

A JOURNAL OF INTER-COMMUNAL SOLIDARITY

# TURNING THE TIDE

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*ALL power to ALL the People!!*



*We can't generate Peoples war if we continue to act & to think as if all people are men, and as if all children are boys.*

*We can't build a mass movement if we fail to allow womyn a proportional share of power.*

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# BUILDING INTERCOMMUNAL SOLIDARITY THRU PRISON WALLS

by Mutope Duguma

Our mission is to bring into practice an inter-social communal solidarity program that is specifically geared towards opening up cordial and conscious lines of communication to all political prisoners held in solitary confinement inside prisons throughout Amerika. Specifically we're referring to those built in rural areas where many of those political prisoners are isolated hundreds or even thousands of miles away from their family and friends. Just an example:

Abasi Ganda s/n Clyde Jackson #C33559, held 30 yrs.  
Sundai K. Dumisani s/n Randall Ellis #C68764, held 30 yrs.  
Abdul O. Shakur s/n James Harvey #C48884, held 30 yrs.  
Mutope Duguma s/n James Crawford #D05996, held 13 yrs.

We intend to ask those human beings who already reside in these rural communities if they would be willing to work with us in establishing communication and contact with these political prisoners, in hopes of closing the disparity and distance gap between this specific class of prisoners and others. Such prisoners have been denied visiting, simply because of their family and friends' economic hardships. These conditions, combined with the distance, make it especially difficult to receive visits that

require a great deal of sacrifice on the part of the visitors.

We believe that we are ALL a community, despite where we reside. So, we respectfully ask something of those who reside in these rural areas where we political prisoners are being held indefinitely in solitary confinement based on our politics. Would they be willing to contribute in an effort to help relieve in some way the burden prisoners are forced to bear because of this deprivation? They can do so simply by visiting them periodically, once or twice a month.

Many political prisoners have been held in solitary confinement for periods ranging from 5 up to 43 years for their political beliefs, and not violence as the state has so successfully propagandized. So this will not just be a service to the socially-conscious political prisoner; additionally, the visitor would also be rewarded with contact with a well-defined intelligent human being, who is well informed about the realities that exist within the political and social arena.

Write to Mutope:

Mutope Duguma s/n James Crawford  
#D05996 D2-107up,  
PBSP-SHU, PO Box 7500  
Crescent City CA 95532

## Inter-communal Expectations

1. The visiting schedule here at Pelican Bay State Prison SHU is as listed Saturday and Sunday only, but this may vary depending on what state or facility.
2. Correspondence is encouraged during the rest of the week or month, in order to develop familiarity with each other.
3. These visits are not about seeking personal relationships. They are more so geared towards providing inter-communal relations between political prisoners and community members, in an effort to develop socio-cultural understanding. Mostly, it allows the socially-conscious political prisoner relief every now and then from their perpetual solitary confined cells.
4. All political prisoners on the list are highly disciplined and have a high regard for humanity, regardless of their racial or class background.
5. We can no longer allow the state and federal governments to dictate how we as human beings continue to exist or to foment dissension based on race and class. It is our choice on how we elect to evolve as a people that will determine what kind of people we will be.



On Aug. 30, the Black Riders, new generation Panthers, posted up outside the CDCR-Parole office as part of a 75-deep solidarity rally for the hunger strikers in the SHUs.

## THE BLACK RIDERS CONNECTION

Picture a hot summer day in South Central Los Angeles. News reports interrupt the normally scheduled program with an emergency flash across the TV screen. The notorious trigger-happy LAPD just gunned down another defenseless Black child in the heart of the ghetto for nothing other than the officers falsely assuming that the supposed "suspect" had a gun. The officers, equipped with numerous less-lethal and lethal high-powered weapons, once again crossed the line and chose to use deadly force against a Black civilian for being armed with a black cell phone. More information will be given during the News at 11:00 PM...

The TV screen is immediately turned off. A highly secret organized system of communication begins. All across Southern California, formerly hostile young Black men and women from the lumpen-proletariat warrior class brief to the tragic incident. This so-called justifiable homicide is not justified to them. The war drums beat louder and louder in their hearts as the information is passed around and down the rigid chain of command. The unification that binds them together is a bulletproof Black Love forged and steeled from an extreme knowledge of their African history and the savage white racist, capitalist oppression of over four hundred years. Outwardly they appear to be average Black youth, a part of the Hip Hop generation, until put under close examination and you notice the military discipline in their every movement. Only when they shed the XXXL T-shirts and oversized baggy sagging pants into Black berets, leather jackets, camouflage pants, and big Black boots will anyone really notice the last true armed Black Revolutionary organization. This extraordinary transformation in their appearance will take place when the coded messages reach the bottom of the rank and file membership and flow back up to the top of the Democratic Centralized structure. Soldiers who embody the undying loyalty to the new Black Liberation struggle emerge from cars, homes, low-income projects and off numerous street corners, clubs, college campuses. All of them are hard-faced, tough, and love their people!

