



# Under Lock & Key

Español  
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## Building Prison Study Groups

by cipactli of Brown Berets - Prison Chapter  
July 2015

I first became exposed to revolutionary theory in prison, although I had been a reader my whole life. Prison has become my classroom for revolutionary knowledge, not because the state ensures this, but because I came in contact with politically conscious prisoners who helped instill a consciousness in me. Groups like MIM helped to fuel my early cultivation through liberatory literature and I was able to engage in study groups throughout my prison journey, facility to facility and yard to yard. Study groups were the key to my own development.

It is a fact that U.S. prisons are used for social control of prisoners, who are mostly from the internal semi-colonies. Colonized people have always been subjected to brutal prison conditions but dialectical materialism teaches us that we can transform our environment, including prisons. In order to revolutionize these modern day slave camps we need to study to revolutionize ourselves.

### How Study Groups Help People

People are social beings, and as strong-minded and determined as we think we are, the truth is we learn best by interacting with our environment and especially other people. We learn best through discussion and debate. Asking questions helps us get answers, and when we are having trouble grasping a concept, studying with others allows us to learn. Teaching others also helps the teacher to learn themselves. The study group facilitates all of this.

In my own experience with study groups within U.S. prisons I have found that besides developing one's own political thought, study groups also teach one how to interact with others and what are the best ways to translate or explain our social reality to the people. We should understand that in many ways those of us who study political science and engage in study groups within prisons operate like political organizations out in society that do outreach to the masses, only our fellow prisoners are the masses.

Just as our counterparts outside prison walls constantly attempt to learn from the masses in order to better help the masses, we should do the same with our study groups. As prisoners, those of us who are conscious must revolutionize these dungeons. We have boots on the ground, and study groups within prisons should develop programs which help educate all of the prison masses, not just those involved in a study group. In this sense a study group can serve as the vanguard in their facility.

Study groups have helped me understand my oppression and the oppression of Aztlán, and through them I have become a better person. Understanding politics and theory has given me purpose and has helped me to help other prisoners to better their existence. In short I have not just learned about history, as when I study alone, but I have learned different methods of using the lessons of history to revolutionize the future.

*Continued on page 7...*



## Seize the Time on September 9

by an Ohio prisoner  
July 2015

Revolutionary greetings to all captives inside the gulags of the united snakes of a-murder (USA). Because of the constant oppression we face by the fact that imperialism won't let up as long as capitalism exists, we must continue to create effective ways of fighting capitalism, ultimately bringing an end to all forms of oppression and the system (capitalism/imperialism) in its entirety.

Prisons and prison guards (pigs) are mere extensions of the system and operate as a form of social control against the upward mobility of oppressed nations. However, captives here, in the past, have done quite a bit in the way of agitation and resistance to some of the injustices carried out by these pigs. I have personally been surprised at what even the slightest bit of unity amongst captives can/has gained in the form of concessions from the pigs. But I have also been dismayed at how quickly unity can dissolve back into parasitism and apathy, when not nurtured, and followed up by those committed and dedicated to educate and uplift.

Again, September 9 is soon upon us. Three years ago a lumpen organization (LO) that was a part of United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP) initiated the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity. This is to coincide with 9 September 1971, when pigs and their overseers stormed Attica and slaughtered 32 captives (and 10 of their own pigs). Captives had besieged the prison after demands to improve living conditions had not been met, and the murder of comrade George Jackson at San Quentin on 21 August 1971. Comrade George was a formidable force in pushing the anti-imperialist movement amongst captives, all the way up until the moment he was slaughtered.

Organizers call on captives to take this day to promote the UFPP by building unity with fellow

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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 United Struggle from Within (USW). Our current battles in the United States are legally permitted. We encourage prisoners to join these battles while explicitly discouraging them from engaging in any violence or illegal acts. MIM(Prisons) and its publications explicitly oppose the use of armed struggle at this time in the imperialist countries (including the United States).

*ULK* is edited and published by MIM(Prisons) and mostly written and illustrated by USW and other United Front organizations behind bars. *ULK* comes out every other month, and is free for U.S. prisoners. For people outside of prison, all issues of *ULK*, plus additional reports from within U.S. prisons, are available on MIM(Prisons)'s website: [www.prisoncensorship.info](http://www.prisoncensorship.info)

## What is Imperialism?

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

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

## What is 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 itself 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 expanded 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 sector of the 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 Krushchev 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.

## Honduras to Yemen: Puppet Regimes Falter

Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)  
July 2015

The vast majority of the governments in the world lack popular support because they serve the oppressive interests of U.S./European/Japanese imperialism. Popular elections in Palestine (for Hamas) and Honduras (for Zelaya) have been rejected by the United States, who put their chosen leaders in power. Meanwhile, Afghanistan and Iraq are the most hypocritical examples of U.S. "democracy building." A decade of military occupation, with all the murders, secret prisons and torture that entails, and even the imperialists can't claim any victory. Iraq has split into multiple states, all of which are engaged in an ongoing hot war. And a recent U.S. government audit of the \$1 billion dollars spent in Afghanistan over 10 years concludes that they have been largely unsuccessful in establishing "the rule of law," not to mention "democracy."(1)

Of course, that's not to say that certain imperialist interests have not been served in these projects. A destabilized Third World nation is certainly better than a unified one, because the inherent interests of the Third World are opposed to those of the imperialist nations. Any successful organization of Third World nations to serve their own interests is a blow against imperialism. And the ongoing wars grease the gears of the military industrial complex.

Looking at the Middle East, West Africa or Central America, we cannot say that the oppressed nations are winning. But the objective conditions for successful resistance are certainly there and developing. Our strategic confidence in the victory of the proletarian nations over the imperialist nations comes from these objective conditions, principally that the proletariat nations far outnumber the imperialist ones.

### Honduras: Mass Protests and Collective Farming

10 July 2015 – Tens of thousands of Hondurans marched in the capital of Tegucigalpa with torches held high to call for the resignation of President Juan Orlando Hernandez.(2) These protests have been going strong for seven weeks, and they are the continuation of a six-year struggle against the forces behind a coup d'etat backed by the United States in 2009.

In this same period a movement to seize land by collectives of campesinos has been ongoing. These collectives are highly organized and participate politically in the national assemblies behind the mass protests. In the countryside, these collectives have provided improved housing, education and pay for their members. They are class conscious, and addressing gender contradictions as well. The documentary *Resistencia* (2015) shows the regular harassment and assassinations these collectives face.(3) One community had all their houses bulldozed while attending a rally in Tegucigalpa, yet they pull together and rebuild, as one campesino says, because they have nowhere else to go. While some collectives seem to have armed guards,

generally they depend on non-violent resistance at this time.

The United States recently deployed 280 Marines to Central America, with most going to Honduras as part of their ongoing militarization of the country in face of this continued mass resistance.(2) Meanwhile, many of the top military personnel who are allied with the large landowners in Honduras have been trained in the terrorist training camp known as the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia.(3) For decades, graduates of this school have carried out the most atrocious and brutal military campaigns in Central America on behalf of U.S. interests. Today, Honduras is considered the murder capital of the world.

### Imperialists Slaughter Yemenis in Desperation

The United States has been waging low-intensity warfare in Yemen since shortly after 11 September 2001. In that time they have carried out over 100 drone strikes in the country.(4) In mid-May of 2015, U.S. troops and ambassadors were pulled out of the country following a popular insurgency that threw out the U.S. puppet regime of Abdedrabbo Mansour Hadi in late March. Hadi has since remained outside of Yemen with no sign that he will be able to return.

Since the removal of Hadi, an intensified bombing campaign in Yemen has been described as a "Saudi-led" effort, yet U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken is behind the coordination center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the United States expedited weapons deliveries to their ally who they've already provided with a strong, modernized military.

On 6 July 2015 over 30 civilians were killed when invaders shot a missile into a small market in the village of Al Joob. Other recent strikes in the region killed 30 in Hajjah, and 45 just north of Aden.(5) "In addition to some 3,000 Yemenis killed since March, the war has also left 14,000 wounded and displaced more than a million people, according to the [United Nations (UN)]."(6) Close to 13 million are lacking food due to the war and the blocking of shipments into Yemen by the imperialist-led coalition. Meanwhile preventable diseases like dengue, malaria and typhoid are spreading.(6)

Like the people of Honduras, these horrific conditions leave the people of Yemen with no choice but to keep fighting. In April, "19 Yemeni political parties and associations rejected the UN Resolution 2216 [an attempt to appease the resistance], stating that it encourages terrorist expansion, intervenes in Yemen's sovereign affairs, violates the right of self-defense by the Yemeni people and emphasized the associations' support of the Yemeni Army."(7) In June, Najran tribes, in a Saudi border region, declared war against the Saudi regime because of the Saudis killing innocent people. This occurred after the House of Saud attempted to bribe tribal leaders to support their war efforts in Yemen.(8)

*Continued on page 5...*

## Imperialist Hypocrites

by a Virginia prisoner  
July 2015

Iraqi-American oncologist and capitalist Rafil Dhafir is serving a 22-year sentence in Amerikkkan prisons.(1) Being a wealthy kkkapitalist did not prevent the united snakes from convicting Mr. Dhafir for his charitable contributions to the people of his native country in violation of economic sanctions during the U.S.-led attacks of 1991 and 2003. During that time Mr. Dhafir was an outspoken public opponent of the U.S. war against Iraq.

Mr. Dhafir continues to experience harassment inside the white man's dungeon. Last year, just before Ramadan, he was moved to isolation and had privileges revoked for several weeks for an "investigation" of allegations that were eventually proven to be maliciously made and utterly false.

But hypocrisy is a common trait of the imperialists. It is common knowledge that the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and other occupied territories are illegal. They are in violation of United Nations resolutions as well as treaties brokered by the united snakes.

Yet as far back as 1982 the united snakes knowingly sent tax dollars to I\$rael. Billions of dollars in U.S. economic aid went to fund those Jewish settlements. From 1978 through 1982, Israel received 48% of all U.S. military aid and 35% of U.S. ekkkconomic aid.(2) The united snakes gives grants, low-interest loans, and weapons free and at reduced prices to I\$rael. Additionally, citizens such as Alan Dershowitz, Arthur Goldberg, and hundreds of thousands of others regularly send charitable contributions to I\$rael that are used to fund these settlements, knowing these settlements are a major cause of conflict in the Middle East. Amerikkka claims that peace in the region is "vital to our security interests." If this is true then why aren't the supporters of I\$rael charged and convicted for economically supporting these illegal settlements?\*

Notes:

1. *The Nuclear Resister* No. 177, 5 June 2015, p.11.
2. *Noam Chomsky, Fateful Triangle, Cambridge: South End Press, 1999, p. 10.*

### Special Literature Offers Ask for it when you write us!

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## Amerikan Land Must Be Redistributed to First Nations

by an Oregon prisoner  
June 2015

I would like to give props to Loco1 of USW for the article in *ULK 38*, "Lasting Impressions." It eloquently expressed the realistic truth of non-whites rising into Amerikkkan political poverty and oppression, but ultimately becoming part of the Amerikkkan imperialist machine, and therefore part of the problem. They undeniably dance to the same tune as the kapitalist oppressors, which is the only way they can get elected into office in the first place. The oppression they become co-conspirators of far outweighs any good they may be trying to contribute to cultural progress, the revolutionary movement, or even reformism. President Obama's black face on the white-Amerikkkan agenda does very little to counter the injustices he inflicts upon the less fortunate. His priority is to please white-Amerikkka and contribute to kapitalism. Everything else is secondary.

