

Can the Democratic Method be Applied in U.S. Prisons?

by a Colorado prisoner
May 2017

"Our task now is to continue to extend and make still better use of this method throughout the ranks of the people..." - Mao Tse-Tung, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People"

What was comrade Mao speaking about when he made these comments? His topic was the democratic method. In 1942, it was explained this way: 1) beginning from a desire for/to achieve unity, 2) resolving contradictions (real differences in opinions, perspectives, positions on questions or issues) through criticism/struggle (not necessarily physical); 3) arriving at a new unity on new basis. In simpler terms: unity, criticism, unity! This was the philosophy and practice which led China to overthrow the exploitative forces draining their entire country. Before this method, the imperialists, capitalists and their allies exploited contradictions between and among the masses and political cadres; in order to maintain their strangle hold on controlling not only the means of production and the productive forces, but also the very existence of the people in all aspects of their lives. This was the oppressive reality in China and is currently the reality (although in varying degrees) in Amerikkka's prisons.

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Building Unity through Talk instead of Violence

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
May 2017

In Mao's essay "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," (27 February 1957) he wrote of melding practice with criticism and discussion in order for our movement and the masses to grow to greater understanding, unity, and strength. The essay explains, when struggling over disagreements amongst political allies (friends), to start from a place of unity, struggle through discussion, and come away with greater unity. For short, we call this unity-criticism-unity. In this issue of *Under Lock & Key* we explore how this method applies to the prison environment. How can unity-criticism-unity help counter the typically hyper-violent method of handling disagreement in prisons?

"The only way to settle questions of an ideological nature or controversial issues among the people is by the democratic method, the method of discussion, criticism, persuasion and education, and not by the method of coercion or repression." - Mao Tse-Tung, ibid.

There are often situations behind bars that require first identifying who are our friends and then we can apply unity-criticism-unity among those people.

A comrade in California reported in *ULK 55* about their long struggle to build unity across different organizations in the yard at California Correctional Institution (CCI), leading up to a banquet with various lumpen orgs participating. (1) This was done through discussion and peaceful struggle, maintained even through some violent episodes. This is a good example of identifying friends even among those who may initially be unfriendly, and patiently working to build unity.

An organizer in South Carolina reported in *ULK 53* on their work fighting lumpen-on-lumpen violence by holding classes to educate the youth on what it means to have unity. (2) Educational classes are a good form of criticism of political line that doesn't involve attacking individuals' views directly, sometimes making it easier for people to accept the criticism and come to see why they are wrong. This holds true for both leaders and class participants. No one person has all correct knowledge in educational classes. Leaders should also be open to learning new things from participants.

It's not always easy to see someone as a political friend when you've had past beef with them. On page 5 there is a report from Arkansas about how two prisoners overcame past differences through political unity. And the article "From Cop to Anti-Imperialist" shows us the sometimes fluid nature of identifying our friends. (see p. 11) Someone who was an enemy of the people while working for the police force has been won over to the side of revolution through circumstances in their life that put them in the camp of the oppressed.

Finally, the public debate we are having with Zero, continued in this issue of *ULK*, is an example of building unity while engaging in political struggle. One which we hope to build on as we further our alliance with Zero and others. (see p. 5)

Contradictions with enemies vs. contradictions among the people

"Since they are different in nature, the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and the contradictions among the people must be resolved by different methods. To put it briefly, the

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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

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

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

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

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

Other Resources

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

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

see our partial political glossary p. 23

Choosing One Ideology Over Another: The Materialist Method

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MIM forms the following conclusions on the materialist method:

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

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

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

United Front for Peace in Prisons- Statement of Principles

The basis of any real unity comes from an agreement on certain key ideas. This statement does not grant authority to any party over any other party. We are mutually accountable to each other to uphold these points in order to remain active participants in this united front.

★ **PEACE:** WE organize to end the needless conflicts and violence within the U.S. prison environment. The oppressors use divide and conquer strategies so that we fight each other instead of them. We will stand together and defend ourselves from oppression.

★ **UNITY:** WE strive to unite with those facing the same struggles as us for our common interests. To maintain unity we have to keep an open line of networking and communication, and ensure we address any situation with true facts. This is needed because of how the pigs utilize tactics such as rumors, snitches and fake communications to divide and keep division among the oppressed. The pigs see the end of their control within our unity.

★ **GROWTH:** WE recognize the importance of education and freedom to grow in order to build real unity. We support members within our organization who leave and embrace other political organizations and concepts that are within the anti-imperialist struggle. Everyone should get in where they fit in. Similarly, we recognize the right of comrades to leave our organization if we fail to live up to the principles and purpose of the United Front for Peace in Prisons.

★ **INTERNATIONALISM:** WE struggle for the liberation of all oppressed people. While we are often referred to as "minorities" in this country, and we often find those who are in the same boat as us opposing us, our confidence in achieving our mission comes from our unity with all oppressed nations who represent the vast majority globally. We cannot liberate ourselves when participating in the oppression of other nations.

★ **INDEPENDENCE:** WE build our own institutions and programs independent of the United States government and all its branches, right down to the local police, because this system does not serve us. By developing independent power through these institutions we do not need to compromise our goals.

How to join the United Front?

★ Study and uphold the five principles above.

★ Send your organization's name and a statement of unity to MIM(Prisons). Your statement can explain what the united front principles mean to your organization, how they relate to your work, why they are important, etc.

★ Develop peace and unity between factions where you are at on the basis of opposing oppression of all prisoners and oppressed people in general. Campaign around the September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity.

★ 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.

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...Unity Talk

former entail drawing a clear distinction between ourselves and the enemy, and the latter entail drawing a clear distinction between right and wrong." - Mao Tse-Tung, ibid.

First we must distinguish between contradictions with the enemy and contradictions among the people. In contradictions with the enemy, such as with the prison COs, or with the Amerikan imperialist government, we are not seeking unity and we should be clear and straightforward in our statements about them. Criticism of enemies is important because it keeps the revolutionary movement on point. We do this when we identify all the candidates in the imperialist elections as part of the imperialist system. We also do this when we call out white supremacists behind bars collaborating with the COs to attack New Afrikans.

In contradictions among the people, on the other hand, Mao wrote: "the essential thing is to start from the desire for unity. For without this desire for unity, the struggle, once begun, is certain to throw things into confusion and get out of hand." This is the opposite of how we deal with contradictions with our enemies. When we run into problems with people who should be our allies, we need to start from this desire for unity.

Contradictions with our comrades, including disagreements within our organizations, should be approached from a position of unity-criticism-unity. In practice this means starting from the understanding of where we have unity, and that our criticism of one another's line and practice is always with the goal of building even greater unity.

We should not just throw out criticisms for the sake of making someone look bad or tearing them down. Criticism must always be with the goal of building greater unity. Sometimes we will not come to agreement over the criticism, but we can at least come to better understanding of our disagreements. Perhaps we can agree on a way to test which position is correct, or identify further research we need to do, or maybe we will agree that the criticism is not significant enough to lead to a split as our areas of agreement are far more significant.

Who are "the people"?

The people are those who we should be approaching as friends, not enemies. Mao wrote: "The concept of 'the people' varies in content in different countries and in different periods of history in a given country." In revolutionary China, Mao was talking about contradictions among those who supported and were served by the revolution in China. The identification of the people in revolutionary China was relatively straightforward as it encompassed the vast majority of the population.

Identifying who are "the people" in imperialist countries; where we're surrounded by enemies of the international proletariat, is a more difficult question. Broadly, the people include those whose class, nation or gender interests are counter to imperialism, as well as all people who take up anti-imperialist organizing. More specifically, within

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...Democratic Method

In U.S. prisons, habitually, the method of solving problems is through hyper-masculinity, or hyper-violence. In a prison, the smallest trifle, disagreement, or unintentional act is met in overly-aggressive manners. Soon a test of wills develops, "my way or no way." But this hyper-violence does nothing to encourage unity, class awareness, or political consciousness, and it cripples the movement. Here is the true reason why prison officials or those connected to prisons and the injustice system do nothing to avoid it, and in many cases, they actually promote hyper-violent methods. This method is detrimental to you but beneficial for accomplishing penological interests. To break this oppression, the democratic method must be foremost in our minds and practice.

Gangs, "clikas," alliances and groups are analogous with political parties, factions and groups of like-minded individuals, in prison and society. In prison there are numerous racial tensions. There are contradictions and various other factors, not least among them, the constant oppressive atmosphere. The only ingredient not present: political consciousness. Here, Mao's lessons can be put to good use.

The procedures of yesterday may not be the exact remedy needed for today's problems. In prison, as in capitalist society, contradictions are normally expressed in acute antagonisms and conflicts. Many times this equates to prisoner against prisoner (rival gang members or conflicting races), or to a lesser extent, prisoner against guards. What do such conflicts achieve? Only further detriment for us. "Failure to understand..." in prison as in society, perpetuates the very causes of hyper-violence, which that same violence seeks to eliminate. Should we search for a different method, other than what the capitalist system

the United States, the people whose class, nation and/or gender interests makes them potential allies includes:

1. Oppressed nation lumpen
2. The very small proletarian class (mostly migrant workers)
3. Petty-bourgeoisie from the oppressed nations
4. Youth of all nations, particularly students
5. Others who are marginalized by imperialism and the patriarchy (i.e. queer and trans folk)

Many of these people could be happily integrated into imperialism, but we should still approach them with a goal of building unity and not as enemies. For the most part however, when we talk about contradictions among the people, we're talking about contradictions with those who are already on the side of the oppressed – either due to circumstances or because they have consciously taken up the cause of the oppressed – not those who are actively supporting imperialism.

Distinguishing enemy lines from enemies

When looking at contradictions among the people it is important to distinguish enemy lines

has provided us for contradiction resolution? Can contradictions be resolved at all? Comrade Mao, in speaking of progress and difficulties says, "...not only should contradictions be resolved, but definitely can be."

"The only method to be used in this struggle is that of painstaking reasoning and not crude coercion..." Crude coercion being the hyper-violence/violent methodology. By opening dialogue for mutual education of every class of people, with a focus on promoting a united front. By critically analyzing, debating and correcting mistaken or inappropriate political views, as well as sowing the seeds that will produce political consciousness. After a time, this process yields fruits and progress. Two prisoners from rival gangs may begin to discuss their mutually oppressive predicament. This leads to criticism, fueled by a desire to struggle against their oppression, a criticism of the available options, submission or hyper-violence, and a rejection of both. Soon these rivals (actually allies against the oppressors) come to realize the only true way: the democratic method. Following such an epiphany, they form an alliance based on refusing to continue being pawns in the game and find a new unity. Unity, criticism, unity!

While the method is practicable in U.S. prisons, Amerikkka's prisoners, on a large scale, lack political consciousness and that is a problem. Here we must focus on educating, which goes back to our "task," as outlined above "...we should work painstakingly and not be impetuous." Creating more "self-determinants" as I've termed it in "The Adaption of Capitalistic Controls." (see ULK 54) For the future health of the movement, the correct political points of view must be nourished, because not to have a correct political point of view is like having no soul. A movement without a soul is dead. ★

from enemies. We're all going to take up incorrect ideas and practices some of the time. That doesn't make us into enemies, even if the line we take up turns out to be pro-imperialist. Learning from our mistakes is part of being a revolutionary. Our job is to help our comrades identify their mistakes, and to be open to hearing from others when they point out our mistakes.

In the essay under discussion, Mao asked "how should our people judge whether a person's words and deeds are right or wrong?" In response we laid out six criteria that applied to a country that was already socialist. We have modified these slightly below to apply to our current conditions.

1. Words and deeds should help to unite, and not divide, oppressed people of all nationalities
2. They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to anti-imperialist struggle
3. They should help to consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, the people's revolutionary organizations
4. They should help consolidate, and not undermine or weaken, democratic centralism
5. They should help to strengthen, and not shake

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Building Peace Through ULK

by an Arkansas prisoner
December 2016

I randomly bumped into a homie who I had previously met a few years back. We got to conversing and eventually got to swapping materials (books, magazines) and we each offered to exchange a "political newsletter." It turned out that we were both referring to *ULK*; each of us not knowing at the time that we were both corresponding with MIM(Prisons) and we were talking about the exact same newsletter (*ULK* 52).

An interesting fact to note is that we were both able to overcome past "beef" that we had against one another. Beef that had manifested in an administrative segregation barracks during 2015 as a result of our poor/squalid isolated living conditions. Our beef was evidence of the negative side-effects that ramify into violence and verbal insolence/disrespect/threats between captives, all being things consequential of our long-term solitary confinement that is deliberately facilitated by the pigs.

We both (me and this said comrade) peeped game and realized that the police want us to have discord sown between us (captives in general, but also specifically between me and this comrade) and I immediately took personal measures to end the pettiness and hostilities — for unity's sake. By squashing the trivial/frivolous "child's play," and setting aside our pride (which has always been a real challenge for me), we wound up developing a very strong unified bond and comradeship that is likely going to carry on into the free world. We passed knowledge back and forth, to fortify one another. I was stoked to be able to aid and assist this comrade as much as possible.

MIM(Prisons) responds: Often *Under Lock & Key* is censored by prison administrators for encouraging violence. We hope the administrators are paying attention to this letter as it clearly demonstrates what we've been saying all along: *ULK* actually encourages peace! ★

Zero Responds to Debating Theory, Building Unity

by Zero
May 2017

[This letter is responding to the debate we printed in *ULK* 55: "Debating Theory, Building Unity for September 9 Protests" - *ULK* Editor]

Let me try to run through this as quick as possible. To the point yo. That original article in the *ULK* 50 was pretty half-assed. Admittedly, so was my response to it.

So, first lemme say that there were a few typos in my response that made some significant differences. Mainly I wanna be clear that it said I don't care about your "lies." The correct word was "line."

Also, I have no fuckin clue what "Post-Fordism" could possibly mean. What the fuck is "Fordism"? I said "Post-Marxist". We live in a "Post-Marxist" era.

As for my acceptance of status quo definitions of "slavery", I don't accept it simply because it's what is commonly presented to us, but because I more or less agree with it.

I do fully agree with your analysis concerning the exploited global proletariat as being the theoretical primary contradiction. Capitalist imperialism depends solely on expropriation of land and resources. In order to sustain capitalist rule this can only come as a result of perpetual expansion into foreign lands, etc., and not to mention wholesale slaughter of oppressed peoples across the globe. Imperialism being inherently nationalistic

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...Unity Talk

off or weaken, communist leadership
6. They should be beneficial, and not harmful, to international socialist unity and the unity of the peace-loving people of the world.

The first three points apply to all anti-imperialists, and we would propose them as good criteria to use for all people who are building united fronts. The last three are specific to communists who are actively fighting for socialist revolution. Communists should apply all six points to our practice.

These six points and the strategy of unity-criticism-unity should be at the forefront as we re-focus energies on building alliances and a united Maoist movement here on occupied Turtle Island. The USW Council is also in the process of putting unity-criticism-unity into practice to reach out across the prison movement to consolidate forces friendly to anti-imperialism and national liberation. We will continue to report back on these efforts in future issues of *Under Lock & Key*. ★

Notes:

1. a comrade of United Struggle from Within, "Combating Gossip, and Setting Examples to Build the UFPP," January 2017, *Under Lock & Key* No. 55 (March/April 2017).
2. a South Carolina prisoner, "September 9th Setback Leads to Unity Building," October 2016, *Under Lock & Key* No. 53 (November/December 2016).

this means "global" class systems emerge and so there you see our analysis is virtually identical.

