

TIME/CUT

Indiana Prison Newsletter

Issue 5 • Summer 2021

ACLU lawsuit for prisoners
at Miami

Labor Exploitation of
Women Prisoners

Black August

Struggle Against Organized
White Supremacy

Rally for Clemency

& 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.

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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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ACLU files lawsuit on behalf of six Miami Correctional inmates over 'brutal & dangerous' conditions

from WRTV.com

by Michelle Kaufman

BUNKER HILL — The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana has filed lawsuits on behalf of six inmates who they say were kept in isolation and subjected to “brutal and dangerous conditions that amounted to cruel and unusual punishment.”

The six lawsuits name Warden William Hyatte and Deputy Warden George Payne Jr as defendants.

All six men were in the restrictive housing unit, where prisoners are placed as the result of disciplinary sanctions or for administrative purposes. The lawsuit says prisoners in restrictive housing spend all their time in their cells, except when they are released for a shower or solitary recreation.

Each lawsuit alleges cell windows had a piece of sheet metal over them that did not let in light. Others allege they were cut by broken glass inside their cells or shocked by live electrical wires hung from the ceiling.

“For the first two weeks that he was in the cell, Mr. Parish did not have a television or tablet and had nothing that could generate light. It was pitch dark,” the lawsuit filed on Anthony Parish’s behalf said. “After two weeks he did receive his television and tablet. But the light that they gave off was inadequate to illuminate the cell, which remained dark at all times ... Being in the dark for that length of time caused him to have a great deal of anxiety from which he still suffers.”

Another inmate, Jeremy Blanchard, was in a cell with the sheet metal cover and a broken light, which the lawsuit says left him in near-total darkness for more than a month aside from when he was let out for a shower.

“At all relevant times defendants were aware that many of the restrictive housing cells had broken windows and no operable light source. Yet, these obvious problems were not remedied,” the lawsuit reads. “Defendants’ solution to the broken windows was not to replace the windows, but to cover the windows with sheet metal so that no light came through the windows... Placing a person in prolonged, isolated darkness for an extended period is a form of torture.”

The lawsuit filed on behalf of inmate Gerald Reed says he was hit in the head by a broken light fixture, “causing painful injuries from which he continues to suffer.”

“The Eighth Amendment requires that incarcerated people must receive the minimal civilized measures of life’s necessities — a baseline standard that officials at Miami Correctional Facility are consistently failing to meet,” said Kenneth J. Falk, legal director of the ACLU of Indiana.

WRTV reached out to the Indiana Department of Corrections, who said it does not comment on pending litigation.



Statement from the Vaughn 17 on Abuse, Neglect, and Solitary Confinement at SCI-Phoenix

from AMWenglish.com

The following statement was issued in coordination with Philly Anti-Repression on June 1, 2021 by members of the Vaughn 17 and other incarcerated community members subjected to abuse, neglect, and solitary confinement at SCI-Phoenix.

For those who are new to the Vaughn 17’s struggle for self-liberation, here is some context: On February 1, 2017, incarcerated community members confined in Delaware’s largest prison, the James T. Vaughn Correctional Center, staged an uprising and took over Building C. Prisoners took guards hostage and called the media, bringing international attention to the prison’s overuse of solitary confinement and demanded humane living conditions, rehabilitation, and education programs. Phone negotiations lasted 18 hours between prisoners and prison officials.

One correctional officer died during the uprising and 18 prisoners were charged with multiple counts of murder, rioting, conspiracy and kidnapping. One of the original eighteen suspects in the rebellion turned and became the State’s star witness; another committed suicide.

Since 2017, participants of the Building C takeover, now known as “the Vaughn 17,” have endured ongoing retaliation by the State. This has included transfers across state lines to Pennsylvania and long-term solitary confinement under the euphemistic measures of “Intensive Management Units” and “Restricted Release.” Prolonged solitary confinement (more than 15 days) is torture.

To learn more about the Vaughn 17 visit: vaughn17.com and follow their supporters and defense group on Twitter and Instagram.

June 1, 2021

This message is on behalf of the Vaughn 17 and others held in solitary confinement under the PA DOC. We are all already at or are about to be transferred to SCI Phoenix or SCI Greene, where the PA DOC has dedicated a building at each facility solely to warehouse people in long term solitary



confinement (and has labeled it the Intensive Management Unit, or the IMU).

Here, we are housed in our cells with only 5 hours of recreation per week, no programs, no schooling, no jobs, or anything else involving rehabilitation. We have been housed in this way (some completely misconduct-free) with no way out.

Restricted Release is the label the PA DOC gives a person when they want to warehouse them in long term solitary confinement. The way Restricted Release is designed is meant to break a person down on all levels.

First it destroys you mentally, then physically, then emotionally, leaving most of the affected individuals hallucinating, contemplating self-harm or suicide, or actually carrying it out.

There is nothing productive or humane about locking up a human being in a box and letting them out for 5 hours a week. If PA DOC chooses to go into rehabilitating people and help them to become better human beings, then long term solitary confinement has to go.

– The Vaughn 17



Attention Private Businesses Operating Inside IDOC Facilities

by IDOCWatch Correspondent in Madison Correctional Facility

The Indiana Department of Corrections has profit making cover business called Indiana Correctional Industries (ICI, previously Prison Enterprise Network or PEN). With ICI, the accounting of funds, profits and budgets are hidden from the state’s budget allocation of funds. In as much, profits from leasing prison spaces to private businesses, from leasing incarcerated laborers, or from selling prison-made goods are hidden during budgetary money allocation schedules I.C. 11-10-7, and 11-10-8 reveals that cash assets in excess of \$1,500,000 go to a “special” or “disposable” fund. ICI earns so much in profits it exceeds \$1,500,000 annually in cash assets. ICI takes legal cover as a state agency from incarcerated suits and as a private business entity from all others. ICI exploits the incarcerated in IDOC jurisdictions,

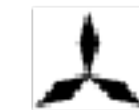
as the profit-making extension of IDOC.

Federal law mandates certain laws and rules for private business using prison labor to manufacture or package goods sold on open markets. Without such rules, unfair trade would be occurring for businesses who use cheap or free incarcerated labor. ICI currently has joint-business operations that do not adhere to these laws. Neither are laws requiring comparable wages paid to the incarcerated being adhered to (I.C. 11-10-7, 11-10-8, and US section 18 1671-1672).

Recently, a private California business lost a partnership with a sponsor, Tyra Banks, because of its association with using incarcerated labor. Any private business in Indiana using incarcerated labor, demand that ICI pays its laborers minimum wages or higher (“comparable wages”) as dictated in law and policy. IDOC had the state legislature to create exemptions disallowing any incarcerated person from making a wage claim. Again, these acts further impact the marginal populations, in this case, female incarcerated laborers. Male ICI workers and joint business partnership are paid minimum wages. No female ICI joint business partnerships pay female workers equally. Exposing the guilty companies and management will be the only way the female voice can be heard.

Pay female incarcerated workers fair and equal pay. Turning a blind-eye is unacceptable!

-Anonymous



Survivors of Police Torture are Still in Prison. Here’s How to Help Them Get Out.

by Elijah Gerald Reed as told to Troi Valles

My name is Elijah Gerald Reed. I’m the son of Armanda Shackelford, and I was just released from prison after serving 31 years for a crime that I didn’t commit.

In 1990, I was told the Chicago police were looking for me for a crime committed a year earlier. I knew I had nothing to do with it so I went willingly to the police station to straighten things out. When I went, I was arrested at the station and then taken to Area 3 Homicide.

I was held overnight. All through the night, detectives asked me the same questions over and over again. I refused to answer. I wanted my phone call and I wanted a lawyer. Whenever I did answer, telling them I had no knowledge of what I was being accused of, they were unhappy.

That was when the intimidation went from being verbal to physical. I was in their hands — this was their place. I was in their house. Anything they wanted to do to me they

could. And they did. I was beaten on by the detectives. I was beaten so badly, that a metal rod that was in my thigh, surgically placed there following a gunshot wound from years before, was snapped, with the screws shaking out of place.

I got beat on a lot coming up, but I could handle that. What made me break was when they talked about my momma.

“You’re gonna send your mom to an early grave,” they told me. “She’s gonna die, and it’ll be your fault.”

I would do anything for my momma. Her death was not something I could live with. So, under extreme physical and psychological duress, I signed a false confession.

They used that document and their own testimony to convict me of a double murder that I had no part in whatsoever. I was sentenced to natural life. I didn’t know if I would ever breathe free air again. I was 26 years old.

As it turns out, I was not the only one subjected to this treatment.

There are many survivors of police torture in the state of Illinois. Jon Burge was a detective and a police commander from 1972 to 1991. In that time, he taught officers how to use torture to extract confessions from innocent people so the Chicago Police Department (CPD) could tell the public they were solving murders.

Newsletter Graphic

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But the torture is much broader than Jon Burge and his Midnight Crew. Police regularly used intimidation — whether physical, mental or emotional — to get people to falsely confess or to accuse others of things that they know did not happen.

The city of Chicago publicly apologized for Jon Burge’s use of torture when they passed the reparations ordinance in 2015. However, there was still no pathway for survivors’ prompt release from prison. An ongoing research project by the Campaign to Free Incarcerated Survivors of Police Torture estimates hundreds of survivors, many of whom are still in prison — more than 30 years after many of them endured torture.

The Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission (TIRC) was established in 2009 to “gather evidence about a claim of torture occurring in Cook County, and then determine whether there is sufficient credible evidence of torture to merit judicial review.” Its purpose is right there in the name:

relief. The commission is supposed to provide relief to the tortured, innocent men and women behind prison walls.

In 2018, Judge Thomas Gainer used the “credible claim” of torture in his decision to overturn my conviction. It’s not just the courts. TIRC claims give legitimacy to someone’s claim of torture. It can help with their clemency or even help them have their sentence pardoned or commuted by the governor — which is how I was eventually able to finally get out of prison. My sentence was commuted, and I’m still in court fighting to prove my innocence.

But because of the limitations of the TIRC Act, there are many men and women who will never be able to get credible claims on technicalities alone. The TIRC’s definition of torture is much more narrow than the definition of torture given by the United Nations — a definition which the United States has signed on to.

For example, if someone is tortured into accusing you of a crime you didn’t commit, by the UN definition, you have been tortured.

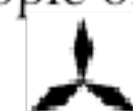
The more narrow TIRC definition is more likely to leave those with credible claims in prison. It’s time to update the TIRC definition so that the falsely accused and tortured don’t fall through the cracks.

TIRC, unfortunately, has limited resources. It took six years for them to process my claim. Others have been waiting up to a decade. A person could easily be innocent and sit in prison for years. Having to wait all that time just to finally get your case “dismissed” on some technicalities could tear a person apart. Most people in prison don’t have a momma like mine — Armanda Shackelford — outside of prison always advocating for them. This is their one chance to see some justice.

The main aspect that set me apart from many still in prison was that my momma was in my corner for years making the case for me and making sure that my case and I weren’t forgotten. Justice shouldn’t depend on my good fortune that my momma was a fighter willing to go up against a corrupt system.

I am home after doing 31 years in prison for a crime I didn’t commit. I achieved my freedom. But am I free? No. I’m not free because of the people I left behind. That’s why I’m using my time to fight for the TIRC amendments.

I urge the people of our city to support the TIRC amendments to avoid more miscarriages of justice carried out in the name of the people of Chicago.



The following is a sketch I authored titled Prison Demolitionism. When we talk or think about prison abolition, we often envision these cells being emptied of their human cargo. But I wonder: what will become of the physical structures of the tens of thousands of prisons once they have been abolished? I believe that if the physical structures of prisons remain, are left in place, then they will simply be repurposed by the state for other forms of human suffering. A good example of this is Angola State Prison in Louisiana. This prison was built on the remnants of an old slave plantation sometime after the abolition of plantation slavery because the plantation was abandoned but the structure of it was left in place. It was repurposed by the state for a new and more insidious form of slavery. So, this sketch presents to you my vision of what I believe to be the next stage, the advanced stage, of prison abolition, which I call prison demolitionism, which is the actual tearing down of the physical structure of prisons once they have been emptied.

One day, the last prison in the u.s. will have been demolished.

And because the police had already been abolished and because there were no other pig institutions to racially profile, harass, and arrest the people, prisons will have lost their usefulness.

As a result, prison populations will have declined significantly and prisons in the north will have been shuttered and demolished.

But, as is customary, the racist confederate-leaning states of the south will have resisted prison demolitionism but the captives still trapped behind enemy lines will have militantly rebelled.

Coordinated mass revolts will have been staged at every remaining gulag in the south. Fires will have been set. Guards taken hostage. Cellblocks taken over. And communiqués released to the media with only one demand: FREEDOM!

In widespread acts of inside/outside working class solidarity, socialists, anarchists, communists, abolitionists, human rights activists, and the loved ones of those still enslaved by the southern states will have all converged at the prison gates with clubs, hammers, bulldozers, and flamethrowers while chanting “Prison Lives Matter!” and “Free Them All!”

Upon hearing the revolutionary chants, the imprisoned souls will have pressed forward with more determination. And in this collective act of love and rage and resistance, walls and gates will have been bulldozed, the armory and guard towers seized, and slave patrol vehicles commandeered.

The imprisoned souls will have dropped their shanks, peeled off their prison blues and orange jumpsuits, and joined their free world allies near the piles of rubble where once stood concrete walls and razor-wired fences. The guards and prison officials, whose existence and livelihood depended so much on abusing, mistreating, exploiting, and brutalizing other human beings for pleasure and profit will have all been sent to reeducation camps to learn anew the human principles of healing, compassion, empathy, forgiveness, community, and love. And the newly freed souls, together with their loved ones and free world comrades, will have been standing in the parking lot, shoulder to shoulder, crying, hugging, kissing, cheering, and holding hands.

And at the designated time they all will have heaved their Molotov cocktails before marching off, only briefly looking back to take one final glimpse and raise their clinched fists at the burning smoking remnants of an evil and vile system that fractured many families and destroyed countless lives.

Interview with Jailhouse Lawyers Speak

excerpted from ItsGoingDown.org

In 2018, there was another call for a nation-wide prison strike, as solidarity actions again kicked off along-side a variety of prison work-stoppages, hunger-strikes, and beyond. The impact of this ongoing organizing, support for prisoner revolt, and the centering of the strike’s demands to abolish prison slavery, pushed abolitionist ideas into the mainstream and also helped win concessions for things like Pell grants.

Now, a call has gone out from Jailhouse Lawyers Speak,

for National Shut’Em Down demonstrations across the so-called United States outside of prisons, jails, and detention facilities.

Wanting to know more about the call-to-action, we caught up with Jailhouse Lawyers Speak to find out the thinking behind the call, how abolitionists on both sides of the walls can come together to better coordinate our struggles, and much more.

IGD [Its Going Down]: Tell us what the idea behind the ‘National Shut’Em Down Demonstrations’ is?

JLS [Jailhouse Lawyers Speak]: Abolition. But because we understand that this is a process; that we call for dismantling the prison industrial slave complex, this current push is to energize the movement towards stronger demands of closing jails, prisons, and ICE.

IGD: How has COVID-19 and its deadly impact on the incarcerated population changed how you call see the struggle on the inside?

JLS: COVID has been an entire other beast. In a way it has made prison life more burdensome. No family visits. In a few places where they started back, the access is very limited with no touching. On a national scope, COVID lock-downs have been frequent, this means limited showers and no rec. What we learned throughout this pandemic is that when it comes down to life and death options prisoners are more likely to unify for life preservation. This is why everyone saw the continued rebellious moves people in prisons were making in order to save their lives. From this energy it is our understanding that we need to message prisoners resistance as life or death.

IGD: What's been the impact of the George Floyd rebellion on what's happening on the inside?

JLS: Sadly, outside of talk, nothing much. For many of us in here, all of us was George Floyd. The only thing is that we survived and was lynched through the judicial process.

IGD: What does the way forward, from your perspective, for the abolitionist movement, look like in 2021?

JLS: This is a question that would need to brought up at a JLS Central Committee meeting. What can be stated is that the inside and outside need to build stronger bonds in communication and target jails, prison, and ICE buildings for closing. We do believe Abolitionist organizations on the outside will unify more with prisoner led Abolitionist organizations on the inside. This will help the Movement gain momentum and victories across the country.

IGD: How does JLS go about overcoming the various organizational and racial divisions that prison imposes on prisoners?

JLS: Communication is the key. Jailhouse Lawyers Speak was founded upon what we call George Jackson principles. One such principle states "Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are already dying who could be saved, that generations more will live poor butchered half-lives if you fail to act. Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution."

We aim to find common grounds in what is better known as prisoner class -interests. Trust when it's stated that this is never an easy process. Especially if we have to relay messages through snail mail or a third party. There are times when we meet with failure. We learn and keep the communication lines alive. A great deal of what we are doing today with phones as an organization on a national scene is new.

We are still developing networks around the country. Our networks are making it easy to push past some of the difficulties you all run into out there. Its probably because in prison fascism is easier to see and the oppressive hand that's smacking us all is more aggressive. Everyone in here is craving major change due to it. The only debate is always to what degree and over what grounds.

IGD: What can we do to expand these actions into women's prisons, jails, and detention centers?

JLS: We do hope a few are already planned at some. Those already in touch with the women in these areas should talk to them about areas that need to be targeted for closures. And if not for closure, at least to highlight the reason for Abolition in general. So speak to the people in those women cells, or those that have recently been released. Another important reason for the call to Shut'em Down is to help promote Abolition in the prisons. We have too many people in prison that don't even know that Abolition is even a working word or option. We have to change this. People in prison all around the nation have to be educated in what Abolition. Open the conversation up with people in these prisons. Stop the reform talks as the only options.

IGD: For everyone on the outside reading this, what would you want to communicate to them in closing, as we get closer to these days of action?

JLS: Understand that what you do matters. This nation has more people shackled to the state or government than any other nation on earth. This number of humans confined has never been known in human history. We can't reform something like that. We have to wipe it out. Not only has this beast grabbed bodies in the millions from poor area mostly, its drained resources from these disadvantaged communities. And when not drained, it has intentionally diverted these resources to more wealthier areas or pockets. All of this to us is by design. People are usually products of their environment.

This is the greatest human rights violation in our time period. We can change this by being on the right side of history. We want to thank everyone that has already committed to

stepping up and began to organizing local Shut'em Down demos in the spirit of abolition. If someone cannot agree with us on total Abolition, we should all be able to agree that this nation has too many damn prisons. Shut'em Down. It's going to take all of us to cause the shutdown of numerous prisons in this nation. This is our cause, this is our agenda. Find a local Abolitionist organization or group and get involved today.

And to the prisoncrats glaring angrily over these words, yeap we trying to tear your damn plantation system down or turn it to ashes

Black August salutations to all!
Can't stop, won't stop!



Interstate Prison Transfers as Weapons of Political Repression: My Nine Years in Domestic Exile (2021)

from RashidMod.com

by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

INTRODUCTION

In December 1990, a Special International Tribunal was held on the existence and abuse of political prisoners/prisoners of war (PP/POWs) in the United States. The tribunal was conducted both to politically educate the public and as a semi-judicial event to put the Amerikan government on public trial, in light of its persistent denial of the existence of PPs in the U.S., and its use of extreme methods of repression to suppress political activism and expression of the poor, workers, oppressed nationality people (of color), and their anti-imperialist allies.

A formal indictment was drawn up against the U.S. government by longtime movement attorneys Jan Susler and Lennox S. Hinds on behalf of nearly 100 PP/POWs held in the U.S.

