

!ROCK!

★ Working to Extend Democracy to All ★

★Volume 3, Number 12★

★December 2014★

LAST ISSUE?

This will be the last of my Editorial Comments in the final edition of the *Rock* newsletter for most readers. *Rock* is dying, although not because of my health. Most of you don't pay at all or pay too little. I have 61 paid subscriptions out of a mailing list of 600. Me, Mark, and the 61 can no longer support the free rides.

Prisoners almost completely paid for the costs of this newsletter for the first two years of her existence. The third year, however, has been a complete and total financial disaster. I accept that my strident communism may be a large part of this decline. Regardless of the reason, Mark and I have both been rendered broke. Now, I leave remaining readers with a message.¹

To Rights Conscious Prisoners:

Why did CDCR and the Governor refuse to respond to the terrific amount of pressure from both the inside and the outside to meet the five core demands? I mean even the Association of Catholic Bishops pleaded in support of the cause of prisoners on hunger strike. Here's why. What prisoncrats and guards fear most of all, more than anything else, is something called dual power. Dual power means prisoners have a say in the running of the prisons. And why not?

A democratically elected organization of prisoners could not do a worse job than CDCR, with its seventy percent failure rate, its ongoing torture programs, and CDCR's treating human beings as less than animals and doing so in conditions that shock the conscience, and at a cost of billions of dollars a year.

1. *Rock* may come out for everyone again when prisoners have donated the money to pay for it (\$500). Mark and I might put out occasional issues at our expense if there is a significant struggle taking place.

Dual power is a revolutionary idea because, well, because it is a step toward full power. I'll say this over and over again, power is not something that can be handed to you on a silver platter. It is something that must be struggled for. And in the process of that struggle you learn how to wield power, how to develop the responsibility that comes with having power. To change your situation, your status as a slave, you need only exercise responsibility. The more collective responsibility you exercise the more power you'll gain.

Try to envision a future in which prisoners themselves allocate fiscal resources, maintain order, decide who is ready to go home, and set standards for living conditions on the inside, and you are paid a full salary for doing this work. The ultimate goal is to eliminate the scourge of prisons altogether. However, that will never happen under the dog-eat-dog culture of capitalism. Even after the socialist revolution it will take a generation or two to erase the negative effects of capitalist culture from society. During this transition period there will be far fewer prisons, although we may not call them by that name. These facilities will be spacious areas of countryside, with buildings designed for comfort (small homes, not cells, close to cities and our families and loved ones), where prisoners (if they are still called that) have everything needed to make life more enjoyable, such as computers, adequate medical care, open conjugal visits, education and wages comparable to outside workers, etc.

My point here is that you are in a struggle for power, without which your conditions of existence will never improve.² You see 2. Save for the pull up bar, or sweat pants you might have to struggle for another twenty years to get.

the phrase "power to the people" bandied about. This is what we are talking about, empowerment!

Dialectics teach us that everything in nature is in a constant state of change. Even rocks, which change very slowly, are not immune from this process. The struggle of prisoners is also in a constant state of change. Everything is either growing or in a state of decline and decay, and this includes political struggles and movements as well. I think we can deduce from the number of participants in the three hunger strikes that the prisoners' movement in California has the potential for growing larger and more powerful, that it is changing into, or in the process of becoming, a political movement.

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Yet there are many contradictions, some antagonistic, like between the keepers and the kept or the rich and the poor, and some non-antagonistic, like the contradiction among various groups of prisoners. Non-antagonistic are resolved through discussion, criticism, self-criticism, and through other peaceful solutions. So while our movement for constructive change is growing, there are internal contradictions that must be resolved. In spite of the Agreement to End Hostilities, for example, a letter writer reports that there was a recent riot between whites and Mexicans at his facility. So there are two opposites at work here—the pull back to the old ways of prisoner-on-prisoner violence (cannibalism), or the peaceful struggle to bring about a more just and rational world. Which will win? Well, of course, the one you feed.

Right now this peaceful movement for progressive change is a mile wide but only an inch deep. The task is to deepen this struggle, while at the same time making it even wider. How is this to be done? Well, there are countless ways. The most important, in my opinion, is for the more politically advanced and rights conscious prisoners to become teachers. The object would be to make social prisoners' rights-conscious and rights-conscious prisoners class conscious.

Being a teacher is as easy as what Walla Walla prisoners did in 1971. Where strict short hair rules were in effect at the time, some prisoners scrawled on walls: If you care, grow some hair."

Advances in the movement can only be made through increasing the rights and political consciousness of larger and larger numbers of prisoners. Those with a more advanced level of consciousness should reach out to the intermediate layers of political development, who in turn can penetrate the bottom strata, moving them forward or at least neutralizing the most backwards. Two of the many ways of accomplishing this is through study groups and putting out small underground newsletters on the inside.

I have been doing this work for over forty years, from both the inside and out here in minimum custody. One thing I've learned in those years is that in this movement nothing stands still. It is growing or

decaying—there will be political progress or there will be internecine cannibalism. Welcome to democracy! You each have a vote. You vote with your feet (*Prison Focus* #41, Winter 2013, page 14).



The first step in this journey is not only to recommit to Agreement to End Hostilities, but to do what your captors have not done: disseminate this call to the populations of the state's prisons. They refuse to take this step to stop the prisoner-on-prisoner violence for two reasons. First, because it keeps prisoners divided and the Green Wall in full control. And, secondly, because stopping the gang violence in this manner would be giving the reps power—dual power—and prisoner power is a terrible anathema to the failing policies of the prisonrats (we might do it better than them, prisoners and ex-convicts are the experts on the root causes of the state's disastrous corrections failure!). Just look at the "Rehabilitation" joke that went no further than a change from CDC to CDCR, while at the same time slashing some already existing rehabilitation programs).

When I talk of socialism some prisoners tend to have a mental picture of Stalinist (oppressed) zombies marching off to toil in the people's glorious factories and wheat fields, like in the old Soviet Union as given to us by the ruling class's means of disinformation and miseducation. And socialism can indeed be that, or even a worse form of government.

Just as the economic system of capitalism can wear a political face of anything from fascist terror to a liberal democracy, so too can the economic engine of socialism. Think of a social system (either capitalism or socialist) as an ocean liner. On the bottom of the ship is the engine that drives it forward, in this analogy we'll call it this

section of the ship the economic infrastructure. On the top of our ship is the wheel house and other mechanisms providing the ship's direction and destination, which we will name the ship's political superstructure.

Capitalism and socialism have completely different economic infrastructures, in the case of the former the means of production and distribution are in private hands, in the hands of large corporations that are owned by less than one half of one percent of the population called the ruling class or bourgeoisie. In the case of the latter, the means of production are owned by the working class and production works to serve their class interests, the interests of the vast majority of people.

The political superstructure of either of those economic engines can take any form depending upon the needs of the struggle. In the case of the revolutionary struggle, it can be anything from authoritarian (but socialist) dictatorship to a liberal democracy in which said democracy actually rules in the interests of the vast majority.

How would socialism look in America? Well, as I said, it will look however the people making the revolution want it to look – the working class and its allies. But I can bet that there will be no revolution in the U.S.A. unless it actually extends democracy—both economic and political, and unless it provides the truth, dignity and justice so lacking in today's America.

To The Class Conscious Prisoners:

"Like Britain before it, the US has tended to support radical Islam and to oppose secular nationalism, which both imperial states have regarded as more threatening to their goals of domination and control."

—Noam Chomsky

The presidential elections coming up in 2016 portend to be more of the same, at this point the race for the office will be between the war mongering Clinton dynasty or, on the other hand, the war hawks of the Bush clan. Or maybe even Joe Biden, or some other dark horse who is virtually the same as a Clinton or a Bush. As you're ground between the wheels of the two party's massive propaganda machines, remember that both parties are about serving the interests of the rich and perpetual war profiteering.

There is big money in making, using, and selling all these weapons—not to mention the money we get from stealing the natural resources and labor of the nations we use our military might against. If you did here within the U.S., what they do internationally, they would charge you with armed robbery. The majority of armored vehicles, weapons, and explosives taking lives every minute in the Middle East are stamped "Made in USA."

While the U.S. is building bigger, more expensive, and deadlier weapons, China has been quietly investing in its infrastructure, building highways, bridges, schools, and other projects that add to the national wealth. It's the age old choice of guns or butter. When a nation builds weapons they might as well be producing garbage, as once used or gone obsolete there is nothing of value left. China, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), on the other hand, just overtook the US to become the world's largest economy.

Look at the difference in their respective defense budgets, the U.S. spends over 700 billion dollars a year on war, which does not account for the billions in supplemental spending authorizations for ongoing wars in places like Iraq and Afghanistan (Yemen, Pakistan, or other nations we are currently bombing).

China, spends a mere 65 billion a year on its military. Gee, I wonder who's going to go broke first. I wonder who's going to need a war in order to get back on top—when your only tool is a hammer every problem looks like a nail, but it ain't necessarily true that you can fix a computer problem with a hammer.

You think these constant conflicts are about terrorism? The tactic of terrorism is nothing other than blowback over our numerous military and foreign policy blunders, committed as we beguile and wrestle the resources away from people in foreign lands. Yes, the systematic exploitation and subjugation of the planet's poor. Any who resist us and our NATO flunkies are marked for death.

Let's take just one commodity—oil. Saddam Husain's mistake was not in possession of non-existent WMDs; his real error was in trying to leave the dollar-based global system for oil exchanges. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi made the same mistake, he tried to sell his oil in a currency other than the U.S. dollar. Iran, with the backing of China and Russia, has been trying to do it also. This is one of capitalism's underlying

flaws; its enormous need for petroleum.

And what about Syria? Returning to author Mike Withy who wrote, in the context of why Turkey is not responding to the ISIS attack on the Kurdish fighters in the Kurdish city of Kobane, that "The Turks expect to be big players in the regional energy market after Assad is removed and pipeline corridors are established from the giant South Pars/North Dome gas field off Qatar. The pipeline will run from Qatar, to Iraq, to Syria and on to Turkey, providing vital supplies for the voracious EU market. There are also plans for an Israel to Turkey pipeline accessing gas from the massive Leviathan gas field located off the coast of Gaza. Both of these projects will strengthen Turkey's flagging economy as well as bolster its stature and influence in the region."³



Again, these wars are about oil, not terrorism! Which came first, the chicken or the egg? Which came first to the Middle East, international imperialism's theft of the natural resources, lands, and the futures of their children (oil). Or, on the other hand, did the armed resistance to that crime come before the invasions? Remember, there would not even be places like Kuwait had it not been for British imperialism slicing and dicing the borders of that region for its own petroleum needs. Note that under international law it is the *right* of a people occupied by a foreign army (in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas where America is murdering people,⁴ to resist such occupation "by any means necessary."

The U.S. and its NATO lackeys will most likely do a ground invasion of Syria (although some purists might already consider bombing the Syrians from the air an act of war), then take Lebanon, and then go for Iran, etc.

"In the Middle East," according to General Wesley Clark: "We're going to take out seven Middle Eastern countries in five

3. This is being written in early October, 2014, so events and conditions may have radically changed by press time. But my point remains the same—it's all about the oil.

4. This is how the U.S. sets itself up for defeat, by killing women and children. It only make people angry—like standing under a wasps nest and shooting into it with a BB gun. The wasps are going to stick together against you. Call them "terrorists" if you like.

years: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan & Iran..." Libya was of course an easy one. Today Libya is a basket case, a failed state.⁵

The American scheme might have worked were it not for two nations, China and Russia. Iran has a mutual defense pact with Syria's president Assad. What this means is that a U.S./NATO attack on Syria might readily lead to a war with Iran and possibly Russia and then China. Or at the very least our bombs will grow the resistance. Like in Cambodia, where under U.S. bombs Cambodia's Khmer Rouge grew from 5,000 to a formidable army of 200,000. ISIS has a similar past and present. Will we also bomb ISIS up to 200,000?

And now it's time to say good bye, at least for now. It has been my honor and privilege to be your propaganda officer for the last three years. I've met some of the best people I've known doing this paper.

Conclusion

Only the 61 readers will be receiving this issue of the newsletter. They are the only ones who have paid. This is where we start.