Now if you can explain to me how we can apply this dialectically correct analysis into revolutionary practice — aside from pencil-pushing while capitalism further secures itself by snowballing into a fascist state — sign me up. But in my studies of all revolutionary lines, I've yet to find a red theory that institutes practice in our current material time and place.

I'm a nihilist. I accept no theory/analysis simply because it's common to any rev camp, but only if it jives with absolute objective and dialectically correct theo-analysis. I find red analysis to be exceptionally on point. But I find major flaws in dictatorships of any stripe based in historical evidence. Authority always shows to turn into tyranny. Communists are just as guilty of mass-murder and oppression as any fascist state and I find the differentiation between "nationalistic" socialism and so-called "international" socialism to be mostly a matter of semantics. Don't get me started on Bolshevism being the theoretical root of fascism, evidenced by Hitler's distribution of Leninist literature. So I'll close this by saying red analysis is sound. But fundamentally anarchist methodology and principles are the only realistic road to a true egalitarian society. I don't swallow this because of identity politics — be it the black flag or the red — but because it's true. And so I apply red analysis to anarchist principles.

Next, obviously I do recognize the importance of line as my writing clearly demonstrates. You make exactly the point of why it's important in your paragraph number five and others. When I say I don't care about line, what I mean is that I don't conform to any line simply because it's a generally accepted body of politics. Though I will and do align myself with any line if it jives with my correct social analysis, theory, or mode of practice. In my case, red analysis, black theory (black meaning anarchist).

Obviously I'm also a big fan of theory. Marxist dialectics being the pinnacle of revolutionary science, this is my area of professionalism in fact. So, when I told you "your theory is based in theory", you omitted the first part of my statement which was that black theory is based in practice. So "anarchist theory is based in practice, red theory is based in theory." That was my statement, which demonstrates my ascription to theoretical science. I simply see no potential for practical application of red theory, and I've seen nothing from red camps that show otherwise.

Further, I say I don't care about line, as in when I'm participating in any revolutionary campaign — not political agenda, but revolutionary campaign, which is different — I could really give a shit if you're a militant red or a backwoods biker for Christ. If you're with the business we're crackin' off then I'll ride in the same car with you. Do I dig your political line? That's irrelevant during

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...Zero

campaigns as long as our interests intersect on the immediate issues. This is also what Bakunin meant and myself when I quote him when he said in a letter to his sister "sometimes you have to throw theory into the fire for it only spoils life" – spoils, not "stalls" (another typo). We're saying theory that cannot be applied, no matter how sound, is worthless. At that time he was still practicing Hegelian dialectics which is nihilistic in nature. And then he went and got himself a political agenda and became just as boring as Marx.

As I state in my original critique, your original article has a clear contradiction in your dudes' own analysis. The paragraph #5 and paragraph #10 directly contradict each other. But whatever. As I said, it was kinda half-assed and it's a mostly irrelevant point within all our other conversation on this shit. Ultimately I maintain my original statement on this which you neglected only to reiterate the same point which is that in refusing to participate in these pigs' exploitative practices, clearly I said "the P.I.C. will have to adjust to accommodate us." That does not even suggest a declaration that it will "close all prisons." For the record, I quoted a comrade from the Free Virginia Movement when I said that.

Lastly in my own personal defense of nihilism, I find red political agenda idealistic and historically and theoretically frightening and horrific. Be that as it may, I actually find anarchist ideas about some revolutionary end result of global economic syndications just as whimsical, and frankly unfavorable as any other systemic socio-economic structure. It's basically just another formula based around labor and industry and distribution of wealth and so on. It fails to bring into question the value and dependence of labor and production in itself. So ultimately it may be egalitarian in theory, which I align with in regard to revolutionary practice in our current socio-economic landscape, as we work from a decentralized organizational praxis. At the end of the day, the idea is to still be subject to industry, and so becomes somewhat mechanical and antithetical to the liberated spirit of the inherent animal nature of humanity. Further, any system, be it hierarchical like communism, or horizontal like anarchism, if it's a system designed to control the means of production, it is susceptible to corruption and a gradual development toward the control of humans by the worst part of other humans. In this case, the nihilist, rejecting all idealistic political theory, will be just as likely to attack and destroy anarchist syndicalism as she would any other system. That is, if it begins to be corrupted – which it would.

And so what this means for the nihilist is that we look forward to nothing but our cigarettes, our bitter coffee, and destruction.

I suppose I could go on and nit pick some more shit, but there's no point. I think we understand each other, and so I shall withdraw back into the black coils of my madness. Feel free to reawaken me for purposes of business or pleasure.

In the end, I hope I speak for everyone who gives a shit when I say I look forward to solidi-

fying an alliance with you – as I've done before – for the coming tidal wave against the agony of oppression.

Face first in the fight for peace.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We appreciate Zero's willingness to continue the dialogue over our theoretical disagreements, and to build our practical unity in the struggle against oppression in which we do have much agreement. We want to reiterate that at this stage in the struggle, we have more unity with Zero and other anarchists than we have differences. We are all fighting to overthrow imperialism, and to take on that enemy we need a united front of all the enemies of the imperialist state. As Zero stresses that means uniting around the battles of the day, despite ideological differences.

There's no need to reiterate our responses to most of Zero's points, instead we want to take this opportunity to again comment on the theoretical debate over anarchism vs. communism and what's the best way to achieve liberation for the world's oppressed. As we've said before, anarchists and communists are fighting for the same end goal: a world where no group of people has power over any other group of people. Contrary to how Zero phrases it above, saying communism is hierarchical while anarchism is horizontal, anarchism is the communist's ultimate goal, we just disagree on how to get there. It is the getting-there process where communists believe in the use of force and repression of the oppressors.

This may seem like a theoretical and esoteric discussion that doesn't have much relevance to our day-to-day organizing. After all, we all know that right now the imperialists hold the power, and in the context of the prison struggle the criminal injustice system is a daunting and powerful enemy that we are all struggling against in many arenas. We aren't close to a revolutionary situation in the United States today, and so neither the communists nor the anarchists are in a position to seize power tomorrow. But this theory informs our practice in the struggle. Zero understands this and so stands firm in eir political positions, weaving them into eir discussion of the September 9th protests. In this we completely agree with Zero. In the long run this theory will determine whether or not (and how quickly) we are successful in overthrowing imperialism, which for many in the world is a life and death battle.

As scientists, we look to history to inform us about the most effective theory and strategy. Zero takes this same approach but draws different conclusions from eir study of history. We disagree with Zero's analysis that there isn't a significant distinction between communism and fascism (ey wrote: "the differentiation between 'nationalistic' socialism and so-called 'international' socialism to be mostly a matter of semantics.") Obviously Zero knows that fascism is an ideology that promotes the oppression of certain groups of people to the benefit of others, while communism promotes the end of oppression of groups of people. But studying the historical practice of communist revolutions we come to different conclusions from Zero. While capitalist propaganda tries to

convince us that communists are brutal and murderous dictators, a careful study of Russian and Chinese history, from history books not written by capitalist apologists, demonstrates otherwise.

First we will state the obvious: neither the Russian nor the Chinese revolutions succeeded in implementing communism. Both reached a socialist state and then were overthrown by state capitalists from within. But during the years when they were implementing socialism and building towards communism, both countries made tremendous contributions to humynity. There are several important metrics we could look at here. To name just a few important ones:

1. Lives saved from feudalism/capitalism, i.e. people no longer starving to death, receiving health care, etc.
2. Lives saved from fascist and imperialist aggression, i.e. the Russian pivotal and central role in the defeat of Hitler and the fascists in World War II, and Chinese support for revolutionary movements around the world.
3. Advances made towards communism, i.e. the Chinese Cultural Revolution as a historical advance over the Russian implementation of socialism in terms of addressing the issues of corruption in socialist state structures through mass participation.

"The central problem with the critics of Stalin is that they do not understand the historical time period he lived in and the real-world choices that actually existed. Yes, he killed many people, too many even according to himself. However, all his repression combined was small compared with the lives he saved through the rapid and revolutionary transformation of society that he carried out. The choice the USSR had was not between liberal humyn-rights utopia on the one hand and tsarist era backwardness on the other. As if to drill this point into thick skulls, history has shown what happens after decades of criticism of Stalin: regression so that millions today are dying for lack of conditions that used to exist under Stalin almost 50 years ago! People supporting 'humyn-rights' and attacking Stalin are responsible for far more deaths than Stalin. That is evidence of the real world choices being faced – not between utopia and Stalin but between the pro-Western phony communists like Khrushchev and Brezhnev and bourgeois politicians like Yeltsin on the one hand and Stalin on the road of Marxism-Leninism on the other hand. Stalin should be compared with other political leaders and then his merits will stand clear.

"Middle-class people from the West focus much too much on dissidents and not enough on causes of death such as food, clothing and basic medical care being lacking. Even including the repression he carried out, Stalin still doubled the life expectancy of his people. For this reason, polls of Russians on their favorite past leaders continue to show Stalin as the second most preferred leader of the past century, after Lenin. Although Amerikkans love Lincoln more than Russians love Stalin, Stalin has a higher public acclaim than most U.S. presidents have amongst Amerikkans, according to the survey by the Public Opinion fund cited in Pravda." (From MIM Theory 6: The Stalin Issue)

Zero believes that humyn nature will inevitably lead to people seizing power for persynal gain

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...Zero

if a state remains. In some ways Zero is correct. Zero's conclusion is similar to what Maoists say about the dangers of a new bourgeoisie arising within the party because of the strong history and remnants of capitalist culture. People don't just magically change overnight, and some will try to take advantage of opportunities to seize power and wealth even after a revolution. This is why the Chinese communists initiated the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: to encourage and foster the criticism of leadership by the people so that leaders who become corrupt will be exposed and removed.

Communists believe that people are conditioned by their environment. We have loads of historical evidence to support this. And so, like the anarchists, we believe that if we can build a society where all people are equal and all people's needs are met, and where the culture doesn't encourage violence and power grabbing, but rather fosters cooperation and kindness, people will learn and adapt into this more peaceful existence. But unlike the anarchists, we don't think this can be implemented overnight. We will need a period where we have a state to force the former-oppressor classes out of power and keep them from taking that power back. We call this state the dictatorship of the proletariat, because it is using the power of the state in the interests

of the oppressed. And during this time we will also be fighting against new people trying to take and abuse power. During this period of cultural revolution we will be remaking the culture while we are transforming ourselves to think and work collaboratively, for the good of all of humankind. People won't just start doing this on a mass scale spontaneously; it will take a long period of struggle against the capitalist patriarchal culture. The Chinese communists made significant strides, but we must continue to do more and better.

For people interested in going deeper into these questions we recommend a few readings. See page 2 for info on how to get this lit from us.

1. There is an entire theory journal written by MIM about Stalin in 1994, along with other relevant articles and reviews. Get *MIM Theory* 6.
2. For a deeper look at the successes and failures of communism we recommend *MIM Theory* 4, a theory journal by MIM, but also we distribute many books by both communists and non-communists detailing their experiences and observations in revolutionary China which provide objective (non-bourgeois-propaganda) facts about the real successes and struggles in that country under Mao.
3. We distribute several books and essays on the restoration of capitalism in the USSR and China for a more in-depth study of that history.★

Subjectivism in Recruiting: Dangerous or Tactical

by MIM(Prisons)
December 2016
español en página 22

first. It is a prudent security tactic to not expose what political work you do to someone who you're not sure about.

Next you say ey is younger, naive and trusting, and you imply that you will take advantage of that. That is how you create resentment. And when people resent people associated with the movement, the movement is put at risk. This is very likely when romance is involved. That is the number one reason not to mix dating with recruiting. People get confused about motivations. Recruiting friends is a little less risky, but also has this problem. It is true that the young are more open to revolutionary politics, which might lead us to take up tactics like leafleting at schools. Our approach should not be to take advantage of the young, or wimmin in general, by using characteristics caused by the gender oppression that they face. It should rather be to tap into the righteous resentment they might have of that gender oppression so that they throw off the negative characteristics that it has encouraged in them, and become revolutionaries.

In more advanced situations it can go another way where comrades start to question whether someone is hanging around because they're dating a comrade or because they're down for the struggle themselves. So for the individual and the collective it is better to

Struggling for Unity Through Study

by a Texas prisoner
May 2016

The real task before us is to convince prisoners that struggling for pecuniary aims solely is to struggle for nothing more than a piece of the imperialist pig pie. I myself don't give a fuck as to whether prisoners get paid or not, just as I was not concerned with the whining "Occupy Wall Street" labor aristocracy complaining when their opulent pig lifestyles were compromised by the "Great Recession" of '08. Good! But I am encouraged there are some stirrings of dissent from Texas prisoners regarding conditions of confinement. It is before us now to harness and direct this dissent into revolutionary channels.

Since beginning this letter I have been approached by a prisoner housed in my wing. This prisoner, "Ivo," avowed themselves to be communist. Ivo receives *ULK*. Ivo was born in Honduras, but raised in the United States. Ivo is a Guevarista. I have initiated and opened a channel of dialog with Ivo and a Black prisoner, "Mississippi." Mississippi has preferred access to the MLM - MIM materials I have available. I have broached the subject of forming a study group with these two. The idea was received rather coolly by both. The three of us are to meet this weekend to discuss it. Ivo says they have serious reservations concerning the MIM line. When we meet I will inquire of their position regarding MIM's 3 main principles. As for me, as it is for MIM, these principles are fundamentally decisive.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We print this letter as an example of the hard work required to build unity. This comrade demonstrates how to build common ground with others, and then studying together to discover areas of disagreement and build greater unity. Of course there will be times when we find that we have disagreements too significant to continue working together. For us (and for this writer) those questions are summarized in our dividing line questions. Any other differences we consider to be non-divisive and things we can struggle through or put to the side in the interests of united action and the greater anti-imperialist movement. We also need to keep in mind that those who disagree with these dividing line questions are not enemies just because of that disagreement. At this stage in the anti-imperialist struggle these folks are still potentially valuable allies in the united front against imperialism, even if they are not communists.★

be clear and scientific about what one's position is.

Recruiting should always be done based on a scientific explanation of political line. Of course, subjectivity comes into play, and there's nothing wrong with packaging things so they will be more attractive to the masses (i.e. form/language).

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Revolutionary Greetings,

...I plan to reach out to this girl I'm dating here in re politics. I will start to feel her out on that topic tomorrow for the first time. She is 24 years old. I'm 31 years old, so I believe I can mold her. She is naive and trusting. I will attempt to teach her once I feel her out. Please write back and let me know what you think about this particular matter.

MIM(Prisons) responds: Generally, we discourage recruiting someone you're dating. Particularly when this persyn has exhibited no independent interest in anti-imperialism. We do agree with your seemingly cautious approach of "feeling her out"

Generic Influence Tactics



- 1) Rational persuasion - logic
- 2) Inspirational appeals - emotions
- 3) Consultation - participation
- 4) Ingratiation - flattery
- 5) Personal appeals - reference to relationship
- 6) Exchange - stated or implied trade
- 7) Coalition tactics - support from others
- 8) Pressure - intimidation or threats
- 9) Legitimizing tactics - authority or expertise

Thoughts on Unity and Alliances

by UFO of United Struggle from Within
March 2017

I believe that having alliances with lines that are military minded is somewhat dangerous to the united front. First and foremost, I do believe in armed struggle, but building public opinion on imperialism and moving toward communism as the ultimate goal to end all oppression is key. Some lumpen orgs or nationalists might criticize MIM(Prisons) on their line. But truth be told we must study the history of the Cultural Revolution in China, which gives us the best way to move toward socialism, ending in communism. It also allows us to learn from the mistakes of the past.

