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Publication of the Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons

Raise the Minimum Wage to \$2.50

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
December 2013

Recently the small town of SeaTac, Washington passed a ballot measure to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. Across the United States the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) labor union has led an effort to demand \$15 per hour for all fast food workers. For a 28 November 2013 strike, organizers said that there were demonstrations in over 100 cities.(1)

In 2014 the minimum wage will be going up in many states. Leading the way are Washington(\$9.32) and Oregon(\$9.10), with New York making the biggest jump to \$8.00 per hour. New York City was center to the recent fast food strikes. Meanwhile, Democrats in Congress have plans for a bill this year that would raise the federal minimum from \$7.25 to \$10.10 per hour.(2)

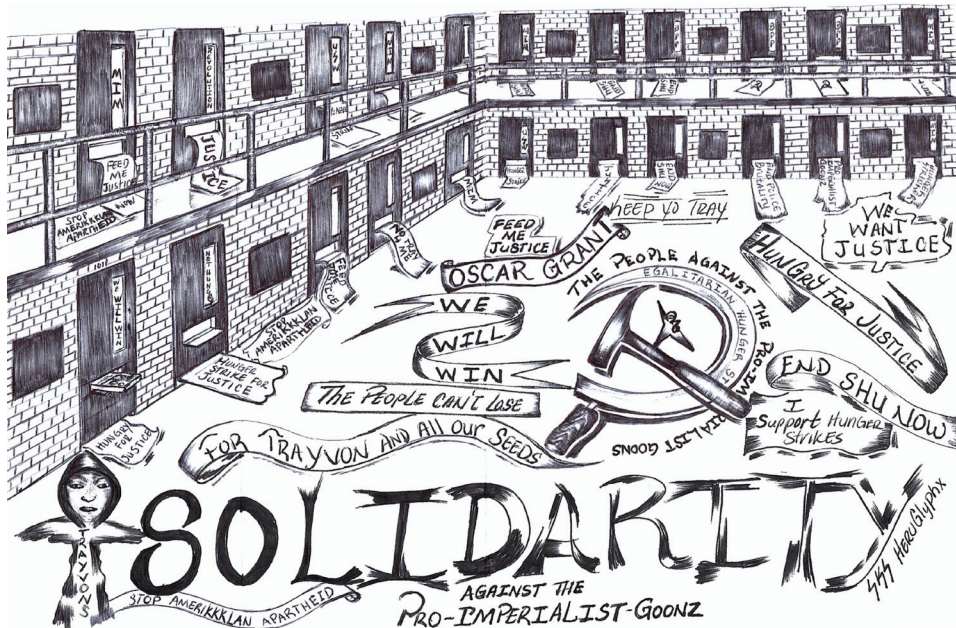
Another place that minimum wage struggles made a lot of noise in 2013 was the garment industry in Bangladesh. As we mentioned in the last issue of *Under Lock & Key*, those workers had a recent victory in the minimum wage being raised from \$38 to \$68 per month. In Cambodia, garment workers have been promised a raise in the minimum wage from \$80 to \$95 per month. Unsatisfied, the workers have joined recent protests against the current regime to demand \$160 per month.(3)

With 48-hour work weeks, garment workers are making around \$0.35 per hour in Bangladesh, and \$0.42 in Cambodia. Believe it or not, these are the privileged workers who have special protections because they are in important export industries. The common Bangladeshi has a minimum wage of \$19 per month, which is less than 10 cents an hour.

The proposed \$10 per hour minimum in the United States would put the lowest paid Americans at ONE HUNDRED times the income of the lowest paid workers in Bangladesh. This is why on May Day 2013 we called out the chauvinist white worker movement for skirting the issue of a global minimum wage.

Now, the first cry of our chauvinist critics will be "cost of living, you forgot about cost of living." Our proposal for a global minimum wage would tie this wage to a basket of goods. That means the worker in the United States and

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I'm Not Crazy for Identifying with My People

by a comrade of United Struggle from Within
June 2012

When one is imprisoned and kept away from society for a rather long period of time, it's not unnatural to feel as if you're beginning to lose your bearings, and it's not unnatural for one to seek help from "medical professionals."

What is considered unnatural however is to speak of the plight of the oppressed. I found this out the hard way when I went to my annual psychiatric review. To be "mentally-ill" or depressed when one is from oppressed nation origin and imprisoned is perfectly normal. However, to be perfectly normal or "sane" under the oppressive conditions of imperialism is certainly abnormal. One cannot be of oppressed nation origin and imprisoned and be content. Depression is a completely appropriate state of mind when oppressed by imperialism; there can be no other reaction.

As stated above I attended my annual psychiatric review and was introduced to the four member committee. I was asked a series of questions. How did I feel? Have I experienced any depression lately? Am I suicidal? I answered

their questions as quickly and concisely as possible. I felt I passed their test with flying colors. As I was about to be excused however one of the psychiatrists stopped me from leaving and asked me if we could talk about my revolutionary tattoos. My first instinct was to ask him what my tattoos have to do with my "mental health." However, I felt it might look bad to not cooperate so I agreed to stay.

The psych wanted to know what they meant. I simply stated that they were political symbols and took it no further, but he pressed and wanted to know exactly what they meant. He kept pressing and at this point I once again thought, "what the hell do my political beliefs have to do with my mental health?!" I figured I'd play their little game and see exactly what they were trying to get at.

I was asked why I choose to have this artwork on me. I replied that they were simply expressions of my solidarity with the oppressed and exploited of the Third World. But why did I feel the need to show my solidarity? "Because" I stated, "they're oppressed and exploited, they've been oppressed and exploited and they're gonna continue to be oppressed and exploited for the foreseeable future!" "Oh, is that all?" At which point I lost temporary control of my emotions and strongly stated: "Yea, that and the fact that they're currently being massacred across the globe!" The committee then collectively jumped and stared at me as if I was indeed crazy for saying these truths.

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subscriptions are FREE for prisoners**

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. We support nations which choose to delink from the imperialist economy, including the right of the internal semi-colonies to secede from the United States. 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 campaign info.

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.

Strategic Confidence

One important piece of our worldview is the strategic confidence we have based on 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. This column was started to support this position.

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro plans to propose the inclusion of Free Puerto Rico in the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Celac) in the next meeting to be held in Havana, recognizing it as a nation independent of the U.S. empire. (El Universal, 9 January 2014)

Protests in Pakistan against U.S. drone attacks continued through December and are planned into mid-January (see this column in *ULK* 35). Early in the month they had forced the Amerikans to cease shipments going through the Torkham border crossing towards Karachi. The Amerikans have threatened to cut aid to the puppet government in Pakistan if they do not repress the protestors and clear the route, which is being used to remove equipment from Afghanistan. So far the rulers in Pakistan have upheld that the protestors are doing nothing illegal. (Associated Press, 19 December 2013)

Hooded men carrying rifles and handguns went before reporters Sunday in an undisclosed location in Guerrero, Mexico and announced the formation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces—People's Liberation. The group also accused the government of killing environmental activists, student and rural leaders and other community activists and demanded the release of detained leaders of groups defending their communities against drug-related violence in Guerrero. (Al-jazeera America, 3 December 2013)

Through December 1st and 2nd, hundreds of Haitian garment workers walked out of factories in the capital of Port-au-Prince and marched on parliament to demand a minimum wage of 500 gourdes (\$11.50) a day. The workers, pre-

dominantly young women, were enraged over a decision by a government commission on wages which lowered the minimum from US\$7.50 a day, which manufacturers refused to pay, to a miserable \$5 a day. Some Amerikans have organized protests outside of Hanes and Macy's to continue to apply pressure on the U.S. companies that are behind this miserable exploitation. (The Weekly Bolshevik, 20 December 2013)

On 25 December 2013, Maoist rebels in India launched an attack destroying an office building in Odisha's Makangiri district. They posted fliers announcing that the act was to demand a withdrawal of security forces from the region who killed 13 of their comrades in September. (The Indian Express)

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army of Colombia issued a joint statement marking 50 years of armed resistance in the country, acknowledging the need for their organizations to merge and reaffirming their continued dedication to national liberation. While the FARC has been in peace negotiations with the state for over a year, they have not laid down their arms or ceded the territories they have liberated. Recent reports exposed billions of dollars in U.S. support that helped the Colombian state murder leaders of the groups, in addition to the \$9 billion in military aid given publicly. Fifty years and billions of dollars later, and the resistance in Colombia still lives. (FARC-EP, December 2013)

Bangladeshi garment workers continue their struggle, after winning an increase in the minimum wage in October to \$68 per month (see *ULK* 35). After hearing that a fellow worker had been murdered by police in a recent protest, workers torched one of the largest factories in the country, formerly employing about 18,000 people, burning it to the ground. (Reuters, 29 November 2013)

In Malaysia, 40 families from the Penan tribe have blockaded roads to their land to stop trucks from a company attempting to turn their land into palm oil plantations. The struggle for land and the struggle to stop environmental degradation are one and the same for billions of people in the Third World. (Survival, 23 December 2013)★

Each copy of *ULK* costs about \$1 to print and mail. To cover the cost of your issue and one more, that's \$2 per issue or \$12 per year. You can pay at each issue, or all up front. Just tell us how much you want to pledge and we'll send you more info. *ULK* Sustainer donations all go toward adding more content to *ULK*.

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. If

Editor's Note:

January 2014

The last issue of *Under Lock & Key* focused on the internal semi-colonies of the United States, and the struggle to liberate them, including the right to form their own states on their own territories. Yet today, the dominant strategy of the internal semi-colonies as a whole is to end their oppression by working within imperialism. We've titled this issue the "Dead End of Imperialism," as we explore why that strategy does not work. This is a point that we must constantly reiterate because the oppressed nations in North America benefit financially from imperialism. But as Ehecatt points out on p. 20, the decrease in class antagonisms in this country does not eliminate the principal contradiction of nation.

The focus on working within the imperialist system is, of course, reinforced by the superstructure of the system and is strongly encouraged in the cultural realm. We feature a couple of movie reviews that explore the trend in Hollywood of promoting working with the oppressor and discouraging liberation struggles. Cipactli's review also exposes the historical revisionism of culture that serves to hide imperialism's brutality.

We take on the theoretical question of the socialist vs. the capitalist roads in our article on the Ukraine. That oppressed nation continues down the failed road of trying to improve their conditions via capitalism. We also look at crime as it relates to class in that article, critiquing the First World lumpen who outdo the Ukrainians in their idolization of the bourgeoisie.

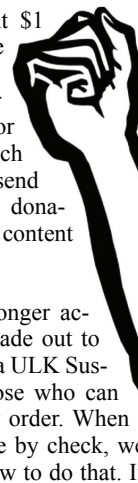
A number of comrades touch on the topic of the dead end of imperialism from a more personal perspective. One recently released comrade writes about the many ways that release from prison offers him little pleasure in this oppressive system. Another USW comrade documents his struggle to maintain his principles in the face of the oppressive "mental health" system. USW331 builds on this topic by exploring what it takes to maintain one's moral compass in the oppressive anti-social conditions of prison.

We hope this issue of *ULK* encourages our readers to think about how to maintain ideological and practical independence from imperialism in our struggle for a better world. The struggle against revisionism within the communist movement is essentially a struggle against those who would sneak bourgeois ideas and strategies into our work. This is a question of success or failure. And as the situation in Ukraine shows, failure can set us back for long periods of time. ★

Bonus Content in This Issue!

This issue of *Under Lock & Key* has 4 bonus pages, brought to you by *ULK* Sustainers and donors! Since July, all donations which are not for something specific (literature, study group, etc.) have been pooled until we were able to afford to add more content. It costs over \$200 to make this happen. Let's see if we can raise money to print bonus pages even quicker next time!

You can send in your donation of stamps any time, or notify us in advance if you want to send a check. If you want to send in regular donations, 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.



We need to raise at least \$200 to print another bonus issue of *ULK*! Fill the fist and get another four pages of content!

you want to send a one-time check, let us know first.

Typically all new subscribers receive an introductory issue of *ULK* which contains important information about MIM(Prisons). All new subscribers will receive the MIM(Prisons) intro with issue 37. In the meantime, enjoy four extra pages of content! ★

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...Identity

The psych then attempted to further bait me and get me to incriminate myself by asking me if I felt the need to show my solidarity in any other way. To which I simply laughed and stared in h judgmental hate-filled eyes and said "of course not, I'm in prison." But what if I wasn't in prison? And of course I laughed and just said no.

S/he then accused me of being a gang member, to which I immediately objected. But to them my appearance means that I'm a gang member. S/he then asked me what I'm in prison for. I told h the truth and told h that I'm in prison for "gang violence." S/he then repeated that I was a gang member. "No!" I once again corrected h. I explained that while I once was a gang member, I no longer am today. However, s/he insisted and asked me if I was in solidarity with the Third World when I was on the streets. I told h of course not. I was in solidarity with myself and my "gang." "So you've changed?!" Of course I changed, everybody changes. To which s/he then looked at me curiously and asked if I'd ever been in an insane asylum. "No" I stated. "Would you like to go to one?" "No" I once again stated. I was quite simply surprised that s/he would threaten me so openly. I was then excused. The implication is clear. To speak of the plight of the oppressed and exploited Third World masses, one must be "crazy."

MIM(Prisons) adds: Check out the article "Psychiatry and Psychology as National Oppression" from *ULK 15* for a good analysis of this pseudo-science that classifies revolutionaries and oppressed nations as crazy. Also request a copy of MIM Theory 9 on Psychology and Imperialism for a complete analysis of this topic. ★

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...Survey

we hope our readers find to be educational and helpful in their organizing work. These four pages were funded by donors and the ULK Sustainers group, a group of United Struggle from Within members and supporters in prison who send in donations on a regular basis to expand *ULK*. To help fulfill the requests for more that was loud and clear in the survey results, send in your donation today. ★

Lenin Statue Toppled in Power Struggle in Ukraine

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
December 2013

Images of a statue of communist leader V.I. Lenin being torn down in Kiev have been celebrated in the Western press, as hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians took to the streets to protest the current regime headed by president Viktor Yanukovich.