Where it ends is up to you. •

5. In the run-up to U.S. missiles slamming into Libya, the bourgeois media painted Gaddafi as a ruthless dictator. For another perspective, please read the article on Libya on page 7. The fact is that the oil wealth from Libya's wells did not go into private hands, but was shared with the people. Gaddafi released all of the nation's prisoners. Education was free, etc. Yet the capitalists elements within the nation wanted that oil wealth for themselves—not the people. With the help of global imperialism the reactionaries won. Today we have those religious fundamentalists (yes, they are also capitalists) fighting with each other for the oil spoils.

I'm just a dumb old ex-convict and even I know that the use of excessive force by those in authority breeds resistance. The peoples of all these nations that are on the receiving end of imperialism's drone strikes and bombings are not rolling over, they are fighting back!

As an atheist I reject religion of such outfits as the Islamic State (IS ISIS or Daash); their homophobia, their draconian position on women's rights, their killing prisoners, pro-capitalism; etc. In one respect, however, they might be right; these lands are their lands and those resources are their resources. Those borders, however, are not theirs. The borders were created by international imperialism. Depending on who you ask, ISIS seeks to restore this region to its former glory by engulfing much of the Middle East, or to make Iraq and Syria one nation again.

Out with President Assad of Syria, then in with IS? Objectively, the U.S. is in a *defacto* alliance with ISIS against Assad, while at the same time bombing ISIS. America's foreign policy since World War Two has pretty much been a disaster—we just never left the post WW II war economy.

When President Dwight D. Eisenhower left office, in his farewell speech to the American people he said, "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

LIBYA: THREE YEARS LATER

Today's Headline: "175 Killed in Fighting in Benghazi."

*Days after Nelson Mandela's passing a Twitter user wondered: "Why was Mandela's life celebrated by the world while Gaddafi, after everything he did for Africa, was gunned down like a dog?"*¹

In 1967 Colonel Gaddafi inherited one of the poorest nations in Africa; however, by the time he was assassinated, Gaddafi had turned Libya into Africa's wealthiest nation. Libya had the highest GDP per capita and life expectancy on the continent. Less people lived below the poverty line than in the Netherlands. In addition, he had a strong presence in Africa, serving as the President of the African Union, uniting 53 states.

Gaddafi believed that he was on good terms with the West. Enter NATO's "intervention" in 2011, Libya is now a failed state and its economy is in shambles. As the government's control slips through their fingers and into to the militia fighters' hands, oil production has all but stopped. The militias variously local, tribal, and regional, Islamist or criminal, that have plagued Libya since NATO's intervention, have recently lined up into two warring factions. Libya now has two governments, both with their own Prime Minister, parliament and army.

The fall of Gaddafi's administration has created all of the country's worst-case scenarios: Western embassies have all left, the South of the country has become a haven for terrorists, and the Northern coast a center of migrant trafficking. Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia have all closed their borders with Libya. This all occurs amidst a backdrop of widespread rape, assassinations and torture that complete the picture of a state that is failed to the bone.

On one side, in the West of the country, Islamist-allied militias took over control of the capital Tripoli and other cities and set up their own government, chasing away a parliament that was elected over the summer. On the other side, in the East of the Country, the "legitimate" government dominated by anti-Islamist politicians, ex-

1. Once freed from prison in 1990, Nelson Mandela visited Libya to personally thank Gaddafi for his many years of support. What was Mandela's real feelings toward the US? In 2002 he said: "If you look at those matters, you will come to the conclusion that the attitude of the United States of America is a threat to world peace. If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the USA. They don't care for human beings."

iled 1,200 kilometers away in Tobruk, no longer governs anything. America is backing a third force: long-time CIA asset, General Khalifa Hifter, who aims to set himself up as Libya's new dictator. Hifter is currently receiving logistical and air support from the U.S. because his faction envisions Libya as open to Western financiers, speculators, and capital.

For over 40 years, Gaddafi promoted economic democracy and used the nationalized oil wealth to sustain progressive social welfare programs for all Libyans. Under Gaddafi's rule, Libyans enjoyed not only free health-care and free education, but also free electricity and interest-free loans. Now thanks to NATO's intervention the health-care sector is on the verge of collapse as thousands of Filipino health workers flee the country, institutions of higher education across the East of the country are shut down, and blackouts are a common occurrence in once thriving Tripoli.

One group that has suffered immensely from NATO's bombing campaign is the nation's women. Unlike many other Arab nations, women in Gaddafi's Libya had the right to education, hold jobs, divorce, hold property and have an income. The United Nations Human Rights Council praised Gaddafi for his promotion of women's rights. When the colonel seized power in 1969, few women went to university. Today, more than half of Libya's university students are women. One of the first laws Gaddafi passed in 1970 was an equal pay for equal work law.

In August 2011, President Obama confiscated \$30 billion from Libya's Central Bank, which Gaddafi had earmarked for the establishment of the African IMF and African Central Bank. Libya had no external debt and its reserves amounted to \$150 billion—which are now frozen (i.e. being stolen by international imperialism).

- One time he released all of the nation's prisoners (and several partial mass pardons).
- It was enshrined in law that every Libyan should have a home and home ownership was considered a basic human right.
- Newly married couples would receive a free 60,000-dinar (i.e. \$50,000) grant to get them on the property ladder and have a comfortable start to married life.
- Libya had a free national health service.
- Libya provided free education for all

citizens.

- If any Libyans had other exceptional medical or educational needs, the government would fund their visits abroad, giving them \$2,300 per month for accommodation and travel.
- Libyans who wanted to work the land were given some acres to farm, a little house, tools, livestock and seeds to begin their careers.
- The government would pay half the cost of every Libyan citizen's first car.
- The price of petrol in Libya was \$0.14 per litre.
- If a Libyan graduate was unable to find a job in his or her chosen profession, the government would pay the average salary of their desired job until they were in full time employment.
- A portion of every Libyan oil sale was credited directly to the bank accounts of all Libyan citizens.
- Every family received \$5,000 in child benefit.
- 40 loaves of bread in Libya used to cost \$0.15.
- 25 % of Libyans had a university degree.

Compare the above with the image of Gaddafi portrayed by international imperialism's twisted propaganda machine. Outside folks can do an Internet search for "Gaddafi" and all those bourgeois lies come bubbling up to the top, since they are the newest. You will have a picture of a brutal dictator, blood dripping from his arthritic fingers, who tortures prisoners, steals the wealth of the nation into his own pocket, and on and on. No slander was too base, no reported "fact" too wild to be bothered with something called fact checking. Here's a sample headline: REVEALED: MUAMMAR GADDAFI'S SECRET RAPE DUNGEONS. Our colossal media machine in bold letters blared out "Kill him, kill him, kill!" All watched on TV as that final bullet was put through Gaddafi's head. And America cheered!²

Let's take a quick look at how that propaganda machine works. We'll take one word, say "democracy" and compare its meaning

2. "...if you form the habit of taking what someone else says about a thing without checking it out for yourself, you'll find that other people will have you hating your friends and loving your enemies. ...you'll always be maneuvered into a situation where you are never fighting your actual enemies, where you will find yourself fighting your own self." Source: *Malcolm X Speaks*, George Breitman, ed., New York, 1965, pp. 137-146.

within a class context. The meaning of “democracy” in ruling class circles is reflected in a 2002 *New York Times* Editorial on the U.S.-backed military coup in Venezuela, which temporarily removed that country’s democratically elected (and very popular) president, Hugo Chávez.

Rather than describe that coup as what it was by definition - a direct attack on democracy by a foreign power and domestic military which disliked the popularly elected president – the *Times*, in the most Orwellian fashion imaginable, literally celebrated the coup as a victory for democracy. “Thankfully”, said the *NYT*, “democracy in Venezuela was no longer in danger ..” because the democratically-elected leader was forcibly removed by the military and replaced by an unelected, pro-U.S. business leader.

The CIA spent five billion dollars destabilizing the then democratically elected government of the Ukraine and overthrew him. In fact, the U.S. and NATO are behind all of the “color revolutions” eating into Russia’s former sphere of influence, which escapes no one save the American people.

Gaddafi believed that he was on good terms with the West.

Three years ago, NATO declared that the mission in Libya had been “one of the most successful in NATO history.” Truth is, Western interventions have produced nothing but colossal failures in Libya, Iraq, and Syria. Lest we forget, prior to western military involvement in these three nations, they were the most modern and secular states in the Middle East and North Africa with the highest regional women’s rights and standards of living.

NATO’s military intervention may have been a resounding success for America’s military elite and oil companies, but for the ordinary Libyan, the military campaign may indeed go down in history as one of the greatest failures of the 21st century.

So why did the bourgeoisie love Mandela and hate Gaddafi? Mandella put a black face on white South African Capitalism. Gaddafi, on the other hand, wanted to sell his oil in exchange for gold rather than the dollar, and he opposed the now unfolding U.S. military occupation of Africa—he refused to join the U.S.’s Africa Command. ●

Information gleaned from Internet sources and strung together (plagiarized) by Ed Mead

AN ACCOUNTING

The Bruce Seidel Memorial Fund is No More

When I was released from prison there was one other George Jackson Brigade (GJB) member still behind bars, a New Afrikan named Mark Cook. I immediately organized the Mark Cook Freedom Committee and set about the process of organizing for his release. While doing this the community raised about \$8,000 for Mark, a car, and a job with the county.

Once Mark was released we continued to work together on political projects. One idea we came up with was to set up a fund for recently released progressive political prisoners. We established a bank account in the name of the “Bruce Seidel Memorial Fund”³ and seeded it with \$10,000 of our own money (we both had good jobs back in those days). We subsequently gave away under half of that money to the people we had set the fund up for, leaving over \$5,000 in the account remaining to be given away to deserving prisoners.

Then the California hunger strikes happened and Mark and I were all in; we threw everything we had into those struggles, including the money reserved for released prisoners. Where’d the money go? Some of that I can talk about and some of it I can’t (nothing at all illegal). We printed 12,000 copies of a color broadsheet, for example, at a cost of thousands, and shipped bundles of them to activists in cities across the nation. We did mass mailings, etc. Also, at that point the Bruce Seidel Memorial Fund had existed for something like five years, and in all that time nobody else had donated a cent to our \$10,000 contribution to released political prisoners.

We felt justified in our use of that money for the political struggle of prisoners—that is until a potential recipient was released. It’s happened. Now former political prisoner Sekou Kambui is freed after 40 years in prison and in need of money. Please give, if only to assuage my guilt.

I apologize to you, Sekou, for using money, a part of which would have been set aside for your release, on broadsheets and such. But there are more to blame than me. The anarchist community not only never gave a penny to the fund, the money they raised was going to former white anarchist

3. Bruce Seidel was a member of the George Jackson Brigade. He was killed during shoot-out with police in the course of a GJB bank expropriation.

prisoners who’d served a short time, while ignoring calls to support people like Sekou.

Mark, at 78, is pretty much broke, in assisted living, and his only income is social security. I’m a spry young 73 year-old. My only income is also social security, although I do have a partner who still works. Also, as most readers know, I have a terminal disease (advanced stage lung cancer). Mark and I are tapped out, we gave all we can give. Now it’s your turn. Please send Sekou some financial support. It need not be much, as everyone (including Mark and I) can give some. Send contributions to:

Sekou Kambui
305 W. Powell St.
Dothan, AL 36303

BOOK REVIEW

“Guerrilla USA: The George Jackson Brigade and the anti-capitalist underground of the 1970s” By Daniel Burton - Rose, ucpress, 2010, 277 pages.

By Jose H. Villarreal

I had heard of the George Jackson Brigade (GJB) for some years and was delighted when a comrade gave me the opportunity to read this piece of hystory by giving me this book. The book discusses the GJB and some of the participants, among them Ed Mead of the quarterly Prison Focus newspaper and monthly Rock Newsletter. I enjoyed learning about the GJB and about the hystory showing what brought people to rise up in armed struggle against the US empire. The book appropriately starts off with a hystory lesson of the times, leading up to the creation of the GJB. This was a period where Robert Williams in the 1950s was in armed struggle in the South with his self-defense group against Klan terror. His efforts would prove too radical for even most liberals in the US and he would go into exile with his wife, Mabel - first to Cuba, then to China.