Response to Coffee House Revolutionaries

by a California prisoner
March 2017

As to the comrade in Ohio and MIM's response on "Coffee House Revolutionaries or Real Militants?" in *ULK 54*, I don't think the comrade in Ohio knows or realizes what MIM(Prisons) does or does not have in the organization's caches or whether or not MIM(Prisons) is or isn't physically or militarily preparing for the perfect time to do what that comrade is expressing in this letter. Also MIM(Prisons) follows Mao's line on war strategy. MIM(Prisons) is not a street gang, or a criminal org. If you want to, and feel the time is perfect to take on the imperialist U.S. army, you're sadly mistaken. In your commentary, I understood where you're coming from because I am not much of a politician. I'm a soldier, and fighter as well. I, comrade in Ohio, agree with you that violence is a necessary means to achieve one's goals in our type of struggle, and little by little, on a small scale the snowball has begun to roll. Trump is helping us push that ball forward, with his political ignorance. He's threatening to dismantle people like us, who have outside organizations – other than MIM(Prisons) – whom we have direct third world connections to.

Now, where I am in disagreement with MIM(Prisons) is that they, or we, should not be reluctant to put a cache of weapons in bunkers or safe-houses just because of what MIM(Prisons) says "recent history" in the United States reveals about the murder or imprisonment of revolutionary groups that have attempted to do that. There does not have to be a set time to get weapons ready. That can be done clandestinely. I will not elaborate on that any more at this time. I will say that I do respect how MIM(Prisons) responded to the comrade in the Ohio prison. You, MIM(Prisons), stated at the end of your response that you "look forward to learning and building with this comrade and eir organization for many years to come." The organization I'll be working for out there are ex-military, ex-cops, and from ex-intelligence of 3rd world military groups from all over the world, and of whom they, as well as all other organizations like them, can't be too happy about the hard line President Trump is taking. ★

Amerikkka targets lumpen orgs, and nationalist groups. So alliance with a militia group might jeopardize the united front. And once the imperialist policies place everyone in one basket who they feel are a threat, they will place them in prisons or worse eliminate them as what happened to many BPP members in the late 1960s. So, I must say comrades, that MIM(Prisons)'s approach with study groups and challenging all comrades to study history and dialectical materialism prepares us to use public opinion to change the minds of the lumpens and all those who are oppressed.

What good is guns if you don't know who the enemy truly is? By enemy I mean, just going up against amerikkka's army is not enough. The enemy is the system which must be changed. Guns with no vision or discipline is suicide to the united front. The best weapon in the struggle is unity, and armed struggle is also important. But each one teach one is the method to awakening the masses on how capitalism destroys lives.

Once the American people become self-reliant and help their fellow man and stop supporting this economic monster (capitalism-imperialism) then hopefully through public opinion and democratic centralism we can achieve the goal we all want which is communism.

As for snitches, there are different levels of snitching. But I will not allow a person in my circle who I know has the tendencies to crack under pressure. I mean those individuals who work for the prison administration, receiving goods in order to cause chaos. They would go so far as telling prison officials that you are sharing revolutionary material and having your books confiscated.

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However, there is something wrong with manipulating people based on their subjectivity to take up politics for reasons other than their support of those politics. This leads to confusion, both politically and interspersally. This is really a strategic question when we say don't use sex, flirtation or friendship to recruit people. Our goal is to teach people to think scientifically and create strong, scientific organizations.

This is not to say that most people in the mass movements will be scientific thinkers won over by purely objective motivations. So there are tactical questions of what language and images we use in order to present our message to the masses in ways that they can relate to. Wearing uniforms, having good music associated with our movement, or having famous people recommend our work are all tactics that appeal to peoples' subjectivism in a way that is not manipulative of the individual and therefore threatening the movement.

At least half of our readers are in prison. And even in university or any smaller community, you will often find people you are already friends with becoming interested in politics. Then it becomes a skill of separating business from pleasure. Political disagreements should not decide friendships and vice versa. A useful tactic to use in this situation, if you feel there might be a conflict of interest or confusion, is to pass a friend off to another

Even on the outside you have to be careful aligning with rats who will jeopardize the united front in order to demoralize and cause dissociation. But as long as those who represent the militant side of fighting oppression can agree that we must use strategy and wait for the right time to strike the imperialist monsters, I'm all for it. But if militants feel as though focoism is their aim, I'm all out. Educate the poor and oppressed first, to show them the real enemy. And there needs to be a change in habits and consciousness so that we will not allow materialistic ideology to control us.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade raises a good point about the risks of allying with those who are engaging in military actions now. We agree with em that focoism is not the right strategy. But the value of a united front is that we can disagree on this point of strategy in terms of the right time for armed struggle, but still unite in our fight against imperialism. We can work with these organizations while struggling with them over these points if such struggle seems fruitful. We do not need to have complete agreement on points of strategy in order to work together in a united front. We would also want to keep these groups at arms' length for the simple fact that advocating armed struggle now is a known tactic cops use to wreck a movement from within.

But beyond the question of uniting without complete theoretical agreement, this writer is arguing that it is too risky to unite with focoists because their premature military action could bring down the whole united front. This is

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...Dating

comrade to be their primary contact and recruiter. This gives the friend more independence to explore politics on their own terms with less pressure from implications that political agreement with you is a requirement for that friendship.

One new comrade who was won over to our cause reported how another prisoner dropped a *ULK* in eir lap on the way to a hearing and said, "here, you'll like this." Many of our subscribers report finding *ULK* in the dayroom. Both of these are examples of "free dropping," a technique to spread our ideas as far as possible to ensure that all who are interested have the opportunity to be exposed to them.

Finding the right balance between casting a wide net, like free dropping, and developing new cadre one-on-one is a tough tactical question. MIM has always erred on the side of casting a wide net. This is based in a strategic decision that building public opinion against imperialism is more important in our conditions than building cadre organizations. But we need people to do more than read *ULK* and our website. Whether it's supporting MIM(Prisons) projects or not, we need people to step up for anti-imperialism to amplify that anti-imperialist voice and to build independent institutions of the oppressed. The oppressed are reaching out to us every day for help. We need more comrades to step up and build the power necessary to provide real solutions to their problems. ★

Drugs a Barrier to Organizing in Many Prisons

by an Arkansas prisoner
January 2017

I got a chance to read *ULK 53* and I remember an article on leadership(1) and how a brother wrote in from a prison in Maryland admitting his part in being part of the problem by dealing drugs in the institution he's in.(2) I'm held hostage in a similar institution that is a complete waste of money. I know that this injustice has to crumble, but it takes education and an awareness to speed this process. Unfortunately, the facility I'm held in is overrun with sk8 (ice) and 2evce (K2) and so the main objective of most of my fellow prisoners here is to maintain their drug habit daily or capitalize off of this impairment to our struggle.

I've been on both sides of that fence so I understand how hard it is to be woken up to the reality. Here at East Arkansas Regional Unit, \$100 of ice can go as far as getting someone fucked off and stabbed up real good. But to tell someone that by doing that they're falling into the trap the pigs have set for us, then you become the enemy and the target of violence yourself. I know there are more like-minded men incarcerated in Arkansas Department of Corruption but we're so few and far between that I know any steps taken to further revolution in my state will have to be taken on my part.

I am more than willing to take a stand against the injustices and the power behind it. I ask United Struggle from Within for your help. I read that you have study packs on leadership and a number of different courses. I would greatly appreciate your help in my education and I will speak out and share with anyone around me here that is within earshot.

MIM(Prisons) responds: Drugs as a tool of com-

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certainly a risk we need to consider. Groups within the UF have the autonomy to act independently of the group, and so some may engage in actions that others disagree with. While we wouldn't automatically exclude focoists from a UF based on their political line, this comrade is correct to warn that we need to stay vigilant about actions that present a risk to our work and to our organization.

At the same time, resisters of all stripes, even those who aren't focoist, bring down repression from the state. Even anti-imperialist academics and people working in electoral politics are harassed, and murdered, by the state when their words are too effective. One could also argue that the frivolous security practices of other groups will jeopardize the UF. We have to find a balance between putting ourselves out there, and getting the work done.

We can't make up easy rules to answer to this contradiction. Instead everyone has to evaluate alliances based on the circumstances and current situation. ★

placency and distraction is all too common inside and outside prisons. This is an issue we want to investigate more deeply as part of our study of the imprisoned lumpen class. We have since enrolled this comrade in our intro study course to get started on the path towards stronger leadership.

We will be doing a report on our research on the drug economy in prisons in the last issue of *Under Lock & Key* this year. To help us, we ask that all of our readers complete the survey below to the best of your ability and mail it to us at the address on p. 1:

1. What items (including drugs) are the most in demand on the black market in your prison?
2. What kinds of drugs are most popular (including alcohol)?
3. What kinds of drugs are easiest to obtain and why?
4. How much do drugs cost?
5. How do drugs make it into prison and into the hands of the sellers?
6. How do prisoners pay for drugs?
7. What are the health impacts of these drugs on the population?
8. What are the social impacts of these drugs on the population? (ie. more fighting, more passivity, more/less socializing, more/less community, what activities would people likely be doing if it weren't for drugs)
9. Are there certain groups of people who seem to use drugs more than others?
10. Who benefits from drug dealing at your facility?
11. Have you seen effective efforts by prisoners to organize against drug use and its effects? If so, please describe them. ★

Notes:

1. Ehecattli, "Who Says the Masses Can't Lead?", October 2016, *Under Lock & Key* No. 53 (November/December 2016).

2. Maryland prisoner, "ULK is a Wake Up Call", June 2016, *Under Lock & Key* No. 53 (Nov/Dec 2016).

Right On!

by a Georgia prisoner

With your head held high standing strong and firm,
with the energy to move the nation.
Your voice screaming loud and clear, equality, justice and peace.
And with hope, our people pump their fist screaming, "right on!"
Right on! Right on! Right on!
Manifesting a universal movement, that was bold and strong.
Installing the mind-frame that "I am my people, and my people are me,"
Providing strength, love and unity.
Showing we don't need their food programs, community control nor schools.
No more, shall we be their fools.
You sought out for nothing they themselves wouldn't have covet,
sick of oppression, it's not as though we've chose it.
Fearing we will no longer bow and scrape our knees, they strategized
a plan, for you with ease.
So being vindictive and rageful they labeled you a hate group,
Targeted for extermination, because they could not control you.
It wouldn't have made a difference being mild and fervent.
You did what you suppose, giving mind, body and soul
as hard as storm currents.
For the people you lived,
and for the people you dived,
head first into a
revolutionary suicide. ★

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

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

Music Review: All Amerikkkan Bada\$\$

by MIM(Prisons)
April 2017

Most Amerikan self-described "communists" will not even listen to this album as soon as they see the title. Those same white nationalist socialists refuse to read MIM's writings because of all the KKKs and dollar \$igns. They claim it's too distracting. We say transforming the oppressors' language is a necessary part of building a revolutionary culture to replace the old one.

A week ago, the top results brought by a search for "Amerikkka" on youtube.com(1) brought up songs from Ice Cube's *Amerikkka's Most Wanted* album, some other hip hop singles, and videos from a former associate of MIM with explicit anti-Amerikkkan messages. This week, Joey Bada\$\$'s new album is rising to the top for that query. *All Amerikkkan Bada\$\$* isn't as edgy as Ice Cube (it does lack Cube's misogyny) and certainly not as edgy as Shubel Morgan (who did music videos for MIM and LLCO), but it's got a pretty strong message of New Afrikan unity and struggle.

In one interview Joey Bada\$\$ said:

"It's like hella vegetables. It's hella good for you, and it's almost my hesitance with it: the fact that it's so good for you, because these kids these days want candy."(2)

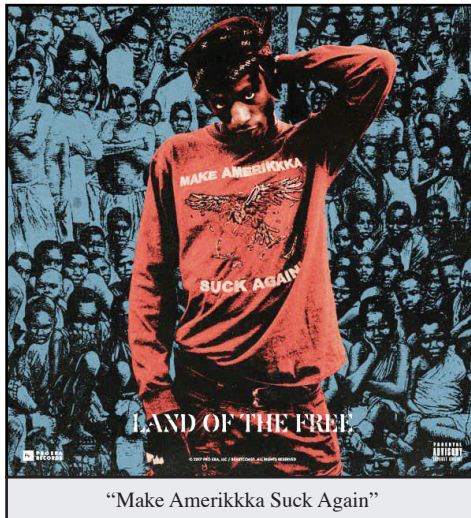
It's an interesting quote, because Shubel Morgan often talked about the need for "sugar-coated bullets" in their artwork to help the message go down.

The album title, *All Amerikkkan Bada\$\$* is no doubt a reference to Badass's late partner in rhymes, Capital STEEZ's mixtape *Amerikkkan Korruption*. Lyrics on this new album hit references to that mixtape as well, such as the track "Dead Prez" that was produced by Joey Bada\$\$\$. Both Capital STEEZ and Joey Bada\$\$ are respected as lyricists, with fast New York styles of rapping.

The album cover (and associated art) features an Amerikkkan flag made out of red, white and blue bandannas. The song "Legendary" makes a reference to Crip culture with the line "the legends they never die, the niggers they only multiply." More explicit are the lines in "Rockabye Baby":

*"Peace to my Slimes, and peace to my Crips
Neighborhood police and they always on the shift
Protect my Bloods, look out for my cuz
When it's all said and done, we be the realest there was
Who else if just not us?
If you 'bout this revolution, please stand up"*

ScHoolboy Q of the Hoover Crips in Los Angeles comes into eir verse with, "I'm part of the reason they still Crippin' out in Brooklyn" and goes on to echo the struggles of New Afrikans



against police brutality and unemployment.

While the first single, "Devastated" has been out for months, the second, "Land of the Free", came out just before the album dropped this week. The first song is about success, and the video has a party vibe to it. "Land of the Free" is about the struggle, and the video features some strong imagery, including all-white pigs executing Black and Brown people in all black. Joey Bada\$\$ intervenes to free some of them, but is later shot and hung by cops in Ku Klux Klan robes. And while the video shows Joey Bada\$\$'s U.S. flag made of bandannas throughout, what is not so prominent is the upside down U.S. flag on the back of eir jacket. "Land of the Free" features lyrics like, "sorry Amerikkka, but i will not be your soldier, Obama just was not enough, i want more closure." The apt-titled opening track, "Good Morning Amerikkka" references Black Panther Geronimo Pratt's framing for murder by the state.

