

the UNNAMED Codefendant

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BOOKS 4 PRISONERS CREW
★ ISSUE 6 FALL/WINTER 2006 ★



IN THE SPIRIT
OF RICHARD
WILLIAMS WE
MUST FREE
JAAN LAYMAN!
Details page 1



LEGAL STEPS TO
FASCISM - THE
CASE OF LYNNE
STEWART
Details Page 22



Tell my people we must continue on. Do not give up the fight. Do not give up hope. We can make it happen." -Hasan Shakurs last words



THE BOOKS 4 PRISONERS CREW
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CINCINNATI, OH 45219
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The Unnamed Co-defendant is a Prison Abolitionist inspired publication and is the infrequent newsletter of The Books 4 Prisoners Crew. The opinions and ideas found within the various articles are, unless stated otherwise, those of the author.

We encourage prisoners to use this newsletter as a means to express your views. Articles, artwork, and poetry should include express written permission to publish and should state if you want your name and contact info. published or if you wish wish your piece to remain anonymous. We will not consider submissions that do not include this info. If we publish your work we will send you a copy of The Unnamed Co-defendant that includes your work.

When submitting articles please keep in mind that the majority of our readers are prisoners. Submissions should therefore be of a general interest. Some of the types of articles we are looking for - prison conditions, prisoner organizing/struggles, prisoner outlook on on these and other subjects.



No solicitation or personal case advertisements (unless the case is challenging general prison rules or conditions and will be a benefit to all prisoners. Your article must clearly demonstrate how your case will effects other prisoners to be considered for publication.), no religious/spiritual articles and no I'm innocent/the system screwed me type articles.

We prefer typed or clearly printed article/poetry submissions. We will not consider submissions we cant read.

All submitted material will be considered a donation. No form of payment or reimbursement will be offered or provided for published or unpublished submissions.

Comments, Criticisms and Submissions should be sent to

The Books 4 Prisoners Crew
C/o The Unnamed Codefendant
P.O. Box 19065
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Ordering Info - Available free of charge at Hobo Bookstore or \$2 mail order an issue for free world folk.

Included free with every prisoner book package our program sends out.

State and federal prisoners who are in one of the states/areas we cover (see page12 for program details) who would like to learn more about our program send a SASE to the address above for our most recent catalog and a couple of order forms.

Sept. 11, said Anne-Marie Slaughter, a noted American scholar of international law.

It was understandable, the Princeton University dean said, but now "we have to restore a balance between security and rights that is consistent with who we are and consistent with our security needs."

Otherwise, she said, "history will look back and say that we took a dangerous and deeply wrong turn."

Back here in Baghdad, at the Alawi bus station, a gritty, noisy hub far from the meeting rooms of Washington and Geneva, women gather with fading hopes whenever a new prisoner release is announced.

As she watched one recent day for a bus from distant Camp Bucca, one mother wept and told her story.

"The Americans arrested my son, my brother and his friend," said Zahraa Alyat, 42. "The Americans arrested them October 16, 2005. They left together and I don't know anything about them."

The bus pulled up. A few dozen men stepped off, some blindfolded, some bound, none with any luggage, none with familiar faces.

As the distraught women straggled away once more, one ex-prisoner, 18-year-old Bilal Kadhim Muhssin, spotted U.S. troops nearby.

"Americans," he muttered in fear. "Oh, my God, don't say that name," and he bolted for a city bus, and freedom.

By PATRICK QUINN, Associated Press Writer Sept. 17, 2006

FRIENDS, HOMMIES, AND COMRADES

MIDWEST PAGES TO PRISONERS PROJECT

C/o Boxcar Books
310A S. Washington St.
Bloomington, IN 47401
No Texas or Michigan prisoner requests.

PRISON HEALTH NEWS

C/o Philadelphia FIGHT
1233 Locust Street 5th Floor
Philly, PA 19107
Free newsletter on HIV/AIDS and other prisoner related health issues. Compiled by former prisoners and prison activists. Will attempt to answer prisoner health related questions.

BOOKS THROUGH BARS

4722 Baltimore Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19143
Sends progressive political and educational materials at no charge to state and federal prisoners in all states except MI. and OR. Donates books directly to county jail libraries but does not accept individual requests from county jail prisoners. Request books by topic. No catalog. Donations including artwork and stamps greatly appreciated.

BLACK ICE PRINT

P.O.B. 13074
Philly, PA 19101
Sends free radical zines to prisoners nationwide. Send SASE for catalog.

Prosecutions and Memories

The exposure of sadistic abuse, torture and death at Abu Ghraib two years ago touched off a flood of courts-martial of mostly lower-ranking U.S. Soldiers. Overall, about 800 investigations of alleged detainee mistreatment in Iraq and Afghanistan have led to action against more than 250 service personnel, including 89 convicted at courts-martial, U.S. diplomats told the United Nations in May.

Critics protest that penalties have been too soft and too little has been done, particularly in tracing inhumane interrogation methods from the far-flung islands of the overseas prison system back to policies set by high-ranking officials.

In only 14 of 34 cases has anyone been punished for the confirmed or suspected killings of detainees, the New York-based Human Rights First reports. The stiffest sentence in a torture-related death has been five months in jail. The group reported last February that in almost half of 98 detainee deaths, the cause was either never announced or reported as undetermined.

Looking back, the United States overreacted in its treatment of detainees after



**TERROR
DOES NOT STOP
TERROR**



BLACK AUGUST 2006



The following is a collection of prisoner writings, Struggles, and events that took place this past August.

PAGE 1 PAINTING FOR FREEDOM
PAGE 4 MURDERED BY THE STATE
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Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation... that people are dying you could have saved, that generations more will will die or live poor butchered half lives if you fail to act. Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your life for the people... take care of yourself and hold on.

George Jackson

Painting For Freedom

A FUND RAISER FOR POLITICAL PRISONER
JAAN LAYMAN

This past summer was a hot one. Since being laid off last May from my previous job as an elementary school janitor I have been making my living outta my tool box as an all around handy man. I normally work alone and tend to like it that way so when my partner and I bid on a house rehab job that was a little to big for me to take on solo I knew I was gonna need some help. My partner has her own 9 to 5 gig and wouldn't be able to help much on this job so I figured I'd ask some of the other Crew members I knew could use the work.

Problem I was having is how the work dynamic was gonna play out. Anybody that knows me will agree I'm not always the easiest guy to work with (did I mention I normally work alone?). I sure didn't wanna play the role of some asshole boss. Hell, I didn't wanna be anyones boss period. Even if I could find away around the whole boss vs worker issue I still was uncomfortable with the idea of my friends and comrades working towards my bottom line.

After discussing it over in detail with my partner we decided we would make the whole job one big benefit gig for Political Prisoner Jaan Layman. Jaans been locked down for over 20 years and has an honest shot of getting out but its gonna take some serious cash to grease the wheels (More later on Jaan and his case). Those involved with this project were able to choose their own wages based on need. We collectively committed to a salary cap that left a good chunk of change for Jaans legal defense.

PAGE 1

All and all things worked out pretty well. Nobody lost any fingers, we made our general deadline the home owner was very satisfied with our work, and we all learned a thing or two about Solidarity and Mutual Aid. Yeah there were some problems here and there (finding out the hard way the only toilet in house doesn't flush is never fun), but nothing we couldn't handle as a Crew.

Instead of touting theory on Internet message boards or stuffy boring meetings with the same 6 people every time we actually put our politics and beliefs into practice. As a movement and as individuals we need to create alternative institutions within the system were working to destroy. Change isn't going to happen by its self and theres bound to be some speed bumps along the way but I'll take failure over not trying any day of the week. They don't call it the struggle for nothing. Love n Rage - Steve

It's a sweat-stained day in August, and I feel like I'm trapped in a dragon's mouth. I'm six feet up a ladder in a cramped second-story bathroom that's so starved for attention it's eaten itself. My forehead's crying something awful, but I gotta keep my head at a thirty degree angle as I scrub mold off the walls and ceilings. Poop's baking in the toilet below, odor rising and turning in my nostrils. I frequently climb down the ladder to wipe sweat from my eyes, but underneath the sweat is a smile. I'm not just smiling, I'm humming to the music in the other room, and at the end of the day, I'll be ready to do it again tomorrow.

Working on the Painting for Freedom Project was great. The work felt real. I partnered with two good friends to learn and practice skills I could take home, even share with others. Every morning, we'd meet at a central location and carpool to the house we were working on. Then we'd balance work with crass jokes, re-writes for popular radio jingles, and arguments about everything from politics to music. During lunch, we'd sit in a line outside, legs outstretched and paper sacks in our laps, comparing our goodies like elementary school kids. On the first floor of the house lived an older woman who frequently checked in on us, even made us cookies and tissue box covers. The job itself was tough, sometimes aggravating (baked poop, anyone?), but there was little about it that felt like traditional "work," and I was actually a little sad when it was all over.

What we did was important. For one thing, one screw up didn't implicate an individual, it implicated all of us since this wasn't in the name of a company or under the pressure of a manager. We had all taken the job on our own terms, and we were doing it together in a non-hierarchical fashion. In doing the job, we shared most of the responsibilities collectively, learned the basic skills together so we were equally capable but could gravitate towards preferences or help out/fill in as needed. There was flexibility in our hours, and we didn't just take the profits and reinvest them in stupid crap that pollutes the planet, hurts families, and helps up the paycheck of someone with more digits in their bank balance than I have fingers. From the compensation, we all took what we needed, then gave the rest to someone who needed it more in their own struggle for liberation.

"There's been a silence about Bagram, and much less political discussion about it," said Richard Bennett, chief U.N. human rights officer in Afghanistan.

Freed detainees tell how in cages of 16 inmates they are forbidden to speak to each other. They wear the same orange jumpsuits and shaven heads as the terrorist suspects at Guantanamo, but lack even the scant legal rights granted inmates at that Cuba base. In some cases, they have been held without charge for three to four years, rights workers say.

Guantanamo received its first prisoners from Afghanistan — chained, wearing blacked-out goggles — in January 2002. A total of 770 detainees were sent there. Its population today of Afghans, Arabs and others, stands at 455.

Described as the most dangerous of America's "war on terror" prisoners, only 10 of the Guantanamo inmates have been charged with crimes. Charges are expected against 14 other al-Qaida suspects flown in to Guantanamo from secret prisons on Sept. 4.

Plans for their trials are on hold, however, because of a Supreme Court ruling in June against the Bush administration's plan for military tribunals.

The court held the tribunals were not authorized by the U.S. Congress and violated the Geneva Conventions by abrogating prisoners' rights. In a sometimes contentious debate, the White House and Congress are trying to agree on a new, acceptable trial plan.

Since the court decision, and after four years of confusing claims that terrorist suspects were so-called "unlawful combatants" unprotected by international law, the Bush administration has taken steps recognizing that the Geneva Conventions' legal and human rights do extend to imprisoned al-Qaida militants. At the same time, however, the new White House proposal on tribunals retains such controversial features as denying defendants access to some evidence against them.

In his Sept. 6 speech, Bush acknowledged for the first time the existence of the CIA's secret prisons, believed established at military bases or safehouses in such places as Egypt, Indonesia and eastern Europe. That network, uncovered by journalists, had been condemned by U.N. authorities and investigated by the Council of Europe.

The clandestine jails are now empty, Bush announced, but will remain a future option for CIA detentions and interrogation.

Louise Arbour, U.N. human rights chief, is urging Bush to abolish the CIA prisons altogether, as ripe for "abusive conduct." The CIA's techniques for extracting information from prisoners still remain secret, she noted.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government's willingness to resort to "extraordinary rendition," transferring suspects to other nations where they might be tortured, appears unchanged.

