

TIME/CUT

Indiana Prison Newsletter

Issue 7 • Spring 2022

**Many Faces of Mental
Health Behind the Wire**

**Guide for Families: When a
Loved One Dies in Prison**

**Hunger Strike Solidarity
Coast to coast**

**Pendleton's
Legionaires Crisis**

**The White Supremacist
Guard Organization that
Caused an Uprising**

& more

Presented by:



TIME/CUT

is a publication for Indiana prisoners and their family and friends. It includes news, thoughts, and helpful resources from inside and outside the walls and around the world. The articles in the publication do not necessarily reflect on its contributors, creators, or distributors. Its contents are for informational purposes only. Time/Cut does not provide legal assistance or romantic arrangements.

This publication depends on the interest and participation of prisoners in Indiana and their loved ones on the outside. Please send us any of the following to the address below: responses to Time/Cut and its contents, helpful tips for navigating prison, sharing your experience, strategies for building our collective power, and more. Please state explicitly if you'd like your contributions to be considered for future issues and if you'd like your name published with it. Time/Cut, PO Box 3246, Bloomington, IN 47402 or timecutindiana@riseup.net.

Please write to us for a catalogue of other articles and texts related to surviving prison. This publication is free to friends and family of prisoners in Indiana. If you do not already receive it but want to, please write us and we will add you to our mailing list. If you wish to stop receiving it, write us and we'll take you off. If your incarcerated loved ones would like to receive the inside version, please send us their address. Thanks for reading!

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The Many Faces of Mental Health Behind the Wire

by Shaka Shakur #1996207

from IDOCWatch.org, Dec. 2021

Within the context of a prison i.e. penal facility, mental health both manifest and display itself in many forms.

A lot of Us who enter into the Prison Industrial Complex come from the lower socio-economical strata of society and arrive with some form of existing psycho- socio issues whether it hides/conceals itself behind that of substance abuse, sexual abuse, etc.

A lot of times it is these underlying issues that often lead Us into the P.I.C. in the first place and goes unacknowledged by the Criminal Judicial System. In fact the kriminal (in) justice system has become a substitute for and replacement for the many mental health institutions and mental health treatment programs that have been closed down due to lack of funding, lack of caring and outright indifference. So that now people whom should be receiving some type of mental health treatment or intervention is now being warehoused in the prison system while mental institutions are being closed down.

Mental Health issues and 'conduct' is now being kriminalized and placed into that context and the responses of the state and its agents is to that of a kriminal and not someone with mental illness. This triggers the full weight of the oppressive and repressive state. This also triggers more abuse, brutalizations, solitary confinement, verbal abuse, beatings, manhandling, disrespect and disregard by a people who are often untrained, overworked, underpaid and I'll equipped to deal with such mental illness or mental health issues.

So someone hearing voices , who is delusional, who might have PTSD, anger or rage issues, doesn't take care of their hygiene, suffers paranoia, etc all becomes a "disciplinary problem" to be further controlled and repressed . Hid away in segregation units, isolation units, placed into camera cells on suicide watch while stripped naked and clothed in suicide prevention smocks. Only to have their good time taken, sentences extended and adding another layer of job security for the employees of the state. Then these same employees become resentful, hateful and vindictive because of having to or choosing to work in an already high stress level environment and this isn't what they signed up for.

I've seen prison guards and prisoncrats commit some of the most vicious abuse and treatment of those who really needed proper medication or mental health treatment, and then laugh and joke about it.

The flip side of this is those of Us who came into the system that have suffered issues that We have never been diagnosed for or those of Us that have grown up in communities or environments that are warzones or where civil wars are raging

over so call "beefs", territory and/or markets connected to the underground economy. Where we have witnessed or seen a body before the age of 13, have loss childhood friends to violence, have loss a parent (s) to the drug game or P.I.C.

It has always angered me to hear govt. officials and other agencies talk about military veterans coming back from foreign wars that have PTSD and/or other mental health issues because of what they have witnessed or experienced and yet we got children in Our communities witnessing school shootings, street souljahs that have been involved in shooting wars, have buried friends and families or have bodies under their belts.

Ain't no Red Cross for Us, ain't no Veteran Affairs/Benefits for Us, aint no military courts for Us where convictions and felonies get deferred or mediated. The only thing left for Us is life sentences, extended aggravated sentences, and a slow death.

The same applies to those of Us whom have fell victim to the govt.. campaigns of chemical warfare raging in Our communities. Don't talk to Us about weapons of mass destruction hidden in the Middle East when we got Meth, Crack, Heroin and every illicit drug known to man saturating Our communities. Where We grow up on it in order to escape the deplorable and harsh reality we often have to find ways to either cope with or escape , only to end up in the Prison Industrial Complex. Where the side affects or after affects of years of drug abuse gets misdiagnosed or not diagnosed at all. Where such is again looked upon as a disciplinary issue; when in fact some of these youngsters whom have been traumatized in the ghetto colonies of amerika and have been smoking embalming fluid and experimenting with all kinds of chemical cocktails or have suffered all kinds of mental health issues that goes untreated.

Because we aren't cutting on Ourselves (some do), not threatening suicide (some do), We don't get treatment and if fortunate enough to get into a program, many of which is racially and culturally bias and not grounded or rooted in a reality of which many of Us come from or plan to return to.

Many of these programs, including Re-Entry does nothing to adequately prepare Us to return back to society and not recidivate. In some systems, in fact, it is just another way/scheme to get federal funding/dollars for programs that have no real substance. So once again many of Us are shoved through the cracks in the system, only to get trapped in the vicious cycle of catch, release and return. Caught in the cycle of carrying these mental health issues into Our communities to only exacerbate already existing social ills and issues. A never ending cycle of Genocide!!!

FREE THE LAND!!



In Some Prisons, People on Suicide Watch Are Monitored by Peers, Not Professionals

by Jake Harper & Lauren Bavis

from SideEffectsPublicMedia.org, Jan. 2022

Phone calls from her mother were usually a comfort for Char'Dae Avery, 29, while she was incarcerated at the Indiana Women's Prison in Indianapolis. But a few years ago, her mom started delivering bad news. Her brother, who was also in prison, got into a fight and was severely injured. Her dad was in an accident.

As her anxiety mounted, Avery felt she was in crisis and needed counseling. Late one night, she went to the only person she could ask for help: a correctional officer.

"They were like, 'Well, it's too late. We don't have anybody here for you to talk to,'" Avery said.

She remembers the guard told her the only way she could leave her dorm would be to tell them she was going to harm someone or harm herself. She didn't think she was suicidal, but with no other options, she told them she was.

"I said, 'Well, I'm not in my right state of mind and I feel like I'm going to hurt myself,'" Avery recalled.

Avery was placed on suicide watch. She traded her khaki prison uniform for an anti-suicide smock: a sleeveless dress made of thick material that's difficult to tear or tie into a noose. She was given a thin mat to sleep on and sent to a cold, padded cell with a window in the door.

Avery fell asleep. When she woke up, there was someone outside staring at her through the window.

Avery remembers the woman telling her, "You're going to be OK." It wasn't a doctor, or a counselor. It was another incarcerated woman.

Outside of prison, people on suicide watch are constantly monitored by a mental health professional in a hospital or treatment center. But in prisons in Indiana and several other states, it doesn't work that way. The person watching an inmate on suicide watch isn't always a trained professional or even a guard. Instead, it's often another incarcerated individual, known as a suicide companion.

Indiana implemented its suicide companion program in 2006 after a spate of suicides. The approach can cut costs for prisons and help address staffing shortages. But some individuals who have served as suicide companions say the experience took a toll on their own mental health.

Taking advantage of an 'abundant resource'

Each month, suicide companions in Indiana's prisons monitor dozens of people on suicide watch. Prisons in Kansas, South Carolina, Michigan and New Mexico also use suicide companions. Federal prisons have used suicide companions since at least the 1980s, and prisons outside the U.S. have similar programs.

"We've kind of gotten this idea of: Let's use our most abundant resource in the correction setting, which is inmates," said Christine Tartaro, a professor at Stockton University in New Jersey who studies suicide in prisons and jails. "Every prison has an abundance of inmates."

Tartaro said companions aren't meant to replace trained mental health staff.

"It could be tempting for budget-minded corrections facilities to just say, 'Oh, we have these inmates. Therefore, I don't need to hire a psychologist. I don't need that social worker,'" she said.

Other mental health experts who spoke with Side Effects were divided on the use of incarcerated people as suicide companions, given their lack of professional qualifications.

"If you're thinking of therapeutic ways to deal with a person who is at a crisis point in their lives, it would never be your first thought [to say], 'Let's have someone sit silently next to them for hours or days on end.' Like, no one would do that," said Dr. Reena Kapoor, a professor at Yale University who also works as a prison mental health consultant.

"I just don't think that in those most acute moments where someone's on suicide watch that ... you should put that responsibility for keeping them safe on another inmate. To me, that's a responsibility for health care professionals," she said.

But Tartaro said she sees the benefits of the suicide companion approach. Prisons are often understaffed, especially when it comes to counselors, and people in crisis may trust their peers more than doctors or guards.

In Indiana, the suicide companion program also helps cut costs.

"We're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars saved every year in staff overtime," said Bill Elliott, a psychologist who helped implement Indiana's program. "The rewards were as much for the person being the companion as they were for the inmate patient who was being watched. It gave them a sense of meaning and fulfillment."

A small 2005 study also found using suicide companions in federal settings reduced the time a suicidal individual spent on watch.

New trauma caused by the program

While suicide companion programs may help prisons save money, some former companions caution that those benefits come at a cost.

Lori Logan, who was a companion for four years at the Indiana Women's Prison, said her experience took a toll on her own mental health.

Years later, Logan said she can still vividly remember one particularly horrifying shift, during which a woman smuggled a razor blade with her into the cell.

"I noticed her shoulder was moving and I asked her what she was doing," she said. "Next thing I know, half the wall was bloody, and I was screaming for an officer."

Logan and other former suicide companions in Indiana told Side Effects they received little training to do the job and struggled to cope with what they experienced. Incarcerated women, in particular, can have histories of trauma, and working as suicide companions traumatized them in a new way.

They watched women pull out their hair and ingest their own bodily fluids; they choked on pepper spray they said guards used to subdue the women on suicide watch.

The former companions also said once they signed up, they were forced to do the job. If they refused, they said correctional officers told them they would be written up, which could result in disciplinary action such as solitary confinement or losing visitation privileges.