While the album features the usual "fuck the police" and "fuck the government" refrains, the last track, "Amerikkkan idol", also says, "Fuck white supremacy," a slogan that seems to be coming into vogue following the election of Donald Trump.(3) This track closes with some pretty sober and explicit lyrics:

"What the government is doing amongst our people is downright evil, disturbing. But not surprising, that's for certain... I believe they are simply trying to slander, start a civil war within the U\$A amongst Black and white. They want us to rebel so that it makes it easy for them to kill us and put us in jails... Alton Sterling's are happening every day in this country, around the world... And it's time for us to rebel, better yet raise hell. I just want everyone to be cautious about how they go about it... not only battling them on a physical plain, but to outsmart them... As Black men, i think our gangs need to do a better job at protecting us, the people, our communities and not assisting in destroying them brutally. It's time they even the score... We need solutions. You better start plotting now."★

Notes:

1. youtube.com generally occupies the #2 ranked website on the internet by Alexa
2. Eli Schwadron, 4 October 2016, Joey Badass Compares His New 'A.A.B.A.' Album to Vegetables, XXL.
3. see ULK 55 on white nationalism

Capitalist Copyright Laws Stifle Education

by Soso of MIM(Prisons)
May 2017

MIM(Prisons) recently received notification from the publisher Seven Stories Press that we are in violation of copyright laws by making a PDF of *The Huey P. Newton Reader* available for free on our website. Copyright laws are a capitalist invention to enable the holders to make more profits. In the case of books, it's publishers (and sometimes the authors) that are making money on these copyrights.

For most of what gets printed these days, trashy novels, bourgeois interpretations of history and the like, we don't care that distribution is limited by copyright. But when it comes to revolutionary literature, especially that which is relevant to the people least able to afford it, we see clearly how copyright laws stifle education. Books about Huey Newton, founder and leader of the Black Panther Party, need to be more widely available.

MIM(Prisons) explicitly publishes everything under a creative commons license which invites everyone to build on, copy and share all that we write. We're not making money on our work, we're putting all of our money into spreading revolutionary education. And we want to encourage others to do the same.

Continued on next page...

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!

CORRESPONDENCE STUDY COURSES

The introductory study group studies a couple essays on prison economics in level 1, and some basics on Maoism in level 2. Graduates can go on to join our University of Maoist Thought, which studies more advanced material. We encourage prisoner-led study groups to also participate in our correspondence study groups!

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.

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 – what 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.

From Cop to Anti-Imperialist

by an Alabama prisoner
December 2016

I recently received my first issue of *Under Lock & Key* (52). I must say that your cause is a noble one. From 2009 to 2013 I was a police officer with the Birmingham Police Department here in Alabama. I got into the law enforcement profession with the sole intent of making the world a better place by serving the people, upholding the constitution, and taking dangerous criminals off the street. It didn't take me long to realize, however, that the most dangerous criminals were my very own fellow officers. Everywhere I looked within my department was corruption, tyranny and oppression.

The details of all the events that led up to my incarceration as a political prisoner are too numerous to list in this letter, but I assure you, they are atrocious. The basic gist of it is that after repeated attempts to corrupt me and indoctrinate me as an oppressor, and my subsequent refusal and threats to report my knowledge of corruption within my department to federal law enforcement authorities, officials from my department erroneously charged me with setting fire to multiple abandoned and condemned houses that were being used as dens for drugs and prostitution. This is all a vicious lie concocted by the government.

Having faith in the old saying "the truth shall set you free" and the belief that we are innocent until proven guilty in this country and will receive a fair and honest trial, I chose to fight my case in our so-called criminal justice system or, as I quickly discovered, the criminal injustice system.

I was informed very arrogantly by the investigators (Birmingham police officials) that they had "hand picked" the judge who was over my case and if I didn't accept a plea deal then this particular judge was going to "crush" me. The judge himself even told me that if I accepted the plea deal he would show me mercy, but if I rejected the plea deal and took my case to trial then "there would be no mercy."

Refusing to be bullied and intimidated into confessing to crimes that I did not commit and begging for mercy when I had done nothing that required it, I proceeded to trial. After an unfair and totally biased and one-sided monkey trial in a Kangaroo court (it took me a while to realize I wasn't at the zoo), I am now firmly of the opinion that D.A. stands for "Disinformation Agent" and that our judges have even less honor than a thief in the night. I was not allowed to present video evidence that proved my innocence and showed intimidation and coercion by police officials. Unfortunately, I was wrongfully convicted and sentenced to 100 years in prison.

I am not submitting my story as an invitation to any pity party, but merely to attest to the corrupt and broken system that I'm ashamed to say I once worked for. A system that sends a man to prison for 100 years for non-violent property crimes where no death or injury occurred; crimes



Read more about Chris Dorner, another cop who didn't play by the rules of the imperialists, in ULK 31

that he didn't even commit.

Now that I am condemned to rot in prison for the rest of my life while my two young sons remain orphaned since I was their only parent, I guess that I'm just supposed to accept my fate. Well, my eyes are wide open now which is why I believe in and uphold the 6 points of MIM(Prisons) and the 5 principles of the United Front for Peace in Prisons.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This writer gives us a good example of why we say that we must judge people by their actions and not just their history. People are capable of learning and changing. Someone who was formerly working for the oppressors can realize their mistake and join the cause of the oppressed. Most often this happens when someone loses their position of privilege, but sometimes it can happen just through education.

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...Copyright

Education should be free for everyone. This includes educational material like books. Intellectual property rights laws stifle creativity and education and also directly harm the welfare of the people. Patents keep drugs restrictively expensive by prohibiting anyone but the inventor from manufacturing the drugs. This system of legal restrictions and secrecy inhibits creativity and the advancement of society by preventing people from building on inventions made by other people. Meanwhile, people suffer.

It's only in a capitalist society, where profit is king, that we need these sorts of intellectual property restrictions. In a socialist society, where the goal is the welfare of the people, we will prioritize the most efficient and effective formula and distribution of life-saving drugs, educational material, and everything else that is good for huminity.

We are sympathetic that small publishers of political books like Seven Stories Press are in a difficult space to earn money. With new book re-

How can I get free books?

Lead a local study group to get *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire.

Participate in the campaign to commemorate the Plan de San Diego and get *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán* by a MIM(Prisons) study group. (see p. 21)

Complete our survey on drugs in prison (p. 9) to get *Capitalism Plus Dope Equals Genocide* by Black Panther Michael "Cetewayo" Tabor.

Translate articles from *ULK* into Spanish and get a Spanish/English dictionary.

Complete our level 1 study group and get *Fundamental Political Line of MIM(Prisons)* and Mao's "On Contradiction."

During the Chinese Cultural Revolution some people were imprisoned for anti-people activities and provided with education about why it is wrong to oppress other people. And we have examples of people who came out of these prisons devoted to serving the people, thoroughly ashamed of their former harmful actions and committed to change. This education is easier when we have state power and the government is working in the interests of the oppressed, but even now we can score victories, especially behind bars, with those who came to prison with erroneous ideas and participated in actions that harmed the people. For this reason we must judge people not by what they say, or by labels they have been given, but by their actions. Those who demonstrate to be consistently working on the side of the oppressed have a place in the revolutionary united front. ★

leases it will often take a lot of book sales just to make back the cost of the printing. However, this doesn't make us sympathetic to copyright claims on a book that was first printed in 2002. Perhaps access to an electronic PDF is curtailing some sales of the physical book, but if free access is getting more people to read this important book, we think that's a victory.

We hope that Seven Stories Press will re-evaluate their goals. On their website Seven Stories claims: "Our credo is that publishers have a special responsibility to defend free speech and human rights, and to celebrate the gifts of the human imagination wherever we can." They have published some important and controversial books including the Dark Alliance series about the CIA and crack cocaine, *All Things Censored* by Mumia Abu Jamal, and the annual Project Censored's *Censored* report. Yet by shutting down the distribution of an important book about the ideology of the Black Panther Party in order to preserve their profits, Seven Stories is working counter to their credo. ★

- 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

Plans for an educational campaign around the history of the Plan de San Diego and the current need to unify Aztlán are under way. See page 21 for more information.

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 (Ohio only).

BUILD A UNITED FRONT FOR PEACE IN PRISONS

The principal contradiction that must be unraveled to address many of the problems prisoners face is petty divisions that prevent unity. 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 around issues and lit; 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. (MO only)

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, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, 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. (*NV recently got new grievance process regulations and the petition needs updating!)

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 also have 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.

No TX Pack Tactics Have Worked

by a Texas prisoner
October 2016

I would like to inform you that I have tried several things listed in the Texas Pack but to no avail. As for the Offender Grievance Program/Administrative Remedies, there are no such things in existence. But what we do have is Administrative Criminal Victimization. I have written the U.S. Department of Justice concerning many issues and I get the same response letter every time. No help.

I've also tried going through the ARRM Division Administrator concerning the denial of a Step 2 grievance but got no response. I have also written to several of the contacts that are listed in the Texas Pack and have gotten no response from them either. I have also filed a Sworn Complaint with the District Attorney here in Coryell County and got no response.

You have educated me a great deal on how to stand when nothing else I have tried seems to work, and these people are not open to reasoning of any type. I just wanted for you to know that I haven't been sitting in here doing nothing after requesting the information that you have sent me to date. I am one of the very few that are willing to stand up for themselves when his or her Rights are being violated and here is the situation that you just have to understand: today's inmate/offender is broken. The State has broken the spirit of those that had one to begin with and they are

content with the way things are and the way that they are being treated. And that, I am sorry to say, is a cold, hard fact.

In Solidarity, Spark Plug

MIM(Prisons) responds: The U.S. prison system has been somewhat effective at breaking the fighting spirit of people it deems threatening to the status quo, as this writer and many others in Texas attest. But our present system just can't help pushing the limits of how much it abuses people. In response to this abuse, new people are turned into revolutionaries every day. And once you know, you can't unknow. Texas comrades need to be there to direct the discontent into productive projects as it arises, lest these potential comrades fall to defeatism.

We knew going into it that the tactics in the Texas Pack are likely ineffective on an individual level. But some people have seen some relief, even though it's sporadic. An important aspect of this project is that everyone who signs up for a Texas Pack also gets a subscription to this newsletter. While they are seeking remedy through the administrative and legal channels outlined in the Texas Pack, they also have the opportunity to learn more about the reasoning behind the project, and the other campaigns United Struggle from Within and MIM(Prisons) are working on. Then through the pages of *ULK* we can develop our struggle on a broader scale than just filing grievances and writing letters. Keep on struggling! Keep your input coming! ★

Surveillance Cameras a Double-Edged Sword

by a California prisoner
March 2017

Greetings to everyone at MIM. I am a prisoner held captive here at High Desert State Prison, in Susanville, California. I'm writing to inform the people of this new and improved form of repression tactic hidden behind the name of public safety and security. An investigative report came out in December 2015 by the Inspector General about the abuse and cover-ups by officers at this prison for 2 decades. Since then, the powers that be have started to install the video recording cameras in the prison, which is not a bad idea. Most prisons have cameras on the yard. However, these new high-tech cameras now have audio/voice recording which is new for CDCR.

They have also installed them just about any and everywhere, in the chowhall, gym, day-room, yard, medical, law library, chapel, laundry, school/education, even in N.A. (Narcotic Anonymous) and A.A. (Alcoholic Anonymous), which begs the question, who're they really keeping an eye on and watching? Now don't get me wrong I'm all for holding these pigs/officers accountable for their actions. But now they're watching and listening to our conversations in the chapel during our religious services where prisoners talk freely and enjoy open discussions on religion, race,

Continued on next page...

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...Cameras

politics, without the eyes and ears of the custody staff. N.A. and A.A. is suppose to be Anonymous where prisoners can get help and talk openly and privately with each other and the sponsor about our addiction and recovery. Now the Anonymous is out the picture when custody can see and listen when they choose to.

Medical is suppose to be between the prisoner and doctor to talk and review medical issues and problems without custody knowing your business. Visiting always had cameras but if the state choses to take out the old and put in the new, then they will be able to listen to our intimate conversations with our family, friends, wives, children etc. All in the name of what? Public safety and security? Or is this just a new and improved way for CDCR to watch & now listen to everything a prisoner does? You decide.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We're glad to have this point brought up for consideration as most of what we've printed on this topic has been in favor of increased surveillance. A prime example was the campaign in North Carolina, centered around a lawsuit filed against staff for assaulting prisoners, focused on getting better camera coverage in state prisons to monitor staff. We supported this comrade in promoting eir efforts, recognizing the vulnerable situation that prisoners are in at the hands of the oppressor. Yet, for those of us outside prison, the call for more surveillance cameras gives one pause. It has come up in relation to police on the streets, but we dismissed that as not addressing the problem. The same could be said inside prisons.

The privacy struggle is one that is very relevant to us. At the same time it is mostly dominated by oppressor interests on both sides. In other words, it's hard to campaign for civil liberties in a general way that is anti-imperialist. There are engineering solutions to privacy that can be used as tools, tactically, by revolutionaries.

There have been reports on the chilling effect of surveillance in the United States, showing that people are less willing to visit certain websites after the Edward Snowden leaks exposing NSA spying operations. While we disagree with the Liberals who call for a freedom of speech that allows people to promote profits over humyn needs, we also propose a program for a dictatorship of the proletariat that expands freedom of speech in many ways compared to current conditions in this country. We would ban the Orwellian "smart TVs" and other technology that is recording and collecting data on people in their homes. We would guarantee not only net neutrality, but internet access to all. Below are some planks from the MIM platform on subjects related to the First Amendment:

1. Restrictions on public posting will be eliminated except on residential buildings.
2. Large and convenient bulletin boards will be placed on every block. Boards covered over will be evidence for the need to build more.
3. There will be convenient places to leave literature along with such bulletin boards.

Powledge Guards Unaware of the Law

by a Texas prisoner
May 2017

Your Texas Pack will support my contentions and add fuel to the fire I have started. You participate in the same practice I do and have been doing since 2010. I apply the law in my grievances. I apply PD-22 in correlation to ED-02.01 and apply the facts of official misconduct that lands officials on administrative probation or suspended 30, 60, or 90 days. I applaud your practice. I appreciate your action, and your newsletter gives me hope that I am not alone in fighting this Goliath that has no moral value. Thank you for your presence and participation.

I am on Powledge Unit after fighting my way to here via other units where I still have civil actions pending. But this unit enjoys retaliating against you for your protected right to file grievances or complain. Standards for prison operations in this country are made by the American Correctional Association (ACA), and ACA Standard 4-4274 states I have a protected right to complain about my conditions and official misconduct without fear of retaliation, but the guards don't know that it exists in ATC Rules. See ATC-040. It has been my safety beacon in many grieves.

The state works off the ignorance of inmates – our comrades so to speak. I am requesting that you keep doing what you do and teach the prison-

ers. Inform them of their rights, privileges, immunities under the Constitution. Where the prisoners of Texas really need help is in statutory law. I am understanding that Administrative Code is where statutory law lies, that governs jails and prisons. Texas prisoners in state facilities are not privy to these laws, so a prisoner cannot successfully litigate a case without an injury. An injury is not a prerequisite to 42 USC 1983.

Well keep up the good work and stand united and strong.

MIM(Prisons) responds: Legal work and campaigns, such as the information contained in the Texas Pack, are one aspect of our struggle toward a society without the abuses that the Texas Pack is focused on: grievance problems, indigent mail restrictions, exorbitant medical copay, and others. We don't think we can get to that society by focusing on just this angle alone, however. So we push our comrades who are getting good information from the Texas Pack to also recognize the bigger picture and the long-term struggle. MIM(Prisons)'s work is focused on prisons in the United States, but we strive for this work to coincide with the struggles of the most oppressed peoples in the world. If you're ready to take that step from prison reformer to revolutionary, we offer lots of study materials on the topic, and a correspondence study course for \$10 or work-trade.★

4. There will be no arrests in any non-residential building or premise for quiet distribution of literature. The only exception will be for high government officials meeting and who face threat of assassination--the Central Committee and government officials above a certain rank.
5. Arrests for vocal discussion will be limited to places where there is a need for meetings and orderly work. Cafeterias, outdoor sidewalks and most indoor hallways will be legally required to allow vocal discussion.
6. Meeting halls of public buildings will be made available for meetings to the public. If necessary more will be constructed.

