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Free to prisoners

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSOURI PRISON LABOR UNION

Off The Hook



VICTIMS OF CHEAP LABOR

by Sheik Mark S. Moore El

The U.S.A has created and maintained perhaps the most consciously vicious and costly prison system in the world today. The increasingly corporate system profits greatly on the stock market through the misery of millions of Americans. In the past 25 years, our state and federal governments have spent hundreds of billions of dollars building and operating prisons designed to separate prisoners from human decency and family support, as well as deny them the physical, medical, mental, social and spiritual facilities necessary for human development and rehabilitation.

The U.S.A. teaches religion for spiritual growth and respect for every human being, but lacks in caring for the poor, the sick, the uneducated, the unemployed, and the imprisoned. The politicians of this country talk about benefits, profits, jobs, education, crime, economics, etc. All of this creates compassion for a system which supports a vile disappointment of the people's hopes. It also feeds the prison system with America's poor, oppressed, under privileged, and under educated and takes jobs from the people of the U.S.A. by sending the work abroad.

The U.S.A. lost 1.9 million manufacturing jobs over the past decade because of prison labor. The government has learned to produce more with less labor and cost. During the last decade our government has replaced brains and brawn with technology and a small amount brawn. This trend is a real danger to American prosperity because of the very small wages paid to workers in the prison industrial system doing service sector and high skill jobs.

America's prison system has become a scandal and a blot on America's international reputation. The conditions in our prisons violate numerous U.N. treaties and covenants and other international laws. State and federal legislatures have passed mandatory laws to enhance charges and impose harsher sentences.

These laws are applied with severe racial and economic bias, resulting in African-American males being ten times more likely to be incarcerated than other American males with the exception of Native Americans. The Federal Bureau of Justice statistics has calculated that 28% of black men will serve time in jail or prison in their lifetime. Although African Americans make up 13% of the nation's people, they account for 37% of this nation's arrest, 55% of those convicted, and 74% of those sentenced to prison. In this country, if one is African American and charged with a crime, it is more important to be able to afford a good, experienced trial lawyer than it is to have a "good case."

Most of the people who are filling our jails and prisons were convicted of charges with sentences not over 5 to 10 years. Incarcerating these types of criminals is costly and deadly to American society because of the effect on jobs that it will have. We the people need to establish a new relationship between society, corporation, and labor which will create prosperous, stable benefits for the people. The people do not make a profit when they have little disposable income to make adequate capital investment because jobs are very scarce where capital or labor rules.

Court decisions and legislation have given corporations all the rights; few of the responsibilities are given to the people. Privileges and protection are not available for the people from the laws of our courts, and legislative actions. Corporate laws protect heads of these corporations and they are rarely held liable for the great and small damages they cause to employees and the communities in which they operate. State and federal courts and legislatures need to revisit the concept of corporations. Corporations must be reintegrated into society, making them contributors to stability so people can be prosperous rather than oppressed by ruthless dictators of corporate policies.

Laws do not force corporations to pay a fair share of taxes that support the communities in which they operate. Corporations shift their work production out of the communities into the prison system, avoiding taxes. For this, they should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. These multinational corporations profit from the cheapest labor, cheapest working conditions, and least protection of workers.

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The Missouri Prison Labor Union Mission Statement

- The MPLU recognizes the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family and the principle that the recognition and adherence to said rights is the basis of freedom for all humans and requisite to peace in the world.
- The MPLU recognizes and believes that all prisoners are human beings as well as political prisoners and have a right to be freed from all forms of abuse, oppression, repression racism, sexism and slave labor exploitation.
- The MPLU recognizes and believes in the people having the right to govern their own lives, and to be freed from wage slavery.
- The MPLU recognizes and is founded upon the principles of liberty, equality and solidarity, and that such principles are fortified with mutual aid, free association and free cooperation.
- The MPLU recognizes and strongly supports the abolition of all prisons everywhere, the abolition of the death penalty, and the ending of the capitalist system with its false democracy.

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Off the Hook is currently undergoing many changes, including a new editorial and layout staff. Lawrence Anarchist Black Cross has formed a small working group to take responsibility for publishing the newsletter three times a year. We work in solidarity with the Missouri Prison Labor Union; however, the views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect our own.

Off the Hook has a new look, but its political intentions have not changed. We hope *Off the Hook* can expand as a forum for MPLU members' opinions, discussion, and expression, so please send your submissions to MPLU president Jerome White-Bey.

In love and solidarity,
The Off the Hook Crew



Crossroads at the Devil's Home

My name is Wilbur Lewis and I am writing in regards to the many wrongs that are being afflicted upon the offenders at this institution, especially in Administrative Segregation.

I, along with a number of other offenders, are being placed in Ad-Seg for 30 to 90 days for drinking too much water. Yes. That's right. For drinking too much! We are being given violations for drug use (Rule 11) when there are no signs of drugs in our urine samples at all. This rule is being enforced because there is a need to have more offenders in the drug class here. Each time an offender receives a violation for Rule 11, he must retake this drug class or be subject to remain in Ad-Seg. another 30-60 days.

The administration here at Crossroads is very diabolic in its treatment of the offenders in Ad-Seg. I watched the guards here tell two offenders that the only way they would move one of them was to fight. As the two offenders fought, the guards stood in front of their cell door for about 2 to 3 minutes before they sprayed the offenders with mace. This is a common practice of the administration here in Ad-Seg. All one needs to do to see that this is common practice is to view the number of Use of Force forms that are logged in this unit. When an offender talks back to a guard or shows some form of self respect by refusing to be treated like a dog, he is sent to Ad-Seg for insulting behavior or creating a disturbance. However, when an officer is mistreating an offender he is looked on by other officers as being a Good Ole Boy. How can society expect offenders to show respect for authority when the very authority that is over them is morally corrupt and very abusive? That's like putting a fox in a chicken coop and asking the fox to not eat the chickens. This criminal behavior of the administration here towards offenders not only goes against the moral fiber of society's laws but the very law of God. We must forever strive to fight this corruption with knowledge and understanding.

Sincerely,
Bilal Talib Shakur (Wilbur Lewis)
Crossroads Correctional Center
1115 East Pence Road



Duration of Placement in Ad-Seg.

March 28, 2004

In my time of incarceration, Crossroads Correctional Center routinely victimizes the whites and racial minorities by carelessly convicting the innocent, excessively punishing the guilty and arbitrarily denying them their due process in accordance with their policies. How did it ever come to this? It came as it always does: through the fierce hate harbored by the few and the complacency displayed by the rest. I pray to God for courage to take on this burden. I pray for wisdom to know what was right and for strength to overcome my own rancor. I have also filed my complaint against Crossroads Correctional Center. To any and all other inmates experiencing these same problems, it is past time to stand out and be heard. Write your complaints out and send them in.



Sincerely,
Malcolm Jackson-EI
#12011 2A-213
1115 East Pence Road
Crossroads Correctional Center
Cameron, MO. 64429

Every year an inmate
spends in prison costs tax-
payers an average of

\$22,000

www.prisonersucks.com

The Sheriff Who Issues Pink Underwear

People's Weekly World Newspaper, 2/14/04, Julia Lutsky

Meet Joe Arpaio, husband, father, grandfather and the toughest sheriff in America, as he calls himself. Elected in 1992 to run the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) in Phoenix, Ariz., the fourth largest sheriff's office in the nation, he runs a jail system which houses approximately 8,000 individuals. Many of them are there awaiting trial because they could not afford bail; those convicted are serving sentences of less than a year.