That indictment enumerated several categories of political imprisonment practiced by the U.S. government. Under "Count III: Cruel, Inhumane, and Degrading Treatment," it identified Amerika's use of interstate prison transfers as a form of political repression against political prisoners. It stated:

"Retaliatory Transfers: Political prisoners, including those who have become politicized since their incarceration, are transferred from one prison to another in retaliation for the exercise of their right to free speech and/or association in the prisons, and/or to isolate them from outside friends and supporters. Most states and the federal government are now parties to an interstate compact permitting a prisoner in one state to serve his/her sentence thousands of miles

away from home and family."

POLITICIZED IN CAPTIVITY

Since 2012, I have been transferred between states under interstate compacts five times because of my political activities: from my home state of Virginia to Oregon, Texas, Florida, then back to Virginia, and now to Indiana. In my transfer to IN, I was traded with Shaka Shakur, another prisoner who has been politically active for a number of years and a thorn in the side of IN prison officials. He wrote about our swap in a 2019 article.[1]

I'd spent the first decade of my imprisonment physically warring against abuses of myself and other prisoners in the VA prison system. I was first exposed to revolutionary ideas and history, and began my political journey, in 2001, and from there began writing and working with outside activists.

In addition to writing political articles, I wrote about the abuses I and others suffered and witnessed, and contributed to developing several prisoner support organizations, national and state-based protest actions, cofounded the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (NABPP, now the Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party, or RIBPP), and other efforts.

In 2009 I was labeled a "domestic terrorist threat" in a "2009 Virginia Terrorism Threat Assessment Report," written by the VA State Police's fusion center in collaboration with the Feds. According to the report, the reason for this slanderous classification and blatant political targeting, was the proven "influence" of my writings in rallying "prisoners and their associates on the outside to unite against law enforcement and the correctional system," and my cofounding an organization (the NABPP) that sought "to continue the mission of the original Black Panthers."

With my work and publicizing prison abuses to the public, the repression I faced changed qualitatively and intensified in comparison to the repression I experienced when I'd responded with isolated physical resistance. I continued writing and organizing and was able to counter a lot of this repression by mobilizing outside supporters and through legal efforts.

I was also repeatedly targeted with trumped up criminal indictments for physical resistance to guard abuses, including multiple counts of attempted capital murder against guards and felonious assaults, all of which were thrown out in turn with me representing myself.

RETALIATORY TRANSFERS

It was then, in early 2012, that VA officials first transferred

me without prior notice or hearing to another state—Oregon—where OR officials attempted to incite racial violence against and between me and various white supremacist prison groups, many of whom I ended up politicizing. I wrote about my OR experiences in a 2013 article, “Political Struggle in the Teeth of Prison Reaction.”[2]

My political work and writings about abusive conditions continued in OR. I was subjected to repression there through the mentioned attempts to incite violence, bogus disciplinary actions, being thrown in solitary confinement, and so on, which did nothing to deter me. Consequently OR officials demanded VA to move me elsewhere.

I was then transferred in 2013 to the notoriously abusive Texas prison system, where as soon as I arrived and while still in chains and defenseless, I was assaulted by guards in riot gear, then by ranking officials (an assistant warden, major and prison guard captain), and had my dreadlocks forcibly cut off.

As soon as the restraints were removed, several physical altercations followed with their riot teams (who retreated), and I was promptly transferred from their reception center to a maximum security prison and thrown into solitary. This all occurred on my first day in the Texas prison system.[3]

As in OR, my political work and writing exposing inhumane prison conditions continued in TX. Again, repression followed which I resisted and which had no deterrent effect on me. TX officials ordered VA to remove me.

This time, during 2017, I was sent to FL, the country’s most violently and notoriously abusive prison system, and held in that state’s most notoriously abusive prisons. Prisons acknowledged by FL’s own Congressional representatives to be run by the Klan.

As Kimberly Daniels, a Black FL Congresswoman stated after touring one such FL prison and the terrifying treatment even she received from the staff in 2018, “I couldn’t sleep for two days after leaving that place. It’s a culture. That’s a city where the KKK lived. And they work in the prison.”[4] She was talking about the Reception and Medical Center in Lake Butler, FL, the first prison I was held at when I was first sent to FL in 2017.

Compared to my prior interstate placements, repression against me and abuses I witnessed were greatly increased in the FL prison system. My writing and political work also intensified—again I was not curbed.

In FL, officials also tried to hide my location from the public and outside supporters, and frustrate my ability to

communicate with the outside. I was not listed in the state’s online prisoner locator system, and people who called the prisons about me including attorneys were told I was located elsewhere.

The deliberate concealment of my location, added a particularly sinister and illegal aspect to my domestic exile, applying a German Nazi tactic of wartime political repression (enforced disappearance).

Secret detention is a form of enforced disappearance which has been a crime under international law since the 1946 judgment of the Nuremberg Tribunal against Nazi war criminals. In relevant part, that tribunal convicted Nazi Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel for his role in enforcing Adolf Hitler’s “Night and Fog” decree issued in December 7, 1941, that called for secretly detaining and disappearing people deemed a threat to German security, but “who were not to be immediately executed.”[5]

After a physical altercation between me and guards, which was prompted by me speaking out about their routinely refusing meals and assaulting a neighboring prisoner who suffered obvious mental illness, FL officials demanded that VA remove me “within five days.”

Because VA officials didn’t have any other state willing to accept me within that timeframe, they had to temporarily take me back in VA. Upon my return I was housed so as to keep me isolated from other prisoners. They admittedly feared my influence on others and exposing their mistreatments to the public.

Initially I was held alone in a completely empty cellblock in the state’s super-maximum security Red Onion State Prison. Then I was moved to the state’s death row at Sussex One State Prison, where only three death row prisoners remained. They were ordered by the warden not to communicate with me. When these prisoners openly defied the warden, I was then moved into another isolated cellblock and denied outside exercise and other basic entitlements.

Efforts to isolate me continued until VA officials finally negotiated with IN to take me. Here in IN, where I remain, officials have again tried to hide my location by not listing me in the state’s online prisoner locator system.

Upon our being traded, both Shaka Shakur and I have been targeted with various well-established “counterintelligence” tactics, calculated to discredit and isolate us and incite conflict with prisoners, including official efforts to falsely portray us as informants (putting “snitch jackets” on us) to other prisoners in these “alien” states where we are relatively unknown to other prisoners.

Snitch jacketing is a particularly sinister counterintelligence tactic commonly used by the pigs specifically to destroy independent activists and organizations. Ward Churchill wrote about it in his book on the FBI's counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) against the BPP and American Indian Movement, where he explained:

“‘Snitch-jacketing’ or ‘bad-jacketing’ refers to the practice of creating suspicion—through the spread of rumors, manufacture of evidence, etc.—that bona fide organizational members, usually in key positions, are FBI/police informers, guilty of such offenses as skimming organizational funds and the like. The purpose of this tactic was to ‘isolate and eliminate’ organizational leadership; such efforts were continued—and in some instances accelerated—when it became known that the likely outcome would be extreme violence visited upon the ‘jacketed’ individual(s). Bad-jacketing was a very commonly used technique...”[6]

Churchill went on to explain that “jacketing” people is “well known in prisons where guards are adept” at playing prisoners against each other.[7]

IN's prisons present a particularly fertile environment for officials to snitch jacket prisoners. This is because the prison culture in IN is one where officials have successfully molded prisoners to think like them, and have cultivated a value system where prisoners inherently distrust and compete with each other, but trust and look to win acceptance, favors, and approval from the pigs. The Willie Lynch mentality and peer suspicion is deeply rooted in the culture.

The prisoners are mentally softened up to not think critically or seek unity among themselves, by the prevalence of officially facilitated addiction and petty materialism, and the uncritical practice of prisoners habitually gossiping, rumormongering, prying into others' personal affairs, and readily discussing personal things and engaging in “friendly” banter with the pigs—a total reversal of the old prison and political culture of decades past. An informant culture prevails where the prisoners openly give information to officials and spread misinformation generated by them.

In any case, in IN my political work and writings have continued, alongside my having previously unavailable access to communicate with outside people using the phone via tablets we have use of inside our cells throughout the day. I have therefore been able to contribute more directly to the outside work of others and organizations I support and cofounded. I continue to experience the range of repressions, and remain undeterred as ever.

These have been the conditions I have experienced and contended with, and which prompted my ongoing domestic

exile (being bounced from state to state) over the past nine years—political oppression and COINTELPRO are alive and well in Amerika. Specific accounts of the conditions I experienced and witnessed over these years can be read in the many articles on my website, which are separated according to each state system I have been imprisoned in (see, rashidmod.com).

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!
All Power to the People!

Notes

[1] Shaka Shakur, “Shaka Shakur Traded for Rashid, Exposes ‘Domestic Exile,’ New Strategy in Prison Low Intensity Warfare,” San Francisco Bay View, May 2019, p. 3.

[2] Kevin “Rashid” Johnson, “Political Struggle in the Teeth of Prison Reaction: From Virginia to Oregon,” 2013, <http://rashidmod.com/?p=2684>

[3] I discuss this experience in Kevin “Rashid” Johnson, “The Texas Department of Cowboy Justice: A Case of Lawless Law Enforcement,” 2017, <http://rashidmod.com/?p=856>

[4] Sarah Blaskey, “‘Timothy Thomas Was Murdered,’ A Politician Says. His Prison Death is Part of an Epidemic,” Apr 30, 2018, <http://miamiherald.com/news/special-reports/florida-prisons/article209789104.html>

[5] See, Judgment of the International Military Tribunal for the Trial of Major German War Criminals, Nuremburg, Sept 30 and Oct 1, 1946 (Nuremburg Judgment), Cmd. 6964, Misc. No. (London: H.M.S.O. 1946), p 88.

[6] Ward Churchill, *Agents of Repression: The FBI's Secret War Against The Black Panther Party And The American Indian Movement* (South End Press: Cambridge, MA 2002), p. 49; See, also, the U.S. Congressional (Church Committee) investigation report condemning the FBI's COINTELPRO as unlawful; with specific reference to jacketing targets:

“The ‘snitch jacket’ technique—neutralizing a target by labeling him a ‘snitch’ or informant, so that he would no longer be trusted—was used in all [FBI counterintelligence programs]. The methods utilized ranged from having an authentic informant start a rumor about the target member, to anonymous letters or phone calls, to faked informants' reports....

“The ‘snitch jacket’ is a particularly nasty technique even when used in peaceful groups. It gains an added dimension of danger when it is used—as, indeed, it was—in groups known to have murdered informants.”

U.S. Congressional Report: *Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans*, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, Report No. 94-755 (1976), Book III, p. 46.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 211



Successful Hunger Strike in North Carolina Prison *from AMWEnglish.com*

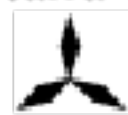
The following report was submitted to a statewide prison newsletter, from an organizer at Bertie CI, in eastern North Carolina. His name is kept anonymous because participants have faced continued retaliation.

Peace to all the comrades out there standing against oppression. After being forced to live in unclean conditions in Bertie's Restrictive Housing Unit, myself and a small group of brothers stood in rebellion against only being allowed to clean our cells once a week, and not being allowed proper PPE during the pandemic—where proper self-hygiene could mean the difference between life and death.

We engaged in a hunger strike that lasted almost six days before our demands were met and we were brought proper cleaning supplies, face masks, and hand soap. Even though we kept things peaceful, the system hates unity, and in retaliation they sent officers to strip us of our property. When we refused, officers on the Prison Emergency Response Team (PERT) hit the unit and forcibly removed and beat some of us. This led to our fellow convicts flooding their cells and refusing cell searches.

It was a small victory in an uphill battle, but through it all, it made me proud to see not just blacks but whites as well come together for a common cause that affected all of us. Together we can't lose, regardless of race or creed we in this together.

Until every cell is empty, stand up and stay strong.



Exploitative Labor Practices for Incarcerated Women

by IDOCWatch Correspondent in Madison Correctional Facility

The Indiana Department of Corrections exploits female incarcerated laborers inside of its female prisons. Female incarcerated are 10% of the total incarcerated population of Indiana. Instead of using its influence and power to build women up, the IDOC bullies, lies, manipulates, and exaggerates its position to abuse those on the insides.

IDOC uses a separate private business entity, Indiana Correctional Industries (ICI), to operate its actual businesses. ICI oversees the manufacturing and selling of prison-made goods, and it also oversees the leasing of prison space and incarcerated labor to promote private businesses. ICI is a highly profitable faction of the IDOC as it never investing in acquiring prison space or prisoners,

thus operating in profits only.

Incarcerated laborers are disposable due to the overabundance of them. Any workplace injuries are uncompensated, insurance benefits are not necessary for the workforce, vacation time and sick days are nonexistent, and taxes are not filed for the workforces currently. Women may not complain of unsafe working conditions or unfair treatment because earning \$1 an hour is better than €0.15 hour. The employers win huge on overtime hours, paying only \$1.50 hourly.

IDOC policies #04-04-102, 04-04-101, and 02-02-101 reveal that IDOC stipulates incarcerated workers employed by ICI (independently or in a joint business venture partnerships) are to be paid comparable wages for the work performed, never less than state minimum wage. The policies detail deductions mandated for such earnings: federal and state taxes, 10% deducted for the state's victim-impact fund, 40%-80% deducted for rent, 15% placed in a re-entry account, with the remaining wages going to the worker.

ICI had the name Prison Enterprise Network (PEN) fifteen years ago when it began its first joint business venture for incarcerated women laborers. A private Arizonian company leased building space inside Rockville Correctional Facility, and incarcerated laborers for its tech-trading Telemarketing company. The incarcerated were offered 40 hours a week for jobs for \$1 an hour, with raises maxing out at \$2.50 hourly. The company profited millions in contracts gained from the labor. The company's website asserts paying incarcerated female workers minimum wages, and has expanded its prison-based offices to include Madison Correctional Unit II. At this location, the same pay scale exists with the exception of two work-release designated incarcerated women who can earn \$15 an hour.

ICI and the private company exploits the incarcerated laborers by stripping them of the minimum wages it claims to pay them. IDOC policies and the private company claim in writing to pay the workers \$7.25 hourly, yet pocket the money for profits of individuals. Over thirty people are employed at each location. Overtime work has exceeded ninety (90) hours in a week. Yet, the IDOC, ICI, and the Arizonian business is raping the incarcerated of wages. The workers are so grateful for the option to work and counter idleness, learn employable skills, and make more than €0.15 hourly – they don't challenge the illegal exploitation. The telemarketing sales made by incarcerated workers do not equate to commissions, nor does the company even consider such compensation. The company misrepresents its treatment of incarcerated laborers and the wages paid to the mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, and wage-contributors.

The Birth, Meaning, and Practice of Black August



by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

Black August is a month designated to pay tribute to the true heroes, martyrs and history of New Afrikan (Black) people in our struggles for liberation against over 400 years of violent repression, suffering and exploitation that we have endured under the systems of bondage here in the Western Hemisphere.

Many important events that occurred and the lives of people who contributed to our struggles fell within the month of August and coincide with our need to know, remember and commemorate the people and events that have fed the flame of our struggle to yet be free.

The concept of Black August began in the California prison system in response to the assassinations of political prisoners and prisoners of war held there, such as George L. Jackson, W.L. Nolen, Jeffrey "Joka Khatari" Gauden and others. Joka Khatari, a torchbearer of Comrade George Jackson, died on Aug. 1, 1978. He died at the hands of California prison officials at San Quentin who refused him medical care for head injuries sustained while playing football.

Finally we can see Rashid in the flesh. Until now, we've known him only from his two self-portraits. This photo was taken shortly before he was transferred from Indiana to Ohio in mid-July.

It was Joka Khatari's death that first inspired the concept of Black August among New Afrikans imprisoned in California. Initially it commemorated the lives and deaths of George L. Jackson, who was murdered by California prison guards on Aug. 21, 1971; his brother Jonathan Jackson, and James D. McClain and William Christmas, who died during an armed action to free Comrade George and others staged at the Marin County Courthouse on Aug. 7, 1970; and W.L. Nolen, Alvin "Fig" Miller and Cleveland Miller who were assassinated by prison guards during a racial melee that was instigated by the pigs at Soledad State Prison on Jan. 13, 1970.

Since its early beginnings, Black August has grown to embrace many significant events and people in our history of struggles in Amerika, especially those that have occurred during the month of August.

But for these struggles and people and their sacrifices, we would not have survived until today. Black August cannot be looked upon lightly.

Black August is now observed each year by our people across the Diaspora.

Commemorating Black August is not simply a holiday observance, but a time of reflection, recognition, fortification, consciousness-building and inspiration. The events and people it pays tribute to demonstrated the greatest sacrifices and commitment and represent a higher awareness of and ongoing service to New Afrikans as a collective people, as a distinct nationality and community of people.

But for these struggles and people and their sacrifices, we would not have survived until today. Black August cannot be looked upon lightly.

Rashid is settling in to his new digs in Ohio. Since he drew the logo for the California Hunger Strikes in 2011, his influence on the movement frightens prison officials so much that they have transferred him from Virginia to Oregon to Texas to Florida to Indiana and now to Ohio.

Our economic practices during Black August embrace community socialist values of mutual aid and support, not individual profit and exploitation of others that is the very basis of the suffering we have endured for centuries and are the values that the U.S. capitalist imperialist system works to indoctrinate us with to make us predatory against ourselves and others in its own image.

During the month of Black August, we practice fasting, exercise – twice daily or as our health permits – political education – educating us in New Afrikan history and the values of revolutionary theory and practice – and refrain from prison commissary purchases as much as possible, instead relying on mutual support.

Black August serves to instill practice and values in us that will develop our ways of thinking and being 365 days per year and to become the people of the liberated future that we are fighting to create for ourselves, for all oppressed peoples and especially for those that will come after us.

Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win!

All Power to the People!

Trying to approach Madison Correctional Unit II staff, including Warden Jan Davis, resulted in my transfer to Madison Correctional Unit I and my termination from my job. Many felons are doing stints in prison for stealing less than these state agencies and private business entities. If the Warden is this angry over my assertion of policy, what does she have to lose in paying the laborers in her prisons as the policy dictates?

Demand fair and equal pay for incarcerated women. The marginal population cannot speak for itself because look what happened to me. Repression and retaliation is easier for IDOC to female populations because of our lack of social networks.

-J.P.-



Why does the private company claim to pay us minimum wages? ICI is exploiting and pimping out incarcerated females while private business partnerships turn a blind-eye.

Police Escalate Line 3 Standoffs at Indigenous, Water Protector-Led Treaty Sites

from *TruthOut.org*

by Candice Bernd

Update: After threatening arrests at the Red Lake Treaty Camp, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have rescinded their trespass order, allowing Water Protectors to stay in the area. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the Biden Justice Department filed a legal brief arguing that the Army Corps of Engineers's 2020 approval of Line 3 followed its legal obligation to consider the project's environmental impacts.

The struggle against Enbridge Energy's Line 3 tar sands pipeline continued with another civil disobedience action Wednesday morning. Five Water Protectors locked themselves to a horizontal directional drill used by the Canadian company to bore the pipeline under the Straight River in Hubbard County, Minnesota. One Water Protector has barricaded themselves inside the drill operating vehicle.

Water Protectors protesting the Line 3 pipeline have faced intense repression in recent weeks. Enbridge-funded police arrested more than 200 Water Protectors this month at a mass action at the Two Inlets pump station north of Park Rapids and forcefully removed Indigenous leaders asserting treaty rights at a separate occupation camp at the Mississippi River in Clearwater County last week.

"I come from stolen Monacan and Tutelo land where the Mountain Valley Pipeline is being constructed. I believe that from the hills to the headwaters we need to act in solidarity with all people resisting extraction in their communities," said one Water Protector who locked down Wednesday, according to a press release. "Betray your whiteness, betray your class, be a traitor to a system that benefits you at the expense of Indigenous people, a system that steals our futures away from us."

