

MIDNIGHT

PRISONERS NEWS



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AND THE PRISON JUSTICE COMMITTEE

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RIKERS

PROGRESS

REPORT

Early August—Internal contradictions force the Peoples Party to disband in several blocks.

Late August—Re-organization come about in the form of the Peoples Collective. During the time of the disbandment, rap sessions, studies etc continued. Progress is still carried out and new revolutionaries are born.

Week of August 31st—Regular rap sessions are established along with classes dealing with history, politics, principles, reading, and writing in english and spanish. A law class is on the verge of being established. Talks in regards to unifying on common grounds are started with the followers of the Hon. Elijah Muhammad. The talks produce no results. Internal contradictions still plague other blocks. But the struggle for liberation hasn't been abandoned.

Early Sept (1-4) A little confusion develops over the sudden loss of certain members. Spirits fall some, then arise, brothers are still strong.

Early Sept (5th) Progress comes as classes continue. Progress is made as the Five Percenters, the Sunni Muslims, (Black) Muslims, and revolutionaries meet. Common ground for unification is found. A suggest resolution for inmates making their own rules and "policing" themselves is heard and accepted. Everyone agrees that certain conditions and activities in here must stop. A steering committee of representatives from each group, and non-members is heard, and accepted also. The brothers in the block attend this meeting. Since it is open to all. The brothers who are not members of any group do not voice any disagreements with these proposals. Talks, any action will continue tomorrow. Note: One August 28th one of this sadist dogs attacked a brother here with a black jack and a knife. The brother was not injured badly. The pig's excuse was that the brother threatened or cursed at him. And wouldn't lock in his cell. The majority of the people were locked in at the time. The situation is being dealt with through the courts, supposedly.

Sadism is also on the rise here in other ways. Many brothers are getting hands, arms, feet, and NECKS



crushed or broken by cell doors. Everyday the pigs have less and less regards for our lives and safety. We are becoming experts at dodging swift closing doors.

Even the food is getting worse. At one recent meal we had cooked cabbage, saurkraut, and onions. All cooked together in one pot. Something must definitely be done about these pigs and this place.

Oppose The Inhumane Who Oppose Humanity!
Rikers Island (Men's Detention) ARS

GAMES

Habari Gani (how are you) Brothers and sisters

I would just like to inform you about the situation here at Rikers Island A.R.S. (Block No. 4). The brothers here are really trying to hold things together even under sadistic conditions. In the block we have brothers which came from all different fractions of revolutionary parties, we had congregations of about twenty brothers at a time but in this congregation no more than five who were really down. During the past couple of months a deadly plan has been put in effect in our block. Games! Yes, games of all sorts, you know ping pong, parcheezie, decks of cards, ect. Now most brothers look at this as the system turn good all of a sudden. But once I closely observed the situation I found myself asking brothers to come down to the library with me so I could help *them* write out a writ for their case, and they tell me "Not now maybe later because I got next on the ping pong table". Young brothers are get strung out on these games. I mean like it becomes an all day thing, the same brothers every and all day playing cards instead of reading or finding some way to educate themselves. This is just one of the problem we are confronted with every day. Last week one of the brothers was put into segregation for having a large puerto Rican flag in his cell, having a flag is not against the institutional rules, but they claimed it had a piece of blanket sewn on it so the charge was destroying state property. Even though we are now down to about four really dedicated brothers we have not for one minute stop trying to educate the people. Most of the blocks population is Muslim or either five Percenter's and we do receive much respect from them. Well I'm going to end this for now but I will keep you informed on what is happening here.

Our struggle is not always hard but a definite *must!*

UHURU SASA

(freedom now)

Akie Hawaa Abdullah Hawaa

Leo Kalid Woodberry

Rikers 4 Block



I WONDER

Where does my screams go, my cries
And my yell.
Or do they linger around the depth of
this hell.
Where goes the blood the tears and
the sweet.
Or is it something just to keep this earth
wet.
Where gos my childrend who are
condition to like their pain.
And where will I find my mind when I
have gone insane.

What will be the offspring of new.
Or will they be puppets and tormented too.
If by asking these questions I seem kind
of vain.
It only because I might not be alive to
See the remains.

Rikers

THE VOICE OF AMERIKA'S PRISONERS OF WAR

What's happening out there?!
In that corrupt, lousy, filthy world.
That holds the seeds to our new dawn.
Our future

Our destiny.

Our real sweet taste of life.

Can't you hear our calls, echoing off these vast dungeon walls?

Can't you Hear our hands?

Scaratching. Sliding. Grasping.

At the slimy corruption, genocide and hate.

That covers these walls.

Unhinges our minds.

And impedes our attempts at 'escape.'

For us the traditional means of 'escape' have been removed.

The saws (the courts), the ropes (parole), the grappelling hooks (conditional release) are all beyond our grasp.

Didn't George, and the brothers at Attica, prove this to you all??

Our salvation lies with you.

Hey!! What's happening out there?!

Freedom Fighters! Guerilla Warriors! Strong Amazonian Queens!

Help us-s-s!!!

Goddamn it!!

If we can hear the sounds of battle out there.

Then I know they can hear our screams.

Riker's Island, Men's Detention (A.R.S)

Southern Outcry

Recently we have had increased correspondence from southern prisons. The following articles reflect the growing struggle there. Midnight Special primarily carries news from the New York area because our location and contacts make it possible for us to give more thorough coverage of events here than in the rest of the country. However, we try to report some of the important happenings in other areas because we realize the prison movement is not limited by state boundaries. In this one issue we are printing a special section from the South due to its importance in the whole prison struggle and because events in southern prisons are rarely reported.

raleigh, n.c.

Hail: Midnight Special

Comrades: of the Womens house of Detentions, Nassau Jail, Attica, Rahway, Rikers, ARS. Soul Dads, and the Tombs, I greet you, not as a black man above you, around you, or below you. but of your own standards, a black man who SUFFER just as you SUFFER, who go through the same torment you are forced to go through. Who is harassed just as you are. and who sleeps in rats and roach infested cells just as you are forced to do. For I just as you is also a Political Prisoner.

The infernos here are very much the same as the ones in which you are forced to Live within. So that is why i will not go too deep into how this inferno is run, but on the other hand let you know just what is happening to your Brothers here in Central Prison of Raleigh N.C., which is no more than the house of the Grand Dragon's of the Klu Klux Klanmen of North Klanlina.

First of all let me say that the brother's here in Klanlina are very much unable to unite as we would like to. The reason for this is

1. The Fascist has something like 72 (give or take one) road units in which they can keep us apart.
2. An inmate can at anytime be murdered and theres nothing any one can do about it. Because here there is a hands off law which means the Fed. can not investigate anything within this prison system unless the state ask them to do so.
3. We can not get out side help or support. The people here simply refuse to give us any help or support. Why? Most of them are very strong beleivers in the system. and we can not get close enough to them to expose this racist mad dog system to them.

"Dig"

In the year 1968 there was a riot here in this inferno which took 6 lives, all of them being inmates. (the come off) inmates gathered on the yard on the west side of this hell. They all sit down and refused to go to there cell block until they could speak with the warden of this inferno. Fascist was then called in armed and given orders to shoot. Dog was turn loose on the inmates. (Note) the inmates was defenceless. They had nothing to defend themself with. They were not rioting to start with. It was to be only a sit in. And know more. However after the dogs was turned loose on them and the shooting started they refused also to die without defending themself. So they began to make and use what ever they could find as weapons. At the end 5 inmates lie dead on the yard. 80 or more wonded some for the rest of there life. What was done.



Southern Outcry

The Governor ordered the very same system that committed those murders, to investigate them. (Brother's and Sister's if we would have been told to investigate our own crime we would not be in these inferno's today.) but they let the Fascist investigate there own crime. That is the way it is here. So you can see why I say, it is easy for brother's to come up dead and nothing be done about it.

I have been here since 1968. And do not look to ever get out alive. Just a few weeks ago my closest comrade, Joe Dell came up dead. The fascist termed his death as a heart attack. But it was far from a natural heart attack. He was only 22 years of age or was it 21 years of age. He had been beat by the fascist, maced, and had high pressure watter wholes used on him so much that it became nessasary for hem to use medication. It is through this medication that the pigs murdered comrade Joe Dell. by giving him a hot-shot That busted his heart. When every thing else they had used failed to stop him they took his Life.

Me I have only Lived through my determination, I have build the determination within my self that i will not die from the hand of a fascist. I believe this determination is what has kept me living this long. There has been several attempts to take my life so far they have all failed. I remember once the fascist brought two (2) white inmates to my cell. I was told they had know where else to house them at the time and that they would have to stay in my cell for about 45 min., and they would be moved. Now this is something these fascist do not do. And that is put a white in a cell with a black. So I knew my life was at stake. So I did the only thing I know to do. I waited for them to make there move and was ready for it. I was cut up bad. My chest and midsection looks like a crossword pusful, but I'm living and one of them is munis part of a lung or something like that. Know charges was brought against either side. Later one of the white's told me he was sorry for his part in the attemp. but when ask if he would repeat this in court he said no. Which for him was good thinking because he would have never made it as far as the court room. Neither would I. How long will I except death from the fascist? As long as I can keep my thinking one step ahead of his. Pride, determination, a strong and everlasting spirit, a long with a good sence of thinking is all that is needed. We have it brother's and sister's let's keep. And cromble these walls to the ground.

