



Sept. 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity 2016

On September 9, 2016 join the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP) for the fifth annual Day of Peace and Solidarity in prisons across the United States. This is an opportunity to commemorate the anniversary of the Attica uprising by organizing for a full 24 hours of no prisoner-on-prisoner violence.

In past years we have seen many actions, from work stoppages to fasts to education classes. These actions lay the groundwork for building long-term unity. As we expose abuses in prisons, we also need to do the work to fight back against them. This can only be successful if we come together as a united force, under our common conditions as imprisoned lumpen. Write in today to get your September 9 organizing pack and start building with others for your local Attica Peace and Solidarity commemoration.

We want to print reports of September 9 actions from everyone who participates. The next *ULK* goes to production soon after September 9, so put your reports in the mail on Monday September 12. ★

Defining and Measuring the Lumpen Class in the United States A Preliminary Analysis

by MIM(Prisons)
July 2016

MIM(Prisons) began to draft a book on the lumpen class a few years ago. We found a gap in the theoretical material on this subject and realized that our observations about this class are a unique contribution to Marxist theory. A lot of research was done, particularly on defining the lumpen class within U.S. borders, but due to competing projects and limited time, the book was put on hold. We began distributing the chapter with our research in draft form, but are not yet close to completing the book, nor do we currently have the funds or resources to print another book. As a result, we are turning to the pages of *Under Lock & Key* to sum up some of our key findings and further develop and apply our theory of the First World lumpen. This article is just a summary of the more extensive draft chapter on the lumpen class which is available from MIM(Prisons) upon request for \$5 or equivalent work trade.

U Can't Sell Dope Forever

"Power is the ability to define a phenomenon and make it act in a desired manner." - Huey P. Newton

Marxist socialism is based in the idea that humyns, as a group, can take charge of the natural and economic laws that determine their ability to meet their material needs. Taking charge does not mean that they can decide these laws, but that they can utilize them. In doing so they develop a scientific understanding of the world around them.

Under capitalism, the anarchy of production is the general rule. This is because capitalists only concern themselves with profit, while production and consumption of humyn needs is at the whim of the economic laws of capitalism. As a result people starve, wars are fought and the environment is degraded in ways that make humyn life more difficult or even impossible. Another result is that whole groups of people are excluded from the production system. Whereas in pre-class societies, a group of humyns could produce the basic food and shelter that they needed to survive, capitalism is unique in keeping large groups of people from doing so.

In the industrialized countries like the United States, the culture and structure of society has eliminated opportunities and knowledge to be self-sufficient. Production is done socially instead. Simplistically this might look like: one company produces bread, another produces shoes, and everyone working for each company gets paid and uses their pay to buy things from the other companies. Everyone gets what they need by being a productive member of the larger society.

The problem is that there are not enough jobs. At first this might seem like a good thing. We are so advanced that we can get all the work done for the whole group with only a portion of those people having to work. But under

capitalism, if you're not in an exploiter class, then not working means you do not get a share of the collective product. So when whole groups are not able to get jobs, they must find other ways of getting the goods that they need to survive. And we all know various ways that people do this.

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MIM(Prisons)
PO Box 40799
San Francisco, CA 94140
www.prisoncensorship.info
mimprisons@posteo.net
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. It serves as a forum to develop and promote agitational campaigns led by MIM(Prisons) and United Struggle from Within (USW). It is a free newsletter for prisoners in the United States, edited and published by MIM(Prisons). It is mostly written and illustrated by USW and United Front for Peace in Prisons comrades behind bars. ULK is mailed out every other month.

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.

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).

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. It 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 six cardinal points, but they can't consciously disagree with any of them. See page 12 for campaign info.

What is MIM(Prisons)?

The Maoist Internationalist Ministry of Prisons, or 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) expresses general unity with all other groups and outbreaks against imperialism; mass movements against oppression have as many forms as forms of power. In this spirit, we insist on telling the uncompromised truth and discussing and criticizing the strategy and tactics of any given action. MIM(Prisons) encourages everyone, communist or not, to be involved in the struggle against imperialism. 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 Khrushchev in the Soviet Union marked the restoration of capitalism in those countries. Other experiments in developing socialism in the 20th century failed to surpass the Soviet model (i.e. Albania), or worse, stayed within the capitalist mode of production, generally due to a failure to break with the Theory of Productive Forces.

Free Political Books for Prisoners

Our Free Political Books for Prisoners Program is a Serve the People (STP) program founded on the model of the Black Panther Party's Breakfast for Schoolchildren and other STP programs, and on the basis of Mao's emphasis that communists should serve the people in everything we do. The purpose of the Free Books for Prisoners program is to help prisoners turn their time under lock and key into a time to develop their politics and build with us toward the beginnings of a more just and productive society. We collect and send out political, legal and his-

torical books primarily (we also have some dictionaries and other reference items that are useful for writers and jailhouse lawyers). The materials we distribute are selected to help people study the conditions under which they are living and to turn their knowledge into political organizing.

We know that many of our subscribers lack financial resources, and this should not be a barrier to education. Because our purpose is to organize, we expect that comrades will exchange work for the books we send. You should write articles for ULK, create revolutionary art, form study groups with other comrades and work through the study group to educate and organize, share our literature and expand our mailing list, lead campaigns against local examples of oppression, or come up with other ways to contribute to the struggle. If you can afford to send donations, and if your facility rules allow, sending us stamps is the best way to donate. We can always use them to get you more books or to help other comrades who cannot afford to pay for their books. (Tell us if you want to send a check or money order so we can send you instructions.)

We can send you a list of specific titles that we currently have available, but it is better to request general topic areas or include substitutions because our stock is constantly changing. The literature list also lists prices for the books we send in if you want to purchase them, but again, lack of funds will not keep you from getting literature, but lack of political work will. We ask you to help us build MIM(Prisons) and United Struggle from Within through your own work in exchange for the books.

If you would like to receive books from MIM(Prisons)'s Free Books for Prisoners program, please let us know the subject areas you are interested in, and the work you are doing in exchange.

Fight Censorship

Under Lock & Key, *MIM Theory*, study materials, letters, and even books like dictionaries have been censored by the state, especially ever since MIM began organizing on behalf of prisoners decades ago. If your MIM(Prisons) correspondence is censored, the first thing you need to know is that you are not alone in struggling to get your mail and reading materials. You will need to be prepared to do the work yourself (making copies of rejection notices, filing grievances, sending copies of these documents to us), but we can send instructions on how to do this. In some cases, we can support your appeals with letters of our own.

These are some basic steps we recommend to everyone in prison:

1. Find out *now* what the prison rules say about your right to receive mail and reading materials. You should read this policy carefully and get a copy for your file if possible. You can also send us copies of the rules to post on our website as a resource for the public.
2. Find out what the prison's implementation of these policies is like. Many times the policy looks reasonable on paper, but the prison staff behaves totally out of line. Ask around.
3. To keep our correspondence going, write to us every 6 months. If you're writing us regularly and are not getting any mail from us, there's a problem with your mail delivery. Do not assume we are ignoring you.
4. If your correspondence with us is censored, it is very important that you keep copies of all the paperwork, (rejection notices, grievances, etc.) and send us copies of these as well. Often this is the only way we find out that our mail has been censored. Once we know of the censorship, we can work with you to fight it.

Expand Spanish

If you write in Spanish or would like to translate *ULK* articles written in English into Spanish, this helps the development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism among the Spanish-speaking peoples of the world. If you want to do translation, let us know. If you want to submit articles in Spanish, go ahead and send them in (it helps if you can still write your letters to MIM(Prisons) in English).

Share *ULK* and Recruit New Subscribers

Let others read the literature we send you. Talk to potential comrades about our politics and work, and have them write in to get put on our mailing list. Our subscribers (you) play a vital role in the growth of our mailing list. Remember, a subscription is free!

Administrative Details

Your subscription will be active for 6 months after each time you write to us. If we do not hear from you for 6 months, you will be automatically removed from the mailing list. We recommend writing to us regularly so you don't lose track of when to update your subscription.

For people outside of prison, all issues of *ULK*, plus additional reports from within U.S. prisons, are available on the website www.prisoncensorship.info

Your address: Please send us as detailed an address as possible, including your full legal name, prison and unit name, prison ID #, street address and P.O. Box, city, state, and 9-digit zip code. Please check with the mailroom to make sure you have the correct information. This is essential for us to send you anything.

Releases: Let us know if you are looking at a (possible) release date in the next two years. We recently beefed up our release support, and it includes a lot of set-up while you're still locked up. Also let us know your expected address post-release if you have one. Even if it is only the address of a relative who you think will be in the same place for a while, this could be the difference between losing contact and staying in touch and politically active after you are released.

Your persynal papers: Do not send us legal papers that pertain to your case unless you have checked with us first. In general, we cannot do anything with your legal papers as we do not have the resources to get involved in individuals' cases. We also cannot return them to you. Rather than focus on only your case, we strongly encourage comrades to write articles about the political implications of their situation, and work on cases that will positively impact the ability for prisoners to organize against imperialism and capitalism.

Please do not send us your only copies of artwork, articles or other writings unless you are certain that you will not need them in the future. Comrades have requested that we make copies of their work and send these copies back. Doing this takes up time and money that would otherwise go to filling book requests, fighting censorship and answering letters.

Other Resources

PARC provides a free resource guide for prisoners. Tell them you heard about them from MIM(Prisons): Prison Activist Resource Center
PO Box 70447
Oakland, CA 94612

Inside Books Projects sends free books and a resource guide to prisoners in Texas.
Inside Books Projects, 12th Street Books
827 West 12th Street
Austin TX 78701
ibp.resourceguide@gmail.com

see our partial political glossary p. 23

Choosing One Ideology Over Another: The Materialist Method

(reprinted from the Maoist Internationalist Movement "What's Your Line" pamphlet)

"We can (and must) begin to build socialism, not with abstract human material, or with human material specially prepared by us, but with the human material bequeathed to us by capitalism. True, it is not an easy matter, but no other approach to this task is serious enough to warrant discussion." V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing Communism," - An Infantile Disorder," Collected Works, Vol. 31, p. 50.

It is only by examining the practice of various ideologies over the long run of history that one can decide which ideology is the most effective in promoting the end of oppression of oppressed groups by oppressor groups. In contrast, some people think it is fair to compare an abstract idea with an actual movement. That is not materialist method. Once one allows ideas to be compared with actual, historical movements one has no way of stopping all kinds of comparisons of ideas with actual practices. One can only compare practices with practices.

It is intellectuals and Trotskyists who compare practices with ideas to see how good or bad the practice is. With this comparison, for example, it is easy to shoot down the practice of Stalinism with the ideas of Trotskyism or the ideas of Madison and Jefferson or any idea for that matter. This method is not wrong because it is Trotskyist or Madisonian. Rather, Trotskyism is wrong because it uses this idealist method to criticize Stalinism instead of comparing Trotskyist practice with Stalinist practice.

In the same vein, it's not fair to compare Maoism with Jesus Christ in the abstract. Maybe Mao did not obey the 10 Commandments. But his followers have a better practice than the Christians when it comes to ending oppression.

The only time it is correct to evaluate a practice in relationship to an idea is within that practice. Maoists can determine if there are better ways to be Maoists and tap existing potential by discussing ideas within Maoism. Even then, the only proof of the validity of a new Maoist idea is by comparing one Maoist practice with another Maoist practice.

Hence MIM uses the "where's the beef" taunt to everyone else. There are an infinity of logically consistent ideas ranging from professors' pet economic models to Hare Krishna. Only some ideas, however, have come with practices to end oppression. By choosing the ideology that goes with the most historically effective practice of social change to end oppression, one separates oneself from dogmatism and religion. Dogmatism may take the form of believing in reform no matter what; it may take the form of opposing dogma all the time, but in every case dogmatism and religion really amount to comparing apples and oranges, the apples being ideas and the oranges, practices. Dogmatists of all stripes conclude that oranges should be more like apples. In contrast, Marxist materialists just pick the best oranges.

MIM forms the following conclusions on the materialist method:

* In debate, we must decide when it is appropriate to compare practices with each other.

* Then we must decide on when it is appropriate to develop ideas within a practice.

(For more on materialism, how we study history, and how we develop our strategy, write in to our Free Books for Prisoners program. We have a number of study packs and books on this topic.) *

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.

On the Importance of Theory in the Prison Movement; Opportunism and Revolutionary Leadership

by Ehecatl of United Struggle from Within
March 2016

"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity." - V. I. Lenin

Often times the first half of this quote is misrepresented by people not really knowing the context. Well-meaning comrades will repeat this political axiom when calling for others to pick up their theoretical game (grasp of revolutionary science), for reasons having to do with the obvious need for revolutionary theory to influence and propagate our revolutionary practice. Yet it was in the process of struggle and heated political debate that Lenin first made this now famous statement. These struggles and other political debates were recalled by Lenin in his book *What is to be Done?*; a book about communist organization and discipline. More to my point, in this book, Lenin addressed the importance that revolutionary theory should play in informing the revolutionary movement, in part for the purpose of combating various erroneous tendencies.

The main tendency which Lenin devoted the better part of this book to was the problem of opportunism. Opportunism can be defined as the conscious or unconscious watering down of political line in order to garner more sympathy for your cause or movement. It can also be said that opportunism can be described as the glossing over of contradictions within the revolutionary movement so as to not offend or turn away your social base. A perfect example of opportunism would be to tell Americans that they are the revolutionary vehicle which we call the proletariat instead of telling them the truth: that they are by and large the objective enemies of the international proletariat – parasites which we call the labor aristocracy.

One example of how opportunism can work its way into the revolutionary prison movement is thru a philosophical belief called pragmatism. To be a pragmatist means to worship the tactics of whatever works at the present time. While there may be occasions in which we must do what is most effective at that particular instance/moment, we must do so in a way that doesn't have us sacrificing our political principles or political line, all for the sake of practical results. Pragmatism as a strategic orientation is a danger to revolutionary movements because it can cause us to shift focus from our strategic goals in favor of the immediacy of tactical results. While tacti-

cal wins are a good thing for the oppressed, we will be in error if we confuse a tactical gain for strategic victory. A real world example of the negative effects of pragmatism is how many prisoners who participated in the California hunger strikes first initiated in 2011 abandoned the struggle for human rights in favor of material concessions and a more comfortable oppression.

Other more nuanced examples of how opportunism has come to dominate political organizing behind prison walls come in the form of "friendship groups" and "elites." Both are hazards to the prison movement because of the seemingly casual nature of the two and the Liberalism that underlies them.

Friendship groups are the more obvious of the two. Friendship groups can be defined as: "A group of friends who also happen to participate in the same political activities. Most of these groups' members participate within the group because they like the people in them and not because they have the correct political line."

Elites can be defined as: "A small group of people who have power over a larger group of which they are a part of, usually without a direct responsibility to that larger group and often without their knowledge or consent."

Friendship groups function on an external level and so many prisoners will surely recognize one when they see them, as most LOs have these types of groups functioning in one capacity or another. Elites on the other hand, while being dialectically related to the friendship group are the opposite and function on an internal level. One thing which both

these groups share in common is their popularization and use of false logic as a method of accomplishing their objectives. This false logic can be best understood as sophism; a method of argument that fake philosophers use to fool the masses by exploiting to their own advantage any situation they encounter or create. One such method of the professional sophist is the ad hominem attack. Ad hominem attacks are marked by appeals to feelings or prejudices rather than to intellect. For example, if one person doesn't like another person's politics, but can't correctly argue against their political line, the aggressor might use an ad hominem attack instead. The ad hominem attack might be accusing the person of violating an established taboo, such as stealing from another person.

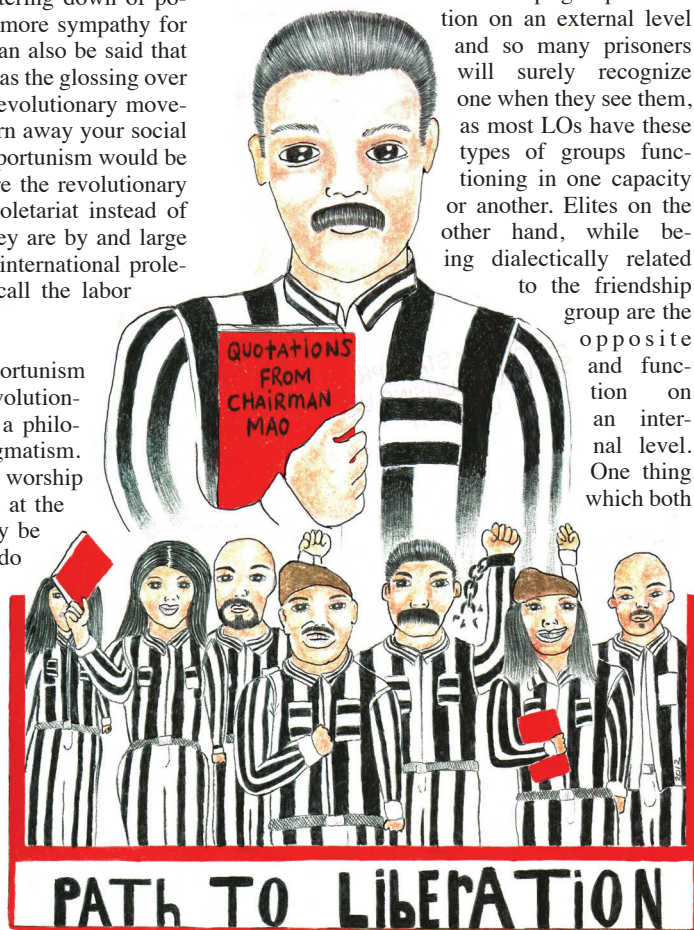
Opportunism will find its way into revolutionary movements and organizations if both the masses and the leadership do not have a strong grasp or even an elementary understanding of revolutionary theory. This can allow for various dishonest and incorrect elements to find their way into our structures, which as a result can cause our movements to falter and perish. This is why as revolutionaries we put such a high premium on the study of revolutionary science not only amongst the prison leadership but the prison masses. Furthermore, in making this point we cannot over-emphasize the dialectical relation between study and practice, as a correct grasp of one will inevitably lead to a correct grasp of the other.