Meanwhile, the struggle is escalating at the state's Red Lake River Crossing, where, at the site where the Red Lake and Pembina Bands of Chippewa Indians signed the Old Crossing Treaty on October 2, 1863, Red Lake tribal members have established a treaty camp on public land within territory ceded to the United States by the two tribes in 1863. On Tuesday morning, Pennington County sheriff's deputies tackled, injured and arrested at least one Water Protector at the camp site after Enbridge began drilling Monday night near the Red Lake River without a tribal monitor present.

Law enforcement has significantly escalated the standoff at the river crossing throughout this week, with the

Pennington County sheriff's deputies bringing police-trained dogs to the site — a tactic that came under heavy public outcry when dogs were sicced on Water Protectors at Standing Rock by private security in 2016. After the arrest Tuesday morning, police presence diminished at the site as construction work paused.

The Red Lake Band's official monitor for Line 3 construction, Sasha Beaulieu, tells Truthout that it's not the tribe's Water Protectors and allies who are trespassing on the site; it's Enbridge — since the tribe has a right to be there under the 1863 Treaty. Moreover, the Water Protector arrested Tuesday morning never crossed the gate that fences off Enbridge's easement site, she says.

"You could see all those cops coming through the gate and arresting him on the other side of the gate, so I don't know how they're getting him on trespassing," Beaulieu says. "The guy ... got pretty banged up by the cops. They had to bring the ambulance out here."

After speaking with the sheriff's office, Beaulieu says the office has declared the tribe's treaty camp an "unlawful assembly." As of Tuesday, construction remained stopped while law enforcement worked on the trespass order. Beaulieu expects sheriffs to move in on the camp soon and says Water Protectors there are standing ready to hold their ground. The Pennington County Sheriff's Office did not respond to Truthout's request for comment.

Beaulieu says the tribe's attorney is working to request a longer-term work stoppage since she has not been allowed to monitor construction for the purposes of protecting archaeological sites under the National Historic Preservation Act, even after the tribe notified the company and law enforcement of her appointment as tribal monitor. Moreover, she says the Army Corps of Engineers has expressed concerns about the tribe's request for a monitor going ignored.

As Truthout has reported, several Anishinaabe tribes have established pipeline resistance camps in northern Minnesota and are asserting Treaty Authority codes to exercise off-reservation jurisdiction over violations like trespass and to defend the rights of sacred wild rice, or "Manoomin" in the Ojibwe language. The U.S. Constitution's Article VI Supremacy Clause clearly establishes that treaty law is the supreme law of the land, superseding any conflicting state law with regard to tribal rights.

"Now this is going to be a treaty fight because they're going to come here with an order for us to leave later," Beaulieu says. "They can come here with their state permit, but I have an assembly permit from the Red Lake Nation, and

it's a treaty permit, so as far as I'm concerned, our legal document should be upheld over their state document."

Beaulieu fears the company is trying to put the pipeline in the ground as quickly as possible in order to skirt the tribe's legal challenge over the Army Corps' water crossing permit in federal district court in Washington, D.C., which is pending. Last week, the Minnesota Court of Appeals sided with Enbridge in a separate case in which the court affirmed state utility regulators' approval of the project.

Water Protectors at the Red Lake treaty camp have not engaged in nonviolent lockdown actions so far. Tuesday's arrest was the first associated with the tribally permitted camp. However, Beaulieu affirms that the Water Protectors aren't going anywhere. "Now they're getting worried," Beaulieu says of Enbridge and law enforcement. "They know we're not just going to sit here and sing Kumbaya while they drill on the river.... They're trying to get us out of here."

Prayer Lodge Struggle Escalates

Meanwhile, law enforcement officials are continuing to encroach on a prayer lodge established by Anishinaabe Water Protectors Winona LaDuke and Tania Aubid in December near Palisade, Minnesota, where drilling has begun at a site slated to cross the Mississippi River. Enbridge workers, escorted by Aitkin County sheriffs and the state's Department of Natural Resources, entered an easement area around the protected cultural site this week and arrested at least three Water Protectors on trespass charges Monday despite an Army Corps order for a work stoppage at the site in December.

White Earth Band of Ojibwe tribal lawyer and 1855 Treaty Authority Executive Director Frank Bibeau issued a cease-and-desist letter to Aitkin County Sheriff Dan Guida and Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Sarah Strommen on June 18, notifying them that their encroachment at the lodge violates the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Bibeau also cited the tribe's 1855 Treaty rights of Manoomin and rights to travel, use, and occupy traditional lands and waters, arguing that further application of state criminal law against tribal members for trespass-related violations would deprive tribal members of federally protected treaty rights.

Monday's arrests, however, show law enforcement continues to blatantly ignore the Treaty Authority's legal notices concerning tribes' 1855 treaty rights. So far, law enforcement has refused to discuss legal requirements in and around cultural sites and Enbridge easements with the 1855 Treaty Authority board, according to Bibeau.

LaDuke was issued a citation in December for praying at the lodge and cultural site. She called the charges trumped up "bullshit" earlier this month at a new campsite she established at Shell River in northern Minnesota. "They put the sign up while I was sitting inside my lodge," LaDuke told Truthout about the incident. "They don't actually need to take [the lodge] down. They don't because they're digging way underneath it. But what's the process? Do they have a conversation?"

In January, five Ojibwe tribes intervened in a Public Utilities Commission decision to exclude the cultural resource survey from the state's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), but their appeal was denied in February. Even if tribes found the state's EIS adequate in terms of protecting Indigenous cultural artifacts, living Indigenous people in the pipeline's path have faced arrest and persecution for practicing their spiritual and cultural beliefs.

"I'm a live Indian person, not a pot shard," LaDuke said. "That was my criticism of their EIS. I said, 'You're looking for pot shards, but we're all live.'"

According to an allied Water Protector on the site, Shanai Matteson, Enbridge workers set up pumps on the east side of the river, across from the lodge, and have been pumping water and drilling around the clock this week as law enforcement presence has escalated significantly. A helicopter whirred over the site during the arrests Monday, Matteson says. Aitkin County Sheriff Guida told Truthout that neither his office nor the 16-county Northern Lights Task Force, funded by Enbridge through a public safety escrow account, deployed a helicopter Monday, saying the helicopter could have been a medical chopper or a private flight.

The Northern Lights Task Force deployed a low-flying Department of Homeland Security helicopter against activists protesting in solidarity with two dozen Water Protectors who locked themselves to construction machinery at the Two Inlets pump station earlier this month, blasting them with dirt and rocks. They also blared a sound amplification device called a Long Range Acoustic Device without warning at the site.

The mass direct actions followed the weekend-long Treaty People Gathering, which drew more than 1,500 people to northern Minnesota to fight the 337-mile, \$4 billion tar sands pipeline. Escalating law enforcement tactics display more than a year's worth of training and preparations. According to records obtained by The Intercept, the Northern Lights Task Force "carried out extensive preparations for helicopter and drone operations in the year leading up to [pipeline] construction via a subcommittee dedicated specifically to air operations."

The Intercept also reports that, at the end of May, Enbridge has reimbursed \$1,086,361 to agencies and organizations responding to pipeline protests and public safety issues — including, as Truthout has reported, domestic violence shelters housing survivors who say they were sexually assaulted by Line 3 pipeline workers. The majority of the funds have gone to local sheriffs' offices, including in Aitkin County, where the treaty struggle over the lodge continues to play out this week.

“Today is another sad day of watching them violate our treaties once again, calling our treaty stand an unlawful assembly.”

Other area sheriff's offices like Beltrami County, which was among the agencies responding to the mass actions earlier this month, are among the top law enforcement agencies reimbursed by Enbridge for “field force” training, gas masks, protective suits, baton stops, security holsters, a megaphone and other gear to “ensure weapon retention for Public Safety Line 3 responses,” according to one invoice.

As tensions escalate across multiple treaty and cultural encampments in northern Minnesota, President Joe Biden's Justice Department filed a legal brief Wednesday arguing that the Army Corps's 2020 approval of Line 3 followed its legal obligation to consider the project's environmental impacts. The briefing is a huge blow to Indigenous and environmental opponents of the pipeline, particularly after another Alberta, Canada-based company, TC Energy, announced the termination of its Keystone XL pipeline this month.

Like Keystone XL, Line 3, if built, would also cross an international border and hundreds of water bodies while locking in dangerous, planet-warming pollution. Indigenous and environmental activists in Minnesota have been fighting Line 3 for nearly as long as activists have been fighting Keystone XL, and call the Line 3 a “Keystone clone,” because it's also an expansion project that would carry tar sands crude from Alberta to mostly export markets. Both pipeline routes abut tribal reservations. Line 3, however, cuts directly across tribal treaty lands and the Fond du Lac Indian Reservation. (The Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa agreed to allow Enbridge to build the pipeline in 2018.)

“We have the right to stand for our treaty rights. We have the right to stand for our water,” says Red Lake's Beaulieu. “Today is another sad day of watching them violate our treaties once again, calling our treaty stand an unlawful assembly.”



Lost Time #3: My Day of Liberation by Charles Rodgers (K-9 Attack at MCF)

from IDOCWatch.org

Lost time is an irregular column IDOC Watch publishes exposing corruption and mistreatment by Disciplinary Hearing Boards, Conduct Adjustment Boards, and parole/probation officers in the Indiana prison system, which often results in incarcerated peoples' sentences being unfairly extended.

My Day of Liberation

My name is Charles Rodgers. I am currently housed at Miami Correctional Facility. I am currently housed in a cell with Brother Khalfani Malik Khaldun, who encouraged me to share some of the injustices that have occurred to me in the past year.

On October 16, 2020 around 3pm, a National Guardsmen who was working N-housing came over my intercom and asked me could I help defuse a situation that was occurring on the 3/4 side. He opened my cell door and allowed me to cross over to try to defuse the situation. The damage was already done.

Once I tried to return back to my side I was met by Sergeant Justin McCray and his K-9. I immediately put my hands up and backed up. I have a phobia of K-9s because I have been attacked in the past. Sgt. McCray started yelling and cursing and ordered me to lock down. I tried to explain to him that I did not live on that side and that I wasn't involved in the altercation that took place. He then stated, “I don't give a fuck, get your ass on the ground!” He then started approaching me, lunging his K-9 at me. I put my hands back in the air and stated to Sgt. McCray, “I am not resisting and you can handcuff me and take me back to my side. But I am not getting on the ground with that dog so close.”

With my hands still in the air, Sgt. McCray ordered Sgt. Callaway to mace me, which he did. I immediately turned my back to the officers and stated, “You're wrong, I am not resisting sir. You do not need to mace me. I'm not getting on the ground with the K-9 so close. You can cuff me and take me back.” With my hands in the air and my back still turned toward the officers, Sgt. McCray ordered his K-9 to attack me, which it did. The K-9 bit my left leg first. I turned back towards the officers and stated, “You're wrong, I am not resisting sir. I'm not getting on the ground with the K-9 so close. You can handcuff me and take me back.” With my hands still in the air, I was maced again. I once again turned my back toward the officers and was attacked a second time by the K-9. Sgt. Justin McCray wrote me up on a Class A-111 Attempted Assault on Staff (K-9) Conduct Report.

Plant Profile: Goldenrod

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: Goldenrod

Scientific name: *Solidago spp* (All plants known to western civilization have a latin binomial name to help with classification and identification. Spp here means "species plural," as there may be a few different but similar species growing around you.)

How to identify: Though it can be just a few inches tall in adverse conditions, Goldenrod usually grows around 4 feet tall on the edges of fields, meadows, and yards. They have numerous small yellow flowers with 3-16 ray flowers per head (they look like petals, but each "petal" is actually an individual flower). The inner disk flowers are also yellow. The leaves are alternate (only one leaf growing out of the stem at each node). There are over 70 species in Indiana! Each has some difference in flower arrangement, leaf shape, and habitat. The most common species have lance-shaped leaves as shown in the top left, though some have rounder leaves. Most are toothed. One of the easiest ways to spot Goldenrod is the characteristic curve of the flowering stalk as shown in the bottom left. Most species have flowers growing out of only one side of the stalk (center photo); less common are flowers growing in the axils or in a flatter head. Stem may be hairy or smooth. Goldenrod starts blooming late July and continues through the fall, with the topmost flowers blooming first.

Encountering Goldenrod: All parts of the plant (flowers, leaves, roots) can be used! The leaves are bitter and slightly pungent. The flowers are slightly more pungent and the roots are sharply pungent or peppery. The bitterness of the leaves indicates stimulation to digestion. The flowers have more affinity for the respiratory tract and the roots for the kidneys. A primary attribute of Goldenrod is its *astringency*. This indicates both a drying property and a property of binding things together (these are related- think of how soggy things lose their integrity and fall apart). This drying property can work for many parts of the body: watery eyes, running nose, wet cough, bleeding, excessive menstrual bleeding, diarrhea, and swelling. Goldenrod pulls excess fluids from these parts of the body and stimulates and supports kidney function to move them out of the body. (Sometimes it can promote sweating too as method of eliminating fluids.) This action on the kidneys increases urine production and also the quality of the urine: it can help clear out pain, infection, or gravel in the kidneys, bladder, and urine. The root can be quite a strong kidney stimulant! The other aspect of Goldenrod's astringency, the binding together, which is the origin of the meaning of its latin name *Solidago*, is its potency in wound healing, especially weeping wounds. It can be used both internally and externally. A cold, warm, or hot infusion of Goldenrod can be made by letting the plant material, fresh or dry, infuse into water. Cold infusions should be left in longer. A poultice can be made by chewing or otherwise



mashing up the plant to be placed on the skin. 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 Goldenrod 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. Moving beyond the physical, to the aspect of spirit or personality, Goldenrod is specifically indicated for one who is weary, frequently needs rest, and is discouraged by how far they still have to go. It can help with endurance and encourage one's perseverance through difficulty on a long journey.



I was initially taken to Segregation but then was placed in the infirmary due to my injuries, where I received 7 stitches to the bites and claw marks on my left leg and buttock area.

While in the infirmary on 10/26/20, I witnessed Ofc. A Goodridge and Sgt. Justin McCray enter the unit for reasons unknown. Ofc. A. Goodridge was the officer assigned to conduct a disciplinary hearing for the Class A Attempted Assault on Staff (K-9) charge. She pointed in my direction and Sgt. McCray started laughing. In this moment I knew that Ofc. A. Goodridge would cover up for Sgt. McCray's Malfeasance. I wrote numerous requests in an attempt to have a different officer conduct my hearing but I was denied.

On this exact same day, Ofc. Goodridge was allowed to review the video evidence I requested with Sgt. McCray, in which she gave false and misleading statements of the video summary in order to find me guilty.

On 11/6/2020 during my Disciplinary Hearing Board (DHB) hearing for the Attempted Assault on Staff, Ofc. A. Goodridge never presented any of the witness statements or any of the evidence she used to find me guilty. I asked several times for the copies and she ignored me. Ofc. Richardson can bear witness to this unfair trial because she was my Lay Advocate at the hearing.

As a result of this I was placed in Segregation for 40 days with a year pending. I lost 180 days good time, and was demoted a credit class. My visitation was taken for a year, 90 day commissary and phone privileges lost, and as a slap in the face I received a written reprimand not to attempt to assault a K-9 again.

I went thru mental stress and severe depression because of this incident but yet I persevered. I've continued to move forward with a positive state of mind and positive actions while educating myself in the process.

I have since started a nonprofit called Painting Prayers from Prison with the intent of helping prisoners who have no help. I would like to be a voice for the voiceless.

If you would like to help me along the journey, you can contact me by setting up an account at web.connectnetwork.com and looking me up in the Indiana Department of Correction database, or you can write to me by regular mail.

Charles Rodgers #136164

Thank you all & May blessings be upon you!



A Month of Incendiary Revolt in Colombia

from AMWEnglish.org

In Colombia, the revolt that has taken over the streets since April 28, now more than a month old, shows no signs of stopping. Conservative President Iván Duque, whose term ends in 2022, has tried a number of classic manoeuvres to appease the rioters, but nothing has been done: neither the suspension of the tax reform that had been the initial spark (including, for example, an increase in VAT from 5% to 19% on basic goods), on May 2; nor the resignation of the Minister of Finance who had carried it, on May 3; nor the opening of negotiations with the National Strike Committee on May 10 (followed by a pre-agreement on May 24 that is currently being validated); nor the rejection by Congress of the bill on the reform of the health system, which was modelled on the liberal North American model (this rejection was requested by many demonstrators), on 19 May; nor a few crumbs dropped on particular categories, such as the extension of free university education to the poorest for one semester, which did not help the government, a semester, which did not calm the students; nor, of course, the police terror against the protesters.

In a Colombian context marked by poverty and the informal economy, the government's blackmail of confinements and curfews against the spread of covid-19 has not worked for a long time to prevent protesters from gathering en masse either, so much so that the government even officially lifted many restrictions on May 19, which were not respected anyway (the curfew being maintained, however, with an anti-riot objective in Medellin and Bogotá, and all weekend in Santa Marta and Cartagena). For the past month, street blockades and roadblocks have been scattered throughout the country, with demonstrations and gatherings that are more peaceful during the day (nearly 10,400 in one month), often followed by riots, looting and looting at night.

Blockades throughout the country...

Concerning blockades, the Ministry of Defense counted, for example, on May 21, nearly 90 daily blockades at the entrances to major cities and on the country's main roads (a total of 2,577 for the past month), regularly attacked or taken over by the police... before being reassembled the following days. Faced with shortages here and there (food, petrol, medicine), the army is now escorting long convoys of trucks across the country, as in the days of the territories controlled by the ex-Farc guerrilla (dissolved in 2016), while some mayors or governors are negotiating with some of the demonstrators to allow the passage of "humanitarian convoys" to maintain a minimum supply (supporting de facto the emergence of reasonable interlocutors and budding politicians). This is also one of the issues at stake in the

tug-of-war between the government and the representatives of the National Strike Committee (composed of the main unions, CUT-CGT-CTC and those of truckers, pensioners or education), where the latter favors these negotiated convoys, while the State demands as a precondition for its signature of a pre-agreement the lifting of all blockades.

In the midst of this mess, the government is obviously quick to denounce the “false blockades” where some hooded men are robbing vehicles to let them pass; merchants and businessmen are crying over their accumulated losses (the country’s major seaport, Buenaventura, estimates, for example, that 270,000 tons of merchandise are currently blocked); while others are taking the opportunity to advance their own local demands, sometimes with unexpected consequences. A good example of this was the forced shutdown from May 24 to 29 of the largest open-pit coal mine in South America, in Cerrejón (northeast Colombia), due to the double effect of the blockade of the railroad line that supplies it by former workers who were laid off since May 5, followed by the blockade of substitute trucks since May 20 by residents of the nearby indigenous municipality of Media Luna demanding more jobs (and not its shutdown, which is devastating their lives). It must be said that this area of the fifth largest coal exporter in the world, La Guajira, is paradoxically considered one of the poorest in the country, so much so that there are even immediate problems of survival such as hunger, with the basic needs of 65% of the population not being covered.

And destructive attacks of all kinds...

In the urban riots, which affect the capital Bogotá, Cali and also many smaller cities, especially in the South, we are witnessing here and there, as in Chile at the end of 2019, the formal creation of a Primera Línea (First Line), that is to say, young demonstrators made of bricks and mortar, who are courageously and decisively confronting the anti-riot squads (Esmad) in the demonstrations. Alongside this “block against block” form of spontaneous collective self-defense, more decentralized, diffuse and mobile practices continue to develop (even farther away from police concentrations) in order not to focus all the attention on the guardians of order alone, but rather on what they protect, by multiplying looting, ransacking and burning of banks, buses or institutional buildings.