On these road camp's the inmates are forced by a fascist with a 12 gage shot gun to dig ditches, lay pip, cut rightaway, build bridges, etc. eight (8) hours a day with out pay. If he refuse to do this slave work his time can be extended. While at work if he is bitten by a snak that is poinous and he is work 50 miles from his camp and 5 miles from a hospital, he is carried to his camp first and if he is lucky enough to live long enough to get to the camp. Then the fascist will (attempt) to get him to a hospital alive. These inmates are also forced to do this work without pay, the state of Klanlina do not even give the inmates who can not afford it a toothbrush andtooth past.

After they have murdered an inmate, you know what these racist mad dogs do. They charge the inmates faimely somewhere around \$60.00 to get there son's body.

Here we are only allowed to visit for 30 min. and only two people are allowed to visit you then.

The Food, what little we get are unfit to eat, and we have to eat the same thing weekly. It is never any thing new to eat.

We shower twice a week, and get one change of clothing once a week.

We get recreation (5) five days a week. (1) One hour a day. The other two days we are made to stay in our cell. And come out only to go to chow. Many inmates do not get out then.

Many inmates here do not even know they have medication here. It is very hard to come by.

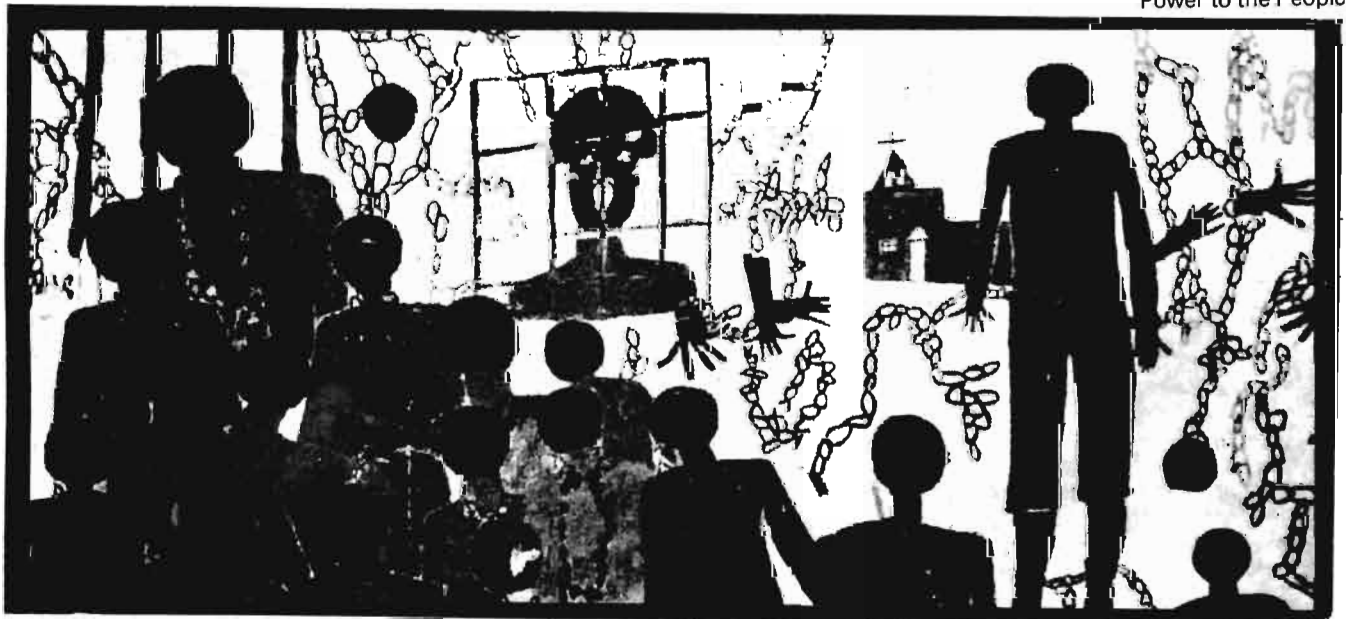
There is know cooling system here, inmates are frequently falling out in there cells from too much heat.

In 1968 4 Black inmates went blind from the effects of mace, the mad dogs here said it was from drinking paint thiner. Nothing was ever done about it, the inmates were made to serve out the rest of there time in a cell.

This is just a few of the things that are happening to the Political Prisoners here. And in this you will find just a few changes that is need here.

Im now trying to get a little thing together called the P.P.F.F., Political Prisoner's Freedom Fighter's. I hope to get out side help and support on this. We feel that getting outside suport and help will be our hardest job. But we all so feel that it will be our gratist accomplishment.

Peace: My Brothers and Sisters
Free All Political Prisoners
Power to the People



Southern Outcry

columbia, s.c.

Power To The People:
Inmates Unite Your Power!

I feel sure that I am correct in assuming that the conception of Birth is one of the most well known phenomenons of our time; since thats how the majority of us got here anyway! But in the position that I am in now everytime I think of the conception of Birth, I seem to relate it to the institutionalized Hell that I'm experiencing now. It's called Prison, but referred to as a *Correctional Institution* under the "Rehabilitation System" which you 'free people' seem to think even exist. I'm not denying that they didn't change our names from *Prisoner's* and *Convicts* to Inmates, but thats all they changed, just a damn name that has no meaning any way. And they've changed the label *Prison* to *Correctional Institution*, only because it appeals to the public, and it makes you think they are really doing something. And the official's didn't change the names and 'system', (what little they have changed), just because they're good guys, oh no, they had to change them because we the inmates died in riots, and conflicts with these pig's and it brought it to your attention. And we had to go to the extreme of taking a few Prison's Officials lives, just to get you free people attention! Until you the strong and free people get your head's together, and help us free ourselves from this racist and fascist institutionalized Hell, we have no choice but to die ourselves and take some more official's lives, and maybe we can get your attention!!!

Just as the Conception of Birth takes place in the female body, the same procedure takes place right here in this prison. But the results of this conception isn't as pleasing as the results of the woman's pregnancy, because she produces a child, and whats more beautiful than a child? The conception I'm speaking of doesn't produce a child, it produces prejudice, hatred, death mental illness and physical illness, and no one wants these inflictions lurking around inside them. We would much rather like to live in a peaceful coexistence with ourselves and others but until we correct our problems there will be no happiness among us suffering people inside these 'fucking-walls':

I'm sure no one has forgotten the suffering-hell the Black man and Black women of this country has endured, especially the Black people, they never will forget! And yet you hear these bigot-bastards say, "thats all over now", no its not over, it never will be all over. Not until you make restitution to the Black people of this country, by giving them back what was theirs anyway, until we the White people took it away.

I am a White man in a Prison in South Carolina, and I see it everyday the Black man is so fucking confused he can't even trust some of his own people, so how in the hell is he going to trust a White man? He's not. Every time a Black man finds some White dude he thinks he can trust, and is really a solid-dude, he turns his back and we slip a knife into it. Why?.....Because the prison officials induce this type of thinking and they encourage this type of thing; they figure as long as the White man is fighting the Black man and vice-versa, the inmates aren't going to have time to fight and rebel against the "system", and so therefore they can carry out their harrassment and racist actions until we the inmates just give up!

If Whites and Blacks will just forget their prejudices towards each other for a little while and UNITE as one and fight this fucking racism and fascism system, we can beat these bastards! But not divided. So please UNITE now, not tomorrow, and who knows our prejudices may just dissolve or lessen themselves by our UNITY and fighting together.

It will take a lot of fight and heart, but we can do it. I quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, ".....I once had a dream." Maybe its a dream but its up to us to make it a reality. I do not speak from the pigment of my skin, which is White, but from the Heart, and it sees no color in STRUGGLE.

Hell-Hole No. 1
1515 Gist St. CB-2
Columbia, S.C.
29202



jackson, n.c.

Southern prisoners lack the audacity and solidarity that is being exemplified by the brothers and sisters up north, but we're being moved by tides, and confrontations with real concrete conditions.

Where I'm confined is designated, Odom Correctional Institution (Prison Farm); this farm imprisons about 170 blacks and 70 whites. 24 of us Odom-blacks, out of 10,000 prisoners state-wide, went through with what supposed to have been a statewide work stoppage, though we were consequently punished. Lack of response! In any rate we have instituted a class-action civil complaint in the U.S. Eastern District Court, Raleigh, North Carolina; our complaint involves the food, living conditions and working conditions, still pending. It is not by any means practical, easy to get the dead and fearful to rise-up and stand together; so the struggle goes on, unrelenting and unending.

At present, I'm, again, confined in segregation for disrespecting a guard. But as long as it is necessary for me to take a vanguard role, the oppressors will continue to harrass and vamp on me. So I'm mentally prepared to suffer the plight of progressive struggling blackman, in service to poor oppressed people of the world, particularly black people and with emphasis upon the plight of Black Prisoners in the Territorial American Empire.

Jackson, North Carolina

Southern Outcry

atlanta, ga.

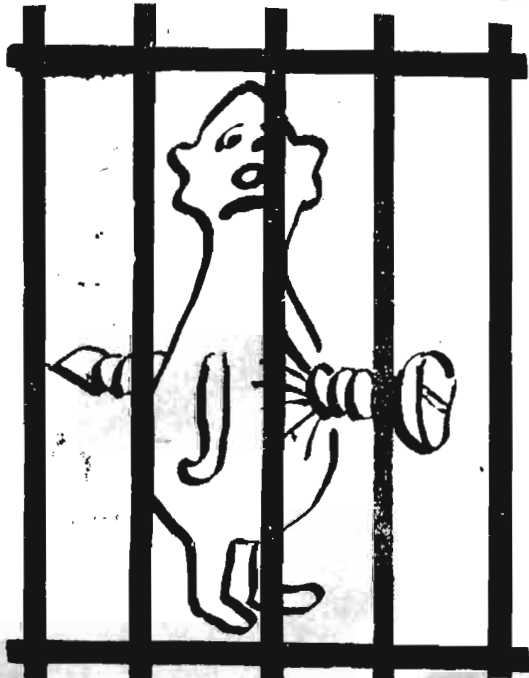
We the Members of the United Black Front (UBF) and Third World Coalition (TWC) in the United States Penitentiary, Atlanta, Ga....send greetings to all our oppressed brothers and sisters in Maximum (inside) and Minimum (outside) security.