To re-iterate, preventative measures are essential in order to safe-guard our movements from taking up opportunism and watering down their revolutionary agendas. We must strongly advocate and fight for the study and production of both revolutionary theory and practice not only to effectively meet the demands and goals of revolutionary organizing, but to navigate our movements thru the sea and fog of bourgeois Liberalism. Our practice will grope in the dark unless its path is illuminated by the most advanced revolutionary theory.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to speak to other challenges of revolutionary organizing behind prison walls. When working with the lumpen and attempting to organize for our collective liberation it is only natural that we will run into a variety of problems that may end with us in frustration. However, we should not blithely dismiss the prison masses as incapable of listening to our message because they are supposedly too "ignorant", "backward" or "apolitical" to understand what the so-called "revolutionary" might regard as "complex," as this has more to do with the revolutionary's own ignorance, inability and incapability to either understand the masses or effectively communicate to them the correct political line. More likely than not, when any movement, strike or action fails to materialize or develop it is not due to the low level of consciousness of the masses, but to the revolutionaries' own lack of profundity and insight into the movement of the masses which they often claim some sort of near spiritual connection to.

We must continue to find better ways to correct

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Book Review: Lumpen by Ed Mead

by Wiawimawo of MIM(Prisons)
July 2016

Lumpen: The Autobiography of Ed Mead
Kersplebedeb, 2015

Available for \$20 + shipping/handling from:
kersplebedeb
CP 63560, CCCP Van Horne
Montreal, Quebec
Canada
H3W 3H8

As anti-imperialists and prison activists, we can recommend Ed Mead's recent autobiography as a useful read. There are a couple inconsistencies with the form and the line promoted in the book, however. While Mead critiques anarchism and reformism in the book, at the end is a list of a number of organizations that struggle for prisoners' rights, and they are all reformist/mass organizations with a couple anarchist groups thrown in. Mead stresses that he does not believe communists should hide their beliefs. Yet it is odd that he finds no communist prison support groups to be worthy of mention. Moreso, it seems that for much of Mead's life ey couldn't find a communist organization to be a part of and support.

The foremost stated purpose of the book by Mead is to "extend an invitation to sections of the lumpenproletariat to join the international working class." While not a bad goal, it does hint at differences we have with Mead and other communists within California Prison Focus (CPF) regarding whether nation or class is the principal contradiction. This has led to divisions in our work to shut down Security Housing Units in California. In the 2000s, MIM was part of the United Front to Abolish the SHU, which was dominated by parties and organizations struggling for national liberation. While CPF was nominally

a member, their difference on this issue led to a lack of working together. This was despite the fact that the United Front explicitly allowed for organizational independence in terms of political line outside of our agreement on shutting down the SHU. In the 2010s, CPF was part of the leadership that created the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity coalition. Mead was perhaps the only one who tried to include MIM(Prisons) in that effort. But the coalition structure forced us to the outside this time as MIM(Prisons) refused to subsume our politics to the coalition.

While recognizing whites as obviously having advantages over others, Mead does believe there is a significant white nation working class in this country. While citing Mao favorably multiple times, Mead points out Mao's failure to put class first as a point of disagreement.(p. 164) Mead's line is also reflected in an off-hand comment saying Stalin was wrong to condemn the German social-democrats as social-fascists. We think Stalin and the Comintern correctly saw the class nature and interest of the social democrats as being labor aristocracy and petty bourgeois, who wavered towards fascism, paving its way to power.(1)

Mead talks about "white skin privilege" and uses it as an agitational point to push people to join the class war while discussing eyr participation in the militant George Jackson Brigade. Mead admits that eyr decision to use revolutionary violence was a direct result of the lack of mass support for abused prisoners.(p. 181) At the same time ey mentions other groups at the time doing similar things and believing that small bands carrying out armed struggle would spread across the country. Mead does not conclude anywhere in the book that it was a mistake to take up this line even though comrades died, while the rest spent the prime of their lives in prison. As we discussed in a recent article on the Black Panthers, it was both common and understandable to conclude that armed struggle would become a reality in

the United States at that time.(2) Yet, not only are conditions less advanced today, history also proved that armed struggle in the United States was premature in the conditions of 1966-72.

From what we know about Mead in real life and from reading the book, it is clear that ey was good at and focused on uniting all who could be united. And while we say it is better for communists to work within cadre organizations than mass organizations, as Mead did much of eyr life, ey certainly did so in a principled way according to the book. And most of those principles are ones that we too support.

While some of the stories are very abbreviated, the book is not short on examples of Mead's efforts, pitfalls and successes. Mead talks about the importance of determining the principal contradiction at each prison ey organized in. While in most cases Mead says it was related to nation, ey said it was related to sexism in Walla Walla, which led to the formation of Men Against Sexism.(3) Interestingly, Mead takes the position that while nation is principal inside prisons, it does not make sense to build a Black-only prison movement (at least on a large scale).(p. 280) We are sympathetic to this view and spend a lot of time calling for unity between nationalities in prison, while promoting national liberation as a strategy for the oppressed nations overall. A couple of good lessons are well-put in Mead's own words:

"...if the immediate demands address prisoners' rights and living conditions, then the backwards elements will either be won over or neutralized by the growing consciousness of the rest of the population."(p. 305) This was one of the most inspiring parts of Mead's story. In a situation where the prison system was dominated

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...Theory

our approach and understanding of the masses, correct our shortcomings, and stop blaming the masses. Likewise, neither should we fear the masses or their criticism, as the acceptance of criticism and self-criticism is integral to establishing the correct revolutionary line. Do not fear the masses because they are the way forward, and do not fear their criticism because often times they prove to be correct, if even just a bit, for whosoever fears the criticism of the masses only proves that what they really fear is revolution. Above all, always remember that revolutionaries are not above the masses in any way, shape or form. We are but the advanced detachment of the prison movement, nothing more, nothing less. Whoever does not believe this is not a Maoist.

In writing this missive a relevant story comes to mind. When the masses in socialist China were struggling for control of their country against the capitalist roaders during the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, many so-called "revolutionaries" felt that the masses were out of control, and that they weren't yet ready to share

state power with the communist party. Many of these revolutionaries advocated an end to this "anarchy," accusing the masses of being too backward to run the country. To this Mao Zedong and Lin Biao responded:

"The assumption of power by ideological means is absolutely necessary if consolidation of the working class's power and hegemony is the goal... To accomplish the decisive political leap, the leading role must revert to the masses; this has nothing to do as it is generally believed in the West to do with any form of spontaneity. The role of the party in destroying 'spontaneous' illusions lies in the quality of leadership which consists in transforming dispersed rebel movements into a revolutionary current capable of overcoming contradictions. Lin Biao says that the mass revolutionary movement is naturally correct; for among the masses, right and left-wing deviationist groups may exist, but the main current of the mass movement always corresponds to the development of that society involved and is always correct. Revolution is the resolution of contradictions."(1)★

Notes:

1. *Daily Life in Revolutionary China*, Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, *Monthly Review Books*, p. 436.

STARTING ULK FUNDRAISING BOARD

This issue of ULK was funded 4.4% by subscriber donations. Our goal is to have the costs to print and mail ULK covered at least 10% each issue. Every single stamp helps!

Since MIM(Prisons)'s efforts at fundraising have consistently fallen short of our needs, we are going to put this responsibility in the hands of our subscribers instead. We are going to form a Fundraising Board, tasked with getting donations to help fund ULK, which is only getting more and more expensive over time.

If you can commit to this long-term USW project, write in to be considered for the Board!

Commentary on New Afrikan lumpen

by a Federal prisoner
February 2016

"We seldom, if ever, think of ourselves as among those petty-bourgeois forces in need of committing 'class suicide' – but We must remember where We are. Here in the seat of empire, even the 'slaves' are 'petty-bourgeois,' and our poverty is not what it would be if We didn't in a thousand ways also benefit from the spoils of the exploitation of peoples throughout the world. Our passivity wouldn't be what it is if not for our thinking that We have something to lose." – James Yaki Sayles, *Meditations on Frantz Fanon's Wretched of the Earth*, p.188

I believe this quote may be of some interest to you in your development of the First World Lumpen (FWL). I believe this applies more to the Euro-Amerikkkan than to the nationless New Afrikan who falls into the class lumpenproletariat (LP) by default of lacking a class society of its own.

I am aware that the New Afrikan lumpenproletariat (NAL) is more privileged than the Third World lumpenproletariat (TWL). But not privileged enough to make it reactionary. The LP of Amerikkka is majority New Afrikan – or an oppressed nation, which changes the quality of the question. So it is not just a LP, but LP of an op-

pressed nation. This qualitative leap in the discussion pushes us to do a thorough theoretical analysis on the LP from all sides of the question.

The contradiction may look like this: First World lumpen and New Afrikan lumpen.

Then it can be stated as this: Euro Amerikan FWL and New Afrikan FWL

Then Euro-American FWL must be understood to be reactionary as it is majority white nationalist (racist). They consist of oppressor nation background.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We have a lot of unity with this comrade on assessing the national contradiction between oppressed and oppressor nation lumpen. As we get into in the Lumpen Class Analysis article on page 1 of this issue, we make a distinction between the lumpenproletariat and the First World lumpen that gets at this comparison between the NAL and TWL the writer points out. We find the lumpenproletariat in countries where there is a sizable proletariat, while the First World lumpen exists in First World countries where there is almost no proletariat to speak of, and this later group benefits from living in an imperialist country.

Further, we agree that there is an important overlap between class and nation when it comes to the lumpen. The national privilege of the oppressor nation makes it unlikely that the lumpen from that nation will be revolutionary, while national oppression puts the lumpen from oppressed nations more likely to be on the side of the world's oppressed. In fact, we believe that the class privilege enjoyed by the oppressor nations extends to encompass any potential white nation lumpen to the extent that they can effectively be considered part of the petty bourgeois class from the perspective of class consciousness. And so when we talk about First World lumpen, we are usually looking at oppressed nation lumpen only. ★



... Continued from previous page ... **Lumpen Book**

by one lumpen organization (LO) that was guided by self-interest, Mead had the revolutionary fearlessness to organize those victimized by the LO to build a mass movement that the whole population came to identify with.

"An organization that depends upon one person for direction is doomed to fail; each level of cadre should be able to take the place of a fallen or transferred comrade, even if that person occupies a leadership position." (p. 306) Mead learned this from experience, both in situations where ey was that sole leader and others where ey was surrounded by a dedicated cadre. Inspiring stories include the first strike ever at McNeil Island, which had 100% participation. (p. 139) While many of the challenges of prison organizing are still the same decades later, you'll find many other inspiring stories in this book as well. It demonstrates both the importance of the prison movement as part of the overall movement for liberation and against imperialism, while showing the limitations of a prison movement that is not complemented by strong movements on the outside. As the current struggle focused on police murders continues to ferment, we work to build a prison movement, and they will feed each other as we move towards the next revolutionary period in history. ★

Notes:

1. see MIM Theory 10: Labor Aristocracy, or the MIM(Prisons) study pack, *The Labor Aristocracy and the International Communist Movement*.
2. *Under Lock & Key 50: Black Panther Party 50 Year Commemoration*
3. PTT of MIM(Prisons), Review: *The Anti-Exploits of Men Against Sexism, Under Lock & Key, Issue 29, November/December 2012*.

Fighting Apathy

by USW461 of United Struggle from Within
July 2016

[In 2012 a comrade summed up an ongoing discussion about organizing the lumpen class, which is below. The summary gets at how we should approach organizing the lumpen. This is a critical question if we are to apply our theoretical understanding of this class to the anti-imperialist movement in a practical way. We aren't looking to just write essays to expand our brains; we focus on political theory in order to inform revolutionary practice. – ULK editor]

USW comrades have been discussing money and material trappings as being synonymous with respect and dignity in lumpen organization youth. The struggle for money, like the dope game, for example, can be less a status seeking activity, and more of the people just exercising their survival rights. Comrades made sure to differentiate between money/survival and material trapping (i.e. gold chains, cars, rims, etc.). Amerikkkanism and consumerism promote hardcore parasitism in lumpen youth, causing extreme alienation and fetishization of money.

Today's youth show the same apathy, indifference and nihilism as the youth of 1955. It was the civil rights movement that awoke the youth of that era. Comrades struggled over what today can take the place of the civil rights movement. War, environment and imperialist expansion were three good starting points to organize around. We lumpen youth have more stake in the future environment and it is us who fight the wars. It helps to understand that those starving to death and suffering/dying from preventable diseases are our people. We must fulfill our destiny or betray it. All this nitpicking and betrayal between sets/sides contributes to humankind suffering. We must overcome this flaw.

The principal enemy we must defeat is the glamorization of gangsterism. A revolutionary or a gangster? What are we? Can the two coexist in a persyn and still be progressive? Gangsterism plants fear by oppression, and revolutionaries are in struggle against oppression. This internecine violence we perpetrate between sets is what the pigs want us to do. They sold us this shit in *Scarface* and we've built on to it and made it our own. Overcoming the glamorization of gangsterism will take proletarian morality, conscious rap, exposing the downsides and ills of gangsterism, the glamorization of revolution, revolutionary culture, and possibly to redefine the word gangsta. Gangsters are parasites and revolutionaries are humankind's hope. It's as simple as that. We need to leave the lumpen mentality for a proletarian

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Building Class Consciousness among Lumpen New Afrikans

by an Ohio prisoner
April 2016

I have seen individuals and groups develop lumpen class consciousness. It was done using history, specifically New Afrikan history, supplied in books and zines. The zines spoke on political and militant New Afrikan organizations. It was also experienced from grown up lumpen New Afrikans in oppressed communities.

Lumpen organizations develop class consciousness among their membership by making it a mandatory study and part of our historical development. Study why we are in the conditions we are in, and it becomes part of studying knowledge of self and our enemy.

A majority of the lumpen only care about

STUDY TO GROW AND WIN!

Depth of political understanding is one of the factors that will determine whether we win our struggle against oppression and imperialism. We need to organize, and we need to be sure we're organizing with maximum results and correct goals. Everyone's political level must be raised! MIM(Prisons) and United Struggle from Within run several projects toward this goal.

CORRESPONDENCE STUDY COURSES

The introductory study group studies a couple essays on prison economics in level 1, and some basics on Maoism in level 2. Graduates can go on to join our ULK Writers Group, which studies more advanced material and helps develop this newsletter. Cost covers printing for assignments and postage. Can pay in money or work. Write in for more info.

USW STUDY GROUPS

MIM(Prisons) supports USW-led study groups by sending in books and study packs. Start by studying this issue of *ULK* with someone. Tell us what questions came up in your study, and what topics you want to study next. If you keep us updated on your group's progress, we'll keep sending you study material.

USW LITERACY MENTORING

Reading and writing skills are an important part of political development and protecting one's rights, especially in prison. USW cells should run Serve the People literacy programs, to help build these skills among the lumpen and help with political development at the same time. Our support for this project is in infancy. We need comrades who already teach literacy to tell us what support they need.

FREE POLITICAL BOOKS

We mail out political theory and history books, magazines, and study packs in exchange for political work or money. Our library includes a wide variety of topics, from economics to organizing strategy to philosophy -- anything you'd need to know to wage a successful struggle against imperialism and all forms of oppression! See page 2 for more on how to get free books.

themselves, money and things. They become territorial to protect their drug spots and the streets they roam and people they know. Some are aware of their class in how it relates to other New Afrikans who are proletarian or boogee. The lumpen want a better life. They get caught up in a trap of mental depression or hopelessness. That's why they take their last and buy nice looking clothes and cars. To feel like they have something, to show an illusion.

Those who are not as blessed spend their money on drugs, alcohol and women to escape reality temporarily. We realize the bigger picture when we encounter the pig (cops) occupying force and they treat us like the ring around a dirty bathtub. We feel the national consciousness of oppression when we are in the court room or modern-day auction block and we are sold off to the modern-day plantation called prison. We see walking and driving while New Afrikan is just cause to be stopped and frisked. Then you realize on the battlefield (street) or in prison (plantation) you are a victim of social engineering and you were not given a fair chance or opportunity. You grew up with a higher percentage of stumbling blocks than most people. You're a victim of circumstance because you're born New Afrikan in an environment set

up like a rat maze with traps around every corner. This is the national consciousness. We're at war against oppression and exploitation.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This is a good reminder of why we need to focus on education as a critical part of organizing the lumpen. Drawing the connections between day-to-day oppression and the bigger picture of national consciousness can be achieved by presenting real examples from history and pushing people to think about these important connections. Study doesn't need to start with deep theory, it can start with something relevant to the student's life, like the example of Malcolm X becoming revolutionized in prison after learning to read, or the Black Panther's fight against police brutality. But we have to give people the tools to take this information further and build a theoretical understanding of why these things happened and what we need to do today. That means studying the deeper questions of political theory and the history of revolutionary struggles, so we can learn what works and what doesn't. With the first sparks of class consciousness among the lumpen will come an even greater desire to learn, and revolutionaries have a duty to feed this desire with material to study and an opportunity to struggle and discuss and build.★

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...Apathy

one. Many true revolutionaries were once gangsters. Gangsterism is a stage, basically.

