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Boston, Confusion and Collective Responsibility

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
April 2013

The recent events around the bombings in Boston has been confusing to internationalists. Last week, we mourned the 3 unnecessary deaths and over 200 injuries that occurred in Boston on 15 April 2013. Today we mourn the over 250 unnecessary deaths (and counting) and over 800 more who remain trapped in the rubble in Bangladesh [14 May update: the death toll has been totaled at 1127]. Yet we are confused, though not surprised, by expressions of sadness that are so disproportionate among Amerikans surrounding these two events. Both were unnecessary results of imperialism. Reports today from one of the bombers in Boston state that he was motivated by the U.\$ invasions and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan -- both imperialist occupations for Third World resources. The deaths in Bangladesh came after a garment manufacturer, who produces goods for the U.\$ market, threatened employees with starvation to get them to work in an unsafe building, which then collapsed while they were inside.

People die in bombings everyday in places like Iraq and Afghanistan where there has been heavy U.\$ military involvement, and yet we don't see Amerikans respond like they have over the last week. Those who got teary-eyed over the deaths in Boston, while barely registering those in Bangladesh as a blip at the bottom of their TV screen, are emblematic of the problem of national chauvinism in the United States. In place of this view we promote a view of collective responsibility. Humyn society is a product of humyn actions that we, as a collective species, determine. For those of us who are citizens of the most powerful country on Earth, our responsibility is that much more grave.

So, the Amerikan reader might ask, should we bow to the demands of anyone who plants a homemade bomb in a crowd? Of course not. What we are saying is that if Amerikans paid as much attention to deaths caused by their nation as they did to deaths inflicted on their nation, then the latter would be less frequent. Of course the latter already pales in comparison to the former, as Amerikans kill far more people of other nations than vice-versa. Taking responsibility for this fact and acting to change it is the single most practical thing one can do to prevent unnecessary deaths of all peoples. Most of the "response" to the bombing in Boston has been political posturing and emotional subjectivism -- all show, no substance. For the people of

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Publication of the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons Advance the Struggle for Humyn Rights in CA Prisons

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
May 2013

Amendment I of the Bill of Rights of the United States:

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

After decades of expanding the repression of the U.\$ prison system, and despite their effectiveness in misleading and breaking up unity, the control units remain a flashpoint of struggle within U.\$ borders. These flashes do take time to develop, due to the excessive restrictions placed on those in these units. So when they do come to light, they emerge from much struggle and are not likely to fizzle out soon.



The struggle against control units is a struggle against torture. It is a struggle against not just the violation of some of the most basic rights that this country was founded on, but also basic humyn needs like sunlight, exercise, mental stimulation and social interaction.

Orders From the Top

As U.\$ president, Barack Obama once honored Rosa Parks and the movement of civil disobedience that she symbolized. It was a movement of Black people for basic rights under U.\$ imperialism. Yet today the Obama administration gives its explicit approval to the torture and repression going on in a country that imprisons more of its population than any other state in humyn history, and a higher percentage of Blacks than the openly racist Apartheid state of South Africa. U.\$ prisons also hold a higher percentage of their prisoners in long-term isolation than any other state that has been documented.

The 2014 federal budget proposed by Obama includes an overall increase in funding for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. More damning, it describes the remodeling of the recently acquired Thomson Correctional Center in Illinois to include an Administrative Maximum Custody (ADX) and Special Management Unit (SMU). ADX "houses the most violent, disruptive, dangerous and escape-prone inmates within the Federal Prison System including those convicted of terrorist activities." "The SMU program is for inmates who have participated in or had a leadership role in geographical group/gang-related activity or those who otherwise present unique security and management concerns." The budget proposal claims that one in six prisoners in maximum security are "gang affiliated." It does not specify how many of the 2100 beds will be SMU or ADX classified.(1) While lawsuits challenge the constitutionality of the treatment people face in these units, and international bodies like the United Nations condemn them as torture, the Obama regime is providing clear leadership to the hundreds of state and local agencies involved in the U.\$ prison system on how prisoners are to be treated.

Obama's role is even more clear in Guantanamo Bay, where prisoners are being held as enemy combatants by the military. Prisoners there began another hunger strike on 6 February 2013.

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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

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 MIM(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 and former 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.

Editor's Note:

Strategic Confidence in the International Balance of Forces

May 2013

While many of our readers write to us to express the lack of consciousness and unity in the prisons where they are held, one USW comrade pointed out in ULK 31 the realization that ULK is a place where conscious prisoners can come together and build, minimizing that isolation. We try to make ULK a tool that helps the development of the growing new prison movement, but primarily it is to be the "voice of the anti-imperialist movement" in U.S. prisons, and it is a Maoist-led project. This not only sets this newsletter apart, but makes for what we believe is a more effective way to address oppression.

Over the years, we've received comments from some USW comrades that ULK is too light on international news and analysis. With all the reader surveys we've gotten back recently, we've had many say they love the content of ULK and like to hear about similar struggles throughout the U.S. prison system. But a few have said they find the prison reporting dry and, more importantly, it does not provide a clear political message to the less ideologically developed comrades. If true this would be a grave error.

Even if we unite the handful of conscious comrades in each prison across the country, we are still only dealing with a small minority of prisoners, not to mention the whole U.S. population. One young comrade recently wrote us, "I write this because I seek advice. At times I feel like giving up trying to fight this fight because it seems like I'm here fighting by myself."

While the day-to-day struggles of USW comrades are primarily focused on the conditions of oppression that the prison masses around them face, a reformist strategy would understandably lead one to defeatism. This is particularly true if you accept our line that Americans in general support the current injustice system and have made it what it is today. How could asking them for change ever change anything? That is why we strive to help prisoners build reformist battles in targeted ways that build a movement, while realizing the limitations of such struggles. Campaigns for prison reform are a tactic to push the prison movement to develop.

One important piece of our strategic orientation is the strategic confidence we have from our global class analysis. Basically, our analysis says that the vast majority of the world's people, a solid 80%, will benefit materially from an end to imperialism. This is why we believe anti-imperialism is destined for success. Subjectively, this can be important to keep

in mind in an environment surrounded by class enemies or by those with bourgeois consciousness.

Pulling these theoretical points together into our practice, as editor I will continue to push for international content in each issue of Under Lock & Key, as has been our policy. One way I plan to expand the international connections we make is to have a section in each issue to print news snippets on events from the Third World that demonstrate determined



resistance and a broad class consciousness that is opposed to imperialism. We hope that our readers find inspiration in this information that you probably aren't getting from other news sources. With no further ado, here are a few recent events that help illustrate why we have strategic confidence in the people's struggle against imperialism.

Paktiya province of Afghanistan, 17 April 2013 - Hundreds of angry residents protested against NATO occupation troops for conducting a night-time raid that killed at least one citizen. (Khaama Press) The sentiments of the people of Afghanistan are so clear that even U.S.-backed President Karzai has continuously called for an end to these raids led by the American military.

In India it is reported that Maoist forces have established a "Red corridor" allowing troop movement between the two key fronts of the People's War in

southern Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, near Gumla. (Hindustan Times, 15 April 2013)

The Communist Party of the Philippines, which has been leading a People's War for decades, has clearly opposed the use of the Philippines to stage a U.S. war in Korea:

"With not even a hint of advocating or forging an independent foreign policy, the Aquino regime declared it an 'obligation' on the part of the Philippines to side with and support US warmongering under the RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1951. The Filipino people must take a stand and resist the Aquino regime's puppetry to US imperialism and for dragging the Philippines into intervening in the Korean Peninsula and the Asia-Pacific. Such a policy endangers the Filipino people." (CPP Ang Bayan, 10 April 2013)

Meanwhile, Hezbollah's Nasrallah said in a TV statement, "Syria has real friends in the region and the world that will not let Syria fall in the hands of America, Israel or Takfiri (extreme jihadi) groups." (The Guardian, 30 April 2013) Russia and Iran continue to support the Syrian government, while Obama threatens intervention and Israel has reportedly bombed the capital of Damascus. This over two year "civil war" is an example of why we say World War III is already here, and it is characterized by U.S. hegemony and low-intensity warfare in the Third World involving both local interests and the conflicting interests of the imperialist camps.

In South America, indigenous people have once again interrupted construction of the Belo Monte Dam in Brazil. Hundreds of people including, "Mundurucu, Juruna, Kayapo, Xipaya, Kuruaya, Asurini, Parakana, Arara, fishermen and peoples who live in riverine communities" occupied the site releasing a statement that read, in part,

"You invent stories that we are violent and that we want war. Who are the ones killing our relatives? How many white people have died in comparison to how many Indigenous people have died? You are the ones killing us, quickly or slowly. We're dying and with each dam that is built, more of us will die. When we try to talk with you, you bring tanks, helicopters, soldiers, machineguns and stun weapons." (Earth First! News, 2 May 2013)

Finally, in Ecuador, the media has covered the continuing struggle of the Wuarani and Kichwa people who have pledged to fight to the death to keep oil operations out of their homeland in pristine Amazon rainforest habitat. Both struggles stand strong against formidable opposition of the local state and multinational corporations. ★

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...Humyn Rights

Since then the ranks of the strike have grown to over 130 people. (2) Many are being force-fed, and many are skeletal in appearance now.

All this is being done as the United States still has the audacity to claim it is promoting freedom around the world, with bombs. As we highlight the connections of the struggle against control units to the struggle against the imperi-

alist system itself, the global importance of this struggle becomes evident. As RAIM pointed out in their recent statement to the international communist movement (see page 9), failures at building socialism in the past have been connected to a temptation to imitate American ways. One way the anti-imperialist minority in the First World can strengthen the movements in the Third World is by making it very clear that this is not a model to follow, and that the American dream is built on torture, genocide, exploitation and injustice.

What to Expect

A Yemeni prisoner held in Guantanamo Bay, who has been on hunger strike since the start had an Op-Ed published in *The New York Times*, where he wrote,

"I will never forget the first time they passed the feeding tube up my nose. I can't describe how painful it is to be force-fed this

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Expanding the California SHU Struggle to Nevada

by a comrade of SAMAEL
May 2013

Recently a fellow prisoner told me he had heard that Nevada was the only state in which a CO had never been killed. Knowing that I have more than 3 decades in this system, he asked if this was true. I looked back and had to admit despite hundreds of assaults, attacks, hostage situations, takeovers, etc., I could not recall one CO being killed, ever.

Up until Nevada State Prison (NSP) closed (2011-12) it was the oldest prison still in use in

the united states. The building in which the first experimental execution with gas occurred (on a cat) still stands as a testament to the gravity of the statements above.