But little has changed because of these requests. When the Americans formally turned over Abu Ghraib prison to Iraqi control on Sept. 2, it was empty but its 3,000 prisoners remained in U.S. custody, shifted to Camp Cropper.

Life in Custody

The cases of U.S.-detained Iraqis are reviewed by a committee of U.S. military and Iraqi government officials. The panel recommends criminal charges against some, release for others. As of Sept. 9, the Central Criminal Court of Iraq had put 1,445 on trial, convicting 1,252. In the last week of August, for example, 38 were sentenced on charges ranging from illegal weapons possession to murder, for the shooting of a U.S. Marine.

Almost 18,700 have been released since June 2004, the U.S. command says, not including many more who were held and then freed by local military units and never shipped to major prisons.

Some who were released, no longer considered a threat, later joined or rejoined the insurgency.

The review process is too slow, say U.N. officials. Until they are released, often families don't know where their men are — the prisoners are usually men — or even whether they're in American hands.

Ex-detainee Mouayad Yasin Hassan, 31, seized in April 2004 as a suspected Sunni Muslim insurgent, said he wasn't allowed to obtain a lawyer or contact his family during 13 months at Abu Ghraib and Bucca, where he was interrogated incessantly. When he asked why he was in prison, he said, the answer was, "We keep you for security reasons."

Another released prisoner, Waleed Abdul Karim, 26, recounted how his guards would wield their absolute authority.

"Tell us about the ones who attack Americans in your neighborhood," he quoted an interrogator as saying, "or I will keep you in prison for another 50 years."

As with others, Karim's confinement may simply have strengthened support for the anti-U.S. resistance. "I will hate Americans for the rest of my life," he said.

As bleak and hidden as the Iraq lockups are, the Afghan situation is even less known. Accounts of abuse and deaths emerged in 2002-2004, but if Abu Ghraib-like photos from Bagram exist, none have leaked out. The U.S. military is believed holding about 500 detainees — most Afghans, but also apparently Arabs, Pakistanis and Central Asians.

The United States plans to cede control of its Afghan detainees by early next year, five years after invading Afghanistan to eliminate al-Qaida's base and bring down the Taliban government. Meanwhile, the prisoners of Bagram exist in a legal vacuum like that elsewhere in the U.S. detention network.

I think it's an experience I will draw on throughout my life. I can't pretend my personal world is some post-capitalist utopia (you know, as though if I pretend enough, that'll become real on some level). However, here was a concrete way I could reclaim at least some vestige of myself within the confines of capitalism. I was defining my time. I was doing practical work rather than something abstract like "customer service," and no one in our work crew was getting rich off the project; we were using the principles of mutual aid to help out Jaan Layman. Obviously, it wasn't pleasant at times, but doing it non-hierarchically with people I enjoyed, respected, and CHOSE to be with made a huge difference and proves that labor doesn't have to be work.

By Layla di Prima

A PERSONAL APPEAL FROM JAAN LAAMAN, OHIO 7 POLITICAL PRISONER

Dear 4strugglemag readers, friends, and fellow peace, justice and revolutionary activists:

I have some hopeful information to share, and I must make a serious appeal for your support.

I have been locked up for over 21 years now. Soon I will complete my Massachusetts state sentence. Then I have to begin a 53 years federal sentence. Because of these two separate sentences I am the last Ohio 7 person, with a release date who is still in captivity. My Ohio 7 comrade Tom Manning is also still in prison, but he has a life sentence without a real parole date.

Last year I discovered a possibility of reopening and challenging my entire Mass case and sentence. If I can overturn this, I would be overdue for release on federal parole. Of course any legal effort is an uphill battle, especially for political prisoners.

But this is a realistic possibility and in fact the first appeal I am hopeful about and determined to win. In order to be eligible for release on parole, I must win this appeal. To do this I need good and committed legal representation. Because of the war and present repressive climate in the country, I have to hire and assemble my own legal team.

About a month ago I established a legal freedom fund and began raising funds for my fight for justice and freedom. While I have been successful in raising funds, especially from family and close people, I still need close to another 20 thousand dollars in order to fight this battle.

This is the first time I have tried to raise money for my own legal efforts. I must admit, I feel awkward asking for your help like this, but it is necessary.

The only way I can launch this fight, is with your serious help now. This is a one time legal effort which will be resolved one way or another in the next year or so. Of course my intention and hope is to resolve this by overturning my case, proving my innocence and finally joining my 24 year old son and family and all of you outside once again.

I need your help to do this now.

Checks should be made out to "Jaan Laaman Legal Freedom Fund" and sent to:

Jaan Laaman Legal Freedom Fund
P.O. Box 681
East Boston, MA 02128 USA

I am encouraging groups and organizations to hold fundraisers and parties, or other events to support my fight for freedom. You can contact the Freedom Fund P.O. Box to inform us about or discuss such efforts.

Thank you for your support and help.

FREEDOM IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE!

Jaan Laaman
Walpole State Prison, February 2006

Jaan is the editor of 4strugglemag. It can be read for free online at 4strugglemag.org and is free to prisoners on request at the below address.

4strugglemag
P.O. Box 42053
Succ. Jeanne Mance
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Editors Note – The cover of this newsletter has a photo of Jaan with the caption that makes reference to Richard Williams. Richard Williams was one of Jaans Ohio 7 co defendants and was a political prisoner himself. He passed away in a Federal Prison this past December after a long battle with cancer. It is in his memory and spirit of resistance we carry on anti imperialist struggle.

MURDERED BY THE STATE

August 31, 2006 The state of Texas gave us another reason to forever commemorate Black August and to rededicate ourselves to the revolutionary struggle. At 6:00 this evening, they executed our brother, Hasan Shakur, the

Neither prisoners of war nor criminal defendants, they are just "security detainees" held "for imperative reasons of security," spokesman Curry said, using language from an annex to a U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing the U.S. presence here.

Questions of Law, Sovereignty

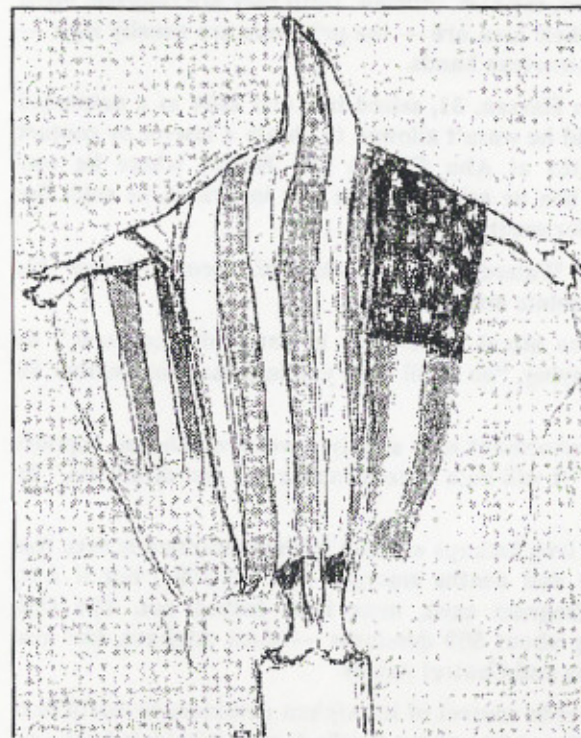
President Bush laid out the U.S. position in a speech Sept. 6.

"These are enemy combatants who are waging war on our nation," he said. "We have a right under the laws of war, and we have an obligation to the American people, to detain these enemies and stop them from rejoining the battle."

But others say there's no need to hold these thousands outside of the rules for prisoners of war established by the Geneva Conventions.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared last March that the extent of arbitrary detention here is "not consistent with provisions of international law governing internment on imperative reasons of security."

Meanwhile, officials of Nouri al-Maliki's 4-month-old Iraqi government say the U.S. detention system violates Iraq's national rights.



"As long as sovereignty has transferred to Iraqi hands, the Americans have no right to detain any Iraqi person," said Fadhil al-Sharaa, an aide to the prime minister. "The detention should be conducted only with the permission of the Iraqi judiciary."

At the Justice Ministry, Deputy Minister Busho Ibrahim told AP it has been "a daily request" that the detainees be brought under Iraqi authority.

There's no guarantee the Americans' 13,000 detainees would fare better under control of the Iraqi government,

which U.N. officials say holds 15,000 prisoners.

activists, lawyers and scholars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the United States said the detention system often is unjust and hurts the war on terror by inflaming anti-Americanism in Iraq and elsewhere.

Building for the Long Term

Reports of extreme physical and mental abuse, symbolized by the notorious Abu Ghraib prison photos of 2004, have abated as the Pentagon has rejected torture-like treatment of the inmates. Most recently, on Sept. 6, the Pentagon issued a new interrogation manual banning forced nakedness, hooding, stress positions and other abusive techniques.

The same day, President Bush said the CIA's secret outposts in the prison network had been emptied, and 14 terror suspects from them sent to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to face trial in military tribunals. The U.S. Supreme Court has struck down the tribunal system, however, and the White House and Congress are now wrestling over the legal structure of such trials.

Living conditions for detainees may be improving as well. The U.S. Military cites the toilets of Bagram, Afghanistan: In a cavernous old building at that air base, hundreds of detainees in their communal cages now have indoor plumbing and privacy screens, instead of exposed chamber pots.

Whatever the progress, small or significant, grim realities persist.

Human rights groups count dozens of detainee deaths for which no one has been punished or that were never explained. The secret prisons — unknown in number and location — remain available for future detainees. The new manual banning torture doesn't cover CIA interrogators. And thousands of people still languish in a limbo, deprived of one of common law's oldest rights, habeas corpus, the right to know why you are imprisoned.

"If you, God forbid, are an innocent Afghan who gets sold down the river by some warlord rival, you can end up at Bagram and you have absolutely no way of clearing your name," said John Sifton of Human Rights Watch in New York. "You can't have a lawyer present evidence, or do anything organized to get yourself out of there."

The U.S. government has contended it can hold detainees until the "war on terror" ends — as it determines.

"I don't think we've gotten to the question of how long," said retired admiral John D. Hutson, former top lawyer for the U.S. Navy. "When we get up to 'forever,' I think it will be tested" in court, he said.

The Navy is planning long-term at Guantanamo. This fall it expects to open a new, \$30-million maximum-security wing at its prison complex there, a concrete-and-steel structure replacing more temporary camps.

In Iraq, Army jailers are a step ahead. Last month they opened a \$60-million, state-of-the-art detention center at Camp Cropper, near Baghdad's airport. The Army oversees about 13,000 prisoners in Iraq at Cropper, Camp Bucca in the southern desert, and Fort Suse in the Kurdish north.