The 60s came and the Watts riots of 1965 erupted. Urban guerrilla warfare was in full swing in many cities. The Chicano Movement raised its fist, the American Indian Movement rose up and groups like the Black Panthers, Brown Berets, Young Lords Party and Weathermen were mobilizing their people in so many ways. Rebellions erupted in New Jersey, and in Detroit the people clashed with the National Guard with over 40 left dead.

The world was erupting all over with revolution and guerrilla wars. The time was

ripe for political activity that drew in the youth and inspired rebellion.

One of the great things about 'Guerrilla USA' was that it discussed how not just the activist community began to really discuss the Lumpen (prisoners, etc) in the scheme of things, but also how there began to be real collaboration between Lumpen folks and activists on the outside. In 'Guerrilla USA' we read examples of people like Ed Mead, George Jackson, Eldridge Cleaver, the Symbionese Liberation Army and others who were prisoners but transformed, revolutionized and injected the activist movement with critical intensity.

Prisoners and ex-prisoners, when politicized, will prove to be that critical component which helps to push and advance the people and the movement for justice forward. This is because prisoners in many cases come from a place of unvarnished repression, which in the US serves as fertile ground for dissent and resistance. The state's worst nightmare is having the "gangs" in the US turn their guns away from each other and instead aim them at US imperialism.

Those prisoners of the 60s and 70s who were able to defy all the repressive odds stacked against them from the state became the concrete examples of the concept 'repression breeds resistance.' This cross-pollination between Lumpen and outside activists is the incendiary burst that threatens US imperialism within its borders the most and which today the state is attempting to obstruct, especially with the new regulations being proposed that would ban any publications which disagree with the state. Problem is the ship has already left the port.

By the time the GJB became active in the armed struggle they had a lot of company. The 1970s were a time when folks stepped up their resistance and bombing became more and more popular. On page 37 the author speaks about different groups that were active during the "second wave of bombing" and just in the Bay Area alone, he notes... "Local players in mid- to late 1970s San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland, and Berkeley included the Chicano Liberation Front, New World Liberation Front, Red Guerrilla Family, Emilio Zapata Unit, Iranian Liberation Army, Sam Melville-Jonathon Jackson Unit."

This was the environment in which the GJB mingled and operated. Groups engaging in urban guerrilla warfare in many cases included ex-prisoners because the struggles on both sides of the prison walls were over-

lapping and there were two, three, many Dragons. But what set the GJB apart from many of these groups at the time, I learned, were its internationalist actions (like when they did a bombing for the four dead Red Army Faction prisoners in Germany). This led me to think of the period during our prison hunger strikes when Palestinian prisoners sent us words of solidarity and we sent solidarity to prisoners around the world who are suffering like us. This solidarity may be displayed again in the near future in more than words by prisoners around the world.

Ed Mead's childhood reads like that of many prisoners who have been 'state raised' - growing up with one parent, running the streets, committing petty crime for pocket money or to eat, juvenile hall and reformatory school. This molding for a rebellious spirit is very familiar to people, especially poor people, in the US. As someone who began doing time in juvenile hall even before I was a teenager I understand this process of institutionalization real good. But this criminalization also creates another development where prisoners begin to understand the reality of our enemy who is most manifested in state repression. This realization is a leap in consciousness which takes decades for a prisoner to grasp in most cases, if it is ever grasped at all. Some, unfortunately, never develop politically on this page. On page 45 Burton-Rose explains this process and how it happened for Ed Mead:

"After being incarcerated on the burglary charges, however, Mead began to identify as a criminal. This adjustment was something of a psychological survival mechanism, permitting, as it did, a positive framing of his increasingly acute alienation from working class respectability. The permanent outsider status of 'criminal' laid the ground work for the oppositional identity Mead would embrace in his early thirties: that of a communist revolutionary."

Once criminalized, in many ways we are in a "permanent outsider status" where jobs, housing, education and other social services are severely restricted, if not totally out of our reach. Out of confusion, many end up blaming themselves for being cast off from US society, but this is only because they don't understand where this oppression stems from. It stems from the same oppression that plagues and criminalizes poor people all over the world, and this is capitalism. Coming to grips with this is a necessity for liberation.

As he did fed time it was interesting to read how Mead was penalized and thrown in the hole for doing legal work. For writing a writ he was punished, and like most of us when told not to do something, well we usually want to do it more.

Chapter six was almost like reading something about the hunger strikes that rocked California in the past few years. In the Federal prison at McNeal Island the author describes Mead's transition to "Jailhouse Lawyer." Most prisoners develop their legal skills in large part because the law is another tool, a weapon, in which to combat state repression. Most of us know that we will never totally liberate the people through the courts, but we can create some wiggle room where we not only just go on another day but we can also open up other fronts of struggle.

Not only was a class action lawsuit filed by prisoners at McNeal Island, but shortly thereafter a prisoner strike followed. Sound familiar? Something else that the author speaks about is how after the work strikes at McNeal Island, Mead began to study revolutionary theory. At one point he began to trace the repression he was experiencing to Amerika, and as Mead is quoted as saying on page 61: "In the process of struggle, one day I looked at myself and saw that I wasn't a criminal anymore."

This was pretty deep, and it's something that all prisoners at some point come to see. When you are resisting repression, especially in a torture unit like Pelican Bay SHU, eventually one realizes that one's struggle for justice has elevated oneself and now it is the state who is the criminal by subjecting us to such dehumanizing conditions.

I found it interesting to read about Rita 'Bo' Brown, another member of the GJB who after living a life on the outside found herself in Federal prison for stealing mail from her job at the post office. This lesbian prisoner was in Federal prison when news broke of George Jackson's assassination in August of 1971. When this news broke the wimmin of Terminal Island staged a strike, it was here that Rita began to develop consciously, as did many others. Wimmin in a federal prison in Alderson, West Virginia, also participated in a strike that quickly turned into a small rebellion - which included some escapes - in honor of "comrade George." The uprising at Attica, a prison in upstate, NY soon followed, in which prisoners took over the prison and dozens were murdered by the state. Prisons

were engulfed in rebellion.

In a similar theme to Ed Mead's story, Rita would get out of prison and become active for prisoner's rights and go on to form a wimmin's prisoner support group. She saw this as a necessity due to the existing University prisoner's coalition following a patriarchal agenda and focusing on catering to male prisoners.

In addition to all of the other radical activity of the 70s, both Rita and Ed seemed to be immensely affected by the activity of the Weather Underground and the Symbionese Liberation Army who were, as the author describes, "incinerated" by what the pigs had done in Compton, California. These two factors seemed to ignite more action in both Brown and Mead, which I believe was the intent of armed struggle, to not just give the enemy a taste of their own medicine but to activate the populace.

It was interesting to read in chapter 15 about a George Jackson Brigade member, John Sherman, who was at one time a member of the Revolutionary Union which is now known as the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP-USA). In this book Mead is quoted as comparing them to "Jehovah's Witness" people who "only interacted with other true believers, unless their purpose was to proselytize." In my own interaction with RCP-USA, other Raza and I have seen them display what can only be described as White chauvinism toward Chicanos. When it comes to the Chicano Nation the RCP is against its existence and liberation.

Having never met the GJB member Bruce Seidel, the impact of his death during the bank expropriation was devastating, when reading about the ordeal. Reading of Bruce committing class suicide in order to take up armed struggle against capitalism was powerful, but his quick death was a tragedy. But again, pig terror always breeds resistance.

Reading of Mark Cook was interesting. After reading his brief commentary for a couple of years now in the Rock newsletter, this private behind the scenes figure comes alive on these pages. His story as a prisoner who helped organize the Black Panthers in a Washington state prison, then paroled to take up prison activism took me through the pages of 'Guerrilla USA' to bank robbery, shootings with the pigs, to liberating one of the GJB members from police custody and shooting the pig in the process. Nicely done, Mark.

Mark's arrest reminded me so much of what happens to prisoners in the general

population when informants are bought off to collaborate with the pigs to frame us up. In Mark's case he got away after the liberating of his comrade, but the pigs did a sweep of all possible suspects, the usual ex-felons in a city. Mark was one of those picked up for questioning, but so was a dope-fiend who knew Mark. This dope-fiend would tell the pigs that Mark confessed to him of partaking in the jail-escape action, and as a result Mark was soon arrested. The crazy part about it is he never "confessed" to this dope-fiend, just like informants in prisons collaborating with the pigs today to take us off the main lines. This is the recipe for the classic frame-up.

Reading about the polemics that occurred once Mead and Sherman were arrested after the bank expropriation and Bruce's death revealed the pulse of the aboveground US Left at the time. Many were denouncing the armed struggle of the GJB, while folks like the Left Bank Collective ultimately supported these actions. By the way, Left Bank Books sent me books years ago through their 'Books to Prisoners' program so it was great to read about their hystorical activity, as well. But concerning the armed struggle, today I would not say that conditions are ripe for an all-out armed struggle en masse, however no phenomenon takes on a linear path. I believe that conditions are constantly ebbing and flowing and that situations arise where the only logical decision is for armed struggle. When the people are being slaughtered by the state there is a need to defend ourselves and the people. This includes in prisons where we have a right to defend ourselves against state terror, although I would not say that armed struggle is necessary in every occasion.

When you are struggling against occupying terrorists, armed struggle becomes a necessity. The more privileged a person is, the less likely it is that they will grasp this, but the contradictions which stem from US imperialism will only be resolved through weaponized struggle. When it comes to US imperialism all options are on the table, and this is because different situations require a different response to life or death questions.

The only criticism I had of the book is when they describe a shoot-out between a lookout and the pig where supposedly the lookout shot at the arriving pig and a bullet hit one of his comrades. Rather than being in the line of fire, a re-positioning could have been a good thing. I did enjoy seeing that a self-criticism was done afterwards.

Once the first half of the Brigade gets caught it seems the second half - Rita, Janine, John and Therese - began picking up steam and getting good at conducting operations. The "disappearing" money was a disappointment, as was John's gambling habit. Perhaps this was baggage he brought from his days with the Revolutionary Union... Ultimately, this was a great book. Not only for its hystorical worth and practical lessons from armed anti-imperialism, but also for helping me to understand some of the folks who came to our aid during our hystoric hunger strike. When we rose up 30,000 strong at times I wondered what brought so many to come to support us. What compelled someone like Ed Mead to spend his own meager funds to create a newsletter like "Rock," which amplifies our voices and struggles in these torture chambers? After reading this book I understand it is a love for the people and a thirst for liberation which compels one on the path to anti-imperialism, and this is what drives one to serve the people. Even the most brutal torture Kamp cannot erase this truth nor stifle this natural development.

Love and Struggle,

Jose H. Villarreal

[Ed's Note: Since this book review is about a group that engaged in armed struggle against the state, and since I was once a part of that group, I feel it is important to clarify something on the subject of armed struggle in the context of the prison movement.

For the California prisoner's movement, violence will lead to immediate isolation and defeat. Yesterday a man newly converted to Islam shot and killed a Canadian guard and rushed into the legislative building where he was shot dead.

I understand his crime, yet such an act, as Candida has made clear, will not have any impact on their decision to join U.S. imperialism in its ongoing attacks on the peoples of the Middle East. Similarly, my placing a pipe bomb under the desk of Washington's DOC boss did not change the brutal DOC policies we were attacking.

If prisoners or ex-prisoners use violence against the state they will be stabbing themselves in the back. In the past I have engaged in violence against the state, and it is remotely possible that I may do it again, should the need to do so expose itself, but that time is not now and the issue is not prisoners. Honor the Agreement to End Hostilities, work to build unity on the inside, that's how you'll win.]

