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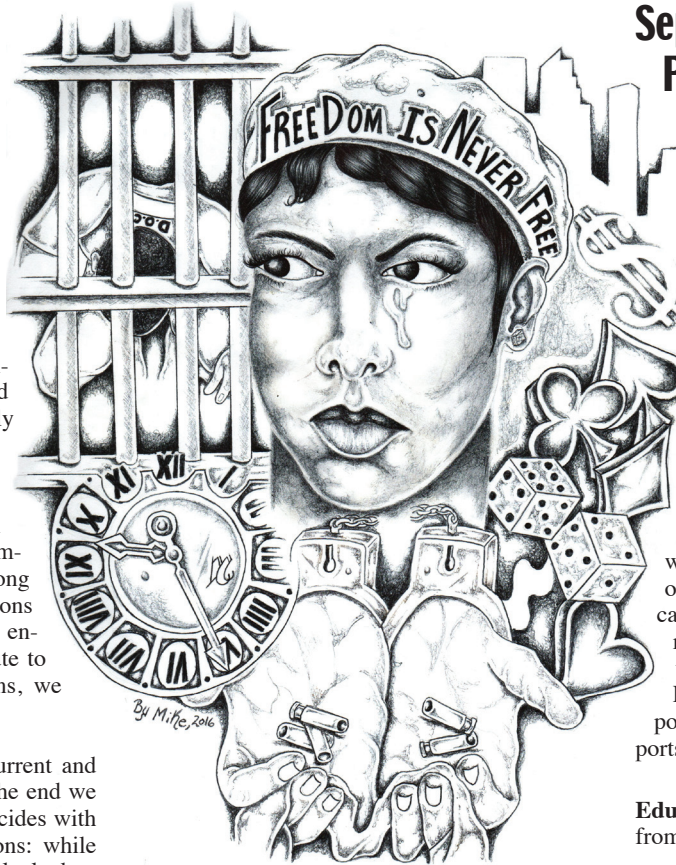
## Political Activism in Prisons for Wimmin

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)  
October 2016

In this issue of *Under Lock & Key* MIM(Prisons) set out to report on revolutionary organizing in wimmin's prisons in the United States.(1) Self-determination for the internal semi-colonies won't be won by males alone, and yet our subscriber list is overwhelmingly male. As a prison organizing group, we wanted to look at what is our role in resolving contradictions along gender lines, in our struggle toward national liberation and an end to Amerikkkan imperialism. The lumpen class has a strong training in male chauvinism, and prisons are an even more extremely masculine environment. If we are going to contribute to the resolution of gender contradictions, we need to consciously put effort into it.

We solicited articles from many current and former prisoners on this topic, but in the end we received very little response. This coincides with our overall reach into wimmin's prisons: while about 7% of the population in prison is locked up in wimmin's prisons, we do not have close to 7% of our subscribers located in these institutions. In this article we will explore the current state of imprisonment of females and some potential reasons for our limited reach and lower political involvement in institutions for wimmin.

MIM(Prisons) has long talked about gender oppression faced by prisoners in the United States. Gender is distinct from class and nation, and located within leisure time activities. Usually gender oppression is something suffered by biological females. But in prison, where the vast majority of the population is male, we still see significant gender oppression. When male prisoners are sexually assaulted by guards this is gender oppression because it's based in "leisure" time. But there are other aspects of this gender oppression, including the Amerikan legacy of lynching New Afrikan men for supposedly raping white wimmin, which is an example of white females having gender power over New Afrikan males. So it's not so straightforward as just looking at biology to determine who is gender oppressed. And as on the streets, gender interacts with nation to complicate the situation in prisons.(Write in for more analysis on this topic, from past issues of *ULK*.)



Females make up 18.4% of all people under supervision of the adult correctional system (prison, jail and probation).(2) They are 6.7% of federal prisoners(3) and 7.2% of state prisoners.(2) The higher percentage of females in jails and on probation reflects the lesser severity and shorter sentences compared to males. Because our reach is mainly in prisons, that is what we will focus on here.

Many have commented on the dramatically increasing female prison population in the United States, especially as the recent growth rate was so much higher than the rate for males. Between 1995 and 2005 the number of male prisoners grew 34% while the number of female prisoners grew 57%.(4) Overall, females went from 11% of all arrests in 1970 to 26% in 2014.(5) However, the U.S. prison population peaked in 2009 and

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## September 9: Prisoner-on-Prisoner Hostilities Cease 4 the Day in CA

by a California prisoner  
September 2016

September 9, 2016 was the fifth annual Day of Peace and Solidarity, a United Struggle from Within solidarity demonstration in prisons across the United States. On this anniversary of the Attica uprising people came together to draw attention to abuse of prisoners across the country while building peace and unity. This demonstration was initiated in 2012 by an organization participating in United Struggle for Peace in Prisons (UFPP) and has been taken up as an annual UFPP event, with people committing to participate in prisons across the country. Actions include education, exercise, fasting, work stoppages, and more. Here we have some initial reports from this day from comrades at High Desert State Prison in California, and there are more reports on page 8. We will put any additional reports in the next issue of *ULK*.

**Education: Building the Movement**  
from E6X.20, August 2016

First I would like to thank the comrades willing to study and struggle with Abolitionists From Within (AFW) here on C-yard, for having the heart to step out and shake hands with the different ethnic groups and put an end to the hostilities with peace on their tongue during Black August. Our study group has been growing throughout the cells here at High Desert C-yard, despite many setbacks of harassment from the pigs here and there. As I continue to share literature with the comrades and this year's study group, I introduce them to MIM(Prisons) and United Struggle from Within (USW). I remind every comrade that everyone's struggles are different (state of mind). If you know what the problem is our job as comrades is to help come up with solutions to combat the problem for our comrades. But in order to do anything to advance the struggle we must be organized in order to help one another, we must set tribalism to the side! And set aside all of our differences as well as our past beef and come together collectively in an effort to accomplish our goals: Peace, Unity and Growth among the oppressed masses.

AFW is back on the move for the second year here at High Desert State Prison (HDSP), bring-

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## What is *Under Lock & Key*?

*Under Lock & Key* (ULK) is the voice of the anti-imperialist movement within prisons in the United States. 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](http://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](mailto: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.

...Continued from page 1

### ...Activism

has been dropping slowly since then. The total change between 2004 and 2014 was a 1% drop in prison population. Over that same period the male prison population dropped 1.2% while the female prison population increased 1.4%. Since 2004 the number of females in prison has bounced up and down every few years with a peak in 2008, a drop from 2008-2012 and then an increase in 2013 and 2014. The dramatic increases in incarcerated females prior to 2004 seem to have leveled off, and there are no clear trends since 2004.(2)

What we can conclude from the numbers above is that the imprisonment rate for females is growing faster than the rate for males, but the growth is relatively slow in recent years and the overall number of females in prison is so much smaller than the number of males that it would take many many years of significant growth to get close to equal incarceration rates between males and females. It is still true that when we talk about prisons in the United States we are overwhelmingly talking about prisons for men.

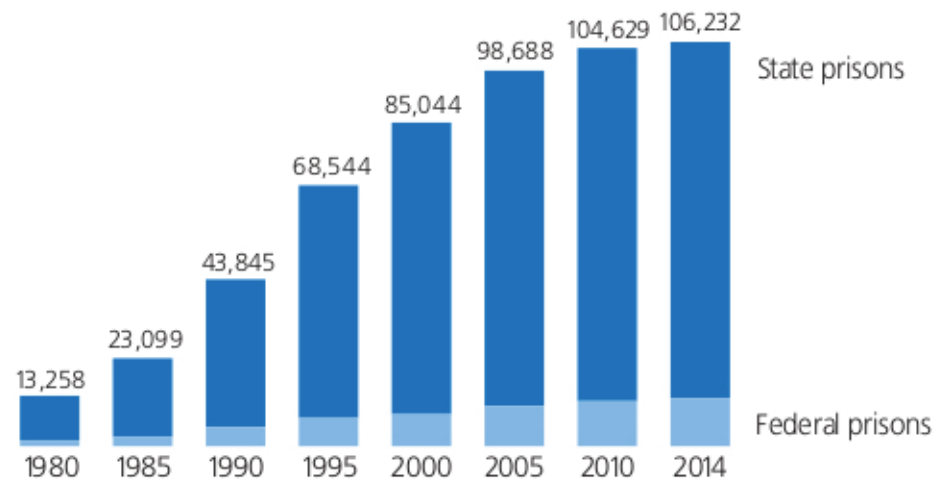
New Afrikans and Chicanas are disproportionately locked up compared to white females (twice the rate for New Afrikans and 1.2 times for Chicanas). But these statistics mean that a much larger proportion of people in female prisons are white than in the male prisons which locks up New Afrikans at almost 6 times the rate of white males and Chicanos at more than twice the rate of whites.(6) And in female prisons the disparity has been decreasing in recent years with incarceration of white females increasing at a faster pace than other nationalities.

Below we examine two possible explanations for MIM(Prisons)'s limited reach into facilities for wimmin. 1. We are not doing a good job addressing issues that are important to this population and so they're just not interested in working with us. 2. Females in prison are less political than males in prison. If the former is true, we hope that this *ULK* will inspire readers to write to us and tell us what we're missing. We do, however, see some solid evidence that the explanation is the lack of political interest among female prisoners.

We need to consider what might cause female prisoners to be less interested in our work than their male counterparts. Those who do write to us often comment on the complete lack of interest among their fellow prisoners. And while we hear this plenty from men's institutions, we also hear many more stories from the men's prisons about activism and interest. In addition, some of the wimmin who write to us are transgender and held in male institutions, with this experience contributing greatly to their political awareness.

Based on our experience and what evidence we can find from studies of prisoners, we believe that wimmin are less likely to be locked up long term, less likely to be put in solitary confinement, more likely to have family waiting for them on the outside, and less likely to have been active members of a lumpen organization prior to or during their term. These are mostly conditions of

## Number of Women in State and Federal Prisons, 1980-2014



Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics *Prisoners Series*; Bureau of Justice Statistics *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear Series*; Hester, T. (1987). *Correctional Populations in the United States, 1985*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

wimmin in general in the United States, and so reasonable assumptions to make. We are by no means suggesting that imprisonment of females in this country is free of abuse or anything other than a product of a system built for social control. But females who are swept up in the net of widespread incarceration are often not the primary targets of the system. The stats on nationality make this clear.

One might argue that gender oppression in wimmin's facilities is scaring people locked up there into unwillingness to reach out to MIM(Prisons). However, we see that increased repression in men's prisons generally results in increased political interest. We get many letters describing threats resulting from political activism or even just education leading people to greater interest in men's facilities. And historically, on a global scale, greater oppression has led to greater resistance, by nation, class and gender.

Overall we think the lower percentage of people in wimmin's facilities reaching out and getting involved with MIM(Prisons) validates our theory about what leads prisoners to becoming politicized. Significant factors include: solitary confinement, lumpen organization involvement, significant repression, censorship and conditions of abuse. Essentially, repression breeds resistance (as long as the repression isn't so extreme that prisoners face total censorship, or health conditions so bad that they are unable to function). We regularly hear that widespread access to TV and other privileges really does buy prisoners out of political interest and activism. This is not a surprise in a country of wealth and privilege where the vast majority of the population enjoys petty bourgeois lifestyles.

Further supporting this theory is our anecdotal experience that trans wimmin are interested and active behind bars. We know they face significant

repression distinct from the general prison population. So it is not surprising that trans prisoners are driven to political awareness and activism.

### Unique Challenges in Wimmin's Prisons

While material conditions, as analyzed above, play a role in the appeal of proletarian-led communist revolution to any population, we also need to look at our own attempts, or lack of, to organize with this population. MIM(Prisons) has not made a concerted effort to connect the struggle for national self-determination with struggles in wimmin's prisons. With this *ULK* we hope to spark that conversation.

With that said, we need to look at what unique challenges are faced by people locked up in facilities for wimmin. This will help determine if we are not addressing the issues that are important to these prisoners.

The battle to maintain or regain custody of children is one issue more prevalent in facilities for female prisoners. In 2006 (and other studies suggest this number is pretty constant in recent years), more than 65% of females in state prisons and 55% of males in state prisons had children under 18 years of age. 64% of these mothers lived with their children before prison, compared to 44% of fathers.(7) While this is a pretty big difference, the overall magnitude of the impact of imprisonment isn't close: there are so many more fathers in prison than mothers in prison. One possibility is that mothers who fear losing custody will do anything they can to keep clean and get out quickly, and this focuses them more on doing their time quietly than fighting abuse.

Sexual assault is another potential issue that may affect female prisoners more than males. In

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## An Invaluable Resource?

by a Colorado prisoner  
September 2016

Few things are more dangerous and detrimental to a revolutionary movement than over- and underestimation, in particular underestimation. Battles have been lost, tides and balances of struggles have ebbed and flowed, and slide from one side to the other. And all because of this simple mistake. Whenever we underestimate someone, group, or thing, we commit this mistake of relegating that person, group, or thing to unimportance. Or we ignore it or them as being trivial. This is something no revolutionary can ever afford to do. Especially those in the anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist movements.

Unfortunately, our movements, as so many others, can be plagued by machismo, a particular form of male chauvinism. In revolutionary circles this happens and wimmin are undervalued and most often underestimated. Wimmin are a force without equal in any movement. In the fight against capitalist and imperialist governments wimmin are an indispensable resource. A clear example of their worth can be found in recent Cuban history, the 26th of July movement.

Everyone knows of Fidel, Raúl, Frank País and Abel Santamaría. But their fame and successes would have been unattainable save for the revolucionarias, wimmin revolutionaries. While there were many wimmin later in the movement, there were two in key roles at the beginning: Haydée Santamaría Cuadrado and Melba Hernández Rodríguez de Rey. These two stood out as invaluable and the personifications of wimmin to a revolutionary movement. Together they were key to printing and distributing "History Will Absolve

Me," the famous Castro speech. They also took up arms during the attack on the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba. Although, triumph eluded them during the assault, their efforts spread the movement from the eastern provinces throughout all Cuba. Haydée and Melba were both imprisoned after the assault. But their efforts never stopped and they even became more active in overthrowing the U.S.-backed Batista regime. Their imprisonment, isolation, and cruelty suffered at the hands of a proxy of U.S. imperialism only served to strengthen their resolve and commitment. As the movement spread, so did support which finished in the triumph of the revolution in 1959. Without them the revolution may never have been achieved.

Wimmin are often undervalued, underestimated and ignored. Let us not commit such mistakes. While the capitalists and imperialists do, let us recognize this fault and exploit it, using their fallacy for our advantage to progress the movement. We need our wimmin to be involved because they are the life blood of any movement and an invaluable resource. As revolutionaries and persons, wimmin are integral to the success of our movement.

Let us take note of this history lesson and put it to good use. We need wimmin, prisoners and captives, to exceed the examples of Haydée and Melba, leading other compañeras from behind the walls as they did. Directing others in constructive methods, organizing study groups and educating other wimmin about the present struggle, as well as how to champion it. Their efforts will give breath to our movement and once it has spread, triumph will shortly follow.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This writer gives a good historical example of wimmin who have overcome barriers of machismo to make signifi-

cant contributions to the liberation of their nation. There are innumerable examples like this one that we can point to for anyone who is hung up on their sexism so much that they think only "men" can liberate the oppressed nations.

