisoner  
August 2012

I have been a reader of your publication going on a couple years now, and I find it the most uplifting and informative I've seen yet! Also, the comrades in this movement have been most helpful in demonstrating to us how to file a petition against the grievance process here in North Carolina prisons. I am currently housed at Marion Correctional Institution's segregation unit in Marion, North Carolina where they keep any prisoner who dares to challenge and question their conduct or actions. However, I have witnessed over the years how our grievance process has become so watered down to the point when you ask for the DC-410 form you're laughed at by correctional officers and told to spell their names right (ha ha ha). It has become no more than a venting process for us! There is no consideration that this is a constitutionally protected right.

However, I recently have sent copies of my petition to the Justice Department in Atlanta, Georgia and the Inspector General's office in Virginia, as well as two copies to North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NC DPS) Secretary Jennie Lancaster via certified mail. I haven't even gotten acknowledgements that they received any of them. So you see, we're being stifled, even at the highest levels. Therefore, we won't get anything done on this issue, short of court action. The people who are supposed to protect our rights won't even do so. So we regroup, and continue this fight for justice, so as to stop this "rubber stamping" game with our rights.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** It seems other prisoners in North Carolina have already come to similar conclusions, as comrades recently passed the two week mark on a hunger strike demanding improvements in conditions, including an end to long-term isolation.

"On Monday July 16th, prisoners began hunger strikes at Bertie CI in Windsor, Scotland CI in Laurinburg, and Central Prison in Raleigh. Targeting a wide range of conditions related but not exclusive to solitary confinement, the prisoners have vowed not to eat until their demands are met."(1)

Apparently, the list of demands released by the NC DPS had sections redacted for "security issues."(2) This might explain why the mainstream media is not reporting the more serious demands, such as "An immediate end to the physical and mental abuse inflicted by officers," "The end of cell restriction. Sometimes prisoners are locked in their cell for weeks or more than a month, unable to come out for showers and recreation" and "An immediate stop to officers' tampering or throwing away prisoners' mail."(1) [As of mid-September, we are still awaiting an update on where this struggle stands.]

## Debating Tactics to Fight Corrupt Officials

by a Texas prisoner  
August 2012

I'm writing in response to one of your statements in the May/June 2012 issue of *Under Lock & Key*. In your *ULK* you erroneously stated "Many prisoners write about the horrible things happening to them with the mind-set that once the outside world finds out, their problems will be over and the perpetrators punished. This expectation is a myth..."

You're wrong. It's not a myth. I've heard about, and have seen, corrupt officials get walked off the unit. Once proper complaints (i.e. step 1 and step 2 grievances) have been filed and family, friends and/or representatives continue calling the director with complaints, an investigation is conducted. The rest is history. It may take a while before action is taken against corrupt officials, but with outside help, justice gets served!

We've seen the increased activity in North Carolina over the last couple years, and so has the DPS, who have stepped up a campaign to keep *Under Lock & Key* and other mail from MIM(Prisons), out of the hands of their prisoners (see p.5). One of the images that triggered censorship was a depiction of a cop and a klan member shooting an unarmed Black man that appeared on p.10 of *ULK* 26. The NC Publication Review Committee ironically cited this image when they censored *ULK* 26 for "Violence against any ethnic, racial or religious group."

Apparently the NC DPS have a problem with criticisms of racist violence. They also see it as a threat to security for the outside world to know the abuses that prisoners are risking their lives to put an end to. Both examples are blatant threats to the safety of prisoners held by NC DPS. ★

### Notes:

1. North Carolina strike announcement and list of demands, [infoshop.org](http://infoshop.org)
2. Raleigh prison administration monitors hunger strike, *Associated Press*, 28 July 2012.

Thank you for your time and concerns. Please continue the struggle.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We agree that it is sometimes possible to get individual corrupt prisonrats removed from jobs through public pressure and complaints. But this comrade demonstrates the truth of what we wrote: just writing about horrible things happening is not enough. You need outside support, which is not something many prisoners have. Even when outside supporters call in to demand investigations, this is not necessarily enough to cause change. The prisons do respond to public embarrassment, and we can win some small victories this way. But with all the individual cases and abuses out there, there is just not enough energy and resources among people who care to fight each of these instances. Similarly, punishing one bad prison employee does not change the fundamentally repressive system. One repressive prison worker will quickly be replaced by another. Until we change the criminal injustice system fundamentally we will not have a true system of justice. In the meantime we must focus on battles that can mobilize prisoners around their common interests. ★