Self-respect, self-defense and self-determination define transitional qualities of a revolutionary. Bunchy Carter, Mutulu Shakur and Tupac all transcended the hood and grew into progressives. What we are seeking as USW is opening up the spaces for gangsters of all walks of life to enter the realm of anti-imperialism and begin a transformation of mind, actions and habits to develop into the model of a revolutionary gangsta with the capability of forwarding the cause of the people. We must understand our potential. It is us, we reading these *ULKs*, that hold imperialism in our fists. A real gangsta is one who has gone revolutionary and has kicked off all the strings of social control -- mental illness, drugs, fantasy, despair, escapism, etc.

Mainstream gangsta rap is the enemy of our people and the struggle. We have to create more revolutionary music, art and literature. Fergie, Fifty, Eminem, Kanye, all push watered down, flimsy lyrics. Mainstream rap is psychological warfare and just as harmful as crack or heroin. Imperialism allows the urban drug trade just like it allows Eminem. It keeps us down. It is a form of genocide and wholly harmful to the revolutionary struggle. The only positive we even entertained in the discussion is that drugs and pop culture rap are a form of rebellion that begins a revolutionary on the path of revolution. The benefits to imperialism outweigh the negatives and the opposite is true for the lumpen. Drugs have us punked, dig?

Raw fear and discouragement are the pistols on the hips of the oppressor. To be demonized as a terrorist, have mail messed with, loss of good time, pig abuses, all contribute to lumpen becoming despondent and not standing up for their rights. People have a responsibility to act and fight for the type of society that they want to live in, or they really have no right to complain about oppression. We face pepper spray, tazers, isolation and a bullet in the back face down. The Nazis used the infamous concentration camps to instill fear. And the united snakes has the largest prison system in the world for the very same reason: social control and intimidation. Meth, cocaine and psychotropics act as targets for the raw fear pistol. Increasing it. Making it more deadly. To be uneducated or out of shape physically assures a mortal wound when the bullets fly. We must outsmart and out stick and move. Knowing 1500 children starve to death per hour, and the fact that 3.5 billion people survive on less than \$2 per day, you suit yourself in bullet proof kevlar. What's a lost letter and a few extra years in prison without good time compared to that?

Nothing comes to a sleeper but a dream. Only through aggressive challenge and exposure of the life-threatening contradictions of upholding the present status quo will we awaken and overcome. Passivity cowers before the eyes of the slave master. We must educate the people into the understanding that raw fear will remain so long as the imperialist system is in existence. It is us, comrades, built exclusively for its utter destruction. This is a call from USW to unite and rise up, in struggle.★

Muslim world citizen Muhammad Ali passes away

by MIM-Orchid
June 2016

[Excerpted from Proletarian Internationalist Notes. Send in a SASE for the full version.]

Muslim world citizen Muhammad Ali passed on June 3 in Arizona, USA.

The words “world citizen” are on the minds of many at this time due to the boxing champion who won Olympic gold in 1960 and knocked out George Foreman in the Congo. It being election season in Amerika, it is interesting that a wide variety of news outlets in the united States including Fox News are remembering Ali as a world citizen. What are these Amerika-first, “American workers first” (Obama) or Amerikan-middle-class-first people doing talking about “world citizen,” one might wonder.

Muhammad Ali in eir mid-twenties raised the idea that one could be a good world citizen without leaving one’s country. Indeed, Ali didn’t just refuse to be drafted during the Vietnam War. Ali showed up to refuse in persyn, did so knowing ey could go to prison for refusing, and almost sacrificed eir whole athletic career. Ali was stripped of titles and prevented from boxing legally, and had to overcome a defeat. Ali explicitly rejected the idea of leaving the united States as some with the means did. To Ali, to do so would have been to abandon an Islamic New Afrikan nationalist struggle. For Ali, refusing Army induction was based on both Islam(1) and a belief that it wasn’t the Vietnamese people oppressing New Afrikans.

“All of you white boys are breaking your neck to get to Switzerland, and Canada, and London. I’m not gonna help nobody get something my Negroes don’t have. If I’m gonna die, I’ll die now right here fighting you – if I’m gonna die. You my enemy. My enemy is the white people, not Viet-congs, or Chinese, or Japanese.”(2)

The U.S. State Department started viewing Muhammad Ali as a threat to u.\$ interests in the early 1960s. Ali was viewed as a potential threat because ey was in a position to help or hurt Amerika’s image in other countries, and impact other countries’ view of u.\$ adversaries such as imperialist rival Soviet Union. Ali made statements such as, “It is a shame how they tell lies about great people like [Gamal Abdel] Nasser.”(3) The united States opposed Nasser’s pan-Arabism and in doing so contributed to much current division and conflict in the world today. The united States also opposes pan-Islamism and pan-Africanism.

It’s easy for Amerikans to regard Ali’s draft refusal, based on conscientious objection and being a Nation of Islam minister, positively today. It is easy to do so after the Vietnam War – the military draft in particular – became very unpopular in the united States. There is no military draft in the united States today – except unofficially via the employment difficulties of New Afrikans with police records, etc. – but international spying, gunboat diplomacy, drone strikes and assassinations are all supported by Amerikans who were against the Vietnam War after or before the war ended.

Once known as “Cassius X,” Ali was the most highly regarded athlete globally who at one point openly opposed integrationism from the perspective of the oppressed. As a promise of life together with Euro-Amerikans in equality, integrationism involves both a deception and a bribe. Integrationism displaces New Afrikan, First Nation and Chican@ struggles: those for independent institutions, self-determination and liberation, and against u.\$ imperialism. Ali came into conflict with many middle-class New Africans, Martin Luther King, and the mainstream civil rights movement, for opposing integrationism while regarding Euro-Amerikans as enemies.

Integrationism is a particular problem in the context of the privilege that people in the united States have. People in the united States with a le-

gal right to work are generally exploiters of Third World workers. Despite this situation, New Afrikans continue to exist as a distinct nation inside u.\$ borders; New Afrika is no less a nation than a variety of other nations. There are contradictions between the New Afrikan nation and the Euro-Amerikan nation, including in employment, imprisonment, policing, psychiatry, and control of territory. Anti-Amerikan New Afrikan nationalism, not seeking a share in the wealth stolen from the Third World, plays a role in progress both inside the united \$nakes and globally.

Muhammad Ali was an inspiration to many members of the Black Panther Party. Before its decline and destruction by the state, the Black Panther Party related New Afrikan self-determination and liberation to internationalism and Maoism, and recognized a significant labor aristocracy/parasitism problem in the united States impacting strategy in that country.(4) Huey Newton said, “How can we say that we have accomplished revolution if we redistribute the wealth just to the people here in North America when the ruling circle itself is guilty . . . they have taken away the goods of the people of the world, transported them to America and used them as their very own.” Similar to Muhammad Ali in not seeing eir world citizenship as complementing or additional to Amerikan citizenship, Newton also said, “Certainly, we are not citizens of the United States.”(5)

Ali’s death happens to coincide with a renewed push for a two-state solution for I\$rael and Palestine and an ongoing struggle for Arab or Muslim leadership versus Amerikan influence, false leadership and obstruction. An idea of world citizenship in which conditions in different countries are connected can bring to the fore crucial and urgent issues of economic and political inequality at the global level. The Palestinian state’s lack of recognition by many other states and lack of control over its territory is related to, and results in, privilege for people in imperialist countries.

Conditions in poor countries may be seen as caused by oppression by rich countries. Equality in one country may be equality of a people who are all oppressors or all still oppressed. It’s important not just to “act locally, think globally” – a slogan appropriated by imperialism – but to consider conditions in the context of global systems of oppression and global class/social structure. A wrong idea about global citizenship can lead to local demonstrations supporting Amerikans’ use of global power to end suffering thousands of miles away, but in a way that actually perpetuates suffering and serves u.\$ imperialist interests.

One of the most famous non-drinkers among other things, Muhammad Ali was known for eir faith, love for the Quran, and concern about others’ experience of injustice. Millions of Muslims around the world consider The Greatest to be one of their own. So do millions of people in Africa, for whom Ali’s greatness wasn’t just about “racial” pride in a narrow, Amerikan sense. Ali’s greatness was significant from the viewpoint of opposing a sense of inferiority – a feeling and

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On Prisons & Prisoners

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

All U.\$ 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.

Update on Wisconsin Campaign

by MIM(Prisons)
July 2016

Prisoners in Wisconsin have been on hunger strike since 10 June 2016 to protest long-term confinement in control units in that state. As we reported in April, the Wisconsin DOC has been playing games with their policies that determine the length of solitary confinement sentences, but no real change has been enacted and prisoners in Wisconsin continue to be locked away for months and even years in isolation conditions that amount to torture.⁽¹⁾ The protesters are demanding changes to the segregation policies of the WI DOC.

Reports suggest that the administration came down hard on suspected participants in the hunger strike, prior to June 10. In spite of this repression a number of protesters remained strong and undertook the strike. After seven days the prison began force feeding the activists, a clear attempt to torture them out of their resolve, because a seven day fast is not enough to seriously endanger most humans. Further, force feeding comes with some serious health risks and we know the DOC medical services are already not working in the interests of the prisoners. As of June 29 six people were still refusing food.

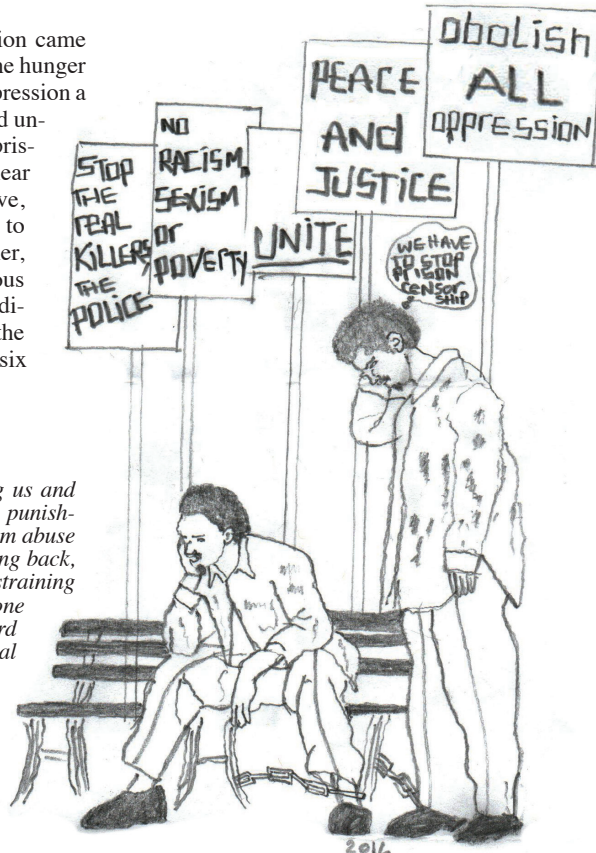
A USW comrade reported June 27:

"As of now they started force feeding us and using it as an instrument of torture and punishment. However, because I refuse to let them abuse me and torture me like that without fighting back, I've suspended mine until I can get a restraining order to prevent such. I let them do it one time and they forced it up my nose so hard that when the membrane of the nasal seal popped it sent a bubble through my head and my head still hurts. I can't let the pigs beat me for free like that, but the comrades in Waupun are enduring it and a few plan to join next month."

We continue to stand with the protesters risking their lives to force

the WI DOC to end their long-term solitary confinement system. These courageous activists are fighting against a system that has nothing to do with security and is only used for social control. People who peacefully protest, such as these hunger strikers, are the most likely to end up spending years in isolation, conditions that are known to cause serious physical and mental health problems. The use of control units in so many Amerikan prisons across the country is just further demonstration that the criminal injustice system is not designed for rehabilitation; its purpose is to control society.

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On "Objective" Reporting

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

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self-image produced by a system of oppression — in colonized nations in Africa and elsewhere. The oppressor nations' status and privileges came from an oppressive system that could be defeated. Ali seemed to prove this in taking advantage of his rare success in what was a white business (Amerikan boxing) to prominently support positions that were controversial in the United States or perceived as threatening. Even when Ali taunted opponents and would-be opponents, he often did so in a way that challenged Euro-Amerikan domination, on live TV. Ali inspired revolutionaries around the world, Muslim and non-Muslim.

Islam is disproportionately a religion of exploited and oppressed people, and Third World oppressed nations today are proletarian nations while oppressor nations are generally bourgeois nations. Hopefully all of the tributes to Ali as a Muslim and as a world citizen will remind people

Got to be Strong

by a West Virginia prisoner

That's the way they wanna be,
That's the way they wanna be,
That's the way they wanna be,

They do things that society can't see.
Lock mass numbers away from being free.
Destroy lives, "but they're not the enemy".
Imperialism trying to keep us down.
Government's oppression and greed makes us
frown.
TV says we're fine, messages from a clown.
They strike out in fear when they see us becoming
strong.
Holding us down cruelly and say WE are in the
wrong.
We're modern day gladiators thrown into the throng.
We're judged evil for becoming the monsters they
created.
No matter how unjust, we're the ones who are always
hated.
Wanting a reaction, don't fall into the trap they've
baited.

That's the way they wanna be,
That's the way they wanna be,
That's the way they wanna be,

Revolutionary minds will be our saviors.
Far too many wrongs done to us by our oppressors.
It has been building up like a bomb, too much pres-
sure.
Government's looting money hand over fist.
Looking at their offenses, it's one hell of a list.
Not to worry, it isn't their loved ones who's missed.
But WE'RE the bad guys who's mass incarcerated.
Acting like they don't understand why we're frus-
trated.
They just warehouse us, we're not rehabilitated.
Unless we're united they'll lock us all from sight.
They're in the wrong, time to stand up for what's right.
We got to be strong, stay together and fight. ★

of the possibility of, and need for, Muslim non-Amerikan leadership in peace in the Middle East. Reactionary idealists are among those holding out for rich atheists in the West to wake up and make revolution; they undermine progress and contribute to repression in the meantime. ★

Notes:

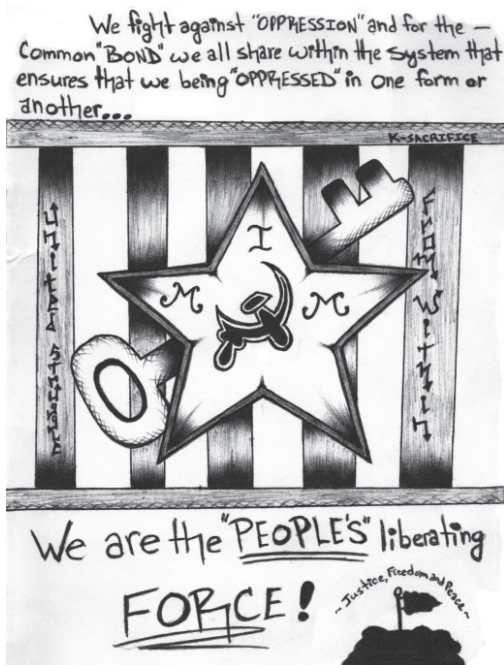
1. "Clay refuses Army oath; stripped of boxing crown," 1967 April 29. <https://www.nytimes.com/books/98/10/25/specials/ali-army.html>
2. "Muhammad Ali on the Vietnam War-Draft," 2011 February 20. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeFMyrWIZ68>
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4. "Maoism restored: the Black Panther newspaper, 1968-69," 1995 May. <http://www.prisoncensorship.info/archive/etext/mt/mt10bpb.html>
"On the internal class structures of the internal semi-colonies," 1998 February. <http://www.prisoncensorship.info/archive/etext/contemp/internalclass3.htm>
Black Panther Newspaper Collection. <http://www.prisoncensorship.info/archive/etext/bpp/>
5. "Huey Newton on Blacks having no homeland to return to (1971)," <http://www.prisoncensorship.info/archive/etext/bpp/books/worldcitizens.html>

...Ali

Private Prisons Exposed, and Same as Public

by MIM(Prisons)
July 2016

Recently an exposé of the private prison Winn Correctional Center in Winnfield, Louisiana, run by Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), was published in *Mother Jones*.⁽¹⁾ The article explains conditions which are completely inhumane, and many of the atrocities are linked to the CCA's drive for profit.



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...Wisconsin

The strikers have asked people on the outside for help:

1. Call Governor Scott Walker's office and tell em to reform the long-term solitary confinement units in the Wisconsin DOC and to stop the secret Asklepion program at once. The number to call is 608-266-1212.
2. Call the WI DOC central office and demand that all 6 humanitarian demands⁽¹⁾ for this hunger strike be met and demand an explanation as to why they are operating a torture program. The number to call is 608-240-5000.
3. Call any media outlets and demand that they do an independent investigation on the secret Asklepion program operating at Columbia Correctional Institution (CCI), and report on the hunger strike.
4. Call the FBI building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and demand that they investigate the secret Asklepion torture program being run at CCI. The phone number to call is 414-276-4684.
5. Call Columbia Correctional Institution and tell them you are aware of their secret torture program. Harass them! 608-742-9100.
6. Join in on the campaign and post it on the net. Convince others to join as well. ★

Notes:

1. MIM(Prisons), April 2016, "Prisoners Plan Hunger Strike to Protest Wisconsin Long Term Isolation, ULK 50.

2. Updates on the hunger strike from solitarytorture.blogspot.com

In the section about the mailroom, the author Shane Bauer mentions *Under Lock & Key*:

"Around the mail room, there are bulletins posted of things to look out for: an anti-imperialist newsletter called *Under Lock and Key*, an issue of *Forbes* that comes with a miniature wireless internet router, a CD from a Chicano gangster rapper with a track titled 'Death on a CO.'"