Much of the coverage of the recent protests in Ukraine condemn government corruption as the common complaint of the protestors, linking it to Ukraine's Soviet past. The association is that this is the legacy of communist rule. In contrast, we would argue that this corruption was the result of economic Liberalism taking hold in the former Soviet Union where bourgeois democracy was lacking. Today's protests are largely inspired by a desire for bourgeois democracy, and the perceived economic benefits it would provide over the current rule by a parasitic bourgeoisie with little interest in the national economy.

The rise of Krushchev to lead the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) after Stalin's death marked the victory of the capitalist roaders within the Communist Party, and the beginning of the era of social-imperialism for the Soviet Union. This lasted from 1956 until the dissolution of the Union in 1991, when Ukraine became an independent republic. The period was marked by moving away from a socialist economy structured around humyn need and towards a market economy guided by profit. This transformation was reflected in the ideology of the people who more and more looked towards the imperialist countries and their crass consumerism as something to aspire to. It also led those in power to have more interest in their local regions than in the prosperity of the Union as a whole.

Even under capitalism, the Soviet Union was more prosperous and more stable than after its dissolution. In 1991, an estimated three quarters of the Soviet people supported maintaining the Union, but the leadership had no motivation

to do so.(1) A move towards strengthening the Union would awaken the proletarian interests, which were opposed to the interests of the leadership that was now a new bourgeoisie. Ukraine played a key role in initiating the dissolution of the USSR. And it was no coincidence that in Ukraine, in particular, the dissolution was an economic disaster as the former Soviet nations were tossed to the wolves of economic Liberalism. A small emerging capitalist class took advantage of fixed prices that were a legacy of the Soviet economy and sold cheaply obtained raw materials at market rates to other countries. They turned around and invested that capital outside in international markets while tightening monopolies on trade at home. This was one of the most drastic transfers of wealth from the hands of the producers to the hands of capitalists in recent decades.(2)

Ten years after the October Revolution of 1917, Stalin wrote, "the resultant dropping out of a vast country from the world system of capitalism could not but accelerate [the process of the decay and the dying of capitalism]".(3) The inverse of this is also true, to a degree: the re-entry of many countries into the world system breathed life back into it. While this brought great change at the hands of the newly empowered national bourgeoisie in those countries, it did not change the fact that imperialism had already made capitalism an economically regressive system. Hence they did not develop the wealth of their nations as the rising bourgeoisie of centuries past had done by improving production and developing trade. Today's rising bourgeoisie restricts markets via monopolies, and heads straight for high-margin business like drugs, weapons and financial markets. What happened in the ex-Soviet countries is a good demonstration of why Libertarian ideals are not relevant in today's economy.

The underground economy had been growing for decades before 1991, and this new freedom to compete was a boon to the criminal organizations that existed. These mafias were on the ground with direct access to the resources of the people before the imperialists had time to fight over these newly opened economies. With rising nationalism in the republics, Russian imperialism had to keep its distance, while other imperialist countries had no base in the region to get established. The inter-imperialist rivalry over the region is playing out today.

In the early years of independence, the Ukrainian state merged with that criminal class that was taking advantage of the political and economic turmoil in the country.(4) As a result the GDP dropped to a mere third of what it was just before the Union dissolved.(5) This came after decades of declining economic growth after the initial shift away from socialist economics. The mafias in the former Soviet countries saw an opportunity to seize local power and wealth in their respective republics as the super power crumbled. Some were further enticed by Amerikan bribes, such as Russian President Boris Yeltsin's family who received billions of

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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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...Ukraine

dollars.(6) For a time there was hope that these changes would improve economic conditions as the bourgeois Liberal mythology led the former Soviet peoples to believe that they could follow the advice (and political donations) of the United States.

This mess, which the region is still struggling with, was the ultimate result of what Mao Zedong said about the rise of a new bourgeoisie within the communist party after the seizure of state power due to their inherent privilege as directors of the state. A successful socialist project must combat these bourgeois tendencies at every turn in order to prevent the proletariat from suffering at the hands of a new bourgeois exploiting class. At the core of the Cultural Revolution was combating the theory of productive forces, which Mao had previously criticized the Soviet Union for implementing. The turn to the western imperialist countries as economic models was the logical conclusion of the theory of productive forces in the Soviet Union.

One of the messages underpinning today's protests in Ukraine is the desire to move closer to the European Union (EU), as opposed to the Russian sphere of influence. It seems that looking to the west for hope has only increased in Ukraine over the last couple decades. But there is no obvious advantage to becoming a client of imperialist Western Europe over imperialist Russia except for the higher concentration of super-profits in the EU. And as other newcomers to the EU can attest, the imperialist nations in Europe will oppose any perceived distribution of their super-profits to the east. Similar nationalism is fueling the Ukrainian protestors who oppose the perceived transfer of wealth from their country to Russia. In general, increased trade will help a country economically. But in this battle Russia and the EU are fighting to cut each other off from trading with Ukraine. As always, capitalism tends towards monopolies and imperialism depends on monopolies.(12)

It is little wonder that the masses would be unsatisfied living under the rule of corrupt autocrats. Yet, it was just 2004 when the U.S.-funded so-called "Orange Revolution" threw out a previous mafia boss named Leonid Kuchma. (7) This regime change gained support from those making similar demands to today's protestors, but it did not change the nature of the system as these protests demonstrate. And that orchestrated movement was no revolution. It was a mass protest, followed by a *coup d'etat*; something that the imperialists have been funding quite regularly in central Eurasia these days. A revolution involves the overthrow of a system and transformation to a new system, specifically a change in the economic system or what Marxists call the mode of production. We don't see any movement in this direction in Ukraine from where we are, as nationalism is being used as a carrier for bourgeois ideologies among the exploited people of Ukraine, just as Stalin warned against.

Rather than a revolutionary anti-capitalist/

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...Minimum Wage

the worker in Bangladesh can afford comparable lifestyles with their pay. Maybe the Amerikan gets wheat where the Bangladeshi gets rice, for example. But the Amerikan does not get a persynal SUV with unlimited gasoline, while the Bangladeshi gets bus fare to and from work. To maintain such inequality the Bangladeshi is subsidizing a higher standard of living for the Amerikan.

It happens that the World Bank has taken a stab at this calculation with their Purchasing Power Parity. Using this calculation, the minimum wage in Bangladesh, which appears to be \$0.09 per hour, is really a whopping \$0.19 per hour.(4) So, we must apologize to our critics. The proposed minimum wage of \$10 per hour would only put the lowest paid Amerikans at 50 times the pay of the lowest paid Bangladeshi if we account for cost of living.

Recently the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (Prison Chapter) accused our movement of dismissing the possibility of revolutionary organizing in the United States because we acknowledge the facts above.(5) Just because struggles for higher wages, and other economic demands, are generally pro-imperialist in this country does not mean that we cannot organize here. But revolutionary organizing must not rally the petty bourgeoisie for more money at the expense of the global proletariat. Besides, even in the earliest days of the Russian proletariat Lenin had criticisms of struggles for higher wages.

While we expressed doubts about Chokwe Lumumba's electoral strategy in Jackson, Mississippi in *ULK 33*, we remain optimistic about the New Afrikan Liberation Movement's efforts

anti-imperialist movement, the criminal corruption in Ukraine has led to right-wing populism in recent years. This was marked by the surge of the Svoboda party into the parliament. The men who toppled the statue of Lenin and smashed it with sledge hammers waved Svoboda flags as they did so, indicating that they represented not just a vague anti-Russia sentiment, but a clear anti-socialist one.

Svoboda's populism challenges the current ruling bourgeois mafia, while their nationalism serves to divide the proletariat by inflaming various grudges in the region. This is in strong contrast to the revolutionary nationalism supported by Lenin and Stalin and by Maoists today. In a criticism of the provisional government prior to the October Revolution in 1917, Lenin wrote on Ukraine:

"We do not favour the existence of small states. We stand for the closest union of the workers of the world against 'their own' capitalists and those of all other countries. But for this union to be voluntary, the Russian worker, who does not for a moment trust the Russian or the Ukrainian bourgeoisie in anything, now stands for the right of the Ukrainians to secede, without imposing his friendship upon them, but striving to win their friendship by treating them as an equal, as an ally and brother in the struggle for socialism."(8)

to mobilize the masses there. Organizing for cooperative economics and self-sufficiency is a more neutral approach to mobilizing the lower segments of New Afrika than the SEIU's clamoring for more wages for unproductive service work. While our concerns rested in their ability to organize in a way that was really independent of the existing system, creating dual power, the SEIU begging for more spoils from the imperialists does not even offer such a possibility. To really address the inequalities in the world though, we must ultimately come into conflict with the capitalist system that creates and requires those inequalities.

One agitational point of the fast food protests has been that 52 percent of the families of front-line fast food workers need to rely on public assistance programs.(1) One reason this is true is that most fast food workers do not get to work 48 or even 40 hours a week. Throw children and other dependents in the mix and you have a small, but significant, underclass in the United States that struggles with things like food, rent and utility bills. Most are single parents, mostly single mothers. Collective living and economic structures could (and do) serve this class and can offer a means of political mobilization. The Black Panthers' Serve the People programs and Black houses (collective living) are one model for such organizing. But state-sponsored programs and the general increase in wealth since the 1960s makes distinguishing such work from working with imperialism a more daunting task.

The campaign for a global minimum wage has little traction among the lower paid workers in the United States, because they do not stand to benefit from this. This is a campaign to be led by the Third World and pushed through international bodies such as the World Trade Organization. We support it for agitational reasons, but don't expect mass support in this country. It allows us to draw a line between those who are true internationalists and those who are not.(6)

Any campaign working for economic interests of people in the imperialist countries is going to be problematic because the best economic deal for them will require teaming up with the imperialists, at least for the foreseeable future. ★

Notes:

1. Jonathan Nack, *Protest Rocks Oakland McDonalds -- Part of nationwide day of actions*, 5 December 2013. Indybay.org
2. Brian Tumulty, NY, *Dozen others raising minimum wage in 2014*, 28 December 2013. *Gannett News Service*.
3. *300,000 Cambodian garment workers join anti-government protests*, 26 December 2013. *The Raw Story*
4. *Wikipedia, List of minimum wages by country*
5. *Write in a for a copy of this article.*
6. *Why \$2.50? Some rough calculations done by comrades have shown that an equal distribution of wealth would put the hourly wage around \$5 per hour. Since we're talking about a reform under capitalism we cannot have complete equal distribution or the profit motive would be gone and the economy would stop functioning. That's not a realistic reform to demand under capitalism. Setting the minimum wage at \$2.50 per hour would leave the world's capitalists half of the money (after accounting for reinvestment, infrastructure etc.) to use as economic incentives. Of course, after we overthrow imperialism, under socialism we would be able to truly equalize wages globally as we eliminate capitalist profit.*

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...Ukraine

This is a concise summary of the Bolshevik line on nationalism.

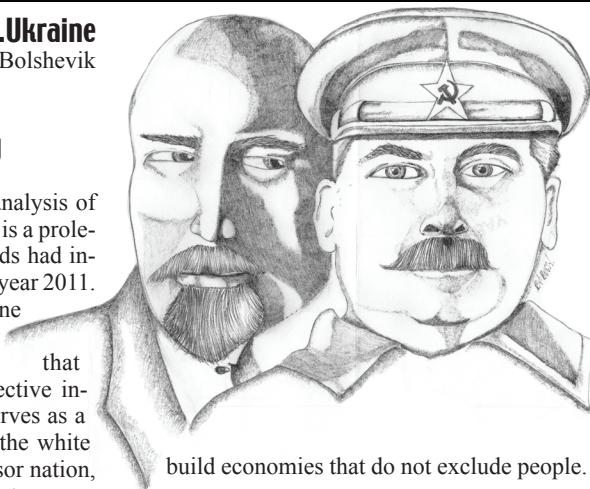
A Note on Class and Criminality

Without doing an in-depth class analysis of Ukraine, we can still generalize that it is a proletarian nation. Only 5.1% of households had incomes of more than US\$15,000 in the year 2011. (9) That mark is close to the dividing line we'd use for exploiters vs. exploited internationally. Therefore we'd say that 95% of people in Ukraine have objective interests in ending imperialism. This serves as a reminder to our readers that we say the white nation in North Amerika is an oppressor nation, not the white race, which does not exist.

While official unemployment rates in Ukraine have been a modest 7 to 8% in recent years, the CIA Factbook reports that there are a large number of unregistered and underemployed workers not included in that calculation. That unquantified group is likely some combination of underground economy workers and lumpen proletariat. In 2011, the Ukrainian Prime Minister said that 40% of the domestic market was illegal, (10) that's about double the rate for the world overall. (11) On top of that, another 31% of the Ukrainian market was operating under limited taxes and regulations implemented in March 2005, which were put in place to reduce the massive black market. In other words, the underground economy was probably much bigger than 40% before these tax exemptions were put in place.

One way we have distinguished the lumpen is as a class that would benefit, whether they think so or not, from regular employment. This is true both for the lumpen-proletariat typical of today's Third World mega-slums, and the First World lumpen, even though "regular employment" means very different things in different countries. While there is a portion of the lumpen that could accurately be called the "criminal" lumpen because they make their living taking from others, we do not define the lumpen as those who engage in crime. Of course not, as the biggest criminals in the world are the imperialists, robbing and murdering millions globally.

For the lumpen, the path of crime is only one option; for the imperialists it defines their relationship to the rest of huminity. Crime happens to be the option most promoted for the lumpen by the corporate culture in the United States through music and television. And in chaotic situations like the former Soviet republics faced it may be the most immediately appealing option for many. But it is not the option that solves the problems faced by the lumpen as a class. Ukraine is a stark example of where that model might take us. As the lumpen proletariat grows in the Third World, and the First World lumpen threatens to follow suit in conditions of imperialist crisis, we push to unite the interests of those classes with the national liberation struggles of the oppressed nations that they come from. Only by liberating themselves from imperialism can those nations



build economies that do not exclude people.