A sterling example of the prevalent "get-tough-on-crime" policies, Arpaio requires chain gang prisoners to provide thousands of dollars of free community services such as cleaning streets, painting over graffiti and burying the deceased indigent in the county's potters' field. He boasts that one of the gangs is the nation's only women's chain gang. The women often choose to serve there because it is preferable to the alternative: lockdown, where they are confined, four women to an 8- by 12-foot cell, for 23 hours a day. All prisoners on chain gangs wear black-and-white striped uniforms. Arpaio introduced this measure in 1997, as he says, to make examples of the prisoners.

Last month Sheriff Arpaio ordered the approximately 500 undocumented immigrants in his jails to register for the draft.

No coddling of criminals in Maricopa. After all, he says, jails are not country clubs. Smoking is forbidden as are coffee, salt, pepper and ketchup; reading material is monitored; there are no movies nor is any recreation provided; unrestricted television is banned. Should a prisoner need to see a nurse he or she must pay \$10 for the privilege.

Apparently because, by his own testimony, he is slightly overweight and on a restricted diet, Arpaio does his prisoners the service of restricting theirs as well: he recently cut the daily caloric intake from 3,000 to 2,500. He boasts the average prisoner meal costs the state but 20 cents; prisoners get only two of them a day. The food is often reported to be old and rotten. Small wonder: it is often surplus food. By contrast, food for the department's dogs costs \$1.15 a day per dog.

Shortly after Arpaio took office in 1993 he expanded the state's policy of housing prisoners in tents. According to former department employees, he emptied an entire floor of one jail to accomplish this. He is thus able to say, and does say, that he will always be able to house anyone picked up or condemned to his jail system. The tent cities, as they are called, oblige their over 2,000 inhabitants to live under the broiling Arizona sun year round. In the summer the temperature can reach 120 degrees. Even in the fall and winter it is close to 100 degrees during the day. At night it can become very cold.

The Maricopa County posse program has been in existence since the '30s. It is a volunteer system that provides community services such as search and rescue operations and enforcement sup-

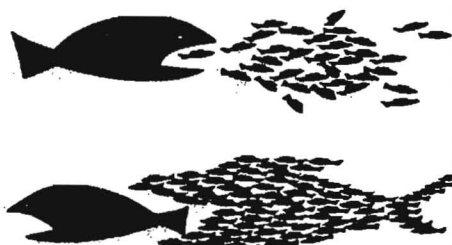
port. Or that is what it did prior to the arrival of Arpaio, who expanded the posse to 3,200 individuals. Their duties now include rounding up "deadbeat" parents, patrolling malls during holiday season and, in the county's "red light" districts, fighting prostitution. Just how these are accomplished Sheriff Arpaio does not specify. He justifies the expanded duties saying they are essentially free services to the community.

The MCSO web site (www.mcso.org) enables one to see mug shots (in full color!) and details about the arrest of anyone held in the jail system. There is a "Crime of the Week," which displays all those arrested for a particular offense. When this writer last accessed the site that offense was DUI - Driving Under the Influence (of alcohol). The viewer can pick and choose offenses and see mug shots and details on any prisoner held for that particular infringement of the law. Some of the more questionable offenses listed are "family offenses," "insurance violations," "interfere with judicial processing," "profession and occupation violations," "transportation violations," and "watercraft violations." Mug shots and details can also be obtained for particular prisoners by supplying a prisoner's booking number or name.

And one final humiliation: the sheriff requires all prisoners to wear pink underwear.

What this regime of torture accomplishes is to make this kind of treatment an acceptable part of the national get-tough-on-crime policy. Arpaio explains it in detail on the MCSO web site, bragging that it teaches wrongdoers the evil of their ways. To the prisoner who expresses dissatisfaction he says simply, "Well, don't come back." Is it any wonder that human rights groups regard his jail system as the harshest in the country?

Sheriff Arpaio is running for re-election this year with his policies as his platform. He says he welcomes suggestions from the public. You can send your comments to Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, 100 West Washington, Suite 1900, Phoenix, AZ 85003, or call 800-352-4553 (in state) or 602-256-100 (out of state). You can also submit comments online at www.mcso.org. As a start you might suggest he tender his resignation - effective immediately.



Victims continued from front page

The U.S. government has provided "corporate welfare" to corporations to promote American corporations at the expense of American societal needs. Hundreds of billions of dollars from corporate welfare clog every U.S. budget; this money should be redirected toward rebuilding the American infrastructure with American labor. If the federal and state laws were directed toward corporations rebuilding with the tax dollars of the American community, more jobs and individual prosperity and stability would be created than any amount of corporate welfare could produce.

Corporate America should recruit, train, and pay a whole new generation to do what this country does best: investing in the people, industries, and jobs of the future. Without a secure, prosperous working community, corporations grow and profit only with the support of government subsidies. These policies benefit corporations at the expense of the rest of the people by utilizing cheap labor from the prison system.

All Americans have a right to a job which will provide income for basic necessities. It's well known that the minimum wage level is long overdue for improvement. Tens of millions of Americans cannot afford even basic health care under the present cheap labor wage. Every other developed nation in the world has quality health care for every man, woman, and child. The U.S.A. is the strongest country in the world, a country that other countries look to for help, but the U.S.A. does not provide adequate health care or educational facilities.

The people need to create a special commission to study, discuss, and drastically revise laws that give corporations the authority to make policies so as to minimize the wages for cheap labor.

Sheik Mark Moore El
MPLU National Coordinator

Columbia, MO radio show airs prisoner letters

The Pirate Utopia radio show airs on KOPN 89.5 FM 2am to 5am on Saturdays.

Missouri prisoners should send letters outlining complaints, grievances, and living conditions to Pirate Utopia c/o KOPN 915 E. Broadway Columbia, MO 65201

Letters will be read on the air and concerns of the MPLU will be included.



Discrimination Against a Minority

Discrimination is a very powerful word. It gives off an essence of hatred, prejudice, and even diversity. All throughout the world, discrimination is apparent: it's so apparent that people in the world today have become accustomed to it. The big question is why is there so much prejudice, racism, and discrimination in the world. That question has been asked by many and there has never been a concrete conclusion. Allah tells us that to understand a thought, we must ponder, seek, and accept it before we will get our answer. Wouldn't the world be so easy if we did these things? Many of us have wondered what the world would be like with no discrimination in it.

Unfortunately, in the society that we live in we are faced with hatred, racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Most of us have learned over the years to turn the other cheek and walk away. However, there are some of us who act out in violence, which results in young, uneducated people who come to prison with a lot of anger built up inside of them, committing crimes in retaliation.

When the accused comes to prison, s/he is taken away from his/her family and friends and is expected to follow all the rules and regulations of the Department of Corrections. The DOC has long been known to be discriminatory against African Americans, homosexuals, and other persons who are part of a minority. So what are we to do, just stand by and let these people abuse us and control our every thought? I say no, but who I am to speak on the matter? I'm just a minority who has been discriminated against and abused ever since my arrival into the DOC. Those of us who care about our rights, dignity and self-worth don't have anyone to express our feelings to because no one will listen. But thanks to the Missouri Prison Labor Union we finally have people who care and want to assist us in our endeavors. So here we are, for all the world to see: lost, hopeless, and alone in a constant fight against discrimination. My answer to all of this is to listen to Allah; to seek, accept, understand, and let the solution come from the heavens. Surely, our Creator would not let such abuse happen if we as the children of Allah didn't have the power to stop it.