Government bureaucrats interfering with the "free speech" of the public will be transferred to jobs where they have no such possibility.

Restrictions

1. Those advocating opposition to the dictatorship of the proletariat as defined at the top of the document will go to prison or re-education camp and thereby not enjoy all full public citizenship rights.
2. Sale of pornography will be forbidden. Distribution of nude photographs paid for by the photographer or persyn who signed a consent form to be displayed in photographs will always be legal, but government authorities may require a registration for financial bookkeeping purposes. Those publicly distributing nude photos of children 12 and under will be sent to re-education camp, whether money spent was their own or not.
3. Any non-party literature or other device for public opinion building will be paid for by indi-

vidual members of the public with money from salary and no outside capitalist money or stolen sources of wealth will be used to promote any opinion of the non-party public.

Stimulation

1. MIM will not order the government to censor the INTERNET except on questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and party rule.
2. USENET [internet message board] groups such as talk.rape, alt.activism.death-penalty, alt.politics.greens etc. will be permitted, partly for stimulation of the minds in imperialist countries, partly to bring to the surface bourgeois thoughts in need of professional proletarian refutation and partly because there will continue to be problems in all these areas under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The need for stimulation is especially great in the depoliticized imperialist countries. Many middle-class peoples will come under the dictatorship of the proletariat without ever knowing that the world's majority of people suffered threats to their survival on a daily basis. (1)

MIM Platform: Against prison censorship

Prison officials claim they have security reasons to act as censors. But censorship prevents prisoners from access to legal help, education, and political organization. Political and legal mail and literature are not a direct threat to the security of prisons.★

Note:

1. "Free speech" under the dictatorship of the proletariat, 1999 MIM Party Congress: Session II.

Gender Contradictions: Female Guards and Male Prisoners

by a Virginia prisoner
March 2017

I would like to bring to your attention a proliferating issue and a sophisticated form of manipulation and capitulation by certain female guards here, which is threatening my motivational efforts and energy of prisoners who are trying to mobilize pockets of resistance. The prisoners in our immediate cipher and midst on a daily basis, in the disguise of recreation, study groups, or just basic conversations, are involved in some alarming episodes of perversion here at Sussex Sucks I State Prison. If we stand by and just criticize, make fun of, or gossip and back bite about those prisoners who get snagged up in this spider web/trap, then the pigs are going to use this misguided erotic behavior to destroy the elements of positive aspirations that iz being pushed forward by a different segment of conscious prisoners here on this slave pen of oppression.

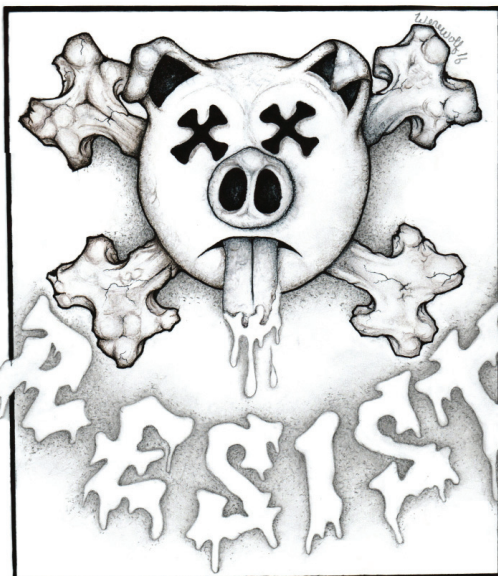
Everyone is aware of the enormous amount of jobs that become available because of the booming rise in the prison construction throughout the Amerikkkan colony. But no one seems to have noticed the alarming amount of female guards that are subsequently recruited, hired and then trained for a job inside this bulging prison culture complex! So today, a lot of these same female guards are assigned to the actual cell blocks/pods that house many of the state's most violent male prisoners. And as a direct result of the placement of these female guards inside each of these components, you now see these same so-called violent prisoners becoming mentally and emotionally hypnotized by the astute beauty of some female guards who exhibit this aura or facade with their tour of correctional duty and within their clandestine episodes of flirtation.

In some of these housing components, I have even witnessed female guards displaying their siren characteristics in an attempt to control and compel the feeble-minded guys into conforming with the prison rules and regulations. In some cases these female guards are playing mind games, as they get off on the drama of seeing several men chasing them and even fighting over them, and manipulating them into becoming pod police by telling and doing the police job as an incentive. These female guards want the prisoners to help them stroke their own clandestine exotic or erotic

fantasies while making money as a past time and advancing their career in law enforcement!

Before I commence my conclusion, it iz essential and imperative that I maintain the organizational strategy by indicating that there are numerous female guards who despise being exploited by the display of male sex organs in the workplace, and I really support all of these female guards who take a stance against this form of sexism. Because to subjugate women in general and solely on the basis of gender iz not only wrong, but dudes who believe and practice these subjective axioms and the actions that stem from this obnoxious belief are really saying that women are not worthy of genuine respect, or perhaps those prisoners think that a woman cannot be feminine without being submissive! All prisoners, brothas, all nations must begin the task of taking a personal analysis of themselves immediately and we should be self-critical. Otherwise we won't understand what our criminal thought pattern iz doing to the overall struggle of the masses here in North Amerikkka.

Correctional male chauvinism must be eliminated if prisoners really plan to make it past this adolescent crisis that arises to the level of this extracurricular prison activity.



In closing, I felt the need to proselytize to the conscious prisoner class, clearly it iz better to err acting to bring about positive change than to do nothing for fear of erring. Please spread this word and cogitate what has been evaluated and written here in adroit-like fashion, because we have

Continued on next page...

CALIFORNIA: Challenges and Reports

by MIM(Prisons)
May 2017

The decentralization of the prison population in California has helped make the voices of the oppressed harder to get out, as county jails step up repression in face of growing prisoner populations. At the Martinez Detention Facility in the Bay Area gang enhancements are being trumped up as a form of national oppression against Latin@s:

"We here, at MDF, Contra Costa County Jail, that are of Latin descent and not southsiders, are being held in Ad-Seg status now since 2010. And now even more unjust treatment is being added to us, gang enhancements just for being housed on this module, even if we don't ask to be housed on this module at time of arrest/booking. Classification, Administration and the District Attorney's office is using this module as an apparatus to get harsher sentences from the courts." - April 2017

Meanwhile, resistance has grown down south at Robert Presley Detention Center in Riverside. A hunger strike began on 13 April 2017. As we go to press updates are a couple weeks old, but we know that about 30 people participated in the strike and that some passed out and were sent to outside medical facilities. The prisoners list 13 demands, including the end of long-term solitary confinement, restrictions on phones/visits and dayroom access.

Within the CDCR we're still seeing the unfolding of contradictions being created by the release of many from the SHU, who were once influential but are now older and less known, into a popula-

tion that is younger and often in disarray. The Agreement to End Hostilities came out of the SHU almost five years ago, and it remains in a state of uncertainty. Many are still working hard on it, but it has not been universally upheld in these last five years. As a comrade reported in March:

"There were two recent riots here. One on the 3A yard here at Corcoran, the other at SATF Corcoran, on 3C yard. No one severely hurt, but it's hard to organize with situations like that."

There were contradictions between many of the forces behind the original agreement and sectors of the prison population that still need to be addressed. USW comrades in California are still working on these contradictions to push for a more united peace. This should be a theme as we prepare educational campaigns for Black August and the Commemoration of the Plan de San Diego, which should both feed into this September 9th Day of Peace and Solidarity. Send in your reports on these campaigns and the conditions for peace where you are. (see pp. 15 and 21 for more info)

Finally, we're getting a lot of requests for info about Prop 57 from readers in California. One comrade recommends contacting:

Initiate Justice
PO Box 4962
Oakland, CA 94605

The latest from CDCR is that if you are eligible you will be hearing from your counselor this summer.★

Notes:

1. Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition, "Updates + Help the Riverside Hunger Strikers Win Humane Conditions," 27 April 2017. Phone: 510-426-5322

Document Prison Abuses

We receive many reports about terrible conditions, abuse and neglect in prisons across the country. While most of these don't make it onto the pages of Under Lock & Key, we do type these up for publication on our website (www.prisoncensorship.info). Documenting and monitoring the abusive conditions in Amerikan prisons is an important part of our work. Keep sending in these reports!

In November 2016 we launched our new Conditions Reports pages online. Web readers can search by state and facility to read your reports.

Clarifying Legal Tactics: Deadly Heat in Louisiana

by a Louisiana prisoner
May 2017

In response to the article in *ULK 55* titled "Correction to Deadly Heat in Louisiana Article," I am equally compelled to struggle my point across to my Texas comrade and all other comrades within the jurisdiction of the 5th Circuit. Our Texas comrade has committed the error of "seeing only a tree instead of the forest," please allow me to explain.

While it is correct that the 5th Circuit remanded the case back to the District Court with an order to apply the injunction to only the three plaintiffs in Angola's death row – Ball, Magee and Code – if one would read and digest the discussion of the 5th Circuit's ruling then one would see that it is obvious that in order for "all" prisoners to receive this relief then "all" prisoners would have to file! And I am fairly sure that most comrades can "come up" with a medical condition! In section 3 of the opinion under "disability claims" the court stated in the last paragraph that because the plaintiffs failed to properly introduce their ADA claims that it was fatal as to that claim, therefore "reading between the lines" one can grasp the nugget of wisdom!

So in conclusion there has been and is a victory against the deadly heat in Louisiana, so I urge all comrades to flood the courts with their own "personal" suits and bypass the stacked deck of the PLRA, entendres? Please read the "entire" case with footnotes etc.: it was declared that the heat can be a violation of the Eighth Amendment. (The ADA provides "endless" major life activities and functions so everyone can find a niche). So if the heat is a violation of a federal right then – (quote from opinion) "such relief shall extend no further than necessary to correct the violation of the fed-

eral right of a particular plaintiff or plaintiffs!" Be that plaintiff!

Please read the case: Elzie Ball, et al. v. James M. Leblanc, et al. U.S. District Court for the Middle district of Louisiana, 988 F. Supp. 2d 639; 2013 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 178557 Civil Action No.: 13-00368-BAJ-SCR. This is on order from Ball v. Leblanc, 792 F.3d 584, 2015 U.S. App. LEXIS 11769 (5th Cir. La. 2015).

MIM(Prisons) responds: In "Correction to Deadly Heat in Louisiana Article", another writer responded to this writer's original article on this lawsuit from *ULK 53*. The responder pointed out that the 5th Circuit Court's decision only afforded people with pre-existing medical conditions relief from the dangerous heat in Louisiana prisons. And so they clarified that the ruling does not automatically apply to all of Louisiana's death row. We are glad that both writers chimed in on the topic, to clarify the ruling and the suggested tactics.

We need to think creatively about how to use this court decision to expand protections to anyone with any medical condition. In conditions like this that are truly dangerous (as we approach summer once again) we encourage people to follow this comrade's lead and look for ways to use the legal system to improve safety of your conditions.

Perhaps others will disagree with this tactic and propose other better uses for people's time and legal research. It's slow to engage in debate through the pages of a bi-monthly newsletter like *Under Lock & Key* but this is beneficial to all readers and a part of the unity-criticism-unity process. It's a healthy debate over tactics that will keep pushing our work forward, so write to us and let us hear your thoughts. ★

and finish, so this bureaucratic red tape is just another arbitrary denial of access to courts, and a violation of the Kentucky Constitution and the U.S. Constitution. Right now I am seeking out accurate factual materials to write out a petition to send to the warden, and accurate factual civil and human rights and constitutional Kentucky and federal laws to fight this injustice.

An injustice to one is an injustice to all.

MIM(Prisons) responds: This is not an issue unique to Kentucky. Prisoners in Texas and Missouri are also being denied access to courts because of a "cite only" rule. And in Georgia our comrades are denied access to the courts because they are on Tier II restrictive housing. In North Carolina there are no law libraries, and the agency that is designated to satisfy the requirement of access to courts is almost entirely useless.

For all our comrades who advocate working through the courts for remedies, we have as many

September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity

Since 2012 the United Front for Peace in Prisons has been building the **September 9 Day of Peace and Solidarity**. This commemoration of the Attica uprising is a day to focus for 24 hours on building the UFPP principles of peace, unity, growth, internationalism and independence in your facility.

In past years organizers have come together with others, or acted alone if necessary, in peaceful solidarity events including fasting, work strikes, educational events, solidarity festivals, and other movement building actions. Start building now, September is coming up fast!

Write in and ask for the September 9 Study Pack, which has lots of good info to help in your organizing for this 6th annual Day of Peace and Solidarity in 2017. In Struggle! In Unity! ★

... Continued from previous page

...Gender

to stop this new wave of mental, physical, and emotional ignorance. Peace!

I want to know if other comrades are dealing with these same issues. If so, no one is speaking on it. Stop watching the idiot box, it's hypnotizing you!

MIM(Prisons) responds: This is a good point to raise for discussion which we hope will inspire others to write in. There is, as this prisoner explains, a general contradiction in imperialist society, with the treatment of females under the patriarchy. But in prison this situation is changed. There is still some clear gender oppression of females, but in male prisons (which are the vast majority in this country) there is a reversal of roles in some ways. Males face gender oppression due to their unique status as prisoners.

We see this with the example given here of female guards manipulating prisoners through sex and flirting. The female guards are using patriarchal objectification to keep male prisoners passive, and even serving the very system that locks them up. We need to expose this manipulation and talk about why it can happen, and what we can do about it. It should not be ok to do any guard's bidding, male or female. Are other people seeing this? What can be done to fight back? ★

comrades who write in saying it is impossible for them to access legal material or assistance. This is one of many reasons why we don't believe the oppressors will ever set up a system that grants real power or dignity to oppressed people, including U.S. prisoners. We work within the system when we can, but we also need to build our own independent institutions, outside the current criminal injustice system, in order to meet and maintain our goals. ★

Access to Courts Denied in Kentucky

by a Kentucky prisoner
May 2017

I'ma start this letter out by sending all my respects to all involved in educating and enlightening those who is fighting such as myself. These past couple of weeks have been very hectic. Here at Kentucky State Reformatory, we have difficulties with the administration denying legal help from legal aids on cases and with research and filing.

In Kentucky, prisoners in administration and punitive segregation are being denied legal representation by legal aides on filing motions, briefs, etc. and on research. Most of us have active cases and are filing new cases, but the administration have told us "prisoners" that the legal aides can't assist us on any cases and they have notified the legal aides not to assist us on our cases. The legal aides have been told that they can only assist us and represent us at adjustment committee hearings.