Curiously, Winn mailroom staff consider political education just as dangerous to the prison environment as electronics and death threats. This blatant censorship is not unique to this facility, and is not unique to private prisons. There are many state-run facilities all across the country where we know our mail is censored in a similar manner. Unfortunately we don't have an investigative reporter inside, and, only being able to communicate with our comrades through the mail, we are not able to combat this censorship or expose it. We post known censorship incidents on our website, but the reality is that we will never know what happens to approximately two-thirds of the mail we send in.

In reading the exposé, one might start to believe this private prison is different from public prisons. That's one of the major downsides of this piece: it leaves the reader wondering, assuming that state-run facilities are inherently better. Yet we post many articles from our correspondents inside showing that state-run facilities can be just

as bad as Winn Correctional Center: lack of appropriate medical care leading to long-term health problems, lack of programming, arbitrary lockdowns, excessive use of force, lack of discretion in hiring personnel, and the list goes on.

To campaign against private prisons is to assert that state-run prisons are acceptable. It legitimizes the United States government as an impartial arbiter. It says that it isn't the prison that's bad, but instead just the aspect of private ownership. Yet MIM(Prisons) sees the prison struggle in the United States as one against social control generally – whether private or state-run.

We thank Shane Bauer for writing this horrific piece for the benefit of our fight against inhumane prison conditions. And we must look at the bigger picture, how state-run facilities fit in, and how the prison reform movement interacts with the struggle for self-determination of the internal semi-colonies and the liberation of the Third World from imperialism's death grip. Certainly imprisonment for profit must be abolished. But this phenomena could only develop inside a capitalist economy. If not this atrocity of capitalism, then there will be another one, and there certainly are. If our struggle is limited to simply abolishing private ownership of prisons, we will have wasted much time and energy that could have been spent on a broader struggle. ★

Notes:

1. Shane Bauer, "My Four Months as a Private Prison Guard," *Mother Jones*, July/August 2016 issue.

People Dying, Urgency to Shut Down Control Units

by an Arkansas prisoner
June 2016

While watching a movie last weekend, suddenly a stretcher and a lot of officers walked by into the entrance of the max control unit. Bizarrely an hour later a lot of officers came out of the max control unit. They held all doors open leading to the infirmary down the hallway. Then suddenly in a hurry came four officers and a nurse pushing the stretcher with a white prisoner on it. I recognized the prisoner, who was deceased. His pale skin was now very swarthy from head to toe, darker than most fair skin New Afrikans. Later I found out that he was paroling out the next day.

Ever since last year I've observed this type of pattern within East Arkansas Regional Unit's max control units. And it continues this year. This means we need to push the campaign to shut down control units harder, by asking all friends and family members to help spread the 2 hour documentary on long term isolation cells and our struggle to abolish them. Ask them to put links to the website on their blogs, facebook, instagram, twitter or whatever social media networks they use and ask others to check out the movie *Unlock the Box* at www.abolishcontrolunits.org/movie

Let's push the hell out of this campaign the remainder of this year! ★

Lesser of Two Evils

by UFO of United Struggle from Within
May 2016

This year's election reminds me of the 1980 Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter neo-conservative presidential campaign. We have Donald Trump, the competitive imperialist bizzness mogul. Now we must ask ourselves, since we have lesser of the two evils, what is it that we as a nation want as a leader? But I find myself not liking or feeding into the rhetoric of both candidates, Trump or Clinton. Hillary Clinton favors exploitation of Third World international proletariat. Both Trump and Clinton have no solutions for the oppressed nations here in the United States or abroad. As senator Sanders pointed out, Clinton is in the pockets of big bankers and Wall Street. And Trump seizes the opportunity to expand his ego and exploit more oppressed nations, by building casinos, resorts and handing out slave wages to the proletarians of that land.

But what are the solutions to our problems in this capitalistic culture? One solution which needs to be addressed is a separate party which would be for the people and by the people. We must not allow the media to downgrade socialism. Socialism and a socialist party in the United Snakes of America is a must. We have to overstand what socialism is and what it can do for oppressed nations here in America. Bringing equality to all

Continued on next page...

Patriotism or Internationalism: Message to the left wing of USW

by California Council of USW
May 2016

This is a question which all communists must ask themselves at one point or another of their revolutionary careers. Furthermore, it is a question which has essentially dominated the International Communist Movement (ICM) ever since that movement became a real contender on the world stage. Suffice to say that there has never in essence been a more important question to ask and correctly answer within the ICM itself other than patriotism or internationalism? That said, the concepts of patriotism and internationalism are not mutually exclusive phenomena forever separated by the same great impassable divide of ideological difference, rather, patriotism and internationalism as properly understood by communists are dialectically interconnected concepts that we must struggle to unite.

Sometimes general, sometimes particular, but always of universal importance, the concepts of patriotism and internationalism represent different aspects of the subjective forces whose task it is to carry out revolution both at home and abroad. Focus too much on one and you run the danger of making an ultra-left mistake. Focus too much on the other and you will not only be committing a tactical mistake, but will be guilty of committing a right opportunist error. What comrades must understand however is that pushing the revolutionary vehicle towards a bright communist future isn't necessarily about making the decision of patriotism or internationalism. It's about both. This is the topic which the following essay will attempt to explain. Thus in wars of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism – but are there other ways for us to apply internationalism within nation-specific projects?

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...Elections

people, and ending global imperialism. But this brings me to Bernie Sanders. His rhetoric of free education and universal health care sounds good, but if you are going to support socialist ideas, then you must go all the way and build a socialist party, and not allow the two party system of Amerikkka to stigmatize socialist views and its persistent hopefulness.

As long as the wings of establishment support imperialism we will never get close to fruition of socialism. But what really upsets me is that New Africans in America sell out to capitalistic rhetoric by upholding or embracing bourgeois cultural propaganda. This is why the title "lesser of two evils" is used for this essay on the awakening of the lumpen to class consciousness.

There are so many contradictions within Donald Trump's "Let's make America great again" slogan. First and foremost, we must understand what made so-called Amerikkka great. Stealing land and demoralizing the First Nations. Denying them culture and their own way of life. Enslaving New Africans, or might I say oppression of all people of color who do not represent white supremacy. That Trump slogan alone is a subliminal white supremacist statement. Making those who support the labor aristocracy continue and support efforts to exploit the white lumpen and the people or nations of oppressed people of color. Creating more wars, and war on the revolutionaries who will stand up to imperialism. And I can't forget about Hillary Clinton who will continue where her husband left off. She was a supporter of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, signed into law by Bill Clinton. And we have the nerve to say oh she's for New Africans. I must conclude that what we have in this election is lesser of the two evils, Trump vs. Hillary. Capitalism vs. mass incarceration.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade is on the right track in condemning the American election system as a tool to reinforce imperialist power.

There is no choice for the truly oppressed and exploited of the world. In fact, the vast majority of those exploited by American imperialism aren't even eligible to vote in these elections because they aren't American citizens.

We agree that the lumpen should be paying attention to this election and using it to raise class consciousness, but we're not in agreement with the implication that Bernie Sanders represents socialist ideas. In fact, he is just the other side of the Donald Trump "Let's make America great again" coin. Both want to increase the wealth of the American labor aristocracy which can only come at the expense of the exploited Third World proletariat. Even if Sanders spreads those super profits around a bit more, that doesn't help the oppressed majority of the world. Sanders supports the same aggressive militarist international policies of all the other imperialist candidates: "We live in a dangerous world full of serious threats, perhaps none more so than the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and al-Qaeda. Senator Sanders is committed to keeping America safe, and pursuing those who would do Americans harm."(1)

The problem isn't just that Sanders doesn't support an independent socialist party, the problem is that Sanders is muddying the word socialist, just like the "national socialists" (aka fascists) in Germany did in their day. This is not a word meant to ensure greater wealth for privileged nations at the expense of oppressed nations. And while it's possible Sanders could pursue a policy of greater advancement for the oppressed nations within U.S. borders, this would only serve to expand the ranks of the labor aristocracy on the backs of oppressed nations globally. We cannot support that sort of rhetoric.

MIM(Prisons) maintains that it is possible one day Amerika will fully integrate the oppressed New African, Chican@, Boriqua and First Nations like the Irish, Italians and others who initially faced oppression but later fully integrated into American society. This could even be done by shifting around some money from within imperi-

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Imperialism and its Class Structure in 1997 by MC5 (\$10)

alist Amerika. But judging from the popularity of the overtly fascist rallying cries from Trump and his ilk, it seems more likely that national oppression abroad will continue to engender national oppression and racism at home.

This election is important for lumpen consciousness within American borders because it would be easy to be taken in by the Sanders rhetoric. Or to be frightened by the Trump rhetoric. And so be moved to rally around "the lesser of two evils" campaign to get on the streets working for the "Democratic Party." But the lumpen class consciousness needs to be tied to internationalism. We need to diligently point out the suffering of the international proletariat at the hands of imperialism, which is the same oppressor keeping the lumpen down. The alliance should be between these two oppressed groups, against the imperialists. Not between the lumpen and the so-called left wing of the imperialists against the international proletariat. Our job as communists is to push the oppressed and exploited classes to the right side of this equation: the side of the world's oppressed.

When the Black Panther Party's Ten Point Program included: "We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like Black people, are being victimized by the White racist government of America" they were demonstrating this internationalist class consciousness, specifically in the context of the Vietnam War. This writer is correct that we will never get close to socialism within the imperialist establishment. But we disagree that there is actually a lesser of two evils in any imperialist election, or a choice between imperialism and mass incarceration. These things go hand in hand, and one side's rhetoric benefits some Americans more while the other side would benefit a slightly different group of Americans, while the white nation remains firmly in power, and the wealth continues to come from the exploited in the Third World. ★

Note:

<https://berniesanders.com/issues/war-and-peace/>

- 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 your own.

NEW OHIO GRIEVANCE GUIDE

A comrade in Ohio with much experience writing successful grievances developed a pamphlet full of advice on how to fight prison abuses using the administrative procedures, and how to win them. Send in a SASE for this grievance guide.

END HOSTILITIES IN CALIFORNIA

September 9 is the annual Day of Peace and Solidarity for the United Front for Peace in Prisons. Last year, in ULK 46, we printed summary reports from all over California on the status of the Agreement to End Hostilities (AEH) after 3 years. For 2016, we want to make sure we hear voices of California prisoners who are not directly affected by the AEH. How are you organizing for September 9 and building peace, unity, growth, internationalism, and independence in your area? How does unity in your facility or unit relate to unity around the AEH? How does it differ? How can we best serve the common interests of ALL prisoners in California?

FIGHT CENSORSHIP IN TEXAS

Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán, and the *Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook* have recently been banned across the whole state of Texas indefinitely. We need a jailhouse lawyer in Texas to take on the policy that disapproved publications are banned forever. We also need a comrade in Texas to take on the ban of *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán* statewide. Write in if you can offer legal support to these struggles. See page 2 for more on fighting censorship.

BUILD A UNITED FRONT FOR PEACE IN PRISONS

Part of our struggle to shut down control units is to end prisoner-on-prisoner violence via the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP). The UFPP sponsors an annual Day of Peace and Solidarity on September 9, with 2016 our 5th annual demonstration. See page 3 for more info on what the UFPP is about and how you can get involved.

SPREAD UNDER LOCK & KEY

Our subscriber list grows in many ways: 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. A basic task you can do for USW is get people to subscribe to *ULK*. It is free for U.S. prisoners!

A very effective 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(Prisons) 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 em write to get eir 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.

MISSOURI PRISONERS DEMAND ACCESS TO COURTS

In Missouri, prisoners in administrative segregation are being denied legal material unless they have an "active case." Of course one needs to do research before an active case can even begin, so this bureaucratic red tape is just another arbitrary denial of access to courts, and a violation of the U.S. Constitution. Write in for the petition, which can be easily adapted to any security level.

TEXAS ACTIVISTS STAND UP!

The Texas Activist Pack compiles all our campaigns in Texas. The current active campaigns include a protest against the limitation of 5 indigent letters per month; combating the deadly heat; the petition to ensure our grievances are addressed; and info on the medical copay. TDCJ has removed the grievance manual from its law libraries. All Texas prisoners should get this information, share it with others, and write reports for *ULK* on their progress with the campaigns. If you can send in a donation, that will help offset the cost to print and mail it out (about \$2.50 each).

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, volunteer to rewrite the petition to work for your state. We recently created a version that can be used country-wide, for people in county jails or who can't otherwise rewrite the petition.

Update This Campaign - If you participated in this campaign in the past, send us a report on what happened. Even if no one ever responded to your petitions, that is still useful information. Tell us how you used it to help organize others and build group consciousness.

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...Cali USW

it has been responsible for spawning.

ary hearts of oppressed people everywhere.

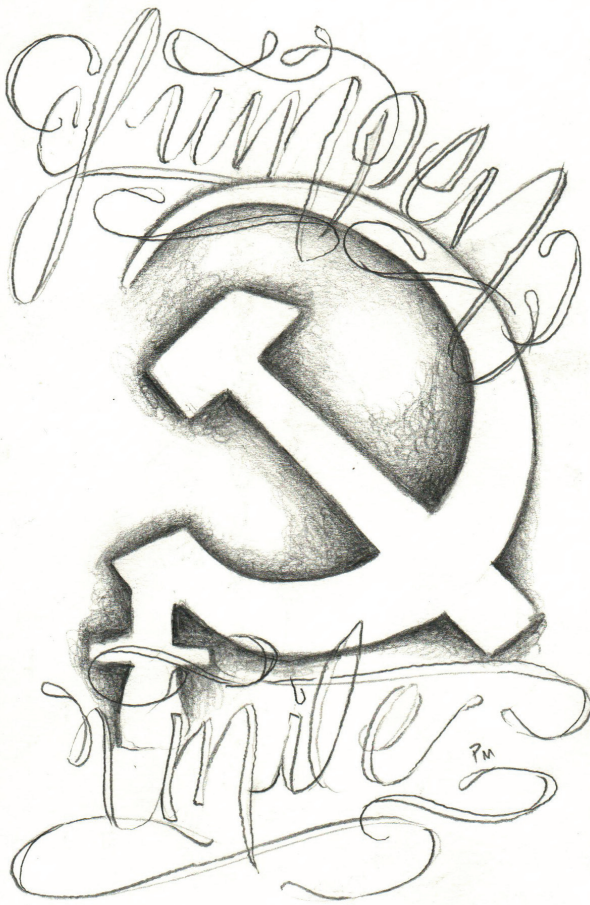
Contrary to how this quote has been narrowed down by some comrades, applied internationalism isn't only about each nation fighting their own battles and hoping that anti-imperialists from other nations will be astute enough to recognize the tactical opportunities of our fight and hence get in where they fit in. Internationalism is about extending our hands and providing assistance to our comrades whenever we can and offering lesser but equally important means of support when other avenues of help have been closed off to us.

Point in fact, MIM(Prisons) can't physically and personally reach out to every prisoner on a one-on-one level. But it has a bi-monthly newsletter that goes out to the prison masses as well as a Free Books to Prisoner Program, a website created in part to help facilitate the needs of prisoners across the United States and document abuse. It runs study groups and most recently help put out *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*, a book that will help to build public opinion for revolution in North America by agitating in favor of the Chican@ masses. Not to mention the other nation-specific and internationalist projects which

Another excellent but largely forgotten and ignored example of applied internationalism being practiced outside of a nation's own borders is how the Cuban masses under the leadership of Fidel Castro volunteered to cross the Atlantic to fight alongside the Angolan people in their struggle of national liberation against Portuguese and American imperialism. This act took place for a variety of reasons, but perhaps none more important than the sheer anger, disgust and solidarity which Cubans felt at the sight of imperialist bombs falling on Angolan heads. It could then be said that this sacrifice on behalf of the Cuban people marked a development as well as a leap in the revolutionary consciousness of the Cuban nation, both because they were willing to give up their lives in the service of another oppressed nation and because with their sacrifice they helped land such a strong and decisive blow against colonialism, while simultaneously helping to detach Angola from the imperialist framework. It could therefore be said that this action on behalf of the Cuban masses was equally, if not more significant than the Cuban revolution itself. This is just another reason why Cuba holds such a special place in the revolution-

This now brings us to a recent debate initiated within the California Council concerning USW's potential contribution to a certain nationalist project, and a certain comrade's apprehensions/objections about the role of USW vis-a-vis the national liberation struggles of the oppressed internal nations, as well as the exertion of influence on USW by revolutionary nationalists operating within that organization. In eir argument the comrade in question took the position that no one nation should be forced to take part in another nation's struggles, citing that this would be tantamount to one nation co-opting others to do its job for them. That said, no nation should be allowed to control another nation's destiny or make decisions for other nations that are integral to the liberation of the latter as this would in effect mark the beginnings of a neo-colonial relation on a certain level. Furthermore, the comrade also made the statement that "USW is not one nation united, it's multi-national." Now this may be true, but the correct definition for USW is the following:

"USW is explicitly anti-imperialist in leading
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...Cali USW

campaigns on behalf of 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."

And from the pamphlet "The Fundamental Political Line of MIM(Prisons)":

"Rebuilding the anti-imperialist prison movement means uniting all who can be united around the common interests of the U.S. prison population in solidarity with the oppressed people of the Third World..."

So while we should definitely be in agreement that no nation should be forced to participate in another nation's struggles and that no one nation should be allowed to come up at the expense of another, this does not in any way mean that USW, or the California Council in particular, should be disallowed from initiating proposals and passing resolutions that will support and lend assistance to nations or nation-specific organizations represented within or outside of USW. The nation in question can either accept the assistance or not. This method of action and participation will ensure that USW retains its United Front mass organization character by preserving the unity and independence of all USW comrades and affiliated organizations.