If we take only the day of May 28, where the forms of self-organization and riotous experimentation remained multiple throughout the country, some enraged people managed to catch the authorities off guard in Popayán (in the south of the country), first by setting fire to a part of the city hall in the center of the city under the enthusiastic cheers of the demonstrators, and then to the huge municipal pound

located in the Bolívar district, where there were almost 2000 motorcycles and cars sequestered by the authorities, provoking a huge blaze visible from almost everywhere.

To take another example, still only on Friday, if we go a little further south in the department of Nariño, bordering Ecuador, the clashes were also consistent in the city of Pasto. There, after having resisted for several hours to the anti-riot police forces thanks to an orderly clearing of several streets of the center, small mobile groups began to attack some specific objectives like police stations (CAI) left vacant, the parking lot of the municipal pound and its adjacent construction crane, which were set on fire in the Torobajo neighborhood, and the large central building of the ORIP (Oficina de Registros e Instrumentos Públicos), which serves as both the civil registry and the public land registry, containing the state archives of a dozen cities in the region. The archives and official documents were mercilessly reduced to ashes.

If we take only the day of yesterday, May 28, where the forms of self-organization and riotous experimentation remained multiple throughout the country, some enraged people managed to catch the authorities off guard in Popayán (in the south of the country), first by setting fire to a part of the city hall in the center of the city under the enthusiastic cheers of the demonstrators, and then to the huge municipal pound located in the Bolívar district, where there were almost 2000 motorcycles and cars sequestered by the authorities, provoking a huge blaze visible from almost everywhere.

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Some figures for the road...

In total, according to the latest assessment of the various types of destruction provided on 28 May by the Ministry of Defence (in Colombia this Ministry and the Ministry of the Interior are one and the same), nearly 1,175 “public

transport vehicles” and “public transport vehicles” were destroyed. 175 “public transport vehicles” and 422 ticket machines were hit (burned or put out of service) in one month -a particularly popular target since the beginning of the revolt-, but also 399 businesses and 433 bank branches, without forgetting the whole of the urban furniture (like the 160 video surveillance masts that were shot down), nor the 28 highway toll booths destroyed (the last one on May 28 in Villa Rica, set on fire by indigenous groups who are at the forefront of the struggle against these infrastructures, and which was the last one still intact in the Cauca region) or the 112 police stations and police posts damaged entirely or partially.

The most recent example of the attacks and targeted retaliation that accompany all of these practices is certainly what happened on Tuesday evening, May 25, in Tuluá, a medium-sized city of 200,000 inhabitants located in the Valle del Cauca, about 100 kilometers north of Cali. There, as almost every day, demonstrators began to converge in the early afternoon on Boyacá Square, for another day of blockades and protests. Around 5 pm, the anti-riot forces of the Esmad (Escuadrón Móvil Antidisturbios) intervened to restore order and traffic, which they managed to do after several confrontations (stones against tear gas and charges), but at the same time provoked a scattering of demonstrators in the streets towards downtown. The latter, in small groups, then undertook for two hours to dismantle street furniture (such as the red lights used to set up barricades), to loot stores, and elsewhere to ransack banks (18 commercial establishments were officially “vandalized”).

In an attempt to contain the situation and facilitate the intervention of the police, the municipal authorities finally decreed a curfew around 10pm until 5am, allowing the uniforms to arrest anyone outside, while the local section of the National Strike Committee obviously denounced all this destruction. But it doesn't matter, since much has already been done until early evening, including qualitatively, and no one will forget this signal to all the other cities, that of a courtroom destroyed from floor to ceiling (after the one in Facativá, completely ransacked on May 2, a week before its inauguration)

Unfortunately, the next day, May 26, we also learned that a young student from the city, Camilo Andrés Arango, was murdered by the cops around 9 p.m. not far from the confrontation zone (and two others were wounded by bullets), and that nine demonstrators were arrested, three of whom were specifically accused of burning down the Tribunal and looting the motorcycle store, charged with “terrorism, aggravated robbery, and rioting” by the public prosecutor's office and then incarcerated that night.

Bloody repression, and the retaliation of Popayán...

At the national level, to give an idea of the repression, let's just say that according to the official figures of the different NGOs that count these exactions, in one month about sixty demonstrators have been assassinated by the cops, 51 of them have lost an eye, more than 2900 have been injured (sometimes by bullets or grenades), 1200 who are incarcerated (300 of them as a result of street blockades), and more than 300 who are still reported as desaparecidos (that is, they have disappeared after being arrested by the police or after being kidnapped in the street by parastatal militias, such as the extreme right-wing militia of sad memory called Black Eagles) To all of this, we must unfortunately add another level of state terrorism, which is the torture of demonstrators by the uniforms, as well as the rapes and sexual abuses practiced in the neighborhood police stations (CAI, Comando de Atención Inmediata) and in the detention centers under the jurisdiction of the Public Prosecutor's Office (URI, Unidad de Reacción Inmediata).

If this terrible repression has not yet succeeded in weakening the determination of the demonstrators who refuse to return to normalcy and have not left the streets for a month, some news that is particularly odious due to its accumulation has also triggered offensives that were unheard of until now. Last May 12, in the early evening in Popayán, a young girl was filmed being picked up and dragged at arm's length by four cops. What was then just another sad story quickly took another turn when the inhabitants of the city learned not only that she had committed suicide on her return home after being held for a few hours in the Unidad de Reacción Inmediata (URI), but that she had also left a last message online stating that she had been raped by the cops. Her name was Alison, she was 17 years old, and was one more since the beginning of the revolt.

On May 14, spontaneous rallies were held in the afternoon in front of various police institutions in different neighborhoods of Popayán, with cries of “cops [tombos, in slang], rapists, murderers”, but the most enraged crowd gradually gathered in front of the huge complex of the Public Prosecutor's Office where the URI where Alison was raped is located. After a first assault repulsed by the anti-riot forces during which its facade is covered with vengeful graffiti and where molotovs fly against the building, a second assault is launched in the beginning of the evening (during which an umpteenth demonstrator hit in the neck by a grenade is killed) which finally succeeds in taking over the URI and then the whole of the disgraced seat of the judiciary institution. Needless to say, the building was then ransacked and burned to the ground without sparing anything, not even the adjoining forensic medicine institute.

Anarchist Solidarity to Prison Lives Matter

from BloomingtonABC.NoBlogs.org

by Jennifer Rose

I write this to answer the call to action by Prison Lives Matter! as an anarchist prisoner and co-founder of Fire Ant (established 2017). While maintaining our autonomy and internationalist anarchist/ anti-authoritarian position against corrupt political parties and/or leadership vanguards, I nevertheless call on my comrades to support PLM by engaging in dialog and solidarity actions toward our common goals to abolish legalized slavery!

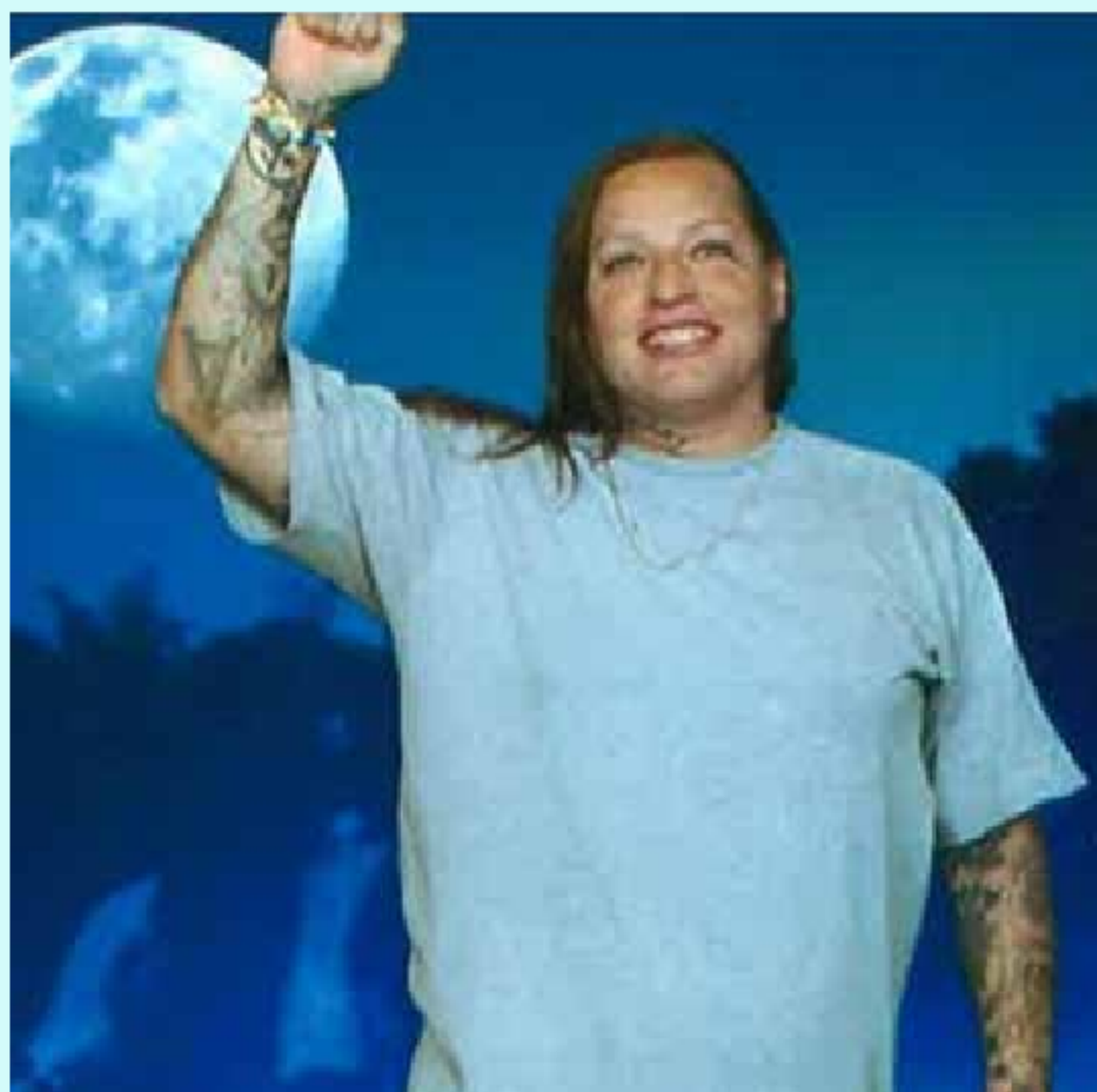
PLM's objective is to establish a revolutionary prison movement infrastructure. The purpose is to implement an effective overall strategy through a movement building network of regional organizing committees, for collaborative work with PLM national coordinating committee. This is a necessity, the need is obvious!

Every single prison should have a George Jackson University or a Kuwasi Balagoon Liberation School. Sometimes, I like to ask myself, not "What would Jesus do?", but "What would Kuwasi do?". For those who don't know about our beloved revolutionary hero, he has been eulogized:

"He was an anarchist in a Black nationalist movement, he was queer in a straight-dominated movement, he was a guerrilla fighter before it was "chic", and he never backed down from his ideals, his beliefs, the struggle, or himself. And, he demanded to be seen, not as a revolutionary icon, but as a person, beautiful and flawed." -Walidah Imarisha (from "Kuwasi at 60" by Kazembe Balagoon)

As anarchists, we can particularly support this statement by comrade Kwame "Beans" Shakur: "Prison Lives Matter is not about "reforming" the existing system. Through this United Front... we will strive to expose the prison industrial slave complex's hidden political and economical position of hierarchy within the United States empire" (from "Prison COVID", Vol 1, No 2)

"In the spirit of Nelson Mandala" campaign calls for international agencies and courts to investigate the human rights' violations that exist within the United States prison system. These violations include the mass murder of nearly 3,000 incarcerated people over the past year, using methodic execution by



COVID-19. This killed the most vulnerable, elderly, and chronically ill prisoners.

People should also take note of the torture claims against the U.S filed by Sean Swain (and myself). Under the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, currently pending trial (The InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights case # 14-146). To contact the IACHR to make claims or witness statements in corroboration of the above, write to:

InterAmerican Commission on Human Rights,
Organization of American States, 1889 F St NW,
Washington, DC 20006, tel #: 202-370-9000, fax#:
202-458-3992, email: cidhoea@oas.org, website: cidh.
org

We are our own liberators!

Solidarity to Prison Lives Matter!

Send all comments, criticism, and correspondence to:
Jennifer Rose #E23852 Salinas Valley State Prison,
PO Box 1050, Soledad, CA, 93960, email: jennirose@
conpals.com, blog: www.betweenthebars.org/
blogs/490

On May 15, Francisco Barbosa Delgado, Attorney General of Colombia, rushed to the scene from the capital, and could only see the tens of thousands of euros worth of damage, including the incineration of a dozen vehicles of the Public Prosecutor's Office, that of the forensic laboratories with the thousands of "proofs" kept in their buildings, the destruction of 22 of its offices, but also the plundering of all the drug seizures or that of the well-stocked armoury of the place.: it is of the end of the lips that the high civil servant will reveal thus that about fifty firearms passed in the camp of the rioters during this vengeful night in Popayán, of which about fifteen rifles.

The government sends the army as a backup...

Finally, to illustrate a situation in which the government is increasing its bloody pressure day by day, we can also turn to the third largest city in the country, Cali, which has been one of the main centers of the revolt since the beginning: yesterday, May 28, during another great national day of demonstrations, 13 people were killed, many of them by plainclothes henchmen. One of them, a 22 year old participant in the first line at the Campestre dam, was shot in the morning. Then it was the turn of two other demonstrators, shot at a blockade in the central neighborhood of La Luna, except that in this case their comrades managed to catch up with the assailant and identify him before finally settling the score on the spot: it was a plainclothes cop belonging to the armed corps of judicial investigators of the Public Prosecutor's Office (Cuerpo Técnico de Investigaciones, CTI), which the government had to acknowledge. Finally, in the evening, a 22-year-old student from the Quechua-speaking community of Inga was shot and killed in the Meléndez neighborhood. The others have not yet been publicly identified.

On Saturday, May 29, President Duque reacted to the previous day's uprising and especially to the events in Cali, condemning in his usual style "the acts of vandalism and low-intensity urban terrorism" of the demonstrators, and then declared that he was using the Law of Military Assistance to immediately decree the dispatch of a thousand soldiers to the streets of Cali; the creation of mixed police/army patrols in other cities such as Popayán ; as well as the global deployment of 7,000 soldiers to put an end to the blockades in eight departments (Valle del Cauca, Cauca, Nariño, Huila, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Caquetá, Risaralda) and thirteen cities (Cali, Buenaventura, Pasto, Ipiales, Popayán, Yumbo, Buga, Palmira, Bucaramanga, Pereira, Madrid, Facatativá, and Neiva)

In reality, it is nothing more or less than an ersatz declaration of a state of emergency (estado de conmoción

interior) demanded by the leaders of his party, which would allow him to govern by simple presidential decrees for 90 days, and which he can do without for the time being, since the Ley de asistencia militar allows him to simply deploy the army wherever the police are in trouble. This measure has only been used in the capital Bogotá since May 5, at the request of Mayor Claudia López... to defend the police and prosecutor's office buildings where protesters are locked up daily while waiting to be transferred to prison.

Finally, it should be noted that while some local authorities relied on this presidential decree (No. 575 of 2021) from Sunday, May 30, to support the sending of Kaskia troops, others announced that they refused to use them (as in Bucaramanga or Caquetá), and that to warmly encourage his bloody Colombian counterpart, the new president of the United States Joe Biden decided on May 28 to give him a small increase, raising the annual sum paid to Colombia from 412 to 453.8 million dollars for 2021.

Brave fighters continue to line the streets as we speak, and the struggle continues.



Shaka Shakur on the Struggle Against Organized White Supremacists in the IDOC

from IDOCWatch.org

by Shaka Shakur

The IDOC has a rich history of Klan and white supremacy activity, as well as organized violence. It was only after New Afrikan prisoners in particular started organizing and engaging in military strikes was some of these abuses curtailed and or pushed underground. A lot of these racists who were up and coming through the ranks during the 70's and 80's are now in leadership positions and policy makers at Central Office or sitting on the boards of private prisons or companies like Aramark. They act as consultants and their background is shrouded in secrecy. This is while giving rise to a whole new generation of neo-fascists from their ilk.

In the 80s a crooked investigator named Penfold at ISP tried to put a hit on Balagoon by offering two white convicts (who were allies) a deal if they would throw white gas in his cell and burn him alive. They refused and in turn exposed the plot. Later during court proceedings, after a takeover hostage situation, he admitted under oath on the stand that he tried to do this and he wasn't fired, demoted, or charged with attempted murder!!! In fact the bastard would eventually be promoted and moved to central office.

When I first went to Pendleton in 1985 after the initial slave rebellion of Feb. 1, 1985, the lock up unit MRU, known as the dungeon was racially segregated. Black's and Whites

could not come out together for recreation. All movement to the rec yards were in handcuffs and shackles. After a late night argument between myself and a young dumb wannabe white supremacist inmate, the guards passed him a knife that morning before rec which I witnessed. They then tried to run us outside together and remove his handcuffs first. I had a handcuff key, and came out of my cuffs first. I gave him a chance to surrender his weapons, he refused and I allegedly commenced to stabbing him nine times, til they were able to drag his ass out. Clearly and firmly sending a message to the good ol boy network that I had no intentions on being a victim. There are many instances of this nature.

Wabash [Valley Correctional Facility] is infested with white nationalist c.o.'s [correctional officers] and they make no secret about it. Some of it is just cultural and racial ignorance, but some of it is also rooted in ideology. They love Trump's dirty draws.

They also have a firmly entrenched 'good ol boy' network of male AND female pigs that are either older or been there a while who are steeped in the racist tradition of targeting New Afrikans. People like Major Russell, Lt. Nicholson, Basinger, Alan Finnan, etc; all of them dudes came up through the ranks together. This is why they were so mad when I allegedly stabbed Sexton.[1] He had been there over 20 yrs and was entrenched in their little racist networks and would sit out there in ear shot of prisoners and tell stories to the younger c.o.'s about how they use to beat us and throw us down steps while handcuffed etc. Seriously.

Several times while I was being escorted the guards would act like they were talking among themselves, but was actually talking to me indirectly about how they wish this was the old SHU (Secure Housing Unit) so they could teach trouble makers a lesson. I always made it clear, that if you ever beat me, its going to be a homicide!!

Indiana prisoners attacked for supporting Zion Yisrayah

The domestic face of Imperialism's New World Order showed itself in the wee hours of the morning of June 5, 1996 at the Indiana State Prison. From the seats of injustice, Gov. Bayh, the Department of Corrections Commissioner and prison officials sought out 10 Afrikan prisoners who were active in anti-authoritarian, anti-death penalty organizing and politics. These 10 determined men were set upon in a manner reminiscent of Nazi Germany, Chicago '68 Days of Rage and countless other examples of heavy booted state terrorism. Stripped from their beds, stripped naked, shackled and chained, and paraded in front of arriving employees, visitors, etc. by heavily armed guards and shipped to Indiana's infamous sensory deprivation unit — "M.C.C. — Supercell." All of this to send a message out to anti-genocide (death) penalty supporters of Zion Yisrayah (murdered by the state July 18th) that in the eyes of the state, such dissent is criminal. It also represented an ongoing battle for the minds of the youth filling up the prisons, in that responsible, conscious and progressive Afrikan prisoners have reached out to these youth to reverse their destruction mentally and physically. So in view of this growing tide of awareness and defiant attitude to reactionary lifestyles by these youth and others, the state have upped the ante by launching an all-out offensive, designed to intimidate, break morale and divide the ranks for anyone exhibiting a humane and

anti-establishment stance or politic. This is the reality the "Indiana 10" has been faced with, and the brutality continues. They have been given sentences in maximum security units ranging from 1 to 5 years. The state has issued media reports stating this is an attempt to "keep the peace," but the reality is that the charges of "conspiracy to riot," "attempt to riot," and "threatening" are without evidence or merit. In evidence has been uncovered that the D.O.C. manufactured evidence with the objective of framing these 10 men. The only threat to peace has been the jack-booted, baton-wielding mercenary kkkops carrying out murder, beatings and the like. We did not round up over 50 Afrikan prisoners in general population, some who have not had a rule violation in years, and place them in D-Cell House for so called gang affiliation. We did not torture Zion Yisrayah for 80 minutes, sticking needles in his arms, chest, neck and foot and stand by with clipboard in hand, recording every last gasp of breath and twitch until he died. We did not rush to cover up such by immediately

sending his body to a local funeral home to be embalmed against the wishes of his family. So you the people, the common man or woman, you judge who is disturbing the peace!