This author is advocating for a necessary first step: first, we must accept that anyone is perfectly capable of being a strong theorist, warrior, contributor, to the national struggles. We don't see many people writing in telling us wimmin are too weak or otherwise should be excluded from revolutionary organizing, so while this sexist indoctrination will ultimately affect how we approach organizing, at least on a conscious level we might be already doing good on step 1. So what's next?

If we continue to see wimmin as a resource, even for revolutionary aims, we are not going to get very far in resolving the gender contradictions that plague our struggle for unity and liberation. Rather than asking ourselves how can we mine this resource, we need to ask "what are the contradictions inhibiting this growth of our movement?" and "what can we do to help resolve these contradictions?" A study of dialectical materialism, including Mao's essay "On Contradiction" is imperative for this discussion.

Similarly, we can't fetishize organizing of any subgroup in our movement, lest we lose direction for the sake of getting some wimmin on board. That's the mistake made by people who believe *who* is saying it is more important than *what* is being said. It's the same trap that got Obama elected as a Black person, and Hilary campaigning on the platform of being a female. Even if the tokenization is of an oppressed group (queer/trans people of color appear to be the token of the day), identity politics is always dangerous and an antithesis to materialism. ★

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### ...Activism

a PREA survey of former prisoners from 2008, 10.5% of females reported prisoner-on-prisoner sexual assaults compared to 2.7% of males. Staff-on-prisoner sexual assault was also more commonly reported by females (2.5%) compared to males (1.1%).<sup>(8)</sup> We are skeptical of these numbers, especially since the taboo against reporting sexual assault is even greater for males and so it's hard to say if these statistics represent a meaningful difference between the experiences in wimmin's and men's prisons. Even if it does, we wouldn't expect this abuse to lead females away from political activism. But it is perhaps an issue we need to expose more often to address the large portion of wimmin who are facing this abuse.

### The Path Forward

It is important to connect our political line with our strategy and tactics, and engage in the scientific process of developing that line as we learn from our practice. While in this article we have focused on facilities for wimmin and organizing of females behind bars, this is a bigger question of how we mobilize females on the streets to join our revolutionary struggle. We

are fighting against class, nation and gender oppression on a global scale, and this battle requires uniting all who can be united. Around the world we have examples of wimmin joining struggles for national liberation, taking up leadership in communist organizations, and historically in leadership positions in Communist China. While we see the national liberation struggle as principal at this point in history, we can not neglect the gender contradiction, both in the general fight against imperialism and in our own political practice. ★

#### Notes:

1. The sex binary of males and females is a false social construct. But for the ease of writing about facilities designed to house people the state defines as female, as compared to facilities designed to house people the state defines as male, we have resorted to using binary gendered language in this article. For more information read the essay "Attacking the Myth of Binary Biology: MIM(Prisons) Eliminates Gendered Language", from ULK 47, December 2015.
2. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Table of Estimated number and rate of persons supervised by U.S. adult correctional systems, by sex and jurisdiction, 2013 and 2014
3. U.S. Federal Bureau of Prisons report, July 2016.
4. Harrison, Paige M. & Allen J. Beck, PhD, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2005 (Washington DC: US Department of Justice, Nov. 2006), p. 4.
5. U.S. Jails fail to meet needs of growing population of women, The Intercept, August 17, 2016.
6. Table 10 from <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p14.pdf>
7. Facts below all from: Women in Prison Project, Correctional Association of New York, 2090 Adam Clayton Powell Blvd., Suite 200 New York, NY 10027
8. PREA resource center report, Sexual Victimization Reported by Former State Prisoners in 2008.



## Call for Unity with LGBTQ Prisoners

by Venomed 1 of United Struggle from Within  
June 2016

Queen D.I.V.A here, I want to speak on why LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/transsexual, Queer) comrades are treated like shit. This is my second bid and I've seen a lot of love towards my community but to be totally honest I've seen more dislike and hate towards my community.

Comrades will rather be respectful to a kkkorektions officer than a homosexual, why? Comrades will rather say good morning with a smile on their faces to a kkkorektions officer, why? Don't you guys know these pigs are the ones throwing your mail away and then telling you that you didn't get any, that they will beat your ass and say you assaulted them and give you a new bid, and that they will deny your visit after your family just drove 7 hours to see you?

What have LGBTQ comrades done to you? Nothing. We were born different, that's it! What if your own flesh and blood son came to you one day and confessed that he's gay? Would you disown him? Would you treat him like you treat imprisoned gays, or would you put your ego, pride

and fear to the side and embrace him?

We are all in this struggle together, let us say "screw what people think." A "unit" is something that works together. We're behind these walls and fences together so why can't we stand together? Stop disrespecting us and you'll see we're not your enemies.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This comrade eloquently pushes the United Front for Peace in Prisons principle of **Unity** around the question of sexual orientation and gender identity, elements of the strand of oppression of gender. We need to look beyond petty differences, and beyond socialized prejudices around gender. Our movement cannot afford to be divided along these lines. Instead we need to judge people by their actions and their political line. Those who side with the pigs, who feed them information, and who help them by provoking fights and doing their bidding: those people are our enemies. People who stand up against the criminal injustice system are our friends. And those who don't stand up but refuse to work with the pigs are our friends in need of a little educating and leadership so that they too will join the struggle. ★

## Bringing in Female Pen Pals

by a Michigan prisoner  
September 2016

There are many female soldiers out there who would love to join the revolution. And there are many ways in which we can bring these sisters into the revolution. One way is via the pen pal process. Many male prisoners have prison pen pals who they can write, educate and/or bring into the fight. The same can also be done with female pen pals who are not incarcerated. They can also sign up the sisters they know or write for a subscription of *ULK*.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This comrade offers a fine suggest that can apply regardless of gender. Any pen pal who might be interested in the struggle against imperialism and oppression should be cultivated on that level. We always need more help from supporters on the outside, so if your pen pals need an org to hook up with they can seek out MIM(Prisons) via our contact info on page 1.

We know many of our subscribers already follow this comrades's suggestion by sharing what they learn from *ULK* with their people on the

*Continued on page 8...*

## Why Won't Wimmin Fight for their Rights?

by a Colorado prisoner  
July 2016

I see MIM is going to do a wimmin's issue. I really don't know what can get women interested and have some courage to do anything other than complain. Women seem to think if they smile, be happy, flip their hair and talk with a baby voice it will get them things. Even though we keep getting things taken from us, women will not speak up and stand up.

I read in *Prison Action News* (by ABC) about a work stoppage they are trying to encourage in September 2016. But all the responses I get from women is they will not participate, they are scared of being locked down, retaliation, blah, blah, blah.

Here is what I am currently going through with the grievance process concerning outdoor yard time: Lieutenant Gayle Ross posted a Posted Operational Rule (POR) changing small yard time. First of all, it was not signed until 1 June 2016, but supposedly went into effect a month before posting on 1 May 2016. PORs must give prisoners a two week notice before a change goes into effect.

Female prisoners are no longer allowed to go out to the small yard at the same time as dog program participants, with/without their dogs, for fear that we may get hurt. Even though dog program participants and their dogs are not separated in the units with non-dog program prisoners. Apparently it's only a safety/security issue for use of the small yard.

Next, Lt. Gayle Ross has spread her safety/security issue to other areas. Apparently wimmin prisoners are too fragile to go outside when it is wet out, puddles on the ground or snow on the ground. Supposedly we are childish and will jump in puddles, and too fragile so we might fall. This reasoning has allowed us to be denied small yard for entire seasons: fall heading into winter, winter, and most of spring, which by definition is rainy. Even though recreation can clear off puddles by sweeping off the water, the recreation staff lets the water sit until it dries naturally, of course closing the small yard for days. Apparently wimmin are dangerous enough to imprison but too fragile to go outside.

There are three steps to our grievance process. I have grieved all the way to a step three, therefore exhausting the grievance process. I am the only one grieving. Women complain, complain, complain but do nothing else. So I am preparing a 1983 [lawsuit].

I have used the grievance petition from MIM(Prisons). None of my three grievances were provided timely responses according to Colorado's AR 850-04 time limit for Step 1, 2 and 3 grievances. I sent this petition to Rick Raemisch, executive director of Colorado Department of Corrections, the United States Department of Justice and the Office of Inspector General. The United States Department of Justice basically said they only considered class action cases. Due to the letter to Rick Raemisch, Captain Bowers met with me and Lt. Gayle Ross about the issue. The situation has not changed for the better.

Now more gym time and small yard time has been taken away. If we don't attend a specific aerobic program called *Insanity/cize* (which is a videotape), we cannot use the rest of the gym or small yard. We cannot use the other exercise equipment or do our own workout program. We must only workout to the DVD (unless we are ADA). Women are complaining but they are doing nothing else.

I am still working on my case with the help of reading material like *Battling the Administration* by David Meister and *Prisoners' Self-Help Litigation Manual* by Daniel Manville, that I bought from Prison Legal News.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This comrade raises some important questions about how females are taught to act in order to get ahead in patriarchal society. The idea that flipping hair, smiling and talking with a baby voice will get stuff for wimmin has been reinforced with very real financial and social incentives based on looks and gendered behavior. While society teaches males that being aggressive and self-sufficient is sexy and also the right way to get ahead at work, that same system teaches females that aggressiveness is unattractive and it's best to be weak and dependent on a man.

There are many strong wimmin standing up for their rights and the rights of others, like this comrade. And we need to train other wimmin that being strong and self-sufficient is the only way to really get ahead and really win battles. Many men in prison also sit around complaining without doing anything, but it is leaders like this writer who, over time, can develop other activists by setting an example of strength and resolve in practice, combined with a correct political line. ★



...Continued from page 1

## ...Sept 9

ing together a cohesive front in reflecting, fasting and uniting to honor those nameless and faceless men of Black August and Attica (1971) by coming together in solidarity. This year we put the issues of today on the table:

1. Who is your neighbor? Always remember racism is an idea that is the product of imperialism. And AFW, USW and MIM(Prisons) are all in agreement with anti-imperialism!
2. What will help us improve our material condition? First we must start off with our neighbor, each one teach one no matter the color.
3. Understand the prison system. The system operates through criminal justice institutions, but functions more like a caste system than a system of crime control.

Comrades, wake up! Understand the racial caste system; they don't require racial hostility or overt bigotry to thrive, they need only racial

indifference. Wake up young Afrikan! Mass incarceration in the U.S. is a comprehensive and well-disguised system of racialized social system. Comrades, help me help us organize and advance our struggle forward for peace throughout C-yard.

### Solidarity

from E6X.20, September 2016

Abolitionists From Within is back on the move on this September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity with all Freedom Fighters and to commemorate and never forget about the Attica uprising. To my comrades around the country who took a stand today, I stand in solidarity with you. And remember the fallen comrades and the spirits that live on.

This is the AFW's second year demonstration at High Desert (HDSP). Last year I was on D-yard as I know my comrades are on the move. Stop the madness, don't forget who the real enemy is. Here on C-yard the cells are growing. I would like to thank all the comrades for participating, and the study group comrades who are fasting with us today in my unit, and my Chicano comrades who had the courage to share with me the *Under Lock & Key* I pass out. We reread articles, talk about it in great detail, clarify with my comrades and spread enlightenment about the history of the Attica uprising and the history of the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity, and remembrance of the fallen comrades. As each comrade in our unit continues to struggle and agree on the best solutions in attacking our issues that are inflicting us today, I encourage each cell to do the same in their unit.

Here on C-yard was nothing but peace today in solidarity with the movement and with the Attica freedom fighters. Thanks to MIM(Prisons), USW, United Front for Peace in Prisons, Agreement to End Hostilities and all my comrades who took a stand today.

We can only change our conditions for the better by struggling together.

### Unity

from J-DOG II LX, September 2016

September 9 will never be an ordinary day for me again. When I was approached with this novel idea of showing solidarity for this 24-hour period I jumped at the idea. Why? Because day in and day out I deal with prison politics, but it's not the politics that bring us better prison treatment, it's politics that keep us at odds with each other over petty b@#s#@! Brothers like George Jackson gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we could have a lot of the privileges we have now. I'm sure the brotha would be very disappointed at how s#!% is now. We've seriously forgotten who the real enemy is, and until we start showing more unity among ourselves this machine that holds us as modern-day slaves will continue to win.

Whether we want to believe it or not we are all brothers in the struggle. From Soledad to Attica, High Desert to Sing-Sing, and all in between. We are all dealing with the same systematic incarceration. So this September 9 I wanted to be

an example of what Unity could bring. I refrained from any yard politic and refused to entertain any backbiting on another brother. I did not sell or use any drug, nor did I give any to my brothers. Healthy mind, healthy body. Although I don't like doing burpees I joined my brothas in a 45-minute test of endurance. For that 45 minutes we were as one. One unit pushing each other to keep going, can't stop, won't stop, our cadence rang loud: Unity! I took the time to stop and ask my brother "how are we today," "can I help you with anything?" These things probably went unnoticed to the yard masses, but I didn't do it for recognition. I did it because strength, kindness, and comradery is infectious. If I infected one brother I've accomplished what I believed could be done.

Now that I've been enlightened to what brothas have been doing for years on September 9, I must continue to push, pull, stride, for unity. I too have lost sight of the power of unity and it feels good to care about something or someone other than yourself. So thank you to my little brother in this struggle for infecting me with this knowledge, and to all my brothers in this struggle from Cali to NY and all in between. From the words of the late great Tupac "Keep ya head up." If we make it through the night, tomorrow's a brighter day.

### Sacrifice

from DM dot LOC, September 2016

In from the cold, it feels great to be embraced by enlightened kinsmen from the AFW. Solidarity Day (September 9) is fast upon us. Some type of sacrifice is needed. Myself I pledge to fast and refrain from cursing and illogical rhetoric. I hope all comrades who participate can stay steadfast and maintain their discipline. ★

## 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

#### ES

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.

## 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!

## Transferred for Suspicion of Organizing

by BRLP-Prison Chapter  
September 2016

After an unfortunate series of group fights between prisoners from rival lumpen organizations during the month of Black August, and a subsequent lockdown at the Buckingham Correctional Center on August 25, two Institutional Gang Investigators (IGIs) descended upon my cell and subjected me to an intense 30-minute interrogation concerning confidential information they received that I was allegedly the mastermind behind a planned September 9 workstrike and was attempting to organize a Black Panther Party - Prison Chapter. They even accused me of being a member of a street gang based on a letter I wrote nearly seven years ago.

When the investigators realized that the interrogation was bearing no fruit and that I was immune to their intimidation tactics, I was subjected to further interrogation the following day by L. Leatherwood, the Chief Investigator for the VA DOC, and a urine test because of a strong "suspicion" that I was using drugs. I was not at all surprised when the urine test came back negative because I have been clean for a decade and am a staunch advocate against illicit drug use, especially among youth.

The interrogation of a select few other so-called "problem" inmates continued throughout the weekend, and whatever "evidence" or infor-

mation the investigators gained or manufactured, led to my being transferred to Sussex 2 State Prison, which is an oppressive, super-max type prison where we are locked down in our cells for most of the day. Controlled movement and the degradation of those of us confined here is the order of the day. Unlike Buckingham, which is a hotbed of political activity, there is virtually no organizing here. No study groups, no agitation, no resistance. Most have never heard of the September 9 protests. The old axiom "oppression breeds resistance" has not taken hold of the prisoners' minds here.

Though I was shipped off to this camp for political reasons, repression and retaliation is often a sign that our agitation is truly effective. I am not in a position to report on the degree to which prisoners at Buckingham participated in the September 9 protests, but here at Sussex 2 State Prison there was zero participation. But we must continue to fight and struggle knowing that one day, when the conditions are right, the flicker will turn into a flame. All power to the people and Panther power to the Black Riders Liberation Party!★



## On Prisons & Prisoners

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

All U.S. citizens are criminals – accomplices and accessories to the crimes of U.S. oppression globally until the day U.S. imperialism is overcome. All U.S. citizens should start from the point of view that they are reforming criminals.