Revolutionary minds can learn from Loco1's political view. However, it draws concern when Loco1 talks of redistributing the lands fairly: "you get what you need. Nothing more, nothing less." Subsequently following a successful revolution this act alone would shift the possession of land for one colonizer to another at the expense and exploitation of the indigenous peoples. Very little of what I've read from the MIM organization has ever gotten to the heart of land claims, which should first and foremost be redistributed back to the First Nation original owners. Many indigenous will be part of the revolution. Non-natives seem to think they are entitled to this land as spoils of war, with complete disregard to the First Nations' claims. Communism is supposed to eliminate oppression. This act would contribute to it, but with power shifting to the hands of a different ethnic and political class.

A complete overthrow of Amerikkkan power should give the land back to those it's belonged to since the beginning of time. This soil is the Redman's tribal ancestral roots and the creator's gift to our people. This includes Mexicanos. Whatever land, if any, is eventually "redistrib-

uted fairly" should be at the sole discretion of its tribal owners. Period. (And it's important that non-natives understand this.) Land would be distributed considerably and compassionately as they feel necessary and see fit. Unless, of course, the communist victors then choose to redirect their war towards the First Nation peoples with the intent of keeping them on reservations and stealing the land by force. That would make them no different than this current Amerikkkan imperialist swine.

In the article Loco1 spoke with the voice of New Afrikans but I think he should rethink his ideas for land grab from the indigenous point of view, who have suffered the biggest atrocities and injustices in history.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This is a letter we had forwarded to Loco1 for comment. Having not received a response we will address this question now. It seems we have great unity with the writer above, and we appreciate this point and inquiry. While Loco1's original point was more about combatting Amerikkkan exceptionalism, which justifies Amerikkans having more than everyone else, the lack of mention of First Nations land claims is certainly a valid critique. It is an ultra-left error in that it is looking towards the ideal future of communism (from each according to their ability, to each according to their need), before addressing the more immediate task of national liberation.

This is an issue that comrades address in our new book, *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*. Though Chican@s themselves are indigenous to this land, claiming all of the southwest United States could be seen as a threat to First Nations, including the largest reservation in the United States of the Navajo nation. MIM has long been friendly to the Blackbelt Thesis as well, and has printed maps showing both of these territories. We agree with revolutionary Chican@ and New Afrikan movements that land is central to the question of national liberation. As nations within what is today the United States, a failure to claim and liberate their own territory is a failure to liberate these oppressed nations. The same is true for all First Nations.

### 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.\$ citizens are criminals – accomplices and accessories to the crimes of U.\$ oppression globally until the day U.\$ imperialism is overcome. All U.\$ 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.

The drawing of new boundaries today is more of an agitational exercise than an actual political reality, except for most First Nations. So we expect First Nations to continue to be at the forefront of determining future border issues. Their weakness, of course, is in their numbers. So it is an important warning that the comrade above issues to ensure that a national program of one oppressed nation does not impose itself onto that of another. Not only is this necessary for building a just world, it will be necessary for a successful anti-imperialist project. Any efforts by an internal semi-colony to liberate itself without regard for and cooperation with the efforts of the others will lead to no true liberation and will end in it being a puppet to the imperialists rather than being free of them.

There must be a united front of the internal semi-colonies against U.\$ imperialism. And once imperialism is overthrown, in imperialist nations there will need to be a joint dictatorship of the proletariat of the oppressed nations to take power and determine how society can best be run in the interests of the formerly oppressed of the world. Exactly how they address the land question between themselves, as well as with the existing oppressor nation on this land, will be determined in the evolution of that struggle, which will certainly bring about many more changes in the process.★

### UFAO Links Up with UFPP

by a Georgia prisoner  
June 2015

I'm writing concerning the ad in *Under Lock & Key* I read for the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP). It was baffling, as it had every concept, principle and law that is in my Family's code. I am the Father of the United Family Against all Oppression (UFAO) and we would like to support the UFPP.

About 150 of us are currently at Macon State Prison and 20 of the Family are in other camps. I'm currently in the hole for going to war with the officers and [a lumpen organization (LO)] for breaking a peace treaty. I extend my hand in assistance to stop imperialism and oppression through paperwork or blood.

When the officers see Bloods, Crips, GDs, Muslims, Vice Lords, Piru, coming together, they don't know what to do. One day we were in the rooms meeting and no one was hardly on the floor. They came in telling us to lock down for no reason, just because they had the authority.

I had to use the scientific method in coming up with a peace treaty. I went around surveying the people of different parties about what makes them fight and kill each other. It's not the color no more, it's about different creeds stealing and tricking each other. So I came up with the antithesis to it, which was to give out prizes at chess and basketball tournaments. It had other things such as a poor box in each dorm where the UFAO is at, which is for everybody.

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## Education is Critical to the United Front

by an Oregon prisoner  
March 2015

The basic logic behind the United Front for Peace in Prisons is simple, but genius. (see p. 2) The concept is self-explanatory. How else do circumstances get resolved without the five principles?

Individualism and evasion counters liberation. Regardless, whether we are into politics or not, believe that politics are into us. All aspects of life have an element of control that dictate our lives, and if we don't seek unity and ultimate internationalism, chaos will always follow. Sharing information about ourselves to each other in collective formats is the first step. Guarding ourselves is natural; it is something we do to protect ourselves from opposing forces. However, through self-discipline and some simple confidence and motivation, progress is possible.

Our biological nature is to be selfish. It is primal instinct to seek ultimate survival and power, and without a balance or some consciousness, humyns want to oppress each other. The ones who have blindfolds on have the idea that oppression = peace, and perhaps they have been programmed to think and view life in such a manner. However am I the only one, or does that logic sound irrational to you too?

In my opinion (and I could be wrong) I believe a better approach is to educate as many people as you can to obtain growth and progress. There will always be contradictions, of course (no matter what). But to give up is to

give up on your people and yourself.

I like Mao's quote from "Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership":

*"[T]ake the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge."*

Educate to liberate!

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We have a lot of unity with this writer's call to action around the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP). But we do disagree that there is a biologically inherent trait of selfishness in humyns. While there is certainly an instinct to survive in all living things, this does not mean there must be an instinct to take power and oppress other people. We can see that this is what many people do today, but the culture of capitalism teaches us that's how to get ahead, from the time we are born. So how can we separate out instinct from culture in this situation?

As Maoists we believe in the need for a dictatorship of the proletariat after the revolution,

respond to efforts at delinking with military intervention. It is this military power that is lacking in Honduras to make their collectivization efforts sustainable.

These are just some of the hotly contested areas of the world today. The battle is between the imperialists and the exploited majority. While the imperialists are the dominant force today, the exploited majority are the rising aspect of this contradiction. As they rise in more regions of the world, they undercut capitalist profits and imperialist military becomes overextended. That is how the exploited majority will become victors and gain control over their own destiny.★

Notes:

1. Jenna McLaughlin, "10 Years and \$1B Later, Little Progress in Establishing Rule of Law in Afghanistan," *The Intercept*, 9 July 2015.
2. "Hondurans March Against Corruption, Unite to Strengthen Demands," *Telesur*, 11 July 2015.
3. Jesse Freston, *Resistencia: The Fight for the Aguan Valley*, 2015.
4. "Chaos in Yemen Undercuts US War Against AQAP," *Agence France-Presse*, 24 March 2015.
5. Alex Potter, "Aftermath: A Photo Essay on Yemen's Victims of Saudi Airstrikes," *The Intercept*, 10 July 2015.
6. "Aden's overwhelmed hospitals turn into hospices," *Agence France-Presse*, 7 July 2015.
7. "Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen," *Wikipedia*, last modified 13 July 2015, at 22:27.
8. "Saudi Arabia's Najran Tribes Declare War on Riyadh," *Electronic Resistance*, June 2015.

where the formerly oppressed majority takes control of the government and runs it in their own interests, while dictating to the minority (who promoted exploitation) how society will be run. During this period of socialism we will need cultural revolutions to challenge the ingrained mentality of capitalism that has taught everyone to look out for themselves first and to get ahead at the expense of others. We know it will take many generations of cultural revolution and re-education of humynity but we do not think the reality of capitalist culture determines what humyns are capable of under communism.★

## Is ULK Too Hardcore for the DOC?

by a Florida prisoner  
May 2015

Your newsletter is very empowering but a little too hardcore for the Department of Corrections in Florida. We must not forget where the people you're trying to reach are at. Our vernacular is too straight forward such as using words like "hunger strike" or "organizing of any kind." You got to start making your newsletter more informative to political theory and education and building a community. Fasting has its time and place, and its reasons. But we must be mindful how we address certain issues. I look up to George Jackson and how he focused on building the Black Guerilla Family (BGF). I am a new generation Black Panther and I use your newsletters in my political education classes. We are all in the same struggle for liberation, but we must understand that real unity comes from sharing and mutual cooperation between the comrades of revolution.

I've been in prison for 14 years and only had to fast once. Yes, it did make the pigs do their job. However, from my observation and participation we need to all just come together and focus on building communities that can adjust to their social housing. Because it's not the pigs who do the raping, stealing, robbing, stabbing, killing, etc. If BGF had to put a worldwide ban on all gangbanging, what makes you think teaching them how to organize will make things any better? There are a lot of groups who you ain't gonna be able to unite and bring peace. I'm not knocking your work, but we got to put political differences aside and focus on building a commune that will protect and serve the people. It can't be just a prison thing. In order to get a strong hold in any state you must have dedicated troops on both sides (prison and turf) all working together under one banner. Yes *ULK* and *United Struggle from Within* are established but the people who claim that they are united under the banner of the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP) are the very same people oppressing the people with gang violence.

How can 3 Blood Kingdoms unite with the UFPP when the actual leader of these Blood sets are in opposition with the idea of peace and unity? Most of these dudes be renegades who try to get some type of support to continue their

*Continued on page 9...*

...Continued from page 3 **...Puppet Regimes**

Yemen's relationship to Saudi Arabia is similar to those of Mexico and Central America to the United States. Yemen was once a nominally socialist state after a Marxist-inspired national liberation army took control after British colonialism ended in the region. So like Central America, Yemen is no stranger to socialism and Marxism. Yet, while militarily conditions are more advanced throughout the Middle East, we do not see the class-conscious subjective political forces that exist in places like Honduras.