Indeed, USW, like all other organizations, has a dual character. Unlike most other organizations however USW's duality is complementary and not in contradiction. While it is true that USW is a mass organization created to represent and fight for the common interests of all prisoners as a distinct social group, it is also a launch pad for the national liberation struggles of the oppressed internal nations in which comrades can cut their teeth thru revolutionary organizing, and from where they can then go on to initiate and lead national liberation struggles on behalf of their own respective nations.

This is what USW, as an anti-imperialist prisoner organization, should be about: the internationalism of prisoners breeding revolutionary nationalism, and revolutionary nationalist projects breeding internationalism amongst the prison masses. This requires more than each nation blindly going its own separate way. It requires unity of action and unity of discipline. As such, it would seem then that what we have here with the comrade in question may be a problem of perspective. What some might see as internationalism others might perceive as a contradiction. What some regard as mutual assistance others will call co-optation. For those of us having this problem of "perception" however, we would be wise to be cautious not to let our own love for our nations blind us to the plight of others, as sometimes what this fear of "co-optation" really translates to is our own fear or refusal to participate in another nation's struggles. Thus, we should be aware of how our own nation's struggles, as well as our failure to act on behalf of other nations, can affect the ICM, lest we degenerate to the level of narrow nationalism.

Since this question of whether or not USW should participate in a variety of nation-specific struggles seems to be one rooted in perception, let us take a closer look at the supposed pimping of nations that would take place if USW were to decide to work in the interests of a distinct national project. As has been the practice thus far, nowhere at all has this resulted in one nation's struggle being taken up to the detriment of another. But let's just suppose that this is the case, then maybe ULK should just stop featuring articles that promote the struggle of one nation or another so that we may ensure that no comrades from any nation feel as if they're being pushed into the background, or that their nation-specific article is forced to share space on the pages of an internationalist forum that also represents one nation or another, lest these comrades begin to feel "co-opted."

Just because Mao Zedong said that in wars of national liberation the nationalism of the oppressed nations is applied internationalism, it does not justify our lack of adherence to other internationalist principles. This is a guiding line of real communism and should likewise be seen

as a line of demarcation for all revolutionary nationalists claiming the mantles of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. Applied internationalism is about more than just fighting your own nation's struggles and we should never forget that. To give an additional hystorical example, when Amerikan imperialism attacked Vietnam the People's Republic of China aided the Vietnamese by providing all types of supplies including food, money and intelligence. Most activists of the time believed this was not enough and that the Chinese should've provided troops as well. We wonder what the previously mentioned comrade would think about this? Perhaps ey would say it was too much and that the Chinese were already guilty of co-opting Vietnam's national liberation struggle and how dare anyone suggest that the Chinese become more involved. Of course, in a possible revolutionary future we can even envision a myriad of situations in which the internal semi-colonies will be forced to coordinate and work shoulder-to-shoulder to oust Amerikan imperialism from their territories. Or would this too be a case of one semi-colony co-opting the struggle of another?

The Palestinian campaign initiated by USW last year is yet another internationalist project that is now shadowed by question marks, at least according to that one comrade's perspective. Perhaps this was simply incorrect practice and "a waste of USW's time"? As previously stated, while we agree that no nation should be forced to contribute to another nation's struggles, we also believe that no comrade should feel as if they're being "forced" to participate in another nation's struggles. As such, maybe these type of people aren't so much for internationalism as they sometimes claim to be? Because Mao accomplished and wrote so much on the national liberation struggle of China many have erroneously come to believe that ey was a nationalist first and a Marxist-Leninist second; but this view is wrong. Mao loved eir nation but ey was a Marxist-Leninist first and foremost who recognized the liberation of China as only a small component in the global struggle for communism.

Choosing and deciding what internationalist struggles one can participate in besides those that are explicitly national liberationist exclusive to one's own is both a tactical and strategical question that is dictated by the struggles and conditions of the time. Lacking a clear and coherent reason why not to participate is indicative of a national chauvinist political line in command. The USW Palestine campaign was a fairly easy campaign to initiate due to the current stage of the struggle and most USW comrades' material conditions. Other struggles will take more time and consideration to implement, while some might be outright out of the question. Excluding the labor aristocracy, there is a reason why revolutionaries from Marx to Mao championed the slogan: "workers of all countries unite!"

We struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people or we don't struggle at all.

– California Councilmembers, March 2016★

Nevada Should Stand Against Negligence and Violence

by a Nevada prisoner
June 2016

You never hear about Nevada and there's a reason why. Cover-ups, medical negligence, racial/social bias along with violence against inmates by COs, and let's not forget one of the worst parole and release systems in the nation. With lopsided, unfair sentence structures even according to statute, and unnecessary parole denials and completely unilateral discretion left to the parole board, which is screaming for reform. This is a culture and a consciousness up here but it will be their undoing.

Oscar Velasquez, a prisoner in Lovelock Correctional Center, committed suicide a few months ago and it's under investigation, a very slow, quiet investigation. Negligence played a huge part in this situation by COs and medical staff. Oscar gave the COs a suicide note on a medical kite. But protocol was broken because Oscar never made it to suicide watch in the medical unit. The next day Oscar was found dead and cold. Which meant COs weren't doing their rounds in a timely manner. Word is the suicide kite never made it to administration. This is being looked at by some other independent group, but it's been very hush-hush. A lot of the population believes the COs were fired but they weren't. They're on leave and being supported by their reps and lawyers.

A personal friend of mine and a lot of other brothas, Johnny Jordan or J.J., died in the uncaring arms of the Nevada medical system. While in High Desert Prison on an appeal trip, he also had a serious medical condition and was not given proper medical treatment. Which I'm sure was not very complicated, but just simply ignored. And it stems from the whole "oh well, fuck 'em" attitude most staff here have for prisoners.

Two of the most recent serious attack/gross incompetence incidents happened at High Desert, which is really under the microscope for piling up bodies for years and sweeping it under the rug.

About two years ago a CTO, aka a "Cadet Trainee Officer" gunned a prisoner down and killed him while handcuffed. He has since been sentenced on two counts of manslaughter; not murder of course, that's for us. What happened was during showers in the hole two prisoners started to scuffle while handcuffed. Instead of pulling them away from each other, the CTO was ordered to shoot and he just unloaded on them, killing one with fatal wounds to his head and chest area.

At the same prison, a prisoner was stabbed while being escorted by COs, if you can believe that! This was more recent, but also little publicity was spread about this. There was more press involved in the shooting death.

Along with these incidents, blatant and unpunished racism and bias in this state is so open it's ridiculous. I'm talking about assemblymen and women, COs, Sgts and representatives alike, it's everywhere.

Keep an eye on Nevada, these mothafuckas fly so far under the radar you rarely hear about things like this. They rarely make the local news and almost never make national headlines no matter how gross or serious it is. The censorship in this state is designed to keep Nevada's public in constant fear and prejudice of convicts. Bulletins are always going up on TV about this or that wanted person, this murderer or that sex offender. "Call secret watch and turn this person in," they'll say. But you rarely ever hear or see in Nevada: this human being was murdered by a cop, by a CO, by

this sadistic cowardly butcher who's been anticipating the chance to take a human life!

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade reports on something we hear more and more these days: prisoners dying from negligence and abuse at the hands of prison employees. And of course these murders are covered up rather than punished. This is one of the reasons why an independent press like *Under Lock & Key* is so important. We need a way to spread this news and organize people to fight back. The mainstream media and politicians are all in service of the capitalist system that set up this criminal injustice system so, as this comrade points out, our appeals to them are going to be purposefully ignored. Send us your reports about abuse and neglect. Even if they don't make it into the print version of *ULK* we will publish them on our website.★

...Continued from page 1

... Lumpen Class

So first capitalism has separated people from their need to provide everything for themselves. In doing so the capitalists alienate the worker from eir product, because it becomes the property of the capitalist. But those without jobs are also alienated from the whole production process. People often turn to the illegal service economy of selling drugs or sexual favors, or robbing and fencing stolen goods. Many also turn to the state for social services to get a distribution of the social product, without participating in production.

All of these solutions are even more alienating than working for the capitalists. Being a shoemaker or a baker are productive tasks that people can find pleasure in, even if they do not have a say in how the product of their labor is then distributed. Given the option, people generally don't want to poison their community, deal with the threat of violence every day, sell their body, steal from people or even take handouts without being able to participate in producing. All of these endeavors require the individual to justify actions that they know are wrong, to dehumanize other people and themselves, and to just live under a lot of stress.

These activities, and the justifications that come with them, contribute to what then becomes the consciousness of this group of people excluded from the economy. Marx wrote about the alienation of the proletariat resulting from them not having a say in how the product of their labor is utilized. But there is a deeper level of alienation among the lumpen in that they must alienate themselves from other humyn beings, even those who are in similar situations to themselves. Capitalism promotes a dog-eat-dog mentality that is alienating for all people because we are encouraged to look out for ourselves and not trust others. But this is most pronounced for the lumpen, who are in turn demonized for their disregard for other people.

The demonization that the lumpen faces by the rest of society is one reason that none of these endeavors have futures. You can't sell dope forever. You certainly can't be a prostitute

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Overcome Censorship on Tier Program

by a Georgia prisoner
May 2016

I've accomplished one of my short-term goals with the help of MIM(Prisons). I received your censorship pack on the situation that these pigs was holding my mail, from y'all and some of my family. Once I read the censorship pack I immediately put it in effect with grievances stating S.O.P. (Standard Operating Procedures) and case laws. Once the administration received my paperwork with the "example of proof and service," that next day I received a bulk of mail from October and also *Under Lock & Key* issues.

Once that was successful, I gave my fellow comrades the game. Now I'm willing to see what else we can accomplish on this Tier II in order to make our time a little better. As I tell my fellow comrades, we need to educate ourselves to overcome our situation. With the structure of the United Front; principles of peace, UNITY, growth, internationalism, and independence. I'm still trying to learn so I will be able to lead correctly.

With this letter is a donation of 10 stamps. If I had more I'd give more, because I salute what MIM(Prisons) stands for. With that said our strive will continue. And the oppressor will not be able to mentally destroy any more.

P.S. Salute to the Black Panther Party 50 year commemoration. They paved the way!!

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade is providing an excellent example and leadership organizing against abuse and censorship in the Georgia Tier program. The state is trying to alienate people from each other, cause extreme psychological damage, and use it as a tool to repress any upliftment and organizing. But we do not have to lie down and just take it. As this comrade demonstrates, we can still come together to fight specific injustices, and use that work to build with others. We look forward to seeing this comrade's work grow and contribute to the United Front for Peace in Prisons.★

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forever. Robbing and scamming is dangerous to say the least. And there are strong policies today to keep people from being on public assistance for too long. So there is a strong interest among the lumpen class to choose another path, one that addresses the alienation and lack of control they have over their own lives, including a limited ability to meet their own needs.

While we recognize that the leading force for revolution is the proletariat, our analysis clearly shows that the proletariat is virtually non-existent within U.S. borders, limited primarily to the small migrant worker population. The predominance of the labor aristocracy within imperialist countries today makes the lumpen a more important element than in times and places where the proletariat is the overwhelming majority. Just as Mao had to apply Marx's analysis to Chinese conditions and understand the key role the peasantry plays in revolution in countries where that group is large, we must apply dialectical materialist analysis to the world today to understand the role that will be played by each significant class in American society.

The lumpen are a more important class in imperialist society today than in the past, and as a result we must identify those who fall in this group and analyze whether they are friends or enemies of the revolution. This essay attempts to identify the lumpen in the United States by looking at several potential indicators of economic and social position in society.

First World vs. Third World lumpen

The lumpen is defined as being excluded from the capitalist system; excluded from production and consumption. Of course, everyone must consume to survive, and the lumpen lives on as a class. But their consumption is outside the realm of capitalist relations. The lumpen must take from others what it needs to survive. And in an exploited country the lumpen takes from working people, the petty bourgeoisie and other lumpen who surround them. It is much harder and therefore more rare to take from the bourgeoisie, so the bourgeoisie doesn't much care that the lumpen exist. The lumpen in the Third World is a parasite class, but primarily a parasite on the masses of the oppressed nations.

In the United States, we have no significant proletariat, so the lumpen class must be a parasite on the petty bourgeoisie. Historically that petty bourgeoisie has been white, while the lumpen have been concentrated in the New Afrikan ghettos, the reservations of First Nations, and the inner city oppressed communities in general. The national contradiction meant that the lumpen posed a threat to the stability of the country.

The history of social services in the United States comes from the Great Depression of the 1930s. As socialism and fascism were expanding to address the problems created by the anarchy of production, U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt had to take drastic measures to preserve

bourgeois democracy. The New Deal recovery program was that measure. It brought a system of social safety nets that live on to this day, though they were reformed and reduced starting in the 1980s with the Reagan administration.

This system allowed the emerging lumpen class to participate in the system of distribution and consumption without participating in production. They could do so in a way that was less precarious, less dangerous and better paying than their counterparts in the Third World. In addition to the federal government's services, there is infrastructure in the First World to provide clean water and sanitation to people of all classes. There is rampant overconsumption and waste that makes acquiring basic needs like food and clothing a snap, and there is enough wealth in the country that many non-governmental organizations can fund their own programs to provide food and other materials and services to those in need. For all these reasons, the First World lumpen are a qualitatively different class than the Third World lumpen proletariat in that they do benefit from living in an imperialist country.

Some claiming Marxism tell us that those we call lumpen are really part of the proletariat; they are just part of the reserve army of labor that Marx talked about being necessary to keep wages down among the workers that were employed via competition. But as has been demonstrated, there is no significant proletariat in the United States (request our Labor Aristocracy study pack for more on this topic). And while there is a contradiction between employers and employees over wages, this has not been an antagonistic contradiction in post-WWII U.S.A.

To the extent that there is a proletariat in this country, they are migrant workers. And therefore the reserve army of labor is found south of the Rio Grande and elsewhere in the Third World.

The First World lumpen are the remnants of a long history of national oppression. The question that they face is whether the oppressor nation is willing and able to continue to integrate them into the American petty bourgeoisie, or if racism and economic crisis will lead to an increased lumpenization of the internal semi-colonies as Amerika pushes its problems off on them.

The white nation in North America has always been a predominately petty bourgeois nation. Therefore petty bourgeois class consciousness is overwhelmingly dominant among white people of all classes. Where there is potential for revolutionary white lumpen, it will be more common when in close proximity or integrated with oppressed nation lumpen. And these will be the exception to the rule. It is for this reason that we say the principal contradiction is nation in the United States, while spending much time discussing and addressing the lumpen class.

Therefore, in the analysis that follows, we will be defining the First World lumpen as a distinct class that is only evident in the United States within the oppressed nations.



Contemporary Class Analysis

In the last few decades we can already point to an expanding prison population, and the cutting of welfare roles, without an increase in employment, as some evidence to support lumpenization at the margins. As expected, this lumpenization has been disproportionately suffered by the oppressed nations. To the extent that whites have lost (or will lose) their class status, this concerns us as a likely trigger for growing fascist currents in Amerikkka, due to their historical consciousness as a settler nation and more recently as the most powerful nation on the planet. As we get into the numbers below, we'll see that the white "lumpen" population could arguably outnumber that in the internal semi-colonies. But percentage-wise they are a smaller minority within their nation, and their national identity pulls them much more strongly towards fascism. For this reason, we will disregard poor whites in most of the analysis below. Of course there are exceptions to every rule. And in particular, among youth and where poor whites are more influenced by oppressed nation culture there could certainly be some splits in the white nation.

While we have not seen a massive de-linking of the exploited populations, the internal contradictions of imperialism have brought significant economic downturns in recent years. In 2009 there was a steep rise in the percent of long-term unemployed (greater than 26 weeks), which has not yet declined significantly. It has hovered around 40 and 45% of all unemployed people; this is about double other high points dating back to 1960. [As of June 2016, over the 3 years since the original writing, this figure has declined to around 25%,

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which is still higher than the 17-18% rates that were normal before 2008.] While this could be a sign of a growing de-classed population, the U.S. economy is so rich that this unemployment has only resulted in modest increases in poverty rates.

Yet, even in the recent recession, government-defined poverty rates have not yet reached the levels they were at prior to 1965 when they were around 20%, give or take. In 2011 the poverty rate was recorded as 15%. Even this rate is inflated since assistance in the form of tax credits and food stamps is not counted as taxable income. If this income was included in their calculations it would pull 9.6 million people above the poverty line and bring the percent below the poverty rate to less than 12%.⁽¹⁾ So it is only a small group at the margins that may be seeing a shift in their material conditions such that they could arguably be seen as not largely benefiting from imperialism.

In order to paint a clearer picture of who is in the First World lumpen class, the following sections look at the empirical evidence both historically and today to figure out where to draw the line between lumpen and petty bourgeoisie within the United States. Above we defined the lumpen class as those who are excluded from the production and distribution of goods under capitalism. If you translate this into U.S. census statistics, this group would fall into those who are not participants in the civilian labor force.

Lumpen Defined by Employment Status

Employment is counted as working at least 1 hour of paid time, 15 hours of unpaid time in a family business, or being off of work (such as vacation or maternity leave) during the week referenced. The civilian labor force includes everyone defined as employed or unemployed (looking for work). Therefore the lumpen would be found in the group that is outside the civilian labor force. In the Figure A we can see that this excluded group has grown in size only slightly since 1960, whereas the labor force has grown much more.

Not everyone in the middle group in Figure A is part of what we would consider the lumpen. We have subtracted out housewives, students, and the elderly (detailed calculations for this subtraction are included in the full draft lumpen book).

In Figure B we see the biggest changes being the increase in the lumpen (from 1.5% in 1960 to 10.6% in 2010) and the decrease in the housewives category. While this is completely feasible, the direct relationship between these two groups in the way we did the calculation leaves us cautious in making any conclusions from this method alone. In order to confirm that our big picture estimate of the lumpen here is in the ballpark we will look at this a couple of other ways, including trying to break down the lumpen via its constituent parts to see how they add up.