Minister of Human Rights of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party-Prison Chapter. He had recently turned 29 years old. At 19, he was framed for murder. He was called Derrick Frazier, then, a poor Black youth who had grown up on the mean streets and in the juvenile halls of Texas, after his mother died of a crack overdose. Tricked by police into confessing to a crime he did not commit, which they knew he did not commit because they already had the confession of the youth who had done the murder, Derrick Frazier was the victim of a racist hate crime, a frame-up, for no other reason than the cops could do it and get away with it. Cynically, they convinced Derrick they were doing him a favor that would save his life. They didn't tell him that he had a right to an attorney or that he could not plea bargain without one. They didn't tell him they had nothing on him, they told him he would die unless he took some blame to show he was cooperating...blame for another's actions he did not even witness. In a very real sense, Derrick Frazier died in that police station. Hasan Shakur was born on death row. It didn't happen automatically. It came out of the depth of despair and with his conversion to Islam and the teaching of a prisoner iman who was a veteran of the original Black Panther Party. In prison he awakened to the teachings of Malcolm X and Mao Tse-tung, of Huey P. Newton and George Jackson. And his living mentor, former BPP/BLA political prisoner/prisoner of war, Russell "Maroon" Shoats. Hasan did not fear his death, nor was he afraid to go on living, because he had found a purpose to his life and death - REVOLUTION! He was prepared to meet the enemy standing on his feet, standing tall! Because in life or death he stood for the people! Today they killed his body, but his spirit will live on, like that of Che, Fred Hampton, Sr. and George Jackson. He will march beside us in the streets and stand with us at rallies and on the barricades. And when the final victory is won, he will be there in the bright future of humanity that will have been bought with martyr's blood and the struggle of generations against all oppression and for the human rights of all!

Tom Big Warrior,
Red Heart Warriors Society

INDIANA'S BREAKING HOUSE: Behavior Modification and Sensory Deprivation Inside the Secured Housing Unit

(August 2006)

Any plative or hyper-aroused pattern. The earlier in life the trauma is initiated, the more firmly locked in this pattern becomes. - Sista Denyse Hicks-Ray

The research on these repressive control units that currently exist in the USA have exposed undeniably what happens to the human mind when exposed to long term isolation. Class action lawsuits by a host of human rights advocates and groups across the country has compelled prisoncrats to place

people diagnosed as mentally ill into treatment facilities. Yet these actions don't involve a plan to resolve current conditions that can and have caused stable prisoners to deteriorate slowly.

I was transferred to the SHU here in Indiana on January 31, 2003 and was first assigned to administrative segregation status. Two separate altercations landed me on d/s disciplinary segregation. The facility for many years has been the right of unchecked random violence and psychological abuse.

Cultivation of Conditions that Create Cruel and Unusual Punishment

On July 1, 2006 I participated in a hunger strike with the intent to obtain a meeting with the prison commissioner or his deputy to address some of the real life issues we believe need and deserve immediate redress. I endured the strike from July 17, 2006 through July 27, 2006. On July 27, 2006 I began to eat the last meal after experiencing some pains in my abdomen region. Collectively, I refused 32 meals and I lost about 20 pounds.

On July 26, 2006, the deputy commissioner and the superintendent visited the unit. The unit officers claimed they were scheduled to visit me. However, I never spoke to anyone. I was later advised that they held a meeting with staff about the issues raised that prompted us to strike. Obviously, someone here discouraged them from meeting with me. While this was rather upsetting, I sort of anticipated such a display of disregard toward resolving the contradictions existing here.

The month of August gained special significance and importance in the Black Liberation Movement beginning with a courageous attempt by Jonathan Jackson to demand the freedom of political prisoners, which the Soledad Brothers' case was the center of attention. On August 7, 1970, Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain, and Ruchell Magee were gunned down at the Marin County California Courthouse that attempt for freedom. Ruchell Magee remains the sole survivor of that bid for liberation, he also remains a POW in the California prison system doing life. Though this rebellion was put down by gory pigs and their agents, it was internalized within the hearts and minds of the people on the outside in the larger prison as well as those in the concentration camps (prisons), internalized in the same fashion as we honor other heroic African Freedom Fighters, who sacrificed their lives for the people and their liberation. - Doc Holiday

I can say that at this very moment, many if not all of us housed on long term disciplinary segregation are victims of cruel and unusual punishment. Being forced to endure the three meals a day that amount to extremely small childlike portions contributes to mental illness and stress-

Jaan Layman - Jaan was incarcerated for actions during his time as a member of the United Freedom Front (UFF), a revolutionary underground organization that carried out armed struggle in support of oppressed people in South Africa, central and South America, as well as in solidarity with the internal displaced colonies within the United States.

The Crew has taken on a couple of benefits this year in support of Jaan (*see page 1 for details on our latest fund raising efforts*) and has raised \$700 for Jaans bid for freedom to date.

U.S. WAR PRISONS LEGAL VACUUM FOR 14,000

BAGHDAD, Iraq - In the few short years since the first shackled Afghan shuffled off to Guantanamo, the U.S. military has created a global network of overseas prisons, its islands of high security keeping 14,000 detainees beyond the reach of established law.

Disclosures of torture and long-term arbitrary detentions have won rebuke from leading voices including the U.N. secretary-general and the U.S. Supreme Court. But the bitterest words come from inside the system, the size of several major U.S. penitentiaries.

"It was hard to believe I'd get out," Baghdad shopkeeper Amjad Qassim al-Aliyawi told The Associated Press after his release — without charge — last month. "I lived with the Americans for one year and eight months as if I was living in hell."

Captured on battlefields, pulled from beds at midnight, grabbed off streets as suspected insurgents, tens of thousands now have passed through U.S. Detention, the vast majority in Iraq.

Many say they were caught up in U.S. military sweeps, often interrogated around the clock, then released months or years later without apology, compensation or any word on why they were taken. Seventy to 90 percent of the Iraq detentions in 2003 were "mistakes," U.S. officers once told the international Red Cross.

Defenders of the system, which has only grown since soldiers' photos of abuse at Abu Ghraib shocked the world, say it's an unfortunate necessity in the battles to pacify Iraq and Afghanistan, and to keep suspected terrorists out of action.

Every U.S. detainee in Iraq "is detained because he poses a security threat to the government of Iraq, the people of Iraq or coalition forces," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Kelr-Kevin Curry, a spokesman for U.S.-led military detainee operations in Iraq.

But dozens of ex-detainees, government ministers, lawmakers, human rights

The Toledo 3 - Activists and community members clashed with riot police during the melee that followed a canceled neo-Nazi rally in October of 2005. While most of the initial support went to out of town professional activist types who were arrested for misdemeanor or other minor charges The Crew has consistently focused attention and support on community members charged with more serious offenses sentenced to prison time for actions during the uprising.

The Crew provides those Toledo Rebels sentenced to prison for direct actions against the Nazis and the State with specific reading materials and 4 embossed envelopes a month.

So far there have been 3 sentenced to prison with more trials upcoming in late Nov. and Dec.

The TOLEDO 3 are

Olajidai Crenshaw
#A519055

Madison Correctional
Institution (MaCI)
P. O. Box 740
London, Ohio 43140

Tried as an adult 17 year old Olajidai was sentenced to 8 years in prison for shooting the lock off Jim & Lou's Bar so other rebels could get in and torch the place. The bar was known to be a local hangout for racists and cops.

Floyd D. Young
#A528251

Pickaway Correctional
Institution
P. O. Box 209
Orient, Ohio 43146

Charged with Agg. riot and Burglary sentenced to 15 months in prison for actions during the Toledo uprising.



Lasandra Burwell
#W063658

Ohio Reformatory for
Women (ORW)
1479 Collins Avenue
Marysville, Ohio 43040

Lasandra was convicted of to two counts of felonious assault and one count of aggravated riot and was sentenced to 5 years for throwing bricks at riot cops and smashing a police cars windshield.

Special Note - *The Toledo 3* welcome letters and support. Embossed envelopes can and should be included with any letters so they can write back and write their family. Ohio State prisons do not allow stamps. Only embossed envelopes.

Khalfani M. Khaldun - Is a New Afrikan Revolutionary that was convicted of the murder of an Indiana prison Guard. Khalfani has been confined to Indiana's SHU units and has suffered years of both mental and physical torture.

Crew members will be helping finance a lawsuit to challenge Khalfanis conditions. To date we have raised \$150 of the \$250 we have committed to. We plan on raising the rest before the first of the new year.

Green Scare Defendants - Crew members raised \$100 in support of the non cooperating defendants at this past Junes Weekend of Resistance.

related abnormalities. Being hungry all through the day causes me to display anger and frustration towards everyone around me. This hunger impacts on my concentration, personality, attitude, association, and mental health. This is a fact for everyone subjected to the current conditions of this repressive unit.

I have organized several campaigns through petitioning these prisoncrats to employ an alternative to this hunger problem, by suggesting that we be approved to order to a limited food order once every two weeks off the prison commissary. These efforts have been disproved of by the facilities prisoncrats, who declare we are receiving adequate portions. However, I completely disagree. I believe this constant state of hunger is a form of forced trauma that creates a desire for food all the time. This is what I go through daily. This is cruel and unusual punishment.

If the hunger pains weren't enough to impact our mental state in this environment, I have consistently had my cell and property ransacked in an attempt to terrorize me into submission. This is also systematic across the unit, constantly not knowing if you will receive mail or will it be placed into another prisoners mailbag. These guys have become so bold, they put human feces in one of my trays. This is a form of terrorism that creates fear and stress. What happens to the brain and body during trauma that has such devastating effects as its aftermath? Danger of any kind evokes an age-old, deeply ingrained response that involves both the nervous and endocrine (hormonal) systems. Pupils dilate, heart rate and blood pressure increase, sense organs reach their peak of sensitivity, reaction time shortens, and attention narrows to the situation at hand. Fear and anger are typical emotional responses to danger. These physical and emotional reactions allow one to overcome pain or fatigue and enable us to protect ourselves from anger from fighting or fleeing collectively. They are known as a stress response.

Many prisoners suffer the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, constriction, hyper-arousal, and others in this unit. PTSD robs prisoners of their support they so desperately need by making them unable or unwilling to relate to others. This is a crucial point, reminding us of the role of human rights advocates in bringing trauma survivors back from the brink. The state is responsible for subjecting us to cruel and unusual punishment and forced behavior modification through isolation.

Dissociation Towards One's Survival

Inside these units I can say that due to constant isolation and boredom, at times I have allowed myself to drift for moments into fantasy. However, I have never allowed fantasy to become a permanent part of my thoughts. Reality is the realm that dominates my consciousness. I have learned that the essence of dissociation is the separation of reality from perception. In

a lot of ways control units can create feelings of hopelessness, loneliness, and abandonment. So to compensate for these emotions haunting them, constant fantasy in many men becomes an escape route. These emotions arose create difficulties in the realm of trust, intimacy, self-assertion, and body image. They may have enormous problems simply caring for themselves and their most fundamental needs. For example, rest and hygiene. Many of the men housed on the SHU engage in fantasy to keep their grip on their sanity, which leads in many cases to avoidance. We do things to stay occupied so that the total impact of control unit repressive conditions will not depress our lives. While acknowledging that we will be here for a while, our exercises, studies, writing, art, and poetry keeps us balanced in these environments, whose entire purpose is to create an imbalance in us. Dissociation is not as great a social problem as hyper-arousal. Neither is a phenomenon known as learned helplessness, where an abused person gives up trying to control their world and sinks into a state of defeat. A person who is used to dissociating may find that their pain is numbed, but that they are also cut off from experiencing happy feelings. Currently this unit is responsible for making many here mentally ill. Depression, anxiety, stress, and self-destructive behaviors are most pervasive inside these units.