We have designed a program of self-help rehabilitation and service to the community at large, which we feel is dynamic and will go a long way in establishing communications and dialogue between the two security. Our four (4) point program which consist generally of starting a Blood Bank to be used without cost by the Poor Black & Latin Community in Atlanta...adopting (assuming financial responsibility for) a few (3) black & Latin children. Taking our funds (monies, personal) which are on deposit with the government and depositing said monies in a black owned bank that is responsive to the community and using the interest from these funds to open and operate a people's food store, where poor blacks can purchase quality food at a nominal cost, has been endorsed nationally and by the Black Congressional Caucus. And after a silent but intense struggle (not without inmate casualties) we are being given the chance to implement the program.

Since a large percentage of the Black and Latin population here is from the New York City area, we felt that we should share this with our brothers and sisters in New York's concentration camps.

Anyone interested in knowing more about the UBF-TWC and our programs and also prison labor union (which we are also in to) please contact us...I close knowing in my heart Pamoja Tutashinda! (together we will WIN!).

Yours in the Struggle,
Keran Holmes
Robert M. Palmer
Jerry Miles
Box P.M.B.
No. 69225-158
Atlanta, Georgie
30315



In the Name of the People, I come before the people in the personage of a captured soldier struggling to be free ... as much, I sing no sad songs/seek no sympathy/and cry no tears for where the blackman is, the battlefield is. That being the case it is our *duty* as a people to qualify ourselves as soldiers by fighting the good fight, on the good foot funky, of liberation ... that our worth may meet the political—economic/and social *needs* of our people. Thus, there are those of us in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary who dare to struggle and dare to win a black victory through a black perspective that will allow us the psychological means to return to a black community as servants rather than slaves ... There are those of us in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary who dedicated ourselves to "resist to exist" for there *be's nothing* behind the walls to rehabilitate us (into what?) except the spirit of struggle which we ourselves must create/develop/and maintain from henceforth ... and there are those of us in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary who welcome the chance to lose our chains in vanguard glory as we define (or re-define) a black expression cable of eradicating the old pimp-pusher-player ideology and implementing the new servant/soldier/servant philosophy which will make a way for, prepare a place for, the theoretical and practical principles that produce love, dignity, and honor.

Let us now observe the efforts of, those here in Atlanta Federal Penitentiary that the people may *know* "we speak not to be speaking but speak to be united" ... we want to take our monies out of the hands of federal control and deposit our monies in a black bank within the community that the interest thereof may benefit the people of that community, we want "X" amount of this interest to be used in the opening and operating of a People's Store whereby the people may purchase their necessities minus labor and the middleman; we want to establish a blood bank whereby we can give our blood directly to the people in case of emergency, and we want to adopt and financially care for children of a welfare status; we also have an Emily Butler Defense Fund; we have collected over \$1,300.00 for the sister's defense so we're not just whistling dixie.

Tentatively we have other plans but first we must transfer these thoughts into acts and deeds. Unfortunately, we have got to find a civic group or congregation or business willing to struggle with us on this level (Citizen's Bank contacted us with reference to the depositing of monies but we halted the negotiation until such time as the four sisters who were fired are rehired). We had some contact with S.C.L.C. (which has fettered and floundered), thus we question the inactivity; do not these ends relate to the People's *needs*? ... is not there a party able to represent the people for the securing of these ends? In the final analysis, we, the blackmen of Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, reserve the right to ask the people and the representatives of the people; are you ready to struggle for the struggle? We desire no sad songs/no tears/and no sympathizers, we need strugglers to struggle with us that the two may be united in one cause, that the prison doors may open and we fly out or the prison doors may open and the community fly in, either/or, we, the blackmen of Atlanta Federal Penitentiary promise as servants/soldiers/servants we'll take to the battlefield first and leave last; any day is a good day for accepting the responsibility of becoming free. May we start today that we may enjoy freedom tomorrow, so come now and let us join hands and make freedom be still.

In The Name Of The People
We Remain: United Black Front
Liaison Officer
Atlanta, Ga.

For my Comrades

I came to this world seeking friends -
I came to this world seeking Love -
I came to this world seeking Understanding -
I found you

I came to this world to weep -
I came to this world to laugh -
You dried my eyes
You shared my happiness

I'm going away from this world seeking you -
I'm going away from this world seeking me -
I'm going away from this world forever with you -
Love,

Love,

Love!

Peace and Power

Attica: International Solidarity

Havana, Cuba
August, 1972

From: Union Union of North Americans Resident in Cuba
To: Our Courageous Brothers in the Imperialist Concentration Camp at Attica, New York

You, refusing to be beaten and driven like beasts, correctly analyzing the reality of your particular social, economic and political situation, exhausting all possible legal means of gaining your basic human rights, threw aside personal differences and petty personality conflicts and collectively moved in a truly revolutionary manner to oppose the fascist practices of the armed representatives of the New York prison system under which you are unjustly confined, brutalized and tortured.

We are not deceived by the lies and half-truths published and broadcast through the ruling class news media, nor by the insidious whitewashing maneuvers of the Rockefeller-appointed McKay Commission in their efforts to discredit your just struggle and minimize the political importance of your clear demands for justice and humane treatment.

The massacre of September 13, 1971, the resulting brutality, torture and murder of the inmate survivors of that massacre coupled with the creation of a new maximumi detention facility at Attica, are positive proof of the impotency of the New York prison system faced with your clear and just demands—demands which forced State Corrections Commissioner Russell Oswald to publicly admit that they were the most awesome challenge he had ever faced in a lifetime career of criminology.

It is clear that your heroic actions were not motivated by desires to escape or to take vengeance on your keepers, but rather to call public attention to the atrocious, inhuman prison conditions which govern your everyday lives.

Your conduct, discipline, courage and unswerving determination to carry your actions to their logical conclusion is admired as an example to all who struggle for justice and respect as human beings. Your sacrifices have not been in vain; they are the inevitable price demanded of all people who struggle to be free. You dared to take the initiative and your voice has been heard throughout the world.

Our Vietnamese comrades here in Cuba have met with us and send this special message to you and to the entire US prison movement:

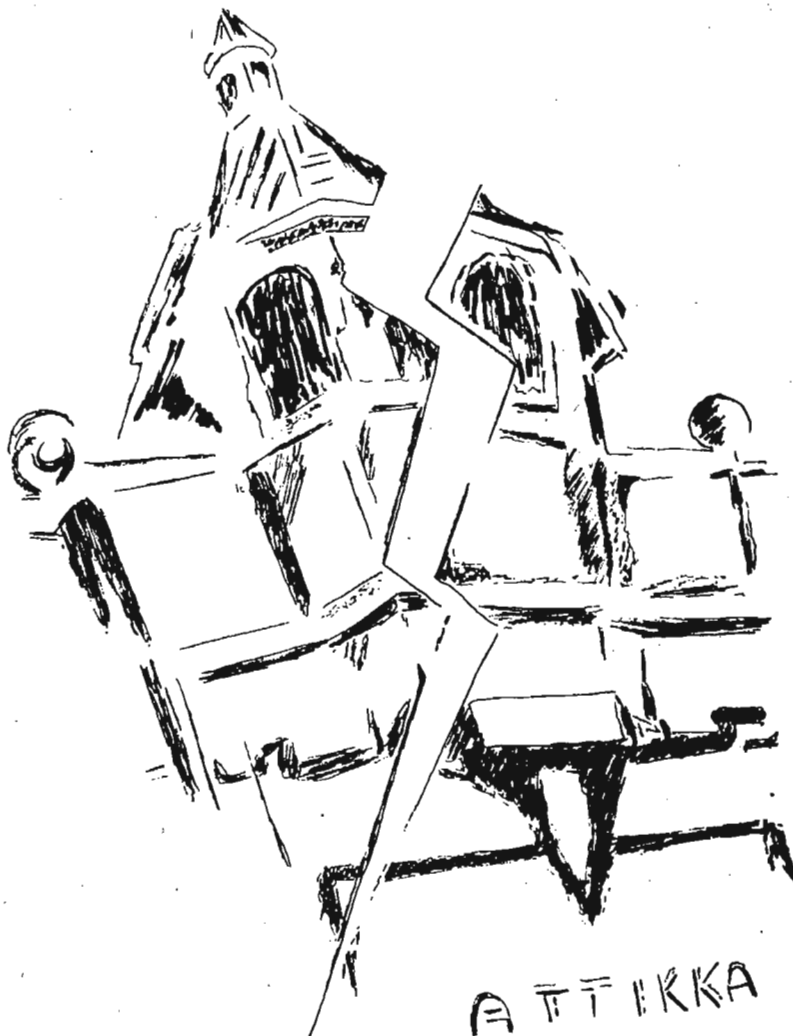
"We are indignant about the brutal prison system in the United States which we have heard and read about. George Jackson's letters from prison have deeply moved our youth. Angela's example is brilliant.

We know that there are thousands of American revolutionaries in U.S. prisons, and although we cannot express our support for them because of the US new blockade, our hearts are always with them.

We express our admiration for those Americans imprisoned for fighting against the war in Viet Nam.

In particular, we send our combative greetings to those black people in prison.

We support your struggle and are fully convinced that you will triumph together with other progressive American people.



Our victory in Viet Nam is also your victory."