Also, keep in mind that we are concerned with the oppressed nation lumpen as a progres-

sive force for national liberation struggles. The above method does not differentiate between nations, and we can assume that somewhere around half of that 10.6% is white Americans.

Gaps in employment rates between New Afrikan males and white males are quite large, and they have increased over the period of 1970-2010. Further, the unemployment rate does not include those in prison or those on public assistance programs. So when "unemployment" rates are reported as being twice as big as for New Afrikans compared to whites, this is an understatement because those rates are only calculated on the civilian labor force who is looking for work. Austan Goolsbee, former economic advisor to U.S. President Barack Obama has stated that since the mid-1980s "the government has cooked the books" on unemployment rates "because government programs, especially Social Security disability, have effectively been buying people off the unemployment rolls and reclassifying them as not 'in the labor force.'"⁽³⁾ This is a prime example of what we call the First World lumpen.

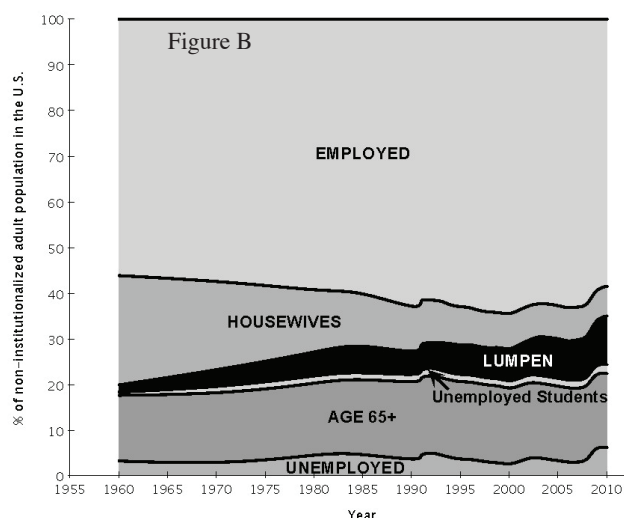
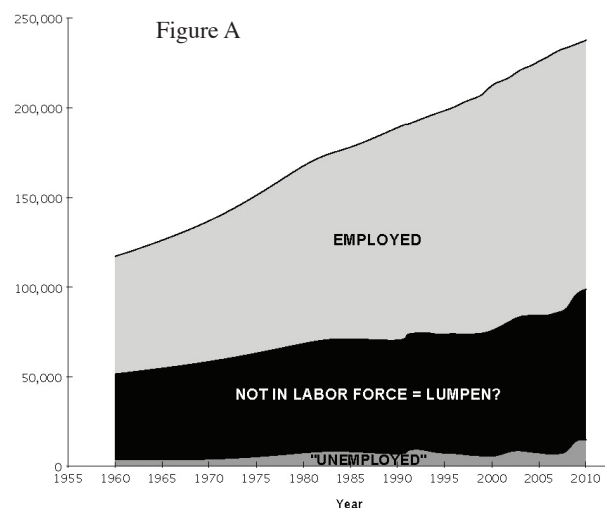
From this analysis of employment status we conclude that the 10.6% of the population that is unemployed and not housewives, students or elderly is principally lumpen. Conservatively we can assume that whites as 65% of the population are that same portion of the lumpen. This means that the oppressed nation lumpen defined by employment status constitutes about 10% of the oppressed nation population.

Lumpen Defined by Income

One thing that jumps out when looking at income data is the difference between individual income levels and household incomes. Some 39% of households had two or more income earners in 2010, so that over 20% of households made six figure incomes, while only 6.61% of individuals did.

Because individuals do tend to live in small group households, we will mostly look at that data below. Another thing that such an approach captures is the difficulties faced by many single-parent households. Single-parent households are the exception in that they do not benefit financially from having many members in their house because one earner must provide for many people. While this is very doable on a labor aristocracy wage, the demands of child-care and also keeping a job make it difficult for many single mothers who end up on public assistance. As a result there is a strong gendered component of the poor and lumpen that we will look at more below.

Before jumping into the numbers, let's look at



the definition of employed. While some in the unemployed group (defined as those who have been looking for work) may fall into the lumpen class, probably even more in the employed group do, seeing that you only have to get paid for one hour of labor per week to be considered employed. Those who are marginally employed, but are dependent on public assistance or the criminal underground to meet their needs, might reasonably be considered part of the First World lumpen class, especially in the context of the oppressed nation ghettos, barrios and reservations.

Here are some numbers to keep in mind as we look at income levels. A person working full-time for minimum wage will make at least \$14,000 per year, depending on the state they work in. An estimate of average value produced per hour is between \$3 and \$5 based on global GDP and global workforce.⁽⁴⁾ At that rate, working 40 hours a week year-round, one would produce almost \$10,000 per year, which may be a good cut off point for saying whether a full-time worker is making more or less than the value of their labor.

From this we can assume that a person earning \$14k or more is participating full time or nearly full time in the labor force. They are, therefore, not a candidate for the lumpen. Since wages for

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Amerikan citizens are all above the global average wage, any legally employed worker will be making more than the value of their labor. Those making less than \$14,000 per year will be in 3 main categories: part-time employed youth, migrants making proletarian or semi-proletarian wages, or marginally employed people who depend on public assistance and other sources of income.

Around 30% of those with an income, and over age 15, were under the \$15,000 per year mark in 2010, while 15% were under \$10,000 per year.(5) This excludes people with no income, especially youth working age who are a special case. But it includes people who are part of households with others who also have incomes. For example, a housewife who works one day a week for extra income and has a husband who makes \$50,000 a year could be in this group. But this 15% gives us one more reference point to think about when estimating the First World lumpen.

Almost 50% of those earning at or below minimum wage are 16 to 24 years old, and 23% are just 16 to 19 years old.(6) This is a case where we would not necessarily see income defining class status. Most of these youth know that they are likely to make more money when they get older by looking at the adults around them. To eliminate the effect of these temporarily low-paid youth, who are still making more than the value of their labor, we will now look at household income and break it down by nationality.

Quintiles break up a population into five different equal-sized groups defined by a range, such as income level. Looking at the lowest quintiles of the population in terms of income is one way to tease out the size and composition of the lumpen. The average income of the lowest quintile is dramatically different between whites and New Afrikans/Latin@s with the poorest whites earning more than double the poorest New Afrikans/Latin@s.

Income for lowest quintile of earners in the U.\$., 2011 (7)		
Race	Upper limit of lowest quintile	Avg income, lowest quintile
New Afrikan	\$15,996	\$7,816
white	\$33,514	\$19,887
"Hispanic"	\$18,944	\$9,821

The upper limit of income for the lowest quintile shows further these differences by nation, but also suggests that quintiles alone are not sufficient to define the lumpen as the upper limit of the lowest 20% of New Afrikans (the lowest earning of the nations) is still \$16k per year, a solid labor aristocracy income at an \$8/hr full time job.

One problem with just looking at income in defining lumpen is that it may be a temporary state of someone being in a low income group. Youth definitely fall in this category. Some older

folks who are retired, who are clearly not lumpen, also fall in this category. Among the 20-55 age group there are good reasons why some people have temporarily lower income but still are part of the labor aristocracy, such as short-term unemployment.

Family Income by Race (8)						
Income	Numbers in 1000s			Percent		
	white	New Afrikan	"Hispanic"	white	New Afrikan	"Hispanic"
Under \$2,500	680	409	308	1.2	4.4	3.0
\$2,500 to \$4,999	273	152	146	0.5	1.6	1.4
\$5,000 to \$7,499	382	180	197	0.7	1.9	1.9
\$7,500 to \$9,999	525	321	264	1.0	3.4	2.5
\$10,000 to \$12,499	664	319	362	1.2	3.4	3.5
\$12,500 to \$14,999	658	301	311	1.2	3.2	3.0

The table above shows that a relatively small percent of families are earning less than \$10k annually: 3.4% of whites, 11.3% of New Afrikans and 8.8% of Latin@s. This table includes those not participating in the workforce since it is at the family level and so should be counting non-working spouses and children among others.

Clearly there are significant differences between single individuals earning \$10,000 per year and a head of household with 4 children earning that same income. Looking at income by size of household gives us more detail on the total economic situation of a family. And we can use this data to calculate the maximum possible income per person for each group. This underscores the dramatic difference in financial situations faced by families based on the number of kids they have. We might use this data to create cut-offs for families whose kids are falling in the lumpen. While parents earning minimum wage and working close to full time are not part of the lumpen by definition, their income puts their kids basically outside of traditional economic financial participation and likely on the streets hustling for extra cash.

Again, the First World lumpen are not dying of starvation or water-borne diseases that the Third World masses face. But they do suffer malnutrition, temporary states of lacking housing, water or electrical service, and exposure to environmental pollutants that most Amerikans do not have to deal with. And youth growing up in a family with a total income of less than \$20,000 provides a standard of living relatively outside of the economic participation of the majority of Amerikans. An average of \$5k per persyn per year in a family of 4 may provide for survival needs but nothing beyond that. In this country, youth who can not find a job to supplement their family's income are likely to end up on the streets working outside of the traditional labor force, as a part of the lumpen. This data suggests that children of the lowest 15-20% of oppressed nation workers are good candidates for lumpen who may work their way out into the labor aristocracy as they get older.

Included in the calculations above are individuals making minimum wage or above at a full-

time job, so we discard the two highest income categories for single people and, just to be conservative, the highest income level for 2 people. (see full version for data) Using the rest of the categories to define either lumpen or migrant proletarian households, we get the information in the table below.

Lumpen or Migrant Proletarian Housholds (9)			
	New Afrikan	white	Latin@
# of families	3489	11,220	2596
% of nation	22%	13%	17%
% of nation <\$10k/family	16%	5%	10%

We do an additional calculation for only families making less than \$10k per year, since one full-time worker making \$10k would be making above our value of labor estimate. While at both levels, there are more white families than other nations, the rates are obviously higher for New Afrikans and Latin@s. The migrant proletariat population is of course much larger in the Latin@ category. So we could say that the New Afrikan lumpen defined by income is around 20% of the population, even though the maximum for the lowest quintile was given as \$16,000/ year above. One report puts the migrant workers earning less than minimum wage in 2002 at 2 million people.(10) With some 80% of immigrants in the U.\$ coming from Latin America and just 2.5 million Latin@ families in these low-wage categories above, it would seem that the Latin@ poor were dominated by working immigrant families and not lumpen. If true, this is one reason nation-specific parties are needed to lead the revolutionary movements in the different oppressed nations. The class content and interests of the lowest quintile of Latin@s and New Afrikans may look similar based on income level, but have very different relations to the means of production and to other nations.

Summing up the income data for defining the lumpen population, we can conservatively use the cut off of \$10k/year for family income to say that 16% of New Afrikan families are lumpen and 10% of Latin@ families are lumpen or migrant proletarian. Further, youth in families earning less than \$5k per person fall in the lumpen even though their parents are still working full time and are not part of the lumpen. That is the children of the lowest 10-15% of oppressed nation workers. So conservatively we can say between 15-20%

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of New Afrikan families are lumpen and between 10-15% of Raza are lumpen or migrant proletarian.

Lumpen defined by education level

There is a strong connection between educational background and what people end up earning financially later in life. There is a clear linear association between higher degrees attained and higher earnings. We do not care so much about the distinction between college graduates and those with advanced degrees, as this is the difference between levels of labor aristocracy, petty bourgeois and bourgeois income (all enemy classes). What is potentially interesting to a study of the lumpen in the United States is the population not even graduating from high school. Those without a high school degree earn significantly less than people who complete high school or college, and this group includes a much higher proportion of people who earn little to no money from legal employment. Therefore we look to educational attainment as a good candidate for a proxy to measure socioeconomic status in the United States.

Looking at educational achievement by nationality, we see that youth not getting a high school degree are disproportionately New Afrikan and Raza. Further, looking at unemployment rates for those without a high school diploma by nationality reveals interesting differences. New Afrikans who did not complete high school had a 22.5% unemployment rate compared with whites at 13.9% and Raza at 13.2%. The rate of employment among Raza probably reflects the large migrant population working low paying jobs such as farm workers, who are fully employed but earning very little.

As discussed above, while the unemployed may be part of the lumpen, this population includes some who are temporarily out of work but are actually participating in the workforce overall as part of the petty bourgeoisie. In addition, these statistics are only collected on people who are considered to be part of the labor force.

Combining income with education level reveals significant differences between whites and oppressed nations. However, the mean earnings for those without a high school diploma are not so low that we can lump everyone without a high school degree into the lumpen, even among oppressed nations.

Mean income for people without a High School degree (11)		
Gender	Race	Mean Income
Male	white	\$22,353
Female	white	\$15,187
Male	New Afrikan	\$18,936
Female	New Afrikan	\$15,644
Male	"Hispanic"	\$21,588
Female	"Hispanic"	\$16,170

These numbers reinforce the theory that lack of a high school diploma in and of itself does not define the lumpen. There are plenty of people entering the ranks of the labor aristocracy without much education, pulling the average income for this group up into the labor aristocracy range. It appears that there is a split among high school dropouts where some are able to join the labor aristocracy and others are pulled down into the lumpen.

MIM has argued that youth are the most revolutionary group among the white nation because of their special status outside of the class to which they were born and because of the way that capitalist society puts youth in a position of disempowerment. A key to the labor aristocracy's attitude as a class is the fact that individuals who may not be making much money at the moment can look around at their peers and see that they should anticipate improving their position. This is especially true for whites. Oppressed nation youth without a high school diploma, on the other hand, receive a mixed message. They look at their peers of their age group and see that they truly can not expect to get a job any time soon. On the other hand they can look at older folks around them and see a large percent having joined the labor aristocracy. This may result in a split in the oppressed nations by age where youth are part of the lumpen class for a period of time but eventually are pulled into the labor aristocracy by the wealth and decadence of imperialist society, even if they exist at the low end of the labor aristocracy. [See "Age as Gender: The Third Strand Shaping the Oppressed Nation Lumpen" in the draft lumpen book for more on this.]

The education analysis doesn't give us a definitive calculation of the lumpen but we can conclude that a sizable portion of the group with no GED or high school degree is part of the lumpen, and this group is 15% of New Afrikans and 35.7% of Raza. These numbers will overlap with unemployment and family income numbers as many people will fall into all three groups.

What About First Nations?

The First Nation populations within the United States remain decimated from the history of settler genocide and continued oppression. As a result, the native people of this land, not including Chican@s, is less than 1% of the total population. An estimated one third of them live on reservations, totaling about 700,000 people.

Despite their decimation, First Nations tend to have a greater consciousness as nations separate from Amerika with rights to their own land, compared to the oppressed nations in the United States as a whole. And there remain concentrations of the indigenous population in certain regions that provide a base for significant resistance. On a number of these larger reservations, the percentage of families with incomes less than \$3000 per persyn ranges between 15 and 25%. For New Afrikans as a whole that figure was 10%, though in regions such as south central Los Angeles it may be similar to First Nations.

Similarly, labor force participation rates on

many of the larger reservations are lower than the average for other nations in the United States by as much as 23%. In San Carlos Indian Reservation 31% of people were receiving cash assistance in 2000, about 15 times the average for the country. About 34% received food stamps. Five of the ten largest reservations had almost a third of the population on food stamps and six had at least 15% receiving cash assistance.

One disadvantage that First Nations face on reservations is the lack of infrastructure benefits that virtually everyone else in the United States enjoys, which factors into our class position and perspective in this country. On reservations 14% of homes lack electricity, 18% lack adequate sewage, 18% lack complete kitchen facilities, and 20% lack indoor plumbing. These are unique conditions that First Nation vanguards must address that will not be of concern for the general U.S. population.

We present these numbers separately because the First Nation population is so much smaller than the other nations we focus on here, and because data on people living on reservations overall is not very complete.(12)

Groups within the Lumpen

Above we looked at employment status, education level and income to estimate the size of the lumpen class in the United States. A third approach is to look at the individual groups that make up the lumpen class as a whole. The main categories of people we will discuss below are the population that is imprisoned and under correctional supervision, the homeless, those dependent on public assistance and those involved in the underground economy.

1) Lumpen in prison and under correctional supervision

The imprisoned population is one segment of the lumpen that is excluded from the methods previously discussed since they are part of the "institutionalized population" in the U.S. Census data. For that reason, we might think that the above calculation underestimates the size, as well as the growth, of the lumpen class in the United States.

In 2011, there were 6.98 million adults under the supervision of the state via imprisonment, probation or parole, in the United States. This was 2.9% of the overall population, with just those in prison being slightly less than 1%. The overall percentage increased at a decreasing rate between 1980 and 2008.(13).

Focusing on the oppressed nations, over 3% of New Afrikan men are in prison. That number is about 1.3% for Latin@s, and less than 0.5% for whites. Rates for First Nations were not given in this report, but tend to be even higher than those for New Afrikans. If we extrapolate imprisonment statistics to all adults under supervision, we get about 8.7% of New Afrikan men and 3.8% of Raza men under some form of state supervision.

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With recidivism rates as high as they are, we are comfortable saying that those 1 million Raza men and 1.6 million New Afrikan men are part of the lumpen class. The same calculations put around 56,000 Raza wimmin and 73,000 New Afrikan wimmin in this group, plus a significant, but uncertain number of First Nation and Asian lumpen under state supervision. As a result, we suggest that 2.5 million is a safe estimate of those who'd fall in the group of imprisoned/formerly imprisoned lumpen, excluding whites. This would add less than one percentage point of the overall U.S. population to our total, but would include another 4.5% of New Afrikans and another 4% of Raza. Note that these numbers can't be added to the totals from the unemployed or income-based lumpen groups above because those out of prison will overlap greatly with this group.