Newly Remodeled Unit Designed for Ultimate Control

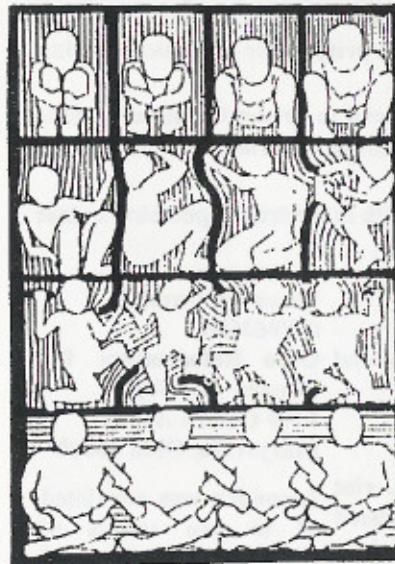
Inside the Indiana Secured Housing Unit construction began early this year to remodel one of its four housing pods. There are four - A-East Pod, A-West Pod, B-East Pod, and B-West Pod. Known as "the beast" because of it's housing of many who were identified as consistent feces throwers, construction on this unit was recently completed and soon it is expected that prisoners will be classified for the unit. Some of the information released on this unit claims that it was upgraded to a highly advanced computer command center with a host of other technology. Some of the cells are now equipped with 24 hour cameras to monitor and observe whoever is assigned to the cell. The toilet, lights, air system, water, are all controlled by the officers assigned to work the Pod control center. These people are so sick with control, the toilets will not flush but once every 15 minutes.

On August 3, 2006 I was advised by SHU officers that they were moving me to this unit. I packed my property and was escorted to B-East 601 a cell that has a camera in the upper right hand corner of the cell so that you are being watched 24/7. What is funny, though, these six bottom cells do not have plug in sockets for our televisions. So on August 4, 2006 SHU officers were instructed to move me to another cell. They moved me from 601 to 607 in the same section. There is no camera in any of the top cells.

The meshed screen doors have been replaced by solid doors; the

BRICK BY BRICK

A look back at 2006



I guess you can call this a year in review article. With so much work yet to be done its important to take a short breather and review tactics and accomplishments. Our program has been providing free educational and progressive political books and zines to prisoners in the states/areas we cover for almost 6 years now. Outside of our free book program Crew members have individually and collectively taken on a number of projects. Below is a look at some of the specific highlights of the past year.

- Steve

Free Prisoner Book Program - The bulk of our Crews work centers around receiving and filling prisoner book requests. We get anywhere from 200 - 400 a month and have sent out over 5000 prisoner book packages this year (2006).

Inside Out A Resource Guide For the Incarcerated - For the past 4 years we have compiled and maintained one of the largest and most informative prisoner resource guides available. Inside Out is distributed to prisoners by over a dozen other prisoner support groups. Our program has sent over 15,000 copies of Inside Out to prisoners this year alone.

Crew Support for Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War

Matt Lamont - L.A. Area @narchist Matt Lamont was originally arrested and was convicted of plotting to attack a southern California Nazi meeting with fire bombs. Earlier this year his parole was revoked and he accused of plotting to blow up Big Bear Dam. When police were unable to find any evidence to back up their fabricated claim they sent him back to prison for having a multi tool in his bed room. According to Matt's parole conditions he was not allowed to have any knives outside of the kitchen and the multi tool had a small blade in it.

The Books 4 Prisoners Crew provided Matt with reading material while incarcerated and sent Jenny (Matt's Wife) a monthly check of \$50 to help with the bills and other expenses for the entire time Matt was incarcerated.

are organizing events specific to targeted individuals, please contact their support committees before organizing rallies or fundraisers. You can find their contact information at <http://ecoprisoners.org/greenscare.htm> or by emailing us. To let us know what events you have planned, please email us at greenscare@mutualaid.org



Are We Safe
Yet?

doors have two long windows on them and a small full-length one near the side of the toilet area. The water in the sink operates the same as the toilet; it cuts off after every first use for about three to five minutes. This unit is clean and freshly painted, but it is still a repressive sensory deprivation behavior modification unit. Also, this unit is equipped with two monitors that will be used to visitors who cannot use the new contact visitation booths. That is crazy for real. The showers are a lot bigger here now; they are stainless steel with hot and cold water controls. Inside the command center the officer is fully equipped with monitors on the entire B-East Side. There are TV cameras, recorders, flat screen TVs and a lot more. They are very proud to have a unit like this. I am the only prisoner out of the six of us moved into this section who is not taking prescribed psychotic medications. When I asked why I was moved and placed on "the beast" B-East Unit, the man responsible for this placement stated that he had to move someone over here. This is an arbitrary move, done because of my consistency in filing complaints against the racist staff on this SHU. They are also upset about the recent hunger strike. This unit B-East is primarily supposed to be designed as a mental health special management unit.



I am not on medication. I've never cut on myself, I am not suicidal, I've never thrown feces or urine on anyone, yet I have been placed around prisoners who are all of the above. They are either trying to infer to the facility heads that I am crazy, or they want to push me to the edge. I am confident that I am not crazy, but after awhile any man's sanity would be tested under these kinds of repressive conditions. As of right now I've been removed from general population for 12 years. I will give you a few reasons why these units have become so popular.

Isolation and Discrimination as a Form of Punishment

This unit and others like it are out to:

1) Physically remove prisoners from those they respect, to break seriously or weaken close emotional ties and comradeship.

2) Have other prisoners spy on us and report back information gathered or disclosing of private materials they've been exposed to.

3) Exploitation of informants and other prisoner opportunists.

4) Convincing prisoners that they can trust no one.

5) Punishing those who show uncooperative attitudes.

6) Systematic withholding of prisoners mail or giving the mail to prisoners who are in concert with their objectives.

7) Prevention of contact with anyone who is sympathetic without pleas for help and support from the outside world.

8) Trying to convince prisoners that we have been abandoned or that we have no one outside these walls who care for us.

9) Using techniques of character invalidation, humiliation, revilement's, to destroy the spirit of the prisoners who resist.

10) Calling prisoners who oppose their reactionary behaviors for filing grievances snitches, homosexuals, or fags.

The objective of the state is to break the will to resist which is creating passivity over aggression in these units. However, the conditions are creating mental health issues. This is why I declare the state/prisoncrats are fostering cruel and unusual punishment against the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. I am unsure if they operate a system like the California Department of Corrections debriefing program. But I believe there is a snitch program of some kind by which one earns an early release from this unit. Such programs should be exposed and not promoted or encouraged.

I am going to come to a close in this essay. I hope that it helps you to know what is going on here. Thanks for your time. Thanks for helping us expose the hunger strike.

A Luta Continua

In Solidarity,
Bro. Khalfani Malik Khaldun #874304
(Leonard McQuay) B-East PO Box 1111
Carlisle, IN 47838

OPPOSE THE NEW WAR ON DISSENT!

ORGANIZE A GREEN SCARE SOLIDARITY EVENT IN YOUR CITY!

December 7:

A Day of Solidarity with Green Scare Indictees and Political Prisoners.

The term Green Scare refers to the Red Scares of the early twentieth century, made famous by the McCarthy hearings and the House Un-American Activities Committee. The Green Scare demonstrates a similar systematic criminalization of dissent as the U.S. government is using all its tactics (e.g., grand juries, specialized legislation, paid agents provocateurs) to target the radical environmental and animal rights movements, those who publicly support them, and others who struggle for a healthy, diverse eco-system and the rights of animals.

On December 7th, 2005, the FBI made their first arrests of "Operation Backfire," a multi-state sweep targeting alleged Earth Liberation and Animal Liberation Front activists with charges of conspiracy and arson threatening them with life in prison. Elsewhere, the government has convicted organizers of the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign – a campaign that ultimately kept HLS off the stock market and can take credit for the divestment of hundreds of their clients and investors. The SHAC 7 are currently serving up to 6 years for violating the "Animal Enterprise Protection Act" by operating a website. In Sacramento, Eric McDavid, waiting in solitary confinement for trial, faces up to 20 years for alleged thought crime. In 2001, Jeff "Free" Luers was convicted of damaging 3 Sports Utility Vehicles that were later restored and sold. He is currently serving his 6th year of a 22 year, 8 month sentence.

This year, on December 7, people all over the country will be organizing and participating in events to raise awareness about the Green Scare and show solidarity with those targeted by it. Please organize an event in your area to support Green Scare Indictees and political prisoners.

Some ideas for events are:

- Film screenings
- Prisoner letter writing parties
- Teach-ins
- Support rallies
- Fundraisers (garage sales, 5-k runs, bike rides, booksales, etc)
- Shows or music festivals

To get ideas or support, please go to GreenScare.org. Remember, everything you do to support people who are targets of prosecution should be LEGAL and in their best interest. Many are in pre-trial or in an appeal process; please do not organize something that could jeopardize their cases. Further, if you

engendered by the blast." Tokyo radio went on to call Hiroshima a city with corpses "too numerous to be counted...literally seared to death." It was impossible to "distinguish between men and women." The Associated Press carried the first eyewitness account: a Japanese soldier who described the victims as "bloated and scorched-such an awesome sight-their legs and bodies stripped of clothes and burned with a huge blister." After visiting the devastated city, Australian war correspondent, Wilfred Burchett described Hiroshima as a "death-stricken alien planet" with patients presenting purple skin hemorrhages, hair loss, drastically reduced white blood cell counts, fever, nausea, gangrene, and other symptoms of a radiation disease he called an "atomic plague."

Shortly after Hiroshima (and Nagasaki), American nuclear researchers finally got around to examining the effects of plutonium on the human body. "There were two kinds of experiments," says Peter Montague, director of the Environmental Research Foundation. "In one kind, specific small groups (African-American prisoners, mentally retarded children, and others) were induced, by money or by verbal subterfuge, to submit to irradiation of one kind or another. In all, some 800 individuals participated in these 'guinea pig' trials. In the second kind, large civilian populations were exposed to intentional releases of radioactive isotopes into the atmosphere." Far from a momentary lapse amidst post-"Good War" paranoia, these U.S. radiation experiments have left a trail of declassified documents that stretches three miles long.

In Iraq (commencing in 1991), Afghanistan (since 2001), Yugoslavia (1999), and testing ground such as Vieques, Puerto Rico (only recently halted), the U.S. has continued to spread the radioactive aromatherapy via depleted uranium (DU) armor-piercing shells. "When fired, the uranium bursts into flame and all but liquifies, searing through steel armor like a white hot phosphorescent flare" explains James Ridgeway in the Village Voice. The heat of the shell causes any diesel fuel vapors in the enemy tank to explode, and the crew inside is burned alive. As grisly as that may sound, the effects of DU do not end with the scorched bodies of Iraqi "collateral damage." Anti-nuclear activist Dr Helen Caldicott explains that DU shells create "tiny aerosolized particles less than five microns in diameter, small enough to be inhaled" and can travel "long distances when airborne."

"There is no safe dose or dose rate below which dangers disappear," John Gofman, a former associate director of Livermore National Laboratory, one of the scientists who worked on the atomic bomb, and co-discoverer of uranium-233, reminds us. "Serious, lethal effects from minimal radiation doses are not 'hypothetical,' 'just theoretical,' or 'imaginary.' They are real."

Second elementary question: Who are the real rogues here?

Mickey Z. can be found on the Web at <http://www.mickeyz.net>.

RESISTANCE FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

8/11/06 In the Spirit of Black August and in solidarity with Khalfani and the other SHU hunger strike prisoners there was a small but loud protest at the IDOC commissioners office.

Like a light being turned on a bunch of roaches many state employees were noticeably upset at our presence. This was reinforced by the 4 or 5 burly state patrol officers that followed us around doing their best to look as intimidating as possible. After first being refused a meeting with IDOC Commissioner Donahue Protesters presented a list of SHU prisoners grievances to Deputy Commissioner Julie Von Arx and again later during a sit down meeting with Indiana Ombudsman Director Charlene Navarro. Though I felt they mostly just blew smoke up our asses in an attempt to get us out of there (trust me it didn't work to their annoyance we stuck around for a couple hours taking turns on the bullhorn letting em know how we really felt) its important to take our enemies out of their comfort zone and let them know loud and clear that they will not be allowed to maim, torture, and kill prisoners with impunity. After all they don't call it the Struggle for nothing, our actions and tactics should represent that. Struggle and Solidarity - Steve

STATEMENT READ AT THE 2006 CRIMETHINC CONVERGENCE IN WINONA, MINNESOTA



In January of this year the FBI arrested 3 people in Auburn, California, charging them with conspiring to destroy a variety of corporate and government targets in California. Along with the three was a paid FBI informant known as "Anna Davies", the story of whom you're probably now familiar All four were at last year's convergence in Bloomington, Indiana.