...Continued from page 8

...Florida

are covering up for these attacks.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This story of prison staff abuse and retaliation against those who file grievances is unfortunately very common in prisons across the country. The campaign to demand grievances be addressed is spreading to new states quickly as comrades look for ways to fight back against this repression. We don't yet have a petition for the state of Florida so we need someone from that state to look up citations and policies specific to Florida for reference in the petition. If you do this research and send us what needs to be rewritten for your particular state, we will gladly send an edited, accurate copy to other USW and Legal Clinic folks in your state. ★



## Movie Review: Step Up 4, Revolution or Spectacle?

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)  
July 2012

*Step Up: Revolution* centers around a dance crew called The Mob that is based in a "slum" of Miami, though has recruited members from all over the world. Their "slum" origins are questionable as they all have bodies of professional athletes and dress like models. And while The Mob always has the resources for the most fantastic props for their performances, we never see any signs of poverty or oppressive conditions in their neighborhood, except for almost being displaced by a development project. Like the billboards for this movie suggest, there is a focus on the forbidden love story between Mob co-founder Sean and daughter of the rich developer who threatens to destroy their neighborhood, Emily, throughout the movie.

The story line is mostly a joke as one would expect, since we all came for the crazy dance moves, right? The only semi-interesting line of dialogue in the whole film is when Emily challenges The Mob for not even saying anything in their art. This is particularly interesting juxtaposed to Sean's line throughout the film that The Mob was created so that their voices could be heard in a city where they are "invisible."

On the one hand, Emily's challenge is a valid critique when the leaders of The Mob are clear that they are all about being financially successful through their art from the beginning to the very last line of the film. At the same time, it perpetuates the idea that there is art without a message, which just isn't true.

This critique reflects back on the greater art form that is the film itself. This is apparently a popular genre now, building off the success of TV talent shows like *American Idol*, *So You Think You Can Dance* and *America's Got Talent*. Many of the performers in the movie are recruited from these shows, and are real-world examples of the success that The Mob is working for. The *Step Up* series of movies is all about providing the audience with an adrenaline rush with ever-more intense dance moves, soundtracks and visual effects.

It seems that they were pushing up on their limits in creating more extreme dance performances, and they stepped into the realm of protest art for a minute to up the ante with this latest edition of *Step Up*. In this genre there is often a strong element of competition, which can provide a source of drama and maybe a fight or two to add to the excitement. But this version stepped it up by having a dance crew that went up against the system, sort of.

The Mob actually starts out as a highly trained flash mob, rather than protest art. Instead of using performance art to convey a specific message in a more impactful way, the flash mob is a modern phenomenon that focuses on transforming the moment with no long-term goals or message. Building on Guy Debord's theory of the *Society of the Spectacle*, some think these disruptions of the spectacle that is the status quo

is somehow a revolutionary act. Most just think it's neat and fun. And ultimately that is what The Mob is about, despite their short venture into protesting the destruction of their hood.

In the end the movie abruptly brings you back to the main motivation being financial success, which could have been the producers poking a bit of fun at those who came to see the movie looking for a more subversive message. But at the same time it was true-to-life in the way that dance and music are used in advertising to sell an image of rebellion and being extreme to youth with money to spend. This movie is very much part of that. But that phenomenon is much bigger in the way that oppressed nation culture, especially in the form of hip hop, was taken and sold to white youth as a form of rebellion, then sanitized by the white tastes that then shaped the culture and sold it back to Black youth as something that was supposed to represent them.

It is this aspect of culture that is hinted at in the film when The Mob says they "are everyone" and that they represent the culture of the neighborhood that the developers will destroy with their plans. In reality, the culture presented by The Mob is a very globalized and technologically-centered culture that does not represent one place or one people, but does reflect material wealth, large amounts of leisure time and mobility that is inaccessible to the majority of the world's people. The movie tries to pass this big-money pop culture off as a local scene threatened by big bad corporations. The timing and message was perhaps an attempt to play on the hype around the "99%" movement, who would see these rich kids as the poor.

But it would be wrong to say that the art and culture presented in movies like *Step Up* is "devoid of content," as implied by Emily's critique. There was a lot of sex and romance culture promotion in this movie, and in the dancing itself. There was a promotion of the art of dance as a big party. And there was the ever-present theme, dating back to *Dirty Dancing* (and probably before), of the need to break the rules to express yourself. But the source of conflict of this expression in Hollywood movies is usually centered around sexuality and romance. In *Step Up: Revolution*, fighting the redevelopment project becomes a cause that drives the dancers to break the rules. But even then, the message you are left with is that it is good to push the limits in order to be cutting edge to be successful at marketing yourself. The most radical action of The Mob is scarred as representing the low point and temporary breakup of the group and it was the only time they actually got in trouble with law enforcement (who were unrealistically absent throughout the movie). It's like the successful politician or non-profit organizer who got arrested once in college for the experience and now has some street cred as a result, but never really represented a challenge to the system. While the term "revolution" has been perpetually overused in marketing, in a way to dilute the power of the word, to use the word in reference to this sort of rebellious behavior is even more