White men in this group number about 1.3 million, but are much more likely to find employment and join the labor aristocracy after release from prison. While in prison white men do fall into the lumpen class but lack the oppressed nation outlook and so often join white supremacist groups rather than supporting revolutionary organizing. This is just one factor contributing to a national outlook that leads us to exclude whites overall when discussing the revolutionary potential of the First World lumpen.

On any given day, nearly 23 percent of all young New Afrikan men ages 16 to 24 who have dropped out of high school are in jail, prison, or a juvenile justice institution in the United States. (14) So there is a significant overlap between those without a high school diploma and the prison population. This reinforces the lack of a high school degree as an indicator of the lumpen, but as we showed above, it's not sufficient alone to identify the lumpen as plenty of labor aristocracy people come from this group as well.

2) Underground Economy

The underground economy parallels the legal economy, and has a parallel class structure. While the economy is capitalist and therefore dominated by bourgeois ideology, the majority of the people in this economy could be considered part of the First World lumpen in that they live at the margins, often with a parasitic relationship to the greater economy. While all communities have people who work "off the books," just as they all have drug dealers, there is a qualitative difference between communities where that is the exception and where that is the rule.

We divide the underground economy into the following categories:

- a. illegal national bourgeoisie in drugs
- b. illegal labor aristocracy
- c. parasitic hustlers (thieves, scammers, pimps)
- d. illegal service workers (prostitutes, corner boys)
- e. small-time service workers (food prep, car repair, reselling)

Mao saw the national bourgeoisie as a class that

can be an ally in the anti-imperialist war, but cannot liberate the nation itself. Due to the parasitic class nature of the internal semi-colonies in the United States today, we do not see the traditional Black and Brown bourgeoisie playing this role. Instead they are some hybrid of petty bourgeoisie and comprador bourgeoisie economically benefitting from the empire. Where we see a parallel to the national bourgeoisie of the exploited nations is among the marginally employed and illegally employed lumpen who rise within the illegal economy. Just as Mao's national bourgeoisie was disadvantaged by imperialist control of their nation, it is the lumpen alone that is excluded from participating in the spoils of empire as the majority of oppressed nationals within U.S. borders do today. And when they do tap into those spoils through illegal enterprises, they remain in a precarious position.

The underground economy includes many small-time service workers who provide food preparation, car repair, vendor and small maintenance services in oppressed communities. The work performed is no different than any other service worker in the legal economy, but their work is usually irregular in such a way that they are part of an underclass that we consider close to the lumpen as they are excluded from the legal economy.

The illegal economy can be looked at separately from the service workers providing legal services off the books. The illegal economy is where we find those traditionally considered the lumpen. It would include the obviously-parasitic hustlers who rob, scam, fence and pimp. But the biggest sector of the illegal economy, and one of the most important sectors of the global economy, is the drug trade. The drug trade, while largely in the realm of the lumpen class, is successful enough to support a well-defined class structure of its own including a full-on bourgeoisie, a stable group earning what would be the equivalent of labor aristocracy wages, and a workforce that receives a more marginal income. The small-time drug dealers in oppressed communities could be grouped with the, largely female, sex workers as a group of illegal service workers who make incomes that are marginal in terms of global wage distribution.

Much of the illegal drug economy in the oppressed communities is carried out by lumpen organizations (LOs). These organizations historically were more dependent on extortion, and this still plays a large role in the economics of LOs. Extortion would be another example of clear parasitic relations of the lumpen with the rest of the community.

LOs are often formed along national lines, bringing with them a legacy or ideology of nationalism. Where these organizations are successful enough to create a bourgeoisie, or even an aspiring bourgeoisie, we see the basis for a national bourgeoisie in the internal semi-colonies.

3) Public Assistance Dependents

While 8% of the U.S. population receives some form of assistance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, about 1.7%

of the population receives more than half of their income that way. That translates to about 5.34 million people we could say are dependent on public assistance. Of those, about 3.25 million (61%) are not white and 2.13 million (40%) are New Afrikan.

Approximately 90% of U.S. citizens receiving cash assistance benefits are single mothers. (15) Just as the imprisoned lumpen is mostly men, the population on certain forms of public assistance is largely made up of wimmin with children, most of whom are actually white. (16)

4) Homeless

Up to 3.5 million people are homeless in the United States, about 1% of the population each year.

First Nations are overrepresented in the homeless population by a factor of 4, while New Afrikans are by a factor of 3.25. Youth under 18 are overrepresented by a factor of 1.65. Whites and Asians are underrepresented in the homeless population.

nation	homeless pop	welfare pop	overall pop
white	39%	39%	64%
New Afrikan	42%	40%	13%
Latin@	13%	16%	15%
First Nation	4%	~2%	1%
Asian	2%	3%	6%

We would put the homeless squarely into the lumpen category, although some of these people are only homeless temporarily and have a support structure that will enable them to move back into the labor aristocracy relatively quickly. Further, many of the homeless will also be on some form of public assistance and are unemployed, therefore groups can not be summed up without double counting a lot of people.

Conclusions

The table below sums up the conservative estimates we have made with regard to who constitutes the lumpen within U.S. borders. Our best total estimate for New Afrikans and Raza comes from the sum of the people identified based on family income and those actively in prison or jail. First Nations are calculated separately. All other methods of calculation are going to double count people we identified by family income and so can not be added to our totals.

We conclude that conservatively we can count 20-25% of the New Afrikan nation as part of the lumpen. Among Raza we calculate between 15-20% as part of the lumpen or migrant proletariat.

To separate out the lumpen from the migrant proletariat among Raza we need to look at the number of migrant Raza in the United States. A Pew Hispanic Center 2005 report estimated 11.5

Continued on next page...

... Continued from previous page ... **Lumpen Class**

to 12 million total "illegal immigrants," 56% from Mexico, and 22% from other Latin American countries. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2009 estimated 10.7 million "illegal immigrants," 62% from Mexico, and at least 15% from other Latin American countries. These numbers give us an estimate of between 8 and 9 million Latin American migrants in the United States. If the census accurately counts Latin American migrants, 17% of this population (based on 8,500,000 migrants) is not in the U.S. legally and most of that group would be migrant proletariat. That leaves a rather small group of lumpen. We can probably assume, however, that the census undercounts migrant workers because of both the transitory nature of the population and the fear around filling out government paperwork. Based on this reasonable assumption, we can perhaps estimate that the lumpen population among Raza is between 5-10% of the total population.

Given the volatility of the people who are still young and are excluded from the system economically and along national lines, the imperialists have no interest in an expanding lumpen class. And the only internal contradiction that would force an expanding lumpen class in the imperialist countries is extreme economic crisis.

As a baseline we can say conservatively that around 2010 the lumpen class represented about 20% of New Afrika, 5% of Raza and 30% of First Nations. This population represents about 4% of the overall population of the United States, and there is no strong evidence of the First World lumpen increasing in a significant way in recent years.

One example MIM had cited in support of the Panther theory of an expanding lumpen due to mechanization was the skyrocketing prison population centered around the 1990s, but spanning the time between the demise of the Panthers and today. While the numbers are staggering, this

Non-Bourgeois Population by National Groupings				
	% Lumpen	# Lumpen	Semi-Proletariat	Non-Bourgeois Classes
New Afrikan	20%	8,160,000	0	8,160,000
Latin@	5%	2,620,000	8,500,000	11,120,000
First Nations	30%	700,000	0	700,000
Total	-	11,480,000	8,500,000	19,980,000

is still a tiny proportion of the oppressed nations. And rather than being the product of shifting economic conditions, we argue that they are primarily a product of the open conflict between the white nation and oppressed nations in the United States via the white power structure of the state.

The police and prisons were the white nation's stick and the economic opportunities and integration were the carrot presented to the oppressed immediately following the strong liberation movements of the 1960s/70s. Therefore, if we see oppressed nation prison populations shift into a downward trend, that would support the idea that the carrot is increasing in effectiveness in integrating them into Amerika.

The flip side of that is as long as oppressed nation prisoners keep increasing, we have strong evidence of an antagonistic contradiction along the lines of nation in the United States. Of course we have seen the trend level off a bit in recent years, ironically, largely in response to economic crisis. But it is too soon to say what that means. ★

Notes:

1. *Poverty in the United States*, Urban Institute, 12 September 2012
2. sources for figure: employment, labor force participation and unemployment numbers from 1. Table 588. *Civilian Population--Employment Status by Sex, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Ethnicity: 1960 to 2010. Housewife population estimated from differential between males and females in this table. Age 65 and up population from U.S. Census data. Unemployed students estimated as 22% of all college students based on data from 1995 -2008. From Profile of Undergraduate Students: Trends From Selected Years, 1995-96 to 2007-*

08. *U.S. Department of Education, September 2010, NCES 2010-220. Total student population numbers from Source: U.S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1900-1985, 120 Years of Education, A Statistical Portrait; beginning 1986, Digest of Education Statistics, annual; National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, Fall Enrollment Survey (various years); and National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Integrated Science and Engineering Resources Data System (WebCASPAR), <http://webcaspar.nsf.gov>.*

3. *Levine, 2012*

4. *Serve the People, IRT*

5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_income_in_the_United_States

6. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/minwage2009tbls.htm#10>

7. Tables F-1 and F-3, <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/data/historical/families/>

8. Table 695. Money Income of Families -- Number and Distribution by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2009

9. https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032012/hhinc/hinc01_000.htm

HINC-01. Selected Characteristics of Households, by Total Money Income in 2011

10. <http://www.urban.org/publications/310880.html>

11. 2012 Statistical Abstract, US Census Bureau Table 232. Mean earnings by highest degree earned: 2009

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13. *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2011*, U.S. Department of Justice, November 2012

14. <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/black-male-dropouts-lead-nation-in-incarceration-63870242.html>

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Streetlow, Magazine of Lowrider Culture, Disrespects Brown Berets

by Antonio Moreno

www.siglodeluca.wordpress.com

April 2016

Magazines of the lowrider culture have long used semi-nude models in their features and advertisements to attract more readers. Recently one of those magazines, *Streetlow*, published its latest issue with one of their models wearing a Brown Beret uniform in a sexualized manner. As the Brown Berets have been a symbol in the Chicano community of resistance and revolutionary struggle, this disrespect caused righteous indignation from actual Brown Berets. It also [brought] attention to the wider problems of misogyny in this car culture where this would happen.

As for the Brown Berets, women have long been active in the organization since their formation in 1967 and after. Brown Beret chapters today are organized autonomously in different local regions, and has been an organization where

women have been prominent in leadership. They have also struggled internally within the organization with sexism and misogyny, facing the same struggles and abuse as from the dominant culture. The Brown Berets as a whole have never been given a proper treatment in any histories, and the role of women in the organization have been given even less. It would be a necessity to get a complete analysis for our future efforts for liberation.

This is a statement from the East L.A. Brown Berets:

April 18, 2016

To Whomever It May Concern:

Any form of image that sexualizes women in the movement is not okay and they will absolutely not be tolerated. We the women do not appreciate this false image for the arousal, fetish, or commercialization of our bodies, as well as the movement itself. We the women in the movement are



not sexual objects. In the 1960's women fought hard against not only society, but the male patriarchal system within the Civil Rights movements

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U.S. Military Delivers Death Blow to Identity Politics

by PTT of MIM(Prisons)
July 2016

Recently U.S. military officials announced that transgender people are welcome to serve openly as warriors for imperialism and Amerikkkan world domination. They made a plan that will roll out over the next year, including financial support for medical treatment such as surgeries, therapy, and hormones.

Some trans activists, who recognize why this announcement is "problematic" for people in the oppressed nations, will assert that "they'll co-opt anything." Which is true, to an extent. The U.S. government in all its forms will try to control any aspect of our society that can be controlled. Which underlines the point that identity politics is *not* threatening to U.S. militarism and world domination, because it *can* be controlled just by mere acceptance. Does the struggle for transgender acceptance (or any gender struggle), distinct from revolutionary organizing, undermine capitalism itself? No. And this announcement proves it.

The U.S. government can't co-opt genuine anti-imperialist organizing, try as it might with front organizations and rewriting of history. It

can't actually integrate the self-determination of nations into colonialism, because they are opposite aspects of a worldwide contradiction. They can't resolve the oppression and desperation of people in the Third World, because they depend on that oppression for its base function of exploitation, to keep people in the United States wealthy and happy.

If your struggle can be integrated into the U.S. military, then it shows which side your struggle is truly on. Are you a revolutionary internationalist? Or just hoping for a better life here in Amerikkka? Everyone who opposes gender oppression, militarism, and genocide, should do everything in their power to organize *against* the U.S. military, and against capitalism, as that's the only way we're going to get to a world without gender oppression for everyone.★

*I will fight by any means
necessary even till death.
Revolution is the solution.*



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...Streetlow

groups. The women fought hard for their respectable roles within the movement, where at the time they were only seen as a supportive role; to cook to clean and for personal comfort. The mujeres fought hard to be treated with respect and be seen as equals amongst our brothers in the struggle. They were and continue to be the backbone of any struggle. When you sexualize our women, you downplay their achievements.

We hereby demand that the cover be removed from Streetlow Magazine, and instead invite them to take real photographs of the women within the movement. That being said, we welcome you to provide a true statement of the women within the movement instead of a far fetched sexualized ideal for the appeal of others. We will no longer allow our women to be sexual fantasies and be exploited for their bodies.

She is the birthgiver, mother of nature, she is the struggle in her own way.

*Signed,
Comandanta Luz, Catalina and all the Mujeres of the East Los Angeles Brown Beret Unit*

This was followed by statements from other autonomous Brown Beret chapters, as well as other individuals outraged by this depiction of a Chicano symbol.

This issue is about common respect for a movement symbol and for the respect of women overall. This current incident shows not only the disrespect of an important symbol for Chicanos, but the larger issue of the portrayal of women in this culture that was created by Chicanos.

History of Lowriders

The history of the lowrider subculture, where stock cars are lowered and customized, comes from the history of the Mexicano people in the United States to preserve their culture from assimilation. Its roots can be traced to an old Mexican ritual called paseo, where young, unmarried villagers walked around their central plaza. It then involved displaying their horses as a symbol of prestige.

The transformation to cars came about in the the 1930's from the pachuco "zoot suit" culture in Los Angeles and El Paso. Then, sandbags were put into the trunks to intentionally lower the cars, often older Chevys, while cruising. One history states that the pachucos and the car culture that developed from it came about from "a generation caught between cultures, struggling to find their own identity." The lowrider culture developed through the decades, and it was in contrast to the mostly Anglo hot rod culture, with more emphasis on the style and presentation of the cars. It has been an outlet for creativity for our people. Lowriders became more mainstream, especially spread through hip hop culture to a wider audience.

One troubling aspect of the culture is the role of women in it. Although women have been more involved in the culture in recent years, men make up a predominant part of it. The car shows and magazines that come from it, the most prominent one being its namesake *Lowrider*, commonly show semi-nude bikini models in its features and advertisements, seen as props next to its cars and automotive machinery. This is often the only im-

age of women that is shown in this culture, and it is not an empowering one.

This particular incident of the sexualization of a movement symbol shows the problems in this culture of the objectification of women. As others have noted, this is a problem in Mexican culture as a whole. This is not the only target. It also shows the limits of cultural nationalism in fighting all forms of oppression. Our revolutionary struggle cannot go forward if La Mujer is not respected. As an old slogan said, "if you are dissing the sisters, you are not fighting the power."★



Conciencia Nacional y al Porqué las Vidas Negras Importan

por USW11 de United Struggle from Within
traducido por Spanish Translator
Febrero 2016

Introducción

La recurrencia de la brutalidad policial y los prejuicios raciales contra grupos nacionales oprimidos en los EE UU ha capturado atención general y elevado la cuestión nacional. Cada vez más, grupos y comunidades nacionales oprimidas están expresando su descontento con un sistema de opresión que los deshumaniza y marginaliza. Se han realizado protestas masivas, la incertidumbre se ha apoderado de las ciudades, y se han formado movimientos organizados como respuesta directa a estas injusticias. O sea, los reclamos por parte de las naciones oprimidas en los EE UU comienzan a definir la cuestión nacional.

Estos eventos señalan una conciencia entre los grupos nacionales oprimidos en los EE UU de que el sistema actual no representa sus intereses, y que de hecho, funciona en su contra. Aunque los indicadores socioeconómicos revelan iniquidades en las comunidades donde residen los grupos nacionales oprimidos, estos indicadores no pueden comunicar las dimensiones de miseria y sufrimiento que resultan del racismo institucionalizado y la discriminación. Así como la conciencia de clases comienza a echar raíces y a crecer entre los trabajadores explotados al cuestionar y compartir sus experiencias unos con otros — dando lugar a organizaciones y movimientos diseñados para combatir esta realidad — de igual manera la conciencia nacional sigue este proceso a medida que las naciones oprimidas lidian con la realidad

de la opresión nacional.

El movimiento Black Lives Matter (Las Vidas Negras Importan) o BLM, es una indicación de este proceso. Este activismo reanudado se ha dado, no solo por los asesinatos sancionados de jóvenes de naciones oprimidas, sino por la acumulación de opresión nacional que ha ocurrido por años. El desarrollo cuantitativo de la cuestión nacional en relación al imperialismo social en los EE UU ha alcanzado un punto crítico. Las semi-colonias y naciones oprimidas en los EE UU tendrán que disputar su liberación o buscar un camino de reforma y mayor integración. Entonces, la pregunta importante es, ¿Cómo es que nosotros, los Maoístas, vamos a alimentar esta semilla emergente a través del nacionalismo revolucionario?