Among the bourgeoisie, there are few who are innocent of breaking the laws of their own class. But there are those who operate legitimate businesses and there are those who operate in the underground market. This legality has little bearing on their class interests. All national bourgeoisies support the capitalist system that they benefit from, though they will fight against the imperialist if their interests collide.

So there is no such thing as "the criminal class" because we define class by the group's relationship to production and distribution, and not to the legality of their livelihoods. And we should combat the influence of the bourgeois criminals on the lumpen who, on the whole, would be better served by an end to imperialism than by trying to follow in their footsteps.

While the Ukrainian people push for something more stable and beneficial to them, the Russian imperialists face off with the EU. The EU is backed by the United States who has publicly discussed sanctions against Ukraine justified by hypocritical condemnation of the Ukrainian government using police to attack peaceful protests. Hey John Kerry, the world still remembers the images of police brutality on Occupy Wall Street encampments.

The real story here may be in the inter-imperialist rivalry being fought out in the Ukrainian streets and parliament. While the Ukraine nation has an interest in ending imperialism, the dominant politics in that country do not reflect that interest. And one reason for that is the lasting effects of mistakes from the past, which still lead to subjective rejection of communism for many Ukrainians in the 21st century. This only further reiterates the importance of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the need to always put politics in command in building a socialist economy to prevent the future exploitation and suffering of the peoples of the world. This is likely a precursor to much more violent conflict over the rights to markets in the former Soviet republics. Violence can be prevented in the future by keeping the exploited masses organized on the road to socialism. ★

Notes:

1. MIM. *The decline of Soviet social-imperialism*.
2. Misha Glenny. *McMafia: A Journey Through the Global Criminal Underworld*, Vintage Books, 2009, p.57.

Release to Amerikkka Brings No Happiness

by a Nevada prisoner
January 2014

Three days from now, after serving 15.5 years for technical violations at parole, I will be given \$28, the pet end of a leash and a ride to Parole & Probation. Upon "release" from prison and "re-entry" into society, two of the "expectations" placed upon me will be to:

1. contribute to my own continued oppression in the form of a \$50 monthly parole supervision fee and,
2. contribute to the oppression of others in the form of mandatory employment resulting in apportionment of part of my wages (taxes) to finance the capture, imprisonment and torture of segments of the civilian population.

These "expectations" are enshrined in a parole "agreement" which I must sign prior to being "released." As a condition of my "release" I am coerced into participating in my own oppression and that of others. If I fail to participate, I will be re-captured and returned to captivity and the torture that entails.

I have been asked many times since the news of my parole broke a few weeks ago if I am happy or excited. I have spent the last 15.5 years in prison for actions which were the result of anti-oppressor activity which would have landed no one but a parolee in prison. I will leave prison visually incapacitated due to deliberate medical neglect which has left me almost completely blind – I am an artist by trade. I am being "released" now only as an attempt to conceal the state's malfeasance which has resulted in my imprisonment for 4 years and 24 days past my mandatory release date. The sudden attempt at damage control is due only to the efforts of an attorney and journalist who recently became involved in my situation. Upon "release" I will be separated from my family, friends, brothers and sister, comrades who will remain confined and tortured, some for the remainder of their lives. I will enter a society which has applauded and financed my, and my people's, captivity and dehumanization; a society which has my destruction and the destruction of all others like me as a cornerstone of its existence. A society weaned on blood, misery and intolerance

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3. "The International Character of the October Revolution", *Pravda*, No. 255, Nov. 6-7 1927

4. *McMafia*, p.84

5. MIM. *Review of Globalization and its Discontents* by Joseph E. Stiglitz.

6. Who owns Yeltsin? Yeltsin's daughter under investigation, *MIM Notes* No. 196, 15 October 1999.

7. Ian Traynor, *US campaign behind the turmoil in Kiev*, *The Guardian*, 25 November 2004.

8. *Pravda* No. 82, June 28 (15), 1917.

9. *Euromonitor International*, 27 November 2012. "Ukraine's Household Income Bounced Back but 2012 Remains Uncertain"

10. Azarov: Shadow trade accounts for 40% of domestic market, *Interfax-Ukraine*, 7 December 2011.

11. *McMafia* p.XIX.

12. *Monopsony is when there is only one buyer, as opposed to monopoly when there is only one seller.*

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...Release

and the wanton exploitation of humyn and environmental resources to benefit a few, while espousing "liberty and justice for all."

As a bi, two-spirit, "ex"-felon and anti-capitalist on parole in what is quite possibly the most corrupt and anti-humyn state in amerikkka, I can look the pale, unblinking masses in the eye and state proudly and unequivocally:

No, I am not fucking "happy."
No, I am not fucking "excited."

This is nothing but a bed move to a different facility with a bigger yard, better canteen and a few more privileges (mostly for the privileged, which I am not).

What enthusiasm I do have is limited to, and derived from, the increased capacity for resistance in the continued struggle due to better options and resources.

On January 2 I will enter minimum security land (i.e. amerikkkan society) and my struggle for equality and freedom will continue unabated at the gate. My respects to all who are left behind.

MIM(prisons) adds: In *ULK 24* we wrote about the challenges released prisoners face on the streets. This comrade has a long history of political activism, and this increases chances of staying active on the streets. But dealing with the challenges of life as an "ex-con" can quickly consume all the energy that might otherwise be put into anti-imperialist work. We at MIM(Prisons) have been working to build a Release On Life program to help prisoners stay active on the streets. Get in touch with us if your release date is coming up in the next year. ★

Bullets Not Food

by Paddymac of USW

walls of water
smashing the wooden lives
rotted from the inside
mourning the dead
jealous of their escape
from a life too hard in a third
world hell

the imperial machines
bring bullets not food
bullets not food
combat boots and cold steel
bullets not food
bullets not food
bullets not food

imperial profits
hungrier than a starving
child
the belly of the beast is
never full
gluttonous greed knows no
bounds

protect the profits
bullets not food
bullets not food
hand grenades and war
machines
bullets not food

Resistance From Within

by USW331 of United Struggle from Within
December 2013

I recently received the level 2 study group. One question it asks is "Does MIM(Prisons) recruit members from prison? Why or why not? Do you agree? Explain." My answer, in part, was "As prisoners we need MIM(Prisons) to not be subjected to our oppression, which helps to protect the integrity and Third World viewpoint of the MIM." I realized that what I was referring to was resistance to what I once read a comrade call "bourgeois brainwashing." I then set about to understand the psycho-social dynamics of this bourgeois brainwashing and how we must form resistance from within. I also examined the role played by MIM(Prisons) and the tie to how we view the Third World.

Bourgeois brainwashing uses the psychological phenomenon of dehumanization to facilitate the deconstruction of our value systems. Used as a defense against painful or overwhelming emotions, dehumanization entails a decrease in a person's sense of his own individuality and in his perception of the humanness of others. This dehumanization of others allows for their maltreatment to be acquiesced in with relative freedom from the restraints of conscience or feelings of comradeship.

Dehumanization has two interrelated processes: self-directed dehumanization, which relates to self-image and denotes the deterioration of an individual's sense of his own humanness, and object-directed dehumanization, which refers to one's perceiving others as lacking in those attributes that are considered to be most human. These two forms of dehumanization are mutually reinforcing: reduction in the fullness of one's feelings for other human beings diminishes one's own sense of self; any reduction of the humanness of one's self-image limits that person's capacity for relating to others.

You see, the first step is for the pigs to beat down our self-worth and self-respect. Once we lose sight of our own humanness, we cannot see it in others. We then have complacency, even to the point of being helpful, while the U.S. empire oppresses, occupies and exploits the Third World nations. Why should I care? The Third World proletariat are less than

human anyway. I didn't put them in the situation they are in, they put themselves there, therefore, they deserve it!

Thus, oppression necessarily rests upon dehumanization, which diminishes and morphs our value system. We can resist dehumanization by holding on to our self-worth and self-respect, and our communistic value system that brought us to participate in the MIM. This takes resistance from within; from within the prison and from within our own selves.

There is a process of resistance called counter-socialization. To keep our values insulated from the conformist bourgeois values shoved down our throats while incarcerated is no easy task. It requires a stabilizing point of reference and behavior patterns that harmonize, to some degree, with our own values. These are two distinct aspects: a supportive reference system or group, and behavior patterns that offer protection against dehumanization of self and others. Our values or attitudes may not be consistent with the behavior expected or even forced upon us, which makes us vulnerable to a deep psychological discord with accompanying stress and pull toward equilibrium to reduce this mental discord and stress. Unless we are careful, our values may subtly change to match our behavior, and the brainwashing has begun.

For us to keep our communistic values from dying or fading away, it helps (it may even be essential) to have value sharers to whom we can refer for guidance and support. This reference group or individual can be other persons within the prison – a formal or informal counter-group. Such a reference system has the advantage of being accessible, relevant (everyone in the same location), and standing out in its interpretive scheme. Our counter-values can also be sustained through contact with or reference to people outside of the prison system. This support has the advantage of not being caught up in the same dehumanizing process as us and, therefore, may be more objective. Furthermore, their existence does not depend on the prison system – a very important point if the going gets rough and the pigs set about to silence our dissension.

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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.



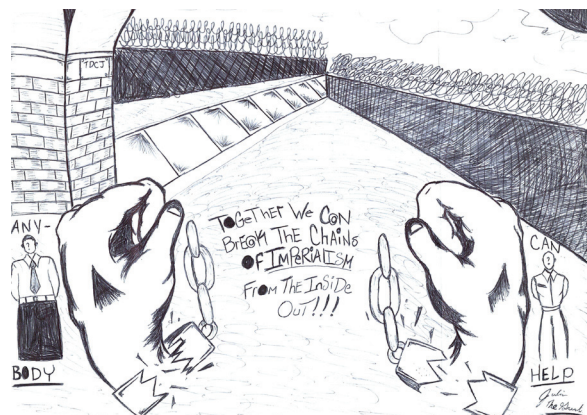
Building Peace and Unity as Prison Promotes Racial Segregation and Group Punishment

by a California prisoner
December 2013

In Ironwood, apparently new regulations have come down from Sacramento ordering staff to remove all signs from the doors depicting race. There were signs on the prison cage door indicating race: blue was for Black, red for Mexican, white for white and green for other. Now the designation for race is Security Threat Group (STG).

There was a recent lockdown (a melee between Sureños and New Afrikans) in one of the housing units. A status report stated that the investigation has been concluded and prisoners who are not members of the affected STGs will resume normal program. In the body of the report the affected STGs identified were Bloods, Crips and Sureños. The next

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...Resistance

To stay on guard, we should occasionally test the limits of the pigs' tolerance for deviant behavior. If we have too much fear of disciplinary action or retaliation we may too narrowly define the boundaries of freedom and may mentally discard alternatives of action that could be advantageously pursued. We can be guided by the experience of others, but more can be gained from personal testing. Personal testing reaffirms a commitment to resistance and nudges us out of complacency. It also gives us a sense of freedom of action, thereby revitalizing our self-determination. To keep from absorbing a new dehumanized value system, we may find it useful from time to time to gut-react with automatic responses. If we always think about consequences before we express our true feelings, the feelings themselves may imperceptibly change. Just as the pigs limit what they will tolerate by way of opposition, we must also limit what we will tolerate by way of co-optation.

One of the most intriguing questions from both a theoretical and practical standpoint is: how long and under what conditions can a person maintain dehumanizing conditions and discordant values without support of any kind from others? Can internal fortitude based on some seemingly distant reference system keep one's brain from being washed, and if so, how? One important aspect of value preservation under conditions of deprivation and debasement is a sense of self-worth. We must hold on to self-respect by preserving some fragment of the truth about ourselves that we respect. Maintaining our integrity under repressive conditions may also require some mental separation of the

self from the conditions the pigs force upon us. When we invoke the scientific stance of the observer, in effect, we refuse to be co-opted into the machinery of self-debasement. The preservation of the psyche is also facilitated by exercising freedom of action, however restrictive the limits. This may be as simple as the exercise of anticipating what is going to happen and having predictions validated by future events. Pro-action, as opposed to reaction, also gives us back some sense of control.

MIM(Prisons) offers the supportive reference system outside of the prison system and strongly encourages us to start our own localized study groups to support each other. They also offer support through the formal group United Struggle from Within. This support is imperative in combating the bourgeois brainwashing by allowing us to keep our communistic values front and center by giving us a criticism/self-criticism forum and correcting us when our values begin to morph. MIM(Prisons) also supports us in action. They give us support in testing the limits, in the grievance process, in organizing, and in letting our voices be heard.

Comrades, we must not fall prey to the pigs dehumanization efforts, communistic value diminishment, and subsequent bourgeois brainwashing. It takes more than passively reading an article or book and agreeing with the content - it takes action! When we start to think that our oppression is our own fault, then we start to justify the oppression of the Third World nations, by the U.S. empire, with some backward bourgeois thought process. We must resist, and this must be resistance from within! ★

Long-Term Lock Down for Prisoners United in Peace Treaty

by a Georgia prisoner
December 2013

I am a Georgia prisoner of war at Hancock State Plantation and just recently on 13 November 2013 I was locked down with numerous others on a Tier II program of "gang control" for long-term lock down. The administration says we are a threat to the security and welfare of the institution. We were stripped of all our property, including hygiene, and given state issue everything.

They tell us that the program is for behavior modification, which is crazy considering most of us haven't been to Ad-Seg in years. But they tell us the qualification for this program runs 5 years prior sanctions. We are not allowed to receive mail, literature, or be involved in programs for any type of reform even though certain inmates are required by courts to take classes in order to be released.

We only get one 15-minute phone call a month on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which are working days to the employed across the United States. The phones turn on at 8am and are cut off at 4:30pm. On top of all this, our visitations are on the same days as our phone calls and we are allowed to have only 2 hours of non-contact visits with a 2-person max of visitors. Most of our families travel more than 2 hours just to see us.

Due to the lack of professionalism, or to the abundance of corruption, we do not receive our 5 hours of outside recreation, nor do we receive cell clean up, which is a violation of our prisoners rights per Georgia Department of Corrections Standard Operating Procedures. We are forced, by coercion of disciplinary reports and gas accompanied by a strip cell, to have a cellmate even though this is a long-term lock down unit and we are considered a threat to the security of the institution and other persons. I heard the warden tell the captain pig "to let us kill each other."