We need your support in that We are

being denied adequate food, medical care, legal material, clothing and opportunity to visit without interference of barriers or monitoring, including attorney visits. In the spirit of the "Counter-Convention to the Democratic Convention," help Us to turn up the heat on Indiana's injustice and expose the conspiracy against the Indiana 10. We demand that:

- 1) All charges be dropped against the Indiana 10.
- 2) All 10 men be returned to general population and removed from all control and Special Housing units.

3) An investigation be launched into the racist rhetoric and stereotyping of Afrikan prisoners by warden A. Parks.

4) An investigation be launched into why Zion Yisrayah (a/n Tommie Smith) was tortured for 80 minutes before being murdered and why the D.O.C. had his body immediately embalmed against the wishes of his family.

"All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for man to do nothing." Zion Yisrayah' last words 7/18/96 —

Shela Shakar, 1/6/96
P.O. Box 337
Westville, IN 46391

For more information contact:

BCAC
P.O. Box 83312
Milwaukee WI 53203



**IN GOOD NEWS:
Rally for Clemency for Leon Benson**

On July 25th, 2021, Truth Never Dies (TND) and IDOC Watch hosted a rally for clemency and compassionate release at Tarkington Park in Indianapolis. The rally was attended by over 50 people who gathered together to hear from the families of Leon Benson, Christopher Trotter, and Aaron Isby Israel and to sign letters to the governor demanding that these men be granted clemency. Organizers agitated by displaying a banner that read "Free Leon Benson! Clemency and Compassionate Release Now!", hanging posters around the neighborhood, and distributing flyers at a nearby Back to School event.

The rally began when Koby Bluitt, leader of Truth Never Dies and Leon Benson's daughter, got on the megaphone to tell the people about Leon's fight for justice and the way it connects to the greater struggle for Mass Release. Leon Benson is an innocent political prisoner who was sentenced to 60 years for a murder he did not commit. He has been an active mentor to other incarcerated men and spreads his message through writing, poetry, music. As Leon would say, "Truth never dies, it's only rediscovered." You can read about Leon's fight here.

Cait from IDOC Watch took over after Koby, connecting Leon's case to the wider issue of clemency and mass release in Indiana. She highlighted the fact that clemency is an action that can be unilaterally taken by the governor at any time to shorten or eliminate a person's prison sentence. These individual cases were then connected to the IDOC Watch demands for mass release. Below are the first three, you can find the whole list here.

1. Release everyone who is over the age of 55 and/or is medically vulnerable.
2. Release everyone held in prison on a technical probation or parole violation and elimination of the possibility of re-incarceration on technical parole and probation violations.
3. Release everyone from prison who would already have been released if they weren't serving disciplinary time ordered by a facility Disciplinary Hearing Board (DHB), restoration of good time across the board, and elimination of the DHB's ability to revoke good time.

Next to speak was Patricia, Christopher Trotter's ex-wife. Chris was originally sentenced to 4 years for a case of petty theft. On February 1, 1985. Chris and other inmates witnessed guards brutally beating to death another prisoner. Inmates then fought back to defend this man and themselves in what was later called a "riot" by prison officials. Though no one was killed and there were no premediated plans for a riot, Indiana sentenced Chris to 142 years for his alleged role in the chaos. Patricia railed against the injustice of confining a man for life because he defended himself and others, but spoke passionately about his political development and mentorship of others inside. Read more about Chris and donate to his fundraiser here.

The last family member to speak was the sister of Aaron Isby Israel. The entire crowd grew emotional as she described the anger and grief her whole family has experienced as a result of his incarceration. Israel has been confined to solitary confinement for 28 years after an exaggerated charge of "attempted murder" after defending himself against guards. He petitioned the governor for clemency in 2020 on the grounds of wrongful incarceration. The governor is supposed to respond to petitions for clemency within a matter of months. It has now been over one year since Israel filed his petition without any word from the governor. Read more about Israel's petition for clemency here.

The rally came to an end with the attendees greeting each other and talking about how to take the next steps forward. Many knew each other from prison or personally knew the three men we rallied around. Organizers from IDOC Watch and TND shared literature on clemency and mass release with the people. Those at the rally were directed to a table where they could sign letters to Governor Holcomb demanding clemency, 50 each for Leon, Christopher, and Israel. We successfully got every letter signed and ready to send off to the governor, which organizers accomplished the next week. The fight continues. IDOC Watch and TND will be hosting future events to agitate for clemency and mass release in Indiana. Follow IDOC Watch on Facebook or Instagram, or check the Truth Never Dies website or the Free Leon Benson Facebook page for more updates.

FREE THEM ALL!

FIGHT THE AMERIKKAN INJUSTICE SYSTEM!

CLEMENCY AND MASS RELEASE NOW!

And here is one of the problems now. Back when I use to hustle, etc, etc, I had a couple of female c.o.s that I'll just say I was extremely close with and I'd use to run counterintel ops. One use to be actually progressive and a sympathizer to our struggle, so I use to get a lot of inside Intel and photos. I actually had emails and photos of the inside of their towers, all their weaponry etc. I can say it now becuz they busted some of the phones I had with it stored in my email folders etc. The point I was getting to is this. You now have a whole new young crop working the SHU who is fascinated by these stories of brutalization. They are nostalgic for a time gone by. A lot of em is young, white, nationalistic and vets who have been over to Iraq and Afghanistan with that oppressive/authoritarian bs and bringing it back home to visit upon us. Khalfani can tell you. After he was accused and convicted of killing that c.o. they psych tortured that brother for over a decade. Dirty mfkrs use to go on the rec pads and get bugs, crickets, grasshoppers, water bugs etc and put in his [food] trays . . . The same shit they were doing to me on a smaller scale before I went on that hunger strike.

You cannot claim to be radical, revolutionary or anti imperialist and you allow the state to define and set the rules of engagement. Ain't no such thang as legal resistance. A movement without any teeth or the ability or even the desire to bite or bite back when bitten is a paper tiger. I refuse to be apart of such because what that tell me is I can be killed or sacrifice my life and those responsible would not be held accountable or brought to justice. It ain't about pushing masculinity or false masculinity/bravado, to me sometimes that argument is used as a copout and excuse to not take responsibility. I don't advocate any type of reckless reactionary adventurism, but as a political line reflective of an ideology, it must be over stood that the groundwork and foundation has to be established to develop the u.g. capacity to hold neo fascist terrorists accountable.

When I first came into the system in the 80s and got sent to Pendleton, right after the rebellion that Balagoon and Naeem allegedly initiated, it was common for pigs to wear Klan rings, for them to call you boy or catch you isolated and call u nigger. At the State Farm in Putnamville they were extremely vicious. Chaining brothers to tables and shit and beating brothers. The stress positions, etc that they showed u.s. troops doing at Abu Ghraib was nothing new to us. Some of us were going through that shit at 18, 19, 20, yrs old. It wasn't til dudes started organizing, taking over shit and demanding that the feds come in....it wasn't til we started serving notice upon racist pigs that justice was a double edge sword that we were able to push back some of the more blatant viciousness. Yet that came at a price, Balagoon did 35 yrs in the hole! Him and Naeem Trotter picked up another 80 to 100 yrs, I've done over 25 yrs in

the hole altogether. Had we had a strong outside mass based political movement with a u.g. capacity, then some of these sacrifices comrades would not have had to make. Understand what I'm saying?

For some of us its too late to try and retreat. I mean I'm a lot older and more disciplined now. I'm not so quick to just jump out there without seeing the larger picture and what's at stake... with that being said, by the same token the state ain't going to allow u to retreat. Its like the scarlet letter. And yet u can only kill me once.

The state murdered Ajamu Nassor s/n Gregory Resonover on Dec. 8, 1994. They tortured him, kept electrocuting him until his head exploded in flames and while they were carrying out this act, they were playing XXX HARDCORE FUCKIN PORN TAPES ON THE PRISON CHANNEL ALL NIGHT!!! Then the fascists threw a party in the admin bldg after the legal lynching was over. This was the epitome of disrespect, and was extremely hurtful and traumatizing. Ajamu and Ziyon were PPOWs and co-defendants, and highly respected and loved.

Approximately two weeks later they found a neo kolonial pig butchered in D cell house which Khal [Khalfani Malik Khaldun] was later charged with. Once it got exposed how they tortured Ajamu and the fall out, the state stopped using the electric chair and started using lethal injection.

In the spring of 96 it came time for them to murder his co-defendant Ziyon Israel s/n Tommie Smith. Making him the first to be lethally injected. This time tho political forces had been quietly doing mass work and educating the population as to the politics and contradictions of the genocide penalty. By the time his date came around large sectors of the prison was organized and mobilized. Various cell houses were carrying out nonviolent mass protest, hundreds of prisoners. In coordination with actions on the streets.

Because of what happened after they murdered Ajamu and although the two events were never proven to be linked, the state moved to temporarily stay Ziyon's scheduled murder, while they manufactured all kinds of crazy conspiracy charges of planning to riot, take over the prison etc, etc and went to federal kourt to get an emergency kourt order to move us to MCC [Maximum Control Complex, now Westvile Control Unit] under investigation. They moved 12 of us for 30 days, while rounding up tens of others at ISP all under investigation. This was all after a silent protest in the kitchen of over 200 prisoners of all nationalities. They panicked and made up a bunch of bs charges and railroaded six of us out of the twelve and shipped us all across the state. Myself and Akono were sent back to MCC. Before we

were all moved , Ziyon would be murdered on July 6, 1996. Tortured like Ajamu. He was poked with needles for over 45 minutes all over his body. The state claimed they couldn't find a vein. During the course of the murder there was militant action on all of the lock up units. Mass flooding which flooded the admin bldg as IDU sits a top of it. Cells were destroyed by snatching the toilets and sinks out the walls and Balagoon and them allegedly engaged in hand to hand combat with the goon squad as they went from cell to cell doing extractions. The 12 were immediately shipped but the protest continued and a c.o. named Patikis ended up being stabbed through the bars by a young comrade as they refused to lock down and engaged the goon squad. This is why I haven't been allowed to return back to ISP since 1996. Everyone has since been allowed back over the years, except for me.

These were different times . . . and a different era altogether. However, it was also a product of the mass work that was taking place on both sides of the wall. Prison News Service also played an instrumental role in that mass work and politicization.

<https://incarceratedworkers.org/news/shaka-shakur-charged-attacking-guard-wabash-valley-indiana-calls-needed-now>



Interview: IDOC Watch, Leon Benson and Abolitionist Organizing in Indiana
from FinalStrawRadio.NoBlogs.org

First, you'll hear from Koby Bluit talking about her father, Leon Benson and his struggle for release after 23 years in prison, 10 of which was in solitary confinement, for a murder charge in 1998 that he has consistently claimed to have not committed. More on Leon at freeleonbenson.org or [leonbenson-freeleonbenson](https://www.facebook.com/leonbenson-freeleonbenson) on facebook. The Mass Release & Clemency for Leon rally in Indianapolis is July 25th at Tarkington Park.

Then, you'll hear from Landis Reynolds, a founder of IDOC Watch currently held in Westville Correctional Institution and who's been in since he was a juvenile, and Ray, an outside organizer with the South Bend, Indiana chapter of IDOC Watch. They talk about their work to start study groups in prison, promote Prison Lives Matter, support jailhouse lawyers and recruit outside lawyers through the Prison Legal Support Network alongside the NLG and more.

TFSR: Would you tell us about Leon Benson?

Koby: : He has been incarcerated in the state of Indiana for 23 years. So, to rewind, in 1999 he was sentenced to 60

years of which he has maintained his absolute innocence, despite the Indiana justice system's refusal to grant him justice in its appellate courts. To touch on these different things that we're trying to get through the appeal courts, they basically were able to convict him of mis-identification by the state sole witness, she changed her statement from the original statement that she had, they had him in custody, they wouldn't even line him up when they wanted to do an actual lineup for her to be able to identify the person that she claimed that she had seen when she was there. Also, there was a new witness that was actually on the scene, and the testimony was never heard in court. And also, they have been not even accepting his appeals to even reconsider the case, even to reconsider any of the evidence because there's not even DNA evidence, the sole eyewitness seen, she described him as a dark-skinned male, and he had on a certain amount of clothing. If you guys have ever seen my pops online, or ever checked out his website platforms, like my pops is nowhere near darker complexion. He is a very light, very light brown young man. And also the clothes did not match, the clothes that the actual police had locked him up in, when he was locked up on that night, he didn't even have the match of the description of the clothing at all.

There was a gentleman who they had got a tip from that actually had a disagreement with my pops. Prior to this crime happening that night, they were able to take his testimony, so-called, and this young gentleman I'm speaking of was someone who was known for using drugs in the area. And this guy basically gave the police a tip, because he was there out of spite to whatever he had going on with my pops. And I guess, of course, they wanted to get my pops anyway due to selling drugs or not that, so... And like I said if you guys heard my pops' song called Innocent, he talked about how he sold dope. He talked about how he was on the streets trying to make a way for his family, my mom and helping her and everything, and not saying that that's right. But that's what he did. And then my pops had a witness who was actually with him that night that never got to speak in the trial, and they wouldn't even allow him to speak in none of the trials, although he's ready, willing, open to do it. And there are also other witnesses that did not get to speak on my pops' behalf. They literally just used this young woman and this other gentleman who was known for using drugs, and he was already on parole, too. It was definitely some mess going on. Maybe a reduced sentence for this young man who actually claimed that he'd seen my pops do it.

Basically, where we are now is my pops has been really trying to get into the appellate courts, and they have refused. He has filed a petition of clemency. This happened back in October of 2020. They finally logged into the system about December of 2020. Within four months in the state of Indiana, they're supposed to give you a decision on if

they're going to grant it or not. And it's clearly been more than four months. Despite that, Leon Benson, my pops has demonstrated his humanity, growth, and rehabilitation. For the past seven years, he hasn't had any misconduct, any write-ups, anything. And he has completed over 50 vocational, therapeutic, spiritual and educational programs, over 50. So he has used his time to really what they think in this criminal justice, incarceration system is supposed to work, people are supposed to get rehabilitated. He really took advantage of all the things that they offer. He is now an asset to society. This is a clear case of rehabilitation versus punishment. Are we going to continue to punish people, even after they have sought redemption from within, they have utilized all the services that are offered within this so-called prison system.

Just a fun fact for those who are listening. Indiana has only granted three clemency petitions since the 70s. Okay, and we are in 2021. And I'm sure there are other people who have sent in applications, and he is not the only one in Indiana who has been wrongly convicted. This is not a unique case. This is tragic when it's known that it's prolonged incarceration. And it's not really to rehabilitate prisoners, we all know incarceration hinders mentally, spiritually, and emotionally. With hopefulness, we are going to basically where his case is now to keep things simple as that he filed for clemency, we're waiting to hear back.

TFSR: Would you share a bit about Leon's activism inside, his creativity, and the gift that he and others like him continue to share despite the dungeons that they're kept in?

Koby: Yeah, for what it's worth, my pops has not spent this time in prison and let it go to waste. He really got into books, he really got into unlearning to relearn about the world around him and culture and religion, and cultivated a new him, he had a lot of time to spare, clearly. I think a lot of people who are incarcerated, not even my pops, they come out with such an amazing, broader perspective on how do you take the pain and turn it into a passion of some sort, how do you take the pain and possibly be able to create a platform for your children to be able to begin, to create some revenue through learning about turning all that they've been through and learning how to get creative with it. And what I mean by that is, although, my pops' body was locked up, although there are other men and women who are incarcerated, and their bodies are physically behind bars, their mind, my pops' mind was free to roam, as he dedicated himself to writing powerful poetry and music and helping to create motivational and educational programs to benefit his other fellow comrades from the inside. He has also worked closely with community activists to push for statewide prison reform, to build a system that truly treats every citizen equally.

My pops has been a key part of forming and running several programs in prison meant to create a better system for others. So I want to mention that he was chosen to be a mentor for the staff that created the band of brothers. And this band of brothers basically taught realistic views of masculinity and help individuals to become better members of their families and communities. My pops has really gotten to the healing point that they so-called push for in prisons, he really got into that, but he created that with other individuals that he was locked up with, and they created that community with each other. And, he is a mentor to other men who are in there for different reasons. And he was tasked with facilitating this group and other group discussions and using his unique perspective to make sure that everyone got the most out of the program.

My pops has been not only a father, he was a brother, he was a friend of his community. My pops is from Flint, Michigan. And he came to Indiana in 1995 and was sentenced to 60 years to life by 1999. He wasn't even here this long, he's not even from here, he came down here to help his uncle with his painting business, and to help them do home renovations. But nonetheless, my pops has really taken all his pain and turned it into a passion. Through his music, you hear his pain, but you hear his liberation, you hear his never dying, ending faith, that his music and his art and his poetry really speaks for itself. Some other things he's been involved in is that he was chosen to be council praise team member and sermon group leader for the congregation of Yahweh, and basically a Hebrew spiritual, cultural community.

My pops is very spiritual, he is not religious, and he speaks about spirituality. That's what we need to be going towards because we all know religion is a social creative construct. My pops spent 10 years in solitary confinement, where people are known to kill themselves, I don't think there are any windows in there, it's literally the size of a bathroom or even smaller, and 10 years in there. I mean, the man has amazing strength. And this is why when you hear his song Innocence, when you hear his song TND Truth Never Dies as long as we discover it, he created most of his art being in the shoe, being in solitary confinement. And so, Leon's commitment to spiritual betterment has won him praise and respect from his peers.

And even from the people inside, and also, Leon became a demand educator, developing a course called The Streets Don't Love You Back, where he educated hundreds of participants about the perils of street life, and how to escape and find your higher purpose. We know a lot of our men end up going to the streets, not because they "Oh, yeah, sign me up, I want to go, I want to get into things that could possibly get me killed or sent to prison for life". No, they get into these things because within their environments,

there are little to no options, especially coming from a single-parent home. My pops never met his father. And this is something unique for me. I didn't know my biological father. I didn't meet him until I was 16 years old. The reason why I'm here today is that my pops stepped up with my mom and said that he would help raise me. And he said he would be my father. Because he never had his father. My pops had character before he went in. Yes, my pops sold drugs, but he did it because that was one of the very few options that he had to actually provide for his family outside of the option that he came down to Indiana to do when that wasn't working.

As I said, he taught an education course in prison called *The Streets Don't Love You Back* and he educated other men who are in prison because of these things. He became a very gifted public speaker delivering over 300 speeches that could be inspirational, comical, tragic, or uplifting, all at the same time. My pops is very artistically inclined. While in prison, it allowed my pops to raise his creativity to new heights. He studied theater, Shakespeare in particular. He took part in several productions. He developed another program called *Poetic Justice*, in which he helped his fellow inmates to express themselves in words while learning about poem structures, style, and performance. Really turning all the BS and all the things that they put him through, he was able to make it because he was able to find meaning within all of this and is still finding it.