Since January, defendants Zachary Jenson and Lauren Weiner have plead guilty and agreed to work with prosecution. Lauren made this choice from the comfort of her parent's mansion in New York while Zachary gave in after months of isolation in Sacramento County Jail. Zach and Lauren have agreed not only to testify against Eric in this case, they have signed deals stating that they will cooperate with all local and federal law enforcement in any investigation or grand jury and will answer all questions posed to them "completely". Failure to do so will result in their deal being revoked and their facing up to 20 years in prison. There can be no excuse or apology for their decisions, no matter what kind of pressure was exerted against them.

Continued on Page 12

Today only one defendant remains uncooperative: Eric McDavid. From the beginning Eric has refused to back down, carrying on his hunger-strike for access to vegan food until he was very ill. Even in 23 hour isolation he has continued his struggle. So too must we continue ours, even in a climate of federal indictments, grand juries, and trial by media.

If we intend to make declaring war on this society a reality and not an empty slogan, we must be prepared to fight the repression, surveillance, and harassment from the State that comes along with that. This convergence and the entire Crimethinc project is worth nothing unless we extend our full support to Eric and all other prisoners who remain unbowed. We cannot let the State succeed in isolating our friends and comrades, no matter what lengths we must go to break this isolation.

There is no doubt in my mind that another Anna Davies sits amongst us. We cannot let this get in the way of learning and sharing this week. We must, however, think before speaking and know what conversations are appropriate for this event. This is a time for fun, but this is not a time for carelessness.

If we are indeed fighting for our lives, not supporting our prisoners will end in nothing less than death. By DA See www.supporteric.org for more info.

The Books 4 Prisoners Crew Is Expanding its Coverage of Units in Texas!

The Books 4 Prisoners Crew has extended its coverage of Texas prisons to the Lane Murray Unit! We now provide free progressive political and educational materials to State and Federal prisoners in Ohio, Indiana, and 4 Texas State prisons Gatesville Unit (womens prison), Lane Murray Unit (Womens prison), Polunsky Unit (Mens prison), and Ramsey 1 Unit (Mens prison). Sorry no county jail requests. Due to lack of funding we are forced to throw away requests from Texas prisoners not in one of the above mentioned Units. Prisoners in the states/prisons we cover send a self addressed stamped envelope for our current catalog and an order form.

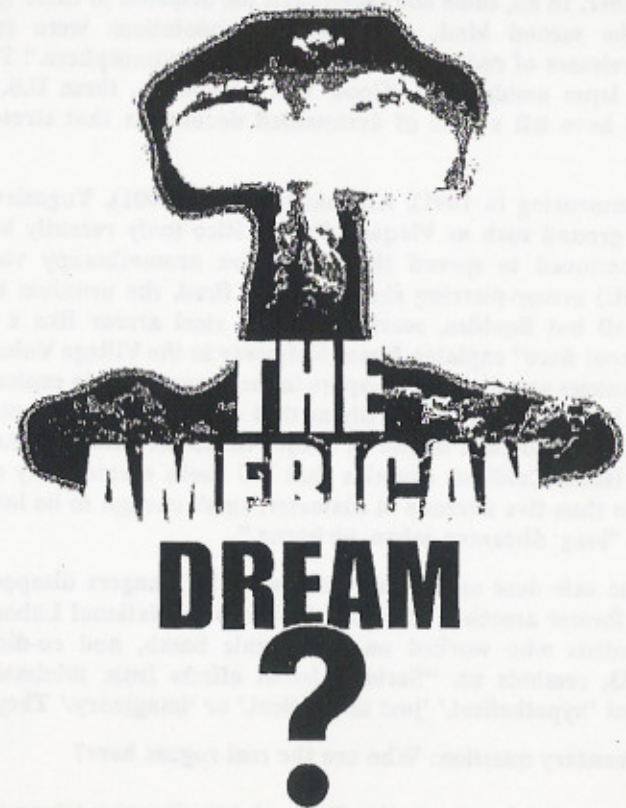


NUKES

IRAN AND NORTH KOREA ARE NOT THE PROBLEM

Thanks to the nuclear aspirations of North Korea and Iran, there's no shortage of rhetoric along these lines: "We can't let rogue nations have nukes. They might use them." Absent from the discussion are two elementary questions. First: What is the only nation to have used nuclear weapons (and have civilians been targeted)?

On August 6, 1945, the U.S. government ordered the dropping of an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. A Tokyo radio broadcast described how "the impact of the bomb was so terrific that practically all living things, human and animal, were seared to death by the tremendous heat and pressure



profit. Th Commissioner [of DOC] at the time had a furniture store and sent in old used furniture to be fully refurbished and then sent back to *his* store and sold. It was *his* privately-owned business. Back then our "state pay" was \$6.40 per month. Man, they'd strip off the old upholstery, fix the springs, and fix the wood on old throw away furniture so good it'd look like new. You had a master craftsman doing professional quality work for \$0.30 a day! That commissioner made all of the off the backs of basically what you could call "slave labor". What a racket that was!

R.M.: The 1980's ?

W-EL.: Drugs hit hard! Lot's of drugs flowing like water. A guard would walk up to you and ask if you wanted something brought in if you had the money. Yeah. He'd go out on a lunch break and bring it back for you. There was lots of cash (green money), and lots of greedy hands.

R.M.: The 1990's?

W-EL.: Tobacco! This is some of the worst corruption I've ever witnessed. You can take a legal product worth \$5-\$6, and because the DOC has outlawed it, a \$5 can of tobacco becomes \$700! It's capitalism to the extreme. If R.J. Reynolds only knew just how much money is made off their products-Whew! A pack of cigarettes goes for \$50. This is what the IDOC has done. And the guards are making money hand-over-fist. They're making \$100-\$200 off a can of tobacco. The local economy benefited too because as soon as the no-smoking ban went into effect, a brand new tobacco shop opened down the road. Business is booin! You walk in any cell house and you can smell tobacco smoke . It's supposed to be outlawed inside. Guards needing a cigarette have even purchased one from an inmate at the prison price of \$2 per cigarette!

R.M.: What about today?

W-EL.: You got a market in cell phones, cigarette lighters, matches, cigarette rolling papers; it used to be marijuana, but today its cell phones. People bring their street habits with them.

R.M.: After 28 years, what hopes and aspirations do have for a life in free society?

W-EL.: First, to obtain my Master's Degree in Political Science. Take my mom to Mississippi so she can live out her remaining life back home. And to try to live and whatever change I can make in someone else's life to keep them from going down the road I've been down; because I've got 'to give back. To always remember those I've left behind in any way I can. That's it.

R.M.: There's a certain "bond" you have with your constituents you've left behind. What are going to do to perhaps give them hope for a future?

W-EL.: "*Shine*" while I'm outside. Shine! Shine and reach back! That's the only way I can sum it up. I can just see little Ya-Ya when I reach back. (Smiling in memory of a good friend).

Randy McGee Putnamville Correctional Fac. Indiana

Editors Note - Randy was recently released on parole. We wish him the best of luck!

POLITICAL PRISONER/PRISONER OF WAR/PRISON REBEL UPDATES

Continued Support needed for Political Prisoner and Jericho Co-Founder

Dear Friends and Supporters:

On August 1, 2006 , for the third time I had a parole board hearing at Auburn Correctional Facility. The parole hearing was conducted by Commissioners K. Ludlow, L. Lazzari and A. Croce, all of whom are Republicans appointed to their positions by Republican Governor George Pataki. Governor Pataki has in place an unwritten policy that all those convicted of violent crimes be denied parole. After Kathy Boudin was paroled at her third appearance, Governor Pataki publicly stated he would not have paroled her. He then summarily demoted the Chairman of the Div. of Parole, and replaced him with one of his Republican appointees, Mr. Robert Dennison. In the July 20, 2006 *New York Law Journal*, it was reported that prior to Robert Dennison's appointment as Chairman, he functioned as a parole commissioner. Chairman Robert Dennison is presently being sued for acting outside of his authority while he was a commissioner. The lawsuit alleges that Robert Dennison, disapproving of two other commissioners granting parole to a prisoner on a panel he was serving, soon after met the family member of the victim. *Continued on Page 14*

Political Prisoner HUGO "YOGI BEAR" PINELL needs letters of support.

In November of 2006 Hugo will be coming up for Parole. Yogi has been imprisoned over 40 years and letters to the parole board are desperately needed. Check out www.hugopinell.org for sample letters and more detailed info.

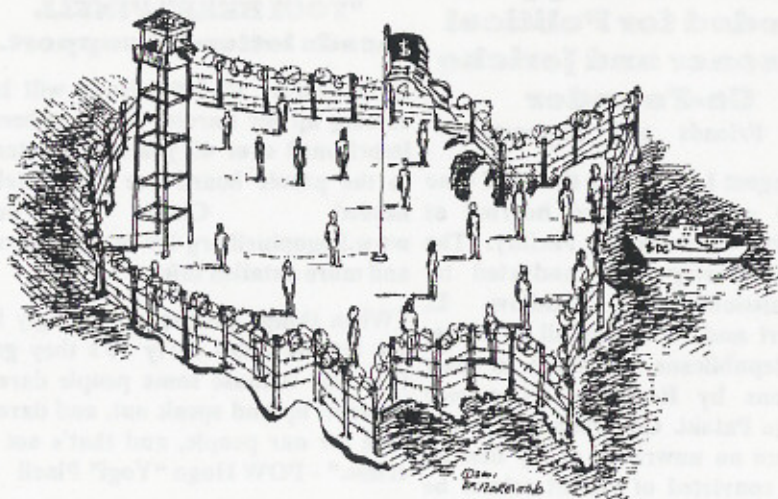
"When things got explosively ugly in the late 60's and early 70's they got that way because some people dared to stand up and speak out, and dared care for our people, and that's not a crime." - POW Hugo "Yogi" Pinell

Eco Prisoner Rod Coronado transferred

From www.supportrod.org This week continues to bring about positive changes in Rod's situation, as he was designated to FCI Tucson on Monday evening. We had no idea where he would end up, and we expected the worst with Georgia and Texas being very probable options. Now Rod is just right down off of Wilmot Rd, for those Tucsonans who want to make the short visit. I have yet to speak with him, but he left me a message with his address on it, which is:

Rodney Coronado #03895-000
FCI Tucson
8901 South Wilmot Rd
Tucson, AZ 85705

He suggested to the victim's family member that the prisoner "should die in prison," persuading that family member to make a statement opposing the prisoner's release on parole. Then Commissioner Dennison conducted a new parole hearing after ensuring the first was rescinded, and denied the prisoner's release on parole. The prisoner is now suing Robert Dennison, but for this act Governor Pataki awarded Dennison the Chairman position of the Division of Parole.