Nine months is the minimum time you can be held in this Tier II program, but if you receive a Disciplinary Report (D.R.) 90 more days are added to your stay. There are seven close security plantations in Georgia that have this Tier II

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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.

Applying the United Front for Peace Principles to the Rasta Movement

by Loco1 of United Struggle from Within
December 2013

ULK 33 was a hit. MIM(Prisons) did a great job with the collection of articles published and the placement of artwork and poems. I want to respond to MIM(Prison)'s call for the various groups that signed on to the UFPP statement.

I signed on under the leadership of USW and since then have implemented the five principles in the following manner. In 2010 I took up the Rastafari Flag and grew out my dreadlocks and beard. After study, the RASTA movement showed me a perfect vehicle that allows for the incorporation of the five points of the UFPP, and it attracts people from all walks of life.

The Peace is principal and practiced every place that I step. When I meet prisoners I attempt to affect the space positively by being open to conversation with people outside my nationality, sex and class. What this means is I rap with Mexicans, Asians, Arabs, Europeans, etc., on a range of topics. I include homophobia, homosexuals, transsexuals, and lesbians in rapping sessions. I even talk to correctional officers, nurses, cooks, plumbers and cleaners when they are open. What this allows for is information gathering.

The RASTA Mon believes in the universal connection, so what I use as an umbrella for people to stand under in unity is the "one love" concept. This is attractive to a lot of people in here because society has put many of us on the shelf. When we are introduced to the idea of networking amongst each other around how to change living conditions, a conversation begins. Very few people will fight the weed smoking, dreadhead rasta man with the bag of books in his/her hands journeying around the world, but many will join because they know the movement is fair. I just use the 5 [five pointed star] as a way to introduce the 6 [six pointed star].

I've initiated the conversation that we all are convicts. Peace was established when fifteen guys asked me to speak at a meeting held for all convicts addressing the issues at this point.

I'm anticipating holding a study group here to apply the educational factor of Growth. When a lot of these guys see me they admire the young man of intelligence and become totally open to learning. I tell everybody my motto is growth and development. In order for any true change to come about one must grow out of the termite ways and the key to change is only found through education. This alone implements the third principle.

As for Internationalism, the Rastafari movement has been recognized as one of the most internationalist movements that there is. I teach what I've learned about other nations through the movement. When you begin to talk to a person who would have never guessed you'd know about their native land, the conversation quickly begins to turn into a lesson from the people of

another land. I just simply listen at this point.

And last but not least, Independence. Everywhere I've been since 2010 I've become both the Rastafari minister and/or the recreational clerk on the M.A.C. body. I simply go to the chapel, show movies about the struggle around with the brothers/sisters in relation to the movies, and play conscious music as we do workshops developing the tools, products and resources necessary in order for our cadre to affect the conditions.

The progress has not yet been seen by me on this side due to the setback of constantly having to split in order to dodge the iron fist, and a poor line of outside contact which my cell depends on for communication. Where we often have our relatives relay peaceful greetings to one another, sometimes a wife, girlfriend, mother or brother becomes upset or overworked without pay and the line is disturbed.

The way for us to build on each others' experiences is to share them, and be honest. Often times we prisoners want to exaggerate the circumstances, putting it on thick. Keep it 100%. Act like you want somebody to understand what you are sharing so that they can go apply your technique and move the struggle in a forward

direction.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade shares some useful tactical approaches and philosophies for building united front across differing groups and individuals. On the ideological level Rastafari does have some congruence with our own work, in particular in the realm of pan-Africanism and African liberation. But these characteristics are a product of the oppressed people who developed the movement rather than the ability of its religious principles to address the material needs of the oppressed. Similar to other religious movements founded by the oppressed, Rastafari shifts the focus from immaterial religious characters to leaders of their own people and to themselves. In these ways these ideologies make a move towards materialism. But Maoism takes it farther, dismissing the lineages and prophecies of the past in favor of studying the material forces that exist within each thing today that will determine its future development. Part of historical materialism is looking at movements of the past, and taking lessons of what works and doesn't work to apply to shaping a better world today. At the same time we seek out where we agree with those of different ideologies to forge united fronts that can push the forces of history forward faster. ★

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...Group Punishment

day only whites and "others" were released for program. When asked about the non-affected Afrikans and the non-affected Mexicans, we were informed that because the non-affected prisoners shower in the same showers as the affected prisoners that makes them associates. So effectively all Afrikans and Mexicans are locked down (according to "race").

Up until the argument between a Mexican and an Afrikan on 30 November 2013, the nationalities on this compound got along. Communication has resolved the issues and things are back to normal except for the administration milking the lockdown. The influential people are reminded of the word that came down from their folks up the way and have been striving hard to maintain the peace.

MIM(Prisons) responds: Group punishment is one of the unjust practices that prisoners who have been organizing around humyn rights in California have demanded an end to. And it goes to show how the state systematically oppresses people based on their "race" in 2013.

The last paragraph of this report is particularly important as it exemplifies the hard work that has been put in by members and leaders of various lumpen organizations across California to create peace and build unity in the fight against the criminal injustice system. We are happy to hear that even while the prison is trying to divide prisoners and set them against one another, prisoners are working to maintain peace. We encourage prisoners everywhere to get involved in the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP)

which was initiated in 2011 to build peace and unity among prisoners to advance our struggle against the criminal injustice system. This prisoner's letter demonstrates the first principle of the UFPP, 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." ★

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...Lock Down

program and they can hold us up to 2 years in each one, which is 14 years in isolation all together if they choose to hold you that long.

The pigs tend to aggravate and irritate us to react out of frustration so we can receive a D.R. They do everything intentionally in order to trick us into a longer stay in Ad-Seg. They know that if everyone was to complete this program in 9 months they wouldn't have any program.

What's so fishy about this sudden occurrence of a Tier II program in Georgia is that earlier this year the Crips, Bloods, and GDs came to a peace treaty in order for us to unite against the pigs' oppression. We are not organized to the point of a name, but we are upholding the principles of the United Front. We are trying to educate our comrades in a more revolutionary mentality. As of now, most of the leaders and the more influential participants are locked down in Ad-Seg and I don't find this a coincidence. The pigs hate the idea of us uniting in peace and not killing each other. ★

ULK Reader Survey Summary

by MIM(Prisons)
January 2014

As of 27 December 2013 we have received reader surveys back from 7.6% of our subscribers over the last 11 months. We ran the survey in *Under Lock & Key* requesting some basic personal information and feedback on the content of *ULK*. Our goal was to assess who is reading *ULK* and what we can do to improve the content. The survey respondents overall represent a distribution of prisoners in line with the general prison population, with a few exceptions consistent with the focus of our work. In particular, we have significant over-representation from Texas, California and Pennsylvania among our readers. This means prisoners in those states are getting more input into the content of *ULK*. While we are no longer collecting survey responses, we welcome readers to send us your feedback on what you like and what you think could be improved as we are constantly looking to improve *ULK*.

Demographics Summary

Assuming that respondents to our reader survey represent the general readership of *ULK*, we evaluated the information on their demographics to see how this compares to the prison population overall in the United States. Below we discuss some differences between *ULK* readers and the general prison population.

Our average surveyed age is 40, but in 2011 only 40% of the prison population was over 40. This is not a surprising fact: people who are older and more educated behind the bars are turning to revolutionary politics. We could conclude that a longer time in prison leads people to become more politically advanced.

Relative to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) on "race" of prisoners, our survey respondents include a slight over-representation of New Afrikans and a significant underrepresentation of Latinos (16% compared to a 23% "Hispanic" population in 2011 overall). We are not surprised to have an undercount of Spanish-speaking folks responding to an English language survey, especially as Spanish-only migrants have been the fastest growing segment of the U.S. prison population in recent years. (see *ULK 11*) In addition, there was a significant percentage (8.3%) of people who identify as indigenous in our survey (including those who identified as half indigenous and half white). The BJS does not collect statistics on First Nations, so we must assume they are included in the remaining 5% that they do not class as Black, white or Hispanic. This indicates 8.3% is a relatively high percentage compared to the general prison population. As an organization fighting for the national liberation of oppressed nations, both internationally and within U.S. borders, we are not surprised that our readership in prison is even more skewed away from whites than the general prison population which is already only 34% white.

The latest study we found (2006) reports that

52% of prisoners are re-incarcerated. 61% of our respondents were incarcerated at least once before. This may be because those with a prison record get longer sentences and so are more likely to come into contact with *ULK*. They are also more likely to be older and active in prison, if our theory about age of prisoners is correct.

A very high percent (48%) of survey respondents are locked up in some form of solitary confinement (RHU, SHU, Control Units, Administrative Segregation, etc.). This is consistent with our experience that politically aware and active prisoners are targeted for isolation as punishment for their activism, and to try to isolate them from other prisoners to reduce their influence. Our research on control units indicates that less than 5% of prisoners are in long-term isolation in the United States.

Reader Suggestions

In response to our question about what people like best about *ULK*, the most popular response (22%) was "all of it!" We appreciate the enthusiasm of our readers. More specific responses that were popular included a lot of support for the unity demonstrated by *ULK* articles (11%) and the stories about other prisoner's work and organizing (20%). There was also a lot of appreciation for state-specific and legal reporting (6%). Five percent of survey respondents liked best the core mission of *ULK* (which people described as Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, internationalism, reporting the truth, or just "the mission"). In addition, we saw responses in support of book reviews, culture, Spanish, country-wide and world news reporting, and general education.

In response to the question about what our readers would like to see more of in *ULK*, aside from the third of the respondents who thought it was just perfect as is or just requested more of *ULK*, one of the popular responses (9.5%) was a request for more theory, including information on the history of revolutionary movements and revolutionary heroes, quotes from communists, Maoist theory in general, and more in depth analysis from MIM(Prisons). Related to the request for theory, because strategy is developed from theory, and tactics come from strategic direction, we also had a lot of people asking for strategic direction in general (5.5%), and many asking for more campaigns and tactical campaign work they can do in their prisons (5%). This is a good reminder for our USW leaders as well as our *ULK* writers and editors that we should tie general prison news to campaign work when possible, and we should be looking for opportunities to initiate new campaigns that will be both educational and lead to potential tactical victories for the revolutionary movement.

A lot of people (9%) want to see more state-specific information (every prisoner wants more information on their own state). We can only increase the content about your state if you take action and write about what's going on there. We rely on our readers for all of the state-specific reporting in *ULK*. And to really make good

news, people need to be organizing so that we have campaigns, successes and failures to report on. So this is a response we hope comes from comrades who are sitting down now to write about their organizing efforts for the next issue.

There were also a lot of requests for resource lists (14.5%) or connections to other resources, and requests for legal information (12%). This is not part of our core mission for *Under Lock & Key*. We do run the Prisoners' Legal Clinic to help fight key legal battles, such as the censorship of political material. But MIM(Prisons)'s core mission is to build the anti-imperialist prison movement, and so we prioritize communist political organizing. We do not have the labor or funding to provide general resource lists and legal assistance in addition to our core work. We know there are not many groups out there doing this, but resource lists and legal assistance will ultimately only provide band-aids to a fundamentally broken system of imperialism. And anti-imperialist organizing is even more scarce in prisons than legal and resource work.

Additional suggestions from readers for specific areas of expansion included: art, control units, current events, international news, poetry, security, Spanish, U.S. government reporting, and issues faced by the elderly, wimmin and LGBTQ prisoners. There were a wide range of topics suggested and the *ULK* staff will be discussing all of them as we strive to improve *Under Lock & Key*.

A few prisoners responded to some of the survey questions requesting that *ULK* be "less racial", and "stop generalizing whites as oppressors" while one respondent liked "your hate against white people." These responses represent a fundamental misunderstanding of the MIM(Prisons) political line around nation. We do not hate white people; we hate the imperialist system which kills, tortures and oppresses the majority of the world's people for the wealth and enjoyment of the minority. We are scientists and we see clearly that in the United States the white nation is part of the minority of imperialist allies leading global oppression. But we also can see that the majority of the people in Russia before the revolution in 1917 who were oppressed were "white." It is not skin color that determines people's status as oppressor or oppressed. However, because of national oppression in the world today, we do see whole nations of people oppressed as a group by other nations. The white nation in the United States is an oppressor group, and there are many oppressed nations in the Third World. From an economic perspective, the other nations within U.S. borders are also part of the oppressors (New Afrikans, Chican@s, etc.), but these groups also face national oppression and so have some interest in anti-imperialism. It's a complex system, that requires careful analysis and cannot be boiled down to race or hate against white people. We hope these readers will engage with us further for study to understand our position.

In this issue of *Under Lock & Key* we are featuring an extra four pages of content, which

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Update on CA Grievance Lawsuits

by a comrade of United Struggle from Within
December 2013

I have filed a petition in Los Angeles County Superior Court on the inadequacy of the grievance procedure in California prisons. I've also written letters to the California Attorney General's Office, the LA County District Attorney's Office, the Governor's office and various media outlets in order to seek their assistance in forcing the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) staff to honor their own policies and regulations. All of my above efforts were to no avail.

The LA County Superior Court ordered an informal response when I filed my petition. The California Attorney General's office assumed the position of respondent to my petition and asked for an extension of time to reply to my petition, and then they failed to meet even that deadline. Before the Attorney General replied, the court denied my petition stating that I was not in compliance with the grievance procedure, despite being unable to cite a single grievance regulation that I hadn't complied with. This judicial abdication of CDCR staff lawlessness is routine in California state-level courts.

I tried addressing the inadequate grievance procedure in the federal courts, by way of a federal civil suit that I filed against California State Prison - Corcoran. The ruling on this was that the CDCR's violation of their grievance procedure does not create a federal constitutional violation, basically saying that the due process clause is meaningless. The case is now pending in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, case number 12-17419.