He's also published several poems, and also several books that have even been stolen. What I mean by stolen is that there are books that he actually had produced and came out with, but they were stolen by different people who actually published them and actually did the legal work behind them. He doesn't even own that material anymore. It's just really crazy, but that's never stopped him. He's still going on, still creating, he actually has an album coming out called *Innocent Born Guilty*. And that will be towards either late July or August. He's done a lot on the inside and has been a part of what prison is supposed to do, to so-called rehabilitate. But once you rehabilitate, then what? Do you still gotta pay? That's where we are now. It's been seven years that my pops has had any write-ups and any violations and as anyone knows, prison is a jungle. It may not be you involved in some mess, it might be somebody else, your cellmate, the guards are corrupt. There's just so much that could happen but for him to be solid that long especially he's in there wrongly convicted, so he could have really lost his mind and really snapped and crackled and popped. But he's been really strong. His strength is so admiring for these past 23 years.

TFSR: Can you talk a little bit about the Mass Release campaign? And how does it relate to the efforts to gain

clemency for your pops?

Koby: I am actually working with IDOCWatch, an amazing organization. They have a chapter here in Indianapolis, Indiana. And basically, they have four things that they are working on within this Mass Release campaign, they're working on actually holding the Indiana Department of Corrections accountable. We need to release some people, we need to release them all because people are not getting rehabilitated through this kind of system. And even when they're rehabilitated, so-called, they shouldn't have to sit and die in these prisons without their family and those other things. So there are four topics that are connected to the Mass Release campaign. One is compassionate release, and this is the release of the aging people campaign. The second is clemency. And my pops is representing this portion of the four topics that they are going to touch on within the Mass Release campaign, and also being able to get Direct Relief. That's the second one. And the third point that they're connecting with the Mass Release campaign is that when their so-called discipline and written up, people are getting their good time taken away. You can get time added to your sentence, really crazy things. And then the fourth one is that some people are getting sent back for technical violations. And literally, they have added like five to ten years on to their sentence. Even though they have good time, even though they've been solid for the last couple of years, if they have one violation or one behavior misconduct, they will add time. It's designed to keep people in, it's not designed for rehabilitation. With this mass release we must release them all and let's rehabilitate them, release them all, and let's actually create programs. As you guys know, if you don't even have a member of your family incarcerated, our tax money, our tax dollars are going to build these prisons, we can put this money back into reconstructing some rehabilitations, get some social works out there, get some psychologists out there, therapy, we need it. But they're focused on keeping people in. So with this Mass Release campaign and my pops, really calling on all those to stand in solidarity and for the state of Indiana to begin to reevaluate the mass utilization of the Indiana Department of Corrections. Even across the country, not even Indiana, but just other departments of corrections. They need to reevaluate this mass incarceration.

TFSR: What might you say to folks on the outside who don't know that they know anyone in the carceral system, or don't think that they have this vested interest in abolition about your dad's case and about the mass release campaign?

Koby: We are all witnessing what is going on. People are getting screwed from different ends, to be very transparent, to be very frank, even just outside of mass incarceration, that is happening – our healthcare. There are just different

things that are being screwed that if we all come together and stand in solidarity with one another, and it doesn't have to be because you directly are affected, it is because that you are a part of this Earth and you have to walk the streets of a person who is affected, who is involved. And you have to make sure that that doesn't mess up what you have going on, that is not deconstruct anything that your children-to-be are going to grow up. We got to think about what kind of world we want to be a part of, what is the change that we want to see. And it's going to take more than the people who are actually affected by mass incarceration. And maybe you don't have a father like me who's been incarcerated. Maybe you have a brother, maybe you have a friend, maybe a friend or a mother who is a single mother because her boyfriend or the father of her children is incarcerated. And now she's out here having to make ends meet. Now she's out here making decisions that she wouldn't have made if she had assistance from the actual father of her child. Now her children are put in spaces with different scenarios that could go left or right because now she has to make it by herself with little to no support. You're seeing children that are ended up having mental and emotional issues within the school system, that may be sitting next to your child and class. And they may be having behaviors that are they're acting out in school, or in high school, or maybe they're in sports, and they're a little aggressive on the field, and there may be some things that are going on, that you may not even know about, that have to do with their parents being gone incarcerated, that have to do with their parents having health issues, mental health issues, and have to do with their family, be in situations where they did not... the children don't even have a say, so they don't even they're not even cared about. And it's just that we have to be a part of a world that we want to see.

It's gonna take all of us, it's gonna take everybody. You are going to have to choose a side. You got to ask yourself every day: are you doing what you would want the world to look like in the future? Are you a part of the change that you want to see? Or are you remaining silent and being compliant? Because remaining silent and not saying anything and not being involved does not make you better or not. That's actually a worse offense. Because if you see something, say nothing, then that lets you know that you are in compliance, that you are just as at fault as the people who are doing these things, the systems that are a part of oppression for different people.

And there are different ways. You don't even have to be standing on the ground, standing in solidarity. Where's your money going? Where are you donating your money to? Is your money going towards these efforts to get these things off the ground? IDOCWatch, have a Patreon and they have things that people can send in money because they're

actually working with prisoners. Also, they're connected with Green Star Families, actually helping families be able to... Certain children are not able to connect with their parents. And because they can't even afford a phone call, they can't even afford to put money on the books of these incarcerated loved ones, right? We just have to remember: it takes a village to demand change. And we all have to do our part. You don't have to be on the ground standing in solidarity. You can be redirecting your money. You could be writing letters, you can be reposting this campaign that you're hearing today. There are ways to be involved. But I would say being silent is definitely not the answer. Your silence lets you and the world around you know where you stand. And if it was you or your loved one, you wouldn't be silent. We just have to really think about that.

...

Landis: : My name is Landis Reynolds, I'm currently incarcerated in Westville Correctional Facility. I was convicted at age 17 and sentenced to 50 years in prison. I'm now on year 17. While incarcerated, my advocacy and activism began with juvenile justice reform, trying to get them to change some of the laws that they use, with respect to waiving minors to adult court and sentence them to adult time for offenses committed as juveniles. And as I began to study some of the background there and witness some of the horrors that take place in the penal setting. I just started to expand my activism a little bit, study more of the systematic causes and abuses that are perpetrated by the prison industrial complex.

Ray: And I'm Ray, I use they/them pronouns. I'm the PSLN outside facilitator and a member of IDOCWatch in South Bend.

TFSR: So for the listening audience, could you all maybe talk a bit about the IDOCWatch, what it is, how it developed? What motivates it, who it supports and why?

Landis: Okay, so IDOCWatch began rather informally. There were some incarcerated individuals in long-term segregation and in various prisons that reached out to individuals on the outside and began to form friendships and relationships with those individuals. And as those friendships and relationships blossomed, the individuals on the outside were able to see the daily struggle that incarcerated individuals go through in the Indiana Department of Corrections, they were able to see some of the systematic abuses and the violations that go on, and over time, as those friendships and relationships began to blossom. It morphed into what can we do to fix this situation? So, IDOCWatch is essentially a collective to provide assistance for those that are incarcerated, to fight back for their rights and assert themselves. IDOCWatch believes in a prisoner-led abolition. Basically, as we strive and struggle for abolition, we believe

Statement from NALC co-Founder Shaka Shakur on the passing of New Afrikan Revolutionary Sanyika Shakur fka Monster Kody Scott

by Shaka Shakur

“i was just informed that Comrade Sanyika Shakur has transitioned to live beside Our ancestors. This is deeply hurtful and a shock as he was still so young. i first met Sanyika in the early 90’s soon after reading his book “Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member”. He was a hell of an influence as i was an up and coming writer and had just officially joined the New Afrikan Independence Movement.

It was he who encouraged me to continue writing. It was he who engaged me in theoretical struggle and our street politics and affiliations helped to facilitate such growth and development. He was in Pelican Bay SHU and i was in the MCC Supermax. Both at war but on different terrains.

We would both end up a part of the same revolutionary structure and work on joint projects together. This structure was The Spear and Shield Collective. We were both protégé’s and students of the great Atiba Yaki Shanna s/n James Sayles (RIP). May these brothers meet up and break bread amongst the ancestral giants who continue to give us strength, direction and guidance.

When I caught this case Sanyika was one of the first from the NAIM to reach out to me and offer his support. When myself and Kwame Shakur first formed the New Afrikan Liberation Collective, Sanyika was one of the first to support our effort. i loved this brother and we have truly lost a giant. i send his family and his children and the sista Tamu strength and love.

**CAN’T STOP, WON’T STOP!!!!
FREE THE LAND!!!!**



that it starts with the individuals that are incarcerated. We have to educate ourselves, we have to take those first steps in the fight towards abolition and asserting our rights. And IDOCWatch has grown exponentially and towards furthering those goals.

TFSR: Ray mentioned the Prison Legal Solidarity Network. I'm wondering if y'all could tell the listening audience a little bit about how that developed and your partnership with the National Lawyers Guild and what the vision is for that?

Landis: Okay, so with PLSN, one of the things we've seen historically, is when it comes to any type of movement when individuals are asserting their civil rights, protesting, and things of that nature alone, without more, it is difficult to accomplish the goal. So various members of IDOCWatch, we put our heads together. And we see that in the correctional setting, many constitutional violations go unchallenged, because either there's an ignorance amongst the prisoner population on how to challenge those constitutional violations, or what we've seen in recent years, is a meaningful or willful attempt on behalf of IDOC to keep offenders out of law libraries or make it difficult for them to assert their legal rights. So, with the PLSN we've seen an opportunity to not only build a network that provided the necessary resources for offenders to attack their criminal convictions or file lawsuits against systematic abuses within the correctional setting, but we've seen it as an opportunity to educate. One of the main pillars and objectives is empowerment. In that, we seize the opportunity to educate the incarcerated on the true motives of the prison industrial complex and the history behind the prison system as apparatus of class warfare and subjugation. We see it as providing the necessary resources to weaponize the very system, they weaponize against our communities, against the prison industrial complex. And it provides an opportunity for us to network and to build those friendships and meaningful relationships to continuously grow and progress towards the ultimate goal.

TFSR: Yeah, that kind of strikes a chord that I've been hearing a lot of quotes of, in the last few years, from prisoner organizers, which is I think a mixture of a quote from... I'm not... amazingly versed in George Jackson, but between George Jackson and also Ho Chi Minh, talking about turning the prisons into schools of liberation. When reading up on the Prison Legal Solidarity Network, I also came across the Prison Lives Matter which I've also heard referenced by incarcerated activists that I have spoken to. Can you talk a little bit about PLM and how the Prison Legal Solidarity Network engages with it and what that initiative is?

Landis: PLM is an amazing organization that was created in part by one of our members, one of our inside coordinators Shaka Shakur. And basically, it is to shine a light on the fact that just because the person was convicted of a crime doesn't mean that their life doesn't matter. It doesn't mean that they shouldn't have a legitimate shot at reformation. The public a lot of times doesn't understand the factors that condition individuals and set them up to be incarcerated, number one. And number two, a lot of people think that incarceration is conducive to reformation. They believe that when you come to prison, you have the ability to take advantage of programs to reform yourself and to become a productive member of society. But that's absolutely not the truth. They don't understand that prisons are absolutely saturated with narcotics. They don't understand that prisons are ridiculously violent. And that most administrations enforce policies and a culture that reinforces the cycle of addiction and the cycle of violence. And when an individual spends years at a time in these environments, without the opportunity for a meaningful reformation, that the system is essentially manufacturing monsters that they're returning to these working-class and minority communities. And it creates that cycle of violence and failure and addiction and re-incarceration. And they don't understand that that was the true meaning of that system.

If you look at the Indiana Department of Corrections, their model isn't reformation, it isn't rehabilitation. If you look at their emblem, it says, Employees Efficiency Effectiveness. So they're utilizing employees to efficiently and effectively incarcerate individuals. It has nothing to do with the reformation, nothing to do with rehabilitation. So Prison Lives Matter was a formation to shine a light on what really goes on behind these walls and to start to put the mechanisms in place, to start to form the relationships and the networks to actually be able to create an environment that's conducive to rehabilitation and supports what we're striving for.

TFSR: And while the work that y'all are doing to co-educate and to engage other people that are behind the bars, it seems super important, especially since people are coming in and going and going back in, people have families and communities on the outside. And one of these major dehumanizing methods of the prison system in the United States is to attempt to, despite what it says, break up those connections. It seems like Prison Lives Matters gives an opportunity for people to gain more tools to be able to talk about what they've experienced to their loved ones on the outside and re-contextualize the reason that they're in that place and engage the people on the outside to fight along their side too.

Landis: Absolutely, and what's disturbing is when you're

incarcerated, those relationships and friendships with your family are already strained because of the distance and the difficulties that come with incarceration. But we've seen an effort on the part of the Indiana Department of Corrections to make that even more difficult. So one of the things that they've done is they've made it harder for offenders to receive snail mail. And one of the reasons for that is they issue began issuing tablets where we can send electronic mail to our families and everything, one more way that they can make money. So what they began to do is, instead of allowing us to receive actual letters, they began copying our letters and making it difficult and limiting the type of mail that your family can send you, they can't send you actual pictures anymore, to force us to start to use these tablets. Now what we're seeing, since COVID, is an attack on the contact visitation. One of the most dehumanizing things about incarceration is you don't have the ability to receive that reassuring touch. And contact visitation, when you're able to see your family and actually hug another human being, hold their hand, kiss your child, that reminds you of your humanity, that's a motivation for you to continue to put one foot in front of the other. And here recently, we've seen an attack on that.

We believe that, and I've heard from a senior official that they're actually trying to eliminate contact visits in the Indiana prison system and force us to have to utilize the video visitation to see our family. And that's wrong on so many levels. Number one, not all families have the financial resources to do that. Number two, the Wi-Fi system is ridiculously unreliable. Frequently, one of your family members has scheduled a visit, and they can't even get through because the Wi-Fi is not up. So as you were saying, maintaining these human connections is really important. And that's another thing that we're seeing constructive efforts to obstruct our ability to maintain that contact with those loved ones, our ability to maintain the network with individuals like yourself who support us and support our well-being.

TFSR: It's a strategy that Departments of Corrections seem to be applying across the country, including at the federal level. It also increases the possibility of surveillance, right? If you've got emails shooting back and forth, and you're paying 50 cents for an E stamp or whatever, through JPay, then suddenly, it's way easier to run an algorithm to just search for certain key phrases or monitor your relationship with people on the outside.

Landis: Absolutely! One thing that's particularly scary is for activists, without contact visits, without the ability to utilize snail mail at any time, people that are shining a light on the systematic abuses and oppression, they can cut you off electronically, stop you from being able to send electronic

messages, they can stop your video visits. Because the way that it was set up before is they could restrict your visit, they could put you on non-contact visits, but at any time an individual could come up there and make sure that you were okay. But the things that they're trying to impose now, where they're making everything electronic, somebody who's a thorn in the side of a particular administration, they would have no problem whatsoever cutting off all of your contacts with the outside world, and you would literally be at the mercy of that particular administration. So it creates a huge possibility for abuse.

TFSR: And so I guess while you all are working towards PLM as a project to garner more attention and get more support, more understanding on the outside, the Prison Legal Solidarity Network is a tool towards multiplying the number of people that are going to be able to advocate for each other and also build solidarity with each other, to advocate on each other's behalf, help them through filing these lawsuits, challenging the imposition of this for-profit filtering of people's real lives and ability to survive.

Landis: So, one thing that we have seen in analyzing history is movements such as this, like I said earlier, require more than simple protesting. In order for us to achieve the things that we want to achieve, we have to start to put the support systems in place to sustain an ongoing movement. One way to proactively counter PRC aggression, and to fulfill certain objectives, such as legal education, political education, the empowerment that we need collectively, was to put this support system in place. We also believe that we have to begin to put other support systems in place to continue to counter some of these moves to further the objectives of the prison industrial complex.

We see, especially at locations like this, where they only provide the minimum amount of education required. Here, under IDOC policy, they're only allowed to teach English in the classroom. So one thing that I've seen is we have a large number of Hispanic immigrants here that can't speak English. So those individuals aren't provided books in Spanish, they aren't provided a translator or individuals that can teach them English, and they're still expected to be able to get their GED. And what's even more unfair about the situation is in order to go on to a vocational school or programs like PLUS or other reformative programs, they require GED. So basically, individuals who are immigrants or don't speak English have to do 100% of their sentence simply based off of a policy. And you see that if you study the policies, the policies aren't geared towards reformation or reintegrating individuals in society, they're geared towards keeping individuals here longer.

TFSR: Like handling a surplus population.

Landis: Absolutely. So, that's two things that the PLSN is looking at right now is we're looking at how they are deprived of good-time credit. And we're also looking at the parole system in Indiana, and how they have absolute authority to re-incarcerate individuals at their whim, which is scary. Once an individual does their required sentence and they're released on parole. If I forgot to report, a change of address, they can send me back to prison for the rest of my sentence.

TFSR: I'd also like to hear a little bit about – I know it's off topic of the Prison Legal Solidarity Network – but if you could speak a little bit about what your experience with COVID has been in the facilities that you've been in, and what vaccination, if any, is happening among the guards, how prisoners feel about vaccines, because I know there's a lot of hesitancy or distrust in certain facilities around the country.

Landis: Well, at the location I'm at with respect to the vaccine, there's a huge distrust. We know that historically, prisons have been the place where they've done medical experiments, tested experimental medications. So amongst the offender population, there's distrust for for-profit medical companies like Wexford, who could care less about our physical well-being, their main concern is their bottom line or profits. So very few of the offenders that I know have actually taken advantage of the opportunity to receive the vaccine, and most of them think we all had COVID. So what's the point in getting vaccinated against COVID, if every person that you know has already had it?

The public has no clue what went on behind these walls during this pandemic. It was terrifying. So when we begin to see news reports about the severity of COVID, how serious it was, there was no meaningful response from the administration whatsoever. And the scary thing is this facility holds more prisoners than any other facility in the state. I just arrived here when the pandemic hit. We have a unit here called ANO where when you're first transferred from another prison or you come from the reception diagnostic center, you go to that unit first, they assess you, and then they send you to your respective part of the prison you are assigned to. So, the first case was on that unit. And what they did is they tried to keep it hush-hush. They didn't respond in any meaningful way. Then when we started to hear that they had positive tests in that unit, from what the correctional staff was saying that they instructed officers to stop, if you weren't assigned to that unit, you weren't supposed to go to that unit. But we were seeing officers go up to that unit, where they had positive cases, visit with other staff, and then go to other units within the facility. And within a few days, maybe a week, we start seeing

individuals start to exhibit the symptoms of COVID. Once it finished sweeping through the prison like wildfire, then they step in, and they basically quarantine each dorm to their dorm. But they knew that the virus was already within each dorm. So, we weren't issued masks. When staff was walking around wearing masks if an offender has made his own mask out of whatever materials that he could get, he received a conduct report for it. And then once they finally started to issue masks, at first, I believe those maybe one or two days, medical staff would report to each unit and check to see if guys had symptoms. But after that we didn't see medical staff for months, there were instances where an offender would be so sick that we would have to threaten to riot to get that offender medical attention. It was a very, very terrifying experience.

TFSR: Landis, you talked about how you've been in for 17 years, you came in as a juvenile, correct?

Landis: Yes, sir.

TFSR: And you've been an advocate around shifts and changes in juvenile incarceration in Indiana. If you could talk a little bit about what some of that work looks like and what maybe people on the outside don't realize why there need to be major shifts in the way that people consider criminality, incarceration, and juvenile health.