Yemen risks falling into inter-proletarian conflict as has been ongoing in Syria and Iraq. Yet, reports from the ground indicate a strong recognition that the ultimate blame for their plight falls on the United States (this is true in Honduras as well). Chaos does bring opportunity for the objective forces of proletarian class interest to rise to prominence. While conditions are dire in Yemen, Syria and Iraq, they lend themselves to building dual power and ultimately delinking from imperialism, which is what the oppressed nations must do to improve their conditions. While there are multiple competing powers in Syria and Iraq right now, no sustainable dual power can develop that is not built on the class unity of the exploited classes as exists in Honduras. At the same time, dual power must be defended, and the imperialists will always

## Prisoner-led Study Groups Summary

by MIM(Prisons)  
July 2015

MIM(Prisons) disagrees with the organizational model of a single ideological leader (or privileged clique) providing all the instructions and theory for its membership, with the masses submitting to this guidance. This is part of why we are an anonymous organization – to help people overcome the cultural tendency of hero worship. We want everyone to take the ideological development of our movement into their own hands. As we've seen countless times throughout history, raising *everyone's* political consciousness, as the Chinese Communist Party did under Mao, is essential to ensuring that our revolutionary movement is not usurped by our enemies or our mistakes.

To this end, we run correspondence study courses, and we encourage prisoners to run their own study groups where they're at. Malcolm X, George Jackson, Stanley Tookie Williams, and countless other leaders developed their revolutionary analysis using their time behind bars in U.S. prisons. We follow their example and aim to push forward the political development of all U.S. prisoners; supporting prisoner-led study groups (SGs) is one way we do this.

We help support over 30 SGs in 16 states and the Federal system. Since the SGs are prisoner-

run and led, we primarily provide support by sending study materials, including books, magazines, newspapers and study packs. Some of the study packs are collections of essays or source material on a particular topic, and others are questions that go with a magazine or book. With this issue of *ULK* and our letters to SG leaders, we also aim to provide tactical guidance and suggestions.

In February we sent out a questionnaire to get a better sense of how these SGs are run, their scope, their successes, challenges and needs. About one-third of the SGs we support responded, and here we summarize what we learned.

The number of participants ranges between 1 and 25 people, and most groups have less than 10 regular participants. Some groups are single-nation, but most are mixed-nation, with a mixture of lumpen organization (LO) and ex-LO membership. We see SGs as a good place for building the United Front for Peace in Prisons through practice. One respondent told us:

*"The three core members have all had gang affiliations in the past. The two brothers were in the Gangster Disciples or Vice Lords, and the Chicano was in the Latin Kings. But behind bars we have found out who the real enemy is: the U.S. racist imperialist oppressor pigs who run this joint. So we*

*have put our racial differences and gang affiliations aside to fight our common enemy."*

The average time an SG has been together is 2 years, with a range of 2.5 months to 6 years. Most go through study material at similar rates: either one *ULK* per week, a few chapters of a book every two weeks, or a magazine/book per month. The SGs that have been going the longest reported that individual members teach what they are familiar with, or have assigned areas to become expert. Other groups report that one person or a core group will lead the entire study.

SGs have a wide range of structure. The structure of your group should be based on the conditions where you're at, but it should be a

*Continued on page 8...*

## One Method of Organizing a Study Group

by a Florida prisoner  
July 2015

The study group that I started and lead is a very small one – only three of us. The most challenging aspect I have encountered thus far is attracting members. In Florida conditions are somewhat different from what I have read about in other states. First, our prisons are highly integrated, but as prisoners we are not, with like nations hanging out with each other. However, there is virtually no gang activity and any activity there is highly localized and disorganized. Secondly, I am at a "re-entry" camp where 80% of the population has less than five years left to serve and the bourgeois brainwashing is in overdrive. And lastly, I am euro-amerikan (which necessitates class suicide).

I found that by openly acknowledging that I am a Marxist/Communist, dialogue is opened with others. I have been branded "that godless Marxist bastard," an epithet I wear as a badge of honor. As a White revolutionary I must be especially fearless in this regard. The majority of prisoners that open dialog about Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM) with me are so conditioned with misinformation and myth that they eventually give up rather than consider that what they have been told all their life is a distortion or outright wrong. Once they are able to consider what I say and/or the MIM literature I show them, then comes their metaphysical ideology.

In my experience gaining a study group member comes down to a three-step process. I

make myself known as a MLMist. Then I must be able to overcome the hystorical myths and mysteries of communism – particularly as they concern Stalin and Chairman Mao. To this end the article "Myths About Maoism" published in *Fundamental Political Line of MIM(Prisons)* (pp. 20-28) is a good start. If they are willing to consider this different view of hystory then the third step is to move into an understanding of materialist dialectics (Marxism) to counter any metaphysical ideology.

MIM Distributors supplied me with the books *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village and Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat*. For my study group a new member reads *Fanshen* first. This is to give a sense of the meaning and power of political consciousness as opposed to simple "unity," and to further dispel hystorical myths about the role of the Communist Party in China under Mao. Next they read *Settlers*. This puts Amerikkkan hystory in a materialist dialectical perspective and demonstrates what is meant by a settler nation. It is an extremely powerful text for euro-amerikans who have come this far in the study group.

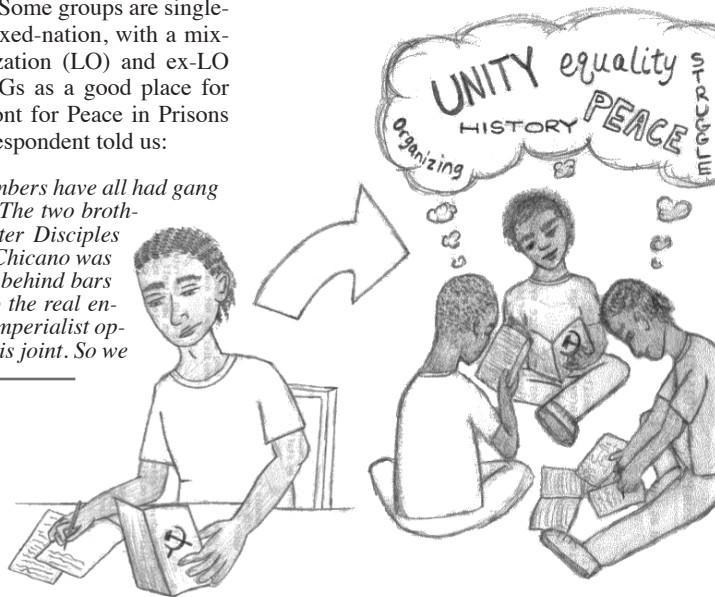
Our group meets three times a week to discuss any questions on a topic that a member might have. We like to take current world events

and discuss them from a MLM/Third World viewpoint. For us, the *ULK* Writers Group supplemental reading is very helpful. For example, the rise and gains of Maoism and the People's Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) in India has been a current focus.

If I had to name the major hurdle I face in educating a study group then it would be what MIM has called lumpen metaphysics – that conditioned ideology that continually rears its ugly head in debates, discussions, etc. In leading a study group one must be wary as that is a subtle path that leads to many wrong and irrational conclusions. As a project we are currently working on an essay for the *ULK* Writers Group on how to identify a lumpen metaphysical argument when it is posed so that its irrationality can be exposed via materialist dialectics. I only hope that all comrades will take an active role and critique it, helping to push its development further.

"Theory without practice ain't shit" and that practice starts with an action. My most fearless action, the action that started my practice of forming a study group, was to proclaim myself a communist and believer in Maoism as a better

*Continued on page 8...*



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## ...Study Groups How do study groups operate?

Depending on one's facility, study groups take on various formations. I have experienced many, from formal groups studying political science while on the mainline where one can meet face to face on the yard and discuss different aspects of society, to yelling through an air vent to people I couldn't see.

I was in one spot where every few days someone picked a different country and we discussed all of the uprisings in that country. People would search old magazines, books or newspapers to find anything on that country.

Another study group I participated in was in a facility that was highly restrictive with revolutionary literature. Since none of us was too politically educated we got whatever newspapers or progressive magazines we could, and we would discuss the articles, and attempt to apply them to other aspects of society.

## Prison Study Groups in Maoist China

If we look to Mao's China, and specifically to the time of the Cultural Revolution, we will see that every level of society was touched by Maoism, even the prisons. When I read about prisons in Mao's China I learn why it is that Maoism is considered the highest stage that socialism has developed so far.

Though frequently badmouthed in the imperialist media for their re-education practice, these prisons focused on the political education of inmates. Most people behind bars had committed serious crimes against the people (landlords who murdered peasants, people who spied for Amerika, government officials who abused their power), and so this education helped prisoners understand how their actions affected others and why they should want to work towards a society where people do not have the power to oppress and exploit others.(1)

The study groups developed by prisoners during the Cultural Revolution involved thought reform. This means understanding why one has particular thoughts and finding ways of correcting incorrect ideas. This was reforming one's errors on levels that many of us cannot even imagine. It was a process of dialectics where prisoners would study the essence of their actions and behaviors. They would also engage in criticism-self-criticism where they would look into their own errors or the errors of others so that they all learned and evolved as a group.

The prison study groups in Maoist China did not conduct criticism-self-criticisms in order to ridicule or bully people; instead it was done to really point out the error and get the person to understand their error. One cannot change a behavior if one does not know or truly believe that they are committing an error in the first place. What we must understand is **every** prison in Mao's China had these daily study groups, which were fully supported by the people's gov-

ernment. In this way prisoners **learned** and became better people because of the study groups. They became people who went on to help build the revolution.

In contrast to Mao's China, here in U.S. prisons we are simply warehoused. We are placed in a cell where we are taught **nothing**, and this is done for years and decades. If we are lucky we are released and come out the same or worse than we went in. We don't learn from the state because under capitalism they don't have any use for us other than filling a cell. And when we try to form study groups we are punished and our studies are falsely labeled as gang activity or security threat activities. This is the difference between a Maoist society and a capitalist society; one heals people, the other destroys people.

All of this was part of the political line of China under Mao which put into practice the theory that people can learn from their mistakes and become productive members of society if they take study and self-criticism seriously. In Amerika's prisons today we find the oppressed rather than the oppressors, but there is still an important role for self-criticism in the anti-people actions of many lumpen. And the study of political theory is especially critical to the oppressed as we hone our understanding of how to fight back against the oppressors.

When speaking about education Mao stressed: "Our educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture."(2)

Mao reminds us that education is to make us better people. In the above quote he describes education being used to help people become workers. Although we are lumpen, education can help us become lumpen with socialist consciousness and culture.