Praise to Allah!

Matthew Ritchie #1014082
1115 East Pence Road
Cameron, MO 64429-8804



Helen Woodson: The Truth Bears Repeating

Plowshares anti-war activist Helen Woodson was released from prison on March 9th, after completing an 18-year sentence for using a pneumatic jackhammer to disarm a nuclear missile silo in Missouri, mailing warning letters to officials with bullets inside, robbing a bank and burning the money. Woodson was arrested again two days later.

In keeping with her promise to report to federal probation officials within seventy-two hours of her release, Woodson entered the federal courthouse in Kansas City, Missouri, on the morning of March 11th.

Woodson describes her arrest:

"As agreed, I reported to the federal courthouse, which also houses the probation and marshal's offices. I had with me my release papers upon which I had written, 'I will not abide by these conditions,' and a plastic coffee mug filled with red enamel paint. When the guards at the lobby desk called me over, I told them I was reporting. Since it was obvious that I wouldn't get beyond them with the cup, I said, 'The government has blood on its hands,' and dumped the paint on their countertop."

Woodson was initially charged with a probation violation, namely the destruction of government property. A second charge, communicating a threat of a weapon of mass destruction, was added as a result of a phone call Woodson reportedly made following her release from prison and prior to her arrest. The maximum sentence is life in prison.

During Woodson's two days of freedom, she also allegedly mailed four letters that could be construed as making threats. She was visited by a postal inspector and told that additional charges would be brought against her based on the letters.

Woodson has indicated that she will not contest any truthful information behind these charges. In a letter dated March 28th, she writes, "I did indeed do what the charges will say, and I will show in court at my sentencing that everything I communicated is absolutely true. I wouldn't have said it if it were not."

You can send letters to:

Helen D. Woodson
#03231-045
Bates County Jail
P.O. Box 60
Butler, MO 64730

In addition to regular mail (which is opened and inspected), Woodson may also receive self-adhesive postage stamps and magazines. Newspapers and news clippings are not allowed. The "library" at the jail where Woodson is being held consists of one cardboard box full of books. Individuals can send donations of books, new or used, directly to Woodson—there is no need to order them from a publisher. For more information, contact: nukeresister@igc.org



Helen Woodson in 1984 (center)

November 11, 1984 to March 12, 2004

Following is a statement Woodson wrote prior to her release from prison.

In the Gospel of Matthew we are told, "No one can serve two masters." Today as perhaps never before in history, it is necessary for each of us to ask, "Whom do we serve?"

Whom do we serve when we name the first explosion of an atomic bomb 'Trinity'? When we call a fast-attack submarine 'Corpus Christi' (Body of Christ)? When the spires of the Air Force Academy chapel are shaped like missiles? When we possess 11,000 nuclear missiles, and our military policy is one of preemptive first strike?

Whom do we serve when the president who took his oath on a Bible leads us into a war based on lies and deception? When we explode hundreds of tons of depleted uranium shells, poisoning the air, water and soil, and inflicting sickness and death on both civilian populations and our own military personnel?

Whom do we serve when the federal courts, which begin each session by invoking God's blessing, sanction abortion, environmental destruction, capital punishment and war? When we print "In God We Trust" on the money and then use it to finance death and destruction all over the world?

Two thousand years ago, when people were asked who they served, they answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" The religious terms in which we clothe our murderous deeds cannot obfuscate the truth; we too have no king but Caesar.

A life of faith calls us to another answer, one exemplified by two saints of the early church. Leaving the Roman army, St. Martin of Tours said, "I am a soldier of Jesus Christ; it is not permissible for me to fight," and St. Maximilian, martyred for refusing military conscription, said, "I cannot do evil. I will not be a soldier of this world."

In 1984, on the feast day of St. Martin, I was one of four people who went to a Missouri missile silo to witness to that truth. In 2004, on the feast day of St. Maximilian, I am expected to report to a Missouri probation office and accept government supervision of my life and conscience. The Christian life is one of ongoing repentance in the service God, and so again, I must witness to the truth.

(This article and statement was published in the Beltane 2004 issue of the Earth First! Journal)

Prisoners and the Right to Vote

Author: Julia Lutsky

People's Weekly World Newspaper, 03/18/04

It might surprise you to learn that nearly 5 million of our citizens cannot vote. That is because they are prisoners or former prisoners. Only two states, Maine and Vermont, allow prisoners to vote. In 14 states this prohibition is for life. Offenders on parole in 32 states are denied the right to vote, as are those on probation in 28. A Dec. 2002 "Civil Rights Journal" article noted, "Given the vast racial disparities in the criminal justice system it is hardly surprising, but shocking nonetheless, to find that an estimated 13 percent of African American males are now disenfranchised." This is but a continuation of the now illegal poll tax and literacy requirements used so successfully to deny Blacks the right to vote prior to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and '60s.

The "founding fathers" granted the right to vote only to wealthy white male property owners. These constituted approximately 120,000 individuals in a population of 2 million free Americans and 1 million slaves and indentured servants. African Americans, women, the illiterate and those who did not own property could not vote. Nor could prisoners or former prisoners. That was because the tradition of "civil death" for violators of the law and their descendants, which dated to medieval Europe, was brought here with the English colonizers.

Today, more than 200 years later, this tradition alone remains: while all others have gained the right to vote, it is still denied to prisoners and ex-prisoners. Public opinion, however, largely supports returning voting rights to ex-offenders. According to the non-profit Sentencing Project, fully 80 percent of the public supports the right of ex-offenders to vote; smaller percentages, 64 percent and 62 percent respectively, support the right of probationers and those on parole to vote.

In theory, the sentence handed down after a verdict is proportional to the crime committed. The denial of the right to vote, however, is across the board, whatever the sentence. All felony offenders are denied this right (except as noted above) regardless of the crime for which they have been convicted. Offenders and ex-offenders are not consistently denied other rights: they may marry, divorce, own property and file lawsuits. Theoretically, their rights are restricted only in matters pertaining to prison security—except when it is a question of the right to vote.

It is true that while some states allow ex-offenders

to regain their voting rights, very often the offender must endure waiting periods of five to ten years before he or she may apply to regain them. In addition, the process of regaining is often cumbersome and costly. In Alabama, a pardon must be sought from the Board of Pardons, and a DNA sample must be supplied. In Mississippi, the governor must sign an executive order or a legislator must introduce a bill on behalf of a former prisoner. The bill must then pass with a two-thirds majority and be signed by the governor. Information on the number of ex-offenders who reclaim their rights following these regulations is difficult to ascertain, but one two-year study in Virginia indicated that, of 200,000 ex-felons in the state, only 404 had regained their voting rights during the period studied.

According to "The Political Consequences of Felon Disenfranchisement Laws in the United States," a paper by Christopher Uggen and Jeff Manza presented to the American Sociological Association in August 2000, even though ex-offenders would be likely to vote in smaller numbers than the general public, they would be more likely to vote Democratic since they are primarily non-white and/or poor. Their disenfranchisement, Uggen and Manza conclude, prevented Democratic control of the Senate between 1986 and 2000.

The United States is the only industrialized nation to have such draconian legislation on its books. When other nations restrict voting rights, the restrictions usually apply only to those convicted of electoral offenses or of corruption. Some nations, among them South Africa and Japan, allow prisoners to vote.