MIM(Prisons) does not advocate that all prisoners go free today; we have a more effective program for fighting crime as was demonstrated in China prior to the restoration of capitalism there in 1976. We say that all prisoners are political prisoners because under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, all imprisonment is substantively political. It is our responsibility to exert revolutionary leadership and conduct political agitation and organization among prisoners – whose material conditions make them an overwhelmingly revolutionary group. Some prisoners should and will work on self-criticism under a future dictatorship of the proletariat in those cases in which prisoners really did do something wrong by proletarian standards.

## Observing Sept 9 in Michigan

by a Michigan prisoner  
September 2016

On the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity, I had a fast and did a lot of political study about the roots of the New Afrikan Independence Movement by Comrade Chokwe Lumumba, Chair of the New Afrikan People's Organization. I also have been studying *ULK, Fundamental Political Line of MIM(Prisons)*, and going over the Day of Peace and Solidarity study pack to keep me conscious of the ongoing war against imperialism and capitalism and the struggle that I'm going through with the prison system.

Ever since 9am we have been on a lockdown. The comrades in Level II in Kinross have done a protest because of the living conditions, the food, and no fans and heat, and this actually started on September 9. Prisoners walked out of their job assignments, so the unsecured Level I prisoners who work in the kitchen served the Level II prisoners brown bag meals. They have Level I and II prisoners on lockdown, but they let us go to the dayrooms, but we can't use the telephones or J-Pay machines. It's truly a surprise to me that they are starting to stand up and fight for their rights instead of fighting against each other.

We need collective solidarity and unity against the injustice of Michigan DOC corruption, because this prison system is corrupted to its very core. This is why we must educate ourselves and get with prisoners' organization in this struggle. We all know and understand that this prison system must be dismantled and abolished!★

...Continued from page 8

## ...Pen Pals

streets. If you have reason to believe your pen pal might be interested in anti-imperialist politics, send an article cut out of the newsletter to see how they react. If they are interested you can suggest they check out our website and you can start raising political questions in your letters. This could help build a solid base of political support on the streets for when you're released. But it's important to always be cautious, and not expose your political views and organizing work to folks who might (even if just accidentally) expose you to the cops.

To be clear, we don't have any evidence that overall males are at a higher level of political consciousness than females. At least historical political movements within U.S. borders don't suggest this is the case, but it is possible the dramatic recent imprisonment rate is driving a politicization of males in a way never before seen in this country. Regardless, we need to get the word out to everyone who might be interested in anti-imperialism, and if our political line is correct the oppressed will see this and get involved.

We'd like to hear from others about successes or failures you have had bringing up politics with folks in letters to the streets. Is this a tactic that we can build on in a more intentional way?★



# Divisions and Struggle in California Prisons

by MIM(Prisons)  
September 2016

Prisons in California have become one of the most active and organized areas of resistance behind bars in the United States. With the second largest prison population in the country, and some of the biggest long-term isolation units, this is perhaps not surprising. Out of this repression and resistance has come some strong organizing efforts over the past few years. And this has also raised contradictions that need to be resolved to advance the struggle. We use this issue of *ULK* to highlight the contradictions and challenge our comrades in California to think broadly about resolutions.

While SHU/Ad-Seg prisoners are about 6% of the California prison population, they were 35% of our readers according to our reader survey conducted a couple years ago. Special Needs Yards (SNY) are reported to be around 30% of the total population, but were about 40% of our reader responders. So while SHU/Ad-Seg are very over-represented, SNY also seems to be slightly over-represented among our readers. There is a big division between SHU/GP and SNY prisoners with distrust and anger on both sides. But comrades from both sides continue to do solid organizing work. One of the significant developments in Cali is the Agreement to End Hostilities (AEH), a United Front that has made important strides forward but is also plagued by these divisions.

It is unlikely anything we do or say will worsen the division between SHU/GP and SNY. Rather than fan the flames, we are airing these grievances as a step towards understanding and eventual reconciliation. We also want to challenge both sides. The revolutionary, anti-imperialist, pro-people forces are tiny in all sectors. Some argue that SNY is in a better position to unite, while others say only GP has potential. So we want to encourage a little friendly competition between the two sides to see who can do more. Practice has already demonstrated the leadership from SHU's ability to mobilize the masses for a progressive cause. But

progressive forces on that side must continue to move forward in order to consolidate those gains, or risk them being lost. At the same time SNY comrades claim they gained the freedom to unite and organize with whoever they want, and so they need to use that position to unite others who dropped out. To both sides we say: if you're only seeking a comfortable way to do your time you're not helping advance the struggle and the revolution has no place for you.

We received a number of responses to the article in *ULK* 50, "Chican@ Power Book Tainted by AEH." One comrade in SNY wrote:

*"In my point of view it [the Agreement to End Hostilities] contradicts every aspect that they preach. Now everybody who died, who caught a life sentence for the struggle they believed in was all for nothing. Take a second and think about that. There are people who are in prison serving a life sentence for killing an individual who opposed his views and beliefs. Now they expect him to be the best of friends with these same people? How does that make sense?"*

*"Now you guys reading this might say 'He is only saying that because he's SNY.' Well, for 4 years I was active and I have seen both sides of the fence. Not everybody over here is a snitch. There is more unity here than there is on the mainline. You see raza from North and South united where it doesn't matter what part of the state you're from."*

Saying that the AEH is hypocritical based on the past goes against the United Front for Peace in Prisons (UFPP) principle of **Growth**. We must allow for growth and evolution of individuals and organizations if we want to see unity among the oppressed, because the old way didn't work. There are major contradictions between lumpen organizations (LOs) still, and between different housing units in California. But we see these as contradictions among the people. Which is why we stand behind the AEH, and think those old wounds can heal. It's been four years, and there's still a long way to go. But people are putting in the work, and in some locations we've seen real progress.

We understand the lack of trust that some have for those calling for the AEH in California. But we say to those people, the ones who truly want to end oppression as this comrade does, isn't the AEH a step towards what you want? Even if you don't trust certain individuals, the more we do to promote the spirit of the AEH, as well as the principles of the UFPP, the closer we get to replacing the old order with a new order based on unity of the oppressed.

This response comes from the comrade at Folsom (not SNY) who reported in *ULK* 50 on the progress of the AEH there, with Raza from north and south playing handball together on the same teams:

*"It's a challenge educating people here, attempting to share and explain the current situation and contradiction of ideology, morals, politricks and capital. These factions seem to be following a textbook on capitalism. Yes, we have*

*the AEH, which is a beautiful thing and can be used as a stepping stone for a more productive practice of commune. At the moment people are more concerned on exploiting the twisted habits of others and making their pockets fatter for self-interest. The 'chiefs' preach to confuse, saying that the ideology, morals and capital is framed around serve the people, united we are stronger and all that glitter. But i've not yet seen one cent invested in the people, books, education or basic needs. Too bizzy taxing the fellas for pickles out their store bags.*

*"Get your back straight my people, the AEH is being tainted by self-interest and is not being maximized to its full potential in a more revolutionary way. Serve the People."*

*"The great are only great because we are on our knees. If you don't have sycophantic attitudes towards the 'leader' and express your support they don't look great. Put some pressure, maybe then these individuals that abandoned the cause for self-interest can snap out of their pig ideology and step their game up and shape their minds and struggle towards national liberation. Resemble more a revolutionary internationalist and not the imperialist pigs that fucked us all in the first place, Tony Montana wanna-be mofu."*

*"I will continue to read, educate, practice and liberate regardless of the situation and this September 9 will be no different."*

A comrade in Corcoran (not SNY) is skeptical of the AEH, but echoes the refrain from many in SHU/GP that there can never be unity with SNY:

*"The AEH is a godsend to all the souljas who have been held captive in the concrete tombs for 10, 15, 20+ years. The AEH is the tool CDCR is going to try and use to 1) gain more funds to build more prisons, and 2) justify the need for indeterminate SHU sentences. The current shape/mindset of prison and prisoners is not what it was back in the days that the souljas remember it being. This is going to create problems. These newly released souljas are going to be dealing with 18, 19, 20 year olds sentenced to 50, 60, 100 years."*

*"The AEH is going to create old-school versus new-school. That about sums it up. There's more to it. Like say the both schools are getting along there's also a snake on the police side ready to cause dissension amongst the community. Bottom line, CDCR cannot afford for the AEH to work, so they will see that it doesn't and when it doesn't they'll try to capitalize off its failure."*

*"They are now selling e-tablets, but only for SNY yards. There's mp3 players only for SNYs. The list goes on. Even with the trades there on SNY yards, the GP level prisoners aren't being afforded an opportunity to utilize programs that would rehabilitate them and better their lives and chances of staying out of prison. The message is clear: if you level four prisoners want to better your life you got to go SNY."*

*"Oh, there won't ever be a united front between GPs and SNY. You're better off trying to get a united front between convicts and pigz. See how crazy that sounds?! While there are solid souljas on the SNY yard, who became tired of the twisted prison politics, They're far outnumbered by pieces of shit, ie. child molesters, rapists, snitches, cowards, people running from drug*

*Continued on next page...*

## On "Objective" Reporting

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

## Approaching Conflict More Scientifically

by a California prisoner  
July 2016

For our Agreement to End Hostilities we reach out to all colors, all genders, all ethnicities. In this struggle, if we can satisfy the interests of the other parties while meeting our own, that is best. Yet a blind following of fixed views of one's identity can undermine any assurance that either party will honor an agreement. It's hard, but we must learn to understand how to see our thoughts with thinking. Identity can prove more a liability than an asset if we drive with our eyes closed.

### Practical Strategies to Address Pitfalls

Pitfalls	Strategy
Ignorance of the political landscape	Map the political landscape
Clinging to a negative identity	Build a positive identity
Reliance on an exclusive decision making process	Design an inclusive decision making process
Treated like a political pawn	Protect yourself from being exploited

### Internationalism is Needed to End Hostility

We must liberate the oppressed from identity politics first. We may be unaware of the political landscape, which leaves us vulnerable to being exploited. A leader may impose a narrative on us, and create feelings of division between us and others. Second we may cling to a negative identity, defining who we are as against the other side and rejecting anything they propose. In an extreme situation, we lose all semblance of our own identity, identifying ourselves only in terms of opposition to the other side. Third, we may feel excluded from the decision-making process, further dividing us from others. Finally, we may feel like a pawn trapped within an unfair political system.

## Building Unity in CA SNY

by a California prisoner  
September 2016

I read some individuals voice their opinions regarding the SNY in unity for the Chicano liberation movement. I have stated before, I am not gang nor am I with gang. My decision to step away from GP was due to my differences in views and beliefs about gang against true revolutionary goals, of which were deemed "undisciplined," (uniting with all Raza North-South, seeing New Afrikans as revolutionary allies, etc.) and succumb to ostracism within a group claiming to be for the Raza.

As a true revolutionary I will not discriminate, isolate, or alienate anybody who is seeking education and displays interest to understand the tyranny of imperialism. Be GP or SNY, that is only

### Strategies to Address Conflict Don't Bargain Over Positions

Problem: Positional Bargaining, Which Game Should You Play? (SOFT) (HARD)		Solution: Change the Game – Negotiate on the Merits (PRINCIPLED)
Participant are friends, the goal is agreement	Participants are adversaries. The goal is victory	Participants are problem solvers
Make concessions to cultivate the relationship	Demand Concessions as a condition of the relationship	The goal is a wise outcome reached efficiently and amicably
Be soft on the people and the problem	Be hard on the problem and the people	Separate the people from the problem. Be soft on the people, hard on the problem
Trust others	Distrust others	Proceed independent of trust
Change your position easily	Dig in to your position Make threats	Focus on interests not positions
Make offers	Demand one-sided gains as the price of agreement	Explore interests. Avoid having a bottom line
Disclose your bottom line	Mislead as to your bottom line	Invent options for mutual gain
Accept one-sided losses to reach agreement	Try to win a contest of will	Develop multiple options to choose from Decide later
Search for the single answer; the one they will accept	Search for the single answer; the one you will accept	Insist on using objective criteria
Insist on agreement	Insist on your position	Try to reach a result based on standards independent of will
Yield to pressure	Apply pressure	Reason and be open to reasons; Yield to principle, no pressure

Currently at New Folsom, staff are creating divisions leading to dangerous situations. When they read letters agreeing to help us, they may withhold this mail, or give it to another prisoner whom they believe will help them carry out their own personal perverted agenda. These inmates are called snitches, liars or PSU/SHU collaborators who speak against human rights. These inmates are encouraged to write to our families, women and supporters with the intent to disconnect them from us. These actions create very dangerous situations, creating the desire to punish these men for working with the administration. These games are being played throughout the state of California, targeting prisoners who have taken conscious steps to resist being casualties of this low intensity psychological warfare. Warfare that is rarely seen or recognized by the everyday citizen. We must find ways to monitor our incoming and outgoing mail. If we ever want to truly stand for the UFPP principle of **Independence**, we must have resources *independent* of the enemy. ★

prison mentality of which I believe should never resurface in a post-revolution liberated Aztlán, this is the greater cause for the national liberation of Aztlán. That is where the true revolutionaries distinguish from gang. My true enemy is imperialism and its many systematic vehicles of oppression against the Chicano lumpen. Always keeping aware of infiltrators and spies working to suppress any resistance, including so-called allies who in truth operate on a subjective ideology of fascism.

In the SNY there are many comrades who have developed a higher political interest and awareness. A personal higher calling for servitude seems present in many for a better future for our next generations. Those who are still with gang are very present as well, but it is those who seek a higher learning and understand of this phantom

*Continued on page 23...*

*... Continued from previous page*

**...CA SNY**

*debts, etc."*

This last point is an important one that requires comment. Yes, prisoners are more likely to unite with pigz than they are with SNY because they are currently led by the criminally-minded. And it's hard to do serious money-making behind bars without working with some criminal pigz. This is a challenge and a contradiction we face trying to organize the First World lumpen. Not only are they criminal-minded, they can often make a fair amount from that crime, even some in prison are happy and prefer that over uniting New Afrika and Aztlán to fight imperialism. This is echoed by the Folsom comrade above.

All of these struggles in the California prisons remind us of how far we have to go, as humynity, to achieve a society where all people can live together in peace, in a society where no group of people has power over any other group. That long-term goal is communism. But to get there we will need to radically change our culture and the education people get from schools and society. Divisions are built into imperialism, people are pitted against each other based on class, nation, and gender generally and more specifically feuds are fostered by the imperialists to pit the oppressed against each other. This culture won't disappear overnight.

We learn from the revolutionary history of China that cultural revolutions will be needed after the oppressed take power, to re-educate everyone and build a truly revolutionary culture and society. It's a long road, and our comrades behind bars in California shouldn't be discouraged by divisions that have been created over many years of capitalist cultural indoctrination. Keep the big picture in mind and build for the revolutionary united front that serves the oppressed of the world. ★



## Our Readers Have Spoken: Prisoncensorship.info Must Live

by MIM(Prisons)  
August 2016

This article is to announce the short-term success of our recent campaign to keep our website alive. After proposing that our limited comrade time might be better spent on pushing forward our prisoner support work, we launched a campaign to engage our online readers. With minimal effort, we have received a substantive response indicating that we were incorrect to hypothesize that we could not mobilize our online readers to contribute to this project as our prison-based readers have from the beginning.