My "take-away" from my efforts so far is that in dealing with these government types (da pigs, bureaucrats, politicians, government, attorneys, etc.) in general, you're up against brazenly socioeconomically biased, unreasonable, spiteful, hypocritical, out-of-touch, legitimized sociopaths. They work together to justify clearly unlawful behavior, and are adverse to a system of legitimate checks and balances. They see barely disguised partiality, in the disposition of their duties, as reasonable and good. We see evidence of this daily. I mean, the recently exposed NSA spy program is beyond any reasonable dispute a violation of the Fourth Amendment, yet they go on unapologetically violating the same constitution that they claim to cherish, absolutely Orwellian with the "double-think."

What irritates me even more is the public's complacency in the face of this brazen tyranny by this nation's power elite. The Declaration of Independence states that it is not only a right, but a duty for the people to replace a lawless government. When will we honor that duty? Thank you for your time, consideration, and your work performed on behalf of the people.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We agree with this comrade's conclusions, and of course, we

Continued on page 13...

Victory Over Stamp Confiscation at San Quentin

by a California prisoner
November 2013

Here at San Quentin's death row we recently won a small victory. The recent mass disallowing of all writing supplies sent via first-class mail to San Quentin's death row AC/SHU prisoners has been halted. But be advised, there is nothing in evidence to support the idea these terrorists in pig clothing have dropped their last propaganda bomb, or that their about face was motivated by guilty conscience dredged up by visits from three holiday spirits.

Consider some underlying facts: November 2013 *San Francisco Bay View* national Black newspaper reports significant influx of "stamp donations" from a drive discreetly organized by San Quentin death row prisoners. Mass disallowing of stamps coincided with the drive. As the drive progressed, the pigs' terrorist activities increased. Disallowing began in spurts around May 2013, capricious post-interpretations of the property matrix ensued, and by mid-September the pen's hierarchy went hog wild.

Appeal #CSQ-J-13-03205 was submitted October 27, explaining exactly how operational procedure 608 article 7 was being illegally circumvented. This appeal was rejected by appeals coordinator puppet M.L. Davis on November 1. Davis offered to process the appeal if appellant directed a CDCR 22 to the mailroom. Davis also demanded appellant remove copies of Article 7 and OP0212 which are in fact the official rules/directives regarding "items enclosed in incoming first-class mail."

At the same time the appeal was being drafted, various articles describing the terrorist attacks on everybody's right to freedom of ex-

Failed Nebraska Protest Shows Importance of Studying Political Theory

by a Nebraska prisoner
December 2013

Just recently there was a boycott here from eating and a refusal to lockdown, leave the yard, or go to our bunks. There were a few fires started and prisoners made it hard for officers to do count.

As good as it might have felt to buck the system, this short lived revolution seemed to be useless because there was no bottom line or demands, and they ended up putting us on more restriction than we were on before. They feed us 2 cold bag lunches for breakfast and dinner, no visits, no church, no club activities, no yard, no one works, no phones (now restored), no outgoing mail (now restored), no library or law library, and officers give you disciplinary reports for every minor thing you do (passing food, sharing books, talking after 10pm, etc.).

The outcome of this "lost cause" shows the importance of studying MIM's concepts and ideology. One thing it did do is show the oppressor that the oppressed do have the will and intent to stand up. But a revolution that's lead by emotions will never win.

pression were *en route* to local small presses, national news outlets, and global social networks by way of prisoner mail. Some articles included instructions on how everyone here, and outside ground zero, could inundate the pen's hierarchy with a barrage of "appeals relating to mail and correspondences" (15 CCR 3137).

This evidence suggests a combination of individual administrative appeals, and the imminent threat of having their pig-tailed asses exposed to the public, is what forced the pen's hierarchy to rethink their positions. This is also an example of standard pig-headed tactics designed to make resistance to their control unit torture tactics seem futile. Their undermining goal is to crush, kill, and destroy our will to organize against them in peaceful protest. Their motive was fear that the struggle is gaining momentum. In fact, their pig-headed terrorist tactics are evidence that it is! Yes, we are gaining momentum, making a world of difference into a world of solidarity which is not indifferent to the rights of anyone in it.

Enclosed with this "announcement of small victory" from the secret torture unit at San Quentin is five 46 cent stamps which were withheld since May 2013. That by itself is not much but if everyone of the global readership would match that contribution in stamps or cash to extend the reach of this publication which amplifies our voices, it would add significant momentum to the struggle.

MIM(Prisons) adds: Donations from prisoners funded an additional four pages in this issue of *Under Lock & Key*. San Quentin is not the first to crack down on stamp donations in a direct attack on the free speech of the oppressed to support media outlets that promote their voices. ★

Another issue at hand here is the refusal to let prisoners out on parole because one person who was let out murdered 4 people (he did his full time, no parole, and he asked for mental health help before he was let out but they refused him.) Now the system wants to make us do more time on our sentence (80% instead of 50%), and make it a longer wait to go to work centers. They haven't taken into consideration all the successful parolees and how broken the system is in preparing prisoners for society.

One thing we must keep in mind is that "a man who stands upon the corners of the paths and points the way, but does not go, is just a pointer and a block of wood can do the same."

MIM(Prisons) adds: This comrade raises a very important point about how we must learn from our failures as well as our successes. And in the case of this protest, as well as many other spontaneous acts of resistance in prisons across the country, the lesson is often that we need to do more to build our level of political knowledge and study theory and strategy so that we can formulate the best approach to our local

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- 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*. It is free for prisoners! 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.

Spread Unlock the Box DVD - Let your contacts on the outside know about this important 2 hour documentary on long-term isolation cells and the struggle to abolish them. Send them to the website: www.abolishcontrolunits.org/movie

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 simply discuss this issue of *Under Lock & Key*. Choose what to study next based on what concepts stump you in this issue. Send us periodic reports on what you have been studying, and we will send you plenty of literature to delve into. We can also help get the reading materials through the mail to your comrades if needed. As you study, you can 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.

FIGHT CENSORSHIP

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

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.

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.

Many prisoners write about the horrible things happening to them with the mindset that once the outside world finds out, their problems will be over and the perpetrators punished. This expectation is a myth, but it is still important to report on conditions through *ULK*.

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

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.

TEXAS RESTRICTION TO 5 INDIGENT LETTERS / MONTH

Texas recently revised their Correspondence Rules to restrict indigent prisoners to only 5 letters per month. A Prisoners' Legal Clinic contributor submitted a letter and a sample Step 1 Grievance Form for Texas prisoners to use to protest the restriction on indigent mail. See page 13 for more info.

DAY OF PEACE AND SOLIDARITY

In remembrance of the Attica uprising of 1971, start organizing now with people in your facility for the third annual day of peace and solidarity on September 9, 2014. 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 the principles on p.2).

FUNDING NEEDED TO EXPAND ULK

If you want to send in regular donations, 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. Each copy of *ULK* costs about \$1 to print and mail. To cover the cost of your issue and one more, that's \$2 per issue or \$12 per year. You can pay at each issue, or all up front. Just tell us how much you want to pledge and we'll send you more info. ULK Sustainer donations all go toward adding more content to *ULK*.

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. If you want to send a one-time check, let us know first.

FL Prisoners Struggle Against Having to Pay for Visits

by a Florida prisoner
January 2014

[In November a USW comrade in Moore Haven Correctional Institution in Florida reported that the prison was taking 10% out of prisoners commissary or trust fund accounts each week and that they were being charged for family visits. The article below is a response to that report.]

This is the second time that the Florida Department of Corrections (FDOC) has tried to impose these despotic demands that I know of. The last time they tried to steal prisoners' money three ways: 1) charging prisoners \$1 for every Disciplinary Report (D.R.) we get, 2) charging prisoners' families to come visit us, and 3) taking 10% out of prisoners' commissary or trust fund account. This was attempted at Okeechobee Correctional Institution.

In response to prisoners' complaints the captain went around to all the dorms and lieutenants at count time and claimed they did not know where the proposed memorandum came from but FDOC headquarters in Tallahassee told them they know nothing about that memorandum, they did not circulate it, and it's bogus and will not stand.

Rest assured that Tallahassee does know about the memorandum at Moore Haven CI. They tried it at one prison and it did not work so they are trying it at Moore Haven because (a) it is a private institution run by Corrections Corporation of America, and (b) are short-timers. They are trying Moore Haven because they feel

Pigs in TX Make Power Move to Silence Revolutionary Voices

by USW88 of United Struggle from Within
December 2013

In a move that caught some of us off guard, the Texas Board of Criminal Injustice has issued an order to drastically change the indigent mail policy within the Texas Department of Criminal Injustice, which runs over 111 Texas state prisons. In August 2013 the board convened and decided that starting October 1, 2013, indigent prisoners will only be allowed to mail 5 general correspondence letters per month! Indigent prisoners were previously allotted 5 letters per week. The primary reason cited for the drastic cut is the financial costs involved in providing postage for the tens of thousands of indigent prisoners housed in Texas prisons. However, there is a very real attack being aimed at the growing number of revolutionary voices that are popping up around Texas to expose the barbaric treatment and inhumane conditions that exist in Texas. It is validation to many of us that our voices are being heard by outside supporters and this new policy is definitely a retaliatory reactionary response to our activism.

Just this year alone has exposed so many major problems in Texas:

1. Texas surpassed 500 executions of human beings on June 26 2013.

they have more to lose and don't know this trick has been tried at Okeechobee CI before.

Here is how we defeated Tallahassee and the institution. At least 98% of the prisoners filed grievances saying that their family was being subjected to robbery and racketeering. This is organized crime against prisoners and their families under the RICO Act, committed by the government against its own citizens. Then prisoners had their families on the phone to the secretary of FDOC, Governor and state representatives raising pure hell about the way they were being unjustly treated via extortion and harassment by FDOC. The last powerful thing we did was had a sit down strike like good old Martin Luther King Jr. Thus everybody would not leave the dorm. That worked so good because (1) it's non-violent, (2) it stopped all work production, (3) there are not enough confinement cells to lock everybody up in, and (4) it's hard to justify locking a bunch of people up because they and their families refuse to be abused by the government. The sit-down strike got FDOC minds right real fast.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade asked about the progress on the grievance campaign in Florida as well. Yet h story above seems like the greatest example of a grievance victory we've heard from that state. Turning grievances into campaigns is about mobilizing the imprisoned lumpen as a group. That is the only way justice can be enforced. It is part of building unity of all oppressed people to end the injustice that is inherent to the imperialist system, and creating a better world for everyone. ★

2. A wrongful death lawsuit was lodged against Texas in regards to the extreme heat (and the pigs joined the prisoners!)
3. Texas leads the nation in prison sexual assault and abuse cases

Rashid of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party - Prison Chapter was moved to Texas from Oregon and the internet is buzzing with his detailed report of the mistreatment and abuse he has incurred since arriving in Texas.

Another new policy that came out of the August Board Meeting which needs our proactive resistance prohibits prisoners from receiving stationary through the mail. Starting 1 March 2014, you will only be allowed to purchase stationary through the commissary. TDCJ is attempting to create a monopoly. Once this happens, they will be able to charge whatever prices they wish for their stationary. Start organizing resistance to this policy NOW!

Comrades, the U.S. Department of Injustice doesn't give a shit about us. In order to actuate change for ourselves we must unite in solidarity, get active with USW and MIM(Prisons), link up with sincere activists and media outlets who are sympathetic to our cause and "mash the gas" on these oppressors. Texas hates media coverage,

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...Need for Study

situation. There is an organizing strategy called focoism that attempts to promote and utilize the spontaneity of the masses to launch a revolution. There is a long history of spontaneous attempts at protest and the focoist strategy of revolution around the world that show us this approach generally leads to more repression, not to victory for the oppressed. We have a responsibility, as revolutionary leaders (and this extends to all readers of *Under Lock & Key*) to learn from this history and apply these lessons to our work today. MIM(Prisons) has a lot of literature on spontaneity, focoism and organizing strategy. Write to us to request study materials on this topic. ★

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...CA Grievances

harbored no real expectations of action from the bureaucrats' offices and courts going into this campaign. This is why we constantly stress the need to organize people around these demands. The pigs are not usually going to do something just because it's right. They are more likely to do something when they are pressured to do it. And pressure can only be applied when prisoners are organized for their common interests.

This is class struggle of the imprisoned lumpen against the bourgeois classes. When this struggle does not exist, our so-called "rights" under bourgeois democracy disappear, demonstrating that they never really existed in their own right. That is why we don't hesitate to report this comrade's failures, because they underline that important lesson. They also allow us to highlight the real victory in the grievance campaign, which is prisoners across many states acting in unison, sharing information and strategizing. Our strategies around this campaign need to keep the big picture of the balance of power in mind so that we do not get lost in an endless cycle of give and take with the pigs. ★

Democracy Denied to Abused Prisoners by CCI Warden

by a California prisoner
December 2013

The wardens in the California prisons that have SHUs are to meet with the prisoners to address the human rights violations that go on here and make the necessary changes to put a stop to these abuses. But here in Tehachapi they are so corrupt and unethical that they will not meet with us. Instead they took it upon themselves to intentionally not process our 602s [grievance forms]. Every 602 we file to address the ongoing neglect and abuse of authority by California Correctional Institution (CCI) officials either gets lost or rejected under made-up policies. Their reasons for rejecting them are nowhere in the Title 15 or Department Operations Manual. When we prove them wrong is when our 602s go missing.

I have brought this abuse of authority to the warden, captain, and lieutenant's attention with no results. To my surprise I was informed that it was these high ranking officials who instruct-

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CA Strike Negotiations Update

by a California prisoner
December 2013

Since the July 8, 2013 hunger strike/work stoppage was suspended (5 September 2013) we've faced extreme retaliation ranging from multiple large scale cell searches to very small portions of food, etc. In Pelican Bay State Prison comrades have reported losing some of the granted supplemental demands (I told 'em so). Updates from October on the negotiations are basically saying CDCR is not willing to break/compromise any further on the 5 core demands.

A few COs allegedly got attacked, isolated incidents for whatever reasons. In all, we hope to remain a peaceful protest, at least until a final resolve. We remain committed in supporting the New Afrikan and/or prisoner class regardless of the torturous/inhumane conditions to which we're currently enduring. "Knowledge is power, information is freedom, and education is our mandate." Long live Comrades George Jackson, Frantz Fanon, Mao Zedong, Malcolm X, VI Lenin, and Karl Marx. We will endure.