Here in the U.S., some states have begun to relax restrictions on ex-offenders: Texas, for example, has ended a two-year waiting period, Maryland has ended a lifetime ban for nonviolent repeat offenders, and New Mexico has repealed a lifetime ban. Given that public opinion favors granting ex-offenders their civil rights, we may well be moving toward the enfranchisement of all our citizens. Only this way can we work toward a government representative of all its people rather than of moneyed corporate interests.



Julia Lutsky is a reader in New York City. She can be reached at blaine.jack@prodigy.net.

Percent of African American men disenfranchised (not allowed to vote temporarily or permanently) by a felony conviction: 13.1%

Invisible Health Crisis

From the Coalition For Prisoners' Rights newsletter
Vol. 29, no. 3 March 2004

Imprisoned women are at the center of an epidemic of preventable illness, unnecessary suffering and premature death. Recent trends reflect a disturbing and dramatic increase nationwide in the number of women incarcerated. In 2002, almost 98,500 women were incarcerated in prisons alone, making up over 6.5% of the total prison population in the United States. This reflects a 592% increase among women prisoners between 1977 and 2001. Nearly two-thirds of all women in jails and prisons are women of color. They are 43% African-American and 12% Latina. An African-American woman is more than seven times as likely as a white woman to spend time behind bars.

While imprisoned, health problems often get worse for women, and prison medical services are inadequate and even harmful. Men usually have better access to specialized medical procedures such as heart surgery, which is generally unavailable to women.

As with other institutions in the U.S., the current prison system was created by men, and male-centered health care is the norm in prisons. The complexities of women's health are misunderstood by providers working in prisons.

Women's health issues tend to be more complicated than men's; women have a higher instance of tuberculosis, hepatitis B and C, HIV, high blood pressure, and asthma. Of women incarcerated in the District of Columbia, 41% are HIV positive, of those in New York state, 18%. Women prisoners in California have a 40 to 60% chance of being infected with the Hep C virus. Women also have higher rates of reproductive health problems due to untreated sexually transmitted infections, and mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression.

Even food in women's prisons is worse than in men's. Several men's prisons have salad bars, no women's prison does. California spends half as much money on women prisoners' food as on men's—\$1.25 a day versus \$2.45. California has also ended women prisoners' access to special medical diets.

A woman prisoner in "The Fire Inside" says, "The medical attention is atrociously inept. No one responds well when their medical needs are not being met."

Regular screening for breast and cervical cancer are not part of the routine annual care received by women who are incarcerated. Prisons have yet to make these routine services available to women, although their availability would prevent unnecessary illness, trauma, and even death.

Pregnancy services are also sorely lacking in prisons nationwide. 6% of women who enter jail and 5% entering prisons are pregnant at the time of entry. But less than 5% of women receive pre-natal care in jails and prisons, which includes vitamin sup-

continued on next page



Women On The Row

There were 47 women on death row in the U.S. as of December 31, 2003. These women range in age from 24 to 73. 26 (55%) are white, 15 (32%) are African-American, five (14%) are Latina, and one (2%) is Native American.

10% of the people arrested for murder are women, but women receive fewer than 2% of the death sentences handed out. A bit more than half the women sentenced to death were convicted of killing their husbands or their children. According to the *Daily Targum* of Rutgers University, one-third of the women on death row are lesbians.

Many women on death row were sexually abused before they were convicted and sentenced. Relatively few states have a death row specifically for women, so many are simply held in isolation, their lives controlled entirely by guards, usually male guards.

145 women have been sentenced to death since 1973. California and North Carolina account for 16 each. Florida and Texas each hold 15, and Ohio has 10. The other states with women sentenced to death since 1973 are Alaska, Illinois, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, Tennessee, South Carolina and Virginia.

Ten women have been executed since 1976. Nine were white, one was African-American. Two were killed in Texas, two in Florida, and one each in Arkansas, Alaska and North Carolina. Oklahoma, however, executed three women in 2001.

This was the highest number executed in one year since Virginia executed six enslaved African-American women in 1863. But Massachusetts still holds the record: fourteen women executed for witchcraft in 1692.

Continued from page 8 plements, regular screenings, and a healthy diet.

One in five of the 2.1 million people in jail and prison are mentally ill; figures are higher for women. Mental health services, like medical care, are inadequate, and many women do not trust prison therapists because of confidentiality breaches and a general lack of compassion.

In addition to medical and psychological neglect in prisons and jails in the United States, women are mistreated by others who work for the male-dominated prison industry. Women's issues are not only dismissed and misunderstood by medical providers, but also by guards and caseworkers. Women are physically and emotionally isolated from their families and children and their communities.

A woman prisoner in Chowchilla recently wrote in a letter about the attitudes of the people who work for the prison industrial complex: "They don't seem to take these living conditions seriously. They feel like you're not Human, because you're in jail. They deny you of all your human rights!"

In response to inadequate care, women are organizing to create better conditions in prisons. AIDS is the leading cause of death in U.S. prisons, and women in New York prisons have twice the rate of HIV infection than men entering prisons. The AIDS Counseling & Education Project (ACE) at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York is one of the most successful projects started by prisoners. It was founded by women prisoners to educate and counsel other prisoners and to help care for women with AIDS.

Many women create informal support groups with other prisoners, increasingly important as programming cuts continue and increase. Women in prison have proven repeatedly that they must and can support each other.

"Un ejército de voces, manos y pies/ un río de caras morenas, miradas que no piden perdón." L. Rios

Resources:

CA Coalition for Women Prisoners
1540 Market St.
Ste. 490
San Francisco, CA 94102.
Newsletter: "The Fire Inside"

Justice Now
1322 Webster St.
Suite 210
Oakland, CA 94612



All's Well in Iraq—Just Ask the Dead

Los Angeles Times April 9, 2004
Steve Lopez

Everything's OK.
Honest.

Shell-shocked wives of soldiers are racing home from ocean-side beauty salons to see if their husbands are among the latest casualties in. But there's nothing to worry about.

The Shiite uprising appears to be throwing the entire country into bloody chaos, and weary American soldiers are being ordered to extend their tours of duty. But you have some good moments and some less good moments in these kinds of enterprises, as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said. If things were spinning out of control, would President Bush be on Easter holiday at the ranch in Texas, where he was visited Thursday by members of the National Rifle Assn., Ducks Unlimited, and Pheasants Forever?

Twelve Camp Pendleton Marines have been killed in the last week, most of them in one horrific battle Tuesday. But there's no "major combat" in Iraq, the president's flack assured us even as several cities were under fire and up for grabs. It's just that a "relatively small number of extremist elements" are being pesky little insurgents.

Can you really even call it a war?

In a war, you honor the dead by greeting their return to American soil. But media, and sometimes even family members, are still banned from air bases as the bodies arrive. The White House doesn't want us to get the crazy idea that Operation Iraqi Freedom has gravediggers working overtime.

Last month, Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY.) called for an end to the ban during an antiwar vigil at the air base in Dover, Delaware. The rally was held by families of American soldiers, and Jane Bright was there. The San Fernando Valley woman's son, Sgt. Evan Ashcraft, was killed in Iraq last July. He was 24.

"I believe we have to turn over our solitary control of Iraq, get the UN and peacekeeping forces in there, and begin to remove the American footprint on this," Bright says.