LAWSUIT SEEKS TO INVALIDATE OUTGOING GOVERNOR'S CENSORSHIP STATUTE

Prisoners, human rights advocates, scholars, and media sue to prevent enforcement

November 10, 2014: Pittsburgh, PA - A lawsuit challenging a Pennsylvania censorship law intended to silence Mumia Abu-Jamal and others convicted of personal injury crimes was filed today, less than one month after outgoing Governor Corbett signed the bill into law as part of his failed re-election campaign. The Abolitionist Law Center, Amistad Law Project, and the Roderick and Solange MacArthur Justice Center are representing Mumia Abu-Jamal, Prison Radio, Educators for Mumia Abu-Jamal, Kerry "Shakaboona" Marshall, Robert L. Holbrook, and Human Rights Coalition in a lawsuit against Attorney General Kathleen Kane and Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams that was filed today in the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Senate Bill 508 allows the Attorney General, county District Attorneys, and victims of personal injury crimes to bring a lawsuit in civil court against the person convicted of the personal injury crime to enjoin conduct that "perpetuates the continuing effect of the crime on the victim". The actions that could prompt a lawsuit include "conduct which causes a temporary or permanent state of mental anguish."

"This law is clearly unconstitutional. The Pennsylvania legislature and Governor Corbett wanted to use Mumia Abu-Jamal to score political points and passed a law that can't pass constitutional muster. We're suing Attorney General Kane and Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams before they can sue to keep Mumia from speaking publicly," said Bret Grote, Legal Director of the Abolitionist Law Center.

On October 16th, days after Mumia Abu-Jamal's prerecorded commencement speech was played for graduates at Goddard College in Vermont, the Pennsylvania House passed Senate Bill 508. The bill was passed in the Pennsylvania Senate the next day and Governor Corbett signed it into law on October 21st, 16 days after Abu-Jamal's commencement speech.

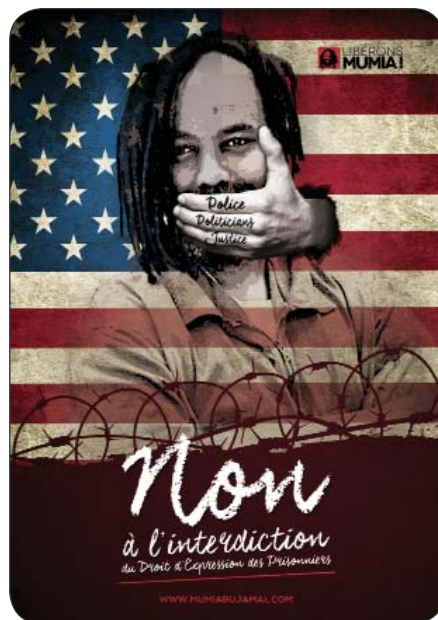
Abu-Jamal has spent 33 years in prison, 30 of which were in solitary confinement on death row after being convicted at a 1982 trial that Amnesty International said "failed to meet minimum international

standards safeguarding the fairness of legal proceedings."

Abu-Jamal has given three commencement addresses in the past: another for Goddard College in 2008; one for Antioch College in Ohio in 2000; and one for Evergreen College in Washington state in 1999. He has recorded more than 3,000 essays, published seven books in nine languages, with two more books set for publication in 2015, and has been the subject of three major broadcast and theatrical movies. The latest film, Mumia: Long Distance Revolutionary, is currently airing on the Starz network, sold out theatres coast to coast, and has sold more than 20,000 DVDs.

"This is not the first time Pennsylvania has tried to silence Mumia," said Noelle Hanrahan of Prison Radio. "The Department of Corrections has punished Mumia for speaking publicly and eliminated in-person broadcast media visits with all prisoners in response pressure from the Fraternal Order of Police." In November 1996, the DOC responded to FOP pressure by eliminating in-person broadcast media visits with all prisoners.

In May 1994, a regular series of commentaries by Abu-Jamal were planned for broadcast by National Public Radio program All Things Considered. NPR fired Abu-Jamal after having its funding threatened on the floor of the U.S. Senate. The Department of Corrections punished



Abu-Jamal for violating a prison rule that forbade prisoners from conducting a business or profession. The Third Circuit found that enforcing the rule against Abu-Jamal would cause him irreparable harm under the First Amendment.

"The Pennsylvania legislature has targeted Mumia Abu-Jamal and in the process swept up a whole host of people in prison and people who have come home," said Nikki Grant, Policy Director of Amistad Law Project. "The fact that this bill is even on the books makes it less likely that people who have been convicted of personal injury crimes will speak out publicly. These are the people who are already most marginalized in our society."

The Human Rights Coalition, another plaintiff to the lawsuit, is consistently critical of human rights violations within the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and is comprised of prisoners, prisoners' family members, formerly incarcerated people, and community activists. "Human Rights Coalition utilizes the voices, input, and leadership of people in prison in all of our work," said Patricia Vickers of Human Rights Coalition. "We also document prison abuse and are concerned that this law will make people fearful of reporting abuse."

"People who have been harmed by violence need relief--counseling, healing, restoration. Stifling speech doesn't provide any of that," said Amistad Law Project Legal Director Ashley Henderson.

"How can the state's legislators pass and politicians sign the recent law described as the 'Muzzle Mumia Act'?" said Mumia Abu-Jamal. "They can't. At least not constitutionally. In order to do so they had to knowingly and willingly violate both the U.S. and state constitutions and their very oaths of office."

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STARK FACTS OF GLOBAL GREED, A DISEASE AS CHALLENGING AS CLIMATE CHANGE

By Paul Bucheit

We seem helpless, both in the U.S. and around the world, to stop the incessant flow of wealth to an elitist group of people who are simply building on their existing riches. The increasing rate of their takeaway is the message derived from the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook (GWD).

It's already been made clear that the richest Americans have taken almost all the gains in U.S. wealth since the recession. But the unrelenting money grab is a global phenomenon. The GWD confirms just how bad it's getting for the great majority of us.

1. U.S. -- Even the Upper Middle Class Is Losing

In just three years, from 2011 to 2014, the bottom half of Americans lost almost half of their share of the nation's wealth, dropping from a 2.5% share to a 1.3% share (detail is here).

Most of the top half lost ground, too. The 36 million upper middle class households just above the median (6th, 7th, and 8th deciles) dropped from a 13.4% share to an 11.9% share. Much of their portion went to the richest one percent.

This is big money. With total U.S. wealth of \$84 trillion, the three-year change represents a transfer of wealth of over a trillion dollars from the bottom half of America to the richest 1%, and another trillion dollars from the upper middle class to the 1%.

2. U.S. -- In 3 Years, an Average of \$5 Million Went To Every Household in the 1%

A closer look at the numbers shows the frightening extremes. The bottom half of America, according to GWD, owned \$1.5 trillion in 2011. Now their wealth is down to \$1.1 trillion. Much of their wealth is in housing equity, which was depleted by the recession.

The richest Americans, on the other hand, took incomprehensible amounts of wealth from the rest of us, largely by being already rich, and by being heavily invested in the stock market. The following summary is based on GWD figures and reliable estimates of the makeup of the richest one percent, and on the fact that almost all the nation's wealth is in the form of private households and business assets:

- In 3 years the average household in the

top 1% (just over a million households) increased its net worth by about \$4.5 million.

- In 3 years the average household in the top .1% (just over 100,000 households) increased its net worth by about \$18 million.
- In 3 years the average household in the top .01% (12,000 households) increased its net worth by about \$180 million.
- In 3 years the average member of the Forbes 400 increased his/her net worth by about \$2 billion.

3. World -- 1% Wealth Grew from \$100 Trillion to \$127 Trillion in 3 Years

A stunning 95 percent of the world's population lost a share of its wealth over the past three years. Almost all of the gain went to the world's richest 1%.

Again, the gains seem almost incomprehensible. The world's wealth grew from \$224 trillion to \$263 trillion in three years. The world's richest 1%, who owned a little under \$100 trillion in 2011, now own almost \$127 trillion. For every dollar they possessed just three years ago, they now have a dollar and a quarter.

From New York and LA and San Francisco to London and Kenya and Indonesia, the rich are pushing suffering populations out of the way to acquire land and build luxury homes. The "winner-take-all" attitude is breaking down society in the U.S. and around the world.

There's a lot more in the GWD, and it doesn't get any prettier. It tells us what unregulated capitalism does to a society.

Paul Buchheit is a college teacher, and the editor and main author of American Wars: Illusions and Realities. •

**I am no longer accepting
the things I cannot change,**



**I am changing the things I
cannot accept.**

LETTER ON RE-VALIDATION DISCRIMINATION

It has come to our attention that many inmates who are undergoing their six-year inactive review are being discriminated against. Specifically, those inmates who the I.G.I. (goons) target and choose to re-validate. According to the memorandum dated August 9th, 2013. Subject: Update and Information Sharing Related to the Ongoing STG Case by Case Review. This from the Director of Adult Institutions.

All validated members and associates undergoing their six-year inactive review will be referred to D.R.B. for a case by case review. "After the evaluation", however, administrators are choosing to refer only those inmates found inactive to D.R.B. Even providing those inmates with a D.R.B. review date while placing those inmates who are re-validated by I.G.I./O.C.S. in limbo.

When confronted, counselors are claiming it is their responsibility to refer an inactive inmate to D.R.B. However, when handling re-validated inmates the D.R.B. referral is not included in their procedures. Thus, administrators are ignoring the Director's instructions on how six-year inactive reviews are to be conducted.

It is also important to point out that the Director specifically states "Although inmates continue to be scheduled ... for their six-year inactive review, only conduct that occurred during the preceding four years will be considered and evaluated consistent with the new STG policy."

Basically, all those being revalidated must fall within the guidelines of the STG policy. This conclusion is further supported by D.R.B.'s stance that case by case reviews will only go up as far as March 1, 2013, as all validated after said date should fall in sync to new STG standards. We know that this is not the case. Many inmates are being revalidated as told by I.G.I. under the "old validation" process.

Therefore, it is imperative that inmates demand their due process rights are acknowledged and respected by voicing such discrimination to all involved. Even by utilizing the 602 appeal process when needed. The discrimination must stop!

Jose Nunez, PBSP

[*Ed's Note: We've received several complaints about the re-validation process.*]

A NEW BEGINNING OR THE BEGINNING OF THE END:

By C. Landrum

It is said that history repeats itself. There is some truth to be found within this statement. All existing matter, be it organic or inorganic, and social phenomenon alike, have a history of endless development, a process of becoming, being, and passing away and into something qualitatively new altogether.

But development does not, nor should it be misunderstood, as proceeding along a straight line. Linearism is a product of the human mind, a human construct, that fails to correspond with the external material world and the laws inherent within it that govern the direction and development of its endless transformation.

History, like every other existing thing in this world, develops not in a straight line, like a recording on a reel that repeats itself continually, but in a cyclical like ascendancy, with each cycle repeating itself qualitatively distinct from the previous one, or as V.I. Lenin described:

“A development that repeats, as it were, stages that have already been passed, but repeats them in a different way, on a higher basis (negation of negation), a development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not in a straight line.”

At this particular stage in our struggle, we are coming full circle as history is once again repeating itself. This is a critical moment, and the life or death of our struggle is being decided by our response to the Security Threat Group and Step Down Program [S.T.G. and S.D.P. respectively] that we have allowed the state to impose upon us.

The fact that we are assisting the state to perpetuate its policy of social extermination under a new label directly reflects the deterioration of our collective unity and the resurgence of the vile individualism that has come to characterize the prison population of the last two decades.

If we are to take a correct measurement of our current situation and the trajectory we are now on, we must place the S.T.G. and S.D.P. within its proper historical context, and this requires that we once again revisit the *Castillo* case with an understanding of the 602 process and the function it serves.

The 602 process serves two main simultaneous functions: First, by seeking relief on an individual basis, it distracts and divides us from the issues that impact us as a

group. Secondly, the administrative process is dragged out for so long and the petitioner is required to jump through so many hoops that eventually most petitioners grow exhausted and abandons all attempts at seeking relief from the violations committed by the state.

Embodied with this statement is the age-old strategy of “divide and conquer”, which the CDC has learned to employ against us with great efficiency. And everytime we utilize the 602 process individually as the only means of achieving transformation, like a ju-jitsu fighter we allow the state to turn our own individualism against ourselves as a means to deprive us of the unity and momentum necessary for waging a successful struggle. More important, this strategy is not limited to the 602 process alone, but is a common feature that permeates all interactions between the state and ourselves. This is inevitable being that the state’s apparatus of repression in all of its various forms—the judicial system, police, military, intelligence, etc., especially the prison system—is an inherently oppressive institution by design.