Indiana Department of Correction officials declined multiple requests for an interview with Side Effects. In an email, spokeswoman Annie Goeller disputed the stories multiple women shared. She said the companions receive training, can debrief with staff after hard shifts, and aren't penalized for asking for help. Goeller also said the program is voluntary.

After trying to quit multiple times, Logan eventually walked off of an especially hard shift a few years ago.

"I was watching the girl hurting herself in front of me," she said. "I stood up. I threw my pen across the lock unit and I said 'I quit.'"

Logan said she wonders whether she would have ended up on suicide watch herself if she had continued as a companion.

From suicide watch to suicide companion

After Logan ended her involvement with the suicide companion program, new companions took her place. One of them was Char'Dae Avery, who was placed on suicide watch when she hadn't truly been suicidal. She met with a prison counselor and was released after a few days. About a year later, Avery became

a suicide companion.

She said prison staff thought her experience on suicide watch could make her a better companion to other women.

"I could relate to them more, because I'd been where they are," Avery said.

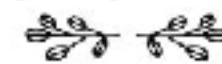
Her experience was similar to Logan's. Avery watched women run into their cell walls and self-mutilate by picking at their skin.

Despite the horrors she witnessed, Avery said it was a rewarding experience.

"I was basically always serious all the time. I was emotionally dead. I didn't have any emotions," Avery said. "Being a suicide companion definitely showed me how to open up, emotionally."

Avery left the Indiana Women's Prison in summer 2020. Even with the personal growth she experienced as a suicide companion, she said she believes those roles should be filled by trained mental health staff.

"It will help the people who are behind the glass more," who are struggling with suicidal thoughts, Avery said. "If they're getting the help that they need, maybe you'll stop seeing them as often."



Gone Too Soon, but You're Not Forgotten: The Guide for Families Searching for Help to Confront a Loved One's Death Behind Prison Walls

*by Bro. Khalfani Malik Khaldun #874304
from IDOCWatch.org, Dec. 2021*

About the Author

The politics of this prison system is real, and without the support of family and friends, many prisoners who may die before leaving prison cases can fall through the cracks. There is an extremely important need for us to encourage prisoners' families on how to fight for their loved ones that may have died in these prisons. We do want the truth out as to how and why it happened. We will not allow the prisoncrats to give us false information as to the manner of death of our loved ones or comrades may have died in prison.

Not knowing the right questions to ask, the right people to call, or the contacts to seek help from can be very intimidating and overwhelmingly discouraging.

While being housed in solitary confinement for 20 years in the Indiana Department of Correction many prisoners lost their lives around me in one manner or another. Suicide as a means of escaping the deplorable conditions were common. Others, compelled by beatings or excessive force by prisoncrats abusing their authority.

As a political prisoner, I have had to stand up and tell the story that other prisoners didn't get their chance to expose. We have an obligation to let their voices be heard, so we free their spirits from the confinement of these walls. Because if these walls could talk, these plantations would explode. These prisoncrats would be removed from their positions, and these plantations would shut down.

For all of our comrades we have lost behind these walls may they rest in paradise.

Forward

Amerikan prisons continue to be permeated by and a hotbed for violence. They will result in the death of prisoners. Some of these cases have and will be at the hands of prisoner on prisoner attacks. Other cases will result at the hands of prison officials, or medical personnel due to medical neglect, or a total disregard for human life.

The world has changed due to the Coronavirus-19. Prisoners are now dying inside the prison plantation due to the virus, adding to the already high death count. They have used COVID-19 to cover-up the real cause of how some prisoners have died. A terrible culture exists in the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility. Professionalism goes out of the window, when it comes to these people's jobs being on the line. Prisoners are being killed by others on behalf of staff. It's our duty to not be silent. To be a voice for those whose voices have been silenced. We have to ensure that these racist inhumane people know that prisoner lives matter. They should be made to know that we will not go away quietly.

This guide is needed for a whole lot of reasons - primarily to be used as a tool to expose prison injustice. Families of the incarcerated could easily be discouraged not to pursue a second opinion as to how a loved one dies in prison. Having an instructional guide can be very motivational.

Hopefully, everyone will enjoy this guide. Embrace and share what you learn from it. Power to the families of those men and women inside the plantations.

The Indiana voice of the voiceless
Uhuru-SaSa!

Chapter One: Historical events of prisoners dying or purposefully being killed by prison officials in the U.S. prisons

The history of the United States can't be reviewed, or researched thoroughly without a careful look at slavery in America, how many people died resisting it, and how it has transformed from the slave plantation, chattel slavery, to prison plantations of modern day slavery.

Being separated from the outside world, and being held in

closet-like cells that are equipped with a light, sink, and toilet, and a bed or beds brings along with this reality a number of mental and physical health conditions that only get worse as time goes by.

When prison officials get away with the murder of a prisoner, each time and after that it becomes easier to do. The murder doesn't always have to be by the hands of prison staff member. In most cases, it could be due to medical neglect. Denial of mental health medications. It could be forced isolation into solitary confinement. The actions and disregard of medical and prison staff have resulted in the deaths of countless prisoners all over the world, but primarily right here in the U.S.

For the past 34 years of my incarceration, I have read many news publications that have exposed the countless deaths of men and women in U.S. prisons. I realize that we are all going to die one day. This is an undeniable fact. But when a judge or jury didn't sentence us to death in prison, unless its natural causes, or an unforeseen terminal illness, we should not be dying inside these modern day plantations. Prison Legal News is one such publication that has historically revealed how prisoners are dying. Seems like nobody on the outside is paying attention.

Prisoners are being dehumanized on a large scale that cannot be ignored any longer. Here, inside the Indiana Department of Correction, especially at the Wabash Valley CF Secure Housing Unit, the years of 2003-2012. There were prisoners killing prisoners, prisoners committing suicide, and officers using excessive force resulting in the death of prisoners.

When prison counselors and internal affairs are aware that a prisoner with a child sex crime or one involving the death of a child can be targeted by being housed in a specific cell or housing unit, they approve it, and someone dies as a result. That blood is on their individual hands. This occurred here at the Wabash Valley Corr. Facility 4 times between 2005-2010 in the general population. When these types of things happen, it's hard not to conclude that it could have been arranged to happen that way.

In 2003, the Indiana Department of Corrections transferred me to Wabash Valley Correctional facility. Having the label on my back as the prisoner charged with killing a staff member, I was placed in solitary confinement. This unit smelled like a human zoo. The conditions of the oppression was driving prisoners crazy, creating a lot of dysfunctionism in an already tense and chaotic environment. Many prisoners met with terrible fates while housed inside the SHU, now called the SCU, only to cite a few:

Between 2003-2012, 1 prisoner was killed during a cell extraction being beaten by the goon squad. To silence his screams, they stuffed a wash rag in his mouth. He swallowed

some of the rag dying.

Between 2003-2009, 2 prisoners committed suicide. One who lived next door to me needed his mental health meds, was denied by them officers. He said he was gonna kill himself. They ignored him, he then set himself on fire and died in his cell.

Between 2003-2009, the second guy was having a mental health breakdown. He was screaming and kicking his door. Officers got mad at the noises, and refused to notify mental health. In his attempts to escape what he felt was his hell on earth he took his own life hanging himself.

In the beginning of 2007, 11 of 23 suicides occurred inside segregation units. Thus, nearly one half of the suicides were committed by 22 percent of the total IDOC prisoner population.

The purpose for this guide is to clearly help the families not to settle for the lies meant to discourage them from investigating these deaths. There is a prisoner death pandemic occurring all across the country. Florida, Alabama, and California among others all seem to stand out the most.

On January 22, 2017, a 36-year old California prisoner with a documented history of schizophrenia died in a jail less than an hour after being released from a restraint chair where he had been for two days. His family settled a wrongful death civil suit for five million.

In 2014, Florida had 346 prisoner deaths on their watch. In June of 2014, Steven Michael Zerbe, 37, who was legally deaf and blind was killed on their watch.

On March 6, 2014, prisoner Mark Akens at Pendleton Correctional Facility fell from the top bed injuring his ribs, stomach, and midsection. Seen by nursing staff, and only given a cursory examination, he was told to return to his cell. Later that night, around 4:00 AM he complained of severe rib and abdominal pain. He was given tylenol and sent back to his cell. The nurse was summoned again at 6:00 AM after Michael Akens lost consciousness. This nurse balked at helping this prisoner until a guard declared he wasn't breathing. CPR was initiated, but it was too late. Michael Akens, 51, was declared dead at 7:02 AM.

In 2017-2018 a friend/comrade named Willie Henley, who I grew up with in these prisons, had severe/chronic constipation. Seen by Wabash Valley nurses and not taken seriously for seven days, he died in his cell when his appendix burst.

Just last year, while held in solitary confinement in a unit called CCU here at Wabash Valley while fighting for his life, Phillip Littler died of throat cancer. Phillip Littler had a long history of resisting being dehumanized by Wabash Valley Prisoncrats.

Filing lawsuits helped him get his story on record. He won several, resulting in thousands of dollars being paid to him by the state.

In 1985, Lincoln "Lokmar" Love was beaten at the "Reformatory" now known as Pendleton Corr. Facility by prison guards severely, sparking a riot that gained the local and national spotlight. Recently, Lokmar, who had been held at the Wabash Valley in the SHU solitary confinement died due to exposure to the coronavirus. This was a great man who cared about everybody affected by prison repression.

In December 2020 a comrade named Big 2 was released from solitary confinement to G-leftwing. He was then moved by counselors to the right side of the unit. About two months later, he had a heart attack in his cell. It is said he was smoking and went into cardiac arrest. He was overweight and diabetic. We believe they let Big 2 die due to medical incompetence.

In 2020, an old-timer named Dirtball was found dead in his cell at Wabash Valley in F-unit. News accounts claimed that he had committed suicide. That was a lie. His hands were tied behind his back. He was allowed to be killed. May have been sanctioned.

There are so many others that should be shared, but the research is not available at the time of this compilation. We can't forget the lives taken or lost in these plantations disguised as Amerikan prisons. This is why it is important to work and join the movement to abolish prisons.

All power to the people who don't fear freedom.