In the early 1980s NSP received attention on "Good Morning America" as the most dangerous prison in the continental united states. This was true for prisoners only (apparently), who've died by the score.

I arrived in 1979 and the two dominating prison-formed organizations were well established, all other groups were extensions of

existent street organizations. These two prison-formed orgs were based on racially charged genesis mythologies of defense from other prisoners.

The COs tended to "turn a blind eye" to, or participate in, prisoner-on-prisoner violence out of fear of retaliation or through "negotiation." Prisoners also turned a blind eye to, or participated in, guard-on-prisoner violence/oppression in return for concessions, creating an environment which thrived on the victimization of prisoners facilitated by guard/prisoner cadres. This relationship still exists in Nevada, though less visible. Many prisoners have been killed, assaulted and raped at the hands and/or instigation of COs, myself included.

New STG Step Down Program is a Sham

by a California prisoner
May 2013

In recent days, Calipatria's Administrative Segregation Unit prisoners were given a 63-page instructional Security Threat Group (STG) pilot policy which serves as a notice of program, behavioral and participation expectations in the new Step Down Program (SDP) for prisoners housed in segregation units.

Prison officials here have told us that in the coming weeks California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) representatives from Sacramento will be reviewing the case file/validation package of all those who have been validated as associates of an STG here at Calipatria to determine their current and future housing needs in accordance with the new SDP placement option chart.

This new policy and SDP is a sham! It does not address the core issues and only gives the illusion that if a prisoner jumps through all their hoops he/she could escape these torture chambers. The fact of the matter is that even if the prisoner is able to gain his/her release back to the general population, s/he will be walking on very thin ice thereafter. Any infraction could bring him/her right back to these torture chambers for an additional six years minimum. If a prisoner has already been through the SDP they

will have to serve two years in step one, instead of the one year for first termers in the program.

CDCR might as well place revolving doors at the entrance of every segregation unit, because this is exactly what the new policy offers. Maybe its going to take the sound of thousands of hungry rumbling bellies before CDCR listens to reason and begins to write policies that are humane and fair.

MIM(Prisons) adds: In response to protests in 2011, the CDCR asserted that they were already working on the issue. This SDP was what they were working on. Previously they offered "gang validation" to prisoners deemed to be affiliated with one of a handful of "prison gangs" within the system. This new policy expands the gang validation, and therefore long-term isolation torture, to all sorts of organizations that are deemed "criminal" or even just "disruptive." Keep in mind that if prisoners stand up against staff abuses, this is considered "disruptive" behavior and such prisoners face regular retaliation. While none of this is new, it is now official policy.

While we know the whole system needs to be thrown in the trash, in the mean time we can at least do better than this. But it depends on prisoners organizing in unity to better the conditions of all prisoners. ★

The point of this is that, historically, Nevada prisoners organize on one of two opposing platforms: 1) personal defense/safety 2) profit. Some combine these two and others degenerate from the former to the latter. This approach inevitably results in a contradiction of defense vs. predation with the consequence of a self-perpetuating condition of disunity among prisoners, due to the self-replicating nature of these positions. In Nevada this is an entrenched proxy of the prison political landscape which must be dismantled.

Alongside the two groups above, there have formed new organizations whose lines continue to define fellow prisoners as enemies or potential victims. In such a climate, racial polarization is inevitable in the defense camp and predatory capitalist expansion is inevitable in the profit camp.

These philosophies embrace, advocate and promote a prisoner vs. prisoner paradigm, a mirror image of the Amerikkkan/prison paradigm used to oppress the masses and to prevent organizing among prisoners. By making prisoners impotent, it facilitates their continued oppression and the violence and exploitation visited upon them, their families, and community by the state.

It was against this background that SAMAEL

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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.

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...Boston

the world who face death on a daily basis, such platitudes are not enough and only real solutions earn respect, not empty words.

A peaceful world is possible. But a peaceful world is precluded by one without exploitation. You cannot maintain wealth inequality and profit motives without the use of force. MIM(Prisons) stands for an end of such use of force, an end to all oppression and exploitation, and an end to the unnecessary deaths that are the result of the system of imperialism in so many forms. We challenge U.S. citizens to join us in taking collective responsibility for the actions of our government and the deaths and destruction that result from it. Taking responsibility means taking action to change those things, while combating the culture of chauvinism that dominates our society. ★

No Peace in Central America Under U.S. Imperialism

by a Texas prisoner
April 2013

El Salvador has one of the world's highest homicide rates, and marginalization runs deep causing orphaned children from disintegrated households, and extreme poverty. The Salvadorian government has brought gang members to the table to negotiate and find temporary solutions for ending the violence, and eventually a "definitive pacification." A peace treaty between Mara Salvatrucha-13 and Barrio 18 has dropped the homicide rate, in a country with a population of 6 million, to 5 down from 14 daily. "Our conclusion is that the crime is only an expression of a much deeper social problem," says Raul Mijango, who is an ex-guerrilla who fought against the government in El Salvador's Civil War, and is also a former legislative deputy of the government established after the Civil War, he's helping broker the deal.(1) Among the gangs' primary demands was a transfer of ranking leaders from max to low security prisons, where family visits are permitted and limited rehabilitation programs offered. He says gang members are subject to worse-than-usual treatment in El Salvador prisons. Jeannette Aguilar, director of the University Institute of Public Opinion in San Salvador says, "...it's a golden opportunity for the country to advance." Some say they need to treat the roots of the problem: marginalization, education, and a lack of economic opportunity.

While El Salvador is working with the gangs on a "peace process," the United Snakes slithers in the mix and designates the Mara a transnational criminal organization and imposes financial sanctions on the gang. El Salvador's president called this label "exaggerated." In reference to the "gangs" in question, Mijango says "...you don't come across a gangster with five bulletproof trucks and armed men — you just don't see it. You see a bunch of kids trying to figure out how to make it. It's a different reality..." Some analysts argue by doing such, the United Snakes could sabotage the peace process. Economic opportunity is crucial to a sustainable peace process, yet it is almost impossible for gang members there to get jobs.

Comrades, why would they put financial sanctions on them at the exact time that El Salvador is pushing for peace in their country? Could it be the United Snakes is purposely trying to compromise this "peace treaty" in order to keep the country in chaos? If these gang members get educated, get jobs, and contribute to their country's development, maybe, just maybe, they would start taking over the jobs, and undermining investments that U.S. imperialism has its tentacles wrapped around. In my personal opinion, the United Snakes is looking after its interest and long-term investments in the region for capital accumulation and political hegemony, by purposely trying to compromise the peace treaty between Salvadorian "gangs!"

MIM(Prisons) adds: We agree with the conclusion this comrade makes. As we pointed out in

Amerikan Torture Culture Hits Migrants

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
April 2013

Proletarian migrants have fed much of the growth in the prison population within U.S. borders in recent years.(see *ULK 11*) As a result they are getting a taste of the torture tactics Amerikans use against oppressed nations within the United States. A recent report showed that U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement holds about 300 migrants in solitary confinement in 50 of its largest detention facilities, which account for 85% of their detainees. Half of them are held in solitary for 15 days or more and about 35 of the 300 are held more than 75 days.(1)

While these terms are relatively short compared to what has become normal in the United States, the experiences are particularly difficult for migrants who don't speak English and have been the victims of humyn trafficking.

The authors of the article cited above cautiously state that the United States uses solitary confinement more "than any other democratic nation in the world." This implies that other countries may use solitary confinement more. One reason they cannot get stats on imprisonment practices in some countries is that they are U.S. puppet regimes purposely run under a veil of secrecy to allow extreme forms of repression of the most oppressed peoples. We have seen no evidence of a mythical nation that is torturing more people in solitary confinement than Amerika.

Amerikans imprison more people than any other nation even if we exclude the people they are holding in prisons in other countries. With at least 100,000 people in long-term isolation within U.S. borders, it seems unlikely that any other country can top that. Further evidence exists by looking at the state of prisons in many Third World countries, which are far more open than even the low security prisons in the United States. And the exceptions to this rule are all countries with heavy Amerikan military/intelligence activity, and usually Amerikans themselves are running the prisons.(3)

California's notorious Pelican Bay reports an

our article marking the one-year anniversary of the peace treaty in El Salvador (see *ULK 31*), the United States has its bloody finger prints all over the state of affairs in Central America. The "civil war" that led to mass migration to Los Angeles and the formation of the lumpen organizations engaged in the peace treaty was financed by U.S. imperialism to eliminate people who were not a part of the imperialist system.

Just this week, Efraín Ríos Montt, former dictator of Guatemala, became the first head of state in the Americas to face trial for genocide. This U.S.-trained-and-financed puppet was part of a parallel war against communist guerrillas and the masses of indigenous people in Guatemala in the same time period, the 1980s. Montt was convicted of genocide and sentenced to 80

average time spent in the Security Housing Unit there as 7.5 years. Many who fought for national liberation from U.S. imperialism have spent 30 to 40 years in solitary confinement in prisons across the United States. MIM(Prisons) has not seen reports of long-term isolation used to this extreme by any other government.

The torture techniques used in Amerikan control units were developed to break the spirits of people and social groups that have challenged the status quo, and in particular U.S. imperialism. Thirty years after their demise, materials from the Black Panther Party still get people in trouble regularly, sometimes even with a "Security Threat Group" charge. That's the Amerikan term for a thought crime.

It could be that these techniques are being expanded into migrant detention centers as a form of discipline of the Mexican proletariat that Amerikans fear as a force of social change. Or it could just be a case of oppressor nation culture spreading its tentacles into other nations. Either way, this is just one of many forms of oppression that serve to undermine the propaganda myth of Amerika as a nation that promotes freedom.

For years, the United States has been under criticism by the United Nations as the principal state using torture in the form of long-term isolation. Today, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said, "We must be clear about this: the United States is in clear

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Spanish Translators Needed!

We need volunteers who can read and write well in both English and Spanish to translate for *Under Lock & Key*. A fast growing segment of the U.S. prison population is Spanish-speaking migrants, and we would like to reach out to them as much as possible.

Write in to put in work!

years. While there was armed resistance to the imperialists, 93% of those killed by the state's repression were civilians. The trial this week came to a halt when information about current president Otto Pérez Molina's role in ordering mass executions came to light, signaling that the the power structure in that country has not left U.S. hands.(2) In both El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1980s, tens of thousands of mostly indigenous people, mostly Mayans, were slaughtered by the U.S. imperialists to prevent them from achieving their goals of land reform and economic socialization.