As most of us can recall, the *Castillo* case was a long, arduous legal battle that raged in the judiciary arena for some ten years in a noble effort to eliminate the state’s inhumane practice of “social extermination”, i.e., *keeping us alive as living and breathing empty vessels without the social intercourse necessary for one to develop identity* (emphasis added by Ed). For reasons left unexamined we failed to complement this legal battle with any other forms of direct resistance, while IGI fascists and the CDC bureaucracy remained adamantly consistent throughout in its own efforts to keep us divided. Despite the absence of subjective conditions (a politically conscious mass of prisoners), the state recognized that nonetheless the objective conditions were conducive for large-scale resistance. And once again, remaining true to form, we allowed them to exploit our own self-interests in a successful effort to prevent this potential from materializing. When, as Anthony Artiaga pointed out in his recent article:

The six year “active/inactive gang status review” was created and implemented. A policy requiring a validated inmate to remain free of any and all gang related activity and association “for no period less than six years in or-

der to reconsider (but rarely granted) general population release....

All hope for a unified resistance dissipated and “every-man-for-himself” was now consolidated and set in stone, with the initial release of a relatively insignificant number of validated SHU prisoners back into general population, we cultivated and insured our own further atomization from each other as we pursued our search for escape on an individual basis by way of the six year inactive review policy.

Despite the fact that group oppression necessitates group resistance, the state has learned long ago that we are easily defeated when we are tossed a bone that appeals to our self-interest. The state accomplishes this with little effort, sadly, when it sold us on a false hope that we could all obtain inactive status as individuals.

To reiterate, Joseph Dzhucashvili stated that dialectical and historical materialism teaches us that: “...the process of development should not be understood as a movement in a circle, not as a simple repetition of what has already occurred, but as an onward and upward movement, as a transition from ... the simple to the complex.”

It has been roughly fifteen years since the *Castillo* case settled, and the empty promise of the six year inactive review policy was implemented—and here we are coming full circle. Like in the *Castillo* case, the state has initiated its imposition of the S.T.G. and S.D.P., pacifying potential resistance with the release of SHU prisoners back into the general population, although this time around the numbers have been significantly greater and have included elements from amongst the “leadership” thus creating an externally superficial illusion of victory.

Throughout the hunger strikes we paid an extraordinary amount of lip service to the necessity of collective unity, and yet when the state employed its own counter-tactics to create fissures and divisions amongst us once again, we assisted them in their endeavor. Without any consideration for long term consequences, or the immediate obvious fact that our current circumstances, or the immediately obvious fact that our current circumstances are far more dire now that when we first initiated our strikes, we could not trip over each other fast enough to sign release forms acknowledging guilt of past association, or membership, “post

A QUESTION TO THE LEADERSHIP

fact” in our scramble to get out. This fidelity to philosophic pragmatism and its application will come back to bite us.

Within the last twelve months the state claims to have released seventy percent of those previously held within the tombs of the Security Housing Unit (SHU), and yet the number of those in isolation have remained consistently steady.

Philosophically, idealism is a still a poisonous weed that continues to distort the mind of many. In spite of those who are proclaiming victory, reality is not determined by wishful thinking.

The demand to eliminate collective punishment was not only not achieved, but true to its fascist inclinations the CDC retaliated by making it policy and thus giving pseudo-legitimization to its practice, via the new STG with the SDP, the IGI has extended its reach even further. Anyone having belonged to any group, or street gang (past or present), or possessing any political opinions reflecting a class position other than their own, can be isolated indefinitely without any connection to a particular prison gang. Our vulnerability has increased in direct proportion to the increase of state power.

Like the six year inactive review policy, the number of those now being released under the S.T.G. and S.D.P. will decrease dramatically and ultimately taper off to a trickle in correlation to our own struggle losing steam with the waning of outside support. If we are to inject life back into our struggle, we must absolutely understand the S.T.G. and S.D.P. for what it is, i.e., another means to perpetuate indefinite isolation under a new label. We have not achieved our goal of ending social-extirpation. This is not a spiteful, nor rhetorical question, but we must sincerely ask ourselves—“is this truly a victory, or a failure being sold as a victory by those reactionary elements amongst us?”

With each state in the historical development of our struggle, changes in policy alone have only amounted to a change in label, allowing the state to maintain its trajectory without interruption. If we are to eliminate social-extirpation, “abstract” changes in policy must be facilitated with “concrete” transformations. We must transform the various Ad Seg and SHU facilities from within, otherwise indefinite isolation will continue unabated and the state will manufacture a new label whenever

circumstances necessitate, be in “program failure”, “validation”, or the latest gem from the CDC’s book of labels “S.T.G. and S.D.P.”, etc.

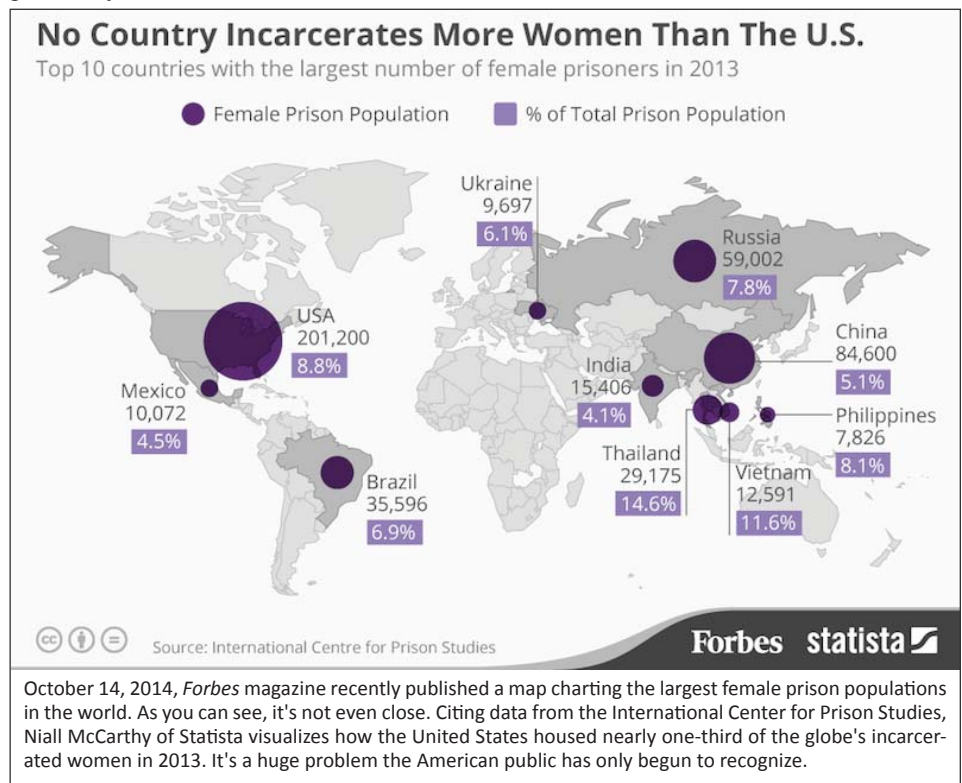
If we are to greatly reduce, or eliminate, their ability to permanently isolate us, we must struggle for the installation of two 4-man tables in each pod, phones, exercise bars (dip, pull up, push up combo) designed and fabricated by prisoners, cellies, Day Room time for social development and preservation of the individual’s identity. Social intercourse is a “human right” that needs to be established to facilitate these changes—both in policy and practice. To accomplish this, “limited association” must be our primary demand, and if collective unity is to be more than empty rhetoric, then we must likewise adjust our demands (which can be done without compromising the original five) and address the interests of those in G.P., such as weights, family visits, the question of prison labor and wages, etc. These are issues that concern all prisoners, S.N.Y. and solid alike, and therefore we should be appealing and accepting support from all corners of the prison system.

If we are to resuscitate life back into our struggle, we must adjust our tactics to meet the changing conditions. If there are any amongst the leadership or anyone politically conscious, who are still dedi-

cated to our original goals, I believe we can achieve this with a small group of strikers consisting of 10, 15, maybe 20 “volunteers” willing to fast consecutively one at a time (or in pairs?) to the end. Each striker could initiate his fast with a new striker on standby joining in at 20-day intervals. And with leadership guidance and blessing, this could be complemented with a state with a statewide prisoner work-stoppage and halt of all movement.

Pre-written and recorded statements, interviews, photo, etc., of each “volunteer” could be provided to various media outlets, TV, radio, newspapers, internet, etc., prior to each striker initiating his fast, preventing the CDC from denying or sweeping deaths under the rug with minimal publicity.

This may seem drastic but have we not already lost life with each strike, while not accomplishing anything substantial? Nonetheless, I know this is a controversial issue with many sides and aspects to it and a proposal of this magnitude needs to be put on the table and discussed. And although the Comrade Ed and I are probably in more or less agreement with my analysis, we have gone back and forth on the issue of a smaller strike of dedicated “volunteers.” I believe that we have both made valid points, but we would encourage both the leadership and other potential volunteers for their contribution to this discussion. ●



PRISONERS FREED QUICKLY AFTER VOTERS OK MEASURE

By Don Thompson, AP

A ballot measure passed by voters this week is already freeing California suspects from jail as their felony charges are reduced to misdemeanors and people previously convicted of the charges receive reduced sentences as they appear in court.

Sheriffs across the state immediately began implementing Proposition 47, which calls for treating shoplifting, forgery, fraud, petty theft and possession of small amounts of drugs, including cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine, as misdemeanors instead of felonies.

More than 60 inmates held for those charges were released from the Stanislaus County jail in the past few days, including a man arrested for his third felony strike, which was reduced to a misdemeanor under the new law, said Sheriff Adam Christianson.

"I released a three-striker today, first time I've ever done that in my career," he said Friday. "A longtime career criminal who'd been sentenced for felony theft with prior convictions. We recalculated his sentence credits, so he's out the door."

Due to overcrowding and court-ordered caps in Stanislaus County jails, misdemeanor offenders generally are not booked or held for more than a few days.

In Sacramento, two dozen suspects walked out of the Sacramento County jail two days after 58 percent of voters approved the initiative on Tuesday. They were among the more than 400 Sacramento jail inmates expected to be freed while they await trial on reduced charges that in many cases will no longer keep people behind bars after arrests.

Other sheriffs immediately changed arrest policies while they reviewed which inmates qualify for release. Meanwhile, inmates in state prison on the charges can petition for release.

It appears the measure intended to save hundreds of millions of dollars a year in reduced prison and jail costs is already having that effect. Under the initiative, savings will be diverted to rehabilitation programs intended to reduce crime, though the programs will lag far behind the criminals'

release.

Hours after the bill passed, Fresno County deputies were instructed to stop jailing people arrested on the lower-level crimes, said Sheriff Margaret Mims. Suspects there and in other counties are now issued citations similar to traffic tickets and ordered to appear in court.

The state corrections department began notifying nearly 4,800 inmates in California prisons that they can petition judges to have their felony convictions and sentences reduced. Convicts serving time for the felonies in local jails can also petition for release.

The initiative is projected to keep about 4,000 inmates out of state prisons each year, more than enough to help the state meet a population cap ordered by federal judges.

Emily Harris, statewide coordinator for the group Californians United for a Responsible Budget, which backed the initiative, said lower-level offenders don't deserve lengthy jail or prison terms even if they can't immediately benefit from crime prevention programs.

Proponents will be watching to make sure the corrections board, which is dominated by law enforcement officials, doesn't siphon the money off for jail programs, or that the truancy money isn't used for more school police officers, Harris said.

Bee staff writer Erin Tracy contributed to this report.

<http://www.modbee.com/news/local/crime/article3654760.html>

CONFRONTING THE BATTERED CITIZEN SYNDROME

By James F. Tracy

State-sponsored terrorism poses a significant challenge to the psychological well-being of the body politic. While evident in many geopolitical locales, this condition arising from such government abuses is especially prevalent in the West. Such a disorder is comparable to the psychological manipulation recognized on a micro-level in some spousal relationships.