In just five months we've seen our volunteer base and collaborative work grow enough to convince us that web development is a good use of our limited comrade time. But as we pointed out in that article, regular contributions are much more useful than sporadic ones, so we must keep up this trend. We have gained at least one regular financial contributor, which more than covers the cost of keeping our website online. We encourage our other volunteers to stick to it.

Those watching our website may have noticed us taking down some requests for help as volunteers have stepped up. While not all have proven themselves yet, we have received responses to diverse needs. By offering up more specific tasks, we've inspired our readers into action, proving they are more than just web traffic statistics. This also proved that lack of focused leadership on our part was part of the problem.

It was not just online readers who responded to our call. One United Struggle from Within leader put forth a proposal to our annual congress to up the enrollment fees for our correspondence study groups and to only provide hard-to-find books to those who pay for them. Another USW comrade proposed that we remove people from the *ULK* mailing list faster to cut costs. We adopted new policies incorporating both proposals, which should help out on the postage side of things. One comrade even spoke of the impact the website had on em from prison, demonstrating that the website directly contributes to our prison-based work.

In addition to the new contributors we've gained in recent months, we've seen an increase in comradely projects putting out good material. This can help us directly by providing material for our newsletter and study groups. But it also helps the movement in general. Supporting MIM(Prisons) is a great way to contribute as we have a proven track record. But we need more projects than the Prison Ministry. So don't let the scope of our work limit you if you can contribute in bigger and better ways.

There is no doubt that setting up secure, reliable institutions on the internet is a needed task. While platforms owned by transnational corporations may have tactical use for promotion, with proper precautions in place, they cannot be our base of operations. Prisoncensorship.info has contributed in this regard and with your support we will continue to work to strengthen it as an independent institution of the oppressed. ★

## Special Literature Offers

(\$5 suggested donation unless noted otherwise)

### New in Spiral Bound

*Seize the Time* by Bobby Seale  
Arms & Empire (economics of WWI and WWII)  
Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Global Capitalism (MIM study pack)  
A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (\$7)

### New Stapled Zines

Remembering the Real Dragon, interview with George Jackson (\$3)  
American Leninism in the 1970s (\$3)  
Excerpt from Never Kneel Down, development and liberation in Eritrea (\$4)  
La Lucha Boricueña (\$3, in English)  
Excerpt from Last Manchu, last Empire of China's autobiography (\$2)  
The Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat by Foreign Languages Press (\$2)

### Spanish: Old MIM lit en español.

Que es el MIM? (\$3)  
Teoria del MIM 1: ¿Los Proletarios Blancos?  
Notas Rojas newspaper back issues (\$3)

### MIM Theory magazine:

No. 2/3 Gender and Feminism  
No. 4 Communist history  
No. 5 Strategy of revolution  
No. 6 Stalin  
No. 9 Psychology and Imperialism  
No. 10 Labor Aristocracy  
No. 12 Environment  
No. 14 United Front

### Learn about the labor aristocracy:

Introduction to the Labor Aristocracy study pack by MIM(Prisons) (\$3)  
Divided World, Divided Class by Zak Cope (\$25)  
The Labor Aristocracy and the International Communist Movement study pack by MIM(Prisons) (\$1)  
Imperialism and its Class Structure in 1997 by MC5 (\$10)

## Americans Continue to Undermine Peace as 9/11 Approaches

by MIM-Orchid  
September 2016

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

The 15th anniversary of 9/11 is almost here. So, of course instead of getting out of the way of others' peace efforts, Americans are coming up with reasons why another group of Muslims need to be killed in addition to the usual attacks on Iran, still on the U.S. State Department's "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list and already subject to formal u.s. economic and financial warfare. Successful peace efforts would reduce the "ISIS" issue. But Americans are conducting global psychological/influence operations against Russia and Saudi Arabia, two countries that have the potential to pursue peace efforts with less American influence despite those countries' varying levels of ties with the United States. This has been going on since 2001 with Democrats making their own contributions against Saudi Arabia and Russia. More recently, Hilary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, and U.S. Green Party nominee Jill Stein unfortunately, have/had been using the issue of Saudi citizenship of some 9/11 attackers as a way to differentiate themselves in a warmongering way from Obama and many Republicans. At the time of this writing, the U.S. House of Representatives' passage of the "Justice

Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act" appears to be imminent.

Several months ago, it was observed, "there is a potential for Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia and other countries, and the 'global bankers' the liberal nationalists at the *New York Times* disdain, to do things together that diverge from what the Americans want." Since then, China and Russia have appeared in the media as seeking increased economic ties with all three countries – Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia – with some discussion of both countries playing a moderating role in conflicts. In the improvement of ties with Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia, as well as Egypt, China and Russia may contribute to the emergence of economic and political conditions favorable to the two-state solution. Various capitalists and capitalist countries have more interest in Middle East peace than the united States does. Meanwhile, Iran, while pushing an anti-american message even in its criticism of Saudi Arabia, has repeatedly noted that perpetuating conflict in the Middle East is actually a u.s. policy. Iran's defense minister said recently that it was part of the amerikans' strategy to, paraphrasing, "create a situation to fan the flames of instability in the region and annihilate national capabilities of the countries standing against them." "Dehqan further noted that the third strategy was to eliminate revolutionary capacities in Islamic

states and region through attacks on Hezbollah and Gaza Strip. / Islamophobia, Iranophobia and Shiaphobia were on their agenda to pit the Muslim countries against each other and sell arms to these countries, he said." "The US has made the region insecure to ensure its interests, he said."

Instead of paying attention and realizing the significance of what's going on, some activists in the West persisted with chauvinist, even threatening statements against China, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and Arab and Muslim leaders who always seem to be more "corrupt" or evil than their favorite amerikan leader or liberal. And they continued to push settler-friendly one-state Israel-Palestine fantasies, anti-nationalist/anti-state delusions, and notions of amerikan progressive potential that have been disproved countless times. Among them are various phony leftists yapping against the very idea of anti-american international united fronts.

Fast-forward to the *Washington Post* discussing some Israelis openly using alleged secret Soviet ties of Mahmoud Abbas to discredit Russian mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian issue. The idea that Abbas is to be considered less trustworthy than Obama who openly leads the CIA, and former foreign service boss Clinton who aspires to lead that agency, is a joke. As long as people cling to such illusions about u.s. leadership and the united States,

Continued on page 24...

# - 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.

## **AZTLÁN UNIFICATION**

Chican@ members of USW are outlining a campaign to unite the nation along anti-imperialist lines. To help develop this campaign, write to MIM(Prisons).

## **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 have you organized around September 9 for 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? See the various articles in this issue addressing this question.

## **FIGHT CENSORSHIP IN TEXAS**

*Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán* is 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.

**CORRECTION:** We recently reported the *Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook* was similarly banned in Texas. However we have since received multiple confirmations that the *JLH* is not banned, and the initial censorship incident which sparked this rumor was a fluke. Thank you to everyone who helps keep our info up-to-date.

## **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). 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!**

See the article below and other articles in this issue for updates on the campaigns in Texas.

## **FIGHT CENSORSHIP IN VIRGINIA**

See page 17 for an article announcing this anti-censorship campaign in Virginia.

## **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.

## **TX Comrades Need to Step Up**

by Texas Coordinator of MIM(Prisons)  
September 2016

This issue of *ULK* is being mailed to 48 states, yet over one third are going to Texas prisons. This can be attributed in large part to the void we've been filling with our Texas Campaign Pack, which has led to a huge influx of subscribers in that state. TDCJ has hidden its own grievance manual from prisoners since 2014, and more recently has effectively eliminated all access to the law library in many facilities. The MIM(Prisons) TX Pack helps people fight back and provides needed resources and information.

Yet when looking through the incoming mail, we notice some themes:

- Most people are focused only on their individual struggles.
- The end goal for most writers is prison reform.
- There is a huge lack of engagement with politics.

Of course there are a number of exceptions to these themes, but the quantity of letters without political content is overwhelming. The vast majority of writers are only interested in getting the TX Pack from us. Their engagement with the rest of our projects (even reading *ULK*, which is sent automatically to everyone who writes us) is a relative rarity. Those who report receiving the TX Pack and thank us for how helpful it is are mostly only using it to work on their own grievances. Some share it with others, but most don't seem to be using it on campaigns together. Of the huge number of people who have been invited to our intro study group across the state, very few actually participated.

If our subscribers in Texas want everything they learned in the Texas Campaign Pack to actually be put to the best possible use, there are a few key points that have to be considered:

- Individual actions are small. The impact of a single successful grievance may feel huge to

one person for at least a small period of time. But we must think bigger than our individual struggles. Especially when most of these struggles are unsuccessful.

- Reformism is very limited. Those in power stall at every opportunity. So while we might see a few victories, it'll always be just enough to keep us motivated to bark up the same wrong tree for another several decades. In order to end what makes oppression possible and profitable, we need to put an end to the capitalist economic system. We've tried reforming it for hundreds of years. Is this what you expect it should look like by now?
- Apply principles of revolutionary theory for an end to oppression. The only way to achieve an end to this ongoing oppression is to learn some principles about revolutionary science. We need to know what has worked in the past, and what hasn't. We need to learn lessons from history for how we can build our present-day

*Continued on next page...*



# Perseverance and Commitment in Texas Lawsuits

by a Texas prisoner  
September 2016

November 2015:

I have an active case in the Federal Courts suing the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) for violation of BP-03.91 Uniform Offender Correspondence Rules, and the corrupt grievance system denying prisoners access to courts. I have filed a lawsuit under 42 USC Section 1983 against TDCJ.

If you would like to help me stop this corruption aimed at Texas prisoners, send any grievances, unsworn declarations, and other process documents you may have that can be used as evidence in the two above mentioned U.S. Constitutional violations to MIM(Prisons). [MIM(Prisons) will forward any documents clearly marked for this purpose to the Court Clerk and Attorney General handling the case. Be sure to write your documentation for the courts on separate sheets of paper from your letter to MIM(Prisons).]

Your evidence will help prove deliberate indifference because it shows officials knew of the problems and failed to act. Please feel free to send ALL of your complaints so that she may realize the wide range and depth of behavior and activities. I doubt she is receiving enough complaints at the present time.

Since filing this case, state employees' actions under color of law has put me *in fear for my life*. I need your support so they know I am not in this alone.

September 2016:

It has been a while since I've sent you anything due to all the time involved with fighting the Texa\$ Legalized Mafia (Texa\$ Department of Criminal (in)Justice) in Federal Court. But I've got to the point that I had to make a report on the advances I've made in our struggle.

1. I sent a letter (which a copy of is enclosed) to the Medical Practice Manager on my Unit who works for University of Texas Medical Board (UTMB). I was reimbursed \$100 of the \$400 I owed them. Upon his response I sent him another letter informing him that though I was thankful for that, it was not enough, I wanted it all back. The next day it was done. Enclosed is a copy of the first letter I sent to the UTMB Practice Manager. I only have one stamp right now, so I will send the rest of the paperwork when I get a chance.

2. My lawsuit against the Texas Board of Criminal Justice is going great. The Court shot down the Ass. Att. General Leah O'Leary's Motion to Dismiss and her Supplemental Motion for Summary Judgment and gave me until September 9, 2016 to have all my Despositive Motions in. I've already done that and filed two complaints of Bad Faith on the Defendants' part for attempting to defraud the Court on several occasions. I've asked for two separate sanctions ordered and for the Court to order a Default Judgment in my favor. It won't be long and we will get the Revision

to Board Policy-03.91 Correspondence Rules repealed.

My next 1983 Lawsuit in Federal Court against the Texas Board of Criminal (in)Justice is going to be over them violating our 14th Amendment right of equal protection under the law, which prohibits sexual/gender discrimination, due to their grooming standard policy. Women who are incarcerated in Texas can grow their hair as long as they want to, but men can't have it very long at all. This is a gender-neutral act and the state is discriminating between the sexes/genders. I've already gotten my informal resolution back from Warden Butcher at Terrell Unit and filed my Step 1 grievance. When it comes back I will file my Step 2 and so on into Federal Court.

Once I finish that one I am going to file against them for slowly but surely denying us due process by removing the tools we need to fight against unconstitutional acts. First in September 2014 they hid the Offender Grievance Operations Manual.

It is unbelievable how people watched me

... Continued from previous page

movement to be as successful as possible at putting a quick end to capitalism and all its atrocities the world over. This takes hard work and dedication, and is the only way for future generations to come out from under the boot of the oppressors.

Once we learn some revolutionary theory, the next step is to put it into practice in our organizing work. Tons of people write to us about how difficult it is to find people in Texas who are interested in politics or coming together to protect themselves from abuses by staff. This is because, despite all the atrocities in TDCJ facilities, TDCJ achieved a delicate balance between privileges and punishment, that keeps the population complacent but not so repressed that they are inspired to step up and do something about it. This dynamic has been going on for eons. The perfect example of this is people who have given up filing grievances because the grievances go unanswered, and instead they just watch TV. If not for the TV or other distractions/privileges, unanswered grievances should lead someone to want to take further action to protect their humynity. By restricting indigent mail and eliminating law libraries in many facilities, TDCJ is signing itself up for some contempt amongst its wards, but only if those who are politically conscious take the next steps to educate and organize.

The most basic organizing steps to try:

1. Share the TX Pack with others, and have them write to MIM(Prisons) to get on our mailing list.
2. Write grievances together. Even if for individual issues, build your collective knowledge about what makes a grievance successful. Don't let the administration give you the runaround.
3. Unsuccessful grievances are part of the pro-

cess. We don't expect to actually have victories with these grievances, but we file them to go through the process of administrative remedies, and build unity through action. When the grievances come back rejected, use them as tools to show how backward the administration is, and how the grievance system is set up to fail.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We commend this comrade on eir commitment to continuing eir lawsuits which benefit all prisoners in Texas, even though ey is facing persynal physical retaliation from prison staff.

We know that unfortunately the retaliation is more consistent than the victories. So while we support this comrade's efforts at this stage in our struggle, we also know that legal action alone won't put an end to the litany of abuses. What we ultimately need is to organize for self-determination of all oppressed peoples worldwide, including the internal semi-colonies within U.S. borders. Until we are free from Amerikkkan imperialism, we will always have a need for these lawsuits, and face even worse conditions. In the meantime, we organize, educate and try to carve out space for our survival.★

## ...Step Up

cess. We don't expect to actually have victories with these grievances, but we file them to go through the process of administrative remedies, and build unity through action. When the grievances come back rejected, use them as tools to show how backward the administration is, and how the grievance system is set up to fail.

4. Meanwhile, build political consciousness. Study articles in *ULK*, and broaden your perspective of how the prison struggle fits in with the struggle of the internal semi-colonies, and oppressed nations worldwide.

MIM(Prisons) offers a multitude of ways we can support you in your organizing. We can provide lit and study guides if you want to start a study group. We also recently revamped our Prisoners' Legal Clinic, and you can use your legal expertise to help others with their cases and help them learn some revolutionary theory. Our literacy program is coming up too, so maybe tutoring others in how to read and write in a Serve the People Program is a role you can play. Or if you're an artist or writer you can contribute articles for *ULK*, which then gets mailed to people all across the country. If you have access to funds, send us a donation so we can continue sending the TX Pack and *ULK* in to the large number of subscribers in Texas.