Amerikans try to demonize MS-13 and Barrio 18 and other lumpen organizations (LOs) as

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...Humyn Rights

way. As it was thrust in, it made me feel like throwing up. I wanted to vomit, but I couldn't. There was agony in my chest, throat and stomach. I had never experienced such pain before. I would not wish this cruel punishment upon anyone.

"I am still being force-fed. Two times a day they tie me to a chair in my cell. My arms, legs and head are strapped down. I never know when they will come. Sometimes they come during the night, as late as 11 p.m., when I'm sleeping.

"There are so many of us on hunger strike now that there aren't enough qualified medical staff members to carry out the force-feedings; nothing is happening at regular intervals. They are feeding people around the clock just to keep up."(3)

Another prisoner who has since been released from Guantanamo Bay after a 438-day hunger strike reported how the force feeding was brutal and they did not clean the tubes between feeding people. The prisoners asked military personnel why they were doing this:

"They told us, 'We want you to break your hunger strike.' They tell us directly like that. They ask us to break our hunger strike. They said, 'We'll never deal with you as the detainees until you break your hunger strike.'"(2)

Comrades from NCTT-Corcoran-SHU (a New Afrikan think tank) have reported that staff at Corcoran State Prison have been announcing similar plans to prisoners in California, indicating that they will not be providing proper medical care and attention to strikers in their prison in the future. These threats, which violate state policies, will also result in undercounting strikers.(4) It is possible that information will not flow as freely this time around, meaning outside supporters will have little information to go on until the struggle is over. This reinforces the need for strong unity among those inside and the ability to act independent of outside support.

We've also received word of plans to move prisoners and staff around strategically over the next couple months. In particular, Special Needs Yard prisoners are reportedly being moved to other facilities and given work assignments. Prison staff apparently thinks this will dilute the spirit of prisoners. However, depending on the balance of forces, this could go either way. We know there are strong supporters of the prisoners' rights movement in SNY already, and we hope these coming months provide the conditions to further break down the divisions within the imprisoned lumpen class. While we know that staff regularly bribe prisoners to create disruptions among the population, the mass support for the interests of all prisoners will make it hard for these bribed prisoners to create disruptions openly in the coming months, hopefully longer.

There have been positive reports of prisoners being moved to areas they once could not go, as a result of the agreement to end hostilities that has been in place for over 6 months now, which was endorsed by the largest organizations in California prisons.(see *ULK* 29) In particular,

positive reports have come from Pelican Bay and Corcoran, where two of the main SHUs are located. San Quentin death row has also reached out to share ideas to build their own prisoner rights campaign over the coming months.

We have received some letters about ideas on tactics for advancing the prisoner rights movement in California. We've printed some in *ULK* and shared others with United Struggle from Within members in California. But in most cases it is impossible for us to have a full understanding of the balance of forces, and thus we are not in a position to determine which tactics are best. In addition, conditions vary so much between facilities. Clearly the comrades in Pelican Bay and Corcoran took the lead in struggling to shut down the SHU and they will likely continue to do so. What we can say for sure is that July 8 will be an opportunity to have your voice amplified by acting in solidarity with all across the state, and many in other states as well. To determine how you can best do this, you must think through and balance the effectiveness of your tactics with the risks involved.

Where we can provide leadership is in our ideological alignment. Some lists of goals that are circulating include things that are not humyn needs. These demands may be subjectively popular among the prison masses, but will greatly damage support from the outside and internationally by trivializing the struggle for basic rights. As we presented in *ULK* 31, below are the strategic goals that, if attained, we think would represent the establishment of basic humyn rights for prisoners (note a small change to point 1.f.).

1. An end to torture of all prisoners, including an end to the use of Security Housing Units (SHU) as long-term isolation prisons.

Basic humyn needs are centered around 1) healthy food and water, 2) fresh air and exercise, 3) clothes and shelter from the elements and 4) social interactions and community with other humyns. It is the SHU's failure to provide for these basic needs that have led people around the world to condemn long-term isolation as torture. Therefore we demand that the following minimum standards be met for all prisoners:

- a. no prisoner should be held in Security Housing Units for longer than 30 days. Rehouse all prisoners currently in SHU to mainline facilities.
- b. interaction with other prisoners every day
- c. time spent outdoors with space and basic equipment for exercise every day
- d. healthy food and clean water every day
- e. proper clothing and climate control
- f. an end to the use of and threat of violence by staff against prisoners who have not made any physical threat to others
- g. access to phone calls and contact visits with family at least once a week
- h. timely and proper health care
- i. ability to engage in productive activities, including correspondence courses and hobby crafts

- j. a meaningful way to grieve any abuses or denial of the above following basic rights

2. Freedom of association.

As social beings, people in prison will always develop relationships with other prisoners. We believe positive and productive relationships should be encouraged. Currently the CDCR makes it a crime punishable by torture (SHU) to affiliate with certain individuals or organizations. This is contrary to the judiciary's interpretation of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. We demand that prisoners of the state of California only be punished for violating the law, and that there be:

- a. no punishment based on what books one reads or has in their possession
- b. no punishment for jailhouse lawyering for oneself or for others, for filing grievances or for any challenges to conditions of confinement through legal means
- c. no punishment for what outside organizations one belongs to or corresponds with
- d. no punishment for communicating with other prisoners if not breaking the law
- e. no punishment for tattoos
- f. no punishment for what individuals of the same race/nation/organizational affiliation do unless you as an individual were involved in violating a rule or the law, i.e. no group punishment
- g. no punishment for affiliation with a gang, security threat group, or other organization - in other words a complete end to the gang validation system that punishes people (currently puts people in the SHU for an indeterminate amount of time) based on their affiliation and/or ideology without having broken any rules or laws★

Notes:

1. *Federal Prison System FY 2014 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET*, U.S. Department of Justice.
2. *Democracy Now!* 29 April 2013
3. *SAMIR NAJI al HASAN MOQBEL. Gitmo Is Killing Me. The New York Times*, 14 April 2013.
4. *NCTT-Cor-SHU, Alarming: Corcoran SHU administrators are directing staff to dispense with California law and state procedures/policy regarding mass hunger strikes*, 22 April 2013

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.

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...Nevada

emerged in defense against the state and it is against this background that Nevada prisoners are oppressed today. It is time for Nevada prisoners to wake up to the reality of our mutual conditions. We reject the prisoner vs. prisoner paradigm out-of-hand and refuse to cooperate, facilitate, or participate in our abuse, oppression and genocide, or that of others. We are calling on all Nevada prisoners to join us in:

1. Organizing for our mutual defense against our mutual enemy, the state, by opening dialogue and forming alliances with all fellow prisoners to address conditions of confinement as a single body.
2. Ending all inter-tribal disputes by adopting the agreement to end hostilities as proposed by the PBSP-SHU short corridor collective. This should include all facilities in Nevada and all custody levels in these facilities striving to expand this initiative beyond prison walls and into our respective communities.
3. Rejecting all racial, gender, sexual, religious and custody divisions as counter-revolutionary distractions. The enemy does not limit its capabilities based on these distinctions and we must stop allowing these distinctions to be an exploitable weapon against us. Our weakness is their strength.
4. Ending prisoner-on-prisoner predation. While Nevada prisoners are victimizing and exploiting each other, the state is fomenting and cap-

italizing on this disunity to further abuse and oppress us. Do not assist this process through inaction or abuse and oppression of fellow prisoners.

5. Breaking silence: when a CO mistreats you, grieve it. Put it on paper and into a public forum. When a CO mistreats a fellow prisoner, step up and back their play. Put it in writing and get it into a public forum. The COs back each others' play without question and we must do the same. We will only be oppressed further by enabling them with silence, and they are exploiting this reluctance to speak up. Every voice counts (see addresses below)
6. Back up the California comrades. It is not just their struggle — many prisoners in Nevada have been segregated/tortured for decades and their voices are not being heard. We must speak for them because all prisoners are united by captivity, suffering and oppression.

Nevada prisoners must unite against our captors and stop enabling and assisting in our own destruction. Expose abuses to:

NV-CURE, 540 E. St. Louis Ave, Las Vegas,
NV 89104

Jonathan Smith, Chief, Civil Rights Div U.S.
Dept of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20530

MIM(Prisons) adds: Also send your reports on abuse to MIM(Prisons) for *ULK!*★

...Continued from page 5

...Central America

killers. In reality, the Amerikans literally trained the genocidal killers of Central American in their "School of the Americas" in Fort Benning, Georgia. They then spent millions of dollars to provide them with military equipment to murder tens of thousands of people. After creating war in the region for decades, it is no surprise that the Amerikans are now intervening to interrupt this peace effort.

Another prisoner in Teajatlán writes: To me the most relevant question this article raises for the U.S. Lumpen prison population is the "peace treaty." These two LOs have had a bloody feud that has racked the violent death toll to the thousands. If peace is possible for them, there is no excuse wut so ever why the petty-penitentiary-plex and tribal warfare going on here amongst ourselves cannot be stopped.

Chiefly, i'm referring to the plex going on in the Texas prison colonies. To everybody "puttin on for they city," i'm barking at the families, yall know who yall are. Sum gotta give, we ain't getting nowhere with this petty-plex. We've allowed hate and violence towards each other to be the basis of our unity in relation to one another. So long as we allow this petty-plex for who has the most dominance and influence on these ranchos, and so long as we allow that hate and violence against each other to dictate our relations to one another, our identity, and our collective consciousness, we'll never truly understand the base of our plex and our common condition. Wut material forces have given birth to and will facilitate the intensification of this plex i'm speaking against? Can anybody explain

to me wut it is, the base of it? For all those engaged and involved, yall know who yall are and who this slug is addressed to, and yall know exactly wut plex i'm referring to.

I recently withdrew my allegiance to one of these LOs comprising the biggest in Texas, because talk of peace is considered weak, and nobody seems to understand wut's at stake, or the genocide we're committing against each other. I now stand alone in an environment where lack of affiliation renders you amongst the weakest, with no say so for even the most trivial of things such as wut channel the pacifier goes on and sometimes with no place to sit even to be pacified. I feel like Che in his farewell note to the Cubanos, criticizing myself for not being a better soldado, leader, and spokesman. But as i lay down the banner of tribalism, i will lift the flame of revolutionary nationalism, striving to better my understanding of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and applying the dialectic science to the material world around me, challenging the old to build new perceptions, which shape our relations, and define our reality. For those of us lumped together in these ranchos, it starts with you and me individually as biological men assuming responsibility. Let's get it right. For those engaged in the peace initiatives between Centro Americano LOs, from the comandante to the soldado, our efforts at nation building do not go unnoticed. Don't allow the prospects of reintegration and cohesion to be sabotaged due to foreign interests. Too much is at stake. To Sanchez of Homies Unidos en Los Angeles who recently had federal RICO charges dismissed... stay stiff homie! Lucha y Libre. Patria o Muerte.★

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Trans Debate: Combat All Forms of Gender Oppression

by a Nevada prisoner
May 2013

I am writing in response to "Debating Trans Rights" in *ULK* 31. I am a bi-two spirit prisoner who's been active in the struggle since the 70s. I do not agree with everything that revolutionary comrades espouse, but these are not grounds for division, they are expressions of human diversity. The Pennsylvania comrade seems to have misunderstood MIM(Prisons)'s position and taken it somewhat persynally.