We, the Union of North Americans Resident in Cuba, take the position of unconditional solidarity with all our brothers in Attica, condemning the actions of prison and law enforcement personnel in their underhanded transfer of prisoners, depriving them of legal representation and preventing them from being able to prepare adequate legal defense.

We close with a special message of hope and encouragement to the brothers in HBZ, and to brothers Frank Smith, Eric "Jomo" Thompson, and all others who were wounded or tortured.

You have written an invaluable page in the book of history which can never be erased. Hang on brothers, you are not alone. The people will avenge you.

LONG LIVE THE SPIRIT OF ATTICA!
POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

August 18, 1972

From: The Attica Brothers in "HBZ"
To: The Union of North Americans Resident in Cuba

Greetings Comrades (Brothers and Sisters),

We, the Brothers and Comrades of Attica received your message of warm solidarity and we offer our thanks to you and all those who have shown concern for us, who've sought Freedom, Justice and Humanity right here in the bowels of the beastly fascist and imperialist.

You and all those who have taken an active stand against fascism, imperialism, racism and injustice have been our impetus as you've made the concept of liberation a reality.

The people in Cuba, North Vietnam, North Korea, The People's Republic of China, The Palestinians, The Mozambicans, Angolans, and those from Guinea-Bissau are our paragons.

As many realize, the concentration camps in America are replete with the Black, Puerto Ricans, Poor and Oppressed people. But many only have a superficial view of the reasons for such deplorable settings!

We assert emphatically that the reasons stem from the socio-economic and political machinery of this country.

The unresponsiveness and insensitivity of the Mancusi-Oswald-Rockefeller-Nixon and all who think and act like them are nothing when we have people like you who are aware of a just struggle. Governor Reagan tried and failed with Sister Angela Davis in California. The Soledad Brother were extricated and Ruchell Magee continues to fight on.

Carlos Feliciano won a people's victory in the Bronx. The Harlem Four are out on bail, so we can see that there is a new tide, the tide of the people to effect humanity and liberation.

We avidly remember Fidel, Raul, Che, and all the determined and courageous people of Cuba and the death blow that they dealt Yanqui imperialism with the ouster of Batista and America's Big Business, who are the bloodsuckers of the poor.

The spirit of July 26th shall always be with us.

Tell our Vietnamese comrades that we are with them as they exert their energies to be a free people and liberate their lands from the American imperialists and their lackeys. Their efforts are justified!

We hear on the radio, read in the papers, and see on the television screen the atrocities being committed against the Vietnamese people.



There is no excuse or no way America can justify her actions against these Asiatic people who are supreme examples of freedom fighters.

Therefore all must support them.

We remain one with you and all who are striving to make this world a better place to live on.

Long Live Cuba! Long Live Vietnam!

Long Live the Spirit of Brother George Jackson and the Brothers who were murdered here by the Rockefeller and Nixon clique!

In Struggle,

The Attica Brothers in HBZ

... Y NACE EL HOMBRE NUEVO



a sister's truth

MODERN TRICKNOLOGY

Vacuum packed promises
And collapsible dreams
Devices geared to tricknology
To disguise their clever schemes

Wind up politicians
Who look like you and me
Only make token, half steppin changes
Because the best things in life ain't free

That pimpin preacher
Sermonizes "Heaven's where it's at"
And "God bless all you suckers"
Before he passes the hat

Yeh, lacency and tricknology
Is sho nuff blowin in the breeze
It'll be hard to thaw out our minds
After a 400 year deep freeze

Sisters we had best become aware
We've got to stop all this bullshit before its too late
And you can forget about asking for what's ours
Cause I hear this government's on a nation break

BALLAD OF THE FIRST OFFENDER

A succession of events
Led to a bust
A first offence
But hey being confined ain't hardly new
For I am black—born with time to do
Crime-submission to a society
Who's hustle is oppression
Sentenced to exist in a living death
Of tokenism and repression.
So now they have my body in jail
Hey, our minds have been in a captivity
From which there is no bail
Sentenced to fight a system
To lose is a fatal loss
Our children doomed to continue this struggle
Wherever we leave off.
So now they've made the bust official
And you wish to punish the "wrong" I've done
You ask do I feel I deserve a second chance?
Shit! I never got a first one!

a sister's strength



BLACK/LACK

Have you ever considered the fact
That Black without the B spells -Lack?
That's an elementary lesson we learn from one another
Cause you can't be on/without knowing the other

BLOODSHED

They're moving towards revolution out there
 They're saying the move of the vanguard is near
 And I hear voices cry "Rise now, my dear!"
 Yet still I feel vibrations of doubt and fear.
 Bloodshed! Are you ready?
 Bloodshed! Got a gun?
 Bloodshed! Will you take what's yours
 Or when it jumps off will you run?
 Are we a black people blood shy?
 It looks that way, but I can't see why
 The letting of our blood is as natural
 As the fullness of our lips
 And since all this bleeding is what's happening
 Why not to free us of these oppressive grips
 Bloodshed.
 When a nigger has a jones, and he's about to have a fit
 He'll shed as much blood as he must, pints—to get a hit
 I know what I'm speaking on. I've felt the disgrace
 And how about all them "High Noon" incidents
 Like when them dudes came through the Gold Lounge
 And blew off Watusi's face?
 Our world is a bloody one. I know what I'm talkin' about
 Remember the late 50's if you weren't in a gang jitterbuggin
 You risked getting your teeth knocked out?
 Niggers scared of bloodshed!
 Shit, that don't even sound right
 50 niggers cut up 50 other niggers
 In them bars every Friday night
 Come on mama, git up off your knees
 We speak of revolution and you go into a deep freeze
 And you out of all of us should know where it's at
 Since you woke up early that morning and found me bitten by a rat
 If all this blood shed must persist
 If this just go to be
 Why not bleed to obtain a goal
 Instead of indiscriminately?
 Besides, when the rise come to pass,
 All aggression will be spent on the enemy (at last)
 The objective will be to liberate his blood for our cause
 So why fear the approach of revolution?
 At least this way, all the blood that's shed
 WON'T

BE ALL
 YOURS



MISGUIDED AGGRESSION

Crime/being born
 Perhaps the wrong time
 Definately the wrong place
 Crime/remaining ignorant
 My mother was ashamed
 of her lovely black face
 Crime/running from the truth, submission to oppression
 And killing ourselves with drugs and in fights
 We are the prime example of misguided aggression



**We
 Are
 Not
 Alone**

a sister's truth

a sister's strength

MODERN TRICKNOLOGY

Vacuum packed promises
And collapsible dreams
Devices geared to tricknology
To disguise their clever schemes

Wind up politicians
Who look like you and me
Only make token, half steppin changes
Because the best things in life ain't free

That pimpin preacher
Sermonizes "Heaven's where it's at"
And "God bless all you suckers"
Before he passes the hat

Yeh, lacency and tricknology
Is sho nuff blowin in the breeze
It'll be hard to thaw out our minds
After a 400 year deep freeze

Sisters we had best become aware
We've got to stop all this bullshit before its too late
And you can forget about asking for what's ours
Cause I hear this government's on a nation break

BALLAD OF THE FIRST OFFENDER

A succession of events
Led to a bust
A first offence
But hey being confined ain't hardly new
For I am black—born with time to do
Crime-submission to a society
Who's hustle is oppression
Sentenced to exist in a living death
Of tokenism and repression.
So now they have my body in jail
Hey, our minds have been in a captivity
From which there is no bail
Sentenced to fight a system
To lose is a fatal loss
Our children doomed to continue this struggle
Wherever we leave off.
So now they've made the bust official
And you wish to punish the "wrong" I've done
You ask do I feel I deserve a second chance?
Shit! I never got a first one!



BLACK/LACK

Have you ever considered the fact
That Black without the B spells -Lack?
That's an elementary lesson we learn from one another
Cause you can't be on/without knowing the other

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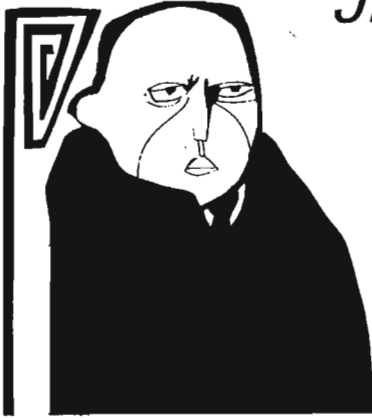
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**We
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Not
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JERSEY LEGAL REPORTS



New Jersey's response to increased nation wide recognition of prisoner's rights was to steam roll a bill through the State Legislature which drastically limits the circumstances under which an inmate can sue his keepers, even though his constitutional rights may have been violated. Under the new act, prisoners cannot sue for damages for being forced to live in rat infested, cold, dark cells; for being attacked by an inmate while a guard stands by; for being unmercifully beaten by ten guards with clubs, mace and night sticks. These are not merely hypotheticals. Inmates all over the country complain of such treatment.

The bill in question, the New Jersey Tort Claims Act, S 969, now Chapter 45, 1972, reads in part:

59:5-1. Failure to provide prison, jail or correctional facilities. Neither a public entity nor a public employee is liable [for damages] for failure to provide a prison, jail or penal or correctional facility, or if such facility is provided, for failure to provide sufficient equipment, personal or facilities in a prison or other correction facility.

59:-2. Parole or escape of prisoner; injuries between prisoners. Neither a public entity nor a public employee is liable (for damages) for:

a) an injury resulting from the parole or release of a prisoner or from the terms and conditions of his parole or release or from the revocation of his parole or release.

b) any injury caused by:

1. an escaping or escaped prisoner;
2. an escaping or escaped person; or
3. a person resisting arrest; or
4. a prisoner to any other prisoner.