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...Enemies

ty, which provides them with a critical advantage. These are textbook guerrilla tactics which continue to work and reinforce the need for a steel-willed revolutionary vanguard. As such, we must immediately re-evaluate our objectives and tactical assessments, and evolve to meet the pale of the enemy. This requires that we take a long hard look at our environment and account for this emerging class of "enemy combatants." A friend of the enemy is still an enemy.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** In light of our efforts to build unity among prisoners overall, this comrade brings up a good point: that not all prisoners can be won over. The divisions created by the oppressors are not just individuals bought off to carry out individual reactionary acts in exchange for favors, but also individuals who buy in to the Amerikan political ideology and truly support imperialism as a system. Both groups are dangerous to the movement. We must protect ourselves from these people, both by trying to turn them to the side of the oppressed while exposing them and avoiding their traps and aggression. ★

insidious. Those who feel like they are doing something radical, when in reality they are part of the system that revolution aims to overthrow, are all too common in the belly of the beast.

This movie takes certain elements of flash mobs and overlaps them with political action in a way to make them seem more radical and powerful than they are. Flash mobs as a phenomenon play into people's desires to be a part of something bigger than themselves and are a combination of youthful rebellion and partying. While sometimes used for political messages as The Mob eventually does, they are generally post-modern forms of expression with no coherent goals or message. The Mob at least has the advantage over your standard flash mob for being well-rehearsed and planned out ahead of time by a dedicated organization, which allows them to easily focus their work on fighting the developers. While they had discipline and hard work, their class interests were what kept them focused on their financial success. The more common flash mob that brings together random people to a location for a party is representative of the same class interests. The post-modern art form takes group action, one of the most powerful tools we have, and makes it inherently individualistic and unconsolidated, making it a spectacle itself. It is much easier to mobilize a mass of petty bourgeois youth to create their own spectacle than it is to exert their power to challenge the system.

While we know this movie wasn't trying to enter into serious political dialogue for solving the world's problems, there are many people holding desires for a better world that end up putting their energy and enthusiasm into self-indulgent dead ends. While dance can be revolutionary, the revolution will not be a dance party. If changing the world was all fun and sexy, don't you think it would have happened by now?★

## Llamada para demostración de Solidaridad 9 de Septiembre

por SAMAEL

traducido por un @ prisoner@ en California  
Augusto 2012

*Incluimos este artículo sobre la demostración en Septiembre porque no tenemos el reporte de actividades traducido (véase p. 1). Es algo que pensamos en organizar cada año y animamos a todos a contemplar que quieres hacer el año que viene.*

SAMAEL esta llamando a todos prisioneros para participar en un demostración de solidaridad el domingo, 9 de septiembre 2012. Nosotros estamos pidiendo a todos prisioneros (quienes son capaz) a embarcar en un ayuno y paro de trabajo desde media noche 8 de septiembre hasta medianoche 9 de septiembre en una muestra de solidaridad con:

1. Ayunando por el periodo citado arriba a menos que una necesidad medica requiere comer.
2. Abstener de trabajar por nuestros captos (o trabajo lento a productividad mínimo) por el periodo citado arriba.
3. Participar en solo contra-oppressor, acciones

redactes y solidarias por el periodo.

4. Cesar todo prisionero - contra - prisionero hostilidades a pesar de pandilla, raza, custodia, sexo, religión o otro división.
5. Mostrar respeto por nuestra esclavitud mutuo y sufrimiento también los sacrificios de todos hermanos y hermanas revolucionarias.

Esto día coincidir con el aniversario de la vuelta de Attica y es previsto a atraer atención a nuestro tratamiento prendado y abuso intensificante de prisioneros del estado.

A cogemos todos prisioneros - encarcelado o no - ha mostrar apoyo con participar o hablar claramente.

Solo un día, solo una voz!

No esperamos que nuestros hermanos y hermanas incurran heridas ni muertes - pero si queremos mandar un mensaje, no solo a ellos, pero a nosotros mismos. Esto es una casa de nosotros - una frente verdaderamente unida. Solo un día.

**MIM(Prisiones) añade:** Apoyamos esta llamada desde un grupo participando en la Frente

### El MIM(Prisiones)

El Ministro Maoísta Internacional de Prisiones, MIM(Prisiones), es una célula de revolucionarios que sirve las masas opresas adentro de las prisiones de los EEUU.. Mantenemos la ideología comunista revolucionaria del Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoísmo y trabajamos del punto del proletariado del tercer mundo.