Having said as much, I see this comrade's struggle (and indeed the trans struggle generally) as an agitational process and as resistance to imposed norms of identity inseparable from the broader battle against sex-based discrimination and exploitation globally.

Whether a trans persyn can afford sex reassignment surgery (SRS) or hormone therapy speaks only to their economic condition and not to their location. This economic hurdle actually applies to most trans people in the u.s., many of whom seek SRS and treatments via the underground from sources in Mexico and Latin America due to the artificially inflated cost created by the medical establishment in the u.s. and exploitative pharmaceutical monopolies. It was done with Cipro during the anthrax scare and is still being done with HIV/AIDS treatment, which has had an enormously adverse impact in Africa where AIDS and AIDS-related deaths are epidemic.

It should also not go unnoticed that trans people in the u.s. are being raped and murdered

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...Continued from page 5

...Migrants

breach not just of its own commitments but also of international laws and standards that it is obliged to uphold."(4) This was in a statement addressing the 166 foreign nationals held in Guantanamo Bay Prison for more than a decade, most without charges.

Just as high-tech weaponry could not win the war in Afghanistan for the Amerikans, the sophisticated torture techniques of the modern control unit cannot overcome the widespread outrage of the masses living under imperialist domination. The opportunities for making internationalist connections to the prison movement within U.S. borders only increases as more people from outside those borders get swept up in the system. ★

Notes:

1. Ian Urbina and Catherine Rentz. *Immigrants Held in Solitary Cells, Often for Weeks*, New York Times, 23 March 2013.
2. Shane Bauer. *Solitary in Iran Nearly Broke Me. Then I Went Inside America's Prisons*, Mother Jones, 18 October 2012.
3. Cora Currier and Suevon Lee. *The Secret Prison ProPublica gathers the best reporting on detention and rendition under Obama*, 16 July 2012.
4. Stephanie Nebehay. *U.N. rights chief calls for closure of Guantanamo prison*, Reuters, 5 April 2013.

Texas Murder Milestone: 500 People Executed

by USW88 of United Struggle from Within
April 2013

As we approach the midpoint of 2013, the state of Texas is about to surpass a horrific benchmark. This summer, the state of Texas will have killed 500 men and wimmin via their barbaric death penalty which is nothing more than the state sponsored murder of humyn beings. Governor Rick Perry of Texas has signed the death certificates of 250 men and wimmin all by himself!

Governor Rick Perry's hands are dripping with blood, dripping with the blood of the citizens of Texas, many who were actually innocent. The state of Texas has paid out \$65 million dollars to exonerees. Texas exceeds every state in the union in exoneree payments. It is #1 in wrongly convicted humyn beings. However, the \$65 million dollar question is: "How many innocent people sentenced to death were not exonerated?" How many innocent people have actually been murdered by this blood-thirsty governor? Remember Todd Willingham (an innocent man executed in Texas in 2004)?

Also, where is the international outcry? 500 murders by the state of Texas! Texans cheer, while Amerikkans whimper or simply remain silent. This is systematic genocide happening right under their noses. Then when the "chickens come home to roost" intelligent humyn beings scratch their heads, perplexed as to why the Grim Reaper has visited the Lone Star State, and Colorado. Definitely tragedies, but is the state of Texas simply an innocent victim? Do I need to mention the disproportionate number of Black and Latino humyn beings who are sentenced to death in Texas?

We have tried pursuing the violation-of-civil-rights route by appealing to the "Big Boss Man" in Austin, Texas to recognize our civil rights struggle. The bottom line is this: Governor Rick Perry is guilty of heinous crimes against humynity and should be tried at the International Court in the Hague!

Texas legislators tell their constituents "times are hard we have no money." They cut \$5.6 billion dollars from the state public education budget, robbing our children of the resources they need to compete in today's technology advanced world and economy, paving the road to the penitentiary while obstructing the path to success. And you tell me this is not a systematic plan?!

Texas legislators ignore the fact that each humyn being sentenced to death in Texas costs the state two million dollars when they exhaust all judicial appeals. Remember, these humyn beings are fighting for their lives, literally. So most, if not all, are going to exhaust every avenue possible to save their lives at the tax payers' expense and countless children suffer for lack of quality education that could be funded by this blood money!

A Dog with a Bone

by a Texas prisoner

There is a saying,
A dog with a bone in his mouth don't bark or bite.
Will you sell your soul or continue to fight?
They give handouts to tame the wolf,
They set the trap when most don't look.
An addict of the state give me all I can take.
You stay in the projects, I'll stay in the White House,
You spend your food stamps until they run out.
We'll exploit the Third World, we'll be alright
A dog with a bone in his mouth don't bark or bite.

Is there a sentence of death under socialism? Yes there is. However socialists and communists don't use the death penalty as a covert tool to ethnically cleanse the lumpen masses. At the end of the day, that is what Texas is up to — ethnic cleansing. Get rid of the niggers and wet backs so the good white folks can feel safe. So now you know the truth. The question is, what are you going to do about it?

MIM(Prisons) responds: In response to the deaths of hundreds in a collapsed factory in Bangladesh this April 2013, the people have called for the execution of the factory owner who forced workers into such unsafe conditions. This is a prime example of the people's line on justice, and a situation where a socialist state might utilize the death penalty. Ultimately, by eliminating the profit motive and the power of an elite over the masses we can eliminate such events from happening in the first place, therefore making the question irrelevant to begin with. Crime is a social phenomenon. This means it can be eliminated via social change. But social change also requires holding those in power responsible. And it is those with more power that can commit the most heinous crimes, as this author describes. ★

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...Food in TX

several organizations out there that will not file a lawsuit for only an individual prisoner. But when a large group joins hands, these organizations will take the case and file for prisoners. We need to file, file, and file. Don't be afraid of retaliation. If the pigs retaliate, add them to your lawsuit. If they deny your grievances, don't stop there, file a lawsuit. How will the state look with all these lawsuits coming from prisoners. We need to stick together brothers. Together we stand, divided we fall. ★

...Continued from previous page

...Gender

as well (especially in prison) due to their identity, as are gays and bis. A 2012 *Black & Pink* newsletter published 43 photos of trans wimmin murdered by hate criminals. This number represented only a tiny fraction of the total number of murders of trans people as the result of hate in the u.s.

From an international perspective, the u.s. cannot be excluded from the global battlefield. The transitioning comrade in Pennsylvania should note that MIM(Prisons) never said they were against SRS/hormone therapy, nor did they derogate that particular struggle. They simply said it isn't part of their global perspective on anti-imperialist struggle. This is hardly a disparaging or anti-trans position.

MIM(Prisons) adds: We appreciate this comrade expanding on what we wrote in *ULK 31*. We stand by our point: "In the article this prisoner criticizes, we wrote that we do not fight for sex reassignment surgery in the same way we don't fight for gay marriage, because both amount to further privileges for people already benefiting from imperialism. We could equate these struggles with the fight to get more women in executive positions in companies, or the fight to get a Black man in the white house. They represent steps forward in equality for Blacks, wimmin, gays and trans people in reaping imperialist spoils of war and gender oppression on Third World peoples. These struggles do not help advance the fight against imperialism, to liberate the Third World peoples." And as we explained in *ULK 12*, the U.S. health care system is not in the best interests of Americans, but on the whole they still have access to far superior care than most people in the world. So to struggle to improve U.S. health care strengthens imperialism, while ending AIDS drug monopolies challenges imperialism.

We agree with this writer that we should not ignore those facing particularly brutal gender oppression in the First World. The murder of trans people, and violence against anyone for sexual orientation or gender identity, is objectively reactionary and is a product of patriarchal imperialism. This violence is just one of many reasons why those facing this gender oppression should be on the side of the anti-imperialist struggle, fighting for a world free of gender oppression. ★

FREE POLITICAL BOOKS

Under Lock & Key is free to all prisoners. MIM(Prisons) also runs a Books for Prisoners Program through which we mail prisoners political theory and history books and magazines in exchange for political work. Prisoners requesting books need to tell us what work you want to do, or just send in the articles, artwork, poetry, report on a study group you formed, etc. For many prisoners, the easiest way to start is by becoming a *ULK* Field Correspondent (see page 12). When requesting books it is best to ask for general topic areas and let us send you whatever we have on hand.

Our Books for Prisoners Program relies on donations of books and money. If you have any contacts on the outside who can donate to our program, or who can hook us up with dictionaries, Mao or Lenin, or other political books, please tell them to contact us at the address on page 1.

MIM(Prisons) Responds to Turning the Tide Continuing Misrepresentation

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
April 2013

In the April 2013 issue of *Turning the Tide* (TTT), the editor, MN (who we assume is Michael Novick, the author of the original article in question), responded to a letter that a United Struggle from Within comrade wrote criticizing an article in the previous TTT issue which misrepresented the MIM political line in a critique of MIM(Prisons). (see *ULK* 31) The editor claims that they are happy that this article provoked quite a few responses and that they want to promote debate because "this is a contradiction among the people." This is a correct attitude, which unfortunately is not backed up by the TTT editor's response, which is embarrassing in its blatant misrepresentation and misinformation about the MIM line. It is very difficult to carry out debate to resolve contradictions among the people if the people involved are not serious about political study.

The first critique the editor makes of the MIM line this time around is "in its staunch defense of the significance of the contradiction between oppressor and oppressed nations, and its doctrinaire reliance on its version of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, it petrifies all other contradictions and the flow of history." The MIM line in question, which MIM(Prisons) upholds, holds that the oppressor vs. oppressed nations contradiction is principal at this point in history, but not that it will always be so. And further, the MIM line puts much work into illuminating the gender and class contradictions. In fact, it has pushed forward the political understanding of class more than any other contemporary revolutionary organization by noting that the changing class nature of the imperialist country population has resulted in a primarily petty bourgeois population. The TTT editor writes about workers: "we have stakes and ties in the very system that oppresses and exploits us" a line s/he claims comes from Lenin, denying that anything might have changed since Lenin's day. On this point it is actually TTT that is dogmatic in its view of contradictions and the flow of history by refusing to study the true nature of the imperialist country working class.