## What are the difficulties?

Forming or participating in study groups is not easy. There are many obstructions we have to deal with. As most know, U.S. prisons unleash political repression in the guise of upholding their laws. They criminalize political organizing and revolutionary activity of the imprisoned captives by labeling it "gang activity" or "security threat group activity."

There were times when I would get a good group of people together and we would have a good study group going and then the prison, out of nowhere, would move people out of the building or section, scrambling the housing population and dismantling the study group. The study group is disrupted, but this only means that we need to start over.

Sometimes I would be somewhere and gather lots of notes on political articles or uprisings and I would use these for groups, only to have my cell searched and all of my notes trashed, with a guard noting "gang notes." Likewise I would acquire a good selection of revolutionary

books only to be transferred to another prison and in the process all of my political books would be "lost."

Once I was in a control unit where the prison put me and a New Afrikan next to each other and everyone else in the unit was juiced up on psyche meds kicking their door all day. The prison did this to further isolate us from our nations. So we formed a study group together and discussed *ULK* and other books. When things get repressive we need to keep studying and educating each other, no matter how hard it is.

Study groups can also be done through the mail. MIM(prisons) facilitates some of the best study groups I have encountered. But this invites censorship and sometimes harassment from the prison staff. We have to understand that learning about our own repression and about communist theory is something the state seeks to prevent. Prisoners learning about revolutionary theory scares the state because it means we will learn and turn theory into practice, against them.

## What's it all for?

We should understand that repression will happen regularly. This is why studying is so important, so that when our mail is censored we have books and literature to fuel our study groups. And when our lit and books are "lost" we can remember our lessons and teach others key concepts like dialectical and historical materialism. We can help other prisoners understand why we need a united front or how the oppressed within U.S. borders developed as nations. We will know all of this and what kind of program we will need to liberate the people because of what we learned in our study groups.

What we do today and how we spend our time in these dungeons will determine what the future of these dungeons will look like. At the same time study groups should produce theory and theory should produce practice. We are not studying to be armchair revolutionaries, we are studying in order to ultimately join the oppressed of the world in smashing imperialism.★

Notes:

1. For more on prisons in Maoist China, ask for *Prisoners of Liberation: Four Years in Chinese Communist Prison*, by Adelle and Allyn Rickett, 1973.

2. Mao Zedong, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," 27 February 1957.

## On "Objective" Reporting

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

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### ...Summary

universal goal to get a variety of participants engaging in leading the group. Raising the leadership skills of the participants is one way to raise their political level. And since people are moved around all the time, a follower in one SG might need to become the leader in a different facility. If they already have some practice generating study questions, acquiring reading material, and recruiting participants, then the new SG is more likely to be successful. In this way we can use a disruption, such as transfers, to our advantage.

The frequency and reliability of meeting to go over study materials also varies widely. For groups who are in different facilities, or who are in isolation, they "meet" by passing lit and sharing essays they write analyzing the reading material. Most groups reported they meet once a week, some 3 or 5 days a week, and one group said they meet daily. Some reported they meet creatively under the guise of religious services or a tutoring program.

### Challenges

Of course one huge barrier to SGs and revolutionary development generally is literacy – your ability to read and write. We know that a significant portion of prisoners are illiterate. Most of our SGs reported they do not spend much energy teaching literacy, and most participants have GEDs or higher. One group even reported that a GED is a minimum requirement to participate. With the abhorrent lack of programming in U.S. prisons, the responsibility of teaching literacy rests primarily on prisoners themselves – each one teach one.

Challenges reported include:

- Imprisonment problems: infiltration, SHU time, validation
- Study material confiscated/censored
- Insufficient study material
- Lumpen problems: bourgeois politics, punctuality/discipline

"Imprisonment problems" will always affect our SGs just because of the fact that they are running inside prisons. But these issues can be addressed somewhat by having good security practices. At least one SG recruits participants by being blatant and open about its politics, receiving criticism from other prisoners (which they then engage through discussion) but not repression from staff (at least not yet). In our limited experience, this is an uncommon scenario, and definitely varies by facility and state. We are creating a security study pack to add to our list of available study materials, so if you have any recommendations of security practices that have worked for your group, please share them with us.

"Lumpen problems" are those which are prominent among the lumpen class as a whole, which we need to address on a mass scale. We can start working on these problems within our SGs. The institutionalization of the daily routine in prisons leads many to rely on others

(their captors) to determine what they do at any given moment. This prevents us from developing the necessary skills of time management and self-discipline. When moved to a less structured environment (e.g. from SHU to general population, or from prison to the outside) it is difficult to stay committed to projects and it can be as if one is just following the wind. Encouraging self-discipline with work reports and planning in advance is one way to tackle this problem.

Study material being censored and confiscated can possibly be dealt with using the appeal and grievance process, but we also need to assume repression will always come from our oppressor whenever we try to educate ourselves. Since you can't rely on having articles or notes to refer back to, try to read the material multiple times before passing it on. Writing a summary or analysis on the material, even if it's just a few sentences reflecting on an article in *ULK*, will help you remember it better and think about it more critically. And discussing your reflections with another comrade if possible will help you develop your overall political analysis. So even if the material is stomped on and torn up and "lost" forever, you will have done your best to hold on to it and can hopefully teach those principles to others even without the written words to refer to.

If the main problem in your SG is having material to study, you're in luck, because that's probably the easiest problem to solve! Barring complete censorship of our materials, MIM Distributors can send you literature on a wide range of topics. Send us reports on what questions are coming up in your SG, what conclusions you are drawing from the material you are studying, and how those conclusions can be applied to the struggles in your prison, and we'll hook you up. Encourage your SG participants to sign up for *ULK* and send us work-trades for lit, such as articles, art, or poetry for the newsletter. You can even pool together your financial resources to purchase books outright.

One of our goals coming from our annual congress is to be supporting 50 SGs across the

...Continued from page 6

### ...One Method

way of democracy. From that point forward I had joined the Struggle.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** Everyone should keep in mind that the tactics used by a comrade in one facility might not be what's appropriate for the conditions where you're at. While it seems useful for this author to be very public about their political views, for many other subscribers to *ULK*, that same act can easily get them validated as a member of a "security threat group" or otherwise harassed by prison administration.

We appreciate how this author laid out how they structure their initial recruiting, and how they are making use of materials we've sent to them. The "supplemental reading" they refer to is a packet of articles from the web on various news and theory topics, which is sent regularly to participants in our advanced correspondence study group, the *ULK* Writing Group. In order to join the *ULK* Writing Group, you must complete both levels of our introductory study group, have a high level of political unity with MIM(Prisons), and be a regular contributor to *ULK*. We encourage everyone who can't set up a study group wherever they're at to join our introductory study group – or both! ★

United Snakes by this time next year. Since the initiative of our subscribers (YOU!) is what determines how many SGs we can support, we are trying to up the support on our end by addressing some of the main challenges identified in responses to our questionnaire. Please share experiences with us that others might be able to apply to their own SGs.

We hope with this issue of *ULK* to spark some inspiration among our readers to take their usual "I read and love this newsletter, and pass it on!" to step up and sit down with their fellow captives to study. It is not only important for our own immediate tasks of building unity and increasing our knowledge, but it is important so that our actions will have the greatest impact on liberating the majority of the world's people. ★

## FREE POLITICAL BOOKS

*Under Lock & Key* is free to all prisoners in the United States. MIM(Prisons) also runs a Books for Prisoners Program through which we mail out political theory and history books and magazines in exchange for political work. When you request books, you should also 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 people, the easiest way to start is by becoming a *ULK* Field Correspondent (write in for our Writing Tips guide).

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

### Some "must read" titles from our lit list:

*The Chinese Road to Socialism* by Wheelwright and McFarlane  
*The Capitalist Roaders are Still on the Capitalist Road* by China Study Group  
*The Political Economy of Counterrevolution in China: 1976-88* by Henry Park  
*Fundamentals of Political Economy* by Shanghai Press  
*Labor Aristocracy, Mass Base of Social Democracy* by H.W. Edwards  
*Settlers: The Mythology of the White Proletariat* by J. Sakai  
 "On Contradiction" by Mao Zedong



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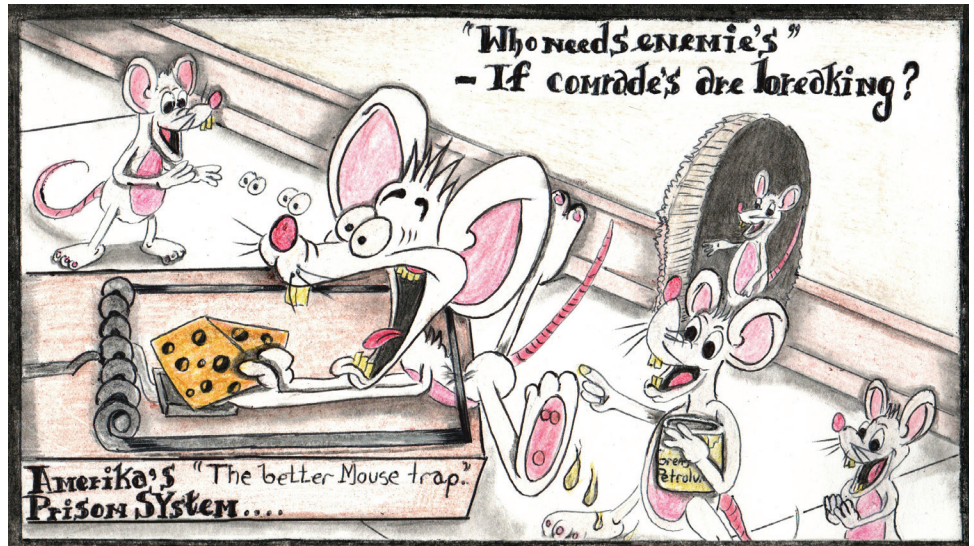
### ...Too Hardcore

renegading. And not knowing any better we, out of unconditional love for revolution, tell them that it's okay. No! We must draw the line and be str8 forward with them! You can't be a liberator by day and an oppressor by night! Your newsletter is on the banned list becuz these renegaders are using you as a sponsor for their renegading, plus the vernacular in the newsletters is too flamboyant. Look at how fast these same dudes are requesting to be removed off your mailing list. Their loyalty is not in the UFPP, it's to their sets. Please don't let them be the demise of a powerful tool we need in here. I don't wish to be removed becuz I'm loyal to revolution.

I believe if you ease up on your newsletter and focus on educating the people about theory and what's going on in the free world the pigs will allow the newsletter to circulate. Communicating and educating is power, so when that is cut off proper growth and development is dead. You probably thinking why didn't I grieve it? Well how can I get round justifying my rights to have a newsletter that blatantly uses vernacular that gives the pigs every right to reject it according to Rule 33-501.401 FAC (3)(G) stating: "It is dangerously inflammatory in that it advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, disruption of the institution, violation of department or institution rules." And (3)(m) stating: "It otherwise presents a threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the correctional system or the safety of any person."