Everyone knows that you have to and need to do research before an active case can even begin

Petition Against Tier II Program at GSP

by a Georgia prisoner
May 2017

[Comrades in Georgia have been suffering from and fighting against the Tier II program since its inception. Tier II is a long-term isolation program with indefinite terms and severe restrictions on communication and other "privileges." Of course the program is officially not for disciplinary purposes. And of course the program has set terms on paper. Below is a portion of a petition some of our subscribers have signed on to and mailed out to various administrators. It illuminates in detail many of the problems that prisoners in Georgia are facing. In December 2014 another comrade from Smith State Prison mailed us a similar petition with over 30 signatures, which we publicized on our website www.prisoncensorship.info

Another comrade in the state is working on a guide on how to fight against the Tier program. We encourage anyone who has successfully won any battle against the Tier program to write in with your experiences, so we can consolidate this knowledge and distribute it to those in need. However, many people on Tier restriction can't even have access to Under Lock & Key or other mail from MIM(Prisons), so those who are in most immediate need of this information aren't even able to receive it. Prisoners who aren't (yet) assigned to the Tier program should take an immediate interest in this topic, so that the knowledge is circulated among the Georgia prisoner population before people can't access it anymore.

As we've been writing about for a long time, we see long-term isolation not only as an atrocity because of the humyn suffering, but also as a political tool that is used by the state to keep the oppressed nations subservient, preoccupied, and broken. We want self-determination of oppressed peoples, and we oppose all tactics that the state uses to subvert this goal. -MIM(Prisons)]

In the name of liberty, life, and human rights the Administrative Segregation population at Georgia State Prison (GSP) is reaching out to you with hopes that you will advocate and intervene on our behalf to put an end to the horrific and inhumane conditions of confinement being forced upon us, through the implementation of the Administrative Segregation Tier II Program, because the grievance system here is a mockery and has rendered us no relief from the oppressive, repressive, and dehumanizing tactics of the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC).

Georgia State Prison, which for decades has held a large lockdown population with some inmates being on lockdown for 20 or more years, began what is called the "Administrative Segregation Tier II Program" on July 16, 2014. On this date, GDC's tactical squad, along with GSP's correctional officers confiscated all of our personal clothing, hygiene products, health care products, books, photo albums, lawbooks, magazines, newspapers, CD players, radios, drinking cups,

bowls, etc., with us only being allowed to keep 20 personal letters, a portion of legal mail, and a Qur'an or a bible (one or the other). Our personal hygiene products were replaced with only state-issue soap, toothpaste, and roll-on deodorant which are of very poor quality.

The guidelines for the Tier II Program (which lasts for a minimum of 9 months) places a ban on all books, newspapers, magazine (novels, textbooks, dictionaries, etc.) and many materials to self-educate ourselves. All books, magazines, newspapers, etc. which are mailed to us are returned to sender without giving us notification or a chance to appeal the prison's decision.

We are not being allowed to continue educational correspondence courses to earn degrees or diplomas so that we can have a better chance of getting legitimate jobs upon release.

Inmates are allowed very restricted contact/access to the "free world" which is perpetuated in part by the ban on books and periodicals and the confiscation of all TVs and radios which effectively blocks us from being kept abreast of current events and aware of the world's happenings beyond the prison's gates. Phone calls and visits are limited to only 3 fifteen-minute collect calls and 3 two-hour non-contact visits for the first 6 months of the program.

We are not being given proper access to the law/courts. Tier II inmates are routinely denied "law-library" by officers. The law library for Ad-Seg inmates only has seven small holding pens and one computer to service the needs of the entire lockdown population, which is approximately 600-700 prisoners.

We are not being given the proper nutrition or portions of food and are not being allowed to purchase commissary as a means to supplement the malnutrition being forced upon us. This is evident in the fact that the number of prisoners being placed on medical diets to increase weight and calorie intake has made a steep incline. Bugs (both live and dead) are often found in the food and the officers still force the trays on the prisoners.

We are inadequately clothed. The prison won't provide us with the proper clothing and won't allow us to purchase the clothing we need.

We are not being given the means to sanitize the cells that we are housed in. The cells are filthy. Most have food, blood, and feces on the walls and there is a serious rodent and insect infestation. We cannot even flush our own toilets; we rely on officers to flush the toilets for us so we may have feces and urine in the toilets for hours at a time.

We are not being allowed to have the hygiene products that we need and are not allowed to purchase any so most inmates have a foul odor because the deodorant the state issues us doesn't work for most of us.

Prisoners Legal Clinic Status Update

Last year we decentralized the Prisoners' Legal Clinic into facility-based Clinics. These Clinics are run by Clinic Coordinators, who are volunteer jail-house lawyers. Clinic Coordinators help others in their facility with legal work, in exchange for those clients engaging in the political struggle in some way. MIM(Prisons)'s role is to provide Clinic Coordinators with legal materials they need to assist their clients.

Everyone who has applied to be a Clinic Coordinator thus far has been approved. The next step is to put the Clinic into action! Send in a report at least every three months including the following information for each client:

1. Type of legal aid provided
2. Outcome/status of legal aid
3. Political trade completed
4. Notes

Also be sure to tell us what legal materials you need, if any. If you need more information, or are interested in starting a Clinic in your facility, write in to MIM(Prisons) and ask about this project.

We are routinely denied the right of religious freedom and expression. We are not allowed to practice beliefs that forbid cutting the hair, keeping kosher or other restrictions from eating certain foods.

Prisoners are subjected to brutality, humiliation, and harassment by correctional officers and staff at any given time. Prisoners are often assaulted while in handcuffs/restraints for no reason at all, but most frequently for practicing "freedom of speech." If a prisoner addresses the warden or other administrative staff about anything they don't like, or mistreatment, you are liable to be sprayed with mace, OC spray, any of the other toxic gases, stripped naked and humiliated and be placed on "stripped cell" with no bedding, clothing, or anything else (regardless of the temperature) for 8 or more hours just for exercising your 1st Amendment rights.

Prisoners are forced by the administration to bunk with other prisoners against their will, even when they let officers know there will be a conflict. This deliberate indifference has led to deaths, stabbings and other serious injuries.

Mental health prisoners are often times punished for mental infirmities and deficiencies which are beyond their control and made worse by the conditions of confinement forced upon them. Mental health patients here are suffering because of a lack of treatment and staff. Many are wrongly diagnosed and are either over- or under-medicated.

Prisoners validated by the GDC as being part of Goodfellas, Young Mafia Family or plain and

Continued on next page...

American Stooges put Palestinian Prisoner Marwan Barghouti in Solitary Confinement

by MIM-Orchid
April 2017

[Reprinted from Proletarian Internationalist
Notes <https://pinotes.github.io/>]

Yesterday was Palestinian Prisoners' Day. Yesterday was also two days after the fifteenth anniversary of intifada hero Marwan Barghouti's illegal abduction from Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. It is on this day that American-backed Israelis, in action opposing the two-state solution, chose to put Palestinian reconciliation and national unity symbol Marwan Barghouti in solitary confinement.(1)

Solitary confinement is a practice widely implemented as a form of discipline and political repression in the #1 prison state in the world, the United States. Used to repress protests of inhumane conditions, solitary confinement is itself widely considered inhumane particularly when done for long periods of time. Some Palestinians have been in solitary for years. Other kinds of worse treatment often accompany solitary confinement. It seems likely that Marwan Barghouti will be in solitary for several days at least.

A long-time prisoner himself with an immediate interest in the outcome of the protest like any of the other "security prisoners" in Israeli prisons, Barghouti was reportedly leading a large prisoner hunger strike against inhumane and illegal treatment of thousands of Palestinians in Israeli prisons. One of the things the prisoners are demanding is an end to solitary confinement, which it seems Barghouti could be in until the hunger strike ends. A mass hunger strike in 2014 lasted two months.(2)

Reactionaries are trying to get the public to associate the open hunger strike with the murder allegations against Barghouti. They are suggesting Barghouti is the only reason for the strike.

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...Tier II

simply as "Mob" are being subjected to group punishment and all prisoners with this validation are kept on Tier II, and most have been on lockdown since November 2011 or even longer. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Tier II program states that prisoners can only be held on the program for 2 years, but those validated as "Mob" are being transferred from prison to prison at the completion of one prison's Tier program requirements and forced to begin the program again at the entry level at the new facility.

We know that prison isn't supposed to be comfortable, but what we are experiencing at the hands of the administrators and staff here is torture and extreme abuse of authority. Regardless of our debts to society, we are no less human than anyone else. Many of us are mentally unstable, indigent, or have no family or friends who are willing to help us fight for our rights to be treated like human beings and not be subjected to such demoralizing and dehumanizing treatment.★

The hunger-striking prisoners' demands include an end to health negligence and an end to detention without trial. Israel is holding hundreds of Palestinians without Israeli citizenship in administrative detention. Because of multiple anniversaries in 2017 related to the colonization and occupation of Palestine, massive protests would have happened whether Barghouti was alive or not.

Many in various countries do consider Marwan Barghouti – one of several imprisoned members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, belonging to different parties – to be Palestine's "Mandela," a potential future Palestinian president. Barghouti was taken by the imperialist settler formation and Amerikan outpost named "Israel" fifteen years ago and subjected to a show trial in a kangaroo court. An intifada figure and strong supporter of Palestinian nationalism and independence before and after being abducted, Barghouti is reportedly able to unite various groups of Palestinians in a way that few are. Many people in various countries already support Barghouti's release.

Barghouti supported the Oslo Accords in the past. Azanian Anglican archbishop Desmond Tutu nominated Barghouti for the Nobel Peace Prize in June last year. At his show trial, Barghouti noted in Hebrew that he was a figure for peace for two peoples.

Barghouti has supported trying different approaches, permitted under international law, to ending an occupation that is illegal. Months and years after major waves of protest and resistance, there are still thousands of Palestinians in Israeli prisons for resisting the illegal occupation and settlement. One of them happens to be Barghouti.

Since the Israeli goon squad kidnapped Barghouti in 2002, the highly influential and extremely wealthy United States has had many years of chances under various presidents to secure Barghouti's release. It hasn't happened. Two-term Democratic president Barack Obama didn't do it. Instead, Obama deceived Palestinians and gave Israel a record-breaking aid package. Obama sought to protect the image of Democrat warmongers and do-nothings, and the United States' image, after now-President Trump won the U.S. election and it became obvious that the United

Palestinian prisoners go on hunger strike

The main demands:

- Abolish detention without trial
- Abolish solitary confinement
- Install a pay phone in each wing of every prison
- Allow more frequent family visits
- Allow photographs with family during visits
- Improve medical conditions



photo: Abbas Momani/AFP

States was going to lose its undeserved standing as a peacemaker.

The West Bank and East al-Quds ("Jerusalem") already had tens of thousands of illegal settlers at the time of Ariel Sharon's al-Aqsa provocation against the two-state solution in 2000. For years the United States has verbally supported the two-state solution and verbally opposed settlement construction, in land universally understood to be occupied territory, while hampering the two-state solution and supporting settlement construction in actuality. Whether Barghouti would ever be president or not, Barghouti's continued detention is hampering processes Palestinians need to go through to arrive at important decisions with a higher level of unity.

The two-state solution isn't total liberation of Palestine. Many Palestinian leaders and figures mediating Palestine's international struggle support it. Some Palestinians consider the two-state solution a temporary step. According to survey reports, many support some approaches to it more than they support others. Though not always agreeing with or emphasizing some approaches to the two-state solution, Marwan Barghouti has supported it.

Despite internal disagreement about specific issues and non-Palestinians' demoralizing statements about the ability to end and reverse settlement activity, the Palestinian nation as a whole is still struggling for the two-state solution in the midst of U.S. hindrance and the intransigence of some Zionist and non-Zionist elements in Israel. Palestinians and various Arabs and Muslims do not support the two-state solution any less than the Americans, who take advantage of conflict

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... Barghouti

and violence in the Middle East, do. As discussed on this website [see notes], even Hamas and Iran support the two-state solution more than the United States does in reality.

Israelis have a chance to oppose West Bank annexation, oppose West Bank settlement activity, and support Palestinian independence. They have a chance to live in relative peace by ending their idolatrous attitude toward the United States and ending their dependence on that hegemonic, rogue aggressor for support in the midst of worsening conditions. However, the Israeli entity stupidly chose to put Barghouti in solitary yesterday. In a month and a half is the fiftieth anniversary of the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and the Syrian Golan. It is possible the Hunger Strike for Freedom and Dignity will still be going on then.

Regardless of intent or how anyone feels about the two-state solution, the broad Palestinian unity around the prisoners' hunger strike may be helping to promote Palestinian reconciliation and unity in other areas, and advance the two-state solution. That is true even though some of what the hunger strikers and prisoners are asking for could be won without freeing prisoners or winning a sovereign independent Palestinian state.

In the United States, there are also hunger strikes including strikes over solitary confinement.(3) So-called intersectionality in the Palestine-United States context is sometimes discussed in terms of pursuing equality with oppressors within a single state. Unity of Palestinians with various perspectives inside and outside prison, though, has the potential to contribute to Palestinian nationalism. Within U.S. prisons, unity of various whites and people in different non-white nations (including the Chican@ nation, the New African nation, and First Nations) often targets repression affecting many different prisoner demographics. This benefits the oppressed and activists inside prison, and can benefit fights for the self-determination of oppressed nations. Often this has nothing to do with uniting Americans in general, or with advancing integrationism, which is a dead-end. Incarceration in the United States, and incarceration of so-called security prisoners and other Palestinians in Israeli prisons, show oppressed nations' need for self-determination.

In response to the Palestinian prisoners' hunger strike, some are downplaying Palestinian unity or trying to take advantage of differences and discourage supporters by saying the strike is just about Barghouti. Yet, many different movements in Palestine have members in Israeli prison and are supporting the strike.

In a statement on the hunger strike, Barghouti refers to "mass" arbitrary detention and mistreatment and opposes occupation.(4) Barghouti refers to "the nation" to which prisoners belong, and "every national liberation movement in history." Barghouti identifies Israel as an occupying power. The prisoners' suffering is related to the

suffering of the Palestinian nation.

"The eldest of my four children is now a man of 31. Yet here I still am, pursuing this struggle for freedom along with thousands of prisoners, millions of Palestinians and the support of so many around the world. What is it with the arrogance of the occupier and the oppressor and their backers that makes them deaf to this simple truth: Our chains will be broken before we are, because it is human nature to heed the call for freedom regardless of the cost."

Among other things, Barghouti addresses collective punishments. "Palestinian prisoners and their families also remain a primary target of Israel's policy of imposing collective punishments."

"Among the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians whom Israel has taken captive are children, women, parliamentarians, activists, journalists, human rights defenders, academics, political figures, militants, bystanders, family members of prisoners. And all with one aim: to bury the legitimate aspirations of an entire nation."

Some are using the failures of Amerika's phony leadership as an excuse to oppose the two-state solution, Palestinian nationalism in general, and peace efforts in general. This is unfortunate. The United States must be opposed. In the international sphere, there needs to be new leadership in coordination with Palestine. Other countries need to influence Israel. Palestinian officials must give up any remaining illusions they might have about the Americans. The United States has proved uninterested in taking serious steps to resolve the conflict. In fact, it promotes and benefits from it. The United States, itself an illegitimate settler entity, is hegemonic, just gets in the way of real peace efforts, and is losing whatever credibility it had in the context of Mideast peace. The AmeriKKKan population has repeatedly proved willing to support or go along with U.S. aggression in the Middle East and, as a whole, is interested in the so-called Israeli-Palestinian conflict only enough to make things worse. The American population doesn't really care about Jews and Muslims overseas. When it seems to care about their conditions, it exploits them for chauvinistic, jingoistic and warmongering purposes and to justify American corruption in the Middle East.