The TTT editor goes on to misrepresent the MIM line writing "...by classifying all working people within the US as 'oppressor nation petty-bourgeois labor aristocrats' [MIM] disarms those who have the capacity to break both their chains and their identification with and links to the Empire." This is such a blatant mistake we have to assume TTT has not bothered to read any of the MIM theory on nation. MIM line is very clear that "oppressor nation petty-bourgeois" are just that: white nation people. There is also a sizable oppressed nation petty-bourgeois population within U.S. borders, and we see their class interest as tied with imperialism, but we identify their national interests as anti-imperialist. And this national contradiction is internal to imperialism.

Finally the TTT editor goes into some convolutions to try to explain how the majority of the

U.S. population is exploited but maybe just not super-exploited because "no private employer hires a worker unless they're pretty damn sure the work that worker does will make the boss more money than the boss has to pay for the work." By this definition, we can assume that the top layers of management of huge corporations are exploited in their six figure salaries (or even 7 figure salaries!). TTT doesn't even attempt to make a scientific analysis of where to draw the line on who is exploited, and since MIM(Prisons) and MIM before us has done extensive work on this we will not bother to explain it again here. We refer serious readers to our publications on the labor aristocracy.

In the contortions to justify calling the Amerikan population exploited, the TTT editor asks "If the domestic population is totally bribed and benefiting from Empire to the exclusion of any contradiction" when why are gulags necessary? That's a fine straw-persyn argument, but it's not a line that MIM(Prisons) takes. We have written extensively about the role of prisons in the U.S. population as a tool of social control of the oppressed nations, highlighting internal contradictions that include nation among others. Again, it seems TTT has not bothered to read even the single-page description of MIM(Prisons) that we publish in every issue of *Under Lock & Key*.

The TTT editor concludes by asking a myriad of very good questions about nations and their inter-relations, all of which the MIM line has addressed in a consistent way, and for the most part a way that it seems the TTT editor would agree with, if s/he had bothered to read up on that line. The supposed rigid and dogmatic line of MIM/MIM(Prisons) is all in the heads of the TTT writers and editors who seem to think our line comes from just a few slogans. We agree that "Revolutionary strategy must be based on a concrete analysis of concrete conditions, not arbitrary, fixed categories, to determine friends and enemies." And we challenge TTT to take

up this concrete analysis. Read our work on the labor aristocracy and on nations, and tell us specifically where you find our concrete analysis lacking or in error. We welcome such dialogue, but the revolutionary movement doesn't have time for slander and false accusations in the guise of political debate.

The last point we will make here is related to a letter TTT published in this same issue, from a prisoner who goes by "Ruin." Ruin wrote to say that s/he shares the TTT views about MIM(Prisons)'s ideological shortcomings and is upset because s/he was kicked out of our study group. We are happy that Ruin has found an organization with which s/he has unity. In fact in previous letters to h, where we pointed out our theoretical disagreements, we suggested other organizations that might be more closely aligned with h views. We run study groups for prisoners who want to work with MIM(Prisons) in both political study and organizing. We stand by the letter we sent to Ruin (which TTT printed) where we explain that it is not a good use of our time to include people in our advanced study groups who disagree with us on many fundamental issues. Ruin told us the first study group was a waste of h time, and that s/he doesn't agree with us on many things, so we're not even sure why Ruin would take issue with our decision that s/he should not continue into the advanced study group. We did not suggest that we would discontinue Ruin's free subscription to *ULK* or that we would stop responding to h letters; it was Ruin who chose to sever all ties and discussion with MIM(Prisons) after receiving our letter about the study group.

Criticism is hard to take, but it is something we in the revolutionary movement must handle in a direct manner, without letting persynal feelings get in the way. It is also important to know when two lines have diverged significantly enough that those lines should be in separate organizations. History will tell which political line is correct.★

An Open Letter to Maoist and Revolutionary Organizations

by MIM(Prisons)
April 2013

The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons (MIM(Prisons)), a communist organization in the United States which formed out of the legacy of the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM), announces support for and echoes the urgency of the main ideas in the below statement from the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement (RAIM). In particular, we recognize the importance of fighting First Worldism, which incorrectly identifies the petty bourgeoisie of the imperialist countries as a part of the international proletariat. First Worldism has played an important role in undermining the building of socialism worldwide. A correct class analysis is critical to all successful revolutionary movements.

MIM(Prisons) refrains from being an outright signatory of this statement because of what

it leaves out. In this dialogue within the International Communist Movement (ICM), we would add that we do not see the legacy of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) as a positive one. As the original MIM pointed out over the many years since the formation of the RIM, it was always a force for revisionism rather than a force for revolution. Revolutionary parties seeking to re-establish the RIM should take heed of the mistakes that were inherent in the RIM design and political line from the start. There is no value in resurrecting a revisionist organization.

Further, we challenge our comrades in Maoist organizations around the world to examine closely what Mao wrote back in 1943 on the question of dissolving the International. We do not believe that conditions have changed since that time so that a new International will be a

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positive development. Instead we uphold the original MIM position that "The world's communist parties should compare notes and sign joint declarations, but there are no situations where a party should submit to international discipline through a world party. Where various Maoist parties from different nationalities have the same goal, they will then coordinate their actions in joint struggle. This will occur in the case of the united states when several nationalities come to exert joint dictatorship over it. Of course there will be some form of temporary organizational discipline at international conferences, but such discipline should not extend to what gets done in the various countries by the various Maoist parties." ("Resolutions on Vanguard Organizing." 1995 MIM Congress.)

From the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement: [This letter has been co-signed by the Turkish group, İstirakî, and the pan-Indigenous web-project, Onkwehón:we Rising. To co-sign this important international document, email raim-d@hush.com]

Recently the Communist Party of Italy (Maoist) called for the convening of an international meeting of Maoist organizations. This call comes some years after the RIM collapsed following the development of evident revisionism within two of its leading organizations, the RCP-USA and the UCPN.

Comrades! Let us carry out and celebrate the firm break with the revisionism emanating from the leadership of the RCP-USA and the UCPN. In doing so, let us reaffirm our defining points of unity based on the experience of class struggle and distilled into Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

These include:

1. All of history is the result of the development of the means of production and the struggle between classes over their ownership and use.
2. Under capitalism, labor is utilized for the sake of profit. Capital is accumulated surplus labor turned against the masses of workers.
3. That capitalist-imperialism entails the indirect and direct exploitation of the majority of people by dominant monopoly capital and reveals widening contradictions inherent in capitalism.
4. The only alternative to the continued barbarism of imperialism is the struggle for socialism and communism. Broadly speaking, people's wars and united fronts are the most immediate, reliable means to struggle for communism.
5. Socialism entails the forceful seizure of power by the proletariat. However, socialism is not the end of the struggle. Under socialism, the conditions exist for the development of a 'new bourgeoisie' which will seek to establish itself as a new ruling class. In order to counter this tendency, class struggle must be waged relentlessly under socialism through the development of communism.

These are points all Maoists can agree on. Yet these do not capture all significant features of today's world.

Comrades! A discourse and struggle over the nature of class under imperialism is sorely needed.

The Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement puts forward a line that includes the understanding that a majority section of the populations of imperialist countries are embourgeoisified. This embourgeoisification often contours around national oppression cast in the history of colonialism and settler-colonialism. It is most wholly construed, however, as an ongoing global distinction between parasitic workers in imperialist core economies and exploited workers in the vast Third World periphery.

Though understandings of this split in the working class was popularized as the 'labor-aristocracy' by Lenin, the phenomenon itself was first noted by Friedrich Engels in a letter to Karl Marx:

"[T]he English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that the ultimate aim of this most bourgeois of all nations would appear to be the possession, alongside the bourgeoisie, of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat. In the case of a nation which exploits the entire world this is, of course, justified to some extent."

With some exceptions, Marxists have focused and debated primarily on the ideological effects of the controversial 'theory of the labor aristocracy.' Unfortunately, less attention has been paid to the economic dimensions of the 'labor aristocracy.'

Within the imperialist world-economy, First World workers (a minority of workers in the world) receive compensation which exceeds the monetary rate of the full value of labor. In effect, First World workers are a section of the petty-bourgeoisie due to the fact that they consume a greater portion of social labor than they concretely expend. This difference is made up with the super-exploitation of Third World workers. Because prices (including those of labor power) deviate from values, this allows First World firms to obtain profits at equivalent rates while still paying 'their' workers a wage above the full monetary rate of labor value. The First World workers' compensation above the monetary rate of the full labor value is also an investment, i.e., a structural means of by which surplus value is saturated and concentrated in the core at the expense of the periphery.

The structural elevation of First World workers also has strong implications for the struggle for communism.

One of the most dangerous and devastatingly popular misconceptions is that social and political reforms can raise the material standard of living for Third World workers up to the level enjoyed by First World workers.

The illusion that Third World peoples can 'catch up' with imperialist countries through various reforms is objectively aided by the common yet false First Worldist belief that First World workers are exploited as a class.



If, as the First Worldist line states, First Worlder workers have attained high wages through reformist class struggle and advanced technology, then Third World workers should be able to follow a similar route towards a capitalism modeled after 'advanced capitalist countries.' By claiming that a majority of First Worlders are exploited proletarians, First Worldism creates the illusion that all workers could create a similar deal for themselves without overturning capitalism. By obscuring the fundamental relationship between imperialist exploitation of Third World workers and embourgeoisification of First World workers, First Worldism actually serves to hinder the tide of proletarian revolution internationally.

Another long-term implication of the global division of workers is the ecological consequences of the inflated petty-bourgeois lifestyles enjoyed by the world's richest 15-20%. First World workers currently consume and generate waste at a far greater rate than is ecologically sustainable. The First Worldist line, which effectively states First World workers should have even greater capacity to consume under a future socialism (that is, First Worldists believe First Worlders are entitled to an even greater share of social product than they currently receive), has obvious utopian qualities which can only misguide the proletariat over the long term.

It is safe to say that First Worldism is the root cause of the problems associated with the Revolutionary Communist Party-USA (RCP-USA) and the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN).

The RCP-USA, desiring some positive significance to offset its terminal failure to organize what it sees as a U.S. proletariat, chose to intervene in various international issues. This typically occurred to the disservice of the proletarian struggle. Now the RCP-USA heavily promotes Bob Avakian and his 'New Synthesis.'