In 2004, Mr. Waverly Jones, Jr., the son of one of the police officers killed in my case, met with then Chairman Dennison, providing a victim impact statement. Mr. Jones informed Chairman Dennison that he felt that I and my co-defendant had done enough time in prison, that he and his family had forgiven us for the crime, if in fact we were guilty of it, and questioned the policy of continuously hitting us at the parole board every 2 years. Subsequently, that victim impact statement was not provided to the parole commissioners conducting my 2004 parole hearing. I was summarily denied parole in 2004, for the very same reasons I was denied in 2002.

At the 2006 parole hearing, none of the three parole commissioners mentioned the victim impact statement or the many other accomplishments provided them as part of my institutional record. In fact, the commissioners were not aware that I had obtained both a BS in Psychology and a BA in Sociology from SUNY New Paltz in 1994, or that I received two commendations for preventing prison gang riots, or accomplished other vocational training. However, when I raised my concerns about the July 20, 2006 *New York Law Journal* report of the suit against Chairman Dennison and his failure to provide the favorable 2004 victim impact statement advocating my release on parole to the parole commissioners, the only comment was by Commissioner

faith was deemed guilty-by-association. And the leaders of this country didn't help anything. George Bush made obscene statements like "We're coming to get ya!" instead of saying who were the individuals who perpetrated those crimes. He just cast a wide net that even came inside the prisons. You know when you cast a net, you catch some of everything!

R.M.: Mr Williams-EL, what are some of the things you and other prisoners have done to *give back* to society and say crime victims?

W-EL.: We had youth who came in and we'd try to give them guidance to stay in school and gain an education that will get you gainful employment. We told them how to be able to see something coming. It may look good at first, but down the road might not be good for you. Don't put that cigarette in your mouth! Don't put that bottle in your mouth! Use a condom because you can't take care of even yourself right now, so don't bring a baby into the world you can't take care of. We held standing-room- only seminars. We had kids come in from schools and walk through the cell houses. Inmates would tell kids about the pitfalls of prisons and how they could win up there. I'm talking about giving it to them in the raw, with the *language* and everything. We raised money for Toys-For-Tots by recycling cans. Muscular Dystrophy, Spinal Meningitis; we gave food to pantries in Michigan City. The Jaycees took donations and gave to various charities up to \$2,000-\$3,000 total at a time. Men at Indiana State Prison gave donations to the victims of 9/11. So the fallacy of the cold-blooded, uncaring super predator convict is a falsehood and blatant untruth! We are men who are just as patriotic and sympathetic as the next person out there in society.

R.M.: What do you want to say to society about corrections in America today?

W-EL.: Men inside were once our friends and neighbors. They're still your friends and neighbors, they just made a mistake. Just as a pencil has an eraser to correct mistakes, education is the eraser inside these institutions. Job skills are another form of eraser. These are the things that will once again make these individuals your friends and neighbors. No one wants enemies, so don't let these who want to be your friends and neighbors be treated as your friends and enemies. We will be returning to your communities. Write your politicians because you have a right to see what goes on inside. You pay taxes every time you go to the store and that gives you the right to know what goes on inside these prisons because it's public information. Get involved, because given a certain situation your own son or daughter could wind up here. And that's how I can best sum it up: Get involved! Martha Stewart is getting involved now, as we speak.

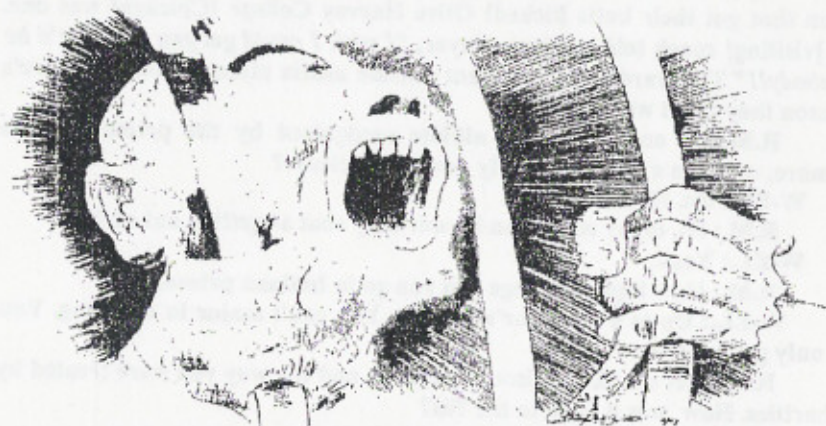
R.M.: Lastly, Departments of Correction are notorious as far as corruption stories go. Without giving names, can you give us any examples of *major* corrupt practices or policies from the past three decades?

W-EL.: One of the biggest: a car lot that was using prison labor. It was located right across the street from the prison. They painted, repaired, overhauled engines, did wheel alignments, ect., inside the prison and then sent the cars back to the lot across the street to be sold for the warden's personal

communication at all. They are trained to dominate, humiliate, and if necessary to put you down physically because that's how they're trained. They dress up guards as prisoners and they train their attack dogs as lethal weapons. The dog sees and smells the uniform and attacks. I'm talking about prisoners' uniforms.

R.M.: I recognize that you're a Moorish American by national descent. How did you get the DOC to allow you to worship as you please?

W-EL.: Yeah. It wasn't until the Radford-EL 1996 Appellate Court decision that those who were Moorish Americans were allowed to worship in the State of Indiana. Until that decision they classified all Moorish Americans as a gang. Even though the MSTA is the oldest Islamic organization in the United States. It's been in existence since 1913. It's lawfully chartered and incorporated in all 50 states and in seven countries outside the U.S.



R.M.: Was it difficult to establish your right to worship anything other than Christian or Catholic?

W-EL.: Here in Indiana, they felt that anyone who wasn't a Christian was a pagan. This was entrenched because this is what is known as the bible belt. Also, most of your prison chaplains have never dealt with people of other faiths, especially the Islamic faith. It was almost like pathological fear that they would steal their flocks. People are afraid of what they don't understand.

R.M.: And following 9/11, how were Muslim and Moorish religions affected in the DOC?

W-EL.: Whoa! I can tell you fist hand! I got a visit from the F.B.I.! Yeah! Asking me what was my religion. Asking me about the MSTA; even though they knew about it already. What did they say? "Was I affiliated with Jeff Fort; was I ever affiliated with the EL-Rukins?" Those were some of the questions they asked me. Then you could see the attitudes of the guards in the prisons. Anytime they saw an inmate with a kufi on their heads they'd make disparaging remarks like, "there goes one of them right there," or "rag head!"

R.M.: Was this wholly political?

W-EL.: It was a knee-jerk reaction to 9/11. Anyone associated with Islamic

A. Croce, who asked how I got a copy of the transcript of the victim impact statement.

These parole denials are in direct violation of the legislative mandate in Executive Law §259i, that establishes the standard that parole commissioners are to consider for parole releases. It is obvious that the NYS parole system has become a political tool of nepotism by the Governor, where 16 commissioners are Republicans.

I am preparing my appeal of the parole denial. In this regard, I am asking for your support. Please write a protest letter to Chairman Robert Dennison, NYS Division of Parole, 97 Central Avenue, Albany, New York 12206, and demand that a FULL BOARD REVIEW be conducted of Anthony "Jalil" Bottom's August 1, 2006 parole denial. We need as many letters as possible to be sent protesting the parole denial and Governor Pataki's unwritten parole policy. Thank you for your support.

Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom) #77A4283
Auburn Correctional Facility
Box 618, 135 State Street
Auburn, NY 13024

Editors Note - Jalil's Birthday is October 18. Please send this comrade a Birthday card and if possible donate money to Jalil's commissary. See www.freejalil.com for more info.

WHAT IS PRISON ABOLITION?

taken from www.criticalresistance.org

Abolition is a political vision that seeks to eliminate the need for prisons, policing, and surveillance by creating sustainable alternatives to punishment and imprisonment.

Abolition means acknowledging the devastating effects prison, policing, and surveillance have on poor communities, communities of color and other targeted communities, and saying, "No, we won't live like this. We deserve more."

Abolitionists recognize that the kinds of wrongdoing we call "crime" do not exist in the same way everywhere and are not "human nature", but rather determined by the societies we live in. Similarly, abolitionists do not assume that people will never hurt each other or that people won't cross the boundaries set up by their communities. We do imagine, however, that boundary crossings will happen much less often if we live in a society that

combines flexibility with care to provide for, and acknowledge, people's needs. To do that, we must create alternatives for dealing with the injuries people inflict upon each other in ways that sustain communities and families. Keeping a community whole is impossible by routinely removing people from it.

An abolitionist vision means that we must build models today that can represent how we want to live in the future. It means developing practical strategies for taking small steps that move us toward making our dreams real and that lead the average person to believe that things really could be different. It means living this vision in our daily lives.

IF NOT PRISONS AND POLICE, THEN WHAT?

If our vision is to eliminate the need for prisons, policing, and surveillance, we must have a clear idea of what we need to make our communities safe and secure. We must make those alternatives realistic and we must be able to begin building them today. We need community alternatives that keep people out of the hands of police and out of prisons and jails, while addressing the fears that people live with on a daily basis. We can do that by building our communities and ending a reliance on, and belief in, law enforcement as the only solution. Here are just a few examples of what those alternatives might include:



* Community-based economic resources: Current cooperative economic models provide us with one set of strategies to build our communities. We can create a means for providing meaningful work - and training for that work - to all. This work and training can provide for our housing, food, and clothing, and should contribute to the well being of the community.

W-EL.: Back in the 70's they had vocational schools, G.E.D. Programs, no college; those came later. There were the Ivy Tech vocational courses. I'm talking electronics, mechanics, and Ball State[University] came in but you had to pay for it yourself. Moody Bible College, Indiana University or Purdue, but you had to pay for it because no grants were available for convicts.

R.M.: I'm thinking sports now. Athletes like Ron Leflore (Detroit Tigers), and Jumbo Cummings (Chicago-heavy weight boxer), who actually were given an opportunity in pro sports because back then corrections were totally different ; how has athletics and it's overall value to prison officials changed since that time

W-EL.: Athletics are viewed as just a form of exercise. It has no value for prison officials. Even though their skills are exceptional, it won't get them out of prison today. I've seen athletes better than many of those seen on TV and they could easily win in Olympic competition, But they'll never get the chance. You know, there have been a lot of boxers who put on exhibition fights in prison that got their butts kicked! Olive Harvey College (Chicago) was one. The [visiting] coach told a prison player, "I wish I could get you out; you'd be somebody!" The warden's don't want outside media attention today. There's a reason they don't want that.

R.M.: Is an exceptional athlete recognized by the prison officials anymore, or given a chance at early parole or release?

W-EL.: No. No .No!

R.M.: So, today education is your only shot at getting out earlier?

W-EL.: Yeah.

R.M.: How high in college can you go in Indiana prisons?

W-EL.: Up to a Bachelor's of Arts. You can't major in anything. You can only get a minor.

R.M.: Let's look at prison conditions and the way you were treated by authorities. How was it back in the 70s?

W-EL.: Brutal. Brutal without sophistication.

R.M.: Define brutal for me.

W-EL.: Try seven or eight 200 lbs.+ guards with billy clubs beating, kicking, and stomping all 140lbs. of me into submission. I was young then. I survived.

R.M.: Ok, add ten years-what were the conditions like in say 1987.

W-EL.: They got a little more sophisticated in their tactics and they got more equipment in. The technologies were more in line. They started getting stun shields, new riot equipment, new training methods. The term *Super Predators* was coming on line, working its way from the east and west coasts. They started talking about taking the weights away because men were getting too buffed up-too strong.

R.M.: And 18 years later? What is it like today?