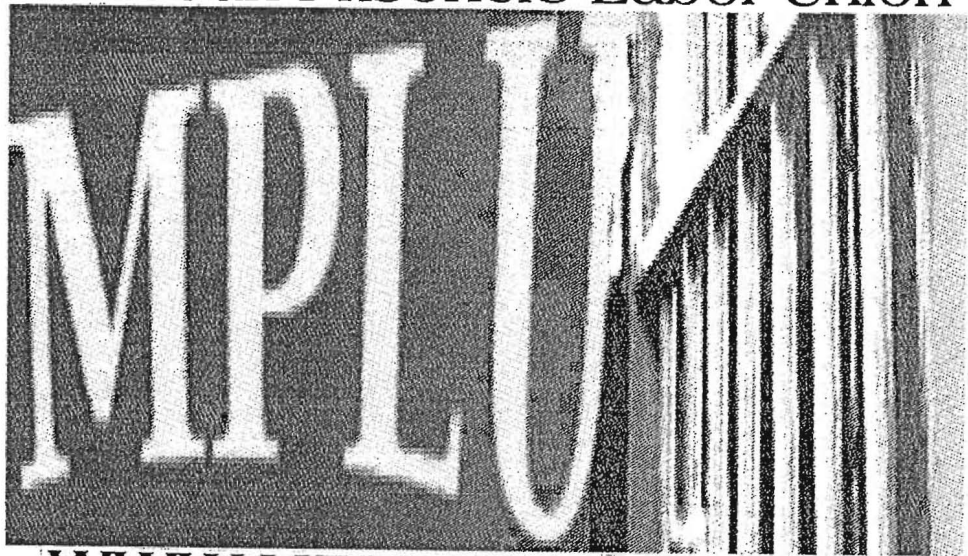
But she's well aware of the degree of difficulty, given the US alienation of allies and what she sees as an American quest to control Middle Eastern oil supplies, regardless of how many lives it costs.

She fears, in fact, that things will get much worse before they get better.

"My husband happened to say to Congressman Rangel, 'We're worried about the draft being reinstated, because I have an 18-year-old.' And Rangel said, 'The draft has already started. They're drafting reservists now. They're drafting grandfathers.'"

Continued on next page

Missouri Prisoners Labor Union



WWW.MPLU-SUPPORT.TK

Continued from last page

Reinstating the draft is an interesting idea. If national leaders are able to downplay the risk and tell us everything is proceeding just swimmingly, could it be because their loved ones aren't picking sand out of their ears and dodging rocket-propelled grenades?

The president's daughters are safe, just like Daddy was during the war of his era. (Bush and Vice President Cheney both managed to avoid any whiff of battle back in their day). And only a handful of congressional representatives have had any family member in harm's way in Iraq.

Sure, it's a volunteer army. But many who sign up do so because they aren't exactly blessed with myriad options. And soldiers serve under the assumption that they are not risking their lives on the basis of hyped threats, goosed intelligence and hidden agendas.

Go to CNN.com, Bright suggested, and look at the price of all that deception.

I clicked a few times and there it was—the roll call of fallen soldiers. The list goes on and on and on—644 American soldiers killed in the first year of a bloody campaign whose end is nowhere in sight.

You hit the "Next" button again and again, and the soldiers keep marching onto your screen. Pages and pages and pages of them. There's a small photo of each, along with hometown, age, and when and where they died.

Some are smiling. Some sport a combat pose. Some look like kids.

Among the dead, 120 were 22 or younger, and going through the list, you spot a lot of 18-year-olds.

An additional 3000 American soldiers have been injured in the war, many of them permanently disabled.

Estimates on the number of Iraqi civilians killed in the war run well into the thousands.

All Rumsfeld said was you have good moments and less good.

He didn't say which there'd be more of.

Not that I'm keeping track, but there's no weapons of mass destruction, the deadly ethnic sparring was easily predictable, we're in trouble whether we stay or go, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is more combustible than ever, and there's no telling how many new terrorists have been spawned.

No, it isn't Vietnam. It's much more dangerous than that.

But that's the cynical view.

The good news is that President Bush is resting up at the everything's OK Corral, and Condoleezza Rice assured the Sept. 11 commission that her boss "never pushed anybody to twist the facts" and create a link between Iraq and the hijacking of American airliners.

Honest.

US commanders are scrambling to determine whether they need more troops to quell the bloody uprisings, but that's probably because they don't get the White House memo assuring everyone there's no "major combat" and nothing to worry about.

Quagmire? What quagmire?

An Anarchist Captive's Thoughts Regarding Prisoner Support

(written on January 29, 1996)

While living in the belly of the beast in a Gulag cage, I watch national events moving toward their inevitable conclusion with government agendas of oppression of the working class, our class, worldwide. In my daily existence, as dismal as it is, "inside" I witness increased efforts of right wing political hate groups to spread their sickening ideological concepts of racism, sexism, fascism, authoritarian communism, every imaginable form of bigotry, all manner of hate meant to divide people, create warring factions, which can be controlled by the few for the benefit of the few, throughout the Gulag system. Gulag officials look on the right wing hate groups' Gulag propaganda with recruiting campaigns with favor in much the same way as nazis and fascists are protected by police from deserved attacks by outraged free citizens. The right wing hate groups recognize the Gulag system as a fertile ground for recruitment of Prisoners which will later prove beneficial as their numbers increase at a future time when it becomes expedient to put their sick divisive ideology into open practice.

The monsters of the earth recognize now, and have realized for decades, a potential "army in waiting" comprised of prisoners, those with absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain by the destruction of capitalism! Accordingly, tight wing hate groups in most places shower the Gulags with their poisonous literature, seek out and make prisoner contacts, and actively support prisoners deemed to value to them or suitable for the proliferation of the politics of division. Through propagandizing and supporting these chosen prisoners, the hate groups create strong, loyal Gulag power bases which eventually aids their numbers in growing outside within the free community as the prisoners are released of the groups are given free world friend and family contacts by the prisoners. The right wing hate groups actively recruit prisoners; prisoners actively recruit fellow prisoners with the seeds of the politics of hate planted in fertile ground largely ignored by the left, particularly Anarchists.

One is prompted to ask the logical question: what is the vast majority of the left doing to combat the politics of hate's successful effort at recruitment within, and from, the Gulags? What are collectives or individual Anarchists doing to neutralize the potential acceptance of the literature of hate by Prisoners starving for political knowledge and education, starving to realize the precise reasons why they are where they are? What are most Anarchists doing to provide a counter balancing effect by providing Anarchist literature to allow Prisoners a choice between opposite polarity political concepts, true equality of people via Anarchism's "from the bottom up" democracy or authoritarian control politics? Not much, nor nearly enough is being done to curtail the spread of the poison of hate. This is extremely sad because as we rest, as we filter, as we procrastinate, as hesitation is practiced instead of productive activity, as apathy reigns and compassion is absent, the monsters of the earth spread wide their tentacles and organizationally grow swiftly stronger. Through inaction, Anarchists passively buy the government's propaganda that Prisoners are nothing more than liabilities to "society," not

worth the air they breathe! The fact is, the vast majority of Prisoners are from the working class, our class! They are the working class brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends! They're from working class stock with working class blood coursing through their veins! Albeit, there are monsters in the Gulags, social predators, but the vast majority of Prisoners are locked away from society for economically based crimes, in other words, working class crimes! The only difference between these Prisoners and any person within the free community is that they were put through capitalism's judicial wringer and shaken out like freshly washed laundry within the Gulags, where they confront the real, brutal face of capitalism without the masks it hides behind when dealing with the real world!