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This 'New Synthesis' is better described as an old bag of revisionisms. Today, the RCP-USA, Bob Avakian, and his revisionist 'New Synthesis' is a distraction from many of the important issues facing the international proletariat.

The UCPN has given up the path of global socialism and communism. It has instead sought to conciliate and collude with imperialism in hopes of achieving conditions for class-neutral development. It foolishly assumes monopoly capital will allow it [to] be anything but 'red' compradors or that Nepal will become anything other than a source of super-exploited labor. The UCPN has abrogated the task of constructing an independent economic base and socialist foreign policy. It has instead embarked hand-in-hand with monopoly capital on a path they wrongly believe will lead to progressive capitalist development.

Through the examples set forth by both the RCP-USA and the UCPN, it is evident how First Worldism corrupts even nominal Maoists into becoming promulgators of the most backwards revisionisms. The RCP-USA is deceptive and wrong in its claim that it is organizing a U.S. proletariat. In reality it wrecks the international communist movement for the sake of the U.S. petty-bourgeois masses. The UCPN, whose leadership falsely believes capitalist development will bring positive material effects for the masses of Nepal, has abandoned the struggle for socialism and communism. The RCP-USA claims to represent what it wrongly describes as an exploited U.S. proletariat. The UCPN takes great inspiration in the level of material wealth attained by what it wrongly assumes to be an exploited First World proletariat.

Comrades! Our analysis must start with the questions, "Who are our enemies? Who are our friends?" These questions must be answered foremost in the structural sense (i.e., how do groups fundamentally relate to the process of capital accumulation), secondly in the historical sense (i.e., what can history tell us about

such class divisions and their implications for today), and lastly in a political sense, (i.e., given what we know about the complex nature of class structures of modern imperialism, how can we best organize class alliances so as to advance the revolutionary interests of the proletariat at large).

First Worldism is a fatal flaw. It is both a hegemonic narrative within the 'left' and a trademark of reformism, revisionism, and chauvinism. Unfortunately, First Worldism is all-too-common within international Maoism.

Comrades! The consistent struggle against First Worldism is an extension of the communist struggle against both social chauvinism and the theory of the productive forces. As such, it is the duty of all genuine Communists to struggle against First Worldism.

Comrades! First Worldism has already done enough damage to our forces internationally. Now is the time to struggle against First Worldism and decisively break with the errors of the past.

The importance of knowing "who are our enemies" and "who are our friends" never goes away. Instead, those who fail in these understandings are prone to wider deviations. Gone unchecked, First Worldism sets back the struggle for communism.

Comrades! We hope the topics of class under imperialism and the necessity of the struggle against First Worldism come up as specific points of future discussion within and between Maoist organizations. The raising of these questions and the firm refutation of First Worldism will mark a qualitative advance for international communism.

Death to imperialism!

Long live the victories of people's wars!

Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement★

Fighting Censorship in Illinois

by an Illinois prisoner
September 2012

On 3 October 2011 I was notified by prison authorities that I had received the September/October 2011 No. 22 issue of *Under Lock & Key (ULK)* in the mail. I was further notified that I could not have *ULK* because it is banned throughout the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). I grieved this unconstitutional banning of *ULK* since IDOC cannot validate its claim that *ULK* is a threat to security. On 27 July 2012 I filed a Section 1983 Civil Suit against the director of IDOC, S.A. Godinez.

This lawsuit is based on the grounds that IDOC cannot substantiate the banning of *ULK* and that the banning of *ULK* violates my Constitutional Rights to:

- 1) Receive and own reading material;
- 2) Have freedom of speech; and
- 3) Have freedom of political expression.

In further news, on 16 August 2012 another prisoner and I received a notice saying that we had received the July/August 2012 No. 27 issue of *ULK* in the mail and that we couldn't have it because *ULK* is banned. We are both currently in the second of three stages of the grievance procedure and will be filing a Class Action lawsuit within the next six months challenging the banning of *ULK*. This suit will merge with my already existing one.

MIM(Prisons) responds: The comrade above has not received an issue of *Under Lock & Key* since November 2011. Appealing the censorship and going through the grievance procedure will often successfully get you the mail that the authorities are attempting to deny. If that doesn't work, we need to be prepared to take the censors to court when possible.

Unfortunately, due to our very limited resources, it is very difficult for us to offer legal assistance directly on your case. Instead we run the Prisoners' Legal Clinic in an attempt to empower and encourage our subscribers to do their best putting together and filing their case on their own. Recently another comrade offered legal services to help fight censorship in Illinois, which is not just an ongoing problem for the author of this Civil Suit. We are attempting to facilitate this anti-censorship battle and push it to a head. Remember to send in your censorship documentation and status updates on your anti-censorship grievances and cases so we can publicize them on our website.★

We have repeatedly addressed similar situations in the past, stressing that the physical safety of both prisoners and staff at facilities where prisoners study Maoism and work with MIM(Prisons) has only improved to date.(1) Meanwhile, according to U.S. law, it is still illegal for the state to censor political speech, affiliation or association because they find it disagreeable.★

Note: We Want Peace, They Want Security. Under Lock & Key 7, March 2009.

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 this issue of *ULK*.

MIM Investigated as STG in Florida

by USW 360 of United Struggle from Within
April 2013

It has recently been brought to my attention by the Security Threat Group (STG) coordinator at this Correctional Institution that the Maoist Internationalist Movement (MIM) and cells thereof is/are currently pending STG classification in the Florida Department of Corrections. As a result all MIM publications will be subject to censorship as "STG material," the possession of being punishable by disciplinary action/confinement.

I am discontinuing my subscription(s) as well as correspondence due to the coordinator's interview as mentioned above.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We are still gathering information on this situation in Florida. We have seen a complete blackout of our literature to select individuals, but not the overall population.

- 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.

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 Political Books for Prisoners Program.

FUNDING NEEDED TO FULFILL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Each copy of *ULK* costs about \$1 to print and mail. Even if you don't have much, send us a few stamps whenever you can. Get your people on the outside to send stamps as well. If you can donate regularly, sign up to be a *ULK* Sustainer. We'll send you reminders when your pledge is due, and give you first priority for literature requests. Just tell us how much you can donate per issue of *ULK*. You can pay at each issue, or all up front.

IMPORTANT: We can no longer accept checks or money orders made out to "MIM Distributors." Becoming a *ULK* Sustainer is the best option for those who can only donate by check or money order. When it is time to send in your pledge by check, we will send you instructions on how to do that.

END SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

The California Council and MIM(Prisons) have drafted our recommended demands for prisoners to adopt related to the July 8 California statewide action to protest solitary confinement and promote peace (see page 6). Prisoners in other states are encouraged to draft demands for their prison's administrators and wardens, and participate in the action where they're at.

DAY OF PEACE AND SOLIDARITY

In remembrance of the Attica uprising of 1971, start organizing now with people in your facility for the 2nd annual day of peace and solidarity on September 9, 2013. From midnight to midnight, prisoners are encouraged to fast and spend the entire day networking and organizing for long-term peace between prisoners, based on the principles of the United Front for Peace in Prisons (see page 2).

UPDATE CONTROL UNITS STATISTICS

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. Much of this data came directly from prisoners themselves. Help keep it updated by writing to MIM(Prisons) at the address on page 1 to get a survey for your state.

NEVADA PETITION FOR ADEQUATE FOOD

SAMAEI launched this campaign to address the inadequate, contaminated and sometimes non-existent food being served to prisoners in **Nevada**. Write in to get a copy of this petition (for NV comrades only).

WE DEMAND OUR GRIEVANCES ARE ADDRESSED

If you are experiencing any problems with your grievance process, such as delays or unanswered grievances, you should join this campaign. Petitions are available for **Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, Oklahoma, and Texas**. Write in to get the petition for your state. If your prison's policies allow, donate stamps or envelopes to your comrades inside to mail out the petition. If you can't make your

own copies, 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 just 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 send MIM(Prisons) copies of your censorship documents for denied issues of *Under Lock & Key* and other mail from MIM Distributors. Also, always file grievances and appeals for your censored mail.

Comrades in **Illinois** have stepped up to help fight the ban on MIM literature that is ongoing at several facilities in that state. IL subscribers should be sure to tell us what mail you're getting, and not, from us!

BECOME A ULK FIELD CORRESPONDENT

If you've written us a letter, then you have all the skills you need to become a *ULK* Field Correspondent. When reporting on conditions, details are good, but keep it short. Not only does someone have to type your article, 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.

SURVEY ON VALIDATION & CENSORSHIP IN CALIFORNIA

This survey questionnaire is for the purpose of making a qualitative assessment of the CDCR's mail policies and practices in relation to prisoners and our families' First Amendment constitutional right to send and receive mail and our 14th Amendment constitutional right to be provided with adequate notice of the reasons for our mail being stopped or disallowed. The data gathered from this survey will be utilized as material evidence in an ongoing case aimed at obtaining a permanent injunction in court. The injunction would enjoin CDCR's Prison Intelligence Unit (PIU) and Institutional Gang Investigators (IGI) from arbitrarily accusing prisoners, our families and law abiding citizens of the free community of promoting gang activity via the mail that prisoners are sending to and receiving from our families and members of the free community. A permanent injunction will only be granted upon a showing of irreparable harm and when the constitutional violation is proven to be of a systemic nature. California prisoners, write to:

Legal Services for Prisoners With Children
c/o Attorney Carol Strickman
Re: First Amendment Campaign
1540 Market St., Suite 490
San Francisco, CA 94102

Texas Prisoners Fight Injustice on Multiple Fronts

Grievance Victories are Won Through Unity

by a Texas prisoner
March 2013

I would like to inform you of a small but major win for your comrades who have recently joined you over at the Jordan Unit. I was on that unit two years. The entire time I was there I listened to people tell me how they fought the rec issues there constantly to no avail. This was my first flaw; I believed we could not win.

I realized this two years later when I was moved to another wing where the conditions were worse. This prompted a totally different response out of me. I researched the policies myself along with the prior grievances others had filed. I learned several things. One was that we were dealing with tyrants, and two, the people who were filing grievances had been ill-informed and were not formatting them appropriately. Their information was jumbled, they failed to utilize policy numbers, etc. This allowed the administration to play the crazy card.

Long story short, myself and three others went to different individuals educating them on what was and had been going on so that they understood. We got every grievance signed and dropped, and we organized two demonstrations. In one protest we converged on the rec yard simultaneously as a show of solidarity, and once told to disperse we dispersed into smaller groups simultaneously, and once told to disperse again, we went back to what we were doing.