In sum, Texas prisoners need to step up. We all already know that filing individual grievances is a joke. The Texas Campaign Pack has info for how to make the most of individual grievances, so we can have a few more successes, but the administration can still just toss out or ignore whatever they don't feel like dealing with. TDCJ headquarters in Huntsville is no better. We hope our comrades in Texas who have been so diligently putting the Texas campaign info to good use will make this connection to the bigger picture and adjust accordingly.★

## The Echo is a Voice for the Injustice System

by a Texas prisoner  
August 2016

I would like to bring to the attention of all comrades one of the more subtle ways the Texas department of criminal injustice subjugates its slaves. Yes we are slaves. The Texas prison system has a little tool it uses to affect the minds of the slaves. It's called *The Echo*. This is a monthly publication put out by TDCinJ (Texas Department of Criminal Injustice). It has about as much journalistic integrity as a house of cards has stability. TDCJ is forever finding ways to save a nickel, such as starving the slaves on the weekend. So it is a wonder that something like *The Echo* should not be cut from the budget. But it remains as it is: an insidious but very effective weapon for keeping the slaves compliant.

All comrades, understand *The Echo* is a propaganda publication funded by TDCinJ for the sole purpose of aiding in your continued submission. I would like to point out a particular feature that is popular among the slaves and that is a section called "DARBY," wherein slaves send complaints and the like. The response from Darby is always the same. He warns the slaves to stop sniveling and whining. He warns us that we are in prison and should expect to just accept every indignity and injustice that we are subjected to. He preys upon the slaves' masculinity, as if to file a grievance is for girls and lesser men. Even in the middle of the columns will appear a little baby in diapers with tears falling from his eyes as if to imply that if you make a complaint or speak a word about an issue you are a sniveling baby. That is just one of the subtle ways *The Echo* manipulates the minds of the slaves.

Another point is what you will not find in *The Echo* and that is anything that actually benefits or improves your quality of life on the plantation, such as, about 18 months ago in the Midland paper on the front page was an article about the heat issue in TDCinJ. Recent federal court cases have been won regarding people dying in custody, and TDCinJ has been ordered to address the issue. The article showed Holiday Unit being equipped with some portable swamp coolers for trial testing. For the last 18 months I have been waiting for *The Echo* to report on this issue and not a peep, zip zero zilch nada.

Comrades, *The Echo* is a dangerous rag that should be avoided at all times. A journalistic publication that purports to publish information of importance to inmates should do that and *The Echo* is nothing more than a tool of oppression. Do not read *The Echo*. It is only for the advantage of the prisoncrats and not us slaves. Use your grievances and fuck Darby.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We have seen a few issues of *The Echo*, and we echo this writer's criticism that it is just intended for distraction and to cultivate an attitude of complacency among its readers. All media outlets reflect the interests of the group that funds and edits it. If we want to hear news and information that will build up the oppressed peoples of the world, including U.S. prisoners, we need media outlets that reflect those interests. For example, this newsletter is written mostly by oppressed nation prisoners of the United States, and is specifically intended to reflect the interests of the most oppressed people in the world.

precedent, stating prisoners gotta have a layer for class certification for class action (I'm not sure of this legality. I have yet to see the order and new case).

Both republican and democrat state officials are supposed to be "interested" in new solitary confinement legislation. One official met with a comrade at WCI. They only let two people visit. The official was the second. While that visit occurred, other officials walked through the oppressive confines.

This struggle is not over. The DOC is still making oppressive plays. On August 8 they continued my AC (Administrative Confinement) going on 19 years. The reasons are simple and concise: my release to GP will be a danger because I'll influence the younger prisoners based on my conduct history. And they noted, my lack of participation (code for kiss ass) showing my disinterest in AC process. (AC process: letting them degrade me, demonize me and sit there begging them and demeaning myself, saying I'm not all that bad mas'er.)

DOC and CCI are still making oppressive moves. Our food portions get smaller every week. And they are cutting movement/activities while

MIM(Prisons) not only publishes *Under Lock & Key*, it also compiles and distributes the exact information that the author of this article is talking about: how to file grievances, how to get your needs and rights addressed within TDCinJ. At about \$2.50 a pop, we send in hundreds of these Texas Activist Packs each year. While our projects address a dire need, which is created by TDCinJ itself, we are not funded by the bourgeoisie and so have very limited financial support. If you want to see this newsletter continue, you need to support it with your political and financial contributions.

We also want to address this writer's framing of prisoners as slaves. MIM(Prisons) disagrees with the use of the economic classification of "slavery" for U.S. prisoners, which we've addressed at length elsewhere. We also question the intent of many who are organizing around the line that prisoners are slaves. Many people who push this line are pushing for economic integration of prisoners into the U.S. economic sphere. They advocate for an exploiter-level minimum wage for prisoners, ignoring the fact that this wage is earned by U.S. military aggression abroad. This amounts to demanding privilege for prisoners at the expense of the international proletariat. We have to always be cautious about how we frame demands to ensure they are in the interests of the world's oppressed, and not just favoring one group over another.

Instead MIM(Prisons) sees prisons as a tool of social control, much like *The Echo* itself, to keep the oppressed internal semi-colonies under the boot of U.S. imperialism. Instead of asking for more integration into Amerikkka, we push prisoners to take up their respective nation's liberation struggle for self-determination, with the goal of a future without imperialism, slavery or any form of oppression.★

telling the public they are studying ways to provide the same in more form.

They are frustrating my access to court, not letting me go to law library, or access the computer to type up my motions. Forcing me to send nerve-damage-penned documents into the court. Knowing courts look down on and don't read chicken scratch. We need you all out there reading this to continue the letter writing campaign that was printed in *ULK 51*. Write Gov. Walker, State officials, wardens at WCI, CCI and DOC secretary.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We continue to stand with the protesters risking their lives to force the WI DOC to end the 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.★

## Wisconsin August Update

by Ras Uhuru  
August 2016

*[Wisconsin prisoners have been on hunger strike since June 10 protesting long-term solitary confinement practices. We received this update from one of the participants in August -Editor]*

We are still on the food strike in WI-DOC and still receiving support across the country from outside parts. Us at (Columbia Correctional Institution CCI) are eating just enough to prevent them from force feeding until I can get a supervisory writ filed in WI Court of Appeals (WI. Ct. App.) The circuit court in collusion with DOC did not address and/or acknowledge filings. Those at Waupun Correctional Institution (WCI) last I heard were still being force fed and the court made the order permanent fluid.

One WCI striker had to go to the hospital as result of abuse, got an infection and could have died. Broke his nose too.

United States East District Court refused class classification. Comrade previously vowed to appeal that but it's supposed to be new 7th Circuit



## Louisiana Prisoners Together Against Inhuman Conditions

by a Louisiana prisoner  
July 2016

I've been in solitary confinement here at Louisiana's Prison for 2 years now. David Wade Correctional Institution is a DOC facility. A disciplinary, concentration camp. Louisiana's most repressive prison. Everywhere you move you have to be shackled and handcuffed. Even to the shower if it's a few feet from your cell. You use the phone once a month, for 10 minutes. Our yard time is only 5 days out the week for 1 hour, inside of a chicken wired cage almost the same size as your cell. The prison is designed to break the mind, body and soul.

Incarcerated individuals here are living in inhumanity in its purest form. I met some guys who have been here on extended lockdown (solitary confinement) for six, seven, eight years straight. Our superiors are antagonists that despise the strong. Their job is to introduce us to the elements of repression. Their goal is to break you... by any means necessary.

It's the heart of the summer and it gets really hot on these cell blocks. We're the only prison in the state of Louisiana that only has one fan on each tier. Its nearly 100 degrees! On top of that, there's no water and we're not allowed ice on the tier. The only water that we're allowed to drink is out of our sink. And sometimes our pipes are backed up, or there's a boil-water warning on the news. If we want water, our only option is to drink contaminated water out our sinks, which is cruel and unusual punishment. Inhumanity. Not to mention that we're only allowed books and newspapers. We have no access to any television or radio. The papers is how we find out about the boil water warnings, and sometimes the newspapers come too late because of slow mail.

They want you to put your jump suit all the way on, while you're in your cell all during the day while it's nearly 100 degrees. This is only a tactic to make you as uncomfortable as possible. You see, every day in these cells is war. They take you to war every single day. Psychological warfare.

A lot of the guys here can't endure the delinquency of the officers, nor could they endure these extreme circumstances of dehumanization. I watch guys break right before my eyes all the time. The mind is very elusive... Hold it tight. One minute you'll be talking to a guy and the next minute they just snap, right before your very eyes, as if their mind was an egg that slipped out of their hand, and splattered across the hard rough pavement.

These situations are so frequent that a lot of the individuals here have gotten used to it. They have so adjusted to where they believe that these abnormal situations are normal. Just a couple of weeks ago a guy hung himself in his cell. His body dangled for a couple of hours before anyone even noticed. He was then rolled off the tier, and it was as if nothing had happen.

Guys use to be killed here by guards all the time. That was until word started to leak outside of these walls and into the free world. But that still wasn't enough to mentally liberate us. We need outside help... recognition... the voice of society... we need revolution!

I'm fortunate enough to be one of the few to be spiritually emancipated. Subsequently I have become a revolutionist. The change has already begun. And unity is a very fundamental principle.

We're dying to live....but we're living to die.

There's about 11 of us total who have been on hunger strike. Today makes my 4 1/2 day without food [11 July 2016]. About 8 or 9 other guys have reached their 7 day mark. But this is only the beginning. We would probably have to go a couple of weeks on hunger strike for them to even take us seriously, which is hard work without the outside help, or support. Also the oppressor refuses to stand down without opposition. Their tactics are vital. You could be on hunger strike for 4 or 5 days and they wouldn't even document it. That way they won't have to report so many to D.O.C headquarters. But also subsequently you wouldn't receive mandatory medical treatment, which is protocol after a prisoner misses 9 meals.

You're declared to be suicidal. By refusing to follow their protocol they violate our constitutional rights. But we're willing to go however long it takes. We also have multiple comrades who have made it to the courts system to push even further after they have successfully exhausted the grievance process. Our fundamental goal is for change... Better circumstances. We want the same thing that the "Pledge of Allegiance" taught us. We want *Liberty and Justice for all*.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We stand with this writer and the comrades in Louisiana fighting back against the dangerous and inhumane conditions at David Wade Correctional Center. This comrade is right that actions behind bars need outside support. It is also important to have some clear demands when we undertake big protests like a hunger strike. This will help focus the response, and ensure that we know when we have won. Fighting for general liberty and justice is definitely our goal as communists, but we know we will never achieve that under capitalism, and so our actions should be focused on winnable battles today while we build for liberation for all through revolution.★

## Lucasville Stands to End Solitary Confinement

by an Ohio prisoner  
July 2016

We write to further enlighten you on the progress of our hunger strike at the Southern Ohio Corrections Facility in the state of Ohio. Since you were last informed, other comrades have joined our cause to end solitary confinement and psychological torture in prisons all across america.

We now have a total of about 30 prisoners who are currently refusing meals. Some of us are being denied medical assistance. Correctional officers have already sabotaged some hunger strikers, by planting food in their cells.

The strike began on 5 July 2016, and staff are refusing to document the strike. Prison officials claim they don't care about our strike. If this is true, then why does the prison administration resort to such extreme tactics to discourage us?

A hunger strike is more than just refusing food.

But the spiritual power generated by our unified thoughts will manifest change. We enclose a list of demands, along with a notification to the public to please contact the Governor of Ohio and the media to inform that hunger strikers are being denied medical assistance. We greatly appreciate your integrity and will keep you updated.

### List of Demands

1. We of the inmates of Ohio ask for an end to solitary confinement and torture of inmates.
2. We ask for the end of the practice of systematic racism.
3. We demand for the end of unfair Rules Infraction Board hearings, which results in a denial of due process.
4. We demand an end to officer brutality, including the assault with chemical agents.

We ask for your support by contacting the Governor of Ohio:  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

or [ohio.governor.gov](http://ohio.governor.gov). Inform them that hunger strikers are being denied medical assistance.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We applaud the organization and commitment of these comrades in Ohio who are risking their lives to fight torture at SOCF. We have received a couple reports on this hunger strike.

We agree that a hunger strike is more than just refusing food, and as another comrade put it, it becomes the only nonviolent option left to protest how you're being treated.

Rather than generating "spiritual power," though, hunger strikes can develop real world education and organizing. As more people see the struggle and are educated about it they learn from the strike and we gain supporters. How well we build this education and organizing depends a lot on a careful evaluation of local conditions so our time and energy and health is well spent. For instance, undertaking a hunger strike with only a few people without outside support or a

*Continued on next page...*

# Battle for Literacy Builds Inside and Outside NC Prisons

by Comrade Genocide of USW  
July 2016

As this missive leaves me in Revolutionary Spirits and with strong desires for emancipation I hope it reaches you in the same manner. I continue to battle the anti-literacy tactics used by these jackbooted fascist Pigs that use the word censorship as a tool to keep us deaf, dumb, & blind. The administration of these Razor Wire plantations, better known as the overseers, have the dictatorship to keep us from reading certain books and material that will liberate us from the continuing cycle of returning to these slave pens of oppression.

Nothing has changed from the tactics used in the 1900s til now, it's only hidden better. After the Nat Turner Revolt in 1831 legislation prohibiting the education of slaves was strengthened throughout the South. "In the words of one Slave Code... teaching slaves to read and write tends to cause dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion!" Any publication on the topic of conscious-raising is disapproved under the violation of Division of Prison Policy Section D.0109 (f) which consists of violence, disorder, insurrection or terrorist/gang activities against individuals, group organizations, the government or any of its institutions! We are given the option to appeal the disapproval, it's then sent to the Publication Review Committee, and 80% of the time they agree with the first disapproval. The recent publications disapproved of mine are the new issue of *Under Lock & Key, The Wretched of the Earth*, and Huey P. Newton's *To Die for the People! Wretched* was approved [on appeal]. I'm still waiting on the approval of the other two publications.

The Commune here at this Razor Wire Plantation came together to form a hunger strike due to

... Continued from previous page

...Lucasville

way of publicizing it will most likely lead to not only a failed action but also will show others that this battle can't be won. It's always important to build for our actions so that we have the support and systems in place to make victory possible. Lucasville has a long history of prisoners going on hunger strike for basic necessities, and a broad outside support system has been shown to be one of the factors that make these protests successful.

So we call on outside supporters to take the actions listed above and publicize this hunger strike through their networks. Through organizing together we can abolish the SHU!

We also want to comment on the demand for an end to "systematic racism" which we would call systematic national oppression. This is a function of the criminal injustice system, by design. As a tool of social control, Amerikan prisons are set up to target the oppressed nations. And so we cannot expect to eliminate this feature of the system without overthrowing the entire system. Demands like this one are just and righteous, but not winnable until capitalism is defeated. ★

conditions we are burdened with, such as the high percentage of disapproved publications. We were promised that we would be allowed to receive publications if we agreed to end the hunger strike! I must say that lately books have been coming in that would not have made it past the mail room. Before the hunger strike I brought to the attention of the overseer that decides to allow us to have the books or material sent in, that there were books in the library of this Razor Wire Plantation that encourage racism, the hanging of Blacks, but those books are OK because they are in favor of the "overseer's" ideology. When brought to the attention of this certain overseer I was laughed at when I showed him the pictures out of a library book titled *The Red Summer of 1919*, where a Black man was being burnt alive while a mob of whites looked on with smiles on their face. I was asked by this overseer why would those pictures bother me so much when I'm not a man of color? What I should do was mind my business and order books other than the ones I been ordering was what I was told!