Landis: The first thing that people don't consider is that minors are physiologically incapable of making an adult decision. So anytime a minor is waived to adult court and sentenced to adult time for a decision they made when they were incapable of thinking as an adult, in and of itself, contradicts justice. For me, after I was convicted, I was at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility, the most violent prison in the state of Indiana. I was placed in a dorm called K-dorm, it was a program called YIA, youth incarcerated as adults. And basically, it was like Lord of the Flies in there, it was violent. There was a lot of misconduct on the part of staff towards juvenile offenders, we really didn't have any rehabilitative resources to speak of. And one thing that I've always seen is that if there's any renewable resource, here, within the last 10-20 years, as a society, spoken a lot about renewable resources, if there's any renewable resource, it is our children. If anybody is capable of reformation and redemption, it's a child. But we're the only country in the world where a child can commit a crime. And one thing that really isn't taken into consideration is the background that this child came from, what motivations caused this child to commit this crime.

Not understanding that background, not understanding the inability to think at the level necessary, and sentencing a child to considerable term in prison goes against what our

Constitution is supposed to do. Because here in Indiana, we have Article 1 Section 18 that says the Penal Code shall be founded upon principles of reformation and not vindictive justice. But what's more vindictive about sending a child to prison where they have a choice between joining a gang and engaging in violent behavior, or being raped, or being robbed, or abused. Basically, when you send a child into this environment, either he has to become a monster to survive, or he has to become a victim. And if reformation is the goal, that makes reformation impossible. So looking towards the initiatives and the things, there is pretty much nothing in place that would allow a child to reform themselves.

TF SR: Thank you for saying that. I really appreciate that. And there's some audio of you also speaking about your experiences up on the IDOCWatch.org website. Really just spell it out also, and very worth listening to. How can people who were in the listening audience support PLSN and get involved, support PLM, if you can speak to that.

Ray: As far as Prison Lives Matter, you can our focus is incarcerated people and people on the outside. You can reach us at PO Box 9383, Chicago, Illinois 6069. Or you can visit us at supportprisonlives.org. For the Prison Support Legal Network, if you are a jailhouse lawyer or interested in our initiative, you can write to us at PO Box 3322 South Bend, Indiana 46619, or leave us a voicemail at 423-281-5009 with your name, DOC number, and a brief introduction and any legal experience or training that you may have, and we will contact you.

If you are a lawyer in Indiana, a paralegal law student, abolitionist-minded with a little bit of legal expertise, we'd love to have you onboard as well in our external committee, and you can email me directly. That's Ray at raddishgreens@protonmail.com.

TF SR: Ray gave us a little bit of information about how outside people can get involved with or find out more about PLSN and PLM. The website for IDOCWatch, or it has a reference to support for the demands of the 2018 national prison strike. About a month ago, I got to speak with someone from Jailhouse Lawyers Speak about the Shut Them Down 2021 initiative. And I'm not sure if you're aware of this initiative, if either you as a member of IDOCWatch, or you as an individual, have any words for the audience about that call out for people to come together around the theme of abolition and engage with juvenile facilities, ICE facilities, BOP, local DOC, whatever and challenge them and educate each other.

Landis: With respect to this specific initiative, I haven't really had an opportunity to read up on it or anything like that. But one thing that I can say is, without unity, we're

not going to make it anywhere. Every year, I see our rights eroded, I see the abuses become more blazing and more sadistic. But unless individuals come together and make up their minds that meaningful change is the only thing that they'll settle for, things are only going to continue to get worse.



Correctional Staff Sabotage R.W.I. Programming *by Quentin Abbott*

In or around June 2018, I, Quentin Abbott #988177, was accepted into the Recovery While Incarcerated program here at (W.V.C.F.) Wabash Valley Correctional Facility. Soon thereafter I was selected to be a Conflict Resolution Mentor and Facilitator of the R.W.I. program which assigned me additional responsibilities. While in this program I excelled as both a participant as well as a Conflict Resolution Mentor; however, that success was short lived due to a major disruption caused by a custody staff change within the program dorm on one day shift/bracket. This custody staff change was done because Sergeant Donaldson and his crew were unable to function and operate G Housing Unit which at that time was a Restrictive Status Housing Unit. As a result, Donaldson and his crew were put in charge of the R.W.I. dorm.

Shortly after this change in staff Sgt. Donaldson began refusing to allow myself and other participants of the program out of our cells to participate in the mandatory peer led groups, one on one mentoring sessions, and other mandatory criteria of the R.W.I. program. Then director of the R.W.I. program Mr. Brian Peek began inquiring as to why all of a sudden the disruptions within the program which had been functioning higher than expected (prior to the custody staff changes), after having been informed by numerous participants that their assignments were not getting done, nor were we being allowed to come out our cells and attend one on one mentoring sessions, the peer led substance abuse classes, and other mandatory functions within the criteria of the program; Mr. Peek came to the dorm and pulled out all the facilitators and mentors and questioned us in regard to these claims. All other facilitators and mentors were too scared too [sic] confirm these claims due to their fear Sergeant Donaldson would target and retaliate against them for having reported his destructive and unprofessional behaviors. I was the only person present who confirmed the claims made by other participants. Mr. Peek at that time assured me he would address Sgt. Donaldson's behavior(s) and he would not allow me to be targeted by Donaldson.

Shortly thereafter there were no changes to Donaldson's destructive behavior(s); thus the director Mr. Peek once again came to the dorm, this time accompanied by Sgt.

Donaldson, at that time they again pulled out all facilitators and mentors and Mr. Peek again asked all present what was the cause of all the sudden yet confusing dysfunction(s) of the program. As expected all present did not say anything due to their fears of being targeted by Donaldson, so at that time I again spoke out on Donaldson's behavior(s) which was sabotaging the participants progress in the program. At that time Sgt. Donaldson stood up, began to walk off while stating that he did not give a fuck, he was going to run the dorm however he felt, and wasn't anyone going to tell him shit, he had been at this facility for twenty-something years and was going to do as he wanted. I then looked at Mr. Peek and informed him that now he had witnessed the problems first hand; in response Mr. Peek instructed all present to go back to our cells and secure, and we did as was instructed of us. Approximately 45 minutes later Mr. Peek pulled me out and assured me that he had spoken with Sgt. Donaldson who was now apologetic and had agreed to comply with the program functions, activities, and criteria; after having been informed of this I returned to my cell. Later on that afternoon Sgt. Donaldson came to my cell door and proceeded to inform me that he didn't give a fuck what Mr. Peek had to said, he was going to run the dorm however the fuck he wanted. In response I asked him (Donaldson) if was he mad or upset and to tell that same stuff to Mr. Peek and to meanwhile get away from in front of the cell door. Donaldson at that time left from in front of the cell door. For approximately the next three weeks to a month Donaldson for the most part operated the dorm according to the program criteria, etc....

However, this new compliance from Sgt. Donaldson was short lived, Donaldson again began refusing to allow us participants out of our cells for program functions and activities. Once again Mr. Peek began inquiring about the recent failings of the program and its participants; on 11/30/2018 during the weekly R.W.I. program dorm meeting we (the facilitators; mentors) were again asked what was the cause of the latest disruption(s) within the program. I waited several minutes to see if one of the other facilitators or mentors would inform all present (then Warden Richard Brown, then Asst. Warden Frank Littlejohn, Cpt. M. Voigtschild, Lt. Fischer, Sgt. Donaldson, then Director of R.W.I. Brian Peek, Case Manager Amber Cutliff, etc...) that Sgt. Donaldson's refusal to comply with program criteria and count letters, etc... was the source of the recent dysfunction(s), however once again I was forced to speak out and inform those present that all the disruptions could be linked to Sgt. Donaldson and date back to the change in custody staff. In response then Asst. Warden Frank Littlejohn (who was seated next to Donaldson and the two had been whispering back and forth while I was informing all present of Donaldson's behavior and refusal to comply with the program's criteria and

count letters) began to question me as if I were lying; in response I informed Littlejohn that a few of his accusations were accurate but the vast majority of his information was inaccurate or a flat out lie. Sgt. Donaldson all the while was staring at me smirking and snickering. So I then requested of him "that while you sitting over smirking and snickering tell everyone what you had came to my cell door and told me; didn't you say that you didn't give a fuck what anyone said, that you had been here for twenty something years and was going to run the dorm however the fuck you wanted?"

Before I was able to finish this statement both Lt. Fischer and Frank Littlejohn both rushed to Donaldson's defense and immediately began to inform me "to hold on and wait a minute 'Q' there will be none of that and that I couldn't talk to an officer like that; at that time and realization that they were on some good ol boys a.k.a. staff versus inmates stuff and there was no logic to be found. I silently walked to my cell location and requested that the cell door be closed, at which time the officer working the control pod secured my cell door. Shortly after C/O Miller approached my cell location and instructed me to pack up I was moving to PHU. I complied with Officer Miller's instructions and was moved.

In January 2019 I began writing several letters. After a period of 30 days of writing various case managers, unit team managers, the warden, everybody, internal affairs, I finally began receiving responses. Even though I never received a conduct report for what took place, I never got an evaluation from the program, why was I being kicked out of the program contrary to IDOC and the program procedures? That's when I was informed that I would be placed on the opposite side of the prison from this officer for a period of at least 90 days. They thought that I needed to be removed to de-escalate the situation. I had not wanted to return to the program because of being scared of this officer, of him being so ignorant and keeping targeting me. When I left the program on November 30, 2018, he began telling some of the inmates that they had found out "Abbott was snitching, turning in anonymous tips, informing on stuff in the program," and that's why they kicked me out. That's not why I got kicked out at all, nothing of the sort has ever happened.

I ended up eventually coming back on this side of the prison, and I had an encounter with Sgt. Donaldson. I asked him about the allegations I had heard he was making, and he denied ever saying anything like that. Internal Affairs had come to speak with me about it, asking me what I wanted to do, because, "You know he's not going to admit to it. We believe you, but what can we do, he's not going to admit to it." They just recently put me back in the vicinity of this man today, and out on the rec yard he seen me and began

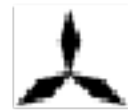
telling the inmate workers in F house that I was a snitch. I received a letter from an inmate about this incident.

“Q,
What’s up homie, you good over there? All is well I hope. Check it out: I’m about to run something by you that you won’t like, but I think you will appreciate that I feel obligated to tell you. We got history and you are one of the most solid dudes I know. Check it out: I got into it with this punk ass sergeant today over him running his mouth about you. His name is Sgt. Donaldson. He was badmouthing you bad, calling you a ‘snitching-ass bitch’ over and over until I stuck up for you. All this causing trouble over and over, about how you were telling on everything in the program. But I went off on him today and lost my job over it. I stuck up for you and checked him. I told him that you were no plaything and were one of the most solid dudes I know. Also that he had his nerve to say anything about anyone when he’s the police running around here with a badge on his shirt. I for real went off on him.

Anyways, I’m about to file a grievance on this sergeant for badmouthing you and putting you in danger and taking my job away for speaking up for you. I don’t know how you feel about all this, but that’s my move right now. For real, you’re my dude, I got nothing but love for you. Please get at me and let me know if you’re in agreement, because that shit ain’t cool.”

So that’s the brunt of all this chaos between me and this particular Sgt. Donaldson. Now, I’d do anything to avoid this man, but he’s going above and beyond to create situations between me and him. The administration at the prison is already aware of it, so I don’t know what else it’s going to take to possibly get transferred or resolve this in a conducive manner.

If [people on the outside] can call down to this facility and demand to speak to internal affairs or the warden, inform them that I feel in danger because of this sergeant running around telling other offenders I’m a snitch, trying to have something done to me. His allegations are completely false. And I’ll speak for my wellbeing, I need support to call this facility and central office and demand a transfer or address what this officer is doing, cus it’s putting me in harm’s way.



Prisoners Stand Against Racism and Colonialism in Canada’s “New Residential Schools”

from PerilousChronicle.com

by Abby Stadnyk

Content warning: This article contains references to sexual assault at residential schools, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and graphic slurs.

On July 1, prisoners at seven institutions across Canada

engaged in a coordinated one-day solidarity fast in honour of Indigenous children who died in the custody of the Indian Residential School system, a carceral apparatus of church and state designed to “kill the Indian in the child.” With genocidal intent and effect, the system operated in Canada from the 1880s to 1996, when the last institution closed.

According to prisoner advocate Sherri Maier of Beyond Prison Walls Canada, 3 units at the Edmonton Institution in Alberta participated in the fast, along with individuals at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Saskatoon Correctional, Regina Correctional, and Pine Grove Correctional, all in Saskatchewan. Prisoners at Fraser Valley Institute for Women in British Columbia and the Toronto South Detention Centre in Ontario also participated.

Asked for comment, neither the Correctional Service of Canada nor Saskatchewan Corrections was able to provide any confirmation of the number of people involved.

The 24 hour action, variously described as a “fast” and a “hunger strike”, began at 12am on July 1, Canada Day, as part of a larger grassroots movement to #CancelCanadaDay. The refusal to participate in any celebration of the Canadian Confederation was spurred by the recent recovery of over 1500 unmarked graves at Indian Residential School sites across the country, as well as renewed attention to the fact that many thousands more will most certainly be found.

It was a really powerful gesture of commemoration and mourning and grief,” said Molly Swain, otipémsiw-iskwéw organizer and member of Free Lands Free Peoples.

Prisons are the “New Residential Schools”

“The prisons are full of residential school survivors and their descendants, and they are in mourning too,” said Indigenous studies scholar and organizer Shiri Pasternak in an interview with Perilous.

The hyper-incarceration of Indigenous people in Canadian prisons is well known. Making up only 5% of the overall population in Canada, Indigenous people comprise over 30% of those incarcerated in federal prisons. The numbers are worse in the Prairie region, where 54% of federal prisoners and as many as 75% of provincial jail detainees are Indigenous.

In an interview with Perilous, Dina Kayseas, an “Indian residential school torture camp survivor” and mother to two incarcerated women, spoke to the trauma and grief that prisoners are dealing with, often on their own: “At the end of the day, they are intergenerational residential torture camp survivors,” she said. “Can you imagine them being in

there alone, not being able to cry or to react because their behavior is looked at under a microscope?”

Also called “historic trauma,” intergenerational trauma refers to the deep psychological and cultural wounds that the Indian Residential School system has inflicted on Indigenous peoples. Researchers say this trauma is passed down and accumulates over the generations, so that even those who weren’t in residential school themselves are still profoundly impacted by the system.

As Pasternak explained, “The late Mohawk scholar Patricia Monture Angus talked about the vicious cycle of the criminal justice system and the child welfare system. The intergenerational trauma of the residential schools was perpetuated through the provincial child welfare system, which was also a system of profound alienation, harm, violence, and sexual abuse that led Indigenous people to be targeted by the state through these predatory systems.”

Justice studies scholar Michelle Stewart calls this the “care-to-prison pipeline,” noting in an interview with Global News that “it’s really emblematic of a system that needs to address systemic racism, the impacts of colonialism and the ongoing impacts of residential schools and intergenerational trauma.”

Speaking of intergenerational survivors who are coping with the recent news while incarcerated, Kayseas said, “They’re going through so much.... They have grandparents and mothers and fathers that were in those schools. They’ve lost people also.”

In an emailed statement to Perilous, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) recognized that “the tragic discoveries of unmarked graves at former residential schools may be difficult and emotional for survivors to hear.” The CSC also referred to a June 25 message from Commissioner Anne Kelly to prisoners and their families, which encouraged those in need of assistance to “reach out to someone if you need to talk, like an Elder, Health Services or your support network. The National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is also available to provide support to former residential school students and those affected.”

Incarcerated people and their families say such help is not as readily available as one would hope, however.

Incarcerated at the Edmonton Institution, residential school survivor Robert Gordon explained in an interview with Perilous that he was not able to access the crisis line: “They do say that we have access to these phone numbers, like the residential school crisis line and all that, but we don’t have access to it. It’s not on my PIN [personal

identification number, which allows a prisoner to phone approved numbers].... I have to go through a process to get it on my PIN.”

Dina Kayseas agreed: “To get that 1-800 number, it needs to be approved, and that takes a while, up to two weeks. And in that time, there’s a lot of people that have suicidal ideation, and this just impacts them in such a negative way, not having the resources or the proper help within those walls.”

Not only are many residential school survivors now incarcerated, but some criminologists say prison is its own kind of “new residential school.”

In fact, as historian Jennifer Graber has documented, U.S. boarding schools (the equivalent of residential schools in Canada) were modeled on a 19th century military prison (Fort Marion). General Richard Henry Pratt, architect of the infamous Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, the first such institution in the United States, was in fact first an army general who subjected Indigenous prisoners of war at Fort Marion to his “corrective,” assimilatory agenda.

An Indigenous prisoner at the Edmonton Institution who spoke with Perilous on conditions of anonymity, addressed this carceral continuum: “When we hear the stories about how they [children in the residential school system] were treated, the same thing is happening in these prisons today. When you really think about it, that is the ripple, that’s the aftermath, the intergenerational trauma.... They’re tearing down and trying to take our souls.”

According to the Edmonton prisoner, guards at the facility have made callous comments to prisoners in recent weeks about the prisoners’ experience in residential schools. On one occasion, he said, a prisoner who is a residential school survivor “made a comment to an officer about... his experience [in residential school]. He said that there’s nothing different from residential school here [in prison].” With graphic reference to the child sexual abuse endemic to the residential school system, “the CO (Correctional Officer) said, ‘At least you’re not getting fucked.... We don’t fuck you.... There’s the difference.’”

“I heard that and the hair on the back of my neck stood up,” the prisoner said.

Racism Runs Deep

Individual and systemic racism runs deep in prisons across the country. The anonymous prisoner at the Edmonton Institution described in great detail the horrific treatment he has received at the hands of guards there.

“We’ve been going through some really disgraceful stuff here, just a lot of discrimination for mental health stuff. We were being called ‘mental retards’, ‘retarded guys,’” he said. He further explained that the men on his unit were being refused brooms and standard cleaning products because, as one guard reportedly said, “You guys are too retarded to have a broom.”

In addition to these slurs, he reported segregation-like conditions, with prisoners having very little time out of their cells and being told that they “don’t deserve programs.”

He also spoke to conditions of lateral violence and blatant racism: “It’s pretty much like the bully effect, the ripple effect for the bullies. The guards were bullying these certain inmates and then those inmates were bullying the severe mental health disorder guys. The mental health disorder guys can’t defend themselves...so what they did is they shit-bombed the other guys.... It smelt like feces on the unit and the guards came on the unit and said, ‘It smells like a reserve’ [the term used in Canada to refer to an Indigenous reservation].”

He also detailed the institutional segregation of white and Indigenous prisoners, noting that white prisoners were often treated better than Indigenous prisoners. His job, he said, was taken from him for no apparent reason and given to a white man.

“They just target the Indigenous people in here,” he explained. “I started really drawing my attention to that” after the news broke about the children’s deaths. “And I started realizing that that’s just the way it is here. You know, that white privilege is just the way of life inside these prisons. And it really started to affect me in a way where I just didn’t want to live anymore.... I just felt really suicidal.”

He felt like he had no other option than to self-harm, something another man on his unit also threatened to do: “They [the guards] asked him why, and he said, ‘Because you guys are so racist, I’m sick of it’.... That was the tipping point for me.... I just started railing on my wrist with a razor blade.... I was like, I can’t take this no more. And I put that other razor blade to my neck and I said, ‘I’m going to cut my throat open if you guys don’t stop.’”

Following this incident, as well as a report to management, the prisoner says that there are signs of improvement: “They said that they would address the issues that were happening at this institution.... They couldn’t fix everything overnight, but they did talk to those guards and there hasn’t been any racial slurs and they gave me back my job.”

Healing through Collective Action and Ceremony

Systemic racism at the Edmonton Institution spurred prisoners there to act in solidarity with residential school survivors and in honour of the children who died. “Because of all the racist stuff that’s been happening in this institution,” the anonymous Edmonton prisoner said, “I just felt that it was really important to let [survivors] know that we’re still alive and we’re going through the same things that they went through.”