The importance of these steps is to allow the administration to understand: 1) We are together, united on this issue, all peoples, all races; 2) We are structured; and 3) We are willing to follow orders. This is the reason for converging, breaking down into smaller groups, and then dismantling.

The second demonstration was an intentional 23-hour lockdown that drew the administration out to talk to us personally. We learned the policies they were leaning on, and their intended avenue of grievance, and in less than 45 days our first wave of grievances came back denied. And as they said they would do, they took their avenue of defense. But within one more week our last grievance succeeded, and two years of problems were settled in less than 45 days with the appropriate initiative.

There were things I felt could have been handled differently when I look back, but this is the first of many fights to come. The battle cry is far from over. I'm at a new place now, and we will see what experiences are to come. The grievance process as we all know is not always a working thing. How could it be? So in my eyes it is only a method of exhaustion when applicable. So we use it, not only for our benefit but for the benefit of all those who stand beside us in the fight no matter what parts they play because they may not be as informed.

50 Texas Prisoners Sign Grievance Petition

by a Texas prisoner
April 2013

I'm writing to let you know that I used the petition that you sent me. I sent it to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Board, on a Grievance Step 1, and attached 50 signatures to it. About 80 to 100 prisoners wanted to sign, but due to the fear of retaliation and abusive and frivolous disciplinary cases they did not all sign. But these 50 prisoners signed voluntarily and have all had problems with the grievance department for lack of responses by the grievance investigator. If I am put in lockup for retaliation I am going to be happy because I tried.

MIM(Prisons) adds: Inspired by the California petition for the proper handling of grievances, comrades in Texas made a petition specific to their state. Our ability to fairly have our grievances handled is directly related to preventing arbitrary repression for people who stand up for their rights or attempt to do something positive. To get a copy of the Texas petition, or one for your state, write to MIM(Prisons). If we do not yet have a petition for your state, we will send you a generic one and you can do the legal research to customize it. ★

The main thing I learned is that the big fight is not our petty battles, but the fight we wage with ourselves. I met many people who could give 1000s of excuses why we couldn't win and not one reason we could. There are those who even believed that they deserved to be treated with no respect because they are incarcerated. And all I could think is, "Wow! How do we get to that point in our minds?"

So to all those that stood by in the fight I send one message: The fight must go on. It must continue even in the face of adversity, partiality, difference, and wanton tyrannical practices. This is the only thing that is certain. And that certainty is found in necessity of sacrifice. There are no exceptions, not for me, not for you, not for anyone. Prepare to give it all every single time until it becomes practice, and hope for an inch. Because unfortunately this is usually how it is gained, one inch at a time. And when we begin to see far enough, we realize that our fights were not to reap immediate benefits, but an investment in tomorrow. Our jobs are simply to keep the fight alive so that someone, anyone, may receive a return on the investment.

MIM(Prisons) adds: We agree with this comrade's message of the importance of unity, and the reality that we can only expect to win small victories through our day-to-day battles. We know that the grievance system in Texas and elsewhere is set up to defeat prisoners' complaints. But the USW campaign to demand our grievances be addressed is helping with small battles like those described by this prisoner. At the same time, we must keep in mind that these

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Fighting for Food: Grievance Strategy Response to ULK 31

by a Texas prisoner
April 2013

In *Under Lock & Key 31*, a comrade from Lewis H/S here in Texas wrote about being fed two small corndogs and five prunes for lunch. Here at the Telford unit in Texas we are on unit lockdown at the time, and matter of fact today we were fed two small corndogs and a very small portion of raisins. But this is quite common during lockdown on all units. To our comrade at Lewis H/S, if it's a regular meal you were referring to, then a grievance will work just right. But like a grievance officer here once told us: "You file one or two grievances and they will not do nothing. But get people together and file fifteen or more, and you will get some action."

Here we were having problems with our regular and diet meals. Well a fellow prisoner stepped up and filed a grievance on both regular and diet meals. As we can see, he was willing to fight not only for himself, but for others as well. He needed some signatures. Many in Ad-Seg openly admitted being afraid of retaliation. We still got 46 strong to sign, but only after argument among ourselves. Two weeks later our portions were doubled. But that was only on the pod that filed the grievance.

I don't remember exactly, but according to the grievance we are supposed to be fed a certain amount of calories each meal. Which means that all that is served on our trays has to be measured by weight. Maybe there is a comrade out there somewhere who knows the right amount and can tell us.

Administration does get scared when a large group joins hands. And as we know, there are

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Bleeding Eyes

by a North Carolina prisoner

My eyes bleed of day to day oppressing
I sit and think where the war began
Is it prisoner on prisoner?
Or is it the deception my eyes hold full of blood
And pain asking questions like will we all get along
And realize it's something been took every day that pass
Will anyone hear the cry of the real POWs
Or will I look in another brother's eyes only
To hear a threat that will lead to this
Administration patting each other on the back
With words saying "now that is what we need"
Another POW lost his life September 2012
Rest in peace Comrade, forever you will be
Known as a brother fighting to see freedom
This day to day oppressing we only hurting
Each other with tears full of pain and suffering
Prisoners of war, I am truly my brothers'
and Sisters' keeper. Knowledge Knowledge.

Playaz Unidos Crean Paz en las Calles

por MIM(Prisiones)

Enero 2012

traducido por un@ prisoner@ en California

En la edición ULK 24, hemos destacado Playaz Unidos de San Francisco, California, para darle a nuestros camaradas adentro una idea de lo que alguna gente que estuvo encarcelada ha estado haciendo luego de alcanzar su libertad para contribuir al movimiento de paz. Muchos miembros y voluntarios de Playaz Unidos (UP por sus siglas en Inglés, N.T.), han pasado tiempo en el sistema de prisiones. MIM(Prisiones) tuvo la oportunidad de entrevistar a Rico, uno de los miembros del personal, quien estuvo 25 años en la prisión de California. Rico era pandillero pero se convirtió en abogado de paz, un cambio de vida con el que muchos lectores de Under Lock & Key se pueden identificar.

Playaz Unidos provee servicios a la juventud, incluyendo programas extra curriculares y excursiones a las prisiones, en un intento de separarlos de la tubería que conduce de la escuela a la prisión, (y del potencial para) actividades violentas, ayudándolos a enfocarse en su educación. La misión de UP declara:

Playaz Unidos es una organización de prevención de violencia y liderazgo juvenil que trabaja con la juventud mas difícil de alcanzar de San Francisco a través de manejo individualizado de casos, intervención en las calles, servicios en las escuelas, actividades recreacionales en centros comunitarios, y apoyo a la juventud encarcelada. Playaz Unidos está comprometida con el mejorar las vidas de jóvenes, que sobreviviendo en ambientes vulnerables, muestran una alta incidencia de vagancia y bajo desempeño académico, o quienes han estado envueltos en el sistema juvenil de justicia a través de servicio directo y colaboración comunitaria. Playas Unidos cree que "Se necesita al barrio para salvar al Barrio."

Rico explica como se involucro inicialmente con Playaz Unidos:

En 1994 estaba encarcelado en la prisión estatal de San Quentin. Y en ese tiempo Rudy [El Director Ejecutivo de UP] estaba trabajando con juventud perturbada y juventud que estaba involucrada en el sistema juvenil, demostrándoles los resultados de tomar malas decisiones. Y ahí conocí a Rudy. Y Rudy me observó trabajando con la juventud, y luego de informarse que yo residía en la zona en que él vivía, me dijo: "Cuando te suelten quiero que conozcas nuestro programa y mires si quieres trabajar con los Playaz Unidos." En el 2005 finalmente salí de la prisión después de 25 años de cárcel y primero me ofrecí de voluntario. Y luego cuando hubo una vacante de trabajo, Rudy me dio empleo de CRN, en la Red Comunitaria de Respuesta. Es un empleo en el cual salimos de noche a hacer asistencia pública y conducimos alrededor de la ciudad platicando con la juventud que está en la calle.

MIM(Prisons) le pregunto a Rico acerca de la importancia de construir un Frente Unida por

la Paz en las Prisiones, y por los obstáculos que enfrentaríamos con ese esfuerzo.

En el 1982 formamos una protesta mientras yo estaba en San Quentin: Sabes, los prisioneros tenían derechos. Teníamos el derecho de ver nuestros familiares cuando venían a vernos. Teníamos el derecho a una educación, teníamos muchos derechos. Pero lentamente nos los quitaron, y ahora los prisioneros no tienen derechos. Si quieres una visita, tienes que trabajar. Si no trabajas, no recibes visita.

Los asiáticos, Latinos, los Afro-Americanos, los anglos, nos reunimos y dijimos, "¿sabe que? sentémonos. Que nadie trabaje, nadie estudie, nada." La prisión depende del prisionero. Por que hay trabajos allí, que requieren un empleo de \$35,000 al año, pero que el prisionero haga por \$18 al mes. Así que ahorran todo el dinero usando prisioneros para el mantenimiento del sistema de prisiones, verdad? Así que cuando nos sentamos, cuando paramos el trabajo, nos entregaron lo que queríamos y luego todo regreso a la normalidad.

Siempre hay incidentes en la prisión, prisioneros lastimándose el uno al otro, pero ese es un buen ejemplo del dicho - juntos nos paramos, divididos nos caemos. ¿Sabes? Si estamos unidos mucha violencia aquí adentro disminuirá, ¿verdad? Por que la gente adentro, predicaran paz allá afuera. Y mucha juventud que hace mal aquí, está influenciada por prisioneros. Pero ahorita no hay paz. No hay paz.

Bueno, si hay [organización por paz y unidad en prisión] pero lo tienes que hacer por debajo porque la administración de la prisión no quiere que te organizes y trates de traer paz. En prisión nos quieren divididos. Sabes lo que digo? Así que hay maneras en las que nos podemos organizar, pero tiene que ser por debajo.

Es ridículo que prisioneros tengan que mantener en secreto sus pláticas acerca de no matarse, para no disturbar los cheques de pago de la administración de la prisión. Pero este no es el único suceso anti-personal que viene de la evolución del sistema criminal de injusticia, el cual está diseñado para proteger al capitalismo y su amado motivo de ganancia. Rico explica algunas de las consecuencias al decidir quien se queda adentro y quien se queda por fuerza en una sociedad capitalista.

Si tratas a un reo como animal, cuando salga va a actuar como animal. Me explico: una vez yo estaba en una unidad de segregación, en el hoyo. Allí vi un hombre que era tan violento que no podía estar con los demás, verdad? Era tiempo de que lo soltaran. Así que cuando lo dejaron ir lo esposaron afuera del edificio, al otro lado del patio, en una van, ¿verdad? Y lo dejaron afuera.