Most of us allow ourselves to be controlled because of fear of losing something. This fear is what the bourgeoisie uses against us to control us. These chains must be broken for emancipation to take place! It starts with the necessities of solidarity.

Comrades, it starts with us held captive within the gulags of these Razor Wire Plantations. How, you ask? Turning these Slave pens of oppression into Schools of Liberation! The Science of Revolution must be spread to the masses of the communities! The help of Revolutionary intellectuals is a must because the key to the people's unity is Revolutionary Consciousness! Instead of wasting time on who is right and who is wrong, instead of not being in solidarity with the next person because of their skin color, we must come together and spread the Science of Revolution to the unconscious. Lenin said: "without Revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."

The future of our emancipation lies in our hands people. So as I bring this to an end, I ask

that you really think about our own Liberation and the well being of our communities as well as the future of education for the youth. Frantz Fanon said: "Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission and fulfill it or betray it." What's your mission?

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** It is timely that comrades are organizing actions to protest censorship of educational materials by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS), as we just learned that a lawsuit will be going to trial on the same issue.(see p. 17) Comrades on the inside and outside are making moves that culminate five years of consistent paperwork battles between MIM Distributors volunteers and NC prisoners on one side and NCDPS prisoncrats on the other.

Those locked up in North Carolina recognized those efforts as our subscribership expanded during periods of time when *Under Lock & Key* was completely banned in the state. But prisoners did receive the protest letters sent by our volunteers and those letters circulated, sparking even more interest in *ULK*. As efforts build on both sides of the fence, MIM(Prisons) will continue to support and promote this campaign against illegal censorship and political repression. As this comrade argues, this is an important battle because it contributes to our efforts to make revolutionary science accessible to the oppressed masses.

As we go to press, we received notice from NCDPS that *ULK 51* is being denied because the article "Sept. 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity 2016" "encourages insurrection and disorder."

We stand in solidarity with the comrades' actions in North Carolina across national lines for their common interests as prisoners. And while this is an example of class preceding nation, we believe that nation overall is the principal contradiction in this country. This is partially because class contradictions are so weak in the richest country in the world. And recent events around police brutality and prison abuse have shown us uprisings that are very homogeneous in their national makeup. And this is where we see the most radical fractures in our society.★

## Hamilton Correctional Institution Refuses all MIM(Prisons) Mail

by MIM(Prisons)  
July 2016

A month ago we sent out a batch of mail to participants in the MIM(Prisons) introductory study group. It was the first mailing of the new session and included a reading assignment and some study questions. We got a lot of denials of this mail from Florida prisons, in particular at Hamilton Correctional Institution where all new participants had their mail returned with an Unauthorized Mail Return Receipt citing reasons that included: "Threat to security, order or rehab objectives, or to safety of any person. Depicts, describes or encourages activities which may lead to the use of physical violence or group disruption. Encourages commission of criminal acts." In fact one of these people was also sent an Unconfirmed Mail Form that just listed the letters we had sent

em recently, and this letter was also sent back to us, citing these same reasons! Clearly the mail room at Hamilton CI isn't even bothering to read the letters from MIM(Prisons) before returning them to us.

In response to this censorship we sent all these folks a copy of our six page guide to fighting censorship. This document contains legal and administrative tips for appealing unjust denial of mail. Immediately 17 envelopes were returned to us (we anticipate the remainder will be returned soon), with another "Unauthorized Mail Return Receipt" from the mailroom staff indicating this letter was denied because:

- "Otherwise presents a threat to the security, order,

Continued on page 24...



## Bombard them with Paperwork: Fighting Censorship in Virginia

by a Virginia prisoner  
July 2016

I am writing to bring you up to date on my litigation against the Commonwealth of Virginia related to the unlawful censorship of *ULK* and other literature. I am preparing to file my second tort action against the Commonwealth for the rejection of *ULK* 48. This will make the second claim I've filed in response to rejections of MIM literature.

I've chosen the state tort route due to the higher chance of success and because the 4th circuit is notorious for siding with the state in such matters. Further, eventually the risk management will get tired of seeing claims of the same nature with the same plaintiffs and defendants, and while it may take time, I believe if enough comrades use the same tactic the issue will be resolved. Prior to incarceration I was the IT Department manager at a card payment company. When I got a dozen emails complaining about a website being blocked in the office I often just removed the block since it was easier than being hassled all the time. I'm hoping risk management responds likewise.

It may be helpful to share my tactic of "bombard the bastards with paperwork" with others.

### NCDPS Sued for Censoring *ULK*

by MIM(Prisons)  
August 2016

A former prisoner of the state of North Carolina has filed suit against the North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) for regularly censoring eir subscription to *Under Lock & Key* (*ULK*) without due cause. In December 2015, U.S. Marshals were ordered by the U.S. District Court to serve Cynthia Bostic and Fay Lassiter with the complaints. Lassiter was the Chair of the Publication Review Committee, who would send MIM Distributors a "letter to publisher" every two months stating that the latest issue of *ULK* was disapproved for delivery. Usually the reason given was "D Code" or "encourages insurrection and disorder."

Cynthia Bostic was the Assistant Section Chief of Support Services, who was in charge of reviewing these decisions. Every two months a volunteer legal assistant would write Bostic to appeal the censorship and she would respond upholding the decision. This went on for 3 years straight with every issue being censored, every appeal being denied, and no specific justifications being given for the censorship.

In an attempt to investigate the so-called "review process" our volunteer filed a public information request with the state and began shopping the case to some civil rights lawyers in North Carolina. It was around this time that our appeal was granted for *ULK* 36. Yet, none of the copies sent to prisoners in North Carolina were subsequently delivered. Presumably the state just threw our mail away. So we went ahead and sent new copies of *ULK* 36 with copies of the letter from

Strength in numbers, you know. In Virginia, a notice of claim is free to file and requires little to no legal skill - just fill out the form, state the relevant facts, include supporting documentation and mail it to Richmond.

During the six month response period comrades will have time to develop their notice of claim into a finely crafted petition to file in court in the event risk management doesn't reply or doesn't provide relief. A tort action is also much cheaper than a 1983 suit since the cost is based on the value of the action, and if the relief sought is simply the delivery of the publication and that the prison get in compliance with the constitution, and so long as there is no security threat in the publication, chances are there will be a positive outcome. That's my goal anyway. Nobody wants to get sued six times a year and nobody wants to get sued six times a year by a hundred people over the same matter. In my tort claims I am naming the Warden, Publication Review Committee and the mailroom as defendants. I'm asking only that the publications be permitted, that the review process be in compliance with relevant statutes and case law, and that this be applied to all MIM publications. I am not asking for money damages simply because it's a free publication; nor am I claiming any mental

Bostic saying that this issue was approved. These too were censored! As most prisoners know, but some readers on the street may not, it can be a real battle just to get these people to follow their own rules and decisions. Like the comrade filing the suit stated in a recent interview, "there are no rights, only power struggles."

We want to commend this comrade for taking up this battle after eir release from prison. This is a shining example of carrying on the struggle for those ey left behind. And it shows leadership and self-reliance to come out and wage what will likely be an uphill battle against the state for basic rights. At the same time, the battle will be so much easier from the outside where one does not have to worry about constant harassment, mail being thrown out and being denied access to law books (North Carolina does not have law libraries in its prisons). The local report on eir lawsuit states that ey will be doing a fundraising campaign, and we encourage people to support em.

This battle is ongoing, as North Carolina continues to ban almost every issue of *ULK* statewide, despite the fact that Lassiter and Bostic are no longer involved in these decisions. Perhaps not surprising for a state that was recently told by a Federal court that its voting laws were illegal for disenfranchising New Afrikans. A lawsuit like this is needed to take the censorship struggle in NC to the next level. Bourgeois democracy will never guarantee the rights of the oppressed. But we can use lawsuits tactically to win battles when we are clearly in the right according to their own rules and principles.★

*Note: Jane Porter, A Former Prisoner Sues North Carolina for Violating His First Amendment Rights, IndyWeek.com, 20 July 2016.*

anguish or emotional distress, besides, who would believe that a bunch of "commies" would get all emotionally scarred because their newsletter was rejected?

Hopefully it helps. I feel that as revolutionaries we must use every tool available against imperialism, and the tort claim is one of those tools.

### Step-by-Step Tort Claim

1. Save all relevant documentation related to the rejection of the publication. Make copies!
2. Complete the entire grievance process. If you get no reply within two weeks send a request form to the mailroom to ask why.
3. Request further details about why the publication was rejected such as page number, any specific articles and the like. Try to get more information from the publisher if you can, such as their side of the story about what the alleged offensive material is, where else the publication has been delivered or similar.
4. Upon exhaustion of your administrative remedy, draft your notice of claim. This is not your petition to file in court, it is only a statement of facts and a request for relief. State only the relevant facts, why the rejection is unfounded and include any supporting evidence. Do not lace your claim with opinions or try to claim the Warden is out to get you. (Unless you have evidence he is!)
5. As you write your claim, when you reference a documented fact make a note of where to find that fact. Mark each documented fact with some way to easily identify it. Ex: "On July 3 the Warden replied to my request for more information. He told me to go f\*ck myself. (See Exhibit 4, Paragraph 3, Line 'A')"
6. Notarize and copy your notice of claim. Make a copy to send to risk management, the commonwealth attorney and as a bonus to each defendant. Include your claim and all supporting documents. You keep the original.
7. Begin crafting your Notice of Claim into a well-written petition to present to the court in the event you don't get any relief. If after six months you haven't gotten any relief take it to court!

This has worked for me several times without having to go to court. It can work for you too!★

...Continued from page 20

### ...Our Response

we need to think beyond the military battle and into the structure of society after capitalism is overthrown. This is why communists believe we must have a dictatorship of the proletariat under socialism while we undertake the long transition to a society where no groups of people have power over other groups of people. It is tempting to take up the gun now and fight back a death for a death, but we want to build a world where all people contribute productively to the betterment of huminity, and that will take a lot more than the death of a few cops.★

## USW Study Group Poppin Off

by a Virginia prisoner  
July 2016

I am delighted to enlighten you regrading our new study group/think tank, based upon the ideas/ideals of information contained in recent and past *Under Lock & Key*. In July 2016, we held our first study group member meeting, with some supporters. We met for over an hour, with 29 people in attendance and 18 committed members.

We deputized four positions of responsibility: 2 moderators, and 2 curators. We plan to conduct smaller study groups in individual pods, with direct dialogue from and with the larger weekly group meetings.

Our first meeting dealt with (1) Revolutionary Consciousness, (2) Revolutionary Activism, and (3) Accepting Accountability and Responsibility – in conjunction with the United Front for Peace in Prisons Statement of Principles on page 3 of *ULK 50*: Peace, Unity, Growth, Internationalism, and Independence.

We will need study materials to continue to move the study group. We are young, new and eager to be a part. We are entertained by what appeals to our conditions – as it relates to Maoist and *Under Lock & Key* principles. Our prison suffers from gangs, disunity amongst offenders/captives, and a gross lack of understanding of revolutionary ideas/ideals.

The questions we discussed at our first meet-

## MIM Correspondence Study Helps Reduce Conflict

by a California prisoner  
June 2016

A couple weeks ago I had an incident at work with an "Uncle Tom", and some of it was due to his "kiss ass" attitude at work. Although I had this issue, I had to check myself from further incident with him by remembering MIM's position that we do not promote violence, and in fact are a peaceful movement. To do what I had in mind would have contradicted that. Reading many responses on our study group discussion, including mine, helped me stop and check myself.

**MIM(Prisons) adds:** We like to highlight examples like this because, while anecdotal, they indicate that our work does reduce violence between prisoners of the United States. We note this as our recent issue of *Under Lock & Key* was rejected for everyone in Fresno County Jail for "tending to incite or promote racism, violence or any other prohibited conduct." And a comrade in California State Prison - Sacramento just had eir study group material censored for the second time ey tried to enroll; even though ey receives all other mail from us without incident. It's just some essays on the economics of the U.S. prison system, yet many prisoncrats fear it, while they promote ignorance and infighting.★

ing were:

- 1) What is revolutionary consciousness?
- 2) What is revolutionary activism?
- 3) What does "accountability" and "responsibility" mean to you?
- 4) What can you, and will you, contribute to the ideas of: Peace, Unity, Growth, Internationalism, & Independence?

The hard work will be keeping the young guys inspired, motivated, and focused on getting and achieving our goals (as we set them). We will need as much and as often materials (and possibly books). We will continue to send stamps as often as we can to cover materials. We have good writers of articles, poems, etc. which we will send.

I have enclosed a list of named members - verbal committals - who wish to receive a subscription of *Under Lock & Key*. I have also enclosed their state number and prison's address. Please sign these Brothers up!

If you have any back issues of *Under Lock & Key*, articles on uniting gangs, revolutionary understanding, or any fundamental ideas to help our young study group, please send them. We will send an updated report bimonthly detailing our weekly meetings, topics, etc. Please support us, as we are new to this, and young. Be sure to know, we are with you in whatever way we can help with larger goals of MIM, and our local goals - we are with it!

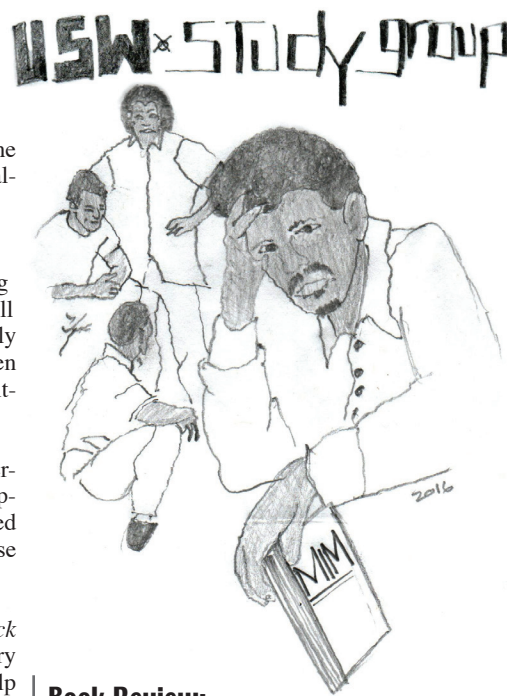
**MIM(Prisons) responds:** We print this report to encourage other readers with the example of our comrades in Virginia. You can focus on topics that interest your group and we will try to supply reading material and study questions. Most study groups start by talking about questions like this comrade describes (such as, "What is revolutionary activism?") or even more basic topics. And this leads to more questions and greater consciousness. People who wonder why so many are locked behind bars are just a few steps away from wondering why Amerika attacks so many other countries, and why people within U.S. borders are so much wealthier than the majority of the world's citizens.

By building through education we can set up solid cores of cadres who can apply what they've learned to analyze conditions and lead political organizing with correct political line and strategy.★

## Building Peace and Unity in CO

by a Colorado prisoner  
July 2016

Every day we study the 5 principles, but we lack materials which is one of the reasons I'm writing, in hopes of getting what we need. As of now we are a very young group of men who have come together and are spreading peace, unity and internationalism. Here in prison we have brought two rival gangs to peace: the Sur 13 and Norteños 14 have now made a treaty with each other and have stopped killing each other. We are now speaking with some of the Muslims who may be



## Book Review: Guantanamo Diary

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)  
April 2016

*Guantánamo Diary*  
by Mohamedou Ould Slahi  
2015

Mohamedou Ould Slahi has been held in secret detention centers by order of the Amerikan government since 2001, first in Mauritania (the country where ey was born), then in Jordan, and finally in 2002 in Guantánamo Bay where ey is still imprisoned. Slahi voluntarily turned emself in to the Mauritanian police on 29 September 2001; sure that ey would quickly be cleared since ey was innocent of any crimes. Instead ey faced years of torture, through which ey initially maintained eir innocence, until it became clear that ey would never be released and ey could no longer stand the suffering. After that point Slahi began to confess to anything eir captors wanted em to say. Slahi still occasionally told them the truth when they asked directly, but for the most

*Continued on next page...*

willing to join "Black Hawk" so we are practicing growth and peace.