This writer understands why Israeli activists would want to focus on opposing their own country or its policies. However, globally there needs to be more opposition to the United States in order to advance Palestinian liberation. Various elements inside and outside Israel are accepting U.S. hegemony and failing to support Marwan Barghouti's and other political prisoners' release while opposing Palestinian nationalism and supporting amalgamation with settlers. That is unwise.

Israelis and the world must act to immediately end the folly of refusing to negotiate with Palestinian prisoners, and end the abuse of hunger strike leaders and participants. Marwan Barghouti and other leaders or political prisoners must be freed from solitary confinement and must be freed from prison. The practice of taking Palestinians to be imprisoned in Israel must stop. The world's countries must support Palestinian independence

and sovereignty regardless of the United States' priorities and exert pressure and influence so that demands of the hunger-striking prisoners are met as long as Palestinians are in Israeli prisons.

MIM(Prisons) adds: As of May 16, Barghouti has reportedly started refusing water in an effort to put more pressure on the Israel Prisons Services to meet striking prisoners' demands.(5)★

Notes:

1. "Israel places Palestinian leader Marwan Barghouti in solitary over prisoners' hunger strike," 2017 April 17. <http://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/1.783863>

"Palestinian hunger strikers' leader moved to solitary confinement," 2017 April 18. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/apr/18/palestinian-hunger-strikers-leader-marwan-barghouti-moved-to-solitary-confinement>

2. "Hunger strike for freedom and dignity," 2017 April 18. <http://gaza.scoop.ps/2017/04/hunger-strike-for-freedom-and-dignity/>

3. www.prisoncensorship.info and Under Lock & Key: "Hunger strike against long-term isolation in Santa Rosa jail," 2016 December.

"Statement from 37 TN prisoners on the many forms of isolation in solitary confinement," 2016 September.

"Missouri long-term solitary confinement frameups and torture," 2016 August.

"Lucasville hunger strike to end solitary confinement," 2016 July.

"Prisoners plan hunger strike to protest Wisconsin long term isolation," 2016 April.

"Update on Ohio hunger strike for medical attention," 2016 April.

"Force-feeding approved for CA hunger strikers," 2013 August.

"30,000 spark California hunger strike," 2013 July.

4. "Why we are on hunger strike in Israel's prisons," 2017 April 16. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/opinion/palestinian-hunger-strike-prisoners-call-for-justice.html>

5. JTA, "Hunger-Striking Palestinian Leader Marwan Barghouti Now Refusing Water," 16 May 2017, www.forward.com.

On "Objective" Reporting

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

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...Stand Up

other prisoners over bullshit but won't take on the pigs is right on. At the same time, everyone has to assess their own conditions and decide what response will work best and bring on the least suffering and retaliation. We need good comrades like this one to get out of prison, not double their time! ★

Criticism of Trump as an Unaccomplished President is Leading to War

by MIM-Orchid
May 2017

[Reprinted from Proletarian Internationalist Notes <https://pinotes.github.io> In this article, (...) indicates sections cut for space.]

Update: On May 18 the United States attacked Syria with further air strikes, claiming self-defense.]

One chamber of the U.S. Congress has just passed a replacement for Obamacare. Reuters is calling it a “big victory” for Trump.⁽¹⁾ At the moment, the headline may be more important than the details. Now that Trump may be able to claim an achievement, at least in the eyes of Republicans, maybe some Democrats will shut the fuck up about Trump not having accomplished anything.

People outside the United Snakes shouldn’t be overly concerned about what goes on in that country in terms of domestic policy, but they should be breathing a small sigh of relief. If the U.S. House of Representatives hadn’t passed the Obamacare replacement, there could have been another high-profile U.S. military attack like the one against a Syrian air base last month. Internal U.S. politics is important in terms of understanding trade-offs pertaining to foreign policy.

On the other hand, it seems likely that U.S. Democrats and liberals will continue calling attempted Obamacare replacement an act of “Russian agent” Trump. Another brazen attack, a military buildup, or more expansion of war (as in Syria, and Somalia and Yemen), to prove that wrong, distract, or build relationships with the Pentagon, is almost a given, but many in the Amerikan so-called resistance make it easier.

Even some so-called radical leftists in the United States have used the threat of Russian-U.S. imperialist cooperation as an excuse for anti-Russia jingoism or uniting with U.S. imperialists with more rhetorical emphasis against Russia. Others view Trump’s supposed friendliness to Russia as favoring whites.

Many U.S. liberals and so-called leftists claim Trump is a particular fascist or worse than Obama, even that Trump is more of a militarist than Obama. Despite some dubious records Obama set as a Democrat and as a post-WW2 U.S. president, they may perceive Trump as a greater threat in matters of war. Yet, [their] opposition to war isn’t there, not to the extent they oppose Trump on other issues when it benefits the Democratic Party for election victories in 2018.

This may partly have to do with some tension between claiming Trump hasn’t done anything and viewing certain attacks as evidence of militarism worse than Obama’s.

On Trump’s 100th day in office at the end of April, some suggested the attack on the Syrian air base made no difference without follow-up in

the form of similar attacks. However, the United States’ proxy, Israel, has occupied a part of Syria for decades. Israel had already attacked Syria openly and directly multiple times before the al-Shayrat air base attack.

The U.S. attack was undoubtedly brazen, but it has to be said: in reality, Obama invaded Syria – in various ways – before Trump did. The Syrian position against the U.S. presence and violations of Syrian sovereignty, which began before Trump was even elected, is clear.

So Trump can’t really claim invading or going to war against Syria as some kind of achievement.

There is the terroristic MOAB attack in Afghanistan and all of the disturbing rhetoric and media coverage about Korea, but at this point in time it still isn’t clear to this writer that Trump is actually worse than Obama on war. The point of saying that isn’t to defend Trump as a militarist, but to raise how certain ways of opposing Trump are leading to war. That is if there continues to be any perception, based on reality or not, that Trump has been ineffective across the board. The result of pressuring Trump to do something befitting a president could be deadly though Trump may get away with killing fewer people than a non-white U.S. president would and did.

There needs to be a stronger anti-war movement in the United States, but not because Trump is more of a militarist than Obama. There should have been a massive U.S. anti-war movement during Obama’s presidency. There should be a discernible anti-war movement not just among some paleoconservatives and isolationists. At the same time, this writer’s and hundreds of writers’ saying there should be a big U.S. anti-war movement isn’t going to cause it to appear as long as there are too few Americans willing to make peace a more important priority than a political platform or some issue.

If the U.S. Senate doesn’t pass the Republican healthcare legislation, opponents keep blocking Trump’s actions on so-called immigration and border security issues, and at the same time critics keep saying Trump hasn’t accomplished anything, Trump may invade or attack a country to show accomplishment. There would be some anxiety, but urban liberals may not really object to an attack more than Trump’s white trash base would, as long as Trump delivers on some protectionist promises and doesn’t rock the boat too much in domestic policy by actually changing it.

Though Trump has already been successful in earning status as a war criminal, Trump still has a lot to go to catch up with Obama in killing and war crimes. Assorted left-wing opponents of Trump may not start opposing Trump on war until Trump has caught up with Obama or exceeded Hillary Clinton’s recommendations for Syria. Clinton, a leading Syria war hawk, has supported sending more ground troops to Syria and creating a no-fly zone. Clinton supported destroying all of Syria’s airfields after the alleged chemical attack

last month.

Talk about how Trump is a do-nothing president – a criticism that is somewhat strange coming from Americans who supposedly don’t support Trump’s immigration-related actions – is stupid and is leading to war. If it isn’t stupid from the standpoint of those panning Trump’s first 100 days in office supposedly from the left – whether as Democrats, liberals, or so-called leftists, in the United States – it is because they don’t really care about war/peace in the first place.

Supposed war-neutral marches

Prominent Democrats continue to use Russia questions to oppose and pressure Trump, even after it has become clear that the anti-Russia rhetoric puts Middle East Muslims’ lives in danger and potentially leads to direct military conflict with Russia. As evidenced by social media posts, these jingoistic Democrats are in fact still popular with many so-called “woke” or “conscious” young non-white Americans. So now U.S. antiwar leaders have to deal with a situation in which some elderly white trash are against certain wars more than young white and non-white urban liberals are. There are many zombies, some highly educated, willing to follow an oreo, coconut or white liberal into war as long as they have some “anti-racist” hustle and are tuned in to certain trends of language and media.

There were the big pseudo-feminist and environmental marches failing to oppose Trump on war – environmentally destructive wars against socially conservative countries – despite Trump supposedly being a fascist or more of a fascist than Obama. There was almost no visible evidence of any attempt to make a connection to war – except to support U.S. rocket science in the context of opposing oil consumption and production – despite the connections that could have been made to opposing war, and the connections that were made to other issues or causes. Instead, there were signs suggesting that female war hawks, in some ways rhetorically worse than Trump, be put in power for the sake of “science” and breaking glass ceilings.

Then, on May Day, some activists – seemingly oblivious to how such populism led to the whole Sanders-Trump phenomenon – supported economic populism. They did so in addition to, and in some cases instead of, opposing Trump’s rhetoric about migrants and attempted and accomplished deportation actions. Seeing people support economic populism at marches in the United States was like watching brainless robots repeating the same motion long after they have fulfilled their purpose. ...

Many of those saying Trump is more dangerous for the world than Obama was, and Clinton would have been, nonetheless don’t oppose U.S. wars or fail to oppose several of them. Many of those saying Trump is so much worse

Continued on next page...

Solidarity Protesting Food Tampering in New York

by a New York prisoner
May 2017

I write with news of what I believe to be progress by a few comrades and I here at Clinton Correctional Facility on 27 February 2017. Me and 7 other comrades staged a peaceful protest in response to gaolers playing around with me and my neighbors' food.

Each comrade refused to return their empty food trays until my neighbor and I received new food trays that wasn't tampered with (my neighbor was a diabetic and needed to eat). Lieutenant Durkin came around to see what was going on and he seen the seriousness of our solidarity and brought us new trays. (Protest over right? But you know these pigs.)

After me and my neighbors' trays were collected these gaolers decided that they were not going to pick up the trays from the comrades who initiated the protest, in order to use this as their own excuse to deny them showers for the night, and to use these trays to extract them from their cells to inflict abuse.

These pigs tried to offer my neighbor and I showers but we refused unless everyone had their

right to a shower, and we continued to press to speak to higher authority.

That only led to higher authority getting tired of our solidarity and want to teach us a lesson by summoning the "Extraction Team." These pigs pumped gas into my cell and the cells of three others, and invaded our cells in units while we were incapacitated by the gas, and beat us one by one. We are in the SHU and on complete lockdown and posed no threat to those cowards.

I was taken to an outside hospital in Malone, New York after the assault only because these pigs thought they broke my ribs. But I won't break, not even bones comrades, not even bones.

These cowards put us on deprivation orders and took all of our in-cell property and left us with just a bare mattress and pillow for the next 5 days (February 27 - March 4). They also took our sweaters and socks and cut the heat off at night in below-freezing weather.

I organized a mass letter to the Superintendent and that's when we started to get our property and water back. The cells were never cleaned after the gas was pumped in and I burned my eyes a few times some nights laying on the plastic bed and

pillow.

We all received false tickets to cover up the racially-motivated mass assault, so we all (7) decided to file grievances on what happened. We're just waiting now. They haven't separated us yet because I know they are just listening to our conversations. Most of us don't have the discipline to speak in silence. Anyway comrades I need advice, stratagems, literature or whatever you think we may need to continue our struggle on the inside in a winning fashion.

MIM(Prisons) responds: We encourage anyone with advice for these comrades to get in touch with us and we'll pass along your suggestions. These sorts of retaliations for peaceful protests are all too common in prison. One suggestion we can make to these comrades is to continue to build unity and knowledge among the group, and work to expand the solidarity to others if possible. Our power comes from unity and this is built in part through studying and struggling together. And because we know admin may transfer anyone at any time, especially if someone is seen as a threat because of eir ability to unite people, we encourage everyone to get set up in our MIM(Prisons) correspondence study course. This will allow people to study together and continue studies even if some folks get moved around.★

... Continued from previous page

...Trump

than Obama on migrants are actually normalizing any fascism that did exist when Obama presided over criminalization of whole groups of border-crossers, the world's #1 prison state, multiple invasions, countless drone murders, other increases of repression, and normalization of what was disclosed about mass surveillance, while deluding many around the world. Various Amerikans claiming to fight fascists – as if U.S. leaders didn't need to be broadly and energetically opposed around the world during the previous U.S. presidency, whether fascism existed inside the United States or not – are in denial about the extent of U.S. incarceration, spying, repression, war, militarism, and dominance of various types, that already exists and has existed for years.

Such odd concurrences mean there needs to be more opposition to the United States globally as well an adjustment in what antiwar leaders are saying with regard to Amerikans.

This writer is all for open borders, more than most Democrats, Chican@s, and Wall Street/trade protesters in the United States, are. The May Day march in downtown Los Angeles was reportedly a lot smaller than marches in March and May of 2006.(2) (That is despite the fact May 1 fell on a Monday in 2006, too.) Many migrants just want to work and not be deported or harassed and don't particularly care about U.S. domestic policy or gaining U.S. citizenship, which would be available to some migrants and not others. Nonetheless, there is no point in others' coming to the United States just to assimilate into that aggressor country and be exploited by Democrat warmon-

gers whose own record on deportations or immigration restrictions isn't significantly better.

The largest march in Los Angeles was named "Resist Los Angeles" by some, unfortunately. It is understandable that some Chican@s and Mexicans would not go to a march not opposing war, with such a name. On the Internet are photos of people wearing Amerikan flags while holding "resist" signs and standing next to others with abortion rights signs. Some whites chose to participate in May Day events with such signs, instead of anti-war signs or pro-migrant signs, and migrants and their supporters were supposed to accept that as unity. Apparently, the fact that John McCain has supported some legalization for undocumented migrants already in the United States, in combination with border crackdowns, is supposed to make migrants grateful for hydra-headed war hawk Clinton-McCain "resistance" to Trump. (After all, Hillary Clinton said in November 2015, "I voted numerous times when I was a senator to spend money to build a barrier to try to prevent illegal immigrants from coming in.")

It could be that many were just being consistent. Obama earned the "deporter-in-chief" name, but it has to be said many who called Obama that nonetheless would not have considered marching against Obama as a "fascist." Eight years of Obama probably made the turnout on Monday – which some thought would be bigger than turnouts on different days in 2006 – smaller than what it could have been. Unless one assumes marchers are almost entirely undocumented, fear of being arrested at a march can't fully explain the reported turnout differences.

They were rare, but among the best signs at marches on May 1 were those opposing militarism or war. Other good signs supported Chican@ independence and Aztlán liberation – too few and far between – opposed mistreatment of migrants, and said Amerikans needed migrants economically.