Chapter Two: Encouraging Prisoners' Families not to just accept what the DOC says caused the death of their loved one

Prison administration officials for years have engaged in suppressing what happens inside these walls. If the facts of an incident will result in a lot of staff being fired if it reaches the public, this information will never get outside these fascist prison walls. So, it is extremely crucial for our outside families and friends to always seek a second medical opinion. There are a host of activist organizations who will help get the truth to you.

Just for an example, you can reach out to: U.S. Department of Justice: Civil Rights Section, Special Litigation, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20535.

You should contact also: Kenneth J Folk, Indiana Civil Liberties Union, 1031 East Washington St, Indianapolis, IN 46202-3652.

Every state has chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union and they have always helped families in matters such

as these. When a mother or father gets a call that a child overdosed, committed suicide, got killed, etc., we have to know that is a devastating time for them. As a long time prison activist, I have an obligation to be of service to the families affected.

A lot of prisoners died during the last year due to COVID-19 and drug overdoses. You will never know the truth or the actual number count. But we should not allow IDOC or the DOC to tell us anything. In order to suppress the actual count that died from COVID-19, they have misled society by saying that COVID-19 victims actually died from Raid-laced paper. That it wasn't COVID-19.

The spirits of our loved ones who have died in prison are depending on us to uncover the truth. Please don't just let the prison tell you anything. Investigate and seek another opinion before you give up on it.

Chapter Three: Educating prisoners' families about how to build support to confront and expose the death of their loved one

As a political prisoner and a prison activist, I have an obligation to help families of prisoners build a support group to help them fight back. The prison environment will always be a dangerous place where unfortunately some men and women are going to lose their lives behind prison walls.

A support group can consist of 3-5 friends or family members of the person who died or was killed in prison. A support group can be helpful in galvanizing local or national support from groups who fight on behalf of prisoners. There are a lot of families looking for help on which direction to go in to get the word out. There are many activist groups who are willing to aid and assist prisoners' families. For us here in the state of Indiana, we have:

IDOC-Watch P.O. Box 11095 Indianapolis, IN 46201
Idocwatch.org

In every state there are prisoner support organizations solely existing to help us challenge human and civil rights violations occurring inside these prisons. I am going to be the voice of those prisoners who fall prey to death in prison. I will not let their lives be in vain, because if it were me who died in prison for whatever reason, I would want someone not to let my work and contributions be in vain.

Due to my activism for the past 26 years, many prisoners have changed their lives and the lives of countless others. Change comes to us all in spirals. Seeing my brother have a heart attack because he was smoking (K2 Spice) sprayed on paper caused me to renew my commitment to being of service to the oppressed masses.

The struggle continues on all fronts, so let us stay vigilant in our work to expose the wrongs issued against us and our comrades. We are our own liberators until all of us are free, none of us are perfect. But, we need to expose these abuses and wrongful deaths.

Chapter Four: Time to seek legal counsel to file a civil lawsuit against prison officials

When our loved one dies or gets killed inside these prison plantations, we have to always be prepared legally to pursue redress in federal court.

If the prisoncrats are responsible for the death of a prisoner due to neglect or malfeasance, we often encourage families to pursue hiring good civil rights lawyers. There are lawyers who are open to taking on a case pro bono if they can see that the case has good merit to it.

When it can be clearly determined that prison officials were responsible for your loved one's death, you will most likely be offered a deal or settlement offer in an attempt to silence your fight. The initial offer will be a low ball number to see if you are thirsty. The attorney will encourage you to pass it up, for a greater offer. We have to never relent when it is time to hold them to account for their actions. We have to overcome any fears that emerge when thoughts of them retaliating against us enter our thoughts. The solidarity we have with activist groups around the country should make you confident that we can defeat these prisoncrats.

Families who don't have a family attorney should research locally based attorneys and read up on their backgrounds before they are given any money. There are a bunch of good civil lawyers here in the United States. Please search their profiles and review the success rates they or their firms have enjoyed in the past ten years. Hopefully you will get a lawyer or a civil firm to represent you.

Securing a legitimate legal argument in matters such as these can mean a win or a loss. I am devoted to getting justice for anyone who has lost a loved one. May none of our loved ones' deaths be in vain! Fight the good fight.

Chapter Five: Contacts to reach out to for help to expose your family's struggle

Prison activist resource center is a national prisoner resource directory that was created to provide organizational help and support to prisoners and their families.

These various contacts are in this directory to provide multiple services and to advocate for us outside of these walls. I will list for you a few contacts that will help you to expose any injustices you have endured or have experienced. See below:

- All of us or none, 4400 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94608
- Amnesty International, 5 Penn. Plaza, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10001
- Center for Constitutional Rights, 656 Broadway, New York, NY 10012
- Solitary Watch, P.O. Box 11374, Washington, DC 20008
- Abolitionist Law Center, P.O. Box 1654, Pittsburgh, PA 15221
- Family Law Project, University of Wisconsin Law School, 975 Bascom Mall, Madison, WI 53706
- NAACP Legal Defense Fund, 40 Rector Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10006
- National Lawyer Guild: Prison Law Project, 132 Nassau St., Room 922, New York, NY, 10038



Marion County's New Jail Is A Total Failure

from IDOCWatch.org, Feb. 2022



Prisoners recently transferred en masse to Marion County's new "high tech" Adult Detention Center (ADC) have already begun to collectively resist the unacceptable conditions inside the facility. County Judges and sheriffs have been forced to admit that the situation is a "powder keg" and that an uprising could break out at any moment (1). Inmates are agitated by non-functional tablets leaving them without access to commissary goods, broken video conference technology making visitation and court appearances impossible, as well as backed up toilets among many other issues.

Judge Amy Jones told Sherriff Forestal that she had been disturbed by what she saw and heard at her recent visit to the ADC in a closed-door zoom conference on January 27th. "Having heard what I heard directly from the sheriff and saw what I saw the other day when I was over there, I mean, it was a little unnerving quite frankly," said Judge Jones. "They were on the brink of a riot (2)." Don't be concerned though, Col. James Martin tells the Indy Star, "The jail's not burning", a vote of confidence if there ever was one (3). It may not be on fire (and there's serious doubt that the Marion County Sheriffs department would know what to do in such a scenario) but that does not mean things are not completely unacceptable as far as the inmates are concerned. The lack of functioning

toilets, inability to order food and hygiene essentials, and the impossibility of confidently meeting with defense attorneys, are all human rights violation of the highest order. Let's not forget that county jails are not state prisons. The majority of county jail populations are comprised of individuals awaiting trial, never having been sentenced for a single day in detention. When will they get their day in court? With how things are going at the "smartest jail in the country"(4) it could be a very long time indeed.

Despite Col. Martin's reassurance, he and Sheriff Forestal "described a perceived risk of ambushes last month at the Adult Detention Center" during January 27th video conference. Allegedly at least two organized attacks on CO's were suspected but neither actually came to pass. Nevertheless, Sheriff Forestal opted for the carrot and stick approach in attempting to calm the situation. After his offer of free pizza to inmates on the week of January 17th failed to compensate for the myriad of deplorable issues they face, the Sheriff decided to exercise a "show of force" by occupying a cell block with deputies (5). None of it has worked to relax tensions.

The crisis at the ADC is an inevitable result of decades of backwards, reactionary policy emanating from the Governor's office, through the State House down to the courts, Department of Correction, police and sheriff's departments. Indiana has seen its incarcerated population grow spectacularly since its sweeping 2015 "criminal justice reform" that resulted in chronic overcrowding in state prisons and county jails. Last year, the Indy Star released a series of articles following years of investigation into the epidemic of deaths in county detention centers. Marion County ADC continues that tradition of death, with an inmate taking his own life only a week after the facility opened (6). Counties have lethargically tried to remedy the overcrowding situation by building new jails all over the state, but even that has been a failure. The overcrowding problem persists with skyrocketing levels of incarceration for low level drug offenders, and now state lawmakers are planning on sending level six felons back to state prison to serve their sentences.(7) Since the 2015 changes, those sentenced to 2.5 or fewer years would serve their sentences at the county level, resulting in a ballooning jail population. The whole fiasco is one massive tangle of incompetence and negligent waste, engineered by politicians and police for whom the humanity of prisoners is the last on the list of priorities. It should be mentioned that the same Judge Jones, whose recent tour of the ADC left her disturbed, just this past December canceled Marion County's collaboration with the Bail Project, a non-profit that posts bail for low-income detainees.(8). That means there are many people trapped in the jail right now for no other reason than lack of funds, and Marion County cut off one of the only resources which could actually remedy the situation. How many people crowded into ADC would be able to defend their cases from home if they were able to post bail? That would be something the public deserves to know.

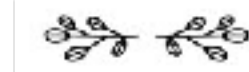
Ultimately, the Indiana Department of Correction has the authority and the duty to shutter county jails which fail to meet the basic standards of overcrowding and staffing. An authority it has never once exercised, despite a sizable majority of county jails violating these standards. That's because, as stated, until recently, the people who suffered the most from these issues were the inmates themselves. That's not a problem as far as the DOC is concerned. Now however, corrections officers are feeling the heat. With the the ratio of prisoner to CO getting bigger all the time, CO's may get that lucrative overtime pay, but their favorite "perks" like mouthing off to and dehumanizing prisoners may cost them more than they signed up for with fewer of their comrades-in-arms around to back them up. The Marion County ADC currently has about half of the staff it purportedly requires, 62 of 116.(9). The prisoncrats should really be concerned when a \$5,000 signing bonus (offered at ADC) and "no experience necessary" fails to attract enough applicants to fill the positions. One can only hope that people are becoming less enthused by the prospect of employment in the service of modern day slavery.

All things considered Marion County's "smart" prison could witness an inmate uprising in the near future. In all likelihood county and state officials from the sheriff on up will blame the "violent" criminals that they warehouse for going too far. But uprisings don't come out of nowhere. The state has been sewing the seeds for this for many years. Sending them to state prisons will not solve the issues either. Those facilities are arguably in just as bad if not worse condition. The number of deaths in the DOC is difficult to know because the department does not share those records. It is known however, that at least two inmates at Pendleton Correctional Facility died and several more were infected from a December outbreak of Legionnaire's Disease caused by contaminated water. It is known that CO's routinely assault prisoners, beating them and spraying them with chemical weapons. The situation at the Secure Housing Unit at Wabash Valley Correctional Facility is not unlike that at Marion County ADC. Commissary is completely restricted, video visitation is available only on weekends if at all, and a recent Covid outbreak caused by negligent CO's infected numerous inmates. It's no wonder the DOC does not step in to correct the county jails when its own house is so out of order.