I myself tried in vain for over a decade "inside" to make contact with like-minded people embracing Anarchist politics. I was determined to reach out and refused to give up, unlike a lot of other Prisoners around me. I reached out at every opportunity, and continued to reach out when there was no response, through many letters requesting political literature, Anarchist books, etc., but above all, comradeship with other Anarchists. My unanswered letters began in the early seventies, continued throughout the eighties, and into the early nineties. Finally a faceless clone of a guard at a Tennessee Gulag handed a first solidarity letter to me in 1992! That letter, and letters since, have been like a welcome breeze of fresh air blowing through a place where air, and live, stands forlorn! The mere fact a fellow Anarchist bothered to write brought tears to my eyes, eyes long convinced they'd never feel tearful moisture again! I've worked hard since that first communication to break down the walls between us, you and I, to reach out, to show those who write that I'm not different except for my circumstances of being within the belly of the beast!

During 25 long years inside, I've watched a sad scenario play out many times. I've watched too many times while Prisoners write to leftist, or radical, political groups seeking literature about their specific politics, Prisoners open up to learning, desiring to do their part some day, if not now, to creation open hand of friendship. Their efforts to learn were ignored because those professing to allegedly be "fighting the system" appeared to have bought into the system's propaganda proclaiming Prisoners as "un-people" not worth the effort of bothering with! It has often puzzled me how those within a political movement can struggle against a system yet seem willing to accept that same system's propaganda as "gospel". Ignored, these previously hopeful Prisoners turned in other directions to seek answers to questions with hate groups represented "inside" more than willing to accept them to their ranks with open arms. The left had capitulated, threw them away, without any effort expended while the hate mongers gained in strength by providing literature, comradeship and support. Those the left threw away, it will likely be forced to fight some day. These Prisoners were lost by default with the right wing winning easy, uncontested victories for the hearts, minds and future potential of these working class Prisoners.

I'm a captive today. However, there's an excellent chance in this era of oppression/repression that you will become tomorrow's Prisoner for any number of reasons or none

I'm a captive today. However, there's an excellent chance in this era of oppression/repression that you will become tomorrow's Prisoner for any number of reasons or none except who you are, what you are, an Anarchist! I hope not as I love you, my brothers and sister, far too much to wish you to experience what I have endured over my sixteen years in capitalism's steel and concrete cages! Stay strong and keep struggling for a better world, a borderless, nation-less, egalitarian world, an Anarchist world! Protect yourselves and other from the monsters of the earth and reach out with mutual aid to each other! And never throw away through apathy a potential you might someday miss when it is needed to save us all and make Anarchism a worldwide reality! They cannot get us all!

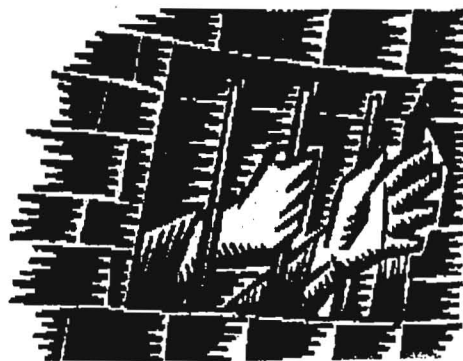
Harold H. Thompson 93992
Northwest Correctional Complex
960 State Route 212
Tiptonville, Tennessee 38079

Prison Abolition Conference August 13-15, 2004

Let's network and build support for our incarcerated brothers and sisters. We must abolish the death penalty and prisons altogether.

Down with locked down Amerika!

Contact Anthony Rayson
S. Chicago ABC Zine Distro
(708)-534-1334
PO Box 721
Homewood, IL 60430



Chattel Slavery by Jerome White-Bey

There are many people who are under the illusion that slavery was abolished in the United States after the Civil War, but unfortunately that is not the case. The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, Section 1 makes chattel legal, for it reads: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." The effect of the 13th Amendment was not to abolish slavery but to limit it to those who have been convicted of a crime. Therein lays the great conspiracy to promote chattel slavery under the guise of the United States Constitution.

The renewal of blatant slavery is very much at an all time high in this country. Many prisoners confined in American gulags fail to realize that the judiciary system is a double-edged sword, for it abolished slavery in one instant, and in the next instant it supported slavery because it legalized it for all who have been duly convicted for a crime, thus legally turning human beings into slaves of the State. In reality, very little has changed since the Civil War except that the states are less honest about their slave holding practices. The State of Missouri law mandates that each prisoner confined under the Missouri Department of Corrections shall work if s/he is physically able, which is the case in every state's established gulag system. The 13th Amendment makes it appear that when you are duly convicted of a crime and shipped off to the gulags to forced labor, it is called rehabilitation; but under the surface it is nothing more than chattel slavery!

There's a supply and demand for cheap slave labor. When one arrives at the gulags s/he finds him or herself working for private companies. These are the same private companies that refused to hire the very same people when they were in the free world. How ironic is this? We could not work for IBM, Microsoft, AT&T, or Texas Instruments for wages in society, but here in the can we are forced into slave labor by the point of the whip—the 13th Amendment.

The Missouri Prison Labor Union does not support slavery in any form, for slavery is wrong. However, if we are forced into labor, then we ask that you pay us the minimum wage. The \$7.50 per month that we are paid in the Missouri gulags is nothing close to the minimum wage.

The Prison Industrial Complex provides this chattel slavery for companies to profit directly from slave labor, because they don't have to pay wages, benefits, or provide medical care for their workers. The privatization and regimentation of prison labor is a growing reality, a reality that we can no longer overlook. A lot of money is involved in the PIC and prisoners are treated poorly,

OFF THE HOOK

abused, harassed, raped, and murdered by prison officials.

We are told that as slaves it is illegal for us to organize unions or to associate with each other in groups for any reason. Armed guards control every aspect of our lives and if one speaks out against the system, s/he becomes a marked person, a troublemaker, and a person to kill. The MPLU works with prisoners who are politically conscious and active. The work we do is dangerous, but we do this without fear for our lives or punishment because we have nothing to lose but our chains. The people have been brainwashed into thinking that slavery has been abolished in the United States, but we know it hasn't. America should be brought up on charges before the United Nations for Crimes Against Humanity, and the 13th Amendment should be abolished altogether as a violation of the laws established by the U.N. that abolished slavery.

"It is the People who have the Power, not the Power who has the People...because without US, there is no Power!"

The Truth Must Be Told

by Jerome White-Bey



The idea of solitary confinement arose in Philadelphia with the American Society of Friends (Quakers) around the end of the 18th century. Quakers were opposed to the public floggings and humiliations inflicted upon those convicted of offenses against the community. They also were opposed to the public execution of those guilty of crimes. In place of these punishments they advocated the solitary confinement of those found guilty of crimes. In this solitary confinement, the condemned would be allowed only a bible. It was thought that the guilty person could reflect upon the wrongs he or she had committed and in the process of doing so could once again become good and productive citizens.

Prisoners themselves were a response to the increasing inability of communities to exile those convicted of crimes; exile had been the means both of punishing the guilty individual and of ridding the community of his or her presence. When Great Britain lost its North American colonies, criminals were exiled to Australia which was a giant penal colony. Since those days, the concepts of prison and of solitary confinement in the United States have taken many twists and turns, none of them for the better.