W-EL.: Today, minor infractions are treated as harshly as possible. No longer is there any type of compromise on prison infractions. You break a rule; your punished as severely as possible. Yeah, because they want to show you that they run the joint! Today when the sort teams come, there's no

W-EL.: Their sentences were becoming increasingly longer because there was climate of get-tough-on-crime in the country. That's right? Matter of fact, it was at this time when the prison boom started. It was almost like they had a crystal ball. It was almost like the *powers-that-be* knew they were going to need these jails.

R.M.: How about the DOC system? How did it change to accommodate the great influx of drug offenders?

W-EL.: At first they made an attempt at drug treatment inside the prisons, but due to budgetary restraints and the overwhelming influx of inmates with treatment needs, they were overwhelmed. They didn't have the resources for that. You need drug counselors and that is affected by budget restraints. Even guys with court mandates weren't getting it either because again, it came up under the lack of resources.

R.M.: Did you see more minority offenders or was it pretty well balanced?

W-EL.: No! Minorities were the overwhelming population in the prison system in America! It was almost like they had a mandate to lock up all minorities who had drug offenses or drug-related crimes. You, know, Reagan was harsh on that.

R.M.: What about disparity in the Institution of drug treatment programs? It's my understanding that since the 1980's crack epidemic, it was very difficult to get any sort of substance abuse treatment. The majority of drug users arrested on drug-related or drug induced crimes from 1986 on were minorities. Yet, the recent *crystal-meth* epidemic of the past 3-4 years which affects mostly rural whites has spurred the Indiana DOC to quickly spring up *meth* treatment programs. What do you make of this disparate treatment?

W-EL.: What's going on with that is the voting blocks. White voters, (rural white voters), know how to put together voting platforms to get treatment programs. "Whereas inner city blacks don't have that unity. If you look at the inner city, your affected by drugs everyday. A hopelessness takes over, where your representatives are not doing anything or are incapable of doing anything to bring about change. And then, When it comes to rehab clinics, it takes money. If your representatives can't get the money from other elected officials of the local state government, that compounds the problems. Then you remember, the inner city is populated by who? The inner city is populated by a majority of blacks, whereas the rural community is populated by a majority of whites. And it is usually in an area where an influential politician wants to bring dollars to the community. When children of whites start using drugs, then you have penalties going downward and treatment programs going up. When president Bush's daughter was in rehab, she got caught smuggling pills inside and instead of getting put out of the program like you or I, they said she had a sight "*pooh-pooh*"; a little relapse.

R.M.: Back in the 70's, when you began your sentence, what was prison like as far as the State providing rehabilitative programs, recreation, and opportunities for early parole?

* Community-based education models: We have examples of small, charter and alternative schools that have been successful in showing us alternative means of educating our community. Community-based schools can offer education to anyone who wants it (youth and adults). Education can be free, participatory, and aimed toward sustaining the kinds of social environments we want to create. They can also model the community forms we want in their teaching practices. Our schools can tailor the learning process to the needs of the students and can involve the adult community in learning and teaching so schools are not isolated from the rest of the community.

* Community forums: Some current restorative justice models from around the world provide us with examples of how community mediation and problem solving is used to resolve conflicts and keep our communities safe. We must create a means of dealing with people who hurt each other (physically, mentally, emotionally, materially). We can establish community forums to address grievances people have regarding each other and as a means of resolving those conflicts. Such formations could include community councils that mediate between individuals/groups, community elders to whom community members could go to for advice and counsel, age-, issue-, and interest-specific groups for building community ties (youth groups, artists' circles, support groups, study groups, etc.), to community-based strategies for keeping individuals community members from harming themselves or others and to provide disincentives for repeating such actions. Above all, these groups can grow from the community and their direction and scope should come from the people involved in them and whom they affect.

* Community Services: Current community-based organizations provide us with good examples of how services may be provided. We must provide services to those who have difficulty providing for themselves. Such strategies can emphasize not only taking care of those who need the most help, but finding ways to help people get through these systems and come out with both what they need and their humanity and dignity intact. These models can also include working with people who currently provide such services to design workshops, trainings, and ongoing support and resources that go beyond providing individual advocacy and services, and emphasize gaining independence from those systems.

* Medical care: Current neighborhood clinics and free clinics provide us with good examples of strategies for making free health care available to all. Such services can include basic health (preventative, check ups, acupuncture, etc.), health crises (major medical emergencies, terminal illness), dental and visual health, and mental health (both routine counseling and therapy as well as crisis care and care for the mentally disabled, etc).

Many of the strategies discussed above are already in place. They are not fantasies, but real life examples of community building and growth.

WHAT DOES ABOLITIONISM MEAN FOR ME AND WHY SHOULD I CARE?

Taking an abolitionist approach means radically shifting the way we think about providing for ourselves and living with each other. It means imagining social environments that provide all of us with basic necessities: a safe place to live, enough food, access to medical care for minds and bodies, access to information and the tools with which to understand and use that information, the resources to participate in whatever kind of economy we have, a means of expressing opinions/interests/concerns, and living free of bodily, psychological and emotional harm (both from individuals and from the state).

Can you say that you have access to all these things? Does every one in your community have that same access?

We need to start building the kinds of social environments that will provide these resources for all before we can abolish anything. We need strategies that will keep our communities whole and keep us safe, not ones that rely on punishment, caging, and bodily harm. The environments most of us live in offer us "public safety" that does not serve the entire community, but protects the interests of the state and the rich and powerful. We cannot abolish prisons if we don't have sustainable communities for people to come home to.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Abolition means that every time we oppose or try to tear something down, we need to build something sustainable in its place. We can do this by being strategic, by researching not only what the problems are, but also what resources are available. We must look not only at what the state is doing wrong, but what is already available in our communities that could provide economic and social sustainability for all, or what needs to be created and how we will create it. Each step in our organizing must be able to do this.

Being an abolitionist means taking action and putting energy into building our families, neighborhoods—all of our communities. It means creating a firm community foundation for people to come to when we finally tear down all the walls. Together we can do this, but we must believe that it is possible.

You cannot liberate yourself by non - liberatory means; you cannot elect a new set of politicians to run the same corrupt institutions - which in turn run you.

Carol Ehrlich - Socialism, Anarchism, and Feminism

because the main drug the was heroin. N you know, people weren't using heroin like they do cocaine today. During the disco era cocaine went from the back rooms to the boa rooms. It was the champagne drug of the elite. Stars and celebrities used cocaine because they could afford it. That changed a lot of things political wise.

R.M.: Long before late President Regan's *no-tolerance* drug policy crackdown, correct?

W-EL.: Yeah, yeah yeah! What happened was that the 80's hit there was a huge influx of coke into America. Prices went from say \$60,000-\$80,000 per kilo down to what it is now; say \$13,000 today. And all of this came about under the Reagan watch. If you remember, This was when Reagan signed the bill. You started hearing the term "*War on Drugs*", War on drugs ". You used to hear it occasionally but then it became everyday, War on drugs. And this was during the Iran/Contra scandal. The Contras and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, another United State financed war.

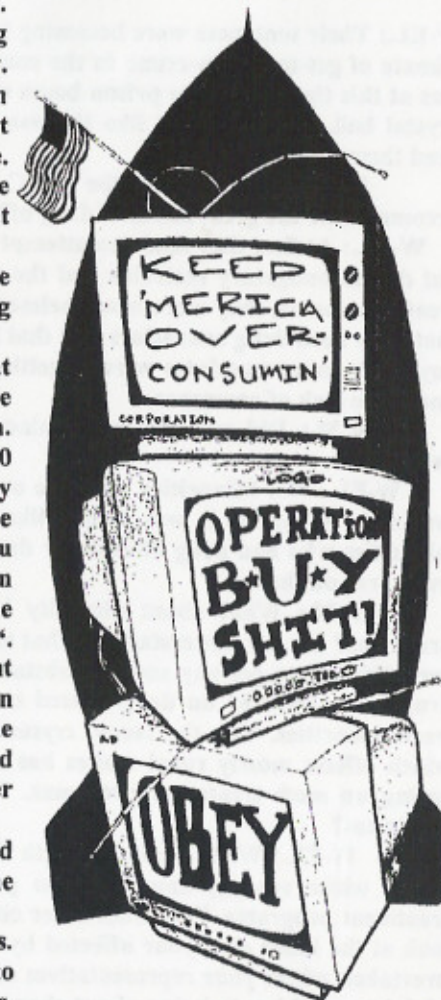
R.M.: And what changes did you see come into being following the so-called 1980's crack epidemic?

W-EL.: Oh, oh terrible changes. Weapons of introduced into neighborhoods. Assault weapons. Children killing children. Juveniles being portrayed as cold-blooded killers and needing to be locked away forever. And thus, juveniles being put into prisons with adults. Then you ha the thing called rehabilitation for juveniles. That was no longer. Then they didn't pretend any longer, [the government], and this had racial overtones because in the early 80's the crack hadn't yet hit the white neighborhoods. Gangster rap hadn't hit yet. White kids hadn't been exposed to the hard drug culture yet, but that was sure to come.

R.M.: What about newly arrived offenders; how were they different?

W-EL.: Most of the guys were young and didn't have any life experience. Most had never been out of the county they were born in. Instead of a formal education, they had what we call a *street* education.

R.M.: On the average were there sentences as long or longer than yours?



the threat of arrest and imprisonment themselves. That is why the case of Lynne Stewart continues to be deeply connected to the broader struggle for justice and the larger movement for social change-

The collective strength of the people must create deep fear in the Bush administration for it to go to such lengths to stop us from our lawful pursuits—something we must remember and seek strength from when we feel intimidated.

by Pat Levasseur

See www.lynnestewart.org for more info.

INTERVIEW WITH A LIFER

A THREE DECADE SYNOPSIS OF CORRECTIONS IN AMERICA

I met Mr. Arthur J. Williams-EL at St. Joseph County Jail in South Bend, Indiana, where he, with extraordinary patience, was being held on federal parole violation. This, despite having been incarcerated in the State of Indiana for the past 28 years. His federal parole had been discharged some sixteen years ago in 1989, yet the detainer somehow remained in his file. Despite having completed a lifer's sentence in Indiana's maximum security Indiana State Prison, he patiently waits for weeks on end for the feds to clean up their books and officially discharge him from parole.

Having a prison experience spanning almost three decades, Williams-EL has seen the evolution of corrections in America and its sad decline *post-Attica*. I recognize the rare opportunity to interview an authentic survivor of a maximum-security prison who has served well beyond what the old law termed a *life* sentence (i.e. 20 years), and herein I will present the views, opinions, feelings and outlook of a now *reformed* college graduate who will continue pursuit of his Masters degree in Political Science.

It is my hope that we can gain a sense of whether the correctional system actually works, or whether it is but an inadequate smokescreen created to pacify society and justify astronomical tax expenditures.

R.M.: So, what was your offense anyway? Did you kill anyone?

W-EL.: Bank robbery. No, I didn't kill anybody.

R.M.: Yet in Indiana, isn't it true that under the old law, most murders were paroled after 20 years?

W-EL.: Yes

R.M.: Why didn't they grant you parole after 20 years?

W-EL.: What the DOC termed conduct. They stated, "Your conduct doesn't justify your release at this time."

R.M.: Sir, can you explain the difference in the political climate in 1977 versus that of today?

W-EL.: Yes. The political climate [back] then wasn't *lock you up and throw away the key*, as opposed to today. There was no war on drugs. There were more rehabilitation places available although less money for rehab. That's

EVOLUTION OF STRUGGLE



When I think of prison writings, I think, not of my own work, but of those I read as a teenager, years ago, which fed me and sustained me as a young revolutionary.