Indeed, the 13-year-old "war on terror" has contributed to a grave societal malady that might be deemed "battered citizen syndrome." As the project of a transnational

New World Order is laid out, the psychological constitution of the polity must necessarily experience perpetual crises and the threat thereof. Genuinely non-conventional political communication, organization and activism are among the few substantial means of combating battered citizen syndrome and the spiritual and psychological slavery it perpetuates.

Battered citizen syndrome is an extremely damaging psychological condition impacting individuals who are collectively subjected to emotional abuse and political disenfranchisement by the psychopathic types that all-too-frequently occupy public office in an era of political and socioeconomic decay. The condition is often the result of "false flag" terrorism initiated by a tyrannical state that has long grown unresponsive to the citizen's actual needs. This syndrome subdues individuals' awareness of their own historical and political agency, and discourages them from seeking assistance for and ultimately remedying their unsafe situation.

There are various stages one will experience as a result of this condition. When persons in the singular or aggregate undergo the threat or experience of state violence in the form of false flag terror (i.e., political assassinations, seemingly spontaneous bombings or shootings, gigantic skyscrapers falling inexplicably at free-fall speed, CIA-sponsored terror bogeys such as Al Qaeda and ISIS, and perhaps even deadly plagues) they will find it expedient to deny such exploitation and decline to admit they are being manipulated by a paranoid and psychopathic state. Corporate-owned or controlled mass media routinely propagating the notion of "free choice" and personal agency by touting the supposed integrity of electoral processes and political institutions actively aid in this denial.

Once a victim accepts the fact that such manipulation is taking place, they will feel remorse. Victims will often believe that the abuse is their fault and not the fault of criminal governance. Eventually, a victim of state terror and violence will realize that they are not to blame for the cruelty they are being subjected to. Despite this realization, the individual will typically choose to remain in the abusive relationship. It may take some time, but eventually the truly self-respecting citizen-victim will understand that in order to defend themselves and their loved ones from harm they must escape their injurious relationship. These stages can be observed in many of the vic-

tims who have ultimately recognized and escaped their relationships with an abusive state.

Denial

The first stage of battered citizen syndrome is denial. Denial occurs when a victim of abuse is unable to acknowledge and accept that they are being subjected to political violence in the form of false flag terror and contrived events. During this stage, a victim of such psychological abuse will not only avoid admitting the mistreatment to their friends and their family members, but they themselves will not acknowledge the brutality from which they suffering. They will fail to recognize any problems between themselves and their government. There are numerous factors that may contribute to such steadfast denial.

In many instances, an individual does not realize they are being subjected to such calculating state violence. This is largely due to the manipulative and coercive behavior of the offending government. The acts of abuse may be so subtle that they do not appear to be harmful or damaging. In other instances, a victim of Machiavellian offenses may suppose that denial is the most effective way to avoid being subjected to further violence and cruelty. Whatever the cause, denial is extremely unhelpful to the victim. Until citizens individually and collectively admit and confront the abuses they are experiencing, they will not be able to secure necessary psychic and material aid and protection.

Guilt

After a citizen experiences the denial period they will move on the guilt stage. During this phase, victims of such coercive violence will undergo feelings of extreme guilt and dishonor by being fingered as potential terrorists themselves. Through the suggestion that they may also be terrorists, citizens will believe they may have somehow caused the harm that in reality elements within their exploitative government has subjected them to.

Abusive governments stage false flag terror events not only to create confusion, but also induce guilt in their subjects. Professional political and opinion leaders prompt feelings of guilt through similar rhetorical appeals. Those of the liberal or “progressive” sort in particular claim that such events are the result of “blow back,” due to the given nation’s foreign policy and imperialist overreach. Similarly, conserva-

tives assert that the nation has been victimized because it has been too forthright in parading its “freedoms.”

Once internalized, “war on terror” guilt ideation is reinforced via the messaging slogans of state agencies. Typical messaging may include communications such as, “Is your neighbor or coworker a home-grown extremist?” “Keep your luggage with you at all times,” “Step this way after removing your shoes and valuables,” and so on.

Regardless of guilt stimulus, feelings of culpability are used to exert further control via rituals of submission, such as enacting excessive and unwarranted security measures to partake in travel, gain access to a public building, or withdraw cash from one’s bank account.

Along these lines, the offending government will convince the victim that it must resort to physical violence in order to punish the citizenry for their negative qualities or behavior. They may threaten or enact violence to teach the citizen not to take part in the activities of which it disapproves or finds inconvenient, such as public demonstrations and civil disobedience.

In addition to such acts, tyrannical governments strip citizens of their civil liberties and establish or strengthen a police state in order to further expand their control. As a result, the citizen’s already low self-esteem and depression will accelerate downward. Once this occurs, it is not difficult to convince the victim that they are being subjected to abuse due to their own faults and inadequacies. If they could only be more dependent on the state and live up to its expectations, they would not be experiencing state terror and exploitation. Victims of such manipulation will believe this. Therefore, they will not contest the abuse being experienced because they have rationalized that their abusive government is not to blame for such cruelty.

Enlightenment

One of the most important phases of the battered citizen’s syndrome is enlightenment. This occurs when a target of abuse recognizes how they are not to blame for their ill-treatment. They will begin to understand that no one deserves to be subjected to state-inflicted terror and violence regardless of their personal characteristics or perceived shortcomings. The fact that the state seeks to manipulate their subjects and exhibits disapproval of their victim’s behavior does not justify exposing the vic-

tim to the trauma prompted by terrorist threats and violence.

During this stage, a citizen will begin to acknowledge that most states are abusive, violent, overseen by psychopathic personalities, and thus the violence experienced is the result of an external socio-political condition and not inherent in themselves. It is now that a victim begins to realize the importance of coming to terms with their situation and holding those in power accountable.

Despite the realization that their fear, anxiety, and loss of civil liberties likely stem from the broader designs of treacherous individuals in power, victims will continue to accept overzealous state power and commit themselves to saving the seriously flawed relationship. They will often use various reasons in order to justify this decision. However, individuals who choose to remain in such an environment will soon find that in most cases the tyrannical government will only increase the severity of its abuses.

Responsibility

Once a citizen recognizes how the psychological torment and terroristic violence they are suffering from is the fault of their government, it is only a matter of time before these victims understand the importance of taking responsibility and escaping their current situation. In the majority of cases, state violence does not improve over time. Most governments subjecting their citizens to violence and brutality are “repeat offenders” and will continue to reinforce control by exposing subjects to heightened abuses. When an individual acknowledges this, they will understand that their safety, and the safety of their loved ones, depends on establishing new modes of governance. During the responsibility stage of the battered citizen’s syndrome, a victim of state violence may experience a vast array of difficulties.

It is essential that an individual plan their escape well. Citizens who have decided to depart from their unfavorable situation should avoid the enticements of major political parties that are usually the root cause of battered citizen syndrome.

If a victim would like support and advice about leaving their abusive relationship they may wish to contact or support a third party candidate running for public office. Citizen violence shelters in the form of information derived from alternative news

Battered Citizen..... Continued on page 19

BOOK REVIEW: “OUT OF CONTROL” BY NANCY KURSHAN

A Revolutionary’s Perspective

By Kijana Yashiri Askakri (*Footnotes by Ed Mead*)

“All human activity is collective—a combination of the work and inspiration shaped by those who came before us and those who labor with us.”

—Nancy Kurshan

Every aspiring prison rights activist, both captive and non-captive, that has a desire to qualitatively learn and to develop themselves into becoming a professionally trained activists, so as to be effective through the course of their line of work, must read and study Nancy Kurshan’s book “Out of Control.” I highly suggest that study groups be formulated, so as to advance and build upon the organizational framework she has provided for the people, to which has been conceptualized in simple and easy to read language. The book at its core, illustrates countless examples of mutual-aid-and-cooperation, along with emphasizing the importance of having clearly established goals and objectives that can be reasonably achieved.

Nancy Kurshan does an excellent job of highlighting the significance of a 15 year (1985 to 200) struggle, that was waged and became manifest in their collective efforts to end the lockdown at Marion Federal Prison, that is located in the state of Illinois to which morphed into one of Amerikkka’s notorious control unit and isolation-based torture chamber (e.g. solitary confinement).

As with any struggle that is geared towards movement building, it begins with the idea of an individual and/or individuals, which was the case with the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML), when its founding members Nancy Kurshan, Jan Susler, and Steve Whitman initially just wanted to educate the people by exposing to the public, the systemic practices of social, political, economical, and racial injustices, that are inherent in the Prison Industrial Slave Complex (e.g. PISC). And in addition to how these contradictions impact and affect our communities. It wasn’t long before their work took on a life of its own—a life molded by their relentless strategic planning and organizing.

Unbeknownst to many in society, the construct of solitary confinement units, were originally modeled after the “diabolical techniques” of the mad scientist Dr. Edgar Schein of MIT, where he provided a

blueprint on how to break and brainwash the Chinese prisoners of war via his book “Coercive Persuasion.” Nancy Kurshan excerpts a passage from his book, wherein it states:

“In order to produce marked changes of attitude and/or behavior, it is necessary to weaken, undermine, or remove the supports of the old attitudes. Because most of these supports are the face to face confirmation of present behavior and attitudes, which are provided by those with whom close emotional ties exist, it is often necessary to break these emotional ties. This can be done either by removing the individual physically and preventing any communication with those whom cares about, or by proving to him that those whom he respects are not worthy of it, and, indeed, should be actively mistreated.

I would like to have you think of brainwashing not in terms of politics, ethics, and morals, but in terms of the deliberate changing of human behavior and attitude by a group of men over who have relatively complete control over and environment in which the captive populace lives.” Page 12 of “Out of Control.”

The context of this is relative to the CDCr’s gang validation policies and practices, in particular, in relation to CDCr’s newly created “How to Make a Slave” Step Down Program (SDP), where prisoners have been targeted/persecuted with the same purpose and objectives in mind—to break and brainwash us! Pelican Bay’s counter intelligence unit (IGI) has successfully destroyed/neutralized the only real outside community support that I had, when they falsely accused my beloved lil’ sista [Name omitted by Ed] of promoting gang activity via a letter she sent me, to tell that Black Panther Party (BPP) members were going to be attending/supporting a community event, that was being held on my behalf, at Lil’ Bobby Hutton’s Park in West Oakland.

Instrumental in the CEML’s successful grass root organizing was several key factors, such as:

Their multi-faceted approach, as to how they took to accomplishing various tasks. They make a point of not just up and involving themselves in activities—if they could avoid it. This allowed them to preserve and maximize their limited resources. For example, they would initiate plans 3, 6 or 12 months in advance, containing spe-

cific goals particular, in relation to CDCr’s newly created “How To Mark a Slave” Step Down Program, where prisoners have been targeted/persecuted with the same purpose and objectives that they wanted to achieve in their line of work. This provided their personnel with organizational structure (leadership), which armed them with the tools to modify their tactics, when circumstances warranted such. This point is significant, as many activists find themselves becoming over-whelmed, burnt-out, and worn-down rather quickly, as they are often operating upon their emotional subjectivity that is associated with being outraged—over how the people they’re attempting to aid and assist, is being oppressed by a racist and diabolical system of government! This typically clouds an activist’s ability to creatively assess the fact that victories often won’t be achieved over night—especially without any organizational structure in place to compartmentalize their work.¹

1. Their collaborative work with political prisoner like Sundiata Acoi, Oscar Lopez Rivera, Alejandrina Torres, Bill Dunne, Safiya Bukhari, Hanif-Bey, Carlos A. Torres, Silvia Baraldini, and Susan Rosenberg, to which later included the prisoners that were also being subjected to various human rights abuses. The relationships that were forged out of this crucible, enabled human bridges to be constructed, wherein CEML members were able to learn, hands on, of the contradictions that plagued this slave kamp (Marion Prion)², and other like it. Thus allowing CEML to be equipped with the necessary tools to achieve their objectives, while providing substantive support to prisoners. Pivotal in this exchange, was CEML’s functional appreciation of Democracy, through the course of staying in contact with the prisoners, but more importantly, including the prisoners in the decision-making process when strategizing for a particular action and or community event. This protected prisoners from being left nameless face-

1. Let us remember that criticism is a two way street. When we discuss the burn out of outside volunteers let us not neglect to mention our fault for this burn out—our putting too much work or making too many demands on our few outside volunteers.