MIM(Prisons) adds: This report on the California prisoner strike is unfortunately just the news we expected from negotiations with the state over improvements in conditions. Promises to address prisoner concerns are easy to make in the face of massive protests and media attention, and quick to be broken as soon as the attention dies down and prisoners stop their protest. We know there are thousands of prisoners in California committed to this cause and ready to take up action again. Leaders must take this opportunity to once again build the support of California prisoners as a whole, and work out a strategy that will lead to the best possible outcome for those in this fight. In the article "Setting Goals in California" in *ULK 31*, we discussed the possibility that tactical changes are needed, including the possibility of demands being formulated locally in each prison, while trying to achieve as much unity as possible across the state. Regardless of the tactics, we must be building revolutionary education and creating a cadre of solid activists in every prison so that we are prepared for whatever the state throws at us. ★

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...Inside and Out

brutality and imprisonment, far higher than their representation in this country overall.

We agree with this comrade that reforms will not fundamentally change the system of imperialist oppression. Still we must fight for those rights that will better enable us to educate and organize, while building towards the long term goal of revolution. ★

Note: Raleigh News & Observer, December 15, 2013



Health Victory After Group Action at RJ Donovan

by a California prisoner
December 2013

I was about to begin litigating matters regarding the ventilation system here when I came up with one last ditch effort to try and handle this issue on a diplomatic level. I acquired about 60 CDCR Form 22s [informal grievances], and I found 30 fellow comrades who were willing to sign their name to them after I typed up all the formal complaints. All of those Form 22s were sent to the Plant Operations Engineer's Department, and we sent another 30 to the Plant Operations Supervisor. At the same time I had a good friend of mine and some relatives mail in a series of Citizen's Complaints on the same subject. Plus, the Ombudsman for R.J. Donovan Correctional Facility, Gabriel Vela came here in response to a letter I had sent to him over the ventilation problem. In other words, Plant Operations got bombed on from all sides, and they responded accordingly. They were up on the housing units today replacing the twenty plus exhaust vents that were not working on our building. Due to that equipment failure we were experiencing extremely high temperatures, humidity, and poor air quality.

Ohio Prisoners Take Up Legal Fight Over Medical Neglect

by an Ohio prisoner
December 2013

Though it is very difficult to rally my fellow prisoners here at Ohio State Penitentiary (OSP) to support any cause, I am happy to say that a small group of revolutionary minded brothers here have come together to fight against OSP's medical department with the assistance of the Ohio branch of the ACLU. I know that comrades in other states, such as California, Nevada and Texas have it much worse than us here in Ohio. But having been the victim of this state's deliberate indifference, I know how it feels to be denied the medical care that is my right as a human being and I am outraged not only for myself but also for all of my incarcerated, abused and oppressed brothers. A victory in this fight is a step on the road to revolution for us all and I hold out the highest of hopes for these comrades and their struggle.

I truly wish there was more good news for me to report from my cage in OSP but sadly, here as in most prisons, good news is hard to come by. Please add my name to the *Under Lock*

...Continued from previous page

...5 Letters

so now we are forced to really make our correspondence count. Drop all the letters to organizations that are only offering lip service with no action and get with this movement! Share *Under Lock & Key*, increase your political study, stand up to the pigs. Don't let the comrades in California be the only true revolutionary soldiers.

MIM(Prisons) adds: Write in to get a copy of the sample grievance submitted by a comrade on the new indigent mail policy, with addresses for who to contact to protest this new restriction on prisoner correspondence. ★

Things can be accomplished if you hit 'em with overwhelming force. They knew that those 60 Form 22s would more than likely translate into the same amount of 602 appeals [formal grievances], which in case you don't know translates into about \$1,500 a piece in man hours to process each one of them. I'll let you do the math. So, things can be done in numbers, "Yes We Can."

MIM(Prisons) adds: This comrade has been actively pushing the campaign to have grievances heard in California, which may also have contributed to these particular grievances getting such a direct response. His work to mobilize comrades there is commendable. Of course, this is just one small battle and just one piece of the work that USW leaders need to be doing. It doesn't cost them \$1,500 to throw your grievance in the trash can. These types of campaigns need to be pushed with a healthy dose of political education to develop comrades politically, so that this type of unity can reach higher levels and address the real systematic problems. MIM(Prisons) runs correspondence study groups and offers materials to help USW comrades run their own study groups inside. ★

& Key mailing list and let me know of any way I can help to support your organization. Also, at this point, I am starved for literature so if you have or are aware of any programs that can help me to get books and literature please let me know.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We appreciate people sending us reports like this about battles, both small and large, taking place across the country. We see the value of connecting struggles across states and learning from the successes and failures of people in other prisons. *Under Lock & Key* reports on these types of battles, but we go even further and offer political analysis and education around these struggles. We are not satisfied with simply fighting for small improvements in medical care or mail policies. Such improvements alleviate the suffering and improve the ability of our comrades behind bars to engage in political organizing, but they should also be part of our broader work to educate and build a strong and committed political center that understands the need to take on the imperialist system as a whole in order to dismantle the criminal injustice system. ★

Setback in Food Refusal Protest

by a South Carolina prisoner
November 2013

We recently had a blow to morale here in my dorm. A refusal to accept cold food went wrong as only a quarter of us refused. Since we were locked down, and only eat twice a day on weekends, most just took it. That left a few saying they would never participate again. However, *ULK* is a good morale boost because it shows that the struggle is being fought everywhere. Maybe it will help them focus on the real issues. All I can do is keep trying. ★

Solo Estoy Haciendo mi Trabajo, El Experimento de Prisión de Stanford

por Wiawimawo de MIM(Prisiones)
traducido por un@ prisoner@ en California
March 2013

Un artículo publicado recientemente desafía el concepto psicológico de "prejuicio de conformidad" que evolucionó del experimento de prisión realizado por Zimbardo y del experimento Maestro/Estudiante de Milgram.(1) El artículo establece conexiones a un trabajo reciente sobre la opresión llevada a cabo por los Nazis en la Alemania de Hitler, el cual concluye en general que la voluntad de las personas para lastimar u oprimir a otros en situaciones semejantes es "menos sobre gente que sigue ordenes a ciegas y más acerca de conseguir que las personas crean en la importancia de lo que están haciendo."

En el experimento de prisión de Stanford (1971) estudiantes fueron asignados papeles de guardias y prisioneros en un simulacro, pronto de que los dos grupos tomaron el com-

portamiento típico de su papel, con los guardias tratando a los prisioneros con tal severidad que el experimento se detuvo prematuramente. MIM(Prisiones) ha utilizado esto como ejemplo de que la opresión es sistemática y no podemos reparar las cosas simplemente con emplear los guardias adecuados, mas bien debemos cambiar el sistema. En ULK19, otro camarada se refirió al artículo en una discusión de como el comportamiento de la gente en prisión está condicionado.(2) La conclusión más determinista que la gente se lleva de esto es que la gente se comportará mal para conformarse a las expectativas. El experimento Milgram (1963) involucró a participantes que eran el "maestro," siendo fuertemente animado a que aplicara falsos choques eléctricos a "estudiantes" que contestaren preguntas incorrectamente. La conclusión aquí era que los humanos seguirán ordenes ciegamente en vez de pensar por si mismos si lo que están haciendo está bien.

"Esto pudo ser la defensa a la que se in-

clinaron cuando buscaban minimizar su culpabilidad" (31), pero la evidencia sugiere que funcionarios como Eichmann tenían un buen entendimiento de lo que estaban haciendo y tomaban orgullo en la energía y aplicación que ellos le traían a su trabajo.(1)

El análisis en este artículo reciente es mas apropiado para un análisis de clase social. Como los autores señalan, está bien establecido que los alemanes como Adolf Eichmann, entusiásticamente participaron en el régimen Nazi, y es la evaluación de MIM(Prisiones) evaluación que existe una clase y perspectiva nacional que le permitió a los alemanes ver lo que estaban haciendo como bueno para ellos y su gente.

Mientras que nuestro análisis del experimento de prisión de Stanford se presta para promover la necesidad de cambio sistemático, esto no sucede con la psicología que surgió de él. El concepto "prejuicio de conformidad" respalda la teoría del gran líder, la teoría de la historia, en donde figuras como Hitler y Stalin eran todopoderosos y omniscientes y los millones de personas que los apoyaban eran robots sin mente. Esta teoría evidentemente disuade un análisis de condiciones y de las fuerzas sociales que interactúan y cambian esas condiciones. En contraste, observamos la teoría psicológica mas reciente en este artículo como afin hacia un análisis psicológico que incluye clase y nación.

Como la mayoría de nuestros lectores reconocerán rápidamente, guardias de prisión en la vida real frecuentemente hacen sus cosas con gran entusiasmo. Aquellos guardias que no creen que se necesita golpear a los prisioneros para crear orden n o los maltratan. Claramente los diferentes comportamientos son decisiones conscientes basadas en las creencias del individuo, como los autores de este artículo afirman. Existe un fuerte componente de clase y nación en el quien se manda a prisión y quien trabaja en prisiones. Esto ayuda a justificar la metodología más opresiva en la mente del personal de prisión. A pesar de ser superior a las conclusiones originales que se han hecho, este artículo reciente está limitado al dominio de la psicología misma y así falla en proveer una explicación al comportamiento de grupos de gente con una posición diferente en la sociedad.

No deberíamos limitar nuestro análisis a guardias de prisión y policías, los cuales son los ejemplos obvios del problema de la nación opresiva. Ward Churchill recordó el nombre de Eichmann en su infame pieza sobre el segundo ataque al World Trade Center para mencionar aquellos que trabajaron en las torres gemelas. Como aquellos americanos, Adolf Eichmann no era un asesino, sino un burócrata que estaba dispuesto a tomar decisiones que le costaron la muerte a millones de personas. Churchill escribió:

"Apelar a la 'ignorancia' -- después de todo una palabra derivada de 'ignorar' -- es menos que una excusa entre esta élite relativamente bien educada. Esto fue hasta el punto de que muchos

El MIM(Prisiones)

El Ministro Maoísta Internacional de Prisiones, MIM(Prisiones), es una célula de revolucionarios que sirve las masas oprimidas 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, apoyamos la auto-determinación de todas naciones y gentes. Apoyamos a las naciones que deciden desunirse de la economía imperialista, incluyendo el derecho de las semi-colonias internas de separarse de los Estados Unidos. Hoy, el sistema de prisiones de los EEUU es una parte importantísima del estado imperialista que es usado para prevenir la auto-determinación de las naciones oprimidas. 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 maoístas 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 fraterna.

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 oprimidas (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 República 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.

Continúa en la página siguiente...

Book Review:

The Girl who Played with Fire

by cipactli of Brown Berets - Prison Chapter
January 2014

by Steig Larsson
Vintage books Zoro
Paperback \$7.99
724 pages

More Gratuitous Sex and Historical Revisionism

This book is the second in a trilogy by Larsson which started with *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. (write in for that review) In it the two main characters, Mikael Blomkvist the journalist and Lisbeth Salander the tech savvy researcher, continue once more in a deadly hunt for truth. This time Blomkvist uncovers a sex trafficking operation and decides to publish a piece exposing these crimes against the people, when folks start getting murdered and his colleague Salander is implicated in some murders. And so once more the pair dive into another job to uncover the truth.

Initially I became interested in this trilogy after learning that the author, Larsson, was an "expert in Nazi organizations" and as a novelist his work would either consciously or unconsciously reflect this "expertise." Propaganda is a powerful medium whether in the literary field or in art and so I thought I would check out Larsson's second book in this trilogy. This trilogy is drenched in violence and sexual abuse, even torture. I suspect his being immersed in Nazi history and ideology while developing his "expertise" leads to this tendency.

This book starts with the character Salander being on vacation in Grenada and gives a watered down version of Grenada's revolutionary history. Larsson writes: "Some two hundred years later, in 1979 a lawyer called Maurice Bishop started a new revolution, which the guidebook says was inspired by the communist dictatorships in Cuba and Nicaragua. But Salander was given a different picture of things when she met Phillip Campbell, teacher, librarian and Baptist teacher. She had taken a room in his guesthouse for the first few days. The gist of the story was that Bishop was a popular folk leader who had deposed an insane dictator, a UFO nutcase who had devoted part of the meagre national budget to chasing flying saucers. Bishop had lobbied for economic democracy and introduced the country's first legislation for sexual equality. And then in 1983 he was assassinated." (p. 15)

What Larsson doesn't say is Maurice Bishop was assassinated after an Amerikan instigated coup – think Libya most recently. Bishop attempted to free the Grenadian nation from imperialist influence and Amerika began to work toward overthrowing this nation just as it's currently doing to Syria. Larson, who no doubt was aware of this history, failed to be honest with the people about Grenada and the Amerikan invasion of marines once Bishop was assassinated. It would have been good to read the real story

...Continued from page 13

ed the appeals coordinators to not process our 602s. These officials here would rather cover up and falsify state documents instead of addressing and following their own policies. We have the documentation to prove this, but if we can't get our 602s processed then it's pointless. These officials behave like they are above the law. They lie and openly admit that they don't have to follow their own policies regardless of who is negatively affected.

MIM(Prisons) adds: This is a good illustration of what we mean when we call a system a bourgeois democracy. In such a system, certain freedoms are very important, especially those related to trade and exploitation. But for the oppressed peoples there is no democracy in this system. These state officials, who are bound by the laws of the state, regularly break those laws with impunity when it comes to the oppressed. That is why we say the rule of the bourgeoisie must be replaced by a rule by the proletarian class, whose interests would respect the rights of all to be free of the abuses prisoners face in the United States.

We believe this requirement that wardens meet with prisoners is an outcome of the recent

woven into this novel but instead Larsson states, in step with imperialism, "The United States invaded the country and set up a democracy." (p. 16) What the united snakes sets up after invasion is neo-colonialism, not democracy. Amerika is a parasite, compelled to exploit Third World nations.