I think, first and foremost, of Malcolm X, who, when his autobiography was published, was no longer a prisoner, but who movingly told of his transformation from a convict called "Satan", to a clean, sober, militant, Muslim minister, and later, leading Black Nationalist. Malcolm's provocative lesson to us all came during a speech when he said: "Don't be shocked when I say I was in prison; you're **still** in prison!"

From Malcolm's autobiography, an invisible but perceptible line leads to the late Dr. Huey P. Newton's **Revolutionary Suicide**; to the late Eldridge Cleaver's **Soul on Ice**; to George Jackson's **Blood in My Eye**; to Dr. Angela Davis's **If They Come for Me in the Morning**... These works opened the eyes of a generation, brought them into the Black Liberation Movement, and opened eyes not just to the horrors and repression of prison, but to the illusion of Black Freedom on the other side of the bars.

We must remember that the long history of African captivity on this land has lasted longer than the United States has existed. Ghettos and other places of poverty are virtual open air prisons, where people walk streets of fear (either from racist cops or from unconscious youth.) Americans claim the freedom to travel, but Driving While Black can be a capital offense. How nebulous, how ethereal is this 'freedom!'

Prison literature, therefore, performs a dual social function; it reports on repression, resistance and survival behind the walls; and it educates in forms and opens possibilities for freedom on the outside. It unites the two sides in consciousness, and illuminates the true nature of a society, as it pulls apart the curtains of its dark, hidden machinery of fear.

No one knows more about freedom, than s/he who is denied it. In America, more often than not, the quality of freedom was determined by one's Africanity. As the famed black writer, Toni Morrison, has written in her

essay, "Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination":

"Africanism is the vehicle by which the American self knows itself as not enslaved, but free; not repulsive, but desirable; not helpless, but licensed and powerful; not history-less, but historical; not damned, but innocent; not a blind accident of evolution, but a progressive fulfillment of destiny." (Morrison 52: 1993).

Morrison's exposition gives us an almost mirror-image of Americanism as freedom; and Africanism as *un*freedom. One knows what freedom is by knowing what it is not.

Similarly, the prison writer, by telling us of the hells of life in the joint, tells us of the underside of the 'free' state.

For centuries, Africans have known that when the high and mighty spoke of 'freedom', it was but words, as empty as the space between the stars and the heavens. Freedom, of course, meant 'white' freedom, and equally, Black captivity. That uniquely American hypocrisy was pinpointed by the rapier wit of English author Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, (at the time of the American Revolution) quipped: "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of [N]egroes?"

There was a time -- a long time -- when the entire South was a prison. If you were Black; and many places in the so-called 'Free North' were, at best, minimum security outposts for Africans, whether slave or 'free' -- where freedom, again, was but rhetoric.

Why, then, should it surprise us, when we look around us, today, only to find a vast Prisonhouse, where millions are chained and shackled, as politicians mouth vacuous phrases about a 'free country'?

And, in this land of prisons, the prisons aren't always the places with bars. If you were to check for the most popular books among young Black men in prison, you'd find the works of Iceberg Slim, or perhaps Terri Woods. In short, you'll find novels about hustling, about street life, about pimping and about drug-dealing. One would think that George Jackson's work would be deeply popular, but, in truth, his name is not well known among younger prisoners.

When one engages some youth on such issues, one is apt to hear the response, "Man -- I ain't trying to hear that 'Black' shit!"

The dearth of cultural, historical and resistance consciousness that one finds in prison, is but a reflection of the low level one finds in the streets. The apparent triumph of the civil rights movement (I say apparent because I believe it's more appearance than substance) has led us to this age when millions of young Blacks not only don't know their rich history of rebellion and resistance; they don't wanna know. Their eyes seek only the streets. That is their battleground, and their targets are each other.

for appeal. It will take several years for an appellate court to decide whether the FBI has the authority to demand documents and information pursuant to an NSL.

The "Sneak and Peek" searches authorized by the PATRIOT Act violate the Fourth Amendment requirement that the government must get a warrant from a judicial magistrate and give notice to conduct a search. "Sneak and Peek" searches occur when the government is able to covertly enter, search, observe, and copy documents or computer files without leaving any indication that a search had occurred. Activists are directly affected because with very little justification the government can secretly listen, search, and violate the privacy rights of law abiding people engaged in political action or organizations critical of the government.

While unrestricted spying on American citizens by the government is frightening enough, it could be argued that the PATRIOT Act's most devastating impact is on immigrant communities in the US. Without the protections of US citizenship, people are detained on secret evidence, deported and sent to secret jails anywhere in the world.

Today activists can be sure of one thing: we are being spied on. Recent reports have revealed that the National Security Agency conducts warrantless spying on Americans.

Bush authorized this surveillance to circumvent the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Congress enacted FISA in 1978 in response to wire tap abuses by the Nixon administration, which it used against its domestic opponents under the guise of conducting counterintelligence investigations.

Today, at the direction of the NSA, the FBI has amassed intelligence files on countless individuals and groups. The Pentagon has spied on peace groups and protest activities under the "TALON" program initiated in 2003 by former Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz to track possible terrorist groups and individuals. With the cooperation of local police agencies, the government has attempted to criminalize dissent, setting up and framing political activists protesting US policies.

When hundreds of people attending peaceful antiwar protests in New York City during the 2004 Republican National Convention were arrested, discovery obtained by their attorneys revealed police infiltration and lies as a basis for many of these arrests. Organizations such as the Center for Constitutional Rights and the American Civil Liberties Union have filed law suits demanding information on the illegal spying. In addition the National Lawyers Guild, the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, Greenpeace, the American Indian Movement, Catholic Peace Ministries and others have filed Freedom of Information letters. The lawyers who file these law suits, who defend activists after arrests and then visit them in jails, prisons and detention centers to protect them must be allowed to do their job free from the chilling effect of secret monitoring and

Lynne's conviction is one of the first steps towards dismantling this system. Especially at risk are unpopular defendants and those organizing against harmful government policies. If you were a successful and skilled defense attorney would you put your career and personal freedom on the line in order to zealously defend your client? Knowing Lynne Stewart, your colleague, is in prison for her zealous defense of a client in a similar situation might well impact how vigorously and forcefully you felt you could defend your client without possibly being prosecuted and jailed.

Since the Bush administration took power, we have seen an exponential growth in government secrecy, as seen in measures like the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) regulations, which permit attorney-client communications to be monitored where "reasonable suspicion exists to believe that a particular inmate may use communications with attorneys or their agents to further or facilitate acts of terrorism." Former Attorney General John Ashcroft amended restrictive Special Administrative Measures to allow for video and audio surveillance of attorneys' communications with people in federal custody. This amendment occurred secretly, without receiving a public hearing. If we are not aware of policy changes, we cannot fight them.

Secrecy in the United States government is not new. During World War I the government infringed on civil liberties by rounding up and detaining socialists, pacifists, Germans and other "suspect" groups, controlling mail, issuing a newspaper censorship code, disseminating propaganda and recruiting private citizens to act as spies. And more recently during the 1950s, 60s and 70s with COINTELPRO, the FBI and police spied on activists, particularly targeting Black and anti-war activists, which set the stage for today's unprecedented attack on our rights.

The PATRIOT Act

How does the USA PATRIOT Act affect individuals engaged in political resistance in the US? One way is through National Security Letters (NSLs). As Congress debated whether to reform or renew the PATRIOT Act, news reports revealed that 30,000 NSLs are issued by the government per year.

Rather than issue a subpoena the FBI can issue a National Security Letter without the review of a judge or magistrate. The NSL also prohibits the recipient from disclosing to any person that the FBI has sought or obtained access to information or records.

There is one constitutionally implied exception to this secrecy requirement. The recipient of an NSL letter has a right to contact his or her attorney for advice on how to proceed. On September 29, 2004, US District Court Judge Victor Merrero declared the use of such letters unconstitutional and barred their use by the FBI. However, he delayed the injunction for 90 days to allow

A few years ago, I heard from several dozen college students who were reading passages from my book, *WE WANT FREEDOM: A Life in the Black Panther Party* (South End, 2004). Almost all of them, including several graduate students, expressed surprise at the death of Black resistance they learned from the book's opening chapter; history they never knew, nor were ever taught, even in inner city schools. Many only learned about Martin Luther King, or George Washington Carver in school, but little beyond that. They received Black History Lite -- a sweet, almost deracialized history, where things were once bad, but Rev. Dr. King saved us, and our people finally got the vote.

When they read of the long, hard, and brutal freedom struggles of Black folks, and about how our people still really ain't free, they're surprised -- and angry.

Surprised at what they didn't know; angry that they weren't taught.

Meanwhile, while those destined to rule (those in college) learn about the history of Black revolutionary resistance, those who are captives, the descendants of those who fought those fierce battles for freedom, show disdain for 'Black' shit, and study, if anything, how to hustle on increasingly barren streets.

The dynamics could hardly be more dire.

Those of us who know our people's history, and who know the Power of that history, must find some way to break through to our young; to reach them. To surprise them. To anger them.

We are reminded of our brave ancestor, the revered Harriet Tubman, (a woman called 'Moses'), who, single-handedly, brought 1,000 Black souls out of slavery through the Underground Railroad.

Her response when honored for her freedom-fighting achievements are as apt now, as they were then. She replied, "I would have been able to free a thousand more slaves, if I could only have convinced them that they were slaves."

Young people, especially those in modern-day captivity, must be exposed to the works of people like Malcolm X, Dr. Huey P. Newton, Dr. Angela Y. Davis, and George Jackson.

It is their history that they must own, if only to gain a knowledge of freedom.

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

See www.mumia.org for more info.

The Books 4 Prisoners Crew carries a booklet by Mumia titled Imperial Wars. It is free to prisoners in the states we cover on request.

Books by Mumia Abu Jamal - Live from Death Row, Death Blossoms, All things Censored, Faith of Our Fathers: An Examination of the Spiritual Life of African and African-American People, We Want Freedom A Life in the Black Panther Party.

LEGAL STEPS TO FASCISM

Threats to Legal Counsel Posed by Lynne Stewart Conviction



When attorney Lynne Stewart was convicted last year on charges of aiding terrorism, the court acted out of fear, and the resulting implications for both Lynne and the legal system in which she worked so hard are indeed frightening. In charging Lynne, the government stretched her conversations with a reporter into serious, felony charges, even though not a single act of violence has ever resulted from her actions and there is no evidence of intent to cause any. Despite this, she now faces 30 years in prison. And her conviction—as well as the legal maneuvers and restrictions that made it possible—threaten to restrict legal protection within the courts.

Lynne's crime was violating "special administrative measures" she had signed by passing a press release from her client, Omar Abdel Rahman, on to a reporter. According to the SAM regulation, many sanctions could have been imposed on Lynne short of a criminal charge—including losing the right to meet with a client, a fine, or disbarment. Yet the government chose to put Lynne on trial for aiding and abetting terrorism.

Part of the work of the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee since the conviction is to show that Lynne Stewart is not a terrorist, does not condone terrorism and was arrested for doing her job. Just as important, the committee uses her case as a powerful demonstration of the dangerous and continued erosion of fundamental civil liberties for all Americans in a post-9/11 era dominated by fear and suspicion.

Attorney Client Confidentiality

The US system of justice is built around the idea that if both "sides" in a courtroom tenaciously advocate for their position, then a judge or jury can sift through the disparate versions of the facts presented and make a fair decision about whose version is correct. Defense attorneys must zealously represent their clients, and that historically includes the right to private conversation. In Lynne's case, the government eavesdropped on her conversations and restricted her access to her client.

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Artwork by William Clemons

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