50:5-3. Suits by prisoners. No action (for damages) shall be commenced by or on behalf of a prisoner against a public entity or public employee until such prisoner shall be released from institutional confinement. For the purposes of the claims notification requirements and the statute of limitations contained in chapter 8 of of this act, a prisoner's claim shall accrue upon his release from institutional confinement: provided however that a prisoner may file a notice of claim in accordance with the procedures set forth in chapter 8 at any time after an injury and nothing in this act shall bar administrative review and settlement of that claim prior to his release from institutional confinement.

This new law, therefore, permanently prevents the commencement of numerous causes of action by prisoners. On its face, sections 59:5-1 states that inmates in New Jersey may no longer sue for damages for the denial of their rights as a consequence of inadequate facilities or staff, when that denial is not a result of arbitrary treatment in a specific situation. Such a restriction will severely limit the impact of prison litigation on penal reform. For example, if applied literally, regardless of how barbaric the facilities, prisoners could not maintain class actions alleging cruel and unusual punishment and asking for damages.

Under section 59:5-2. b. 4. the state disavows its responsibility to protect those under its exclusive control. Since a prisoner cannot by law take necessary steps to protect himself as he would if he were a private citizen, he must rely on the state. This section is therefore, clearly unconscionable and specifically rejects recent New Jersey case law.

Even in cases where prisoners can sue for damages, section 59:5-3 limits that right until he is released from institutional confinement. Such a delay will have the same effect as denying prisoners the right to sue for damages under any circumstances. Some inmates will never be released; most will be released sufficiently far into the future that their ability to sustain the burden of proof will be irreparably impaired. More important, however, is that damage actions do more than compensate for past treatment. Since they hit the state directly in the budget, successful damage actions are undoubtedly one of the most effective means of curbing unconstitutional acts or omissions on the part of guards and correction department administrators. Along this line it is important to note that the Tort Claims Act was passed at a time when a growing number of courts across the country are granting damages in prison rights cases.

Probably the most devastating aspect of this act is that it unanimously passed through the legislature in less than one month without any of the legislative proponents of prisoner's rights even choosing to recognize its impact.

LOOK AT AMERICA!

Look at America! and see the planes come & go,
Look at America & see people dying by the score.
The head over the wretched mass, questing for
immortality,

Unaffected by the harsh reality.
Look at America! & see slaves in the land of
democracy,
Shackled by the fetters of hypocrisy.
The guns, gas & mental pollution,
The euphemism & rhetorical solutions.
Look at America! & see the protestors, the
multitude of marchers,
The rabid dogs unleashed, & the cattle-pod
torturers.

Look at America!
Look at America!
Look at America! & see the redneck sheriffs
who knows no shame,
They'll even kill in Jesus's name.
See the poverty in the valley, poverty in the hills,
Poverty in the cities & genocide with the pill.
Yeah, look at America,
America!
America!
America!
&
Remember
Attica!
Attica!
Attica!



RAHWAY: INMATE COMMITTEE

Sir:

It took a riot in Rahway State Prison on Thanksgiving Day in 1971 to bring at least some awareness to the tax payers of New Jersey that poor and often inhuman conditions exist in their "correctional" institutions. The horrifying reality that "rehabilitation" is a term not applicable to New Jersey's prison system and that their tax dollars are creating embittered, dangerous people who will eventually be released to their communities, shocked many concerned citizens and caused them to question their elected officials.

Governor Cahill was applauded when he called for elections to be held in the prisons so that inmates would have representatives to voice their grievances and appointed a committee of professional men to negotiate with the elected "Inmate Committee With Grievances" from Rahway State Prison. The negotiations have resulted in volumes of transcripts and many agreements with some promises by the Governor through his committee; little tangible improvements have been noted in the prisons.

Though further negotiations are desperately needed to correct the conditions within the prison system, they are not forthcoming. The Inmate Committee With Grievances is unsure that the Governor's Committee is still in existence and finds its self in a compromising position without representatives of the Governor with whom to negotiate.

The Inmate Committee With Grievances has been hampered in the performance of their duties recently by the denial of permission to hold a full council meeting. Three members of the committee, including Committee Chairman, Thomas Wooten, are being held at a new "readjustment unit" in Trenton. The reason given for denying the meeting is that the three committee members are no longer residents of Rahway State Prison. The fact that these men were elected while actually in exile at the facility in Yardville, with the sanction of Governor Cahill, seems to have been conveniently forgotten. Sadly, these methods are in keeping with the same type of oppression that led to the violence and bloodshed at Rahway State Prison in November of 1971.

There should be no attempt to fix blame for these recent inequities; all efforts should be directed toward eradicating them so that productive negotiations between the "Governor's Committee" and the "Inmate Committee With Grievances" be resumed. It is in the interest of every New Jersey resident that this be done immediately since it is agreed that the offended suffers at least as much as the offender.

Samuel Williams 46013
Vice Chairman
Inmate Committee With Grievances

joliet: black concentration camp

As a result of events at the Joliet-Stateville Prison in Illinois on June 25, 1971, 200 inmates were "confined without hearing after being discriminately singled out and branded as trouble-makers, racist agitators, organizers..." A petition was filed by 15 brothers in behalf of all black prisoners to end the barbarous treatment they were receiving. The only result was an investigation of the inmates by the FBI in May 1972. Judge Bauer on June 13, 1972 heard 'evidence' on the brutalizing conditions to which the 100 still confined were still subjected. They were denied relief in his decision and then placed in segregation. At this time "Our legal, local, and personal mails are all being suppressed by these Klu Klux Klans to deny us Blacks from communicating with the outside world—we have no chairs or stools—our cell lights were removed and placed inside of a covered ventilator which leaves us now in total darkness, being unable to read or write without nearly going Blind—we are held confined to these savage cages 24 hours a day, without any toilet articles to keep our cell clean—we are denied outdoor exercise and showers; and whenever we do go to the yard our cells are ransacked where our legal and personal properties are stolen or destroyed by these red-necked savages acting as prison guards."

DEAR GENTLEMEN AND COMRADES:

This Document is being sent to you UNDERGROUND, which is your only means of receiving it—Please DO NOT SUPPRESS the PUBLICATION or the ANNOUNCEMENT of OUR NAMES....This is why we BLACKS are SUFFERING so greatly because our names are held SECRETLY behind these MURDEROUS PRISON WALLS.

You COMRADES, may Communicate me through my ATTY. Mr. LAEL F. JOHNSON, 14th STREET & SHERIDAN ROAD, NORTH CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60064, because this the only way I will know you have written me, or have made an effort to Communicate me.

You COMRADES, have undoubtedly READ and HEARD of all the TURMOILS* UPHEAVALS* CHAOS* and SOFORTH, that has occurred here at Joliet Old Prison Concentration Camp Confinement for BLACKS ONLY....I am one of the many BLACKS confined here as a result of June 25th 1971 Dissension that occurred in the Stateville Prison Ball-Park of which Peter Bensinger, and John Twomey, CONSPIRED and tried to incite a RIOT at the Stateville Prison Ball-Park to get many BLACKS KILLED, and CONFINED as they possibly could....This Peter Bensinger, and John Twomey, the EPITHET KLU KLUX KLANS, are now in the present process of trying to MURDER certain BLACK PRISONERS, while DESTROYING the MINDS and BODIES of other BLACKS, and then converting them into ANIMALS here in this RACIST and HELLISH CONFINEMENT, which is nothing other than a "DEATH-TRAP" for US BLACKS.

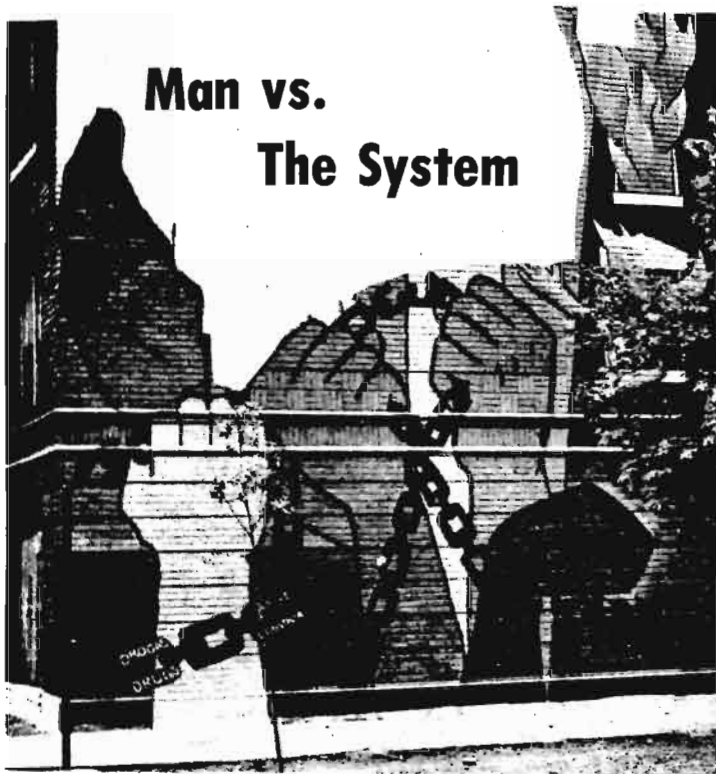
Since the DC-COURT'S decision entered on June 13th 1972, by the Grand Wizard William J. Bauer, of Chicago Richard Daley ran Federal Court Building, the hundred (100) and more BLACKS still confined, are presently being taken from their Cells since June 21st 1972, on ROW-CALL, and asked WHAT WE "NIGGERS GOT TO SAY" for ourselves, and then we are Confined to another CELL, called "SEGREGATION" which the Prison Guards were Building while Judge Bauer was prolonging the entry of his Decision from April 27th, to