**MIM(Prisons) responds:** This writer provides an excellent example of building peace through a United Front organization that focuses on education. Rival organizations that fight each other behind bars or on the streets are serving the purposes of the oppressive system which seeks to keep us distracted and fighting each other rather than focusing our energy on the real oppressors. With this peace treaty we anticipate a growing powerful movement in Colorado against the criminal injustice system. ★



... Continued from previous page ... **Guantanamo**

part the stories were not possibly consistent or confirmable since the "confessions" were entirely fabricated. But after ey began to make false confessions and falsely implicate others Slahi was allowed to sleep and eat, and the extreme physical abuse stopped. The details of eir torture will make readers wonder how Slahi held out for so long.

Slahi started writing down eir experiences in 2005 (after ey was finally given paper and pen) and after many years of legal battles eir heavily censored manuscript was finally released by the Amerikan government. This book is an edited version of Slahi's story, complete with the original redactions. The editor, Larry Seims, includes some speculation about what is behind the redactions and documents other declassified information that corroborates what Slahi wrote. In spite of heavy censorship, the released manuscript includes surprising detail about Slahi's experience including years of torture, the clear evidence that ey is innocent, and the Amerikan government's desire for a false confession.

The book is written in English, Slahi's fourth language, one that ey learned in prison in order to better communicate with eir captors and understand what was going on around em. For six and a half years Slahi's was allowed no contact with the outside world and was even hidden from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which has a mandate under the Geneva Convention to visit prisoners of war and others detained in situations like Slahi's to ensure humane treatment. For the first year of incarceration Slahi's family didn't even know where ey was, they found out when one of eir brothers saw an article in a German newspaper. In 2008 Slahi was finally granted the "privilege" of twice-yearly calls with family. In 2010 Slahi's petition of *habeas corpus* was granted by the DC Circuit Court of Appeals, ordering eir release. But the Obama administration filed an appeal and Slahi remains in custody.

## Amerikan Imperialist Global Domination

The many people who were arrested and kidnapped from their home countries to be sent to Guantánamo Bay underscore the neo-colonial status of those countries. As Slahi explains

*"November 28th is Mauritanian Independence Day; it marks the event when the Islamic Republic of Mauritania supposedly received its independence from the French colonists in 1960. The irony is that on this very same day in 2001, the independent and sovereign Republic of Mauritania turned over one of its own citizens on a premise. To its everlasting shame, the Mauritanian government not only broke the constitution, which forbids the extradition of Mauritanian criminals to other countries, but also extradited an innocent citizen and exposed him to the random American Justice." (p. 132)*

When the ICRC finally got in to see Slahi, the last detainee they were allowed to visit, they tried to get em to talk about abuse ey experienced.

*"But I always hid the ill-treatment when the*

*ICRC asked me about it because I was afraid of retaliation. That and the fact that the ICRC has no real pressure on the U.S. government: the ICRC tried, but the U.S. government didn't change its path, even an inch. If they let the Red Cross see a detainee, it meant that the operation against that detainee was over." (p. 348)*

This book underscores the power of Amerikan imperialism to do whatever it likes in the world. There is no government or organization able to stand up to this power. This is something that many Amerikans take pride in, but this is the power of a people who seek to dominate the world for economic gain. When the oppressed fight back, that power is deployed to squash the resistance by any means necessary. Of course there is a contradiction inherent in this power: Amerikan imperialist domination breeds resistance from the oppressed around the world. So-called terrorist attacks on Amerikan targets are responses to Amerikan terrorism across the globe.

As Slahi noted when ey was watching the movie *Black Hawk Down* with a few of eir guards:

*"The guards went crazy emotionally because they saw many Americans getting shot to death. But they missed that the number of U.S. casualties is negligible compared to the Somalis who were attacked in their own homes. I was just wondering at how narrow-minded human beings can be. When people look at one thing from one perspective, they certainly fail to get the whole picture, and that is the main reason for the majority of misunderstandings that sometimes lead to bloody confrontations." (p. 320)*

We would not agree that it is just misunderstandings that lead to these bloody confrontations. Rather it is the blood thirst of imperialist aggression constantly seeking new sources of exploited and stolen wealth that inevitably leads to bloody confrontations.

While Slahi is far from politically radical, eir experience educated em in the reality of injustice and the definition of crime by those in power. Writing about eir arrest and initial imprisonment in Mauritania: "So why was I so scared? Because crime is something relative; it's something the government defines and re-defines whenever it pleases." (p. 92)

## War on Islam

The target of Amerikan aggression changes depending on where there is the most resistance to imperialism. Back in the mid 1900s it was focused on the communist countries, this shifted to the "War on Drugs" and attacks on Latin America in the late 1900s, and then to the Arab world in the early 2000s. Slahi is acutely aware of this latest wave of aggression by the Amerikan imperialists targeting Islam and the hypocrisy of this attack:

*"...Americans tend to widen the circle of involvement to catch the largest possible number of Muslims. They always speak about the Big Conspiracy against the U.S. I personally had been interrogated about people who just practiced the basics of the religion and sympathized with Islamic movements; I was asked to provide every detail about Islamic movements, no matter how mod-*

*erate. That's amazing in a country like the U.S., where Christian terrorist organizations such as Nazis and White Supremacists have the freedom to express themselves and recruit people openly and nobody can bother them. But as a Muslim, if you sympathize with the political views of an Islamic organization you're in big trouble. Even attending the same mosque as a suspect is big trouble. I mean this fact is clear for everybody who understands the ABCs of American policy toward so-called Islamic Terrorism." (p. 260-61)*

Slahi also documents the denial of religious practice in detention camps:

*"But in the secret camps, the war against the Islamic religion was more than obvious. Not only was there no sign to Mecca, but the ritual prayers were also forbidden. Reciting the Koran was forbidden. Possessing the Koran was forbidden. Fasting was forbidden. Practically any Islamic-related ritual was strictly forbidden. I am not talking here about hearsay; I am talking about something I experienced myself. I don't believe that the average American is paying taxes to wage war against Islam, but I do believe that there are people in government who have a big problem with the Islamic religion." (p. 265)*

Slahi misses that this chauvinism is not at root a problem Amerikans have with the Islamic religion. Rather it is a problem they have with oppressed people who rise up to oppose Amerikan imperialism. Islam is just one of many targets because it is a religion of the oppressed. The Amerikan government (and its people) had no problem with Islam when al-Qaeda was an ally in the fight against communism. In fact Slahi himself trained with al-Qaeda for six months in Afghanistan, but this was during the time when that group was supported by the Amerikan government and fighting against the Soviet-backed government in that country. This action was legal for Mauritanian citizens, and in fact encouraged by the Amerikan government. Nonetheless this fact became one of the cornerstones of the Amerikan insistence that Slahi was behind the World Trade Center attacks, among other things.

## Will Amerikans Oppose Torture?

After years of torture and unjust imprisonment at the hands of the Amerikan government Slahi remains relatively moderate in eir views about the country and its people. Ey sees fundamental good in all people, a view that communists share, but one that has blinded Slahi to the economic interests of the vast majority of Amerikans which leads them to support the torture in Guantanamo even after reports like this one are released.

*"What would the dead average American think if he or she could see what his or her government is doing to someone who has done no crimes against anybody? As much as I was ashamed for the Arabic fellows, I knew they definitely didn't represent the average Arab. Arabic people are among the greatest on the planet, sensitive, emotional, loving, generous, sacrificial, religious, charitable, and light-hearted.... If people in the Arab world knew what was happening in this place, the hatred against the U.S. would be heavily watered, and the accusation that the U.S. is helping and working together with dictators in our countries would be cemented." (p. 257)*

*Continued on next page...*

# How Should We Respond to Police Violence?

by MIM(Prisons)  
September 2016

The recent attention to murder and brutality of New Afrikan men by Amerikan police, and the shooting of police officers in Dallas, Texas by Micah X, apparently in retaliation for this brutality, inspired a lot of thoughtful letters from across the country. Many commented on the need to take up the gun to fight those with guns.

A contributor in Florida asked:

*"So, my question is this: how effective and appropriate was the brother's actions (or sacrifice) at this point in time, or what do we, you and the readers make of all this? Are there any lessons, a message, or information to be learned from all of this? Or, ultimately, is there perhaps any more room, space, or a vacuum for more of this kind of self-defense at this point in time? And if so, how does one go about or start preparing, alleviating, educating, demonstrating or organizing for such right now from this example (or lesson) at this point in time? Like Micah X, are we ready to effectively exercise or address any more of this yet - or continue to keep the conversation going?"*

If Micah were trying to spark a revolution, this would be a good example of what we call

... Continued from previous page **...Guantanamo**

The reality is that most people in the Arab world do know about Amerikan injustice. In fact, in Mauritania the police told Slahi "America is a country that is based on and living with injustice." (p. 134) when Slahi asked why they were extraditing em when they believed ey had already proven eir innocence. And it is this knowledge that leads to many taking up the fight against Amerikan imperialism. At the same time most Amerikans now know about the torture of detainees at Guantánamo Bay and public sentiment is far from outraged at these actions. Large portions of the population rally around political figures like Donald Trump when ey calls for more torture.

From all of this we see further evidence for the potential of Islam as a liberation theology for those fighting against Amerikan imperialism. Just as the masses in Latin America were drawn to Catholic liberation theology as a reaction to oppression and injustice in that region, segments of any religion are likely to adapt to popular sentiments. Liberation theology was a valuable ally for the revolutionaries in Latin America.

Regardless of the format this liberation struggle takes, we know that the oppressed people of the world can not wait around for Amerikans to wake up and stop the torture themselves. Now more than a year after Slahi's book was released (which even spent some time on the best seller's list), still nothing has been done about eir situation. The masses must liberate themselves; their captors will never willingly give up power. And the Amerikan people are enjoying the spoils of the captors, so most Amerikans are happily going along with imperialist torture worldwide. ★

focoism:

*The belief that small cells of armed revolutionaries can create the conditions for revolution through their actions. Demonstrated revolutionary victories, the successes of the foci, are supposed to lead the masses to revolution. Focoism often places great emphasis on armed struggle and the immediacy this brings to class warfare. Focoism is different from people's war in that it doesn't promote the mass line as part of guerrilla operations.*

It is difficult for us to know Micah's goals and intents without having been there and spoken with em. Regardless of eir intents, the outcome of the actions ey took serve as ammunition for the oppressors to continue oppressing. For them, it is much easier to gain (even more) public opinion and sympathy when they are able to point at specific incidents of a member of a movement "mercilessly" gunning down pigs. Remember that the majority of people in power are already on their side.

While revolutionaries and many in the oppressed nations know that Micah's actions were an act of self-defense, white politicians and leaders will never see it that way. As a Federal prisoner wrote to us: "President Obama called what happened in Dallas Texas 'A Vicious, Calculated, Despicable ATTACK!'" In their eyes, violent actions taken against a pig (or pigs) can never be considered self-defense, especially when the "offender" in question is non-white.

At this point, standalone violent actions such as this one serve to incite the government to act with more urgency against those who they perceive threaten them, and allow them to place themselves ever more in the role of "victim," and to place the oppressed in the role of "aggressor."

Violence is a very necessary part of effecting any kind of true change that puts an end to imperialism, but there is a time for it, and that time is not now. Our focus now is on educating and organizing ourselves, so that we are better able to organize those who already see things as we do. It is important to consider what someone with a drive like this could achieve over a lifetime of work.

A contributor in Maryland wrote:

*"One of the DJs said one of the solutions was for us to just comply with the pigs no matter what when confronted in the streets by them. Basically, don't dare challenge master. But there can be no change without challenge. Why do we continue to lay down?... The white supremacists of this land have taken up refuge behind the badge. They can never be rooted out. Not by Obama, or anyone else. Remember they got a 200 year head start on us."*

While it is true that there can be no change without challenge, it is also important to remember that not all challenge enacts change. The pigs in no way deserve respect, compliance or gratitude. And it's true that they won't be rooted out without taking down all of the imperialists first. However, to challenge them now militarily serves

## Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán

by a MIM(Prisons) Study Group

Chican@ Power is an invaluable resource for anyone struggling for liberation of the internal semi-colonies of the United States. We are sending it out with study questions for use in your study group or individual study. We compiled answers to these study questions into a study pack, which can be sent to you after you've read the book, or if the book is censored.

We don't want to prevent anyone from getting the book for lack of funds, but the production costs are HUGE. The book costs \$22.95 + s/h (\$10 for prisoners). We're asking anyone who can contribute \$10 for their copy, or more to cover for others, to please step up and send in your donations today. If your facility allows, you can send us stamps. To send a check, we need to send you instructions, so tell us first.

to get the wrong people killed and give more instances for the oppressors to point at and say "Look! Look at how irrational and violent they are! We need to give the police more power, for our protection!" The oppressors will always try to paint the oppressed as the villain; we can never avoid this accusation altogether. But we need to look at the balance of forces and ask, in spite of this rhetoric, if we have enough political opinion in our favor that our armed struggle will have enough support to be successful. Suicide missions like Micah's make armed struggle look futile, so we should avoid them until we know we can win. Even those who have reverence for what Micah did probably wouldn't do it themselves.

Look at the Black Panther Party, and what happened with them. The BPP openly carried guns as a demonstration of potential power, without engaging in focoist actions. But still, the Amerikkkan imperialists struck back aggressively with guns, drugs and imprisonment, leading to the eventual downfall of the group. We can only expect even more aggressive attacks in response to use of the gun. The time for armed struggle is when the fight can be won. Right now, we're not close to that point.

This battle is a good example of why we need a vanguard party to lead the revolutionary struggle, including the armed struggle to take down the imperialists. It also provides some insight into just how hard the bourgeoisie will fight to maintain their position of power. Even after they are defeated militarily by the majority of the world's people we can anticipate that former bourgeois individuals and their lackeys in the police and military, as well as new people who aspire to wealth and power, will not immediately become cooperative and productive members of society serving the people. For this reason

*Continued on page 17...*



## Chican@ Power Interview

Below is Part 1 of an interview with one of the authors of the recently released book *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*. *Chican@ Power* is primarily authored by Chican@ revolutionaries who are locked up in California's prison system. They wrote this book as part of a study group led by MIM(Prisons). The comrade interviewed is one of the imprisoned authors. The book is available to our subscribers for \$10 or equivalent work trade.

**Comrade, can you start with an overview of the contents of *Chican@ Power*? Is it appropriate to call it a handbook for making revolution in the United States a reality?**

I wouldn't say - I don't think it should be used as a handbook for revolution, which might be what some people might look at it as, but more as an educational text with which Raza can begin the struggle toward confirmation from Chican@ gangbangers to Chican@ revolutionaries. And I'm well aware that maybe not everyone will become a revolutionary in the strictest sense, but at least to elevate people's consciousness so that they know that, you know, first of all that there is a Chican@ nation, that it exists, and it needs to be liberated.

*Chican@ Power* a educational tool will hopefully help Chican@s to not only understand the correct political lines concerning the liberation of Aztlán but will also help them become more aware of their true national identity, which lies outside of the Amerikkkan nation.