The inmates at ADC are faced with an environment completely out of their control. They lack the most basic of human necessities, and have no idea what or how things will change. They've been neglected, tortured, and humiliated. So they may break windows, they may disable technical systems, flood cells or take other actions. All perfectly reasonable given their conditions. No matter what happens, the blame lays squarely at the feet of Marion County, the DOC, and the State of Indiana.

(1-3)<https://fox59.com/news/security-concerns-raised-after-near-riot-and-ambush-at-new-marion-county-adult-detention-center/>
(4-5)[https://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/02/04/marion-county-sheriff-forestal-gets-](https://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/02/04/marion-county-sheriff-forestal-gets-candid-new-jail-challenges-community-justice-campus-indianapolis/6643256001/)

[candid-new-jail-challenges-community-justice-campus-indianapolis/6643256001/](https://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2022/01/06/indiana-jail-overcrowding-lawmakers-might-send-more-prison/9104180002/?fbclid=IwAR2qA6nkDve0V67Y6BKpKkOsQhsom9-YQA5Y-8gdM37GNe2fQxIaovWGNwI)
(6)<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/crime/2022/01/17/marion-county-adult-detention-center-detainee-dies-monday-morning/6558042001/>
(7)<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2022/01/06/indiana-jail-overcrowding-lawmakers-might-send-more-prison/9104180002/?fbclid=IwAR2qA6nkDve0V67Y6BKpKkOsQhsom9-YQA5Y-8gdM37GNe2fQxIaovWGNwI>
(8)<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/local/marion-county/2021/12/16/marion-superior-court-ends-support-bail-project/8931342002/>
(9)<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/02/04/marion-county-sheriff-forestal-gets-candid-new-jail-challenges-community-justice-campus-indianapolis/6643256001/>



Inhumane Conditions, Possible Suicides, and Covid on RSHU at Indiana State Prison

by Angaza Iman Bahar #891782

from IDOCWatch.org, Dec. 2021

On Nov. 13, 2021 a prisoner housed at Indiana State Prison on the Restricted Status Housing Unit (RSHU) at 3am hollered that he was experiencing symptoms related to covid-19. He was located on the 200 range, east side of the unit, cell 221. The entire unit had been placed on lockdown for 14 days due to another prisoner testing positive for covid. For over 2/3 hrs the prisoner's pleas for medical assistance went ignored. It took an hour for the officer on duty to even come and inquire into what was the problem and even then told this prisoner who was in extreme pain (one of the criteria for calling signal 3000) that he would have to wait until the nurse showed up on the unit to pass out meds to be checked out. Please keep in mind that this is the same unit where two prisoners in less than a week were found dead supposedly having committed suicide, yet their bodies weren't discovered for hours, possibly days, due to staff incompetence. The cells are literally falling apart and mice infested. Such has created a dangerous life threatening environment where the well being of prisoners housed on the unit is simply not a concern for the administration and thus the staff who work over here. Policies which clearly specify the manner in which the unit is supposed to be run are blatantly ignored and the conditions over here would be described by the International Commission on Human Rights as deplorable and unfit for human beings. Officials here will claim that these are lies but I ask that an independent agency be asked to seek a court order to force the prison authorities to allow them to come and see for themselves what is going on. Only then will they be able to get to the bottom of this. I personally am being subjected to all of this simply because of my political views, having not committed any crime and being illegally held past my correct release date on technical parole violations. The courts here in Laporte County seem to be purposely delaying setting a hearing to address the habeas corpus I've filed seeking my immediate release.

11/20

Update is that they left this guy unattended for two days after he first sought medical attention and when they finally tested him he came back positive for covid.

11/29

As you all know the administration here at ISP has had the RSHU unit on quarantine lockdown for about a month due to an outbreak of covid. Yet they refuse to test everyone on the unit to determine who may be infected at one time, isolating those individuals and bringing the situation under control. Instead they simply wait until someone becomes sick enough to realize he has covid and requests to be tested. This has allowed them to maintain the lockdown status the unit was placed on beyond the required two week quarantine period. At this rate everyone on the unit is at risk of becoming infected due to the administration's deliberate neglect. It is as if they purposely designed a potentially dangerous situation and at this rate someone will probably die as a result of their negligence. Under the quarantine lockdown status many of us who were placed on the unit pending disciplinary hearings have had our hearings postponed indefinitely, leaving us in a state of unknowing. Yet I learned that some disciplinary hearings are being held, it's just that Disciplinary Hearing Officer Smith is choosing who he wants to see, postponing those cases where prisoners have been brought up on trumped up charges by staff who have chosen to use the disciplinary process for vindictive purposes. What's really shocking is that I haven't received one notice of postponement, which policy requires she issue to justify her reason for delaying the hearing. I believe this is a tactic to maximize my exposure to covid and prevent me from pursuing the issue of my illegal incarceration at the hands of the Indiana Parole Board. Locked inside of this cage 24/7 I cannot utilize the resources of the law library, making my fight to access the court that much more difficult. This has been my status for over a month and like I said I have not been found guilty of anything, nor am I under investigation. I write these updates so that the public out there are aware of the human rights abuses that are happening right here in amerikkka, who love to claim it is such a free and just society, unless you're incarcerated.

12/01

It has been revealed to us prisoners that the possible origin of the covid outbreak here on the RSHU was a Case Team Manager who tested positive for covid, I believe over the holiday weekend. It would make perfect sense, for she was responsible for walking the ranges and came in contact with pretty much everyone on the east side of the unit where I am currently being held. I personally was forced to interact with her, for without her it would've been impossible for me to access the court, for she picked up my legal mail and brought me the notices of the lawyers requesting I call. Yet despite this revelation ISP still has not done enough to effectively bring this situation under control. Testing for the entire unit has not been mandated and is clearly the only logical approach if

you were serious about fighting the spread of the deadly virus. Yet as I have repeatedly proclaimed that seems not to be the aim of this administration. Instead they seem to rather allow it to slowly run its course through the unit for it gives them justification to keep us confined to the cells 24/7. I have also learned that the disciplinary hearing officer has been coming to the unit and conducting disciplinary hearings. Yet I have yet to have my matter heard despite the fact that it has been over a month since the incident and I was placed in RSHU pending disciplinary hearing. My due process rights have been blatantly disregarded and violated, for I have yet to receive a notice of postponement of the hearing which must give a legit reason for the continuation. It is like they have intentionally placed me in a high risk environment hoping I become infected with this deadly virus. All that I have said here can be verified and I write this simply as documentation of the human rights abuses being carried out here at ISP. I truly hope that you forward this to any and everyone willing to listen and take action to expose what is being done to us here before someone dies as a result of these people's deliberate indifference...



Support of Indigenous Prisoner Rights at USP Victorville

from FreeOsoBlanco.org, Jan. 2022



Artwork: Scalp Warrior, by OB with Bear & White Eyes, 2016

Stand with Indigenous prisoners at USP Victorville! Tell BOP prison officials and staff to respect Native religious rights and practices!

On behalf of all Native and Indigenous prisoners held at USP Victorville, we call on prison officials and staff to cease and desist from violating the religious rights of Native and Indigenous prisoners being held at USP Victorville.

Plant Profile: GROUND IVY

The isolation of prison extends beyond separating humans; it also separates the imprisoned from most of the rest of the world, from nature, from animals, from plants, all things that are vital to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. But for those who are allowed time out in the yard, there remain small opportunities for exploration and encounter. Here is brief profile of a plant you may be able to find growing near you

Common name: Ground Ivy, Ale Hoof, Creeping Charlie, Gill-over-the-Ground

Scientific name: *Glechoma hederacea* (All plants known to western civilization have a latin binomial name to help with classification and identification.)

How to identify: Ground Ivy is a small but prolific and very common plant. As indicated by the name “Creeping” Charlie, its stems sprawls out prostrate over the ground (*Photo 1, 4*), covering large patches but getting up only to 6 inches high. The leaves (*Photo 3*) are opposite (2 leaves coming out of the same node, one on each side of the stem) and round to kidney-shaped with shallow, blunt teeth. The leaves grow on sizable (relative to the size of the leaf) petioles, or leaf-stems, off of the main stem. The leaves have short, stubby hairs. The flowers (*Photo 2*) are irregular, meaning they have symmetry on only one axis (split top to bottom), but not radial symmetry like “regular” flowers, with 3 lobes on the bottom and 1 on top. They are purple to blue, 1/3 to 1/2 inch long with spots of white and darker purple in the middle. They are tubular before opening up into those 4 lobes. Ground Ivy is known to put out rootlets from nodes that touch the soil, allowing it to become its own plant even if cut off from the main stem. It has a pleasant though “grassy” aroma when crushed. It begins flowering early in the year and the green parts persist sometimes all year round!

Ground Ivy is easily confused with both Henbit and Dead Nettle. Henbit is different in the the top leaves have no petiole, but grow straight out of the stem. They also do not form new roots at the joint. The leaves are smoother, less hairy, and are somewhat retroflexed- the edges curving downward. The stems are more reddish. Dead Nettle, on the other hand, is fuzzier. The leaves are more heart-shaped than round, more pointy at the tip. The tubular flowers of both are more closed than Ground Ivy, lacking the open sides lobes. All three of these plants are edible.

Encountering Ground Ivy: A main attribute of Ground Ivy is its affinity for the ears, in both a physiological and metaphorical way. Ground Ivy can be used for tinnitus or ringing in the ears, ear infection, and blocked sinuses. Physiologically, its effect extends beyond the ears to the nose, throat, and eyes. The taste is astringent, bitter, and acrid. This indicates its drying and cooling properties. It can address dampness, leaking, and stagnation in the ears, nose, throat, eyes, upper respiratory tract, lungs, and gastro-intestinal tract. The bitterness also has a mild action on the liver. The acridness indicates a dispersive quality, loosening blockages and stagnation. This action also extends to the lymphatic system. So throughout the body we see the pattern of drying and dispersing stagnant fluids. But this is really highlighted in the ears. And this relates to its emotional, mental, or personality-level influence. It helps us to “hear” better. Not just physically, by clearing out blockages in the ear canals. But to communicate better with each other by clearing out distractions, old patterns, and mental blocks that keep us from truly hearing and understanding each other. It can help us be more open to what is actually being said instead of what we expect to hear. To connect this quality to it’s own life, I think of how small and modest Ground Ivy is, yet how plentiful, common, and widespread across the globe. Almost like a fly on the wall, on countless walls. Think of all the things it must witness, it must know! I see it as sharing some of that power to witness, to know, to learn, to hear, with us.