"REVOLUTION IN OUR LIFETIME"

June 13th 1972....The CELLS has newly "CHICKEN-WIRE" Screens which are indeed, extremely difficult to see through while the LIGHTS has been removed from the CELLS TO INDUCE TOTAL BLINDNESS "UPON THE BLACKS". Here we BLACKS are placed in a STRIPPED-CELL with a Concrete-Block (TOMBSTONE) to sleep on without any MATTRESS, and no Personal and Legal Properties Permitted at all; and OUR ONLY means to be RELEASED, is in thirty (30) Days upon writing the "Prison Administration" a Confession Letter of an APOLOGY in Admission to whatever Commission of an ACT that they wishes to CHARGE US BLACKS WITH.... "The conditions here has now become ATROCIOUS INFERNALLY INHUMAN, SAVAGELY INARTICULATED, than ever before in HISTORY.... And this the "REPRISAL, and HEARING "ORDERED TO US BLACKS by the CONSPIRACY of that FUNKY- BEAST WILLIAM J. BAUER I

THANK YOU COMRADES SINCERELY,
Charles Thomas
48871



Man vs. The System

LNS

Steel bars imprison a Man's very heart and soul. It makes him want to fight the society that put him there. Sometimes that fight is turned inwards towards his comrade and peer. Sometimes towards his self. The greatest need on Earth is for that Man to recognize the prisoner in the next cell as his brother. To fight this society successfully takes a unity of brotherhood behind the walls. Oppression is felt deeply in prison. So deep that it rises to the surface of the skin and chills the bones as the coldness of those bars.

The shrill sound of voices clamoring against the chaotic beat of rattling spoons and clicking gates. A Prison is a grey and desolate place.....The battle ship of eternal conflict. A disorder which is often instilled in the prisoner's being. It becomes a hopeless struggle which must eventually lead to the destruction of a person, or the destruction of a facade built upon people's fears. This same feeling Prison instills-is the one often carried to the next encounter with what becomes to be known as a White Man's system.

Either a Man lets this chaos into his personal system, or he must deny each day of his existence behind bars. He becomes aware of the confused Universe where, out of consent he's designated to deny himself-or the systematic society which has little or no feeling at all. He's a rebel whose seen inhumanity from a front row seat.

There's not a school in the world which can teach more of the soul than a Prison cell. It's one step to the shit house-then one to the breakfast table. In between is nothing but loneliness which is just about the length of a day.

When the gates close for night recess-a hand reaches out....trembling. All desire is to keep the damn gates open for eternity.....to free that heart and soul to a people who only half hear-half see-half know the truth-of the great warriors within; the freedom fighters among whom nerve is greater than the policeman's bullit-whose soul is mightier than.....Or the heart became rotten as the eyes of the daily ration of potatoes, as they find their way down the throat of a walking hell.

Brooklyn House of Detention

state of the struggle

This message by brothers in Attica HBZ was read in front of the prison at the memorial held there September 13, 1972.

Prior to succumbing, the human being's natural warning system forces him to rally his remaining strength to put up a struggle. We put up such a struggle-an irrepressible struggle for survival, born out of misery and oppression which is attica. Struggle comes in many forms, keeping our loved ones well fed, clothed, healthy and secure is struggle. Aiming for equal and meaningful employment is a struggle. Aspiring to racial equality is struggle.

Now we must also struggle in another direction. We must strive for unification and place aside our petty differences, our personal grudges and human prejudices. The road is hard, but then we are not a weak people. We cannot think that the way will be a bed of roses and if we do we will still have to consider the thorns.

The events of Sept 9 thru 13th, 1971, were the results of our struggle to be recognized and accepted as human beings. And due to our mutual sufferings-being subjected to the same repressions in equal measure our unity evolved instinctively. This unity is still with us-a full year after the massacre we call "Bloody Monday." This Sept. 13th is a milestone symbolic of our belief that only is unity can we survive and move toward our universal goal of peace. We hope that this year will be everlasting in our memories; as a year of hardship, suffering, friendship and the true and sincere acceptance of each other as the real and faithful brothers we have become.

By no means is our fight over. Our struggle is endless for once we cease in our just endeavors we will become no more than what the system wants us to be. Let us formulate, establish and adopt what is needed if we are to pursue our dreams, ideals and aspirations.

Power to the People

ADVICE

You say speak of war
well we're on the front line.
You say speak of business
we're way far behind.

The sayings "Black Power", "freedom Now"
Aren't just to be worn on a pin.
Nor will just Dashiki or Afro's
help our people win.

If our revolution doesn't first take place in our minds.
We'll keep getting shit and further behind.

We'll keep on decellorating
in our deplorable status.
While steady afflicted
by this systemized sadist.

We might get a million
but they'll still be others.
So keep struggling sis
and push harder brother.

Rikers



TRAGIC MAGIC

Sisters and Brothers,

Lets prove society wrong. Lets show these un-compassionate people that we are not the dogs they would like people to believe.

Lets stop killing ourselves and loved ones with that tragic magic.

We must overcome that "White Lady" she is our destroyer.

Lets prove the theory of once a dope fiend, always a dope fiend wrong.

We must fight in order to survive and overcome all the obstacles that Amerikas society puts in our path.

It cannot and will not be done if we the people continue to do just as "they" want us to do. They would be very happy and content to have us stay just where we are, in jail or some kind of iron box.

We must be strong to fight and in order to do that we must have complete control over body and mind.

We must dig ourselves before we give in and become the living dead once again.

Remember Your Mission...

Power to the People
Rikers Island,
Womens House of Detention

UNITY OF THE OPPRESSED

RIKERS ISLAND

In times of constant strife, oppress people can ill afford to be scattered about in their own vein of individualism.

We as a whole people must unite disregarding all differences, standing together struggling and surviving as one well oiled 'Mind and Body.'

Egotism is a lonely road which can lead to silent death,

Unity is a loud unspoken weapon of positiveness for all "Third World People." A weapon that can only be challenged because of division and separation.

The political prisoners of the world (All Oppress People) whether in the acknowledged Concentration Camps or in the "Ghetto Concentration Camps" must live and practice unification throughout their daily lives.

To stray away from unity is to be without power, and without power our struggle is over before its locomotion has been gased up and set on the tracks of liberation.

Unity is the oppressed people's A-Bomb, and with it we shall blow the oppressor into the realization that oppressed people will be oppressed no more.



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MARYLAND UPDATE

The September Midnight Special [vol. 2, no. 7] carried an account of the uprising in the Maryland Penitentiary [the "Pen"].

Several of the Brothers from Maryland State Penitentiary have written us to say that the struggle there has broadened and grown in the last two months. The Administration has increased its repression. A prisoner Carlo Reddings was blasted off a high window ledge by tear gas on August 24, and this was followed by a massive attack on the Brothers in the whole south wing of the prison which had responded with outrage to Brother Carlo's fall. The administration is also vamping on the prisoners' free Commissary Program. However, the unity and strength of the Maryland Brothers seems to be increasing.

... As a result of the latest revolt against such injustice in the "Pen", myself along with fifty (50) other comrades are now being held on Maximum Security South wing of the "Pen" awaiting pending court action against many of us, charges ranging from kidnap to assault, Robbery etc.... We are now subjected to the intensified daily abuse of the pigs, who desire is to repay us for our determination to break the bonds that bound us, and to ultimately crush the Administrators and their running dogs.

The course we (those or us who have chosen to resist in a conscious matter) have taken, only bear exposure of this decadent empire and its destruction.

your comrade(s) in struggle
And Intercommunal solidarity
Love! Struggle! Power
All power to the people!

Baltimore, Maryland



PEOPLE'S VICTORY

On July 28, 1972, a jury in Brooklyn Federal court, after nine hours deliberations, awarded Jerry ("the Jew") Rosenberg \$7,500. as damages against the NYC detective who arrested him. This \$7,500., one of the largest verdicts in any jury action of this nature, was won with Jerry acting as his own lawyer in the almost two week trial before Judge Dooling, Eastern District Judge.

Jerry's main contentions, was that Detective Martin, who was a named defendant in this action, had violated his civil rights by prejudicing Jerry at the time of his surrender on the charges of homicide which is the basis of his current imprisonment, when Martin gave press statements, etc., placing Jerry at the scene of the crime and identifying Jerry as the killer. Jerry's position was that statements and other actions by Martin affected his right to a fair and impartial trial on his current conviction.

Jerry, a National Lawyer's Guild member, graduated from Blackstone College in Chicago with a law degree. He has assisted numerous other prisoners with their legal attempts to secure justice and has won some 39 cases for them, thus far. It is interesting to note that this was the first civil trial that Jerry ever has handled.

In October, Jerry will be suing five other cops in a similar civil rights action, brought in the Eastern District of New York (Brooklyn). It is hoped that all who can attend the trial, do so, and the exact appearance date will be announced.

Jerry Rosenberg was held in segregation in HBZ at Attica from September 13th, 1971 until the last week in April, 1972, when he was transferred to Sing-Sing prison. While he was being held at attica, the former warden, Mancusi, indicated that Jerry was among the "targets" for the grand jury who will indict prisoners for their alleged participation in the attica rebellion. It may be that Jerry will have to handle the trail of criminal indictments for Attica in the near future.

COUNT TIME

It is count time in the prison
yesterday i placed a mark
on the green wall where the sun
has been.
Today
the sun has come back to it.

In Vietnam
it is also count time
the dear are counted
in Asia
but there spots don't come back.

Progress is tallied
by the head count
of the dead.

California Mens Colony
San Luis Obispo, Calif.