Of course the book also introduces the Chican@ masses to revolutionary science and the revolutionary traditions that were largely responsible for putting that science to use, most notably the Soviet and Chinese experiments in socialism.

The book also goes into critiquing various forms of Chican@ nationalism, which some Chican@s tend to mistake for liberatory ideologies, of cultural and narrow nationalism, that, when put into practice, actually lend themselves to supporting oppressive structures such as Amerikan imperialism.

It features a brief historical synopsis of the Chican@ nation. It also gets into some more contemporary topics such as Chican@s' participation in the democratic process in the United States today, as far as speaking on contemporary presidential candidates. There's also some book reviews in there covering a wide variety of aspects, critiquing the RCP's line on the Chican@ nation and other oppressed nations. Some cultural nationalist reviews in there. Our position on where the Chican@ nation is right now and where it needs to go in the future. I would say that is the brief synopsis of what's in there.

**You mentioned the transition from gangbangers to revolutionaries, that you hope this book will inspire. That's a path that you are personally familiar with. Could you speak on your development from gangbanger to revolutionary to author?**

I really began my little journey like every other Chican@ in here, you know. I was oblivious

to the fact that there was even a Chican@ nation to begin with. Like most other Chican@s in here, i started off categorizing myself as a Mexican. I came to prison for anti-people activity, gangbanging. The first few years i was just kinda trying to lay low and just stay out of trouble and just -- i mean if something came along on my little journey i would do it, as far as if i would be asked to do any kind of negative actions. But i think after a few years i really just became disillusioned with everything. I realized that everything that i knew or that i thought i knew as a youngster, i mean, for the most part everything was a lie.

I would say that's really where my political development probably started in a sense as far as i knew that i didn't want this no more. I knew that this kind of life wasn't leading anywhere and remembering bringing pain to my family, bringing pain to others, and i just didn't want that anymore. At a certain point i decided that, this is when the SNY yards first came into being, in the early 2000s. Even though they were around much longer than that, this is when they really started being used in the prison system in California. SNY yards stands for Sensitive Needs Yards, the modern day equivalent to California of protective custody yards. So for people that can't walk the mainline, they end up over here. Everyone just does their own thing, you don't gotta follow another man's orders, as far as another inmate. I think that was a big part of motivating me to come to this side.

Once on this side, for the first few years, i was all about just doing me. I wasn't worried about anybody. Just trying to do my time, and kinda just take it slow and easy. And i really wasn't political at all. Until i believe it was around the time of the invasion of Iraq by the Amerikan government. And i think that's around that time that's when i started being politicized. And i really just started seeing everything on TV, seeing the bombing, seeing people dying, seeing the suffering going on over there. It wasn't hard to tell why the U.S. was there. And like i said, i wasn't political, but at that point, i could at least see that.

So simultaneously, around the same time, i just happened to have a cellmate who was real real anti-Amerikan. I would label him as a fan of Mao, and he claimed a mantle of Mao, and he claimed to be a communist. Up to that point i had never met anyone like that.

And so through discussions on certain topics, world affairs, politics, just through watching the news, slowly but surely i kinda started opening my eyes a little bit more. At some point, he just so happened to share the Maoist Internationalist Movement ten point program. And when i first read it, i thought it was a pretty egalitarian program. And all the stuff on there looked good, you know. I remember reading it and thinking "man, why can't all governments, or all people, be on that same trip?" It seemed like pretty easy stuff to implement. So, why not? And so then i guess i kinda started asking myself, well, why not?

At that point he introduced me to, i believe he shared with me some old MIM Notes as well, this is back when MIM Notes were still being printed out. I liked everything they had to say, i agreed with everything they had to say and i ended up getting my own subscription. And around then i believe i wrote MIM, i asked em for some beginner materials on Marxism. I remember they sent me a pretty complicated book on Marx, an introduction to his philosophy. Even though i understood some of it, i didn't understand a lot of

it. And i really struggled a lot with that text. And i had to read it maybe 3, 4 times over the period of a few months just to really start absorbing the essence of what Marx was speaking to.

I was doing that for a minute, i was starting to collect little so-called revolutionary books here and there. At that time, MIM wrote me and they invited me to a study group -- "On Contradiction" by Mao Zedong. I kinda just went from there.

I would say the turning point was when i got hooked up with Cipactli, and i was invited to participate in the Aztlán study group. This was another first for me, as i had never met or heard anyone that called themselves a Chican@ revolutionary nationalist. Nor was i aware that there was such a thing. And basically from working with Cipactli and struggling with him, as well as with MIM(Prisons), i slowly but surely came to realize my own mission, which is that of a Chican@ national liberation struggle for self-determination in alliance with the Third World communist movement.

You know, i was completely ignorant to a lot of this stuff until i started working with MIM(Prisons) and Cipactli. So i really just think this book is gonna mark a new level of development in Aztlán for the Chican@ masses. I would hope that in the next coming years we really begin to see a upsurge in the Chican@ masses in prisons and really, you know not just getting conscious, but actually building on that consciousness by organizing.

There's so many things that i think that could be done in here and i think as we all know, at least Chican@ prisoners, you know, the key to peace on the streets is peace in the prisons. And i think for us to have peace on the streets and for the Chican@ liberation movement to really begin organizing out there, it has to start in the prisons.

**Could you speak more on that relationship, between peace building behind prison walls and peace on the streets, outside of prison?**

Well, i can't speak for other nationalities, but as far as for the Chican@ lumpen, for the gangbangers out there, i think a lot of stuff that goes on the streets is controlled by what goes on in prisons. At the flip of a switch the lumpen chiefs right here, they could organize a peace treaty on the streets. I mean they've done it before. When i was out there, you know, everything stopped virtually overnight. From warring and killing and drive-bys to virtually overnight, hey, that's it, we're done. And that's the kind of power they have, and i don't see no reason why Chican@ revolutionaries can't have that same power. Especially when it's power that's gonna help the whole of Aztlán, it's gonna help all Chican@s out there. First by making peace and unity in here, it'll spill out into the streets.

I think we can expect a lot of Chican@ revolutionaries in here to begin organizing as well, and i think right now there's really just small pockets of comrades here and there. You might bump into one person here, you might bump into another person there, you might go to another yard or another prison and there's no one there, you're the only one there. And i think as time goes on we're gonna start seeing a lot more conscious people stepping up to the plate and deciding that they're done with the old ways and they're gonna begin organizing for Chican@ liberation. ★

# El Instituto Correccional Hamilton Rechaza todo el Correo de MIM(Prisiones)

por MIM(Prisiones)

traducido por un@ prisoner@ en Wyoming

en Ingles p. 16

September 2016

Un mes atrás enviamos una tanda de correo a los participantes del grupo de estudio introductorio en el MIM(Prisiones). Era la primera tanda de correo de la nueva sesión e incluía una tarea de lectura y algunas preguntas.

Recibimos muchos rechazos sobre este correo de las prisiones de Florida, particularmente desde el Instituto Correccional Hamilton, en donde a todos los nuevos participantes se les devolvió su correo con un Recibo de Retorno por Correo No Autorizado que cita razones que incluyen: "amenaza a los objetivos de seguridad, orden o rehabilitación, o a la seguridad de las personas. Representa, describe o alienta actividades que pueden llevar al uso de la violencia física o desorganización grupal. Alienta a que se lleven a cabo actos delictivos." De hecho, a una de estas personas también se le envió un Formulario de Correo Sin Confirmar que enumeraba las cartas que nosotros les habíamos enviado hace poco, y esta carta también fue enviada, citando las mismas razones! Está claro que la sala de correo en el Instituto Correccional Hamilton ni siquiera se preocupa por leer las cartas de MIM(Prisiones) antes de devolvérmolas.

Como respuesta a esta censura, a estas personas les enviamos una copia de nuestra guía de seis páginas para luchar contra la censura. Este documento contiene consejos legales y administrativos para apelar a la injusta negación de correo.

Inmediatamente, se nos devolvió 17 sobres (anticipamos que lo que sobra será devuelto pronto), junto con otro Recibo de Retorno por Correo No Autorizado\* por parte del personal de la sala de correo, que indicaba que esta había sido rechazada porque:

- "De otro modo representa una amenaza a la seguridad, orden, u objetivos de rehabilitación del sistema de correccional, o a la seguridad de cualquier otra persona."
- "Representa, describe o alienta actividades que pueden llevar al uso de la violencia física o desorganización grupal."
- "Alienta o instruye en la comisión de actividades delictivas."

La carta en cuestión contiene citas legales y pautas de políticas de apelación administrativas. Este tema claramente no está relacionado con la violencia o seguridad de una prisión. No hay nada en esta carta que se pueda interpretar como que representa o alienta a la violencia o desorganización grupal. Y definitivamente no tiene nada que aliente o instruya a cometer delitos. Hemos enviado una apelación al alcaide de Hamilton pero no somos optimistas dado que incidentes similares en Florida se han chocado contra paredes de silencio o de negación de nuestras demandas sin razón.

Necesitamos un abogado para que nos ayude con esta pelea en Florida, pero hasta ahora, ninguna firma de abogados ha estado dispuesta a aceptar este importante caso.

Tenemos compañeros que conocen muy bien la ley que pelea contra esta censura, pero es muy difícil coordinar nuestro trabajo cuando nada de nuestro correo ni siquiera les llega a estos activistas.

Casos como estos deberían enfurecer, incluso a aquellos que creen en América como una sociedad justa. Es obvio que no hay justicia en la negación de material educativo y recursos legales a los prisioneros. Y este tipo de acción expone claramente la mentira de la rehabilitación que el sistema pretende apoyar. Las personas con acceso a internet pueden buscar en la web estos y otros casos de censura en nuestro sitio [www.prisoncensorship.info/data](http://www.prisoncensorship.info/data) ★

## ¿Quieres leer más en español?

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

We need volunteers who can read and write well in both English and Spanish to translate for Under Lock & Key. A fast growing segment of the U.S. prison population is Spanish-speaking migrants. By translating into Spanish, you can help ULK reach out to our imprisoned compañer@s.

Write in to put in work! ¡En Lucha!

## El MIM(Prisiones)

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

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

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

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

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

2. 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 formaron 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.



...Continued from page 10

### ...SNY Unity

enemy, imperialism, who I would like to reach out to! This is the struggle to unite.

It is public consciousness what we aim for, not numbers. The calling for revolution is within each one. Many lumpen have perceived revolution solely as an armed struggle and cause for war to kill the oppressor. In part, yes that is a goal, but i would disagree to integrate individuals who are solely for war. That would be as uniting or recruiting mercenaries, as Reagan did against the Sandinistas and to extreme case, the Salvadorian government force enlisting children against the FMLN.

Those with true revolutionary interest take on study and self-development with eagerness. Those whose interests are not aligned, they simply walk away. Revisionist and other suppressive Raza are always present and that creates obstacles as well as a struggle to unite. Interacting, talking, and sharing our political lines are gateways to congregate and build study cells without risking our demise in a front by those wishing to suppress our efforts to unite.

No matter what another comrade's political maturity is, well-developed or first time knowing, the practice and persistence to learn is what I see. For I myself am still amateur to communism. The abolition of imperialism and the liberation for Az-

tlán is my goal, to live in equality for all.

Sharing *ULK* and other material is a minor step I take for now in order to broaden and spread that consciousness within the lumpen here in my environment. Sometimes referring to myself as being for the Chicano national liberation movement upon meeting fellows brings questions from some and ignites interest in others. With time I share my copy of *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán*.

To comrades in SNY reading this, let's continue our struggle to unite. To comrades in the GP, struggle in solidarity and power to you all true revolutionaries. ★

**Abbreviated Glossary-** write in for our full glossary and more study materials on these topics (send \$4 or work trade)

### 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 wimmin'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, imperialism 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. 52

September/October 2016

*...Continued from page 11*

#### ...Peace

resolution of conflicts in the Middle East – which the amerikans have a prime role in creating and sustaining – will be unnecessarily difficult. Amerikan aggression in the Middle East, Africa and Asia will face fewer challenges.

The line here is not that 99% or even a majority of amerikans are oppressed by some 1%. Others spread lies about some impending or future revolution in the united States not involving international forces prevailing against amerikans. It is important that people around the world, whether they are socialists or not, recognize the general lack of revolutionary and progressive potential in the united States so they can make appropriate political and economic decisions. China and Russia still have majority-exploited working classes; hegemonic united \$nakes doesn't.

People die and are injured unnecessarily while imperialism continues to exist. U.\$ dominance is an impediment to advancing against imperialism in general. In terms of 9/11, there should be empathy for the families of the 9/11 dead – but only as humyns. No child died in the buildings. Some children were on the planes, and non-whites and non-amerikans also died, but descriptions of 9/11 as an attack on amerikans belonging to or sharing membership in oppressed groups are misleading. Empathy or sympathy based on the 9/11 dead being "workers" or some other identity – or victims of amerikan and Saudi capitalists as if amerikans weren't exploiters generally – is reactionary in addition to devaluing the life of those who don't have the favored identities.

The united States generally benefits from violent provocations anywhere. Armed provocations can be inspired by warped views of class struggle

being concentrated within the Third World as if overthrowing the local religiously or ideologically impure bourgeoisie took priority over international political struggle, diplomacy, and uniting against the amerikans. The amerikan petty-bourgeoisie is relatedly and commonly seen as needing to be riled up in fascist, populist or false ways. Whether movements like ISIS are directly products of the CIA, or not, the CIA – including both liberals and conservatives who have no problem pragmatically with supporting "left-wing" and militant opposition movements in other countries – is involved in various secular movements and activities undermining international struggle for peace.★

*Notes: Send SASE for full article including footnotes.*

### WRITE FOR ULK

Planned themes for upcoming issues:

53 - Fascism - Fascism is imperialism on steroids. Write in for our fascism and study pack to help develop your article on the topic. Send in your article submissions by November 1.

54 - Movement Tactics - How do we decide what tactics to use in our present-day struggle? Why do we work on campaigns that we don't think will be successful?

55 - United Front alliances with white nationalist groups - Is there ever a time when we would unite with reactionary oppressor-nation lumpen orgs in a United Front for Peace in Prisons? How has this been done, and how could it be done? Or why should we avoid it? Would unity with pariahs such as snitches or child molesters ever be appropriate?

*...Continued from page 16*

#### ...Censor

- or rehabilitative objectives of the Correctional system, or to the safety of any person"
- "Depicts, describes or encourages activities which may lead to the use of physical violence or group disruption"
  - "Encourages or instructs in the commission of criminal activity"

The letter in question contains legal citations and administrative policy appeal guidelines. This subject matter is clearly not related to violence, security or safety of a prison. There is nothing in this letter that could remotely be construed to depict or encourage violence or group disruption. And it certainly has nothing encouraging or instructing commission of crimes. We have sent an appeal to the Warden of Hamilton but aren't optimistic as similar incidents in Florida have just run into brick walls of silence or denials of our claims without reason.

We need a lawyer to help take on this fight in Florida, but so far no law firms have been willing to take up this important case. We do have some comrades who are very savvy with the law fighting this censorship, but it's very difficult to coordinate our work when none of our mail can even get in to these activists.

Cases like this should outrage even those who believe in Amerika as a just society. It is obvious that there is no justice in the denial of educational material and legal resources to prisoners. And this sort of action exposes clearly the lie of rehabilitation that the system pretends to support. People with access to the internet can browse these and other censorship cases on our website at [www.prisoncensorship.info/data](http://www.prisoncensorship.info/data) ★

★ See partial political glossary p. 23 ★