The signs calling for a \$15 an hour minimum wage in the United States and supporting vague "resistance" to Trump are of a questionable nature at best. Even religious signs supporting humane treatment of migrants were much better than those. There is nothing anti-fascist about failing to oppose war while agitating Amerikans on economic issues and changing definitions of fascism just because Democrats just left office and are seeking office. ... ★

Notes:

1. "House passes healthcare bill in big victory for Trump," 2017 May 4. <http://www.reuters.com/article/usa-healthcare-vote-idUSW1N1GF01D>
 2. "15,000 people take part in May Day March in Los Angeles," 2017 May 1. <http://www.nb-closangeles.com/news/local/May-Day-March-Demonstration-Protest-Los-Angeles-Immigration-420884743.html>
- "May Day march draws 30,000 to downtown L.A. in call to 'resist' Trump," 2017 May 1. <http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20170501/may-day-march-draws-30000-to-downtown-la-in-call-to-resist-trump>
- "May Day immigration March was no record breaker," 2017 May 2. <http://www.laweekly.com/news/may-day-march-turnout-disappoints-in-los-angeles-8185820>

Cinco de Mayo Launch of Campaign to Commemorate Plan de San Diego

by a California prisoner
May 2017

Revolutionary Greetings!

Basillo Ramos created the "Plan de San Diego" in 1915 in the State of Texas. This was a call to arms and involved a coalition of Mexicans, Blacks, First Nations and Asians to take up arms against white supremacy. These are some of our freedom fighters who came before us. They fought, sadly, the same struggle we are faced with today.

The Aztlán that so many fought and died for, and many of us have been imprisoned for, continues to glimmer on the horizon. It is the People's will to regain a foothold in our Sacred Land and break the chains that colonize our minds. It is time to rebuild the Revolutionary institutions. Raza Stand Up! Ya Basta! For we are on the quest of Aztlán!!

Yes, let us not forget freedom fighters like Joaquin Murrieta, who sought supreme justice in California during the Gold Rush and fought the abuse of La Raza. Or David Sanchez and Carlos Montez who founded the Brown Berets in 1967. Or Corky Gonzalez and The Crusade for Justice.

It is right to study and learn from the lessons of the past, and use these lessons to continue to work united towards a common goal. In fact, we always made sure that a portion of time was set aside during all AV Brown Beret meetings for just this: to educate our membership. This was such an important factor that we had as #4 in our 10 Point Program, EDUCATION.

Stand Up Against the Pigs

by Venomed 1 of United Struggle from Within
May 2017

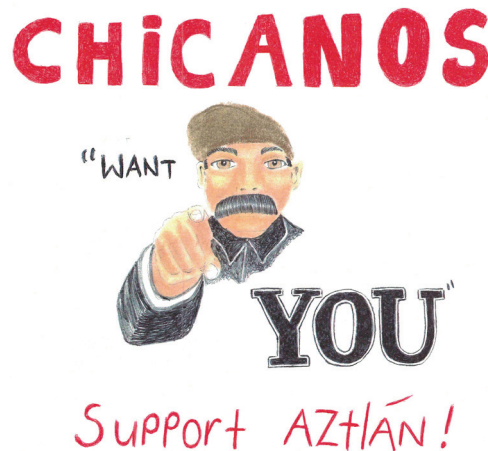
I usually don't weight in on stuff because most of my time is spent fighting the system, that's what I do. I don't like pigs and I don't like how these wannabe convicts be talking a lot of shit but as soon as these pigs pull out their pens and misbehavior reports they hide under their bunks!

I'm a transgender woman and I'm not scared of these pigs! I was working in the mess hall and the target of the most feared pig here and when I wrote him up all these wannabe convicts started telling me how I shouldn't fuck with him because he will retaliate. I said "fuck him I'm gonna keep doing me." Sure enough he retaliated and so did I. In the New York State Employees manual section 2.12, it states that they can't use abusive, aggressive, vulgar or obscene language, so whenever I heard him violate that rule I'd write his ass up. He retaliated by writing a false ticket on me. I got 7 days keep-lock and then went back to work. Two days later I got fired and then I got threatened that if I kept writing grievances that they would set me up by giving me a new charge. I stopped grieving his ass and wrote to the Inspector General's office (ya ya!).

We must rebuild the Movimiento! And it's just as important to build unity across revolutionary organizations. Viva La Causa.

MIM(Prisons) adds: In August and September of 1915, the military operations carried out in southern Texas by units of 25 to 100 men reached their high point. Comrades in United Struggle from Within have been holding discussion over recent months to build its first commemoration of the spirit of the Plan for August 2017.

Comrades on the outside are encouraged to organize book events around *Chican@ Power and the Struggle for Aztlán* for August, and/or study groups to read the book leading up to August. Prisoners can write in to get copies of the Plan de San Diego flier to distribute locally, which includes a list of proposed actions from United Struggle from Within organizers.★



So, my question is this: why the fuck are dudes that have 15, 20, 25 plus years so scared to go at these pigs, but when a comrade owes them \$3.24 they're ready to put a shank in the guy's back? Why when a pig disrespects you, you tuck your tail and run, but when a comrade disrespects you, you all of a sudden got a set of balls?

I'll tell you why a lot of these guys might do it. Because they know the pig will beat their ass all the way to the hole. But if they fight a comrade that shit will only last at the most a minute and then it's "get on the fucking ground before I blow your fucking head off!"

I've physically went at these pigs more than 5 times in the last 3 years and I've gotten 2 new bids behind it! I would've been home last year but there's a line that if crossed there should be consequences. I turned 10 years into 20. I'm not proud of that. Not at all. And I don't go around broadcasting it. But sometimes you have to stand up for yourself. If you don't stand for anything you'll fall for anything!

So, to all of my comrades, stand up to these pigs. I'm not telling you to go up against them with your fists, but don't just let them do what they want to you. Attack them by pen, fists, pro-

WRITE FOR ULK

Planned themes for upcoming issues:

57 - Disability and Gender

FINAL SUBMISSIONS DUE JULY 1

Many people write in about the extreme abuses they see of disabled prisoners daily. We want to report on the special issues faced by disabled prisoners, including circumstances that are unique to prisons (and the lumpen class) that lead people to become physically disabled, such as bad medical care, poor work conditions, etc. Examine tactics specific to organizing around physical disability, and potential ADA precedent. Health status is part of what defines gender and gender oppression. (send in 1 stamp for "Clarity on what gender is" by MIM)

58 - Organizing the Streets from Behind Bars

How do we overcome challenges and connect with people who will do the leg work on the outside? What kinds of work can be done? Is this a good use of time/resources? How do we sustain this over time, since it is dependent on sympathetic people on the outside? How is our struggle similar or different to lumpen orgs whose leaders are locked up?

59 - Drugs in Prisons

How are drugs impacting prisons and prisoners? What can we do to overcome drug use and addiction in revolutionary organizing? See page 9.

60 - Political Economy of mass incarceration

More specifically, the politics of imprisonment of urban oppressed nation people in rural white communities. Submit articles on the following topics, or come up with your own:

- How does economics/national oppression make all prisoners political prisoners?
- Arbitrary labeling of behavior as criminal, leading to more imprisonment of oppressed nation people
- Criminalization of undocumented people, New Afrikans and Chican@s via media
- How imprisonment leads to the destruction of urban communities
- Experiences with institutions of extortion and how it has affected family and community
- Nepotism that is rife among prison staff, who lack of qualifications
- Analyze the cycle of poverty and crime that it perpetuates and the system of mass incarceration it fuels

tests, or whatever! In the words of Malcolm X "By Any Means Necessary."

Peace Comrades!

P.S. - "I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear." - Rosa Parks

MIM(Prisons) responds: This comrade provides us with an important reminder that we can't just sit back passively and allow abuse to happen. And the criticism addressed at those who will fight

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Subjetivismo al reclutar: Peligro o táctica

Diciembre 2016

en inglés por MIM(Prisons) (p. 7)

... Estoy pensando acercarme a la chica con la que estoy quedando a la política. La empezaré a tantear por primera vez sobre este tema mañana. Ella tiene 24 años y yo 31, así que creo que puedo moldearla. Además, es inocente y confiada. Intentaré enseñarla cuando la haya tanteado. Agradecería que me respondierais y me dijerais lo que pensáis de este caso particular.

MIM(Prisons) responde: Normalmente, desaconsejamos que se reclute a alguien con quien se está saliendo, sobre todo si dicha persona no ha mostrado estar interesada por sí sola en el anitimperialismo. No obstante, coincidimos con tu aparente actitud prudente de "tantearla" primero. Es una táctica de seguridad prudente no poner todas las cartas sobre la mesa respecto a tu actividad política con alguien que no estás segur@ de si lo va a tolerar.

Otra cosa que has comentado es que es más joven, inocente y confiada, e insinúas que te aprovecharás de eso. Es así como creas resentimiento y, cuando una persona está resentida con otra asociada con el movimiento, se pone en peligro dicho movimiento. Esto es más probable cuando está involucrado el amor. Esa es la primera razón por la que no mezclar las relaciones con el reclutamiento: La gente confunde las motivaciones. Reclutar a amig@s es algo menos arriesgado, pero también tiene este

problema. Por otro lado, es cierto que l@s jóvenes están más abiert@s a políticas revolucionarias, lo que puede llevarnos a emprender tácticas como repartir folletos en las escuelas. Nuestra actitud no debe ir dirigida a aprovecharnos de l@s jóvenes o de las mujeres en general, usando características derivadas de la opresión de género a la que se enfrentan. Más bien, debemos acceder al resentimiento justificado que pueden tener por esa opresión para que dejen de lado las características negativas que las ha animado y volverse revolucionarias.

En situaciones más avanzadas, esto puede producirse de otra manera en la que l@s camaradas comiencen a preguntar si alguien ha empezado a juntarse porque está saliendo con un@ camarada o porque cree por sí mism@ en la lucha. Por ello, tanto para ella individu@ como para el colectivo es mejor ser clar@ y científic@ sobre cuál es la posición de cada un@.

Reclutar siempre debe hacerse basándose en una explicación científica de la línea política. Naturalmente, la subjetividad entra en juego y no hay nada de malo en adornar las cosas de manera que sean más atractivas para las masas (ej. Forma/ lenguaje). Sin embargo, no está bien manipular a la gente basándose en su subjetividad para que hagan política por otras razones distintas a su apoyo a dichas políticas, ya que esto conlleva a confusión, tanto políticamente como interpersonalmente. Esta es una cuestión realmente estraté-

gica cuando decimos no usar el sexo, el coqueteo o la amistad para reclutar gente. Nuestro objetivo es enseñar a la gente a pensar científicamente y crear organizaciones científicas fuertes.

Esto no quiere decir que la mayoría de la gente en los movimientos de masas sean pensador@s científic@s convencid@s por motivaciones puramente objetivas. Así que existen cuestiones tácticas sobre qué lenguaje e imágenes utilizar para presentar nuestro mensaje a las masas de manera que puedan identificarse con él. Llevar uniformes, asociar buena música con nuestro movimiento o que personas famosas recomienden nuestro trabajo son todo tácticas que atraen al subjetivismo de la gente sin manipular al individu@ y, por tanto, sin poner en peligro el movimiento.

Como mínimo, la mitad de nuestr@s lector@s están en prisión e, incluso en la universidad o en cualquier comunidad más pequeña, verás a menudo que gente con la que ya tenías amistad está comenzando a interesarse por la política. Entonces, se trata de tener la habilidad de separar el trabajo del placer. Los desacuerdos políticos no deben decidir las amistades y viceversa. Una táctica útil para esta situación, si sientes que podría haber un conflicto de intereses o confusión, es pasar un@ amig@ a otr@ camarada para que este sea su contacto principal y reclutador@. Esto da más independencia a dicho amig@ para explorar la política en sus propios términos con menos presión

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El MIM(Prisiones)

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

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

Como revolucionarios internacionalistas, nos apoyamos la auto-determinación de todas naciones y gente. Hoy, el sistema de prisiones de los EEUU es un 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 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.

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

TURTLE ISLAND: In the language of many northeastern Indigenous Nations, Turtle Island is used to refer to both the western hemisphere as a whole, as well as more specifically to refer to the northern land mass of the continent. We generally use the term "occupied Turtle Island" to refer to the territories of the United States and Canada, which are occupied by a European settler majority, while using "Turtle Island" to mean all of the Americas, which remain dominated by U.S. imperialism today.

IDEOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

IMPERIALISM: Lenin defined imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. Defined by the globalization of

capital, the dominance of finance capital and the division of the world into imperialist and exploited nations; Maoists see the latter as the principal contradiction in the world today.

As the economic system that dominates the world, 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 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. 56

May/June 2017

...Continuado de la pág. 22

...Subjetivísimo

por las implicaciones de que este acuerdo político contigo sea un requisito para dicha amistad.

Un@ nuev@ camarada al que le ha convenido nuestra causa informó cómo otr@ prisoner@ le lanzó una publicación de *ULK* a su regazo de camino a una audiencia y dijo: "mira, esto te va a gustar." Much@s de nuestr@s suscriptor@s afirmaron haber descubierto *ULK* en las zonas comunes. Ambos son ejemplos del "dejar caer", una técnica para difundir nuestras ideas tanto como sea posible para garantizar que tod@s l@s interesad@s tienen la oportunidad de estar expuest@s a ellas.

Encontrar el equilibrio correcto entre lanzar una amplia red, como la técnica de "dejar caer", y desarrollar un nuevo cuadro uno a uno es una cuestión táctica complicada. MIM siempre ha er-

rado en el lanzamiento de una amplia red. Esto se basa en la decisión estratégica de que, en nuestras condiciones, es más importante crear opinión pública contra el imperialismo que crear organizaciones de cuadros. No obstante, necesitamos que la gente haga más que leer *ULK* y nuestro sitio web. No importa si están apoyando o no los proyectos de MIM(Prisons), nosotr@s necesitamos que la gente dé un paso adelante por el antiimperialismo para amplificar esa voz antiimperialista y construir instituciones independientes de l@s oprimid@s. L@s oprimid@s nos contactan todos los días en busca de ayuda. Necesitamos que más camaradas den un paso adelante y creen el poder necesario para proporcionar soluciones reales a sus problemas. ★

Correction to ULK 54:

from an Ohio prisoner

In the Jan/Feb 2016 issue, in the article titled "Tactical Lessons from Historical Lucasville Struggles," there was an error. It said "After the uprising, five prisoners were sentenced to death for the murders, and they are the only people held on Ohio's death row."

That is an incorrect statement. Ohio has many people on death row. Now, as far as I know, they are the only ones on death row housed at the Ohio State Penitentiary (OSP). They moved the rest of death row several years ago to the Chillicothe Correctional Institution. For whatever reason, the state wanted to keep the guys from Lucasville at OSP. ★

¿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!

Self-Criticism/Correction for ULK 55 Language

from an Oregon prisoner

In *ULK 55* I saw many parallels to my own journey: past and present. The continual process of trying to politicize euro-nationalists is a very frustrating dilemma indeed. They've been bred by their own (dominant culture) to see themselves as superior! Which oftentimes manifests in their usage of covert racist terminology. Even as they attempt to convey a struggle oriented opinion (see *ULK 55* p. 16). A Georgia captive refers to a man of color as "boy"!

MIM(Prisons) responds: Thanks for this criticism. We print it now since it slipped past our editors last issue. Terms like "baby boy" and boy are often used as terms of affection, especially by older comrades. But the word has a different meaning when written by a white person describing an oppressed national, especially by a member of the Aryan Nation. Specifically, boy was commonly used by white Americans when bossing around, threatening and just generally oppressing New Afrikans during slavery and after. It was a mistake for us to let such a use of the term slip into *ULK* without criticism. ★