OBSERVATIONS

The calculated speed of
a prison seagull is measured by
its flapping wing repetitions
from one tower to another.

The moon is measured in
the black sky
traveling from one window bar
to another.

On the floor i stare
watching the criss-cross patterns
of the invading sun's shadows
crawl across the cement to the wall.

California Mens Colony
San Luis Obispo, Calif.



"THE TRUTH HAS BROKEN"

The reality of truth has broken!
The dead lies, lie in state,
while mourners draw flowers,
to mourn the death of their false
hopes, grown from untruth,
to cause human brothers to die.
The reality of truth has broken!
the lies which had saddened,
have lost their cold hold
on the enmaddened masses,
no longer holding them in useless lies.
The reality of truth has broken!
The useless lies no longer hold
their sting on senseless wings.

Ohio



"I ALWAYS GO TO THE FRONT"

I always go to the front
As the Midnight Special
Saying always the true
About those yankees bestial.

I don't care wherever I go
Or where I be.
Always I go to the front,
Like the Midnight News.

Wake up my dear brother?
From that amerikkan dream,
Let put out the common wealth
To make Puerto Rico free.

That when you are free
You can live in peace?
With your brother and sisters
Like a human beings.

Now that you are young
Join the workers of america;
To defend the labors
From those gringos bestial.

Don't let nobody take your freedom!
The precious thing belong you;
So in the future you can live free
In your own wonderful home.

U.N. Bill Of Prisoner's Rights

The following is an excerpt from the UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION ON STANDARD MINIMUM RULES FOR THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS. It was adopted on August 30, 1955.

PART I. RULES OF GENERAL APPLICATION

Basic principle

6. (1) The following rules shall be applied impartially. There shall be no discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

(2) On the other hand, it is necessary to respect the religious beliefs and moral precepts of the group to which a prisoner belongs.

Separation of categories

8. The different categories of prisoners shall be kept in separate institutions or parts of institutions taking account of their sex, age, criminal record, the legal reason for their detention and the necessities of their treatment.

Accommodation

9. (1) Where sleeping accommodation is in individual cells or rooms, each prisoner shall occupy by night a cell or room by himself.

(2) Where dormitories are used, they shall be occupied by prisoners carefully selected as being suitable to associate with one another in those conditions.

10. All accommodation provided for the use of prisoners and in particular all sleeping accommodation shall meet all requirements of health, due regard being paid to climatic conditions and particularly to cubic content of air, minimum floor space, lighting, heating and ventilation.

11. In all places where prisoners are required to live or work,

(a) The windows shall be large enough to enable the prisoners to read or work by natural light, and shall be so constructed that they can allow the entrance of fresh air whether or not there is artificial ventilation;

(b) Artificial light shall be provided sufficient for the prisoners to read or work without injury to eyesight.

12. The sanitary installations shall be adequate to enable every prisoners to comply with the needs of nature when necessary and in a clean and decent manner.

13. Adequate bathing and shower installations shall be provided so that every prisoner may be enabled and required to have a bath or shower, at a temperature suitable to the climate, as frequently as necessary for general hygiene according to season and geographical region, but at least once a week in a temperate climate.

14. All parts of an institution regularly used by prisoners shall be properly maintained and kept scrupulously clean at all times.

Personal hygiene

15. Prisoners shall be required to keep their persons clean, and to this end they shall be provided with water and with such toilet articles as are necessary for health and cleanliness.

16. In order that prisoners may maintain a good appearance compatible with their self-respect, facilities shall be provided for the proper care of the hair and beard, and men shall be able to shave regularly.

Clothing and bedding

17. (1) Every prisoner who is not allowed to wear his own clothing shall be provided with an outfit of clothing suitable for the climate and adequate to keep him in good health. Such clothing shall in no manner be degrading or humiliating.

(2) All clothing shall be clean and kept in proper condition. Under clothing shall be changed and washed as often as necessary for the maintenance of hygiene.

19. Every prisoner shall, in accordance with local or national standards, be provided with a separate bed, and with separate and sufficient bedding which shall be clean when issued, kept in good order and changed often enough to ensure its cleanliness.

Food

20. (1) Every prisoner shall be provided by the administration at the usual hours with food of nutritional value adequate for health and strength, of wholesome quality and well prepared and served.

(2) Drinking water shall be available to every prisoner whenever he needs it.

Exercise and sport

21. (1) Every prisoner who is not employed in out-door work shall have at least one hour of suitable exercise in the open air daily if the weather permits.

(2) Young prisoners, and other of suitable age and physique, shall receive physical and recreational training during the period of exercise.

Medical services

22. (1) At every institution there shall be available the services of at least one qualified medical officer who should have some knowledge of psychiatry.

(2) Sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals.

(3) The services of a qualified dental officer shall be available to every prisoner.

23. (1) In women's institutions there shall be special accommodation for all necessary pre-natal and post-natal care and treatment. Arrangements shall be made wherever practicable for children to be born in a hospital outside the institution.

(2) Where nursing infants are allowed to remain in the institution with their mothers, provision shall be made for a nursery staffed by qualified persons, where the infants shall be placed when they are not in the care of their mothers.

24. The medical officer shall see and examine every prisoner as soon as possible after his admission and thereafter as necessary, with a view particularly to the discovery of physical or mental illness and the taking of all necessary measures; the segregation of prisoners suspected of infectious or contagious conditions; the noting of physical or mental defects which might hamper rehabilitation, and the determination of the physical capacity of every prisoner for work.

25. (1) The medical officer shall have the care of the physical and mental health of the prisoners and should daily see all sick prisoners, all who complain of illness, and any prisoner to whom his attention is specially directed.

(2) The medical officer shall report to the director whenever he considers that a prisoner's physical or mental health has been or will be injuriously affected by continued imprisonment or by any condition of imprisonment.

26. (1) The medical officer shall regularly inspect and advise the director upon:

- (a) The quantity, quality, preparation and service of food;
- (b) The hygiene and cleanliness of the institution and the prisoners;
- (c) The sanitation, heating, lighting and ventilation of the institution;
- (d) The suitability and cleanliness of the prisoners' clothing and bedding;

Discipline and punishment

27. Discipline and order shall be maintained with firmness, but with no more restriction than is necessary for safe custody and well-ordered community life.

28. (1) No prisoner shall be employed, in the service of the institution, in any disciplinary capacity.

(2) This rule shall not, however, impede the proper functioning of systems based on self-government, under which specified social, educational or sports activities or responsibilities are entrusted, under supervision, to prisoners who are formed into groups for the purposes of treatment.

29. The following shall always be determined by the law or by the regulation of the competent administrative authority:

- (a) Conduct constituting a disciplinary offence;
- (b) The types and duration of punishment which may be inflicted;
- (c) The authority competent to impose such punishment.

30. (1) No prisoner shall be punished except in accordance with the terms of such law or regulation, and never twice for the same offence.

(2) No prisoner shall be punished unless he has been informed of the offence alleged against him and given a proper opportunity of presenting his defence. The competent authority shall conduct a thorough examination of the case.

(3) Where necessary and practicable the prisoner shall be allowed to make his defence through an interpreter.

31. Corporal punishment, punishment by placing in a dark cell, and all cruel, inhuman or degrading punishments shall be completely prohibited as punishments for disciplinary offences.

32. (1) Punishment by close confinement or reduction of diet shall never be inflicted unless the medical officer has examined the prisoner and certified in writing that he is fit to sustain it.

(2) The same shall apply to any other punishment that may be prejudicial to the physical or mental health of a prisoner. In no case may such punishment be contrary to or depart from the principle stated in rule 31.

(3) The medical officer shall visit daily prisoners undergoing such punishments and shall advise the director if he considers the termination or alteration of the punishment necessary on grounds of physical or mental health.

Instruments of restraint

33. Instruments of restraint, such as handcuffs, chains, irons and strait-jackets, shall never be applied as a punishment. Furthermore, chains or irons shall not be used as restraints. Other instruments of restraint shall not be used except in the following circumstances:

- (a) As a precaution against escape during a transfer, provided that they shall be removed when the prisoner appears before a judicial or administrative authority;
- (b) On medical grounds by direction of the medical officer;
- (c) By order of the director, if other methods of control fail, in order to prevent a prisoner from injuring himself or others or from damaging property; in such instances the director shall at once consult the medical officer and report to the higher administrative authority.
34. The patterns and manner of use of instruments of restraint shall be decided by the central prison administration. Such instruments must not be applied for any longer time than is strictly necessary.

Information to and complaints by prisoners

35. (1) Every prisoner on admission shall be provided with written information about the regulations governing the treatment of prisoners of his category, the disciplinary requirements of the institution, the authorized methods of seeking information and making complaints, and all such other matters as are necessary to enable him to understand both his rights and his obligations and to adapt himself to the life of the institution.
- (2) If a prisoner is illiterate, the aforesaid information shall be conveyed to him orally.
36. (1) Every prisoner shall have the opportunity each week day of making requests or complaints to the director of the institution or the officer authorized to represent him.
- (2) It shall be possible to make requests or complaints to the inspector of prisons during his inspection. The prisoner shall have the opportunity to talk to the inspector or to any other inspecting officer without the director or other members of the staff being present.
- (3) Every prisoner shall be allowed to make a request or complaint, without censorship as to substance but in proper form, to the central prison administration, the judicial authority or other proper authorities through approved channels.
- (4) Unless it is evidently frivolous or groundless, every request or complaint shall be promptly dealt with and replied to without undue delay.