El imperialismo es el enemigo número uno de la mayoría de gente del mundo, no podemos obtener nuestra meta de terminar toda opresión sin derribar el imperialismo. La historia nos ha mostrado que el imperialista hará guerra antes de permitir un fin a la opresión.

Como revolucionarios internacionalistas, nos apoyamos la auto-determinación de todas naciones y gente. Hoy, el sistema de prisiones de los EEUU es un parte mayor del estado imperialista siendo usado para prevenir la auto-determinación de las naciones opresas. Es por esta razón que vemos a prisioneros en este país como manteniendo la delantera de cualquier movimiento anti-imperialista y revolucionario. Mientras que nuestra organización se enfoca en apoyo al prisionero, creemos que hay una necesidad grave de trabajo para el Maoísta en organizar y educar en muchas áreas en los Estados Unidos. Tenemos la esperanza que alguna gente se inspire por nuestro ejemplo alrededor de prisiones y que lo aplique a su propio trabajo para crear más células maoísta y amplíe el movimiento Maoísta detrás de las líneas del enemigo.

MIM(Prisiones) se distingue de otros grupos en los siguientes seis puntos. Consideramos que las otras organizaciones que activamente mantienen estos puntos ser fraternal.

1. El comunismo es nuestra meta. El comunismo es una sociedad en donde ningún grupo tiene poder sobre cualquier otro grupo.
2. Una dictadura del proletariado es necesario. En una dictadura del proletariado la mayoría explotada anterior dicta a la minoría (el que promovió la explotación) como la sociedad se debe conducir. En el caso de naciones imperialistas, una dictadura junta del proletariado de naciones opresas (JDPON) debe hacer este papel en donde no hay proletariado interno o una base significante de masas que favorece comunismo.
3. Promovemos una frente unida contra todos los que se oponen al imperialismo. El camino al JDPON sobre las naciones imperialista incluye unir todos aquellos que se puedan unir contra el imperialismo. No podemos pelear el imperialismo y pelear otras que están ocupadas en conflictos de vida o muerte con el imperialismo a la misma vez. Aun las clases de una nación imperialista pueden ser aliados en el frente unido bajo ciertas condiciones.
4. Una clase parasítica domina los países del primer mundo. Como Marx, Engels, y Lenin formularon y la idea de MIM ha reiterado a través de análisis materialista, el imperialismo extrae súper-ganancias del Tercer Mundo y en parte usa esta riqueza para comprar poblaciones enteras de supuestos trabajadores. Estos supuestos trabajadores comprados por el imperialismo forman una nueva burguesía pequeña - llamada la aristocracia de labor, ellos no son un vehículo para el Maoísmo. Aquellos que trabajan en los intereses económicos de la aristocracia de labor del primer mundo forman la base de masas para apretar el agarre de la muerte del tercer mundo por el imperialismo
5. Nuevas burguesías se formarán bajo el socialismo. Mao guió la marcha para exponer la burguesía que se desarrolló adentro del partido comunista en la Unión Soviética y la campaña para bombardear los cuarteles generales en su propio país de China. Esas experiencias demostraron la necesidad de revolución continua bajo la dictadura del proletariado. La lucha de clases no se termina hasta que el estado haya sido anulado y el comunismo se haya alcanzado.
6. La Gran Revolución Cultural de Proletariado en China fue el avance más lejano hacia al comunismo en la historia. Mantenemos la Unión Soviética hasta la muerte de Stalin en 1953, seguido por la Republica de la gente de China a través de 1976 como los ejemplos mejores del socialismo moderno en la práctica. El arresto de la "Pandilla de Cuatro" en China y la subida de Khrushchev en la Unión Soviética marcaron la restauración del capitalismo en esos países. Otros experimentos en el desarrollo del socialismo en el siglo 20 fallaron de sobrepasar el modelo Soviético (es decir: Albania) o peor, se quedó adentro del modelo capitalista de producción, generalmente por la falla de romper con la teoría de fuerzas productivas.

Unida por Paz en Prisiones por un día de unidad y protesta pacifico, y va trabajar con células locales organizantes para coordinar este demostración. Este es una oportunidad por el FUPP a desarrollar sobre el principio de paz: "Nosotros organizamos para acabar con conflictos innecesarios y violencia adentro del medioambiente de prisiones estado unieses. Los opresores usan estrategias de dividir y conquistar para que peleamos entre nosotros en vez de contra ellos. Nosotros nos pararemos juntos y nos defenderemos de la opresión."

