

OHIO CONTROL UNIT MONITORING PROGRAM: OUTSIDE SUPPORT AND INSIDE REPORT

We are all aware of the proliferation of the growing cancer called Control Units. National focus has been on Pelican Bay CA, Marion IL, Florence CO, and Westville IN. But it's important to realize that almost all U.S. gulags have control units - usually titled "administrative control", "administrative segregation", or "local control". All are isolation blocks, labelled as "administrative" for the sake of litigation - but all are definitely punitive segregation. A National Control Unit Monitoring Program has been instituted and sponsored by Dr. Corey Weinstein and Bonnie Kerness of AFSC. The Anarchist Black Cross and CURE have taken positive roles also. In Ohio, we have a group of progressives, anarchists, and activists who are building a solid political platform with the Ohio prisoners, and attempting to network into a coalition with all Ohio activists and groups. Josh MacPhee, who is attending Oberlin College, and other activists there, will be establishing contact with any Ohio prisoner who is politically and socially active. Anyone who has been the victim of control units, have friends or family who have been victimized by these units, and those criminal justice groups outside, are urged to contact: Josh MacPhee, POBox 342, Oberlin, OH 44074 to assist in monitoring human rights violations in the control units, as well as actively organizing against them and the proposed SuperMax the DOC wants to build. Prisoners will be matched up with outside activists, and eventually establish public and prisoner education programs.

The Office of Criminal Justice Services just issued a report on "The State of Crime and Criminal Justice in Ohio." Over 100,000 Ohio'ns are under a criminal sanction of prison, jail, parole, and probation. One of the most interesting aspects of this study is how the politicians claim they don't need a survey of Ohio citizens attitudes concerning crime and criminal justice. They (politicians) state that the system is soft on crime, there needs to be more prisons, and other rhetoric that all politicians are spouting following the hype of the War on Crime. Contrary to the politicians beliefs, research has indicated that key decision makers often misread citizens attitudes. Surveys in Ohio show that most Ohio'ns are favorably disposed to restitution, community service programs, and other alternatives rather than prison terms, and building more prisons. The survey shows by an 8-1 ratio that programs which emphasis preventing young people from becoming criminals are a better crime control investment than severe punishment of criminal behavior. So who are our Ohio politicians representing with all all their strict legislation and call for stiffer sentences and more prisons? They're not representing the People, and this is why we need to organize our people outside - because these are supposed to be our representatives.

If they are not in touch with the People, what is motivating them? Could it be the Service Industry within the prisons? Prisons are major industries, but aren't our politicians supposed to represent the public, not just industry? To obtain a copy of the report, write Jeffrey J. Knowles, Section Chief, Office of Criminal Justice Services, 400 East Tower St., Suite 120, Columbus, OH 43215, phone (614) 466-7782, fax (614) 466-0308 and ask for a copy of the "The State of Crime and Criminal Justice in Ohio" and learn the real story about Ohio's system. Let the politicians know they are misreading ohio citizens.

My activis gut me placed back in the control unit. Just today, two guards beat a prisoner who they suspected of having contraband (wine) in his cell. Contrary to policy and common sense, the guards had this prisoner's door opened and beat this prisoner who offered no resistance. All because they thought he had homemade wine in his cell. An offense like this supposed to be dealt with by writing a conduct report up on the prisoner. Guards are not supposed to open a control unit prisoner's door for a search without having that prisoner handcuffed. If force is going to be used on a prisoner a supervisor is supposed to be called, the incident videotaped, and the prisoner cuffed. It is this continuous and blatant use of unnecessary force and innappropriate supervision that was one of the 21 points brought up and agreed to be stopped when the Lucasville Brothers surrendered after the Easter 1993, 11 day uprising. So it's back to business as usual here at Southern Ohio Correctional Facility. So much for the DOC's agreement to abide by the 21 points negotiated by prisoners, prisoncrats, and civil rights attorney Nikki Schwartz. Another abuse fostered by Unit Management is the use of informants and prisoner collaborators to set up and entrap prisoners. One of the most blatant and notorious collaborators I've seen is a prisoner named Robert Parks, who claims to be a paralegal, then uses the information he obtains through deception to testify against prisoners on murder cases, institutional infractions, as well as against guards. SOCF prisoncrats allow him to maintain his "stable" of homosexuals around him, have consensual sex (both strictly forbidden by the prison administration), deal drugs, and violate prison rules and state law. He actually orders the Chief Investigator not to perform uranalysis tests on his "stable" and associates. In exchange, he works with him to set up prisoners, while he remains infraction free. Just as we expose infiltrators in our movements outside, we must work to do the same inside. Be on the lookout for this one, as he's subject to appear at any prison at any time, as he was promised a transfer for setting me up. He's an African American, 5' 10", balding, glasses, average built, and excellent con man. he's proud to be an informant and he has from the warden all the way to the attorney general catering to his wants and needs. The National Law Journal is doing a five part series on the blatant abuses of informants and their protectors. This series is a must to read, due to the blatant and overt use of informants in Ohio who manufacture cases against others for their own benefit, both inside and outside. This is but one example of Unit Management abuse.

Even the prisoners in the Control Units and SuperMax prisons that have national focus on them are allowed radio, TV, and commissary purchases - since the long term isolation alone is reserved for special punishment. But here in Ohio we spend years in control units denied all personal property, commissary, radio, TV, etc. Commissary purchases are limited to once a month and only include paper, envelopes, ????. Ohio is breeding a hate factory in their control units, and it's time for change! Contact Josh MacPhee and organize against this disease. When prisoners are treated like animals, they'll eventually act like animals. Remember Attica, Remember Santa Fe, Remember Lucasville!!!

John Perotti
held hostage in the cesspool of Ohio