2. I was a prisoner at the Marion Federal Prison during some of that period and I too was very active in the struggle against not only that prison’s degrading behavior modification program, but all such programs.

less, and voiceless, when the reality of the issues directly pertained to prisoners being brutalized, tormented, and dehumanized in every extreme by our oppressors!

2. CEML understood the importance of having organizational infrastructure, wherein they constantly distributed pamphlets, leaflets, flyers, brochures, and other propaganda based materials, wire their work. Shops, seminars, study groups, etc. That they held to educate the people, about their line of work. This insured the basis of, clearly define organizational expectations being set for, which made it easier for CEML to receive the support from the community by other people wanting to become CEML members; volunteering her time or donating funds and other essential resources for their work.
3. CEML did not limit the focus of their primary objectives, to just ending the lockdown at Marion, they also instituted additional campaigns, they became interconnect (secondary) to their pursuits. For example, the prisoners at Marion were being forced to drink, shower, and wash themselves in toxic polluted water! The exposure of this contradiction, brought about outrage from the environmentalist in our community this allowed CEML to forge a united front with them. And this was a pivotal tactic, when you account for the fact, that, CEML only had 10 to 15 core members throughout their entire 15 year struggle. This is extremely impressive!

Close this with a clenched fist salute to Nancy Kurshan in the entire CEML staff for a job well done, but more importantly — for having a wherewithal, to share their struggle of life's experience with the people. So again, everyone to read and study Nancy Kurshan's book "Out of Control" for free on the Freedom Archives website, and build upon the framework that she has provided us. The book is available online at "http://www.freedomarchives.org/Out_of_Control/index.html".³ ●

Build to win.

For more information contact:
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Crescent City, CA 95531

3. If you don't like reading a whole book online you can order a hard copy of the book from either Freedomarchives.org or amazon.com, etc.

REPORT TO U.N. CALLS BULLSHIT ON OBAMA'S 'LOOK FORWARD, NOT BACKWARDS' APPROACH TO TORTURE

By Murtaza Hussain, "The Intercept"
10-31-14

Months after President Obama frankly admitted that the United States had "tortured some folks" as part of the War on Terror, a new report submitted to the United Nations Committee Against Torture has been released that excoriates his administration for shielding the officials responsible from prosecution.

The report describes the post-9/11 torture program as "breathtaking in scope", and indicts both the Bush and Obama administrations for complicity in it – the former through design and implementation, and the latter through its ongoing attempts to obstruct justice. Noting that the program caused grievous harm to countless individuals and in many cases went as far as murder, the report calls for the United States to "promptly and impartially prosecute senior military and civilian officials responsible for authorizing, acquiescing, or consenting in any way to acts of torture."

In specifically naming former President George W. Bush, Department of Justice lawyer John Yoo and former CIA contractor James Mitchell, among many others, as individuals who sanctioned torture at the highest levels, the report highlights a gaping hole in President Obama's promise to reassert America's moral standing during his administration. Not only have the cited individuals not been charged with any crime for their role in the torture program, Obama has repeatedly reiterated his mantra of "looking forward, not backwards" to protect them from accountability.

Needless to say, you shouldn't try that defense in court if you're an ordinary American on trial for, say, a drug crime.

It's also worth remembering that, horrific as it was, the torture regime described in the report was only a tiny part of the wide-ranging human rights abuses the United States committed after 9/11. It doesn't even account for the network of prisons where hundreds of thousands of people were detained in Iraq and Afghanistan – many of whom suffered beatings, rape and murder at the hands of U.S. soldiers.

The environment that allowed such treatment was again authorized at the highest

levels, but just as with the CIA program the only people to receive any legal sanction for these actions have been low-level soldiers who've essentially been used as scapegoats for the crimes of their superiors.

By refusing to prosecute Bush-era officials for their culpability in major human rights abuses such as the CIA program and Abu Ghraib, President Obama is not just failing to enforce justice but is essentially guaranteeing that such abuses will happen again in the future. His administration has demonstrated that even if government officials perpetrate the most heinous crimes imaginable, they will still be able to rely on their peers to conceal their wrongdoing and protect them from prosecution. This not only erodes the rule of law, it also helps create a culture of impunity that will inevitably give rise to such actions once again.

The UN report cites former Yale Law School Dean Harold Koh as describing the Bush administration's legal definition of torture as, "so narrow that it would have exculpated Saddam Hussein." To his credit Barack Obama has finally called a spade a spade and identified Bush officials actions for what they were: torture. Having done so, it's now incumbent on him to stop protecting the officials who authorized this crime from legal scrutiny. ●

Source: First Look Media.

[Ed's Note: *As a socialist and defender of democracy and freedom I tend to take the principles of our rights seriously, among them:*

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

No mention of citizenship requirements or place of birth. No mention of the rights being bestowed by congress, or even the constitution.

Yet we, arrest, torture, and even kill our own citizens without a shred of the guaranteed due process of law. We are back in the 1500s, before the Magna Carta (Latin for Great Charter) which established habeas corpus among other freedoms. Where are the outraged mobs of Americans? Watching America's Greatest Idol, of course.]

3RD HUNGER STRIKE AT NW DETENTION CENTER

Over 200 hunger strikers

Immigrant detainees are putting their bodies on the line for the third time this year, to call attention to the inhumane treatment in the GEO Group detention center. Geo Group, a corporate giant that profits off the unnecessary suffering of those it imprisons for the convenience of ICE, while their civil immigration status is investigated. Advocates are concerned that hunger strikers will suffer retaliation similar to the retaliation inflicted during previous hunger strikes. Hunger strikers were placed in solitary confinement for up to 30 days and threatened with force-feeding. Last spring hunger strikers received unfulfilled promises from ICE officials.

Geo Group has been allowed to supplement their lavish compensation of more than \$100 per day per person with a cluster of self-reinforcing schemes to profit even more from the people placed in their "care." Those schemes include:

- Unwholesome meals with insufficient nutrients
- High commissary prices for food and other items
- Using the labor of detainees paid at the rate of \$1 per day to prepare the meals, do the cleaning and laundry
- Charge fees to families to provide money to the detainees

Geo provides inadequate nourishment which creates a demand for commissary food at inflated prices, which induces detainees to work for essentially no pay and then profits from families' contributions to those commissary accounts.

Cipriano Rios, one of the hunger strike leaders, provided supporters with the following information this weekend. Just today 35 more people joined, making a total of close to 200 detainees in hunger strike. We are certain that if it wasn't for all the communication restrictions we face, more detainees would have joined, reaching more than two thirds of the total population. Our action is in the name of justice, hunger for freedom; therefore the hunger of the body, for most of us, is not above the claim for justice. Not one more! Stop families destruction!

Colectiva de Detenidos NWDC

NEWS SHORTS

Iraqi Doctors Call US Depleted Uranium Use "Genocide"

Official Iraqi government statistics show that, prior to the outbreak of the first Gulf War in 1991, the country's rate of cancer cases was 40 out of 100,000 people. By 1995, it had increased to 800 out of 100,000 people, and, by 2005, it had doubled to at least 1,600 out of 100,000 people

<http://truth-out.org/news/item/26703-iraqi-doctors-call-depleted-uranium-use-genocide>

The Real Secret of Iraq's Germ Weapons

In October some old chemical weapon shells were found buried in Iraq. These were not WMDs, but a few leftovers from Iraq's 1980s war with Iran. Some research shows the chemical warfare manufacturing equipment came from Germany, France and Holland. The feed stock for the germ weapons came from a US laboratory in Maryland—approved by the US government.

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article40011.htm>

19-Year-Old Dies Naked On Cell Floor Of Gangrene

Three times last year Madison County jailers watched small-time criminals die before their eyes, according to a series of three lawsuits filed in federal court. Each argues that Madison County withholds the most basic medical care in order to save money, banking on the insurance of the medical contractor to cover any resulting lawsuits.

http://www.al.com/news/index.ssf/2014/10/gangrene_and_broken_bones_kill.html

Poland Objects Human Rights Abuse Charges

Poland is to ask the European Court of Human Rights to re-consider its ruling that Poland violated its human rights commitments by hosting a secret CIA jail on its soil, the prosecutor general was quoted as saying on Tuesday.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/10/21/uk-cia-prisons-poland-idUKKC-N0IA14K20141021>

47% Of Incomes are Below The Poverty Line

Forty-seven percent of Americans have incomes under twice the official poverty rate, making half of the country either poor or near-poor, according to figures released last week by the Census Bureau.

These figures are based on the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM), which takes into account government transfers and the regional cost-of-living in calculating the poverty rate. According to that calculation, there were 48.7 million people in poverty in the United States, three million higher than the official census figures released last month.

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article40036.htm>

In Defense of Extremism

No one calls themselves a terrorist; no group calls itself extreme. When you see those words in print or spoken by a broadcaster, therefore, you know you are looking at a smear, an insult, lazy shorthand masquerading as argument.

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article40050.htm>

Drone of Damocles

John Kerry says all those fired at by drones in Pakistan are "confirmed terrorist targets" - but with 1,675 unnamed dead how do we know when only 4 per cent of those killed by US drone strikes are named members of al-Qaeda, it's hard to trust American foreign policy

<http://tinyurl.com/l9edqgn>

Imprisoned Nation

In 1970 California's population was 16 million and 10,000 of those were incarcerated at a cost of \$500 million per year. In 2008 California's population is 34 million, yet there are 176,000 are incarcerated at a cost of \$11 billion per year (cost includes average base salary of \$74,000 per state prison employee). There are currently 2.38 million people in US prisons, 1 in every 32 people are in the criminal justice system in the US (includes probation & parole). Where does it end? When half the population is prisoners and the other half are prison guards?

We don't want to be parasites on society. We need jobs, not more jails!

KEEPING NON-VIOLENT WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA PRISONS

By Jessica Pishko

In 2011, under mounting pressure to decrease the prison population, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) created the Alternative Custody Program (ACP). It's a program designed to forge a path for low-level female inmates to return home (under electronic surveillance), care for their children, and reintegrate into their communities. The policy is currently the subject of a lawsuit claiming that it discriminates on the basis of sex, but in theory, it seems like a prison authority might have finally gotten something right.

That's what Cynthia thought when she appeared before the panel (called an Institution Classification Committee in CDCR lingo) after applying for ACP. After getting her paperwork straightened out and applying three times, she was told she was denied. She needed a teeth cleaning before her application could be processed.

Another woman was denied because of a computer error: Her dentistry was up to date, but a bureaucrat hadn't changed her status, so she remained behind bars.

In the offices of California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP), letters (which you can read here) have piled high from women who want to return home to their families and repent for their crimes. But very few of the eligible inmates are given a real chance to take advantage of the opportunities that ACP promised. In one of the letters, an inmate named Anna wrote: "I know I've made mistakes in my life, but I'm ready for a change. Yes, I've been in and out of prison, but don't only look at my record, look at what I did and all my programs." Anna is currently in prison for identity fraud. She has not been released.

Michelle, who has four children at home,

was denied ACP because of a mistake in classification—her crime was embezzlement, but it was mistakenly classified as "violent," rendering her ineligible. Misty Rojo, the program coordinator at CCWP, has received reports from women who were denied release because they had a pit bull as a pet and because they received medication for a treatable medical condition like high blood pressure.

Before the women are released under ACP, they're subject to a pre-release interview that includes sensitive questions about their histories of abuse and other mental anguish. The Justice Department has determined that at least half of all female inmates have been victims of physical or sexual abuse and one-third have been raped prior to incarceration, and appearing to harbor lingering psychological trauma from this abuse can prevent release. Even worse, the people asking these questions aren't licensed therapists, according to Rojo, and they intentionally ask questions that cause the women to break down into tears and then accuse the women of being "mentally unstable," which means they are not eligible for release.