Contact with the outside world

37. Prisoners shall be allowed under necessary supervision to communicate with their family and reputable friends at regular intervals, both by correspondence and by receiving visits.
38. (1) Prisoners who are foreign nationals shall be allowed reasonable facilities to communicate with the diplomatic and consular representatives of the State to which they belong.
- (2) Prisoners who are nationals of States without diplomatic or consular representation in the country and refugees or stateless persons shall be allowed similar facilities to communicate with the diplomatic representative of the State which takes charge of their interests or any national or international authority whose task it is to protect such persons.
39. Prisoners shall be kept informed regularly of the more important items of news by the reading of newspapers, periodicals or special institutional publications, by hearing wireless transmissions, by lectures or by any similar means as authorized or controlled by the administration.

Books

40. Every institution shall have a library.

Religion

41. (1) If the institution contains a sufficient number of prisoners of the same religion, a qualified representative of that religion shall be appointed or approved.
- (2) A qualified representative appointed or approved under paragraph (1) shall be allowed to hold regular services and to pay pastoral visits in private to prisoners of his religion at proper times.
- (3) Access to a qualified representative of any religion shall not be refused to any prisoner. On the other hand, if any prisoner should object to a visit of any religious representative, his attitude shall be fully respected.
42. So far as practicable, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life by attending the services provided in the institution and having in his possession the books of religious observance and instruction of his denomination.

Notification of death, illness, transfer, etc.

44. (1) Upon the death or serious illness of, or serious injury to a prisoner, or his removal to an institution for the treatment of mental affections, the director shall at once inform the spouse, if the prisoner is married, or the nearest relative and shall in any event inform any other person previously designated by the prisoners.
- (2) A prisoner shall be informed at once of the death or serious illness of any near relative. In case of the critical illness of a near relative, the prisoner should be authorized, whenever circumstances allow, to go to his bedside either under escort or alone.
- (3) Every prisoner shall have the right to inform at once his family of his imprisonment or his transfer to another institution.

Removal of prisoners

45. (1) When prisoners are being removed to or from an institution, they shall be exposed to public view as little as possible, and proper safeguards shall be adopted to protect them from insult, curiosity and publicity in any form.

(2) The transport of prisoners in conveyances with inadequate ventilation or light, or in any way which would subject them to unnecessary physical hardship, shall be prohibited.

(3) The transport of prisoners shall be carried out at the expense of the administration and equal conditions shall obtain for all of them.

Institutional personnel

52. (1) In an institution for both men and women, the part of the institution set aside for women shall be under the authority of a responsible woman officer.

(2) No male member of the staff shall enter the part of the institution set aside for women unless accompanied by a woman officer.

(3) Women prisoners shall be attended and supervised only by women officers. This does not, however, preclude male members of the staff, particularly doctors and teachers, from carrying out their professional duties in institutions or parts of institutions set aside for women.

54. (1) Officers of the institutions shall not, in their relations with the prisoners, use force except in self-defence or in cases of attempted escape, or active or passive physical resistance to an order based on law or regulations. Officers who have recourse to force must use no more than is strictly necessary and must report the incident immediately to the director of the institution.

(2) Prison officers shall be given special physical training to enable them to restrain aggressive prisoners.

(3) Except in special circumstances, staff performing duties which bring them into direct contact with prisoners should not be armed. Furthermore, staff should in no circumstances be provided with arms unless they have been trained in their use.

Inspection

55. There shall be a regular inspection of penal institutions and services by qualified and experienced inspectors appointed by a competent authority. Their task shall be in particular to ensure that these institutions are administered in accordance with existing laws and regulations and with a view to bringing about the objectives of penal and correctional services.

PART II. RULES APPLICABLE TO SPECIAL CATEGORIES

A. Prisoners under sentence

Guiding principles

60. (1) The regime of the institution should seek to minimize any differences between prison life and life at liberty which tend to lessen the responsibility of the prisoners or the respect due to their dignity as human beings.

(2) Before the completion of the sentence, it is desirable that the necessary steps be taken to ensure for the prisoner a gradual return to life in society. This aim may be achieved, depending on the case, by a pre-release regime organized in the same institution or in another appropriate institution, or by release on trial under some kind of supervision which must not be entrusted to the police but should be combined with effective social aid.

61. The treatment of prisoners should emphasize not their exclusion from the community, but their continuing part in it. Community agencies should, therefore, be enlisted wherever possible to assist the staff of the institution in the task of social rehabilitation of the prisoners. There should be in connection with every institution social workers charged with the duty of maintaining and improving all desirable relations of a prisoner with his family and with valuable social agencies. Steps should be taken to safeguard, to the maximum extent compatible with the law and the sentence, the rights relating to civil interests, social security rights and other social benefits of prisoners.

Treatment

65. The treatment of persons sentenced to imprisonment or a similar measure shall have as its purpose, so far as the length of the sentence permits, to establish in them the will to lead law-abiding and self-supporting lives after their release and to fit them to do so. The treatment shall be such as will encourage their self-respect and develop their sense of responsibility.

66. (1) To these ends, all appropriate means shall be used, including religious care in the countries where this is possible, education, vocational guidance and training, social casework, employment counselling, physical development and strengthening of moral character, in accordance with the individual needs of each prisoner, taking account of his social and criminal history, his physical and mental capacities and aptitudes, his personal temperament, the length of his sentence and his prospects after release.

Work

71. (1) Prison labour must not be of an afflictive nature.

(2) All prisoners under sentence shall be required to work, subject to their physical and mental fitness as determined by the medical officer.

(3) Sufficient work of a useful nature shall be provided to keep prisoners actively employed for a normal working day.

(4) So far as possible the work provided shall be such as will maintain or increase the prisoners' ability to earn an honest living after release.

(5) Vocational training in useful trades shall be provided for prisoners able to profit thereby and especially for young prisoners.

(6) Within the limits compatible with proper vocational selection and with requirements of institutional administration and discipline, the prisoners shall be able to choose the type of work they wish to perform.

72. (1) The organization and methods of work in the institutions shall resemble as closely as possible those of similar work outside institutions, so as to prepare prisoners for the conditions of normal occupational life.

(2) The interests of the prisoners and of their vocational training, however, must not be subordinated to the purpose of making a financial profit from an industry in the institution.

73. (1) Preferably institutional industries and farms should be operated directly by the administration and not by private contractors.

(2) Where prisoners are employed in work not controlled by the administration, they shall always be under the supervision of the institution's personnel. Unless the work is for other departments of the government the full normal wages for such work shall be paid to the administration by the persons to whom the labour is supplied, account being taken of the output of the prisoners.

74. (1) The precautions laid down to protect the safety and health of free workmen shall be equally observed in institutions.

(2) Provision shall be made to indemnify prisoners against industrial injury, including occupational disease, on terms not less favourable than those extended by law to free workmen.

75. (1) The maximum daily and weekly working hours of the prisoners shall be fixed by law or by administrative regulation, taking into account local rules or custom in regard to the employment of free workmen.

(2) The hours so fixed shall leave one rest day a week and sufficient time for education and other activities required as part of the treatment and rehabilitation of the prisoners.

76. (1) There shall be a system of equitable remuneration of the work of prisoners.

(2) Under the system prisoners shall be allowed to spend at least a part of their earnings on approved articles for their own use and to send a part of their earnings to their family.

(3) The systems should also provide that a part of the earnings should be set aside by the administration so as to constitute a savings fund to be handed over to the prisoner on his release.

Social relations and after-care

79. Special attention shall be paid to the maintenance and improvement of such relations between a prisoner and his family as are desirable in the best interests of both.

80. From the beginning of a prisoner's sentence consideration shall be given to his future after release and he shall be encouraged and assisted to maintain or establish such relations with persons or agencies outside the institution as may promote the best interests of his family and his own social rehabilitation.

C. Prisoners under arrest or awaiting trial

84. (1) Persons arrested or imprisoned by reason of a criminal charge against them, who are detained either in police custody or in prison custody (jail) but have not yet been tried and sentenced, will be referred to as "untried prisoners" hereinafter in these rules.

(2) Unconvicted prisoners are presumed to be innocent and shall be treated as such.

(3) Without prejudice to legal rules for the protection of individual liberty or prescribing the procedure to be observed in respect of untried prisoners, these prisoners shall benefit by a special regime which is described in the following rules in its essential requirements only.

85. (1) Untried prisoners shall be kept separate from convicted prisoners.

86. Untried prisoners shall sleep single in separate rooms, with the reservation of different local custom in respect of the climate.

87. Within the limits compatible with the good order of the institution, untried prisoners may, if they so desire, have their food procured at their own expense from the outside, either through the administration or through their family or friends. Otherwise, the administration shall provide their food.

88. (1) An untried prisoner shall be allowed to wear his own clothing if it is clean and suitable.

(2) If he wears prison dress, it shall be different from that supplied to convicted prisoners.

89. An untried prisoner shall always be offered opportunity to work, but shall not be required to work. If he chooses to work he shall be paid for it.

90. An untried prisoner shall be allowed to procure at his own expense or at the expense of a third party such books, newspapers, writing materials and other means of occupation as are compatible with the interests of the administration of justice and the security and good order of the institution.

91. An untried prisoner shall be allowed to be visited and treated by his own doctor or dentist if there is reasonable ground for his application and he is able to pay any expenses incurred.

92. An untried prisoner shall be allowed to inform immediately his family of his detention and shall be given all reasonable facilities for communicating with his family and friends, and for receiving visits from them, subject only to such restrictions and supervision as are necessary in the administration of justice and of the security and good order of the institution.

93. For the purposes of his defense, an untried prisoner shall be allowed to apply for free legal aid where such aid is available, and to receive visits from his legal adviser with a view to his defence and to prepare and hand to him confidential instructions. For these purposes, he shall if he so desires be supplied with writing material. Interviews between the prisoner and his legal adviser may be within eight but not within the hearing of a police or institution official.

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