The prison camp at the U. S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba exemplifies the extremes of which the prison system is capable. Guantanamo prisoners were originally confined in open air cells constructed of fencing. A full security prison is presently being constructed to house them. Some of them have already been moved to the new high security quarters, the conditions under which they live are barbaric. The position of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay is not directly comparable to that of prisoners in the United States, for those at Guantanamo have not been charged and are being held as "enemy combatants," a term devised to classify them in a way that excludes them from both national and international law. They are being held without rights,

in a foreign land without access to their own governments, legal help, or their own families. Many do not know where they are and none knows how long he may be held. Indeed, they do not know if they will ever be tried or simply summarily taken out and shot one fine morning. They dare not dream of ever being released.

The provisions of the United States Constitution do not apply to them according to the present administration in Washington since they are not being held in the United States. The administration likewise denies that they are covered by international law, since they are not classified as prisoners of war the Geneva Convention does not apply to them. Similarly, neither the Universal Declaration of Human Rights nor the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights applies to them. They are, therefore, in a sort of legal void from which there is apparently no exit save a the discretion of the United States government.

It should not be considered strange that many prisoners confined in the United States are beginning to compare the conditions under which they live to the conditions in which the Guantanamo prisoners find themselves. All around the county prisoners and guards alike have tagged administrative segregation units with the derisive nickname Guantanamo Bay. The conditions under which prisoners confined in the United States live, lacking basic human rights, are much like those of the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.

There is a great fear among U. S. prisoners that if Washington can do this to "enemy combatants" how long will it be before they do it to anyone they choose to define as without rights at all? Isolation has driven many Guantanamo prisoners to attempt suicide, some of which, I imagine, have been successful. The same things has happened to prisoners here in the United States. The conditions under which the prisoners at Guantanamo presently live may foretell what prisoners will soon face in this country: concentration camps.

With the picture of Guantanamo fresh in your mind, consider the horrors to be found here in the separate Departments of Correction established in each jurisdiction. Together they are often referred to as the Prison Industrial Complex. Every prisoner confined anywhere within this complex has his or her own horrific story to recount.

This writer is one such prisoner. I am confined in the South Central Correctional Center, a Missouri state prison located in Licking, Missouri.

Within the prison I have been unjustly confined in administrative segregation.

Those of us confined in administrative segregation units ("ad-seg" units or simply "the hole") here as elsewhere are subject to conditions similar if not identical to those suffered in the Guantanamo prison camp. The single difference is that we are told we have civil rights and constitutional protections. If truth be told, unless one has money, one has no rights at all. If I had money, I would not be confined here as I am. Prisoners in the United States are being confined for years alone in tiny cells with minimal human contact.

We may be removed from our cells at any time for any reason. When this happens, we are ordered to "cuff up." Translated, this means that we must turn around facing the back of the cell, place our hands behind us so that they reach

out the food port door where handcuffs are then placed on us. Once handcuffed, we are ordered to back out of the cell, whereupon two guards, one taking hold of each arm, lead us to wherever it is they are taking us. Then, since we are out of our cells, guards will enter the cells, search them and trash anything they find. They do this when we are out of our cells for any reason.

We are allowed out to "dog kennel" cages for an hour three times a week; we are allowed three ten minute showers a week. There is no recreational equipment with which to work out in the cages: no weights, no handballs, nothing at all. Each of us is issued a prison jumpsuit and a coat to wear while in the dog kennel, but nothing with which to cover our heads against the cold, the rain, or the snow. Neither are we issued gloves; the tennis shoes issued to us will not stand up to the rain or snow. Exclusive of the jumpsuit, the additional clothing to which we are entitled in our cells consists of a single pair of socks, a pair of undershorts, and a t-shirt. In short, we are half naked in our cells. The cells are very cold.

We are not permitted to order food from the prison canteen. Nor can we watch TV, listen to radios, or have educational materials of any kind. Similarly, smoking is forbidden in ad-seg units.

Food is used as a means of punishment. We are often denied food whenever the authorities are so inclined. The food trays are often waterlogged and broken. We are not allowed pepper, butter, fruit, or biscuits. These restrictions are for "security" reasons. If we are not found standing at the cell door when the food trays arrive, the guards will pass the cell without leaving the food tray. Complaints about not being served are met with mace and sometimes beatings.

Prisoners are maced and beaten on a daily basis for any small thing or for nothing at all.

Continued on next page



Notice! Notice! Notice!

There is a Russian prisoner confined in a German prison who is seeking to write a Russian prisoner who is confined here in the States. If you know a prisoner who is from Russia, contact him for the hook up:

Comrade Thomas Meyer-Falk
Schonhornstrabe 32
76646 Bruchsal Germany

"We got to work with each other on both sides of the world."

Many prisoners confined in two person ad-seg. cells become victim of assault and/or rape; the only way to escape this is to take part in what are called "gladiator" fights while guards stand outside the cell door placing bets on who the winner will be. Prisoners are forced to fight each other just to be moved to another cell. Another common practice here occurs when a prisoner, fearing for his life, refuses to enter a cell with another prisoner. The recalcitrant prisoner is then handcuffed to an iron bench for 24 hours.

Here in the hole, we are allowed one four minute telephone call a month, provided that we have "been good." We are allowed two no contact visits per month. This means that we can visit with our loved ones for an hour a month, during which time we cannot even touch their hands. At times our mail is withheld for no reason. These are some of the horrifying conditions under which we live here in the Missouri prison system's ad-seg. units.

Ad-seg. units have become the homes of prisoners who are mentally challenged; over 80% of prisoners housed in Missouri ad-seg. units are classified as mentally ill and are on some kind of psychotropic medication. The mentally ill prisoner is confined to a cell for 24 hours a day most days and 23 on others. It is obvious that his condition can only deteriorate. In addition, many prisoners classified as normal when they enter ad-seg. units find themselves mentally challenged afterwards.

Prisoners spend years in cells measuring 8' by 12' all day, every day. A great deal of this time is spent either naked or half naked. Horrifying, yes, but it gets worse. On March 18, 2004, a prison nurse and two prison guards approached the cell door of Keith Macon, #182929. Keith is classified as mentally challenged and he has been held in solitary confinement for seven years. The nurse ordered him to take some type of medication for which he had not asked, and when he refused the nurses order, both the nurse and the guards walked away.

They returned later and covered the windows of all our cell doors with paper to prevent any of us from witnessing the beating they proceeded to give Keith. He was attacked by the guards and the nurse then injected him with a drug of some kind. Mr. Paul McPheeters, Unit Manager of the ad-seg. unit here at Licking, tells us that either we take the medication or we will be forcibly medicated. It is some kind of experimental drug they are trying to force upon us; they tell us the drug is for prisoners deemed to have behavior problems. Such a definition covers every prisoner in ad-seg. They refuse to tell us the name of this behavioral control drug.

Recently I was informed by Mr. McPheeters that I have been assigned to ad-seg. for the remainder of my prison sentence. This is the equivalent of a death sentence for me; at the age of 48, it can be nothing else. (Indeed, at any age it's a death sentence!) Every prisoner confined in the ad-seg. units throughout the nation has a story to tell about the horrifying conditions which he or she is forced to undergo just to stay alive and to preserve his or her sanity. It is time to bring our struggles to the forefront by any

means necessary. The prisoners confined at Guantanamo Naval Base in Cuba and the prisoners confined here in the United States share the same struggles and the same enemies.

In struggle and solidarity, Jerome White-Bey

(In a letter dated June 3, 2004, Jerome informed the editors that he would hopefully be getting out of the hole soon.)