The pigs read everything that comes in this slave plantation, so you can't put your comrades on the chopping block to get their heads cut off politically. If you're going to coach then coach, but don't forget that you're out there in the free world and we are not. Every day we have to deal with these pigs' bullshit! And they use the gangs as their puppets to do hits for smokes and food. That's the real story in this place that the prisoners are brushing under the rug. It ain't just the pigs who are oppressing our people, it's their puppets. So we got to build self-defense communities that are not afraid to establish new order in the land. It's too many chiefs and political debates about bullshit. Ride or Die! Unite or Perish!

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** It's always good to hear about serious organizers using MIM(Prisons) literature in political education classes and as organizing tools. And this comrade is writing from a state where most issues of *Under Lock & Key* are being censored systematically, so we do need to take seriously our challenge of getting political literature in to prisoners in Florida. This writer says we need to focus on educating people about theory, and we do have a lot of theory resources available to anyone who asks (just trade some work for lit if you can't pay). But *ULK* is an agitation and organizational publication, and our goal is to educate people through information and news about what's going on in prisons and in the world in general. We purposely maintain this focus instead of just putting out political theory because we need a tool that can organize people. If we



...Continued from page 4

### ...UFAP UFPP

Nothing happened in the dorm I was in until [an LO] stole out of the box of [two other LOs] and they broke the treaty. So, me being the General didn't approve of it, so a war broke out. Because once you say you're revolutionary, your word and peace treaties mean a lot in my eyes.

I am also asking for guidance and support because people are getting free, going home, and I don't want the impression of a gang or drug lord. I'd rather finish what Assata Shakur, Martin L. King, Malcolm X, Frederick Douglass and other great leaders left off on. I'm open for all political and friendly advice. My goal is to support all oppressed people no matter their affiliation, and under a treaty with people with affiliations in gangs.

We as a whole must unite and become one family to end the criminal label that the United States put on us, to disguise what their gang is doing. Because they have abandoned and malignant hearts when it comes to power and wealth. And I'm going to stop the real terrorists at all cost.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We commend this comrade for pushing for peace on their unit, and for pointing out that the imperialists are the real enemy. It makes sense that in organizing the lumpen for peace, we will still see lumpen

only offer political theory we are missing the final step in helping people to connect the theory with practice. While we agree with this comrade that there are some things we do not need to say, we cannot sacrifice our political line to get our publication inside. And the fact is that the prisons use these "dangerously inflammatory" and "threat to security" claims for all sorts of literature we mail to prisoners, including reference materials, history books and theory.

Further, we do not agree with this comrade that *ULK* actually fits within those rules for censorship. Instead of presenting a threat to security and good order, *ULK* actually promotes security by promoting peace. The prisons, on the one hand, claim that prisoners fighting one another is one of the biggest problems they face

tendencies arise, like the one our comrade described above about stealing from the poor box. Even though we're bringing people together for revolutionary reasons, we are still heavily influenced by our capitalist culture and indoctrination. We need to make it a priority to bring thorough revolutionary education to all the comrades we're working with, in order to combat this lumpen mentality of getting up on the backs of others, and undermining our struggles for peace.

Prisons are a volatile environment. And we're building for peace in prisons. It's somewhat ironic to enforce a peace treaty using physical violence. We should take this incident as a lesson that while we're discussing how to begin a peace treaty, we also need to discuss how we can hold others accountable to the peace treaty if they break it. Is a prison war the only possible method of accountability?

If anyone needs literature to help educate others about the role of the UFPP in our overall fight against our common oppressor, then write in for back issues of *ULK*. If you've been able to develop a sound peace treaty and have experimented successfully with how to hold others accountable when they fall out of line of the treaty, then please send a report to *ULK* so we can grow stronger as a movement. ★

and so they need more guards and more security weapons to deal with this problem, and then when a publication shows up promoting peace among prisoners they claim this is a threat to security as well. We need to fight this bogus claim. *ULK* does not encourage violation of rules, and in fact for events like the September 9 day of peace, we encourage prisoners to work within the rules of their institution to build peace. Even hunger strikes were developed as a form of non-violent protest, so we will continue to fight the censors who claim reporting on them somehow encourages "violence and insurrection." To them, prisoners in peaceful protest is a threat of violence and pigs beating prisoners is instituting security. To them newspapers calling for the bombing of other countries are cool, but newspapers exposing

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... Continued from previous page **...Too Hardcore**

torture in U.S. prisons are dangerous. We cannot accept such double standards and hypocrisy.

As for the question of various lumpen organizations declaring their unity with the United Front for Peace in Prisons and then turning around and disrupting efforts to build peace, we recognize that this is a potential contradiction with lumpen organizations. It is a real challenge for groups that have historically promoted prisoner-on-prisoner violence to take up organizing for peace. We cannot expect this path to be smooth and easy. Nor can we expect all groups to join us on this path. But even the declaration of support for the UFPP is a step forward for LOs. And we must work to push them even further and confront their contradictions, rather than dismissing them as hopeless. For the record, we don't have lots of people asking to stop their subscription to *ULK*. In fact very few people write to be removed from our list once they get a copy of *ULK*. And our subscribers continue to increase, even in high censorship states like Florida and North Carolina, because people hear about our organizing to fight that censorship. When the pigs stop abusing and torturing people in U.S. prisons we will shift the content of our newsletter to focus on parts of the world where people are still being abused and tortured. ★

## Black August Call to Celebrate Freedom Fighters Year Round

by a New York prisoner  
April 2015

The celebration of Black August really should be all year round. Only we can make this change. For those who lack knowledge of Black August, it's considered the "celebration of freedom fighters." Every individual who stands against oppression on any level is a freedom fighter. The color of one's skin is irrelevant. I love you sister Marilyn Buck (rest in power), Lolita Lebron (rest in power), and Silvia Baraldini, among others who weren't the color of black. Yet, they were black. Because, to the oppressed of any nationality, Black isn't a color.

Black is an establishment created to protect one's civil rights. Black is courage. Black is self-motivation to win. Black is vision. Black is respect. Black is love. Black is loyalty. Black is unity. Black is pride. Black is you! Furthermore and more importantly, Black is me!

Collectively, these Black endearments are us (i.e. united souljahs and united souljahettes). This is why I believe Black August, the celebration of freedom fighters, should be year round.

In preparation of such a celebration I am calling on all comrades to pick a freedom fighter of their choice and submit a 250 word essay

on your chosen freedom fighter describing why you've made such a selection and the impact this freedom fighter had on you. I am asking in solidarity with *Under Lock & Key* for all readers of *ULK* to participate. Although every article may not be printed due to space and financial hurdles, your participation will not be ignored. Let's strengthen the voice of *ULK*. Because if we're considered the voice of *ULK* and we don't strengthen it, then who will?

Unity is a powerful device when applied suitably. Let's unify ourselves rather than destroy ourselves.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** We decided to take up this comrade's call for submissions about freedom fighters year round by printing it during Black August and then following up by printing submissions from *ULK* readers in a future issue. Of particular importance in this call is understanding that all prisoners are political prisoners. And so we do not just identify freedom fighters as people who were famous for their political activism before being locked up. Instead we encourage you to think about the prisoners who have affected you in a positive way, including those who haven't written books or received media attention. Let's celebrate all freedom fighters and strive to be freedom fighters ourselves. ★

## The more things change, the more they stay the same

by a California prisoner  
May 2015

As early as October 2012, the administrators of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) have relentlessly advocated to the public how the step-down program (SDP) is an improvement upon the gang validation policies/practices that previously existed. But history informs us that any mantra of change being presented by the powers that be means more of the same, literally.

On 17 March 2015 I was the sole prisoner transferred out of Corcoran SHU via special transportation, as the warden issued some type of "special order" for me to be housed at CCI Tehachapi SHU. I have yet to see this "special order." I'm not going to get into the litany of horrendous living conditions that exist here at this point and time, however, I've witnessed countless prisoners be issued bogus rule violation reports (CDC 115 RVRs) and then coerced to start over and repeat the step that they were just in. This subjects the prisoner to being interned to indefinite solitary confinement status once again, as there are no mechanisms in place that would prohibit and/or prevent this process from reoccurring. It's nothing more than the same old barbaric and dehumanizing gang validation policies and practices.

For example, the most prominent reason for prisoners being issued CDC 115 RVRs is because their name has been found in a "kite" that was written by another prisoner. Not only is this contrary to our primary 5 core demands from

the mass hunger strikes, in relation to behavior-based "individual accountability," but it is also contrary to the new SDP policy. In particular, CDCR memorandum dated 9 August 2013 states in part on page 4:

*"At times this information includes a list of names or other personal information being found in another offender's possession that has some nexus to STG activity or behavior. During the DRB reviews, the offender whose name is simply on the list (versus the individual being in actual possession of the list) will not be held accountable for the contents."*

But wait, it gets even better my people. While at Corcoran, counter-intelligence officer S. Niehus searched my personal legal property in February 2015 and stole ("confiscated") my legal exhibits for active legal cases under the false premise of it being gang-related contraband. In my first level 602 appeal interview with Institutional Gang Investigator Sergeant Pierce, he told me:

*"Corcoran's litigation office has confirmed [your] active legal cases and that the confiscated materials were indeed legal exhibits for said court cases, but he is going to retain possession of them, as CDCR has deemed the materials to be gang-related contraband per CCR Title 15 Section 3378."*

It can't be both ways! Either they're legal exhibits or not. This type of subjective rationale makes it fundamentally impossible to challenge these bogus allegations of gang activity, because no sooner do we get evidence that refutes these ridiculous allegations, it is then stolen under the

falsity of being gang-related. How is this not more of the same old policies and practices? But more importantly, how can we win under these circumstances? It is imperative that the people send letters and emails to M.D. Stainer, Susan Hubbard, Scott Kernan and others in CDCR's headquarters in Sacramento, California to voice your outrage on this contradiction.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** In the meantime, we will also fight from the angle of publicizing these abuses via our independent media resources (*Under Lock & Key* and [prisoncensorship.info](http://prisoncensorship.info)). We also fight injustice by offering educational materials and study groups to raise the political understanding of anyone with an interest in putting a permanent end to false imprisonment, torture via inhumane long-term isolation, and an oppressive state and military which tries to bully the entire world. The more we understand our oppression, the better equipped we will be to fight against it effectively. ★

### No Stopping Me

by a Georgia prisoner

Locking us down simply because they can  
Trying to break us down to make us feel less of a man  
Instill hate in us, turning us against each other  
When will we utilize our 3rd eye which is the mind  
Through its strength alone it will break these chains  
that got us blind  
We must stand as one together, we must unite  
Realize violence is not the only way to fight  
So much can be done by the force of a powerful voice  
Confined behind these walls but my mind will never be  
under lock and key  
Exercise my mind daily so there's no stopping me ★

## Reading is Fundamental

by a South Carolina prisoner  
April 2015

Throughout the history of our uncivilized world, those who invade, conquer, colonize, and oppress the people without fail make their first order of business to uproot and destroy the educational facilities and libraries. The oppressor nations and their oppressive apparatus know the importance of books and a proper education.