“We wanted to stand with them and let them know that they’re not forgotten,” he explained

Another prisoner at the Edmonton Institution, Robert Gordon, explained in an interview with *Perilous*: “I’m a residential school survivor, and I just thought it was appropriate to fast for all of those graves and show support to other residential school survivors.”

“I carry that burden that I had when I was a kid. I wear it like a badge of honour,” Gordon added. “It made me who I am, but it made me a lot stronger and more resilient.”

The anonymous prisoner discussed the support the men received for their fast from management, cultural center staff, and Elders at the institution: “The Elder sang a couple of songs. She told us that she was going to stand with us in solidarity along with the management team, and she said that once we can get full contact back [post-COVID], we are going to have a feast for the kids that were lost.”

Gordon, however, pointed to continued disrespect from guards even during the ceremonies: “I have a little orange heart [a symbol for the children who died] placed on my window and some of them walk by and laugh at it... just being inappropriate. I don’t know if it’s a personal attack on me or what, but they seem to thrive on doing stuff like that. They get a reaction out of us because they can.... They have nothing to lose at the end of the day. They get to go home to their family.”

“A lot of the staff here doesn’t really understand the stuff that we go through,” Gordon said.

Ultimately, Gordon urged the public to “be more open-minded about what they think when they read about people in the prison system. Not everybody’s just being a bad person here. There’s people trying to make changes in their lives, trying to just do their time, you know, and go back to their families or their loved ones.”

At the Pacific Institution/Regional Treatment Centre in Abbotsford, British Columbia, following the recovery of 215 unmarked graves on the grounds of the Kamloops Residential School in late May, another fast was held.

This one took place over four days. According to Cree prisoner Andy Peekeekoot (Kutawusin Mahikan), at least 23 incarcerated people participated.

In an interview with Perilous, Peekeekoot explained that “so many people wanted to participate because they were personally affected by what happened. All of us had friends or family members who were in residential schools and everybody is really waking up to the definition of intergenerational trauma.”

The fast was a ceremony that was healing for the men involved. “On the first day of the fast with the Elder,” Peekeekoot detailed, “we all made tobacco ties and we attached our prayers during the four day fast to these tobacco ties, which we committed to the fire on the fourth day.” These prayers were for “the family of the people who are here” and “even the other people in prisons,” he explained.

In a recent discussion of Indigenous prisoner hunger strikes, Métis/Cree scholar and organizer Mike Gouldhawke explained, “Maybe when non-Native prisoners do a hunger strike, they’re not thinking of it as a spiritual thing. They’re thinking of it as just a tactic to meet a certain goal. But I think for Indigenous prisoners, there’s the spiritual aspect, because we would have fasting in our culture already, before prisons ever were brought to this territory.”

Following the fast at Pacific Institution, there was a feast and round dance around the sacred fire. “It was a really touching ceremony... It was really good,” Peekeekoot said. The round dance brings the community together in “unity and non-judgement and brotherhood.... It signifies strength and lasting commitment, and a celebration of unity.”

“It sure lit a fire under people,” Peekeekoot continued. “There’s a new focus and strengthened ambition for people in here.... The Aboriginal personnel, the staff, are coming more frequently and they’re making themselves more available. I notice people exploring different resources. Just exercising their rights more.... Seeing them speaking up for themselves in a way that wasn’t there before.... People are walking with a different pride.”

Solidarity Beyond Bars

In addition to the fasts and hunger strikes by prisoners, there were a number of solidarity actions organized by family members, advocates, and abolitionists on the outside.

Otipémsiw-iskwéw Molly Swain, a member of Free Lands Free Peoples, explained in an interview with Perilous that supporters need to “stand in solidarity and support prisoner

actions,” while recognizing that “this is a survivor-led movement coming from the inside.”

“One of the big ways that the system works to oppress people on the inside is by making it very, very difficult for communication between the inside and the outside, between folks inside the prison and the broader public. Supporting by doing the action and by being public about your support and encouraging others is, I think, really important,” Swain added.

Advocates from Beyond Prison Walls Canada, True North Radio, and Inmates 4 Humane Conditions came together on July 1 to engage in a one-day solidarity fast.

A member of True North Radio shared with Perilous her reasons for participating in the fast, commenting on its spiritual dimension: “This connects us, this works to connect us all in an unseen way,” she said. “The lost children are the adult detainees. It’s like a parallel, like bringing those two worlds together.”

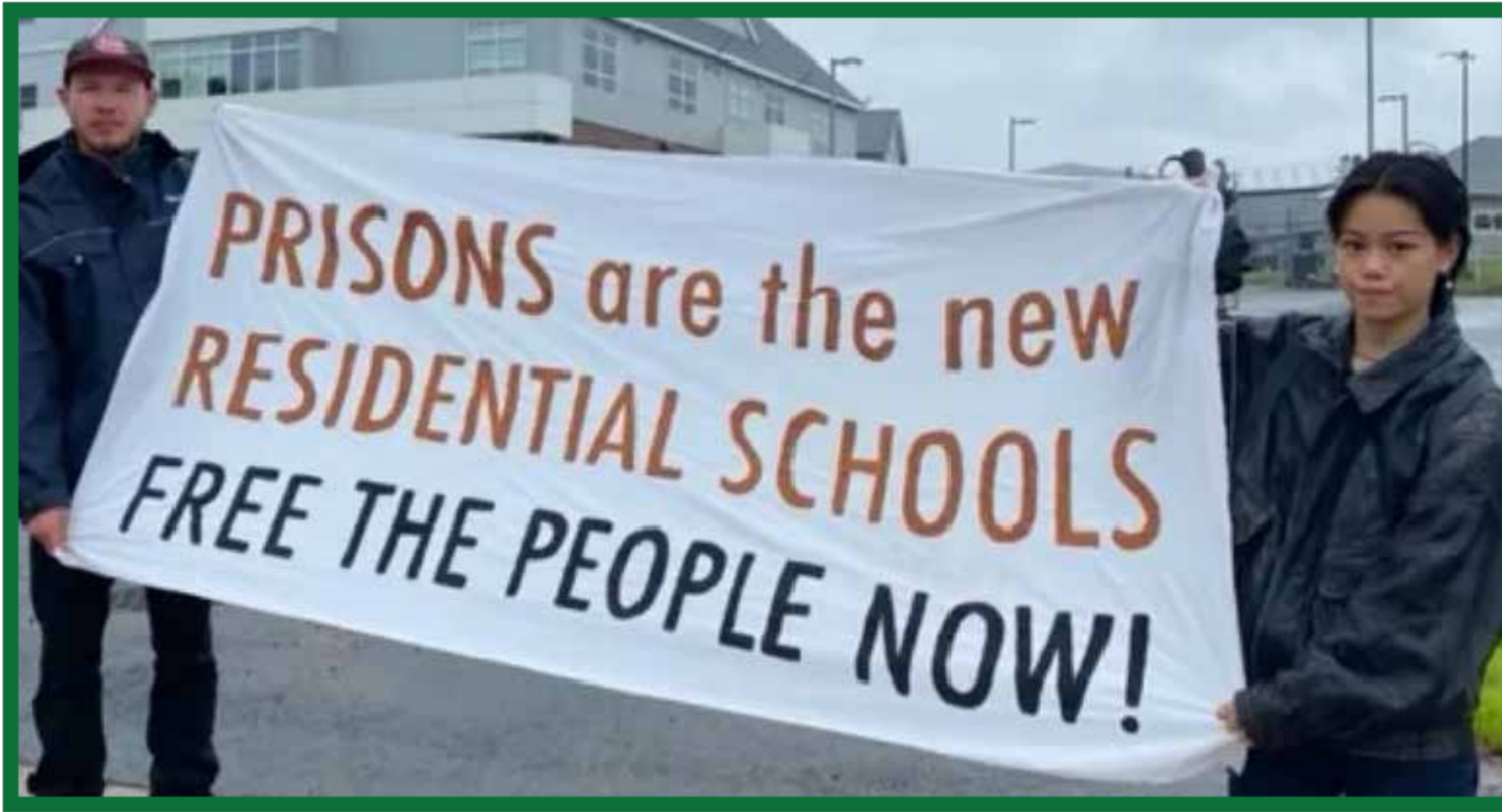
“I was proud to stand with them,” she said. “They are doing honour while they’re caged. They are doing honour while they’re caged under the same genocidal policies that murdered their ancestors.”

On the east side of the country, a demonstration took place on July 2 outside Nova Institution in Truro, Nova Scotia. In a public statement, organizers from the Abolition Coalition explained that “the event was organized to honour those inside the women’s prison and to recognize that colonization is ongoing through the federal penitentiary system.”

Demonstrators at the event were joined by water defenders and members of Grassroots Grandmothers, protectors of the Shubenacadie River. Protestors chanted and sang, and grandmother Darlene Gilbert “advocat[ed] for the healing and decarceration of Indigenous women everywhere.”

“Following the action, the group gathered at the river, drawing the connection between the ongoing removal of Indigenous people from land through policing and criminalization, as well as the environmental destruction of those territories,” the Abolition Coalition statement continued.

In downtown Toronto, Ontario, the Tkaronto Four Directions Circle, a grassroots collective, has joined together to reclaim Indigenous land, culture, and spiritual practices in solidarity with those who have been removed from their lands and communities through carceral systems. On July 1, members of the group engaged in a 24-hour fast at Dufferin Grove Park in solidarity with the prisoners, “praying for



Demonstrators gather outside Nova Institution on July 2. (Photo credit: El Jones).

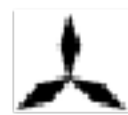
them, offering that tobacco to that fire and sending them that love, that protection and healing,” Dina Kayseas, who is Council Chair of the Four Directions Circle, relayed in an interview with Perilous.

“We have a sacred fire going here for those 215-plus murdered and missing Indigenous children... and for community to heal with each other in a good way, and walk with each other in a good way,” Kayseas explained.

“Those inmates in there,” she stressed, “they’re not only going through what we’re going through, but they’re going through it in such a deep way because they’re locked away from their family. They have no support system in there, so they came together in solidarity to bring awareness and to honour those children.”

As of July 8, the fire at Dufferin Grove Park continues.

“We’re standing together in solidarity to keep it going,” she noted. “We also have other educational teachings going on. We have silk-screen t-shirt printing, we’re going to have beading. We’re going to have storytelling, drum teachings, song teachings, and fire teachings. It’s all going to come together in synchronicity.”



**LOCK ‘EM UP, THROW AWAY THE KEYS
“Indiana Prison Officers Given Too Much Power in Issuing Disciplinary Hearing Punishments”**

by Leon Benson

“Lock me up throw away the key
They don’t care about a ni**a like me”.
—Kevin Gates, NO OPTION (2020)

According to www.prisonpolicy.org the state of Indiana not only leads the national average, but the entire world with

its 723 people per 100,000 that are incarcerated. While all other states’ prison populations have drastically decreased in the last 10 years, Indiana’s has increased.

These statistics should leave any concerned citizen with many questions as of why this trend is occurring in Indiana. Is it the fault of Indiana lawmakers? Is it

cruel judges sentencing too many people to prison? Is it politicians stirring public fears with “Lock ‘em up throw away the key” election campaigns? Is it because Indiana has flawed parole and clemency systems that doesn’t guarantee prisoners early release for good behavior nor completing rehabilitative programs?

Surely, neither of the above contradictions are solely responsible for Indiana’s mass incarceration epidemic. However, placed together they equate into a structure of violence. Therefore, only a holistic, Healing Justice approach can properly correct or eradicate such an oppressive system. Meanwhile, the plot thickens. When we look closer at this issue of Indiana’s prison population growth. We will discover that some prison officers have been given too much power at Disciplinary Hearings in prolonging prisoners sentences for breaking certain rules.

Let’s see how Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) Disciplinary Hearing Boards (DHB) function and how DHB officers take prisoners’ good time in corrupt ways. In addition, we will explore the need for all human rights, prison reformist and prison abolitionist activists alike, to fight for the restoration of all good time taken by DHB officers and to end their ability to take such time as punishment at disciplinary hearings.

DISCIPLINARY HEARING FUNCTION

Similar to how courtrooms operate in society by a set of laws and policies written and passed by state and federal legislation, IDOC disciplinary hearings operate within its prisons, although on a lower level than in society, and governed by IDOC policies. This particular IDOC policy #02-04-101 is entitled “The Disciplinary Code For Adult Offenders”. Which outlines how disciplinary hearings should function within a set of rules.

Let’s start with the IDOC rules that all prisoners are to

adhere to or be subjected to restriction of privileges (loss of phone, visits, commissary, GTL tablet, recreation), housing (solitary confinement), extra work duties, loss of earned credit time (good time) etc., or even new criminal charges in some cases.

These rules are placed in the classes of A, B, C, & D. Class As & Bs being the most serious offenses and Cs & Ds more minor. Let's review the most egregious class A offenses: A-100 "Violation of any State or Federal law" ; A-102 "Battery Resulting in Bodily Injury" ; A-108 "Escape" ; A-111 "Conspiracy/Attempt/Aiding or Abetting any A Conduct Offense" ; A-113 "Trafficking" ; A-114 "Sexual Act with Visitor" ; A-115 "Battery Against Staff, Volunteer, or Contractor" ; A-121 "Possession of Cell Phone or Cellular Communication Devices" to name a few.

If such rules are violated IDOC staff (counselor, case manager, teacher, nurse etc.,) and correctional officers can write a prisoner up on a conduct report (it's also called a ticket in other prisons around the nation). The conduct report summarizes the alleged offense by the prisoner.

The conduct report then is sent to the prison's assigned Disciplinary Review Officer, who personally gives the prisoner notice of the charge; at least 24 hours before a hearing is held to decide guilt or innocence. Also, the review officer informs the prisoner of all her rights: to lay advocate representation; to request witnesses; to present evidence; to speak your own behalf; TO BE HEARD BY AN IMPARTIAL DECISION MAKER (DISCIPLINARY HEARING OFFICER). After the notice (screening) process is complete a hearing date is scheduled.

The Disciplinary Hearing Officer (DHO) must conduct hearings according to IDOC policy and procedure (#02-04-101). Therefore, the DHO must review the conduct reports and all available witness statements and evidence to make an impartial decision.

Finally, in the event that a prisoner is found guilty of a class A or B, the DHO has the power to impose the harshest sanctions or a slap on the wrist-warning. The harshest sanctions are time in solitary confinement, loss of job/education and loss of earned credit time.

At this point, if the prisoner opposes the results, he or she can appeal the DHO's decision. The DHB appeal must be based on due process violations of IDOC policy and procedures or it won't be successful. The first appeal option is to the prison's Warden. If it is denied there, the second option is to appeal to IDOC's "Legal Service Division". If the appeal is denied there, the final option is to file a federal Habeas Corpus for Disciplinary (prison) Hearing Petition

with the Indiana Federal District Court. If the Habeas Corpus is denied in the last federal court process at the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, then, the DHO's decision is final.

TOO MUCH POWER

"No man should have all that power
the clock's ticking I just count the hours".

—Kanye West, POWER (2010)

Besides the courtroom judge there is no other official that has more power over a prisoner's stay in prison than a Disciplinary Hearing Officer. Of course, this is only if the prisoner has to appear before them for an alleged offense. We can argue for a prisoner's need for self-accountability while inside. However, it is extremely hard for any prisoner to avoid confrontations with guards and staff at some point of their extended (5 yrs or more) incarceration.

Put another way, from my 23 years of carceral experiences I would say that less than 25% of all people who ever served prison time will get through it without violating any rules that result in facing a DHO. Face it, disciplinary hearings are essential parts of maintaining the Prison Industrial Complex.

This fact alone allows such hearings to be used as political tools to control the checks and balances of prison populations and the housing of certain prisoners. It's no secret why more politically conscious and activist prisoners are held in segregation units; or why many prisoners don't qualify for early release. Race and religion are factors too. Although the IDOC policy #02-04-101 requires that all DHOs be impartial. Such impartiality is rarely practiced. Most of these hearings can be described as "clown courts" due to their lack of integrity and professionalism.

Factor in the fact that most DHOs are friends with the guard or internal affairs investigator that write these alleged conduct reports on prisoners. Where's the impartiality in that? Evenmore, the same IDOC policy gives prison guards and investigators the power to use "confidential informants" as long as they swear under oath that they believe the informant. Some of these pathetic men in prison will lie on another prisoner out of envy, let alone to avoid a stint in solitary confinement. Also, the policy allows guards to identify controlled substances (K-2, heroin, meth, perks, etc.) by their opinion, without performing any chemical tests to confirm their belief.

When such evidence is used against prisoners for major class A offenses, the likelihood that DHOs will reject it, is slim to none. The same biases happen when prisoners are accused of assaulting guards or staff or having sexual

relationships with them. If you think the Blue Wall of corruption by police is bad, the Steel Wall of corruption by prison staffers has to be worse by proxy.

RESTORATION KEYS

“Both [prisoner & jailer] are forever wrapped in the chains of brutality. One caught in fear of affliction, the other in fear of reprisal. It’s like holding a cobra. When privileges of holding it are exhausted the fear of releasing a pissed off cobra increases by the minute”.—Dr. Venson Jordan, *THE CENTRIPETAL NATURE OF TRUTH* (2016)

I personally know Dr. Jordan, he is a very thoughtful brother and an impactful teacher. His analogy of prisoners being turned into pissed off cobras by the very brutality of their jailers, is spot on. Here, Indiana DHOs have been poisoning the well being of many prisoners by stealing their good time, which ultimately steals their opportunity, not only for early release, but for rehabilitation.

Therefore, we as Prisoner Rights advocates must work in solidarity to take such power from the hands of DHOs, because it’s a conflict of interest. They have been keeping too many of our loved ones locked up longer than necessary and throwing away the keys. The KEYS are the answers and solutions.

We need solutions in order to prevent the situations in Indiana prisons that cause assaults, trafficking, cell phone possession, and sexual relationships between staffers and prisoners. Where is the rehabilitation in keeping people locked up longer? Only for now hardened and pissed off people to return to society someday, to do what? Run for governor? Perhaps to commit more crimes on impulse?

We have to challenge Indiana lawmakers to change IDOC disciplinary hearing procedural policy that gave DHOs the power to take good time as punishment. Furthermore, all prisoners should be able to petition IDOC classification for restoration of 100% of their good time back, with the exception of a few. Therefore, a new guideline must be created to make this goal reality.

The ultimate keys to power must always remain in the hands of the nation’s people. WE should always get the last vote: restorative justice now!



**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
DAY OF RAGE
SUN. OCT. 10, 2021
EVERYWHERE**

WE CALL FOR AUTONOMOUS ANTI-COLONIAL ANTI-CAPITALIST AND ANTI-FASCIST ACTIONS.
AS COVID-19 RAVAGES OUR COMMUNITIES THE PLAGUE OF COLONIALISM CONTINUES TO DESTROY OUR SACRED LANDS.
FOR MISSING OR MURDERED WOMEN GIRLS TRANS AND TWO-SPIRIT RELATIVES. FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN BURIED AT RESIDENTIAL/BOARDING SCHOOLS.
AGAINST RESOURCE COLONIALISM. AGAINST COLONIAL BORDERS. AGAINST THE SETTLER COLONIAL POLICE STATE.
FOR TOTAL LIBERATION.

READ OUR AGREEMENTS AND PROTOCOLS AND FIND OR LIST AN ACTION:
WWW.INDIGENOUSPEOPLESDAYOFRAGE.ORG

NEW · AFRIKAN · LIBERATION · COLLECTIVE

FREE THE LAND **N.A.L.C.** **REBUILD TO WIN**

BREAK THE CHAINS OF OPPRESSION

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*

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