Ground Ivy can be eaten, juiced, or made into tea by steeping in hot water. Three things to be aware of, though, before eating wild plants: avoid the area if any lawn chemicals or other toxins are used in the area, make sure you’ve identified the correct plant (most easily done when its in flower), and avoid over-harvesting to make sure it is able to reproduce and come back next year! But Ground Ivy does not have to be consumed to be encountering. Meeting the plant, getting to know it, or picking it just to have it around, can all add a little something to a perhaps otherwise dull day.





A former Rikers Island inmate describes her attempt to kill herself at the notorious New York City jail during an October 1, 2021 City Hall protest featuring family members of prisoners who have died while imprisoned there. (Photo: Andrew Lichtenstein/Corbis)

During the first week of December 2021, prison staff purposefully destroyed the sacred sweat lodge at USP Victorville, also removing medicine bags and other materials from Indigenous prisoners. These actions are violations of religious rights of those held at USP Victorville. Furthermore, counselor Villanueva has withheld BP-8 forms from said prisoners, by not coming around the unit in order to prevent them from filing a formal complaint about these blatant religious rights violations.

According to the Bureau of Prisons website, “Chaplaincy Services Branch ensures the Constitutional religious rights of inmates.” This is obviously not the case at USP Victorville, where Chaplains Northway and Kelvington continually infringe upon the religious rights of Native and Indigenous people held at the prison. As confirmed in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA) and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Person Act of 2000 (RLUIPA), these basic rights must be respected and adhered to.

As Indigenous prisoners at USP Victorville are denied to even raise their legitimate grievances within the prison system, along with the continued denial of basic religious rights, and the destruction of their sweat lodge, we are urgently requesting emails and phone calls to BOP prison officials in order to rectify these gross violations of prisoners’ rights.

Immediate Demands

1. Immediately provide proper materials so that the prisoners themselves can rebuild the sweat lodge destroyed by prison officials. The energy involved in the process of rebuilding has significance for Indigenous religious purposes, so the work should and must be done by them. Materials needed to rebuild the sweat lodge include willows, rocks, and untreated firewood (as it is illegal to burn treated construction wood in the State of California).

2. Ensure prison staff are properly trained on what they can and cannot do in regards to Native/Indigenous religious ceremonies.
3. That prisoners be given immediate access to BP-8 forms so they can file a formal complaint.



200 Inmates Hunger Strike Over ‘Inhumane’ Rikers Island

by **Brett Wilkins**

from CommonDreams.org, Jan. 2022

A hunger strike by around 200 prisoners at New York City’s Rikers Island jail entered its sixth day Thursday, as demonstrators continued to protest “deplorable” and dangerous conditions including lack of medical care during a surging Covid-19 outbreak at the notorious lockup, where 15 inmates died last year.

“It just gets worse and worse,” 55-year-old Rikers inmate Nelson Pinero told *The New York Times*, adding that mice and insects regularly keep him up at night.

“I don’t wish this upon nobody,” he said.

Inmates described freezing cold, vermin- and filth-ridden facilities, rampant violence including “fight nights” staged by gangs, and insufficient protection against Covid-19, which has recently sickened more than 370 prisoners in a jail where less than half of the population is fully vaccinated.

“There’s no safety for us,” Richard Colon, 41, told the *Times*. “There’s no one to help us. It’s scary in here.”

Another inmate, 26-year-old Arian Medina, said that “people are going crazy in here. They’re losing their minds.”

Speaking at a Thursday rally organized by the Fortune Society in support of the hunger-striking inmates, New York City Council Member Carmen De La Rosa (D-10) hailed the prisoners' "defiance against a racist, oppressive system that extracts Black and Brown men from our community every single day."

De La Rosa said the Washington Heights, Inwood, and Marble Hill communities she represents have "been targeted and surveilled and imprisoned."

"When I tell you Rikers Island is a crisis, it's because I've seen what happens behind prisons walls across this state," the former state assembly member said. "None of the prisons across New York state are as bad as Rikers Island."

The vast majority of Rikers' approximately 5,400 inmates are pretrial detainees who have not been found guilty.

Gothamist reports:

By many measures, Rikers conditions have recently deteriorated. Sixteen held in city jails died last year, 15 of them at Rikers. Incidents of self-harm nearly doubled for a period last year, according to the federal monitor appointed to oversee the jail. Rates of violence have also increased, and residents have reported that the intake area where detainees are first processed is infested with vermin, and lacks beds and working toilets. Backlogs in the courts due to the pandemic have resulted in people being locked up for longer, awaiting disposition of criminal charges.

The Omicron-driven Covid-19 surge has also hit correctional workers hard, thinning staff ranks and further endangering inmates. According to the New York City Department of Correction, around 30% of employees were out sick as of Tuesday. This means prisoners are being forced to miss important medical appointments.

"There's just not enough officers to walk anyone around," Christopher Boyle of the New York County Defender Services told Gothamist.

Inmate Ervin Bowins said that his unit has been denied access to mail, recreation, medical and mental health services, and the law library to work on their cases. Bowins said conditions at Rikers fall short of "mandatory minimum standards for a human being."

Boyle told Gothamist that "everything is limited to a degree that's never been seen before," and that inmates have "had enough."

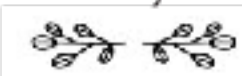
"They've finally said this is what we're going to do to get some attention," he said of the hunger strike.

Prison abolitionists and other human rights activists have voiced solidarity with the hunger strikers, while decrying conditions at Rikers.

"We are in solidarity with the brave people incarcerated on Rikers Island who had to resort to a hunger strike to protest the deplorable and deadly conditions they are facing, especially as Covid rates skyrocket," Jerome Wright, statewide organizer of the #HaltSolitary campaign and member of the Jails Action Coalition, said in a statement.

"New York City officials need to act NOW to decarcerate, end solitary confinement, and ensure people have access to medical care and other basic needs," he added.

Incidents including the 2015 suicide of Kalief Browder, a teenager previously jailed at Rikers for three years without trial for allegedly stealing a backpack, spurred former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio to propose a plan to close the facility by 2026. Although approved by the City Council over two years ago, the plan has since been delayed indefinitely.



Hunger Strike in Santa Rita County Jail

from SRJSolidarity.org, Jan. 2022

At least two dozen prisoners in the Alameda County Jail are continuing a hunger strike which began on January 8, 2022 to protest an increase in the jail's commissary prices. Prices increased on December 27, 2021; the second price increase during the COVID-19 pandemic alone. Many people rely on commissary items for daily sustenance due to the poor quality and small portions of County food. Food quality was the subject of a previous prisoner hunger strike in October 2019.

Prisoners say that the cost of some items has increased by more than twenty percent. Instant ramen, once \$1.13 for a single package, now costs \$1.39. Instant coffee, which many prisoners trade for extra food, was raised from \$4.00 to \$6.75.

One person on strike says that on January 7, when prisoners decided to begin their protest, Deputies responded by entering his Housing Unit POD with pepper spray, tasers, and block guns, threatening to confiscate commissary items from each cell. The Alameda County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) has denied the existence of a hunger strike; but prisoners confirm that the jail has been monitoring the strike.

ACSO maintains rules and regulations regarding prisoner protest. David Vigil, currently on hunger strike, says that Deputies have retaliated by manipulating or disregarding these rules to prevent an official record of the strike. People in Housing Unit 3C were also told that they can't come out of their cells during mealtime, he says. One time, a Deputy handed out lunches to strikers and refused to document their

refusal nor take the lunches back (a hunger strike is considered “ended” when a prisoner accepts food into their room, even if they don’t eat it).

Another prisoner who has participated in past hunger strikes confirmed that these are common tactics.

“Around December 2020, I was on a hunger strike...Deputies started opening the door and trying to put my lunches into the room to end the hunger strike, so I had to push the food out and close the door. One day, they got so frustrated that they pulled the sandwich and fruit out of the bag and started throwing it, through the open door, into my cell!”

David Vigil says that these tactics make hungry people feel discouraged, and wants the public to question ACSO spokesperson Ray Kelly’s claim that “there is no hunger strike at the jail.” He says that news coverage and speaking with the community makes strikers feel more supported. Eric Rivera, who is drinking only water and Gatorade, informed KTVU on Tuesday, January 18 that he is willing to “go as hard as I can” to make sure that demands are met.

Demands include:

1. Stop profiteering off of prisoners. Commissary prices should be no higher than SF County Jail’s prices. [1]
2. Strip the Sheriff’s power to raise prices. The power to raise commissary prices should not be under the Sheriff’s control. The Board of Supervisors alone should have the power to change prices, and only after a public hearing.
3. Stop the for-profit Santa Rita jail kitchen run by Aramark Correctional Services. Improve the jail’s kitchen food for prisoners with fresh fruits, vegetables, and a variety of carbohydrates and protein. Stop the daily meals of boiled beans and boiled soy protein lumps.
4. Increase portion sizes. Food trays should not be shorted food, and prisoners should not be hungry after a meal.
- 5.

[1] Maruchan ramen costs \$0.25 at many stores. SRJ charges \$1.39. SF charges \$0.52 for the same item.

Please stay tuned for further support requests from striking prisoners. While strikers decide on what ways the outside should support them, please write signed statements of support that will be published and shared with strikers. Let them know they aren’t alone!



Solidarity to Rikers Island Strikers

from *OaklandAboSol.org*, Jan. 2022



Aerial view of the east housing units of Santa Rita Jail of Alameda County, CA

At least two dozen prisoners in the Alameda County Jail (“Santa Rita”) are continuing a hunger strike which began on January 8, 2022 to protest an increase in the jail’s commissary prices. Prices increased on December 27, 2021; the second price increase during the COVID-19 pandemic alone. Many people rely on commissary items for daily sustenance due to the poor quality and small portions of County food.

Simultaneously, across the continent, hundreds of people incarcerated in NYC’s Rikers Island jails had also initiated a hunger strike against unsafe, unsanitary and inhumane conditions.

“We stand with you because it’s the same everywhere.”

In close touch with outside supporters, the Santa Rita hunger strikers, spread out over four housing units, learned of the parallel struggle in NYC and jumped at the chance to send their support across the country and into Rikers Island cells.