Este acción de 24 horas requerirán un poco de sacrificio por prisioneros, pero no debería incurrir herida, y debe resultar en una reducción de violencia así que todo prisionero-contra-prisionero hostilidades cesará por el día. Podremos aumentar conocimiento mas grande sobre la opresión contra cual luchamos, y construir la unidad que es necesaria por esa batalla, con organizar grupos y individuos a participar.

Desde Georgia a California, desde Virginia a Illinois, a cruzar los Estados Serpientes, déjenos mostrar que la lucha de prisioneros es una lucha común. ★

### ¿Quieres leer más en español?

Tenemos algunos libros y revistas revolucionarios. Escríbenos para pedir algunos. En cambio por la literatura gratuita pedimos que nos mandes algo de trabajo. Escríbenos un artículo, forma un grupo de estudio, mándenos algún arte, lo que puedas hacer para contribuir a la lucha revolucionaria.

...Continued from page 5 ...Growing Mvmt

summed it up when he said "mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, it will always be found that the task itself only arises when the material conditions for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. At the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism."(5) What this is basically saying is once the productive forces develop to a point, they will naturally enter the next stage in social evolution. I think prisoners are at the stage in social evolution across Amerika and this is reflected in the uprisings we are seeing develop as never before.

The folks in Red Onion are a link in a long chain that reaches from concentration camp to concentration camp and the Brown Berets - Prison Chapter stands in solidarity with them in our common march towards human rights! ★

Notes:

1. <http://www.abolishcontrolunits.org/research>
2. NPR, Latino USA, 7-13-2012
3. Stateline/Pew Center 2012.
4. CBS, 60 minutes. "Hard measures" 4-29-2012
5. Preface to "The Critique of Political Economy" by Karl Marx. pg 329.

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. 28, September/October 2012

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#### ...Free Speech

for these organizations to build in more positive directions.

Part of this criminalization of a specific sector of society is the use of self-created and perpetuated so-called experts on gang intelligence. Most of our readers are all too familiar with this farce of a profession that is acutely exposed by the court's opinion in this case. The final court opinion calls out CO J. Silveira for claiming that the plaintiff's letter contained an intricate code when he could provide no evidence that this was true. They also call him out for using his "training and experience" as the basis for all his arguments.

*The warden's argument is flawed for two reasons. First, the argument is based solely on the unsupported assertions and speculative conclusions in Silveira's declaration. The declaration is incompetent as evidence because it contains no factual allegations supporting those assertions and conclusions. Second, even if the declaration could properly be considered, it does not establish that the letter posed a threat to prison security.*

As great as this is, as the author of the article above points out, they usually get away with such baseless claims. More well thought out lawsuits like this are needed, because more favorable case law is needed. But neither alone represents any real victory in a system that exists to maintain the existing social hierarchy. These are just pieces of a long, patient struggle

that has been ongoing for generations. The people must exercise the rights won here to make them real. We must popularize and contextualize the nature of this struggle. ★

Notes:

1. *Who's Talking in Code, Pig? Under Lock & Key 4.*

#### 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)! The intro study group is split into 2 levels and studies articles written by MIM(Prisons); a pamphlet on the basics of MIM(Prisons)'s political line; and Mao Zedong's "On Contradiction," which introduces us to the philosophy of dialectical materialism (how we study history).

The whole study course costs \$5 (do not send a check or MO). You can trade work for study if you can't pay. Participants must be able to receive the study materials via mail and respond to each assignment on time. Write in today to sign up for the next group.

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 came up and we'll get you some more reading materials to help answer those questions.

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#### ...NABPP

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** It is a sad result of the criminal injustice system in Amerika that oppressed nations must demand the right to peace. But as this, and many other stories from behind bars demonstrate, this is the reality we face. And this is why the first principle of the United Front for Peace in Prisons is Peace. The United Front is fighting to unite the oppressed, see page 2 for more info. ★

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#### ...Manual Diaz

Moreno publicly regretted to the local media that the community resorted to violence while simultaneously calling for transparency from the police.

The entire attack was caught on tape. How much more transparency do you need? We know that no amount of transparency in the world will ever keep sadistic pigs or their attack dogs on the leash, because that's exactly what they're there for, to be set loose on the oppressed like the rabid dogs that they are!

How quick were the pigs to shoot rubber bullets at wimmin and children of brown skin color in Anaheim this weekend? Yet how many rubber bullets were shot at all the Occupy movements combined this year? What was the proportion of violence and how much restraint was practiced with respect to the former and the latter? I'm sure that if the numbers are calculated we will see a gross discrepancy of violence. ★

Notes: *Notas Telemundo 52, 7/23/2012*