In *The Girl who Played with Fire*, the character Blomkvist is approached to expose sex trafficking and so the book attempts to examine gender oppression:

"Apart from a handful of women working on their own who profit from the sex trade, there is no other form of criminality in which the sex roles themselves are a precondition for the crime, nor is there any other form of criminality in which social acceptance is so great, for which society does so little to prevent." (p. 113)

I don't totally agree with this last point in Amerika, although I agree that gender oppression is great and society does little about it in Amerika. But there is another form of criminality which is socially acceptable, and that is national oppression. In the United States, Brown, Black and Red peoples are overwhelmingly imprisoned, given life sentences and placed on death row or murdered in the streets by the state, and social acceptance is great. Many don't do shit about it, and others think the oppressed nations bring it upon ourselves. Chican@s are living under occupation. Aztlán, the geographical homeland of the Chicano nation (the southwest), was stolen by Amerika via murder and terror. Many Amerikans act as if this is normal. Even so-called "revolutionaries" like the revisionist RCP-USA are against Aztlán regaining our land that is occupied by the imperialists. So

Continued on page 18...

...Appeals

prisoner strike in California that targeted the inhumane conditions of isolation specifically. But it is no surprise that at CCI the high-ranking officials are denying prisoners' access to the legal appeals system through which they are required to file. In fact, this is not specific to CCI; we hear regularly about grievances being "lost" in many prisons. And this is why the campaign to demand grievances be addressed was initiated in California in 2010. This campaign won't solve the larger problem of torture in the SHU, or overall corruption in the criminal injustice system, but it gives prisoners a systematic way to fight for their limited legal rights to appeal wrongdoing by the prison staff. Write to us today for a copy of the grievance petition for your state. Organizing around this campaign is one way to organize the oppressed nations and classes to eventually replace those in power now. ★

Spanish Translators & Editor 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.

If you have great written Spanish skills, volunteer to edit articles others have already translated.

Write in to put in work!

...Continuado de la pág. anterior

...Stanford

de ellos, teniendo éxito en las actividades en que estaban implicados, no eran conscientes de los costos y consecuencias a los demás. Esto ocurrió por el negarse absolutamente a ver." (3)

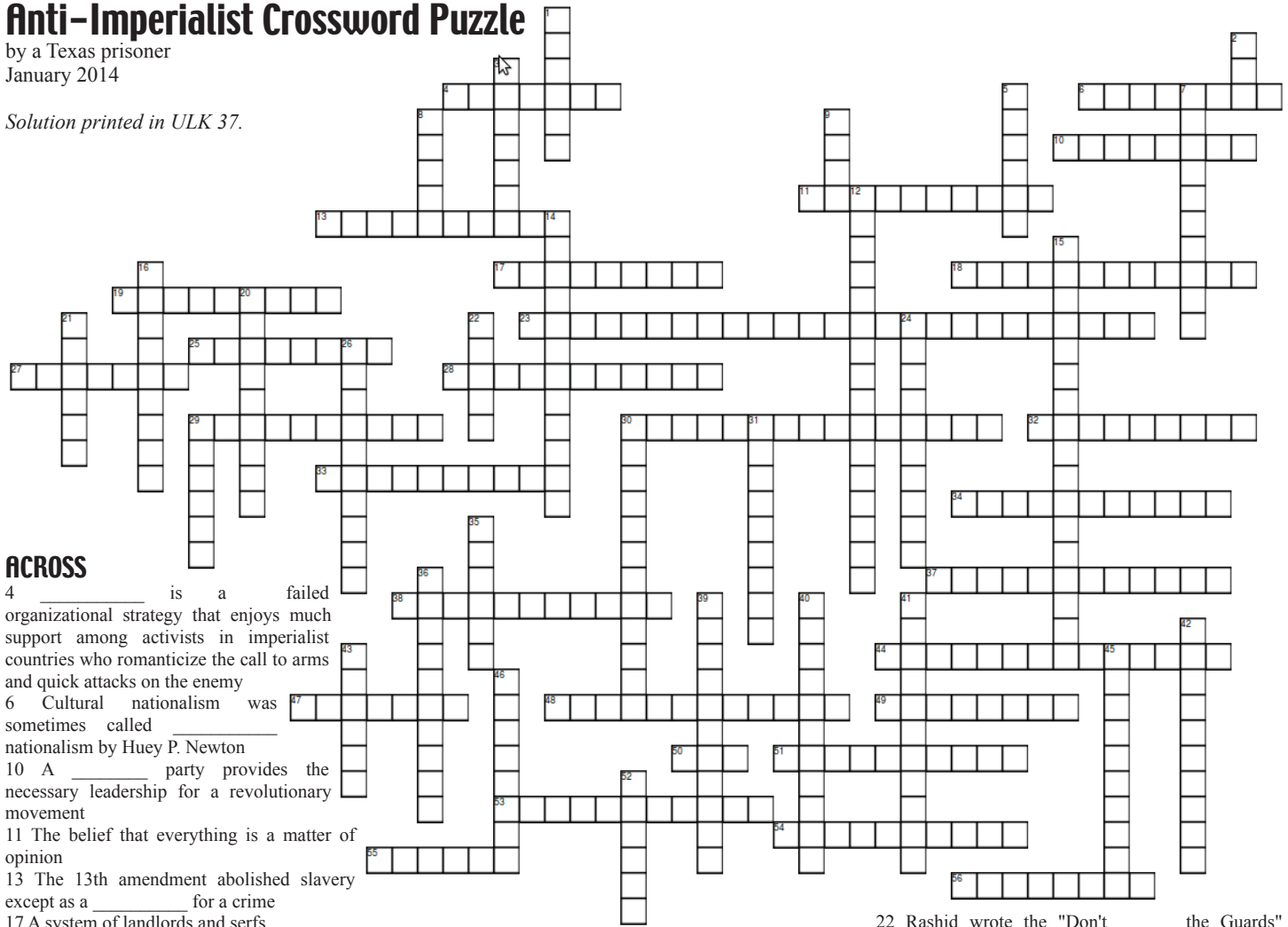
Los autores de este artículo reciente recalcan que el llevar a cabo algo como lo que los Nazis hicieron en Alemania requiere creatividad apasionada para sobresalir y reclutar a otros que creían en lo que estaban haciendo. Es lo que llamamos el factor subjetivo en el cambio social. Alemania se enfrentaba a condiciones objetivas de aflicción económica debido a haber perdido sus colonias en la primera guerra mundial, pero tomo el desarrollo subjetivo del Socialismo Nacional para crear el movimiento que transformó la gran parte del mundo. Es por eso que nuestro camarada, quien escribió sobre psicología y condicionalmente, estaba en lo cierto al recalcar el conocimiento es necesario para contrarrestar la opresión institucional que los prisioneros enfrentan. (2) Transformando el factor subjetivo, la conciencia del ser humano, es mucho más complicada que una necesidad inherente para conformarse u obedecer ordenes. Periodos de gran cambio en la historia ayudan a demostrar el elemento dinámico de conciencia grupal el cual es mucho mas flexible de lo que la psicología determinista nos haría creer. Esto es el por que la psicología nunca podrá determinar verdaderamente el comportamiento humano. Es estudiando, clase, naciones, genero y otros intereses de grupo que podemos predecir y cambiar el curso de historia. ★

Notas en la página 20...

Anti-Imperialist Crossword Puzzle

by a Texas prisoner
January 2014

Solution printed in ULK 37.



ACROSS

- 4 _____ is a failed organizational strategy that enjoys much support among activists in imperialist countries who romanticize the call to arms and quick attacks on the enemy
- 6 Cultural nationalism was sometimes called _____ nationalism by Huey P. Newton
- 10 A _____ party provides the necessary leadership for a revolutionary movement
- 11 The belief that everything is a matter of opinion
- 13 The 13th amendment abolished slavery except as a _____ for a crime
- 17 A system of landlords and serfs
- 18 Focusing your time on things that give you glory or that you somehow find personal pleasure in is called what?
- 19 A _____ is anything available for sale or exchange
- 23 Was the farthest historical advance towards communism (3 words)
- 25 The only time it is correct to evaluate a practice in relationship to an idea is within that _____
- 27 _____ Science positively asserts that the earth once existed in such a state that no man or any other creature existed or could have existed on it
- 28 Where it does impose repression, the ruling class may gain the popular support of the bourgeoisified workers in favor of what? (3 words)
- 29 A practical matter of fact way of approaching or assessing situations or solving problems
- 30 Under this the state nominally owns the means of production
- 32 Organizing societies according to peoples' needs
- 33 Love of one's country
- 34 The group that pays others less than the value of their work therefore making a profit off of them
- 37 The appropriation of surplus labor from workers by capitalists
- 38 At one time was a state capitalist country
- 44 They often believe in a kinder, gentler capitalism
- 47 Before his death Mao said he only wanted to be remembered as a what?
- 48 A major part of the imperialist state used to prevent self-determination of oppressed nations. (2 words)
- 49 _____ is a crucial issue for all serious revolutionaries that has recently received popular attention following the release of information by an NSA whistle-blower

- 50 To believe in _____ is to believe in mysticism.
- 51 The class of people who own enough property that they would not have to work to make a living
- 53 The highest stage of capitalism
- 54 The system under which non-workers control the production of wage workers
- 55 This class is rarely employed, often living as parasites on other proletarians
- 56 The dominance of one group over others

DOWN

- 1 A pig is a _____ officer
- 2 Developed the theory that a new bourgeoisie develops within the Party during socialism
- 3 The knowledge and application of knowledge on how to get from A to B the fastest
- 5 The most advanced stage of the science of revolution to date
- 7 Belief in one's own group being superior or of higher priority
- 8 _____ is a group of people defined by their relations to the means of production and their relationship to other people
- 9 A made up classification of people into groups to justify oppression through ideas of inferiority
- 12 Working class that benefits from the imperialist world's super exploitation of the Third World.
- 14 The Amerikan government has been promoting _____ politics for decades
- 15 The _____ - _____ refers to people who are exploiters but also must work
- 16 The belief in, or promotion of, ideas without basis in fact or without depth
- 20 Once labor is done
- 21 Marx said capitalism will _____ solutions to homelessness, hunger, illness, pollution, and war.

- 22 Rashid wrote the "Don't _____ the Guards" handbook
- 24 When _____ fails it is the fault of the vanguard party
- 26 Democratic _____ is a key question of organizational strategy that helps to ensure both the security of the organization and the appropriate application of the scientific method in testing out line and strategy across the organization
- 29 The majority of the world's _____ have a material interest in revolution.
- 30 Extra profits derived from workers paid less than what is necessary to reproduce their labor (ie. feed their children)
- 31 Abolition of power of people over people
- 35 A concept based in reality that is defined by a group's land, language, culture and economy
- 36 Who got Russia out of World War I?
- 39 This type of persyn commonly downplays class struggle and overplays the struggle to increase production and technical progress compared with political views.
- 40 The _____ originated in the industrial revolution which took place in England in the last half of the 18th century
- 41 They are free to sell their labor power (see 40 down)
- 42 The arrest of this group in China marked the restoration of capitalism.
- 43 _____ are imprisoned at rates 10 times those of whites for drug charges.
- 45 The condition of anorexia is a manifestation of gender _____
- 46 An ideology based on pre-scientific thinking
- 52 _____ culture is a more promising battle ground for the oppressed today than Egyptology or even kwanzaa.

...Continued from page 16

...Book Review

gender oppression is not the "only" socially acceptable crime. Like national oppression, class oppression is also socially acceptable to many but this is something else Larsson leaves out.

The Girl who Played with Fire is filled with sex. At one point Salander, while vacationing in Grenada, is having sex with a Black male teenager, who the author portrays as being eager but unsure of how to initiate sex with Salander, a white womyn. What the author doesn't reveal is this uncertainty in real life on how to initiate sex may be from centuries of oppression and lynchings of Black males after having sex with white wimmin, even if the womyn initiated sex or was the one who pursued the Black male in the first place. The character Blomkvist is having sex with Harriet, who was in the first book of the series. She is now a board member to the magazine *Millenium* where Blomkvist works.

Salander's old guardian, B Jurman, who raped her and who as a result she tortured in *Dragon Tattoo*, is back and in this book he hires some nazi-connected motorcycle club to take out Salander. She finds out and then her guardian turns up dead, along with two more people who are killed by a gun with Salander's fingerprints on the weapon. Salander becomes the prime suspect in these murders and so Blomkvist begins his own investigation to clear his ex-lover Salander's name.

Larsson describes how the character Salander, while being pursued for three murders, is targeted by the bourgeois press, and how

all her past is blasted all over the front pages of Swedish newspapers. In one article they describe her as being placed in a psychiatric institution where Salander was placed in a room the doctor described as being "free of stimuli" for being unruly. The author discusses this solitary confinement: "When she grew older she discovered that there was another term for the same thing. Sensory deprivation. According to the Geneva conventions, subjecting prisoners to sensory deprivation was classified as inhumane. It was a commonly used element in experiments with brainwashing conducted by various dictatorial regimes, and there was evidence that the political prisoners who confessed to all sorts of crimes during the Moscow trials in the 1930s had been subjected to such treatment." (p. 450)

Larsson attempts to show how sensory deprivation is inhumane, a fact that those of us housed in SHUs across Amerika can agree with. But Larsson, as a true Amerikan apologist, points the finger at Russia in the 1930s for using such treatment. This is bullshit! Russia in the 1930s was building socialism while encircled by imperialism and fighting off attacks for being the world base for revolution. Russia in the 1930s was gearing up for the war with Nazi Germany, sending Soviet tanks to fight Mussolini's fascists. This was a time when comrade Stalin also fought the Soviet-Japanese war of 1939. There were counter revolutionaries working with the imperialists to uproot socialism, and in Russia during the 1930s those imprisoned were given a trial to see if they would stay in prison or be released or face other penalties. This is in contrast to the thousands in solitary confinement here who do not even get a trial! We can not

even face our accusers! We are not placed in solitary for crimes or violence, but for our ideas, our thoughts or supposed beliefs! And we are kept in solitary until those brainwashed confess and implicate others after being subjected to this treatment by the capitalist dictatorial regime of Amerikkka! This is something Larsson refuses to admit in his capitalist propaganda books. It is common knowledge that Amerika imprisons a higher percentage of its people than any other country. Larsson does not even mention Amerika in discussing the use of sensory deprivation. My first "baptism" to a sensory deprivation cell by Amerika was at the ripe age of 12 so I'm well aware of what life is really like in the Amerikan capitalist dictatorial regime.