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Cuando lo soltaron le quitaron las esposas, y le dijeron: "estas libre." ¿Como podemos ayudar a alguien así, en su regreso a la libertad? Si es tan violento adentro que necesita que este segregado, ¿como pueden soltar a alguien así? Si comete un crimen acá afuera, se refleja en los otros reos. Así tienen el poder de decir, "¿ven lo que pasa cuando soltamos a estos muchachos?"

Pero hay hombres allá adentro que están mejor que yo - que pueden hacer mejor de lo que yo hago aquí, y aún así todavía están encarcelados, por la política. Hay muchos de ellos, muchos. Conozco varios personalmente que deberían de haber salido y que pueden contribuir acá afuera para lograr la paz. ¿Cómo podemos liberarlos?

Nuestra respuesta a la pregunta de Rico, es que la única manera de librar a esos reos, del todo, es organizarse por el socialismo y luego el comunismo. Cualquier reforma que le hagamos al sistema de prisiones tal como es hoy podría ocasionar que algunos reos, pero mientras el capitalismo exista personas serán explotadas y oprimidas. Esto conduce a la resistencia, directa y indirecta y la prisión es para la gente que no cumple con las reglas. En el socialismo, todos tienen un papel que ocupar en la sociedad y la opresión de estado solamente se usa contra aquellos que agobian a otros.

Cuando el sistema económico cambie y valore a la gente sobre la utilidad, las prisiones también cambiarán. En la China de Mao, Allyn y Adele Rickett eran dos espías americanos quienes escribieron un libro titulado "Reos de Liberación" sobre su experiencia como reos del Partido Comunista de China. Su experiencia les enseñó que cuando el reo se critica así mismo y está preparado para contribuir a la sociedad, serán liberados. Por otro lado, cuando reos continúan el daño a la sociedad (como organizándose para re-instituir un sistema económico capitalista) no se les permite la salida simplemente por que su sentencia se les venció. En su lugar se les aconseja que estudien, lean, discutan, y que su critiquen a si mismos hasta que se conviertan en miembros productivos de la sociedad.

Cualquiera con un hueso compasivo en su cuerpo puede decir que lo que paso en la China de Mao es un modo más eficiente de encarcelamiento al que tenemos hoy en día. La diferencia entre los liberales y MIM(Prisiones) es que sabemos que la única manera de llegar ahí, es a través de la revolución socialista para que el sistema de prisiones se ponga en las manos de aquellos que son agobiados.

Otro reto de hoy en día que discutimos con UP era su meta de alcanzar autosuficiencia financiera en el futuro. Rico nos explica las limitaciones que trae el recibir fondos del estado.

Si solo depende de nosotros, vamos a trabajar duro, y a luchar realmente por la paz. Pero porque los recursos vienen de DCYF [Departamento de niños Juventud y familia de San Francisco], ellos limitan nuestro movimiento. No podemos participar en demostraciones. Si hubiese una manifestación del

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movimiento Ocupar Ahora (Occupy Now), no podemos ir, porque se le prohíbe a nuestra organización, yo pienso que es importante estar allá afuera con la gente que pelea por el cambio. Cada año hacemos una caminata de Silencia la Violencia con Paz. Podemos hacer caminatas al estilo de Martin Luther King. Pero cuando se trata de presupuesto, crimen, y prisiones, demostraciones para acabar con esas cosas, no podemos participar.

Lo que ocurre afuera le puede afectar a la juventud en el futuro si las cosas no cambian. ¿Y porqué esperar a que envejezcan para exponerlos a marchas y a que peleen por sus derechos? Tu sabes que me encantaría de llevar a estos jóvenes a un movimiento como ese, por que eso les da sabiduría de la vida, que les enseña hay algo mas que pasar el tiempo en la calle. Pero desafortunadamente no estamos permitidos a participar en movimientos como ese.

Hemos aprendido de la historia que estas limitaciones financieras no exclusivas de UP. Para el sector sinánimo de lucro en los Estados Unidos, la "ayuda" similar brindada a países del

tercer mundo. Siempre asegura a los capitalistas que su dinero trabaje a favor de sus intereses. Es por esto que la "independencia" es uno de los puntos de unidad des Frente Unido por la Paz en Prisión. El dinero es demasiado fácil de adquirir en este país, mientras que revolucionarios efectivos son difíciles de encontrar. La liberación siempre ha sido energizada por la gente. Así que acordamos con Rico en la importancia de luchar por autonomía.

Hasta entonces, ciertamente se pueden tomar pasos positivos dentro de estas limitaciones. Hay muchos niveles en nuestro movimiento y muchos papeles por jugar en la construcción de la paz y unidad entre las masas. Y sin grupos como UP alcanzando a la juventud en las calles, esfuerzos como el de Frente Unido por la Paz en Prisiones sería muy limitado para tener éxito.

Para terminar, Rico comparte estas palabras con camaradas que se preparan para salir.

Lo único que puedo decir es que mientras estén vivo hay esperanza. Y si en verdad quiere ir a casa, haz lo debido, no importa lo que pase; y luchen por sus derechos. Tienen que

ayudarse el uno al otro y pensar en la paz, porque ustedes son necesarios acá afuera. La experiencia que tienen de la prisión, pueden salvar muchas vidas acá afuera, con sus hermanitos y hermanitas que buscan guía en alguien que haya vivido sus experiencias. Buena suerte, espero que salgan, y estén aquí y ayuden a cambiar a nuestro sistema en uno mejor.

Comparado a la vida en prision, como un "ciudadano libre" tienes mas libertad de organizarte, incluso, hasta en libertad condicional. Tu activismo no debería de terminar con tu sentencia de prisión. ★

United Playaz
1038 Howard St
San Francisco, CA 94103

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 significativa 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.

Reader Survey

Complete this reader survey and receive a free back issue of *Under Lock & Key* or other anti-imperialist pamphlet. We are trying to get a better picture of who reads *ULK* and what they find useful. We have also been doing research on the imprisoned lumpen class in general. By filling out this survey you can help us with both. We also have a more extensive economic survey that you can use to collect anonymous data about the people in your prison to help with our research. Just indicate below if you would like to become a survey proctor and help with this research. *If you already responded to this survey, please do not fill it out again. Instead, see p.12 for how to get free lit.*

1. How old are you? _____ years
2. Is this your first time in prison? YES or NO
3. How many years have you spent in prison total so far (incl. juvenile facilities)? _____ yrs.
4. What is the highest grade of education you've completed? (number for grade, or level for college, i.e. AA, BS, certificate, etc.) _____
5. Outside of prison, how many total years did you work at legal jobs that earned money? _____ years
6. Are you a U.S. citizen? YES or NO
7. What is your nationality (or "race")? _____
8. How long left on your current sentence? _____
9. What is your current housing/security status? (GP, SHU, etc.) _____
10. What is the best part of *ULK*? _____
11. What would you like more of in *ULK*? _____
12. Would you like to administer a more extended survey to those around you to help with our economic research? YES or NO
13. Other suggestions: _____

Return completed survey to:
MIM(Prisons) Reader Survey,
PO Box 40799 SF, CA 94140

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ATTENTION PRISONERS:

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

16

Under Lock & Key No. 32, May/June 2013

Taking Grievance Petitions to Next Level

by a California prisoner
April 2013

Thank y'all for sending me *ULK 30*. As always, it was easy, mind-broadening reading. Although I understand and accept the realities presented by your info, it is discouraging to see that we of this line of thought are the minority. As obvious as all of the societal contradictions, imbalances, and institutional hypocrisies are, the majority of people still hold on to the lie that Amerikkka is a fair, just, and free society. It's absurd and obscene.

I had filed a state court petition challenging the staff's abuse of the inmate appeal process here at California State Prison - Los Angeles County. The judge has issued an order for the prison officials to informally respond, and they in turn were granted an extension of time on responding. The good thing is that the petition was not summarily dismissed as is routine in the California state courts. Nevertheless, the facts, law, and evidence are strong in my claim. If given a fair shake in litigating I absolutely expect victory in the case.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade filed a state court petition in the same vein as the campaign for the proper addressing of grievances which is now three years strong. Many partici-

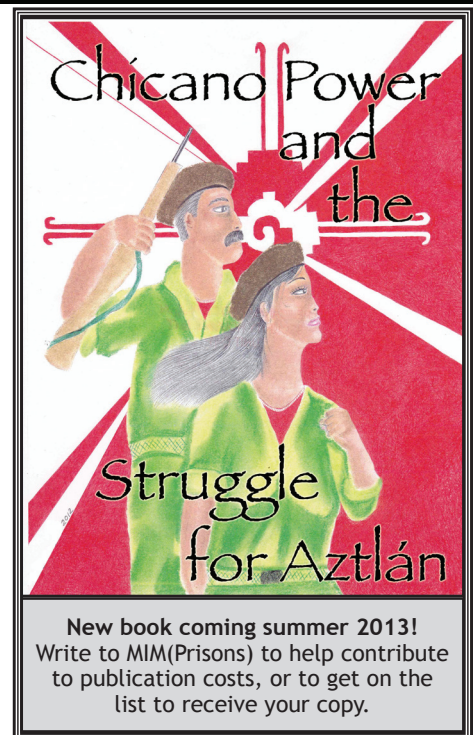
pants in this campaign are still circulating petitions in their facilities and mailing them to their respective wardens, prisoner support groups, etc. But others, like this comrade, have applied their knowledge of the legal system to push the campaign even further.

We hope the state court petition this comrade filed does have its fair shot at success in the courts, as these victories can contribute to the larger struggle of the oppressed in this country. Sadly, we know this is unlikely, and it is for the same reasons why Amerikans choose to ignore the "societal contradictions, imbalances, and institutional hypocrisies" we report on in *Under Lock & Key*. Even though all Amerikans have at least some general idea of the terrible things this country does across the world and within its own borders, they receive so many great things from being Amerikan that they are willing to accept and even back those actions. We are in the minority in this country. Rather than stay discouraged, we should do as this comrade does and take that as a cue that we need to work that much harder and with more creativity in order to pave the way for revolution. And always keep in mind that we are in the majority globally. ★

...Continued from page 13

...Victories

small victories are part of a larger battle against imperialism as a system. We can't expect to win that overnight, but we can build, and educate, like this comrade says, "as an investment in tomorrow." ★



...Continued from page 7

...Central America

Notes:

1. *The Christian Science Monitor Weekly*, 29 October 2012.
2. *Democracy Now!*, 19 April 2013.