That's what an inmate named Theresa claimed happened to her in a letter she wrote to CCWP explaining that she "was not prepared for what took place in my ACP classification hearing." Theresa met all of the criteria for ACP and had no disciplinary actions. She participated in programs like Alcoholics Anonymous and anger management. But in her hearing she was asked about her suicide attempts as a minor as well as her childhood and adult molestation and rape. She felt blindsighted by the process and dejected at the result, which was a denial of her ACP application.



ACP, only 420 have been released in the three years the program has been active. (The CDCR told me that it did not keep track of how many ACP petitions were denied.) California's prisons are overflowing—so why is the state trying to keep its women inmates behind bars?

Women are one of the fastest-growing segments of America's prison population, and more than half of these women—at least in California—are non-violent offenders. Women, along with gender-nonconforming inmates, are also some of the most vulnerable inside prison; rates of inmate-on-inmate sexual violence are higher among women than men. Even further, it's estimated that 75 percent of incarcerated women are the primary caretakers of their children, meaning that their imprisonment leaves a trail of disaster for their families.

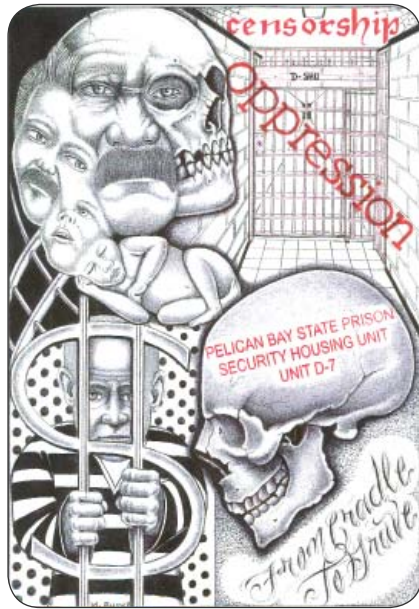
In the policy debates over California's deplorable prison system, women's prisons have frequently fallen by the wayside. Overcrowding leads to a range of obvious problems, from overuse of solitary confinement and more frequent lockdowns (since there are too many inmates for the staff to control) to a lack of basic supplies and unsanitary conditions. But perhaps the most severe indirect consequence of overcrowding is poor medical care for the inmates. In December 2013, a court-appointed panel of medical experts issued an independent report condemning the conditions at CCWF citing a litany of institutional deficiencies.

More shockingly, an investigation this summer by the Center for Investigative Reporting discovered that nearly 150 female inmates were given unauthorized sterilizations between 2006 and 2010 at CCWF, CIW, and Valley State. A new bill just signed by Governor Brown last month supposedly outlaws the practice once and for all.

CCWF and CIW have been the target of scrutiny for poor medical care for nearly two decades, but instead of releasing female prisoners who are unlikely to pose



harm—thus, potentially alleviating some of these issues—Governor Jerry Brown recently signed a contract worth \$9 million a year with GEO Group, the second-largest private prison contracting company, to take over a prison facility in McFarland, California that will house about 260 women (with an option to double its size). Press releases for the prison claim that the facility will boast services like job training, drug programs, and other therapeutic interventions, although there is no guarantee that transferred inmates will be able to continue any of their current programming.



Art by Michael Russell

But the move is not an auspicious one. While the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) doesn't have the best track record, it looks like a luxury hotel compared to GEO Group, which is the subject of hundreds of lawsuits for violence, mistreatment, and poor medical care in its facilities.

In 2010, the ACLU filed a lawsuit on behalf of an epileptic Texas man who died from an untreated seizure while in solitary confinement. GEO Group was called out for the abysmal conditions in a Mississippi juvenile facility by a federal judge, who held that the private company allowed "a cesspool of unconstitutional and inhuman acts and conditions to germinate." On top of concerns about privatized prisons, the latest outcry over the proposed McFarland facility crystallizes the ongoing problem of California's women's prisons, facilities plagued by scandals and problems that remain largely out of the public eye.

While the GEO contract might temporarily alleviate overcrowding, it doesn't

solve the real problem, which would be to allow the release of non-violent offenders and maintain the programs that help these women reintegrate into their communities. (ACP, by the way, provides no assistance for women seeking employment or housing.)

The popularity of *Orange Is the New Black* has drawn attention to the plight of women in prison. When I talk with people about prisons, I often hear how difficult it is for these women to speak up about their treatment because they have felt so consistently ignored by prison authorities who operate in a system dominated by hyper-masculine principles. The CDCR, like all prison regimes, lacks accountability because their decisions are always shrouded under the guise of "public safety," something no politician seems bold enough to question.

Women inmates are less likely to riot or institute hunger strikes, which emboldens the CDCR to ignore them because they are less in the public eye—contrast, for example, the very public hunger strikes at Pelican Bay with the relative silence at CCWF. These women suffer from what is called a "double invisibility," hidden from the public's eyes because no one will take the time to listen. •

<http://www.vice.com/read/women-are-becoming-second-class-citizens-in-californias-prisons-114>



An Outstanding Example of the Revolutionary Proletariat of the White Working Class in Amerika.

Art and words by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

DOES ROCK HAVE A FUTURE?

Unfortunately for those who have made recent donations of money or stamps (we are talking about \$22.50 in checks and about 30 stamps) will not be getting refunds, although they will receive the appropriate number of any future issues of *Rock* that might come out.

It cost me over a buck to get this double issue into your hands, and there would have been 599 others just like you. If you've donated recently, or if you plan to contribute something in the future, your name will be added to the new *Rock* mailing list and, the next time we get the money for an issue, with only 61 of you, it won't be long before you'll get another copy of the newsletter.

If you paid for a subscription and have not received your full 12 issues, you will be getting any future issues that are printed until your subscription term expires. If, on the other hand, you sent me a \$15 subscription in July of 2014, but you've been receiving the newsletter free since 2012, then you have no subscription at all. You have paid for one of the two free years. The point here is that nobody should lose money unless you all inside just totally kick me to the curb. Then 61 readers will be out of luck.

Want to know how bad it is? Out of a California mailing list of 433, when those whose subscriptions had expired or who had not paid enough were removed, we had only 61 remaining. The 372 prisoners who allowed their subscriptions to expire, or otherwise not paid, is the financial burden Mark and I have been carrying for most all of 2014. The number of 61 paid readers, includes complementary subs to sister publications, such as *Turning the Tide* and *S.F. Bay View*, and free subs to those who have given artwork to the newsletter. Donations of articles does not keep you on the list, as publishing is your duty.

The *Rock* mailing lists (California, Washington, Oregon, and Texas) have been gone through and anyone who is not paid to date, or whose subscription has expired, has been deleted. A new mailing list has been developed and will consist of only those few (61) who have recently contributed or those who actually do contribute something in the future.

When enough in stamps and money have been donated then we will publish an issue of *Rock*. That might be every month or once a year or never—it depends entirely



Movement elders Mark Cook Left, Ed Mead, Right Photo taken at Sheridan Federal Prison in Oregon, September of 1993. Both were doing armed Bank robbery convictions

on you. I'll leave a subscription form on the back page, just in case folks want to see if we can make this work again.

Now what about the 167 readers in the states of Washington, Oregon, and Texas? Washington has two paid subscribers, one gave \$15 and the other \$1,000 (his subscription will last longer than me). Oregon has one \$15 subscription. And I have one \$15 subscription from Texas. Those are the only ones who will get future issues of *Rock*. We'll grow or die from there.

Anyone with subscription or money questions should let me know, but if you want a response you *must* enclose a SASE. I can't afford to spend fifty cents every time I write a letter to a prisoner.

Lastly, *outside people should not send me money for the newsletter (or for any reason other than a subscription). This is a prisoner publication and if prisoners do not support it then there is no reason for its existence.* We did well for two years, back when there was a struggle, but this year, in the absence of struggle, when some of the inside leadership went into the state's behavior modification programs, it's been a financial bust in terms of the newsletter. It sort of feels like the wheels are coming off, like it's back to every man for himself.

Does *Rock* have a future? That's what we are deciding now. Each prisoner has a ballot. As always, you vote with your feet.

Ed Mead

Battered..... Continued from page 13 media, meaningful political discussion and debate, and grassroots and independent political organizing can also provide victims with the necessary support to make a clean break from tyrannical state power that will ultimately lead toward the forging of more constructive political realities for themselves and their fellow citizenry. ●

<http://memoryholeblog.com>



ANDY'S FIGHT

300 MILES NORTH, THE MURDER OF ANDY LOPEZ WAS HEARD IN THE SHU AT CSP – PELICAN BAY

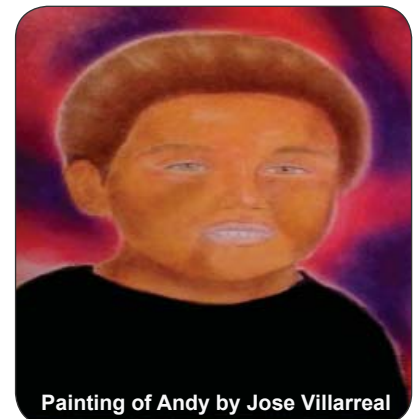
Andy Lopez was murdered by a Sonoma County Sheriff in Santa Rosa, California on October 22nd, 2013. He was only 13 years old. Andy's murder was deeply felt all over the world. 300 miles north of Santa Rosa, Jose Villarreal was moved to write and create art in honor of Andy from his cell in the SHU at CSP – Pelican Bay.

Jose Villarreal is a prolific writer and artist who has spent the last ten years of his life in the SHU at Pelican Bay. He writes frequently for publications such as California Prison Focus and The Rock. Everything Jose does he does with purpose and commitment – including taking part in the most recent prisoner hunger strikes that occurred at Pelican Bay and elsewhere throughout the California Prison system. Jose has dedicated his life to struggling for Brown youth, Aztlan and oppressed people everywhere. He could not sit idle after hearing that Andy Lopez had been murdered and quickly created the following portrait and poem for and about him. He recognized that Andy's struggle is one that we all share – the fight against repression and for liberation. When we fight for Andy, we fight for all of us.

You're presence lives on in every struggle against brutality,
a precious life not spared the coarse nature of our reality.
A reflection of life under Amerikkka in these streets,
We yearn for the day youth need not worry about them folks wearing them dam sheets.

You were not allowed to reach your 14th birthday,
This tragedy was felt all the way up in Pelican Bay.
I was in my windowless cell when I got the news,
mijito in our struggle for justice we will not lose!
Today we are born into a repressive state,
Yet the beauty of the people is shown resisting on your birthdate.
You're precious life meant more than you would probably ever know,
Your small Brown fist has already dealt them a mighty big blow.
Transformation has started due to this pigs actions,
Look at the mobilization of people from so many factions!
Your fight began the day you were born,
Occupation will continue until struggle becomes the norm.
Today we rebuild with liberation in sight,
there is no way in hell we will abandon Andy's fight!

By Jose Villarreal #H84098
Pelican Bay – State Prison
SHU – C11 – 106
PO Box 7500
Crescent City, CA 95532



Quote Box

"America's entire war on terror is an exercise in imperialism. This may come as a shock to Americans, who don't like to think of their country as an empire. But what else can you call America's legions of soldiers, spooks and special forces straddling the globe?"

*Michael Ignatieff,
New York Times*

". . . in America, we have achieved the Orwellian prediction—enslaved, the people have been programmed to love their bondage and are left to clutch only mirage-like images of freedom, its fables and fictions. The new slaves are linked together by vast electronic chains of television that imprison not their bodies but their minds. Their desires are programmed, their tastes manipulated, their values set for them."

Gerry Spence, Freedom to Slavery

"None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"There are only two mistakes one can make along the road to truth; not going all the way, and not starting."

Buddha

"Search for the truth is the noblest occupation of man; its publication is a duty."

Anne Louise Germaine de Stael

"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."

Leo Tolstoy

"Silence, they say, is the voice of complicity. But silence is impossible. Silence screams. Silence is a message, just as doing nothing is an act. Let who you are ring out & resonate in every word & every deed. Yes, become who you are. There's no sidestepping your own being or your own responsibility. What you do is who you are. You are your own comeuppance. You become your own message. You are the message.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse "

Leonard Peletier

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