As we know from history, the Africans who were brought to Amerika and turned into slaves were forbidden to read and write. In fact, to be caught with a book or even attempting to learn how to read and write was a crime for them. These are facts that trouble me immensely, because the more things seem to change, the more they actually remain the same.

In September of 2012 while being housed in the Special Management Unit (SMU) at Lee Correctional Institution, in Bishopville, South Carolina, I filed a grievance, because on 25 April 2012, the then-acting Warden (Michael McCall) had the Rapid Response Team (Red-Team) confiscate all books, newspapers, magazines, etc. from SMU prisoners. I was left without one single piece of paper in the cell; they even took the toilet paper.

And though this was against their own policy (SCDC Policy OP-22.12), it has still been upheld on appeal. It is criminal to hold a human being inside of a cell for twenty-four hours a day with absolutely nothing to read and occupy the mind. While on SMU for almost four years, I developed high blood pressure and mental health issues. Since being off SMU I no longer have signs of high blood pressure and I have resolved my mental health issues on my own. I was taking medication for high blood pressure and the mental health issues and currently I am medication-free.

Some prisoners get their families to order books for them, but some bookstores such as Barnes & Noble have refused to let my family order books that must be sent directly to me, because they've had so many problems with the institutions sending books back. Companies have simply gotten fed up with having to send refund checks, because so many books, magazines, newspapers, etc. (primarily literature pertaining to Black history and culture) are unauthorized and thus, we can't receive them.

Currently I am being held captive at Perry Correctional Institution (PCI), which is in Pelzer, South Carolina. Here at PCI they not only deny prisoners on SMU books, but they've shut down the regular library services as well. The general prisoner population's library services have been shut down for about five months now. We have been told that the books that are currently part of the regular library will be divided up and placed on shelves and/or carts that will be built in the respective dorm units. I have written requests to the staff here concerning the library services (or lack thereof) and they give me the same run-around. I have even pointed

## Education vs. Propaganda

by a Colorado prisoner  
March 2015

I am a tutor in the prison's fascist propaganda program, known as GED Preparation. In the classes the prisoners are taught the official U.S. government history line, which they are expected to parrot back when they take the GED tests.

Some of the lies the prisoners are taught are:

- The "valiant" Amerikan colonists fought for freedom with the help of many willing Black slaves. Of course, freedom for the slaves was never an issue, only how to secure power and control for the white masters (all male) who wrote the new rules (Bill of Rights, etc.) for the nascent Amerikan government.
- Once the British gave up, the new Amerikans immediately headed west to grab as much "vacant" land as possible, and with the accompanying preachers, to convert those filthy, violent heathens to the correct religion, Christianity. The religion that teaches "slaves obey your masters."
- They don't mention that when those pesky primitives resisted handing over the land, they were attacked, killed if possible, then once subdued, were herded off for re-settlement (to land no whites wanted because it was unlivable badland).
- At the end of the Civil War in 1865 Abraham Lincoln and his minions passed the 13th Amendment which, it was claimed, ended slavery. Totally ignored and denied (if questioned) by the teacher was the part saying "...except as punishment for crime where of the party shall have been duly convicted..." Then the creation of thousands of "crimes," when conviction of any of them meant to be thrown into slavery. "Put on those shackles and start hoeing that cotton, prisoner!"

I sit in the class with steam coming out of my ears as I listen to the lies. I cannot speak up if I want to keep my job. Frustration! Once out of class though, I talk to receptive people so they

out to them that they are not abiding by their own policy (PS-08.04 Library Services) when it comes to how they've shut the library down.

The South Carolina Department of Corruption's policy GA-01.12 (Inmate Grievance System May 12, 2014), p. 5 states: "Responses: in most instances, grievances will be processed from initial to final disposition within 171 days." It is no accident that the South Carolina Department of Correction (SCDC) has taken well over two years to process my grievance in question and many many more.

Once the grievance process has been exhausted, the prisoner can file civil suits for various violations committed by the SCDC, but most civil suits have to be filed within a two-year time frame of said violations. The SCDC has developed, maintained, and even nurtured a system of crime and corruption against the

get the real history and its impact on the U.S. social/political system.

Comrades who write of the need for prisoners to educate themselves, using their free time for improvement, are absolutely correct. Prisoners reading the MIM publications will find truth and real knowledge. In the prison-created/mandated classes they will find only the official U.S. government line. However, we still can learn truth if we are willing to do our own research, talk to aware comrades, analyze the information, and then come to rational awareness.

In conclusion, if you want to win in your battle against the forces of capitalist fascism, then learn how to educate yourself, and spend your free time doing it. Knowledge does lead to power. Ignorance supports only slavery.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** This writer is on point about the underlying themes of capitalist education and the importance of anti-imperialist information. We must take what we can from all sources. If you don't have a high school diploma and your prison offers GED classes, it's well worth enrolling. But we need to take this education, along with the mainstream press, with a critical eye knowing it is representing the capitalists' dishonest version of history and news. We can learn some useful facts but we have to always put them under the anti-imperialist microscope. This is why alternative press like *Under Lock & Key* is so important. We print the news that no one else will publish. If you are reading this, share it with others and help spread the knowledge and build the power of the oppressed.

If you need access to non-Amerikkkan history books and study materials, you can get them from MIM(Prisons) via our correspondence study courses, Free Books for Prisoners Program, or the United Struggle from Within prisoner-led study group support project. Just write in to get started! And if you're like this comrade and are trying to reach out to interested people to spread revolutionary education, write in to get some anti-imperialist propaganda to share. ★

very people who they have the audacity to call criminals. They prolong and hinder the grievance process in their attempts to stop prisoners from having their day in court.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** The issue of restricting reading materials to prisoners is a topic with a long history in U.S. prisons and in South Carolina. As much as people like to pretend that policies and legislation have an impact on the ground, they must not get as many letters from prisoners as we do that show just the opposite. As this comrade shows, the laws and policies may be in place, but there is always some way to get around it, usually by citing "security" concerns.

Attempting to hold prison administrators accountable when they do violate their own rules leaves one's grievances to sit unanswered for two years as this comrade's are. And the

*Continued on page 14...*

# - 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 with USW by working on these campaigns, or initiating their own.

## SPREAD UNDER LOCK & KEY

Two years ago we were circulating a list of goals for USW, one being to double subscribers to *ULK*. Two years later, we have reached this goal! A combination of efforts led to this success: comrades passing *ULK* around in their facility; sending us sign-up lists of new subscribers; getting ads in other prisoner publications; and doing organizing work that attracts attention of the imprisoned masses. Let's double it again!

A basic task you can do for USW is get people to subscribe to *ULK*. It is free for U.S. prisoners! A great method is to ask other prison publications to run free ads for *Under Lock & Key* and MIM(Prisons)'s Free Political Books for Prisoners Program. The ad could say something like "MIM is a revolutionary anti-imperialist group fighting criminal injustice, and helping prisoners to organize and educate themselves. Sends free political books and dictionaries, offers a free subscription to their newspaper Under Lock & Key, and runs correspondence study courses. Write to MIM(Prisons) for a free subscription." Be sure to include our contact info from page 1.

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.

## FUNDING NEEDED TO EXPAND ULK

More subscribers means *ULK* is more expensive to get out! Each copy costs about \$1 to print and mail. If you send us 2 stamps, that covers your issue, and 12 stamps pays for your subscription for a whole year! 24 stamps covers yours and sponsors another prisoner's copy for a whole year. If your facility rules allow, send in stamps. Tell us BEFORE sending a check so we can send you info on how to send it. Do NOT send a check made out to MIM.

We will be printing 4 bonus pages in the next issue of *ULK*, funded all by subscribers. But since our subscribers have gone up, we are going to put donations toward keeping up with new subscribers instead of adding bonus pages. We still need you to contribute if you can, otherwise eventually we will have to reduce how much *ULK* we are able to send out!

## WE DEMAND OUR GRIEVANCES ARE ADDRESSED

If you are experiencing problems with your grievance process, such as delays, unanswered grievances, or harassment, you should join this campaign. Petitions are available for Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, and Texas. Write in to get the petition for your state. If your prison's policies allow, give 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 yourself. MIM(Prisons) doesn't have the resources to mail out the 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.

## FIGHT CENSORSHIP

Everyone should be sure to send MIM(Prisons) copies of your censorship documents for denied issues of *ULK* and other mail from MIM Distributors. You should always appeal censorship of mail from us!

## BECOME A ULK FIELD CORRESPONDENT

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.

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 all these articles, but remember that it is not your one report that's gonna make a difference; it is the accumulation of reporting from across the country and the connections we make between those struggles. So leave room for others to tell their stories, which strengthens your own.

Planned themes for upcoming issues:

- 46 - United Struggle from Within campaigns  
(send September 9 reports by September 13!)
- 47 - freedom fighters (see p. 10)
- 48 - religion

## TEXAS ACTIVISTS STAND UP!

There are a few campaigns building in Texas, and we've put together all the information and help guides into a Texas Activist Pack. This is a large pack of info, so if you can send in a donation for it, that will help offset the cost to print and mail it out. The current active campaigns are a protest against the limitation of 5 indigent letters per month; combatting the deadly heat; and the petition to ensure our grievances are addressed. Recently the TDCJ made a move to remove the grievance manual from all law libraries. All Texas prisoners should get this information, share it with others, and write reports for *ULK* on their progress with the campaigns. Ask for it!

## SHUT DOWN CONTROL UNITS

Control units are used as a tool of political repression to alienate and torture anyone who works for change from within prisons. In the past few years, there have been mass prisoner protests against control units in California, Georgia, and other states across the country.

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.

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

## Finding Unity in Texas through ULK

by a Texas prisoner  
June 2015

I found a copy of *ULK* 39 and saw that right here in Texas concentration camps there are likeminded brothers struggling in other facilities in the same predicaments. Resist! Resist! Don't get discouraged! I am among you and our numbers are slowly growing.

This very morning I got the various gangs to quit talking bullshit by speaking to my likeminded neighbor about what I've read and studied from *ULK* 39. These white gang members normally talk over me and try to drown me out, but my voice is loud and I want to be heard by all; Black, Brown, Red, and white. Everyone fi-

nally got quiet and me and my neighbor talked. For about 45 minutes we talked about organized prison protests in California, of the 30,000 prisoners hunger strike, and the fact that in Texas you can't get more than two to agree to do it and they give up after commissary.