Here we share a collection of statements of solidarity statements (and advice) from current hunger strikers incarcerated in Santa Rita Jail:

James Mallett:

“Keep fighting! Know your cause and know your limits. As a unit, you can achieve positive change even if you have to sacrifice your own body. It’s not right for us to be treated unjustly just because we’re prisoners, many innocent until proven guilty – we should be treated as such. Our sacrifice may be small, but in the future and for those behind us, the effects will be loud. They will have the changes we fought for.”

Eric Rivera:

“I’m in solidarity with you as someone from New York myself. We share the same sentiments, the struggle is the same, and the underlying issues are the same. Follow the money in any situation – it’s a litany of greed, and these institutions need to be held to account. We stand with you because it’s the

same everywhere.”

Odell Jones:

“If you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything. This is as good a cause as any. If you’re not going to strike, don’t discourage those who are.”

Jeremy Daniels:

“If we don’t stand for something, we’ll fall for anything. Strikers in Rikers can be heard all the way over here on the west coast. Keep making loud noise. I get strength from knowing about strikers on the other side of the country.”

Timothy Phillips:

“My friends and brothers, I hope this finds you well, or at the very least, brings you some solace. My name is Timothy and I am currently incarcerated at the Santa Rita Jail near Oakland, California. I just recently learned of your organized efforts to raise awareness to your valid grievances. I want to assure you that you guys are not alone and many of us here in Northern California stand with you during this perpetual struggle. We understand what you are going through – battling the wanton treatment and inhumane conditions inflicted by jail authorities. Keep in mind that personally speaking, I believe that hunger strikes can be a viable form of peaceful protest. I would humbly offer this added piece of advice: whichever tactics or strategies you undertake, it is vital to “organize” – which entails: effective communication, solidarity, support, and maybe some mutual compromising. The old adage, “teamwork makes the dream work” is very real! I want to close by letting all of you know that you are in our sincere thoughts and prayers. Our community activists and supporters are keeping us updated regularly as to how you guys are doing.

And finally, I’d like to share this very pertinent quote from Dr. King: “the true measure of a man is not where he stands during comfort and convenience, but rather where he stands during crisis and controversy.”



One of the 11 jails located on Rikers Island, New York City



Pendleton Crisis: Legionnaires Outbreak Kills Prisoner, Infects More

from *IDOCWatch.org*, Dec. 2021

On December 1st the Indiana Department of Correction confirmed an outbreak of Legionnaire’s Disease at the Pendleton Correctional Facility in Pendleton, IN. As of December 6th, one prisoner has been confirmed to have died and at least five others infected.

Legionnaire’s Disease is caused by infection with the Legionella bacteria which finds its way into the lungs through aerosolized water droplets. The exact site of contamination in the prison remains unknown and the Indiana Department of Health and Center for Disease Control are currently investigating.

The IDOC has been less than forthcoming with information about the outbreak. Countless people with loved ones at Pendleton have had little success in getting the IDOC to respond to concerns over safety and prevention at the facility. The IDOC claims that filters have been placed on shower heads to prevent aerosolizing of the bacteria. However, these measures do not account for potentially contaminated water droplets being spread through the use of water faucets and toilet flushing. No indication has been given as to what the plan will be for these vectors of infection.

Concerningly, IDOC Watch is aware of reports from inside the prison that as early as September 28th, inmates were alerted to a problem with water quality but were told that the risk was minimal. However, inmates reported that CO’s began drinking bottled water at that time, while bottled water was not made available to the inmates.

At this point it is unclear when the IDOC was aware of the problem or how large the outbreak currently is. What is known is that safety measures at this time are wholly insufficient.

We are demanding more information from the IDOC and state of Indiana. We are requesting that supporters call:

IDOC Commissioner Robert Carter

(317) 232-5711

Governor Eric Holcomb

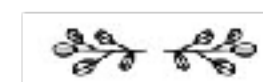
(317)232-4567

Indiana Department of Health

(317)233-1325

Please share your concerns with these agencies and demand information on the current state of the outbreak and safety measure being taken.

We would appreciate if people share whatever information they have to idocwatch@riseup.net or fill out the contact form on idocwatch.org.



LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE

Legionnaires' (LEE-juh-nares) disease is a very serious type of pneumonia (lung infection) caused by bacteria called *Legionella*. If you develop pneumonia symptoms and may have been exposed to *Legionella*, see a doctor right away. Be sure to mention if you have used a hot tub, spent any nights away from home, or stayed in a hospital in the last two weeks.

Legionnaires' Disease Can Cause Pneumonia Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of Legionnaires' disease can include:

- ▶ Cough
- ▶ Shortness of breath
- ▶ Muscle aches
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Fever

Doctors use chest x-rays or physical exams to check for pneumonia. Your doctor may also order tests on a sample of urine and sputum (phlegm) to see if your lung infection is caused by *Legionella*.

Legionnaires' Disease Is Serious, but Can Be Treated with Antibiotics

Legionnaires' disease is treated with antibiotics (drugs that kill bacteria in the body). Most people who get sick need care in a hospital but make a full recovery. However, about 1 out of 10 people who get Legionnaires' disease will die from the infection.

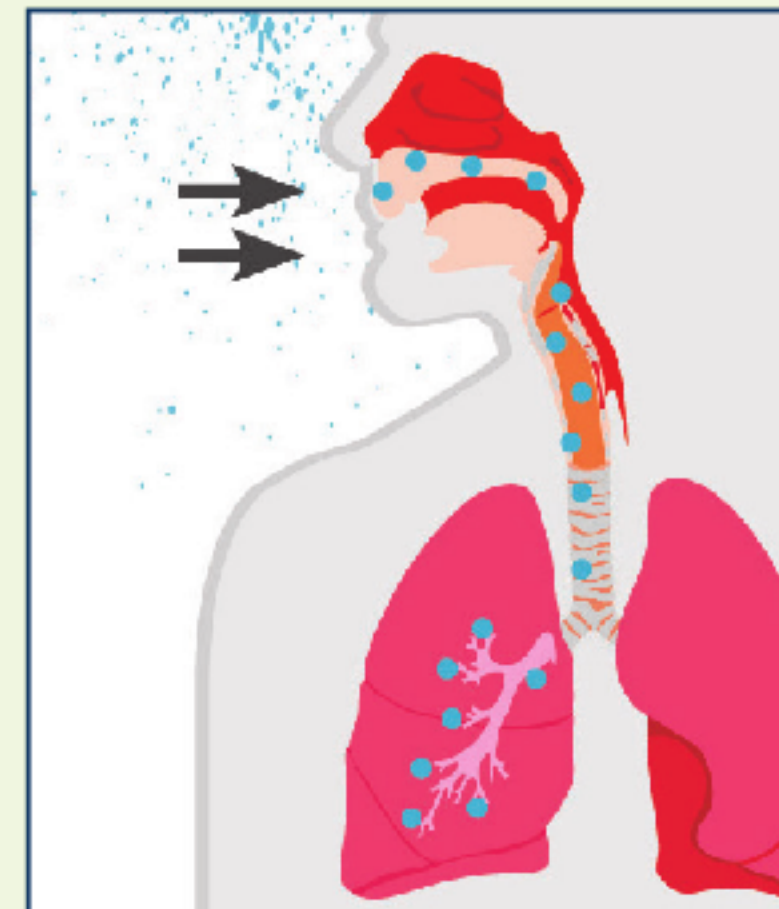
Certain People Are at Increased Risk for Legionnaires' Disease

Most healthy people do not get Legionnaires' disease after being exposed to *Legionella*. Being 50 years or older or having certain risk factors can increase your chances of getting sick. These risk factors include:

- ▶ Being a current or former smoker
- ▶ Having chronic lung disease, such as emphysema or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- ▶ Having a weakened immune system from diseases like cancer, diabetes, or kidney failure
- ▶ Taking medication that weakens your immune system

Legionella Are Usually Spread through Water Droplets in the Air

In nature, *Legionella* live in fresh water and rarely cause illness. In man-made settings, *Legionella* can grow if water is not properly maintained. These man-made water sources become a health problem when small droplets of water that contain the bacteria get into the air and people breathe them in. In rare cases, someone breathes in *Legionella* while they are drinking water and it "goes down the wrong pipe" into the lungs. In general, people do not spread Legionnaires' disease to other people.







Legionnaires' disease, a type of severe pneumonia, is caused by breathing in small droplets of water that contain *Legionella*.

Common Sources of Infection

Outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease are often associated with large or complex water systems, like those found in hospitals, hotels, and cruise ships.

The most likely sources of infection include:

-  Water used for showering (potable water)
-  Cooling towers (parts of large air conditioning systems)
-  Decorative fountains
-  Hot tubs

The Sons of Light: The White Supremacist Guard Organization that Caused the 1985 Indiana State Reformatory Uprising

from IDOCWatch.org, Feb 2022

On February 1st, 1985, a prisoner rebellion at the Indiana State Reformatory (ISR; now Pendleton CF) shook the Indiana Department of Correction. Prisoners angry about guards beating a well-loved and respected jailhouse lawyer named Lokmar Abdul Wadood Yazidi, s/n Lincoln Love, confronted the guards in attempt to get into the Captain's office where Lokmar was being beaten with an illegal baton/bat while unconscious and in chains, after having been brutalized by a cell extraction squad (prison SWAT) on the Maximum Restraint Unit.

Had it not been for the heroic actions of those prisoners, especially John "Balagoon" Cole and Christopher "Naeem" Trotter, Lokmar would have been beaten to death by the guards, and others on the Maximum Restraint Unit would likely have been brutalized, if not killed, as well. In court proceedings and investigations following the uprising, it was revealed that the cell extraction team that attacked Lokmar had explicit orders to kill him.

After confronting guards and attempting to get through to the Captain's office in order to rescue Lokmar, Balagoon & Naeem were forced to take other guards hostage and take refuge in a cellhouse in order to survive, as all the guards at the prison were now coming after them to kill them. They ended up leading the take-over of J cellhouse, which lasted for 16 hours and ended in negotiations after the State Police, DOC administrators,

National Guard, and local & Indianapolis media had gotten involved and come to the prison. During the take-over prisoners stood together in solidarity, due to the fact that they had already been organizing in collective self-defense against the guards brutality, through an organization they called the Black Dragons, which the guards mischaracterized as criminal gang. The prisoners issued a list of demands during the cellhouse takeover pertaining to the guards' systematic racism, overcrowding, and lack of recreation. The DOC commissioner was fired as a result of the uprising, and some of the guards involved in the beating of Lokmar were sentenced to federal prison.