Salander soon learns that the persyn responsible for the murders she's accused of is an ex-Russian military intelligence man named Zala who she and her co-workers at *Millenium* magazine find out is also Salander's dad. Salander uncovers documents that track her life since childhood and reveal a coverup that has the Swedish government working with her father and providing him secret exile. The book ends with Salander attempting to take out her abusive father and ends with her father actually shooting and burying Salander, leaving her for dead, only to allow her to awaken in a shallow grave and unsuccessfully attempt to exact revenge on her wrongdoers. This book describes Salander as a lesbian man-hater but she only seems to exact justice on wimmin-abusers and stands up and takes on the most primitive patriarchal male chauvinists in her society. ★

Movie Review: The Butler, Movie Misleads Oppressed Nations

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
December 2013

The Butler (2013) portrays the life of Cecil Gaines, a butler in the White House for 34 years, starting in 1957. The movie is a fictionalized version of the story of Gene Allen's life. MIM(Prisons) sums up this movie as propaganda to quell the just anger of the oppressed nation masses, encouraging them to work within the system for small changes.

The focus of the movie is on the oppression of New Afrikans from the 1950s to the year 2008, dividing its focus between the White House and the successive Presidents, and the activists in the streets. In the streets the movie gives special focus to the Freedom Riders and Martin Luther King Jr. The movie derides the most important political leaders of the time, barely mentioning Malcolm X, and attempting to portray the Black Panther Party (BPP) as a brutally violent movement out to kill whites, just using the community service programs like free breakfast for school children as a cover.

The heroes of the movie include Gaines's son, Louis, who participates in the civil rights and activist movements over the years and eventually "learns" that the best way forward is to push for change from within, and runs for Con-

gress. We see his dedication as a Freedom Rider, and fierce commitment to freedom and justice, as Louis literally puts his life on the line, enduring brutal beatings, repeated imprisonments, and constant threat of death. Louis moves on to work with Martin Luther King Jr. in a highly praised non-violent movement, and then joins the BPP after King is killed. Louis turns from an articulate and brave youth into a kid spouting revolutionary platitudes that he doesn't seem to understand, making the BPP into a mockery of what it really represented.

The other heroes of the movie are the U.S. Presidents. With the exception of Nixon, who is portrayed as a drunk, all the other Presidents are humanized and made to appear appropriately sympathetic with the civil rights movement. While they all are shown saying things clearly offensive, racist, and in favor of national oppression, each President has a moment of redemption. John F. Kennedy tells Gaines that it is Gaines's persynal history and the story of his son's activism that changed his mind on the need for the civil rights movement. Even Ronald Reagan is shown secretly sending cash to people who write to him about their financial problems, and telling Gaines that he's sometimes worried that he's on the wrong side of the civil rights movement. On a positive note, all

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Movie Review: 12 Years a Slave

by Nikolai Brown of Anti-Imperialism.com
December 2013

12 Years a Slave is an acclaimed film about the real-life story of Solomon Northup, a free-man living in upstate New York with his family, who in 1841 was abducted, sold into slavery, and put to work on a plantation in Louisiana.

Aesthetically the film is well made. Actor Chiwetel Ejiofor, who plays Northup, does an excellent job of portraying the mental anguish and transformation inflicted through bondage. Scenes and shots are carried on slightly longer than in typical films, imparting to the audience a tension felt by the protagonist. The story proceeds in a slow measured pace representing the drawn-out bleakness of slave life.

Though not the typical Hollywood blockbuster, *12 Years a Slave* has been hailed by critics for the "horror" it depicts. After seeing the film, a reviewer for *Time* magazine proudly proclaimed she "will never look at this country the same again."

With popular films on controversial topics, it is worth examining why they are popular to begin with. Popular culture is part of the superstructure and functions to obscure and reinforce

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North Carolina Brutality on the Streets and in the Prisons

by a North Carolina prisoner
January 2014

Two recent stories in Durham, North Carolina show a clear pattern of law enforcement and the judicial system overstepping its boundaries. On 15 December 2013, officer Markeith Council, a Wake County Jailer, was found guilty of "involuntary manslaughter," after he slammed a prisoner on his head, not once, but twice.⁽¹⁾ The evidence showed that the prisoner, who was unarmed, and weighed less than half that of the 290 lb Council, was unconscious after initially hitting the concrete floor. The autopsy showed a severe laceration to the prisoner's skull, and several crushed vertebrae in his neck. This prisoner was incarcerated for an open container, drug paraphernalia, and a failure to appear, crimes that apparently now carry a death sentence.

The officer was only sentenced to a term of 90 days, and will spend all of his time in protective custody, no doubt receiving special privileges from former co-workers.

In the second story, a Durham teen, Jesus "Chuy" Huerta, was shot to death while his hands were cuffed behind his back in the back of a police car, in police custody. The teen was shot in the head, after being searched by the officers, and not found to be carrying a weapon.

Here's the kicker: the police investigation determined that the teen shot himself in the side of the head while handcuffed in the back of the car. The reports were only released after protests. During a candlelight vigil for Huerta, police in riot gear fired canisters of tear gas at mourners, and forced them to disperse.

In "Common Sense," Thomas Paine wrote: "Common sense should tell us that the powers which have endeavored to subdue us, are of all others, the most improper to defend us." The bourgeoisie cannot be reformed. Voting in new oppressors won't change things. The system is broken, it cannot be fixed. The oppressors, through reform, will only withdraw, make empty promises, and come back harder to crush the

oppressed. Those afraid to endanger themselves don't realize that they are already in danger. We are in danger from a group that will stop at nothing to maintain a stranglehold on us.

Lanesboro Correctional Institution, in Anson County, North Carolina, has been locked down since a single prisoner, acting alone, cut an officer on 19 November 2013. The prisoner, to my understanding, isn't even at this camp anymore. For weeks prisoners were forced to shower in full restraints (handcuffs, shackles, black box, waist chains, locks), and the lock-down is still 24 hours a day. Prisoners are only allowed to leave their cells to shower, or to go to work. There is no recreation, and food trays are served in the cells. All other activities have been halted until further notice. There is no foreseeable end to this "institutional lockdown," and staff are still claiming "security reasons," even though there hasn't been another incident since 19 November 2013. Until prisoners learn to stand together, this is the way things will remain.

MIM(Prisons) adds: This author is right that the incidents of violence on the streets and in the prisons are all related, and all part of a larger system of oppression that perpetuates the system of imperialism. This is a system that relies on the subjugation of some nations by others, both globally and within U.S. borders. The white nation has the power, and the oppressed nations in the United States are disproportionately locked behind bars, and victims of police brutality and murder. Even with a Black figurehead (Obama), the white nation still has the power and control. Statistics tell the story of the very few New Afrikans and Latin@s in positions of power (lackeys and figureheads) while these nations suffer the highest percentage of incidents of police

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...12 Years

extant class relations. What is commonly called "history" is merely a narrative regarding the past which advances specific collective interests in the present. Underlying its appropriately nerve-wracking aesthetics, *12 Years a Slave* is fundamentally political in the broad sense. And in this sense, it is fundamentally counter-revolutionary.

The broad message of *12 Years a Slave* is one against resisting oppression or violently rising up. Instead, perseverance and patience is better. According to the narrative, freedom and liberation can be attained by benevolent saviors from among oppressors.

The subject of the film is important for the film's popularity. There could be a major film depicting in a positive light the "true story" of Nat Turner or Denmark Vesey. Would such a film be as popular as *12 Years a Slave*? Probably not.

The notion of violent resistance comes up in the beginning of the film. Yet the lead plotter is quickly killed by a white rapist working aboard a slave ship [one of those rugged white "proletariat" types]. Never again does the film's protagonist attempt to violently resist. Instead, Northup takes the advice of another slave and conceals his identity and hides the fact he is educated.

Eventually Northup is "saved" after he meets a sympathetic bearded white carpenter from Canada (played by Brad Pitt) who is briefly hired by the plantation patriarch. Injustice, the film's narrative explains, is resolved not by mass resistance and class warfare but instead by the select graces of those among the oppressor classes (especially those whom we are accustomed to playing "good guy" starring roles).

Related to the overall message of the movie,

another problematic aspect of *12 Years a Slave* is the voyeuristic violence meted out against Northup and the other black slaves. Like the oddly vivid rape scene in *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, *12 Years a Slave* contains intense depictions of brutality against the oppressed. When it comes time for the oppressed to get revenge however, the audience must use its imagination or be narrated to about the futility of violence. In one scene Northup is forced to abuse another slave. Unfortunately, any analogy to the present is likely lost on the modern audience.

What is more interesting, *12 Years a Slave* represents the best of mainstream U.S. culture – high culture – but not mass culture at large. Whereas this counter-revolutionary narrative is widely extolled by what is commonly called the left, another segment of the population is infatuated with vapid "reality" TV shows such as "Duck Dynasty," which features millionaires who play racist, homophobic rednecks. For Third Worldists, this is further evidence that majority sections of imperialist nation populations lend their agency to reaction.

There is no wondering why *12 Years a Slave* is popular, despite its controversial topic. The film's overall message, the function of its narrative in modern society, is one which protects existing class structures by ideologically polemicizing against liberatory violence. While perpetuating the acceptability of viewing the "bad" violence against the oppressed, it falsely renders it safely in the past. This gives "enlightened" liberal audiences the ability to be grateful for their new-found understanding of the United States – without actually changing their understanding of the United States or the broader development of the modern system. More fundamental to the film's counterrevolutionary politics is the lack of sympathy for the violence of the oppressed, whether then or now, and faith in the miraculous intervention by philanthropic members of oppressor classes. ★

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...The Butler

of the Presidents were shown as reticent to take any positive action towards change until the popular movement forced them to act. This is the reality of any oppressor class.

Gaines does, in the end, come to the realization that real change was not going to come from the White House, and quits his job to join his son in activism in the streets. But this action is played up to be as much an attempt to reconcile his relationship with his son, as a dedication to activism itself. And the activism seems to end with just one protest. In the end, both Cecil and Louis celebrate the "victory" of Obama in the 2008 election as a sign that their battle is finally over.

The Butler does a good job of portraying the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s, but only as a minor part of the plot. And it ultimately suggests that New Afrikans should be satisfied with an imperialist lackey in the White House as a representation of their success and equality with whites. It fits into a group of recent movies that Hollywood has produced, such as *Lincoln* and *12 Years a Slave*, to rewrite American history to quell the contradiction between the oppressor nation and the New Afrikan internal semi-colony. ★

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Under Lock & Key No. 36 January/February 2014

Police Brutality: Isolated Incidents or Institutionalized Practices?

by Ehecatl of USW
November 2013

Many have seen the stunning October 28 video of police in New Mexico assaulting a New Afrikan family after pulling them over on the side of the road. To most of Amerika this type of footage is shocking for any number of reasons. Whether it be because the teenage son was tazered by police for trying to protect his mother from pig oppression, or because police shot at the kid-filled van. Most Amerikans deem this type of behavior unacceptable and they demand answers. Likewise, some within Amerika agree that this behavior is not what those who "protect & serve" should be doing, but they'll come up with excuses for the police such as, they only have a split second to react, and in the heat of the moment hesitation can cost you your life. And then there are the more convoluted excuses such as, the police did what they did because of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), or any other such stress-related condition associated with being a cop. And to the white settler-state, and even to some from the oppressed internal nations, these idealized excuses perfectly suffice. But the truth of the matter is that this type of behavior on the part of the pigs is acceptable exactly because that is how the police keep the oppressed in check. These types of abuses are not isolated incidents, but institutionalized practices that are part and parcel to maintaining white power in the United States.

To the Chican@ nation this type of police

brutality is nothing new, isolated or particular to New Afrikans. Rather it is part of reality for the oppressed of the Chican@ nation and any other internal semi-colony. For those of us growing up in the 80s and 90s in the ghettos and barrios of Amerika this was certainly a daily possibility, especially whenever we dared to venture out the hood and into or near the settler communities.

Integration into the consumer economy via labor aristocracy wages has brought privilege for the oppressed within U.S. borders via the stolen super-profits and cheap abundant goods from the periphery. But the reality of imperial dominance cannot be negated by class relations as they continue to be modified by national interests and the principal contradiction: imperialism vs. the oppressed nations. Leave it to the apologists for national oppression in Amerika, the post-modernist theorists and other petty-bourgeois intellectuals who would have us think that we've reached some type of "post-racialism" and that therefore it's ok to paint oneself in black-face for example, or dress up as your favorite Latino stereotype for Halloween because "race" relations in the United States have never been better. And the hystory of segregation is better forgotten. Yes "race" relations in the United States have changed profoundly, but let's not get it twisted, segregation was ended and civil rights were won exactly because of the strong national liberation movements and the threat of armed struggle that underlined the Black, Chi-

can@, Boriqua and First Nation power movements of the 1960s and 70s. What humyn dignity we have today is not owed to concessions and benevolence on the part of the oppressor nation and their power structure. Rather they are rights won by revolutionaries and masses before us; as there are no "rights," only power struggles.

Pigs almost always walk away with a slap on the wrist for abuses of power and attempted murder incidents such as the one in New Mexico, so let's not start believing that just because that shooting was caught on video it's gonna mean a conviction equaling the ones doled out to the Black and Brown in North America on a daily basis. If we want justice, we better go get justice and not expect it's gonna be given to us. ★

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...Stanford

Notas:

1. Haslam SA, Reicher SD (2012) Contesting the "Nature" Of Conformity: What Milgram and Zimbardo's Studies Really Show. *PLoS Biol* 10(11): e1001426. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1001426
2. for an in depth discussion of conditioning and other psychological concepts in relation to prisons see *The Subjection of the Incarcerated* by a Pennsylvania Prisoner in ULK 19.
3. Ward Churchill. "Some People Push Back": On the Justice of Roosting Chickens (2001).

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