En última instancia, el punto de este artículo es el explorar brevemente como la opresión nacional informa la conciencia de las naciones oprimidas dentro de las condiciones únicas de una sociedad imperialista en los EE UU e identifica las implicaciones claves que resultan del movimiento BLM y que son relevantes al movimiento de liberación nacional a mayor escala. Es importante notar que el movimiento BLM no es una organización revolucionaria. Aun así, BLM es una enseñanza para nuestra causa, ya que demuestra el potencial de las semi-colonias internas y las naciones oprimidas internas en los EE UU de poder organizarse en base a los problemas relacionados con opresión nacional.

La opresión nacional y el derecho de una nación a la auto-determinación

En cuanto a las semi-colonias internas y a las naciones oprimidas de los EE UU, la cuestión nacional debe basarse en reconocer sus derechos a la auto-determinación. Las naciones oprimidas están sujetas al semi-colonialismo, y por lo tanto, no pueden controlar su propio destino. Debido a que la supremacía de los blancos domina cada aspecto de la nación oprimida, la existencia material de dicha nación toma un plano secundario dentro de la estructura de poder regida por la raza blanca.

Más aun, la nación-estado blanca-dominante ha creado mecanismos de control social para mantener el dominio de las naciones oprimidas. Encarcelamiento masivo, la disfunción comunitaria y de familia, la cultura de estereotipos y estigmas, entre otros, son algunos de los medios que utiliza para no perder de vista a dichas naciones oprimidas. Un ejemplo relacionado con el punto anterior son las restricciones sistemáticas que impiden el acceso a una educación reconocida y que limitan el acceso a oportunidades de empleo significativas. La falta de trabajo significa pobreza y los males sociales que la acompañan. Además, el racismo institucionalizado y la discriminación promueven actitudes y comportamientos que continúan formando una cultura de inequidad dentro de las comunidades de las naciones oprimidas. Como resultado, algunos miembros de las naciones oprimidas se ven obligados a perseguir un estilo de vida criminal, exponiéndose al represivo sistema de injusticia criminal.

Aunque la situación descrita no es una representación de la nación oprimida en su totalidad, si nos presenta la necesidad de una liberación nacional y la ejecución del derecho de una nación a la auto-determinación. Es cierto que las semi-

Continúa en la página siguiente...

El MIM(Prisiones)

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

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

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

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

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

2. La dictadura del proletariado es necesaria. En una dictadura del proletariado la anteriormente mayoría explotada dicta a la minoría, la que promovió la explotación, cómo se debe conducir a la sociedad. En el caso de naciones imperialistas, una dictadura del proletariado de naciones oprimidas en unión (JDPON siglas en inglés) debe hacer este papel en donde no hay proletariado interno o una base significativa de masas que favorecen el comunismo.

3. Promovemos un frente unido con todos los que se oponen al imperialismo. El camino a la JDPON sobre las naciones imperialistas incluye en unir a todos aquellos que se puedan unir contra el imperialismo. No podemos pelear contra el imperialismo y pelear contra otros que están ocupados en conflictos de vida y muerte contra el imperialismo a mismo tiempo. Aún 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 el pensamiento de MIM ha extendido a través del análisis materialista, el imperialismo extrae súper-ganancias del Tercer Mundo y usa en parte esta riqueza para comprar poblaciones enteras de supuestos llamados trabajadores. Estos supuestos llamados trabajadores comprados por el imperialismo forman un nuevo sector de la sub-burguesía llamada la aristocracia laboral; ésta no es un vehículo para el Maoísmo. Aquellos que trabajan en los intereses económicos de la aristocracia laboral del Primer Mundo forman la masa básica del aprieto-mortal sobre el Tercer Mundo del imperialismo.

5. Nuevas burguesías se formaran bajo el socialismo. Mao guió el ataque para exponer a la burguesía que se desarrolló dentro del Partido Comunista de la Unión Soviética y la campaña para bombardear las jefaturas en su propio país, China. Esas experiencias demostraron la necesidad de revolución continua bajo la dictadura del proletariado. La lucha de clases no termina hasta que el estado se haya anulado y el comunismo se haya alcanzado.

6. La Gran Revolución Cultural del Proletariado en China fue el mayor avance hacia el comunismo en la historia. Apoyamos a la Unión Soviética hasta la muerte de Stalin en 1953, seguida por la República Popular China hasta 1976 como los mejores ejemplos del socialismo moderno en práctica. El arresto de la “cuadrilla de cuatro” en China y el ascenso de Krushchev en la Unión Soviética marcaron la restauración del capitalismo en esos países. Otros experimentos en el desarrollo del socialismo en el siglo XX fracasaron en sobrepasar el modelo Soviético (es decir, Albania), o peor, se quedaron dentro del modo capitalista de producción, generalmente debido al fracaso para romper con la Teoría de las Fuerzas Productivas.

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...Conciencia

colonias internas en los EE UU y las naciones oprimidas gozan de estándares de vida y privilegios que sus compatriotas del tercer mundo morirían por tener. Aun así, la realidad de la opresión nacional no es menos perjudicial para la nación oprimida estadounidense. El dolor y sufrimiento asociados con las injusticias a causa del semi-colonialismo no dejan de ser menos reales.

Estas experiencias sociales de opresión nacional afectan emocionalmente a las naciones oprimidas. Cada día y cada instante de opresión nacional que los miembros de dichas naciones tienen que soportar deja una impresión en su conciencia. Eventualmente, los mismos empiezan a conectar los puntos y a reconocer lo injusto de su situación en la sociedad estadounidense.

¿Qué significa la conciencia nacional?

El punto central de este artículo es el ayudar a que las naciones oprimidas desarrollen una conciencia de su situación debido a la opresión nacional. Esta conciencia no es revolucionaria ni es substantiva. Para aclarar, cualquier situación material que los humanos viven provoca la conciencia correspondiente y refleja su situación de vida. Rashid Johnson nos dice en su libro, "Historical and Dialectical Materialism: The Science of Revolution points," que la conciencia es un producto de la materia; del mundo físico. La casa-prisión que resulta de una sociedad imperialista en los EE UU es el mundo físico, y las relaciones e interacciones económicas, políticas, y sociales que lo forman envuelven actividad física.

En este sentido, las naciones oprimidas en

los EE UU están sujetas a este proceso dialéctico a medida que estas relaciones e interacciones acondicionan su conciencia. La actividad en la vida diaria dentro de la sociedad imperialista en los EE UU deja una impresión en el estado mental. Y como demostramos anteriormente, la opresión nacional es una parte fundamental de la vida diaria de las naciones oprimidas en los EE UU. Además, la conciencia nacional es similar a la clase nacional en que durante el ajetreo de la vida diaria las personas intercambian y comparten ideas en cuanto a su situación material, sus condiciones de vida. Comienzan a buscar maneras de resolver los problemas a los que se enfrentan. Los intelectuales se reúnen a discutir, teorizar, y buscar la solución a problemas comunes. Pero más importante aún, se fundan instituciones y organizaciones para ayudar en el empuje de sus

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IDEOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS

MAOISM: Maoism is the doctrine which guided the first successful Third World peasant revolution that liberated China in 1949 and guided the building of socialism in that country until capitalism was restored in 1976. Maoism influenced all the subsequent anti-colonial struggles in Africa and Asia and inspired many other revolutionary movements including ones inside the United States.

Maoism is famous for many changes in China, including land reform; collectivization of agriculture in what was then a poor country; ejecting both foreign occupiers and pro-landlord elements with the strategy of "People's War" against numerically, financially and technically superior enemies; abolishing China's huge drug addiction problem; ending pornography and prostitution; eliminating the practice of breaking women's feet (footbinding) to make them smaller and supposedly cuter; establishing China's first law allowing divorce and eventually instituting worker-run industry without private property in the means of production.

Complete revolution is fundamental to Maoism. This means that all social, cultural, political and economic relations must be revolutionized. People will not be liberated by simply breaking the state or smashing capitalism. China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the best example we have of this attempt to completely eradicate capitalist influence in a society.

INTERNATIONALISM: The ethical belief or scientific approach in which peoples of different nations are held to be equal. Internationalism is opposed to racism and national chauvinism.

We Maoists believe the nationalism of oppressed nations is "applied internationalism." We oppose nationalism of oppressed nations directed at other oppressed nations. We seek a united front of oppressed nations led by the international proletariat against imperialism.

Today there are two kinds of internationalism: bourgeois internationalism and proletarian internationalism. In the bourgeois internationalist view, peoples of all countries should have a chance to become exploiters. In the proletarian internationalist view, exploitation inevitably leads to violent conflict, so peace amongst nations depends on a global view not defending private property.

REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALISM: The solution to the plight of the oppressed nation in liberating itself from the global imperialist system to attain self-determination. Revolutionary nationalists see the struggle of the nation as primary. They may or may not be communists.

ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

IMPERIALISM: Lenin defined imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. 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, imperi-

alism determines much of the material reality that everyone on planet Earth faces 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.

CAPITALISM: Capitalism is a mode of production, or economic system, where the bourgeoisie or capitalist class owns the means of production and exploits the labor of the proletariat. Because the proletariat owns nothing, they are forced to sell their labor power on the market in exchange for what they need to survive. When they work for the capitalist, the capitalist owns the value that they create and only pays them the portion of this value to sustain themselves. The rest is called surplus value, or the profit exploited from the worker, which is the basic law of capitalist economic relations.

STATE CAPITALISM: Under state capitalism, the state nominally owns the means of production, but production is organized around profit, not the needs of the people. The Soviet Union became state capitalist under Khrushchev, and China became state capitalist under Deng Xiaoping. In both cases, a new bourgeoisie developed within the state apparatus and the Communist Party itself.

SOCIALISM: When Maoists use the term socialism we are referring to the transition stage between the capitalist mode of production and communism. This involves organizing society with the goal of meeting people's needs, not making profit. History shows that a dictatorship of the proletariat (as opposed to our present dictatorship of the bourgeoisie) is necessary to make socialism work and maintain democracy in a socialist society. Class struggle continues under socialism.

COMMUNISM: The abolition of power of people over people. This means abolishing all oppression, whether of nations by nations, classes by classes, women by men or any other division in society. Communism is based on mutual cooperation, peace and justice instead of oppression.

Long-run goals of communism include the abolition of classes and organizing society without governments or borders. As in certain tribal societies in the past and living still today, communists believe that it is possible for humans to organize themselves without war, crime, starvation and homelessness. When there are social problems, communists blame those problems on how society is organized. They seek to organize society to bring out the best in people, however flawed the species may be. No communist leader has ever claimed that a society has achieved communism yet. That means the industrial societies of our time have either lived in capitalism or socialism. Finally, communists believe that a communist party - not just ad hoc or individual organizing - is necessary to seize state power from the oppressors.

CLASS DEFINITIONS

BOURGEOISIE: The exploiter class most characteristic of the capitalist system. Their wealth is obtained from the labor of others, in particular the proletariat.

The term "bourgeoisie" now usually refers to the capitalist class in common usage. The capitalist class is those who own

enough property that they would not have to work to make a living. This class only works if it wants to. Also included in the term are people with very powerful positions in production or government generally. A ruler may or may not have great assets on hand, but if they really wanted them, they have the power to get them.

There is another common and critically important usage of the term "bourgeoisie." Technically the bourgeoisie includes other sections, including those more numerous than the capitalist class. The "petty-bourgeoisie" or "petit-bourgeoisie" refers to people who are exploiters but not on the scale of the capitalists. The petty-bourgeoisie often owns its own means of production or professional skills but does not hire enough workers to be able to quit working and still live a life of leisure. There are other categories of bourgeoisie that are not capitalist, such as what Mao called the "comprador bourgeoisie" which owes its existence to imperialist capitalists and cannot function on its own as a capitalist class.

LABOR ARISTOCRACY: Unlike the traditional petty bourgeoisie, they do not own their own means of production and so must work for others. But unlike the proletariat and semi-proletariat, the labor aristocracy in the First World earn more than the value of their labor and therefore have interests that fall in the bourgeois camp allying with imperialism.

In the First World today we define this group as the lower segment of the petty-bourgeoisie, working for a wage and earning more than the value of their labor but without the means to get a loan to start a small business themselves. This group benefits from the imperialist world's superexploitation of the Third World. They are bought off by the imperialists with these superprofits. In the First World this group is not exploited and so not part of the proletariat. On the contrary, their incomes are often higher than those traditionally classified as the petty bourgeoisie in the Third World, further demonstrating their bourgeois character.

PROLETARIAT: The group of people who have nothing to sell but their labor power for their subsistence. The proletariat does not draw any profit from any kind of capital because they have none. Proletarians are propertyless and thus have "nothing to lose but their chains." The proletariat is the least conservative element of society.

There are several groups that fall within the proletariat: 1. The working proletariat are exploited by others who make a profit off of their labor. 2. The non-working proletariat make up the reserve army of the proletariat. In current times this group is usually temporarily unemployed and seeking employment. The long-term unemployed usually fall into the lumpen-proletariat. 3. The lumpen-proletariat, a group of people who are unable to sell their labor power in the long term and so end up living as parasites on other proletarians. This group is found in the Third World, and is distinct from the First World lumpen.

FIRST WORLD LUMPEN: The class of people in the First World who are excluded from the productive process. By virtue of living in the First World this class, on average, receives more material benefits from imperialism than the global proletariat. As such their interests are not the same as the exploited classes and we do not include them in the "lumpen-proletariat." But their conditions in many ways parallel those of the lumpen-proletariat standing in stark contrast to the majority of the First World populations. This class includes U.S. prisoners, which is a focus of the organizing work MIM(Prisons) does today.

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Under Lock & Key No. 51

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...Conciencia

agendas. Todas estas acciones toman lugar a medida que las personas se reúnen después de reconocer el problema.

Entonces, cuando los marxistas de antes hablaban en cuanto a construir y profundizar la conciencia de clase entre los trabajadores explotados, se estaban refiriendo al proceso por el cual la gente comenzaba a darse cuenta del predicamento en que se encontraban, pero de una manera revolucionaria. Para nosotros, los Maoístas, nuestro trabajo en este punto histórico es el de mover hacia adelante las luchas de liberación nacional dentro de las naciones oprimidas con nacionalismo revolucionario. Debemos construir conciencia nacional entre las naciones oprimidas para que estos grupos entiendan que los conceptos tales como raza son falsos y que América no vela por sus intereses. Estos grupos tienen que llegar a entender que las naciones existen y que su respectiva nación se merece el poder ejercer su derecho a la auto-determinación.

¿Por qué las vidas negras importan?

El movimiento BLM no es nada diferente al compararlo con el movimiento chican@ que exigió la revocación de la legislación chauvinista, racista, dura-contra-inmigrantes en Arizona unos años atrás.

En las comunidades chican@s, la inmigración es un problema extremadamente decisivo. Las pólizas chauvinistas de Obama han deshecho familias, el maltrato de los trabajadores migrantes en el campo laboral se ha hecho demasiado frecuente, y en general, las comunidades chicanas sin servicio ni recursos continúan creando iniqui-

dades y pobreza. El hecho de que Arizona estaba tratando de pasar—y eventualmente pasó—leyes anti-inmigratorias, fue la última gota que llenó la copa, lo cual movilizó a la comunidad chicana. De igual manera, la opresión nacional ha causado estragos en la comunidad Nuevos Africanos (New Afrikan o NA), siendo dicha comunidad la cara de la inequidad y la injusticia en los Estados Unidos. Los NA, particularmente los jóvenes, están cansados del maltrato. El movimiento BLM, aunque surgió como resultado de la brutalidad policiaca, personaliza el rencor y la angustia de la nación oprimida de NA ante la marginalización y represión que han sufrido por años.

Debemos tomar ventaja de movimientos como estos ya que demuestran la frustración de las personas oprimidas con el sistema, como también su disposición a comprometerse y cambiarlo.

Una implicación clave que surge de esto es la recurrencia de las naciones oprimidas a querer superar la opresión nacional. ¿Competirán las naciones oprimidas en los EE UU por su liberación o se conformarán con una reforma, y por extensión, una asimilación e integración parcial? Los medios convencionales proveen cobertura de estos eventos para controlar un grupo que de otra manera sería una amenaza a su situación vigente (status quo). Por lo tanto, actúan como supervisores en vez de reporteros objetivos con el propósito de formar una opinión pública y debilitar la idea de una revolución organizada. Esto tiene consecuencias serias para el movimiento de liberación nacional en los Estados Unidos en conjunto. Por eso es que el movimiento BLM es tan crítico, porque no podemos permitir el mismo resultado que ocurrió al final de la era radial en el año 1960.

Conclusión

En pocas palabras, el impacto de la opresión nacional en las semi-colonias internas y naciones oprimidas de los Estados Unidos ha comenzado a empujar hacia adelante la cuestión nacional. Hemos comenzado a ver una realización emergente entre las naciones oprimidas de que la sociedad imperialista en los EE UU esta cundida de inequidades e injusticias. Solo el nacionalismo revolucionario puede nutrir y ayudar a crecer la semilla de la conciencia. Y si nuestra meta es la liberación de las naciones oprimidas dentro de los Estados Unidos, entonces debemos de formar nuestra conciencia nacional como preparación. Los movimientos como el de BLM ilustran el potencial y el activismo que está vivo dentro de las naciones oprimidas. La responsabilidad cae sobre nosotros quienes debemos de capitalizarlo. ★

¿Quieres leer más en español?

Tenemos algunos libros y revistas revolucionarios. Escribenos para pedir los. En cambio por la literatura gratuita pedimos que nos mandes algo de trabajo. Escribenos 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. By translating into Spanish, you can help ULK reach out to our imprisoned compañer@s.

Write in to put in work! ¡En Lucha!