John "Balagoon" Cole and Christopher "Naeem" Trotter remain in prison to this day, having been sentenced to 88 years and 142 years, respectively, for their leadership of the rebellion. They have served 33 and 20 years in solitary confinement, also respectively, in retaliation and as

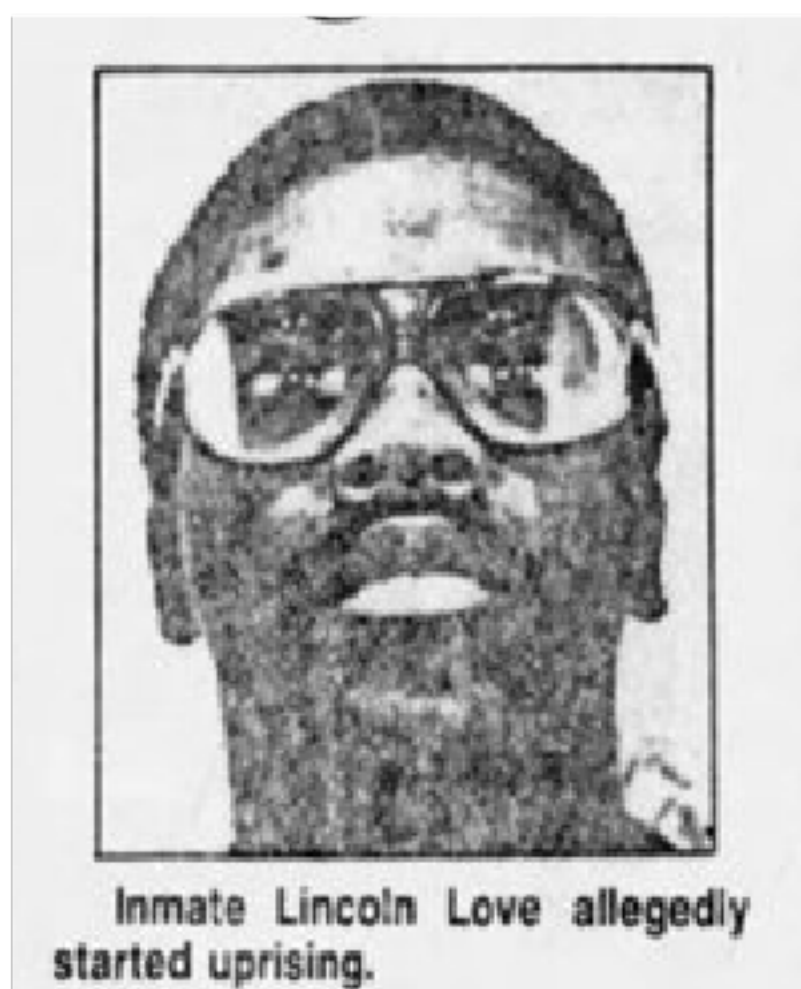
- 468 Q Are you aware of any white racially motivated groups that any of the guards belong to?
- A Sons of Light.
- 469 Q And what do you know about them?
- A It's a group of Lieutenants, Captains, Sergeants that belong to this that use the KKK literature and the same type of rituals. They are a splinter group. They're not affiliated, they don't pay the dues. It's developed solely for the institution.
- 470 Q What's their purpose?
- A Well, they hate niggers, they hate Jews, and they hate Catholics. That's what was explained to me.
- 471 Q Who explained it to you?
- A Well, you have Lt. Burke, which was the Reverend. He recruits the--
- 472 Q Excuse me. He's the Reverend?
- A The Reverend is the man who tries to--he'll talk to you about joining the Klan.
- 473 Q He's the Reverend of the Sons of Light?
- A Right.
- 474 Q He's not the Reformatory Reverend?
- A No. No.
- 475 Q Okay. Go ahead.

Excerpt from ISR guard Michael Richardson's deposition

extra punishment for their leadership of prisoner resistance. At the time of the uprising, they both had less than two years remaining to serve in prison.

Balagoon and Naeem were wrongfully convicted, and all of their subsequent appeals have been denied. The judge and prosecution in their 1987 trial worked together to prevent the jury from learning of the existence of the Sons of Light white supremacist organization, a Ku Klux Klan “splinter group” organized specifically among the guards of the Indiana State Reformatory, and their systematic brutality against any Black prisoner who refused to be dehumanized. An ISR guard, Michael Richardson, who had been stabbed during the uprising attempted to shed light on the existence of the Sons of Light organization and their practices, by giving information to the Indiana State Police and the FBI prior to the uprising and in a deposition to the defense attorneys prior to the 1987 trial of those targeted as the leadership of the uprising. Richardson’s testimony during the trial was intentionally curtailed by the prosecution and judge every time he tried to speak on the Sons of Light and the pattern of brutal beatings of Black inmates at ISR that had provoked the rebellion.

ISR guard Michael Richardson’s testimony, confirming that a formally organized, explicitly white supremacist organization called the Sons of Light existed among the guards, including at the highest levels, has never reached the media or the general public, until this day. IDOC Watch has obtained a copy of the deposition he gave to the defense attorneys prior to the 1987 trial. The most relevant section of the document, describing the Sons of Light, is excerpted. Read the entire document at IDOCWatch.org.



True Leap Press Has a New Address

from TrueLeapPress.com

True Leap Press is a radical publishing collective with members in Illinois and New York. We promote Black intellectual struggle and advocate for the building of mass-based, autonomous projects for antiracist, anticapitalist, and antipatriarchal political education.

The address for True Leap Press Zine Distro has changed. Since 2017, the Leap has provided free print political education materials for imprisoned people engaging in abolitionist study. We have over 200 titles in our new 2022 catalog. We do not keep a mailing list, as literature is only available upon request. If you would like a new catalog for their 2022 literature selections, please reach out to

True Leap Press Zine Distro

P.O. Box 6045

Concord, CA 94524



On the Murder of Richard “Bucky” Canada by Westville CF Guards, June 9, 2021

from IDOCWatch.org, Jan. 2022

Richard Canada, affectionately known as Bucky to his fellow prisoners, spent the last moments of his life handcuffed to a wheelchair in a holding cell at Westville Correctional Facility. Canada was well-known at Westville for his boisterous personality, and his refreshingly obnoxious sense of humor. He was also known for his addiction to synthetic cannabinoids. Synthetic cannabinoids, also known as Spice, kate, or tune descended on the Indiana prison system with the same virulence as COVID, inundating a prison system already saturated with drugs. This new breed of synthetic cannabinoid is frequently laced with dangerous opioids, such as fentanyl. The deadly concoction has fueled countless deaths, overdoses, and a crippling wave of addiction.

Blinded by the primary motives of economic exploitation and coordinated oppression, the Indiana Department of Corrections remains ill-equipped to meet this new threat. Canada had triumphed over his addiction in the months preceding his death. With his mind unclouded by Spice, his personality shined even brighter. He was reaching the end of his prison sentence and frequently spoke of the beautiful life he was excited to be returning home to. For months he successfully maintained his sobriety, until his transfer to the Westville General Services Complex, GSC. GSC is known to be

lawless, violent, and drug-ridden. It is frequently weaponized against inmates as a form of coercion and punishment. Those who vex the administration are transferred to GSC where rehabilitative opportunities are sparse, and negative influences are rampant.

On the final day of his life, surrounded by temptations, Canada succumbed, purchasing and smoking a stick of Spice. He was assisted to his bed area by other inmates, where he remained quietly in a Spice-induced stupor. According to the witnesses, the officer assigned to 6 Center noticed Canada's lethargic state and reported it to the Sgt. Brazil, who immediately responded with GSC's tune squad. The Indiana Department of Corrections has at its disposal millions of dollars specifically allocated by the Indiana legislature for drug abuse treatment under Indiana Code 11-8-2-11. Despite the availability of these funds and the intensity of the synthetic drug epidemic, Westville made no move to meaningfully increase substance abuse treatment. Instead, the administration formed and mobilized tune squads. Correctional officers with a propensity for violence and a reputation for excessive force were assigned to these squads and tasked as first responders for Spice overdoses.

Armed with tasers or OC spray and clad in black gloves with reinforced polymer knuckles, these squads would burst onto a unit, clear the wing of all inmates, citing safety and security concerns for clearing wings. The true motive was to eliminate potential witnesses to excessive force.

Inmates experiencing a Spice overdose, commonly referred to as "pranking out," were routinely handcuffed and viciously assaulted. Those housed on upper floors unfortunate enough to provoke the higher up responding tune squads were "taken on flight," a term used for throwing handcuffed inmates down a flight of stairs. It was one of these flights that brought Canada's life to a tragic end. According to eyewitness reports, Sgt. Brazil responded 6 Center with GSC's tune squad in tow. The squad was comprised of Lt. Crittenden, Correctional Officer Yosuf, Sgt. Diaz, Sgt. Brazil, and a yet to be identified caucasian correctional officer. They made a B-line to the bunk area, snatching a lethargic, but compliant, Canada from his bed and placing him in cuffs. He repeatedly asked why he was being taken as he was physically escorted to the stairwell by Officer Youssef and the other unidentified caucasian officer. At least one prisoner witnessed Canada as he was thrown down the flight of stairs where he struck his head on a jagged outcropping of broken tile. The impact resulted in massive head trauma. A frantic Sgt. Brazil burst back onto the unit asking for towels. Inmates readily surrendered their personal towels, believing they were necessary to render medical aid to Canada. After he was removed from the scene, they watched in dismay as their towels were used to mop up the victim's blood in an attempt to conceal this crime scene.

Canada was eventually life-lined from the prison due to the

extent of his injuries. In solidarity, inmates sprung into action, attempting to contact his family. The administration responded just as quickly, cutting off WiFi access to tablets and electronically blocking phone access to the entire General Services Complex. This communications blackout remained in effect for three to four days. It was later confirmed by the GSC complex director that the communications blackout was in direct response to inmates' attempts to contact the Canada family and the media.

Westville's Office of Investigation and Intelligence Division conducted a cursory investigation. All inmate witnesses were interviewed, yet the staff involved were not disciplined nor charged for Canada's murder. Instead, some of the staff involved were reassigned to different posts. It is worthy of note that immediately prior to the homicide, Lt. Crittenden and Sgt. Brazil had been reassigned to GSC after assaulting a handcuffed inmate in the educational complex.