Emancipation Without Emancipating

review by El-Malik Amun Ra' Iuemhetep Bey

Abraham Lincoln was not the great emancipator that people have always held him to be. As a people, we tend to be fooled so easily into thinking and believing that this man had our best interests at heart. J.A. Rogers' pamphlet "The Five Negro Presidents" lists him as being of mixed race; while this may or may not be true, his history and writing show him to be an enemy to our race. In "The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln" (edited by Roy P. Basler, 9 vols. 1953-55), Abraham Lincoln was cited as saying:

I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races, that I am not, nor ever have been in favor of making voters or jurors of Negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favor of having superior position assigned to the white race.

What Lincoln did was to free slaves in Confederate held territory where he couldn't free them and to leave them in slavery in Union-held territory where he could have freed them! That is what I mean by emancipation without emancipating. Thus, January 1st, 1863, was not the so-called Blacks' Emancipation Day, nor a Day of Jubilee for the slaves, except in certain military venues and Northern cities far removed from the hurt and humiliation of Slave Row. In truth, there has never been a day in the United States of America when all the slaves could join hands and say together, "Free at last!" This is something so-called Whites (Europeans) in general, and too many so-called Blacks (Asiatics) in particular, just don't seem to understand. There has never been a day of closure for the slaves or shareholders—or the sons and daughters of the slaves and slaveholders. Here is the kicker: the real day of deliverance, December 18, 1865, the day and date nobody remembers, the day the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified, was so formal and was hedged about with so many levels of technicality that it came and went, giving life without giving notice.

St. Louis, Norfolk, Baltimore and other cities celebrate a January 1st emancipation that specifically excluded Memphis, New Orleans, and Norfolk and didn't even apply to the border states of Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Delaware. To add to the confusion, millions have created annual celebrations based on the idea that their ancestors were "freed" on January 1st, 1863, but were not informed until months later by generals and officials.

If pressed, all or almost all scholars will concede that the Proclamation didn't free the slaves on January 1st, 1863, but this information is disseminated, if it is disseminated at all, in footnotes or asides, and there is a tendency, even among the best scholars, to defend or even praise the Proclamation that didn't free anybody. This was not an oversight or an accident. This act required art, forethought, and design to draft a document that freed everybody when in fact it freed nobody! And if it is called an accident, how would one explain the same accident happening twice? For when Lincoln warned rebels in September that he would sign an emancipation in one hundred days if they didn't lay down their arms, he carefully and precisely said that he would free all slaves within any state, or *designated part of a state* in rebellion. (CW=Collected Works). Lincoln stated to his cabinet unambiguously that he intended to free "all persons held as slaves within any state" in rebellion; this was on July 22nd, 1862. This means that he decided between July 22nd and September 22nd to play a little game. It means that he knew in September what he intended to do in January. It means that he was planning in September to keep in slavery the slaves he promised to free in January.

A growing amount of evidence suggests that Lincoln's Proclamation was a tactical move designed not to emancipate the slaves but to keep as many as possible in slavery until he could mobilize support for his conservative plan to free Asiatics gradually and to ship them out of the country. What Lincoln was trying to do was to outmaneuver the real emancipators and to contain the emancipation tide, which had reached such a dangerous intensity that it threatened his ability to govern and to run the war machinery. This is no mere theory; there is indisputable evidence on this point in documents and in the testimony of reliable witnesses, including Lincoln himself. The most telling testimony comes not from twentieth-century critics but from cronies and confidantes who visited the White House and heard the words from Lincoln's mouth. There is, for example, the testimony of Judge David Davis, a Lincoln crony who visited the White House in 1862, some two months after Lincoln signed the Preliminary Proclamation, and found him working feverishly to subvert his announced plan in favor of his real plan. What was Lincoln's real plan? It was the only emancipation plan he ever had: gradual emancipation, the slower the better, with compensation to slave owners and the deportation of the emancipated. His "whole soul," Davis said, "is absorbed in his plan of remunerative emancipation, and he thinks that if Congress don't fail him, that the problem is solved..." This information can be found in the Davis Papers, November 26th, 1862, Illinois State Historical Library. It's actually called "David B. Davis to Leonard Swett, Davis Papers".

Yet, this raises another question! *What* plan of remunerative emancipation? Two months prior, Abraham Lincoln announced to the whole world that he was going to free the slaves of rebels with a stroke of the pen on January 1st. He didn't say anything about Congress not letting him down. What are we to understand by this? We are to understand, among other things, that words, especially Lincoln's words, are deceiving and that Lincoln announced his first plan as a mask to cover his real plan and his real end. What's the real end? The Proclamation was not the end designed by him, but only the means to the end, the end being the deportation of the slaves and the payment for them to their masters at least to those who were loyal. There is corroboration on this point from, of all people, Abraham Lincoln, who asked Congress in his second State of the Union message to approve not the Emancipation Proclamation but an entirely different plan, the real plan he had confided to Judge Davis, a plan that contradicted the Proclamation and called for, among other things, the *deportation*—his word—of Blacks and the racial cleansing of the United States of America (CW).

There he was, enclosed in a racial prison of his own making, trying to escape the inescapable, saying words—"We cannot escape history"—that would dishonor him and all who afterward endorsed the words without denouncing the proposal.

So, in reality, on January 1st, 1863, Abraham Lincoln re-enslaved and/or condemned to extended slavery more so-called Blacks than he ever freed. In "The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning" (edited by T.C. Pease and J.G. Randall, Vol. 1 Springfield, 1925), it records that in the spring of 1862 when Lincoln sat on the District of Columbia emancipation bill for two nights, he did so because he had promised an old Kentucky friend that he wouldn't sign the bill until the friend could leave town with two of his slaves. Lincoln wrote that he regretted that the District of Columbia slaves had been freed at once, that "it should have been for gradual emancipation," and that "now families would at once be deprived of cooks, stable boys &c and they of their protector without any provision for them".

Historians like to talk about how Lincoln said during his presidency that he never willingly put a thorn in any man's bosom. The truth is, he never stopped putting thorns in the bosoms of so-called Blacks (what we now call African-Americans or Native Americans). Historians paint this picture of how Lincoln suffered during the war, absorbing every bayonet thrust and bleeding the blood of the so-called White (European) soldiers in blue and gray. There is no evidence that he gave more than a passing thought to the ordeal of the so-called Blacks (Asiatics) in blue, not to mention the slaves condemned to slavery and death by orders he issued and didn't issue.

Harriet Tubman said that American slavery was "the next thing to hell", and slaveholder Thomas Jefferson said on one of his good days that one hour of American slavery was "Fraught with more misery than ages of that" which the European American colonists "rose in rebellion to oppose".

How can anyone defend, much less praise, a "great

"emancipator" who regretted the emancipation of a people from that hell because it would, among other things, deprive Southern European families of domestic servants "and they of their protectors"? And how can anyone fail to see that the same insensitivity characterized the man who said in the coldly phrased Proclamation that the areas in which more than five hundred thousand slaves lived "are, for the present, left precisely as if this Proclamation were not issued". Precisely.

Lincoln knew what he was doing. Not only that, he told everybody what he was doing, and everybody, or almost everybody, has refused to read and understand the words he wrote to describe what he was doing. In both the Preliminary Proclamation, and in a quotation in the final Proclamation, Lincoln said in the sentence that the slaves in designated areas would be free and that the government would do nothing to repress them "in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom." How about that: "for their actual freedom".

Actual: this is the word that gives the game away. Lincoln said he was giving the slaves freedom, and that the government would not repress them if they decided to run away and *actually* free themselves.

These are excerpts... more is forthcoming, but for a full reading, see author Lerone Bennett, Jr.'s "Forced Into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream".

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