Then a Mexican brother got into our conversation and told me about MIM and MIM(Prisons). I told him I had found *ULK* 39 in my cell. He said it was his and they move him around every two weeks because he's a "threat to security." He then shot me *ULK*s 38 and 37, several *Prison Action News* publications, and the Texas petition to have our grievances addressed! I've been doing something similar for

several years. It's really helped a few people out. There is a right way and a wrong way to write step one and step two grievances. It's the most asinine case I've ever run across, but if you use their own game rules against them most times you prevail. There are small victories. They just circumvent new policies with bogus practice.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** The Texas activist pack is available to anyone in Texas who wants guidance on fighting to get grievances heard, and it also includes information on how to fight the medical copy as well as the restriction on indigent mail supplies. Just write to us for a copy. It's a big packet of information so if you can send a donation to cover the cost of printing and mailing, that would help us send more lit to other prisoners in need! ★

## Peace and Solidarity Challenge September 9

by a California prisoner  
June 2015

I want to comment on the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity. This idea is the greatest, but fasting for the day is pointless. We have to focus on the name of the day: peace and solidarity. The best way to do this is to print a challenge to all who want a change in this hellish world. The challenge is for the change-seeker to go to an "enemy" and commit an act of kindness. No act is too big or too small. If you see someone in the struggle in need of some support, be that support. The number one reason for mistreatment in prison is lack of solidarity amongst prisoners. When pigs know they'll only have to deal with one race or a certain number of prisoners they feel comfortable committing the acts of mistreatment.

If prisoners moved as a unit against mistreatment and injustice these pigs wouldn't behave how they behave. I'm not saying, hey everybody, let's hold hands and sing Kumbayah, but we need to start supporting each other in order to have a livable life. The line has to be drawn so the pigs understand this is how things are going to be and we will no longer be divided on certain

issues. When we fast, to me it shows strength and dedication, but to the pigs they couldn't care less. We have brothers dying while fasting to support their cause and the pigs couldn't be happier. Fasting has become ineffective.

On September 9 and beyond we have the opportunity to create our own peace. There was a movement called "pay it forward." In that movement you just did a good deed for someone with no expectation of a reward. You let the person know "I want nothing, just do for someone else what I've done for you." So we take from that and mold the peace and solidarity movement similar to it. On our end we'll call it the "peace and solidarity challenge." This can be big as, if not bigger than, the worldwide "ice bucket challenge." The Klansman pigs don't expect enemies to get along. Through our cause not only will we get along but we'll support each other when needed. All the world thinks about prisons and gangs is that we kill each other and inflict harm on one another. We can show our little brothers, sons, nephews, daughters, nieces, sisters, and cousins that the enemy is not each other. We're all going through the same struggle. "Peace and solidarity" is the only way out. September 9 – Join the Movement! ★

## Attica Prisoner Remembers 1971

by a New York prisoner  
July 2015

August is approaching rather quickly and before I address the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity, I want to address the making of such a day of global recognition.

Black August is the representation of struggle. Black August is a clear representation of the resistance exhibited by the oppressed who fought not to return the deed of enslaving their unfortunate captors, holders or those who sought their demise; but, rather, to end the slave economy. Black August is the awakening of the poor of all nationalities to stand up and fight to end the oppression we encounter on all levels.

This fight doesn't entail the necessary requirement to pick up guns. Violence only begets violence. To bring peace, unity, growth, internationalism and global independence, we are to share our experiences to come up with a solution to prevent these unfortunate encounters from being transferred to our youth. The key is communication and patience. Black August is for all who seek programs of productive change to participate. We welcome all who are indeed sincere in change to engage in this growth.

Our commemoration of the 9 September 1971 Attica uprising should be a somber day of triumph and, more importantly, solidarity. The Attica uprising ignited not too long after the untimely demise of our beloved revolutionary comrade George Jackson, who was shot to death by tower guards in the San Quentin maximum security prison on 21 August 1971 – one year and two weeks after the death of his little brother Jonathan "Manchild" Jackson who was

gunned down on 7 August 1970.

Much sorrow is attached to the Attica uprising, for the physical loss of so many brothers. The purpose of the Attica uprising was for better conditions of prisoners (i.e. education, cleaning areas, an end to racial discrimination, etc.). The courage these comrades displayed never will be forgotten. It is up to us to see that their memories are honored, and the first step to this effort is learning and then teaching those who wish to learn.

I currently reside in Attica and I teach as much as I possibly can regarding the law and history. It's the key to our liberation and only us (united soldiers) can be held responsible for the new surge of our youth entering the prison system at such young ages. We are their keys to betterment, provided we aim for better conditions ourselves.

During Black August fast till sundown. From September 9-13 fast as well from sun up to sundown in true solidarity of our comrades.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** As we see in other articles about the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity, there are many ways to organize and recognize this day. Some will choose to fast, others will choose to engage in education towards greater unity, still others will spend the day in quiet contemplation and study. What you do will of course be determined somewhat by your conditions. But whatever your action, be sure to emphasize the building of peace and unity. In general, we don't agree with this writer that "violence only begets violence." We know that the oppressors won't put down their guns and stop killing those they oppress without physical force. But our current stage of struggle is a peaceful

## Censorship in NY Targets Oppressed Nation Lit

by a New York prisoner  
March 2015

Last month I received my first issue of *Under Lock & Key* (No. 42), and I'm honestly surprised that the correspondence unit even let this newsletter into the facility. In the 13 years that I've been imprisoned, I've witnessed and experienced having all kinds of books, magazines, and other publications be either censored in part or disapproved altogether.

The conventional reasons behind this censorship are either that the works contain content that is considered a threat to the safety and security of the institution, or that the literature contains "gang" signs or other unauthorized organizational content. Of course these reasons are totally arbitrary and capricious. For example, the prison media review committee regularly blots out the peace gesture in *The Five Percent Newspaper* and claims that the hand gesture is a "gang" sign. However, I've seen pictures of President Obama making this very same gesture, but these pictures are never censored.

Similarly, I'm enrolled in a college program and last semester the administration here disapproved two pieces of Black literature: Richard Wright's *Big Black Good Man* and James Baldwin's *Going to Meet the Man*. They claimed that the stories were offensive in content. The real insult to me was that during the very same semester they approved literature in other Eurocentric classes that regularly referenced Black people as niggers. I guess offensive content is okay as long as it doesn't offend those in control.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** This new *ULK* subscriber is reporting a problem we see in prisons across the country: systematic censorship of literature that presents even mild cultural news targeting a New Afrikan audience. White supremacist books and magazines get past the censors with no problem, but books by famous authors like Richard Wright and James Baldwin are denied. And *ULK* is even more likely to be censored because it speaks to the situation prisoners face today and builds unity and peace to create real change as part of a broader anti-imperialist struggle.

Everyone who successfully gets a copy of *ULK* should do their part and share it with others. You never know when it's going to slip past the censors, so each issue should be passed around so that we can maximize its use. And if you get a copy from someone else, be sure to write to us for your own subscription. ★

one. We echo this comrade's call to cease all violence on this day, and instead build between the groups that might otherwise stay apart. Talk about ways you can work together against the common enemy of the criminal injustice system. However you commemorate the Day of Peace and Solidarity, send in a report on what you did to *Under Lock & Key* by **September 13** to be included in the next issue. ★

## Ensuring Prisons are Populated

by an Illinois prisoner  
June 2015

When the U.S. border patrol concocted a plan in 2005 with the help of George W. Bush called "Operation Streamline" the idea was to get tough on immigration by arresting and prosecuting those who crossed the border, instead of simply deporting them or placing them in a civil detention center. According to a report by the Bureau of Justice (BOJ) more than 80% of immigrant defendants received a prison sentence.(1) This punishment was for crossing an imaginary line into territory that was, before the battle of Alamo, their country's land. If one looks at it from the side of someone who crosses illegally and is held up to 15 months in jail, one must ask what the hell is going on with this new prison system. According to the BOJ statistics the more than 60,000 people convicted of immigration crimes in 2014-15 were primarily found guilty of one of two things: "illegal entry" or "illegal re-entry."

In Texas, where many arrests are taking place, it is costing the state \$270/day to house immigrants, not including food. That's \$98,550 a year! Former Attorney General Eric Holder announced reforms to the nation's drug sentencing laws in an attempt to reduce the number of federal prisoners held on non-violent offenses, but these actions are not tackling the bigger picture. The expanding pool of new prisoners has meant steady business for the two largest U.S. private prison corporations. Last year, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) received 30% of its revenue from federal contracts with the U.S. Marshall Service and the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), a total of \$546 million. The GEO group received more than 25% of its revenue for a total of \$384 million and four of the CCA's board's senior executives are former BOP employees. In Pearsall, Texas, there is a jail that can house up to 1,800 men at any one time, sleeping up to 100 on iron bunks in dormitories. This isn't a traditional jail, but a piece of land surrounded by fences topped by razor wire and run by the GEO group.

A Congressional Budget Office analysis of new senate immigration legislation estimated that

*"the additional prosecutions under the bill would lead to an increase in incarceration costs totaling about \$1.6 billion over the 2014-2023 period ... Those costs would stem from the increased number of individuals prosecuted, the change in sentencing guidelines, and the rate of conviction. ... Implementing the legislation would increase the prison population by about 14,000 inmates annually by 2018. The total additional costs to detain, prosecute, and incarcerate offenders would total \$3.1 billion over the 2014-2023 period..."(2)*

In Arizona, three privately run jails have contracts that require 100% occupancy. The main incentive for private prisons is to make money and they lobby politicians to keep it that way. The United States is a country where private corporations profit from "lockup quotas." So in the eyes of capitalism "Operation Streamline" is full steam ahead.

## Guards Deliberately Starve Prisoners in Virginia

by a Virginia prisoner  
May 2015

I was in building B2 and saw officers Lawson and Gibson starve a prisoner for 3 days straight because the prisoner wrote them up for messing with him.

We were in the hole in B2, in segregation. When we get fed we have a box on our door. The officer puts the food in and then slides this piece of metal to the side so we can reach in to get the tray and put it back. All trays have tops on, and this is how they get away with it on camera. The tray is empty when they get to the cell, but with the top on the camera just shows them placing the tray in the box. If someone writes them up the officer will claim he delivered the food, but the whole time there was never anything on the tray.

To punish prisoners who expose them, the officers do things like plant knives in their cells to do a staged cell search, or put the person in segregation to have better control over them.

The main two people who call all the hits here at Red Onion Prison are Walter Sweeney,

the Unit Manager for B building, and Yonce, Unit Manager for A building. They both use the word "nigger" here frequently with prisoners. The warden does nothing; he lets the unit managers run this place however they want.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** There is no justification for torture of prisoners, yet it happens all the time in the Amerikan prison system. This description of deliberate starvation in Virginia in retaliation for prisoners exercising their legal rights fits in with the overall goal of the criminal injustice system as a tool of social control. There is nothing rehabilitative or corrective about these actions. This is why we call for a complete dismantling of the system. We are not just writing about a few bad apples perpetrating evil deeds, while the rest of the system is otherwise working well. Prisons help control oppressed populations within the United States for the imperialists. We won't be able to end this through the legal system that is part of the overall criminal injustice system. That doesn't stop us from taking on legal battles when they are winnable, but at the same time we must build a movement that can take down the entire system.★

...Continued from page 11

### ...Fundamental

response from administration is often just a brush off with no practical resolution obtained. Taking them to court over the issue is immensely difficult, even for the most litigious prisoner.