Bucky's death is one of numerous unsolved homicides committed at Westville Correctional Facility. These homicides were not committed by prisoners with a perceived propensity for violence. These homicides and violent assaults are routinely committed by IDOC staff members, emboldened by a sadistic, us-against-them culture. Their victims are believed to be without value and voiceless. It is our duty to be a voice for the silenced, a lighthouse for those in darkness. Silence and inaction is acquiescence.



Indiana's Neo-Slave Trade: Wage Theft in IDOC Public/Private Partnerships

from IDOCWatch.org

Article 1 Section 19 of the Indiana Constitution mandates that the penal code shall be grounded upon the principles of reformation and not vindictive justice. But what happens when those tasked with creating the laws necessary to make reformation possible choose to systematically undermine them? Let's take it a step further. What happens when those duly elected to construct and uphold the law are knowingly complicit in the willful violation of federal law? What message does that send to the men and women seeking rehabilitation, their families, and society at large?

In May of 2013 the Indiana legislature demonstrated their contempt and disregard for the law with its passage of House Enrolled Act 1334. ATA 1334 specifically prevents inmates from challenging IDOC's systematic theft of wages guaranteed under federal law. The legislature's coordination with DOC's racketeering activities demonstrate the true spirit of the Thirteenth Amendment and lawmakers' complicity in the economically motivated enslavement of Indiana's incarcerated.

Arvinmeritor operates the brake shop at the Correctional Industrial Facility (CIF). The brake shop is known as a joint

venture program, a collaboration between IDOC's Indiana Correctional Industries and a private business or organization. Any inmate who has ever been housed at CIF knows the brake shop is the very epitome of a sweatshop. Inmates work 10 to 12 hour days manually refurbishing brake shoes for 45 to 55 cents an hour. It is arduous, injury-prone work, where if you're not promptly incapacitated, the carcinogenic brake dust inhaled on a daily basis will do you in later.

Many inmates are forced to work there either to pay a 90-day time cut in exchange for 2 years of labor or for the 70 to one hundred dollar a month income which barely covers an inmate's expenses. When there is a shortage of brake shop workers, CIF officials randomly sign inmates up. Those unlucky enough to have to face the draft have two choices. Work, or receive a major conduct report.

As a participant in Indiana Correctional Industries' joint venture program, federal law mandates any inmates employed through joint venture programs receive prevailing wage for their labor. See Title 18 United States Code 1761 subsection c. Indiana lawmakers acknowledge this requirement in Indiana Code 11-10-7-3, "Offender compensation," which states any agreement entered into between the Commissioner and a private person under this chapter must provide that an offender employed by a private person under this chapter will be paid at least the prevailing wage for that type of work as established by the Department of Workforce Development including applicable wage increases for overtime work. IDOC administrative and operational policies further acknowledge these federal and state directives. Despite the above referenced laws the highest paid brake shop worker makes just north of a dollar per hour. The prevailing wage for brake refurbishers in Indiana is north of \$11 per hour.

In 2013 CIF inmates Chuck Adams and Charles Howard refused to be robbed a moment longer. Together they filed an action in court seeking compensation for their stolen wages under Title 22 of the then Indiana Code. When caught with their hand in the proverbial cookie jar, both IDOC and Arvinmeritor scrambled but Adams and Howard had the law squarely on their side. With no viable counter argument, lawyers for the two agencies searched for technicalities to thwart Adams and Howard's fight for redress. DOC officials understood if they lost the case, it would open the floodgates for many similar legal actions resulting in millions of dollars of lost profit. Most importantly, it would signal the end of that form of economic exploitation of Indiana prisoners.

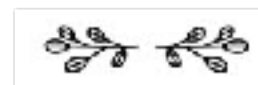
At the directions of DOC officials, state representative [Jeff] Thompson authored ATA 1334, which was introduced in an emergency session. ATA 1334 precluded Indiana inmates from filing legal actions challenging IDOC's blatant violation of Indiana state wage compensation. With full knowledge of its illegal nature it passed both house and senate and was signed into law by the Governor on May 9, 2013. It is incontrovertible

that this law was meant to eliminate any legal remedies for inmates to obtain legal relief for the systematic embezzlement of their hard earned wages.

After a protracted legal battle, the Indiana Supreme Court defeated Adams' action on a manufactured technicality. It ruled Adams did not have a private right of action to seek relief. In layman's terms, they were saying even though the law governing wage compensation was enacted to benefit those subject to Indiana law, because the statute didn't specifically state inmates could use it to obtain relief that it didn't apply to them. The decision defies logic. It was demoralizing to inmates department wide. The decision signaled that while the law could be used to tear prisoners' lives apart it wasn't applicable in helping them put it back together. It demonstrated that the corporations benefiting from DOC's joint venture partnerships are the legislature's true constituencies and that the law wasn't meant to benefit the inmates making an honest living for their struggling families.

Many inmates view Adams' attempt as futile. It reinforced feelings of hopelessness in the face of a seemingly powerful foe. Despite the dismissal of this legal action, his case was a resounding success. He didn't succeed at obtaining his hard-earned wages but he did succeed in forcing the boogeyman into the light. He exposed the prison industrial complex, its lawlessness and propensity for deceit. He exposed the depth of complicity in the economic exploitation of the incarcerated by the highest chambers of Indiana government within all three branches. The executive, legislature, and judiciary. So much for checks and balances.

I had the pleasure of meeting Chuck Adams at Wabash Valley in 2015. He had a shock of white hair and a manicured white beard. He reminded me of a trim Santa Clause, though his blue eyes were not jovial. They held a quiet strength, the strength of a fighter. In 2013 he essentially co-opted their system and weaponized it against them. Battles are not always about obtaining instant victory. Sometimes battles are meant to expose the enemy's strengths and weaknesses. The court is the DOC's achilles heel.



In Memory of Comrade Sanyika Shakur
by Bro. Khalfani Malik Khaldun #874304
from IDOCWatch.org, Feb. 2022



Recently, I received a notice and newsletter on the life and history on comrade Sanyika Shakur, who I was introduced to through our esteemed comrade and brother Shaka Shakur while we were fighting the war for survival in the trenches of the Maximum Control Complex in Westville, Indiana.

Comrade Sanyika Shakur was an extremely prolific writer and theoretician. He sent me his initial book, *The Life of a LA Crip Gang Member*. We began to exchange a series of political correspondence that led to a very strong comradeship between New Afrikan political prisoners.

We began to share ideas on establishing the Family and Friends Campaign to Free Bro. Khalfani Malik Khaldun. Sanyika Shakur was the epitome of a souljah for all oppressed people. He helped me get publicity on the state of Indiana charging me with the death of a prison guard in 1994. Through his guidance, I was brought in contact with a lot of radical left wing organizations who still to this day lend me their support and extend me a loving shoulder to lean on from time to time.

Sanyika also helped me perfect our definition of today's political prisoner that became politicized since entering prison.

So, once I read the report of this brave and courageous freedom fighter's transition to the ancestors, I was extremely shocked and saddened by his loss. Many would like to write this comrade off because he could never stay out of these plantations for very long.

However, these same critics would never take the time to learn this comrade's struggle. A life overshadowed by gangs and an unshakable drug addiction, yet he still managed to protect and

serve the people and his community. With a perfect constancy he wrote powerful essays that helped to educate the public. As to what was really going on in the everyday lives of men and women in U S plantations. His work and solidarity with other long time prisoners of war and political prisoners awakened many.

I have to say that my life was made better having that comrade in it. The prison industrial complex's entire mission to destroy all organizations in amerikkka who pose the greatest threat to national security is being won by them using these prisons as weapons of mass destruction. They are keeping us in these places by using conduct reports to rob us of our earned good time, which ultimately, disrupts our release from prison. Having comrades like Sanyika Shakur, Shaka Shakur, Lincoln "Lokmar" Love, Balagoon, Israel, and so many more on the path to guide us was a great blessing.

These men I will always honor and consider to be the examples of new afrikan manhood, in the same tradition of Comrade George Jackson. The extraordinary men of valor. I pledge to continue the work these brothers taught me when I was just in the infancy stages of my political transformation. I now ask our ancestors to guide our comrade Sanyika Shakur's spirit to the paradise his service earned. I will never forget you, Sanyika Shakur. Until we meet again. I will extend to you a 21 gun salute.

All power to the people!
A luta continual
Uhuru Sasa!



Writing to Prisoners

Since prisoners are often transferred between facilities, we won't print addresses that can quickly become outdated. Instead, we'll direct you to the Indiana DOC "Offender Database" on their website. You can look up their current location with their DOC# (listed on Table of Contents). We use the number because the names they use are often not the state name that the DOC lists them under. And then look up the mailing address for that facility. Correspondence and engagement with what they've written here is welcome.

Some tips for writing to prisoners: Be clear about your intentions. Share something of yourself and also be curious to learn more about them. If you're not sure where to start, reference ideas they have written about. Don't say anything sketchy or incriminating for yourself or others. Assume that everything you write is being copied and read by prison administrators. Use only blue or black ink on white, lined paper in plain, white envelopes. Keep in mind that prison is, in many ways, the epitome of toxic masculinity and saturated with problematic and harmful ideas and social norms. Prisoners often will not have the latest language or frameworks for social justice. Be generous and seek to understand their different experiences, but also don't be afraid to engage and share your own experiences.

If you prefer to correspond online, you can set up an account at web.connectnetwork.com



IDOC Watch has a Patreon
patreon.com/idocwatch

IDOC Watch is a prison abolition group based in Indiana that works to expose and end abuses by the Indiana Department of Corrections, build prisoner power, and strengthen solidarity between those who are locked up and those who aren't. We practice prisoner-led abolition, which is a strategic tendency within the abolitionist movement that prioritizes connections between organizers inside and outside the prisons, jails, and other forms of carceral monitoring, and formerly incarcerated people. We believe that the most effective strategies and tactics for overcoming the prison industrial complex will be informed by the experiences of people who have suffered through the system directly.

All funds we receive through Patreon will be put directly to covering our everyday expenses and building toward future actions that advance the struggle. Phone calls, printing, mailing, and covering emergencies inside comrades have are all expensive but integral to the work we do.

TIME/CUT

PO Box 3246
Bloomington, IN 47402

timecutindiana@riseup.net

**Chapters and associates in Indianapolis, South Bend,
Evansville, Bloomington, and Gary**