While we can definitely make some significant advances through the court system, we need to always be conscious of the overall picture. The same problems have been going on for decades and even centuries. If bourgeois democracy worked, wouldn't the issues of literacy and free education be resolved by now? Instead we have increased integration (i.e. more parasites leeching from the international proletariat) and individual people battling it out with petty paperwork struggles. Still.

For the lack of response to grievances, a comrade in South Carolina created a petition for the proper handling of grievances. Unfortunately it seems South Carolina does not have a time limit on responding to grievances, which might be a worthwhile issue for a prisoner to take to court if it means there would then at least be a policy in place to limit the time administrators can sit on

answering a grievance and thus taking one step closer to satisfying Prison Litigation Reform Act requirements. The campaign to have our grievances addressed is an attempt to show the collective problem of neglect of the grievance procedure, rather than keeping it on the individual scale that is so convenient for prison administrators to disregard. Different states are having different levels of success in their grievance petition campaigns, but overall at least we are further proving how useless the offered forms of relief are in actually resolving problems.

In choosing which campaigns to fight, we assess how they will impact our overall struggle against imperialism. Our role at this point in the struggle in the United States is to build public opinion in favor of national liberation struggles of the oppressed, and against the capitalist economic system. Having access to reading materials is hugely important in developing an understanding of revolutionary politics, and by keeping prisoners in the dark with literally no material to read, the state of South Carolina is further delaying our struggle for liberation from all forms of oppression.

Comrades in South Carolina should organize around this lack of access to books and educational materials. If they can manage to get a library back, and to lift restrictions on what books can be mailed in to SCDC facilities, it would have a big impact on prisoner-led study groups and individual study. It would also have a big impact on the breadth and depth of political consciousness in South Carolina prisons, and would be very beneficial for our overall struggle against imperialism. Comrades in South Carolina should write to MIM(Prisons) with their ideas on what United Struggle from Within can do to help fight the censorship in South Carolina prisons!★

Notes:

1. Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Immigration Offenders in the Federal Justice System, 2010", 18 July 2012.
2. Congressional Budget Office, "Cost Estimate for S. 744 Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act," 18 June 2013, p. 52.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** Private prisons are indeed cashing in on national oppression in the United States. And the use of prisons to target migrants is a key component to the imperialists' efforts to keep the borders closed and hoard wealth for Amerikan citizens. Defining the act of crossing

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# La Brutalidad de la Policía Americana y las Tortuosas Prisiones son el Mismo Asunto

por cipactli de Brown Berets - Prison Chapter  
February 2015  
traducido por un prisoner@ en California

La decisión de no enjuiciar al cerdo en Ferguson, Missouri por el asesinato de Mike Brown ha desencadenado a la gente, y con mucha razón. Este es un disco rayado de este sistema de injusticia y su intención real. Cuando desperté y perdí las noticias esa primer mañana y vi la reacción de las cortes de no presentarle cargos al policía asesino, yo estuve contento de que la gente estaba expresando su descontento contra este sistema. Digo este sistema porque es realmente este el que apoya la capacidad del Estado de seguir masacrando brutalmente a la gente.

Entonces vi a ese mismo policía asesino en una entrevista y él sin rodeos dijo que él no sentía remordimientos. Él estaba satisfecho de dispararle a un hombre joven en la cara y la cabeza quien estaba simplemente resistiéndose a ser asesinado, oponiéndose a su asesino. Él era la cara de America y él ofreció un retrato real acerca de todo lo que America es. El barrio en el que Mike Brown fue asesinado era como los

barrios de donde son los prisioneros, este es de donde es la mayoría de la gente pobre en los Estados Unidos. Esto es lo que experimentamos cuando interactuamos con el Estado.

No hay excusa para lo que esta ocurriéndole a la gente pobre en las calles. Esta es una descarga interminable de desesperación desencadenada entre la gente oprimida. Y sí, todavía habemos muchos prisioneros quienes somos inconscientes a lo que esta sucediendo, aunque esto este ocurriendo en sus calles. Esto es como gente que tiene vendas en los ojos y no ve que está pasando alrededor de ellos, no una o dos veces sino diariamente a través de los Estados Unidos. Los prisioneros necesitan ponerse las pilas y darse cuenta que lo que ocurre afuera en las calles esta relacionado con ellos porque estas son sus gentes quienes están siendo masacradas brutalmente, este es un lado de la guerra que necesita ser volteada. La sublevación en Ferguson es una respuesta a esto y esta es una buena respuesta pero la gente necesita responder en muchas diferentes maneras para manifestar que estos policías asesinos tienen que parar de estar asesinando a la gente.

MIM(Prisons) agrega: nos unimos a la llamada de este camarada para más sublevaciones como en Ferguson. La gente tiene el derecho a estar indignada con el sistema de opresión nacional dentro de los Estados Unidos. y tenemos que llamarle a este sistema claramente por lo que es; no solo hay una multitud genérica de gente pobre en este país, los pobres son desproporcionadamente concentrados en las naciones oprimidas. Estos grupos, Nuevos Africanos, Chican@s, Primeras Naciones, junto con minorías nacionales como Mexicanos, viven en un país donde sus barrios son ocupados por la fuerza de la policía imperialista y donde ellos pueden encarar la muerte por el solo crimen de andar por la calle.

Relacionando los puntos para prisioneros incluye reconocer que este es el mismo sistema de injusticia criminal que mete en la cárcel a naciones oprimidas, el que esta matando a la gente en las calles. Los policías, las cortes, y todas las prisiones son parte de este mismo control social sistemático. Y así, protestando los abusos contra prisioneros detrás de las rejas son parte de la gran lucha contra el imperialismo en las calles. Tenemos que hacer estas uniones y mantener en mente los más amplios objetivos mientras peleamos contra la opresión diaria detrás de las rejas.★

## 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, nos apoyamos la auto-determinación de todas naciones y gente. Hoy, el sistema de prisiones de los EEUU es una parte mayor del estado imperialista siendo 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 maoísta y amplíe el movimiento Maoísta detrás de las líneas del enemigo.

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

1. El comunismo es nuestra meta. El comunismo es una sociedad en donde ningún grupo tiene poder sobre cualquier otro grupo.

2. Una dictadura del proletariado es necesario. En una dictadura del proletariado la mayoría explotada anterior dicta a la minoría (el que promovió la explotación) como la sociedad se debe conducir. En el caso de naciones imperialistas, una dictadura junta del proletariado de naciones 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 Republica de la gente de China a través de 1976 como los ejemplos mejores del socialismo moderno en la práctica. El arresto de la "Pandilla de Cuatro" en China y la subida de Khrushchev en la Unión Soviética marcaron la restauración del capitalismo en esos países. Otros experimentos en el desarrollo del socialismo en el siglo 20 fallaron de sobrepasar el modelo Soviético (es decir: Albania) o peor, se quedó adentro del modelo capitalista de producción, generalmente por la falla de romper con la teoría de fuerzas productivas.

## ¿Quieres leer más en español?

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

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

Write in to put in work!

## Under Lock & Key not enough?

If one *ULK* every 2 months isn't enough political study for you, then join a Maoist study cell through MIM(Prisons)! We start with articles written by MIM(Prisons) on the topics of prison economics, then study a pamphlet on the basics of our political line; and finish with Mao's essay "On Contradiction," which explains the philosophy of dialectical materialism (how we study history).

The whole study course costs \$5 and you can trade work for study if you can't pay. Write in today to sign up for the next group. (Tell us first if you need to pay with a check.)

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You must write to us every 6 months to stay on our mailing list.  
Tell us what mail you've gotten since the last time you wrote.

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Under Lock & Key No. 45

May/June 2015

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### ...Populated

an imaginary line in pursuit of a safer environment or a higher wage as illegal and requiring imprisonment is just one more way that the Amerikan criminal injustice system ensures a system of social control over oppressed people within U.S. borders. And the private prisons have found a way to turn a system that is inherently built on taking a financial loss (the government has to subsidize prisons as they do not make enough money from prisoner labor to run themselves) into a profitable enterprise for imperialist parasites. Sadly, there is no problem filling these prison quotas, as the criminal injustice system shows no sign of cutting back on what has become the largest imprisonment country per capita in the world. We have written before about the private prisons economic push to lock up more migrants.(1) And in response to these conditions, more recently we have seen some migrant prisoner protests.(2) In the end we won't be able to defeat this system of national oppression against migrants and all oppressed nations without dismantling imperialism itself. Imperialism depends on closed borders to ensure luxury for a few at the expense of the rest of the world.★

Notes:

1. MIM(Prisons), "National Oppression as Migrant Detention," *Under Lock & Key No. 11*, November 2009.

2. MIM(Prisons), "Prisoners Take Over Adams Correctional Center in Protest of Conditions," *Under Lock & Key No. 27*, June 2012.

### Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán

by a MIM(Prisons) Study Group

is a new book in the final stages of production. We are going to be sending out a mass mailing of this book to everyone who has signed up for it, with a study pack!

The book costs \$20 + s/h (\$10 for prisoners), and the production costs are HUGE! **Chican@ Power is going to be an invaluable resource for anyone struggling for liberation of the internal semi-colonies of the United States**, and we don't want to prevent anyone from getting the book for lack of funds.

We're asking anyone who can contribute \$10 for their copy, or more to cover for others, to please step up and send in your donations today!

If your facility allows, you can send us stamps. To send a check, we need to send you instructions, so tell us first.

...Continued from page 1

### ...Seize the Time

kaptives, and to demonstrate resistance to the criminal injustice system by fasting, refraining from work, engaging only in solidarity actions, and ending kaptive-on-kaptive violence/hostilities.

MIM(Prisons) said the number of reports were down in 2014 compared to the previous years, where they'd seen a growing interest and more involvement by kaptives on this day of protest. Imperialism is still krushing the upward mobility of the lumpen and oppressed nations, and we can not slack off on our duties organizing, agitating, campaigning, educating and building our own independent institutions to remedy our problems.

We are 44 years and many kaptive uprisings later, but the oppressive conditions remain the same. And, as back then, Maoist study groups are being formed; calls to unite kaptives are being heard; and of course oppressors are still oppressing. So let us both memorialize this day and use it as a catalyst to push leaders forward – as we "seize the time" because we have had E-NUF.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** Write to request a September 9 study pack to help understand the history of this day of struggle and build for Peace and Solidarity in your prison. Send your report on what you did to commemorate this year's September 9 to *ULK* by September 13!★