This display of strength and unity among former gang banging young Blacks puzzles and shocks most people, especially the racist barbarian LAPD. This is something new, powerful and amazing to them. They had a long history of dealing with Blacks, and nothing was better

known than the disunity, misguided rage, and animosity of one group toward another. How was this spectacle of over fifty different tribal individuals forming solid disciplined lines of unity under a Black leader to be explained? This was seen as a very real threat to the fascist Amerikkkan state. This Black unity will inspire massive Black Power, which, of course, will reduce white power and its domination of the whole earth. These formerly disunited individuals are now unified under my generalship, and we have opened a full-scale war against the evil forces of oppression, aimed at driving them out of every Black community in the US. The successful Black Panther military tactics of Huey Newton and the great General George Jackson are remembered and followed: careful, unhurried training and political organization; the secret movement of troops in small groups in different directions, all assembling at a stated time and place near enemy pig strongholds; then swift-moving, generally surprise attacks by different people on different centers of white supremacy. These operations took years of tedious and dangerous organizing in every hostile tribal area to build.

The real reason for the series of victories over the racist enemy is our extensive knowledge of revolutions on the planet, and our battle tested make up from growing up in the neo-colonial "Concrete Vietnam" of the Los Angeles gangland. We are now reaching out to other young Black Africans throughout the world because we realize that L.A. is not the only Black community that has been ravaged by the government created Black on Black violent crime. The fascist state smuggled drugs and guns into our communities to keep us fighting each other instead of attacking them like during the late 1960's and early 1970's. These were just some of the weapons and tactics used to destroy the old Black liberation movement.

We have begun to change the Black on Black violent criminal mentality into a Black Revolutionary mentality. The so-called Lost Generation X is now beginning to morph into Generation Malcolm X!

By General T.A.C.O.,  
Black Riders, new generation Black Panther Party  
All Power to the People!

To join or form a prison or other chapter,  
Call 323-289-4457

Write PO Box 8297, Los Angeles 90008

## YEAR IN REVIEW

– **November 2012.** The Black Riders Liberation Party, new generation Black Panthers (BRLP) initiate the ISC in Los Angeles, CA as an alliance with anti-racist activists, radicals in Occupy from various communities, a collective of radical sex workers, and others. ISC launches several serve the people programs, such as Break the Lock and Hood Health.

– **December 2012.** ISC joined the Sex Worker Outreach Project of Los Angeles (SWOP-LA) to observe the International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers, especially police terrorism.

– **January 2013.** ISC has several community meetings to draw up "Guiding Principles," drawing inspiration from George Jackson's "Unitary Conduct," Huey P. Newton's "Revolutionary InterCommunalism" and General T.A.C.O.'s updated form of African intercommunalism.

– **February 2013.** ISC hosts a celebration of *Turning The Tide's* 25th Anniversary. Hood Health fundraises for original BPP comrade Elder Freeman, for medical treatment for cancer in Cuba. We also join with Stop LAPD Spying Coalition to protest police racism after the pigs' execution of Christopher Dorner.

– **March 2013.** Hood Health holds a Community Health Forum at the So Cal Library with AIDS and blood pressure testing, and traditional health information

– **April 2013.** ISC joins comrades in East LA as they liberate Parque de Mexico for the 19th consecutive year. The BRLP is honored with the "Continuing the Struggle" Award by the Black Panther Party Alumni Association presented by Kathleen Cleaver. Break The Lock, the ISC prisoner solidarity program, presents at USC's annual "Cruelty Conference."

– **May 2013.** ISC joins the Southern California Immigration Coalition May Day demo in downtown LA. We stand with Black USC students charged after a brutal attack at an off-campus party by LAPD. ISC also hosts a birthday party honoring Sandino, Ho Chi Minh, Malcolm X and Yuri Kochiyama.

– **June 2013.** Break the Lock organizes a fundraiser. George Jackson Freedom School begins its summer session. Comrades cosponsor the appearance of Theresa Shoats, daughter of Russell Maroon Shoatz, and Rene Valdez of Scientific Soul Sessions, as part of national campaign to release Maroon.

– **July 2013.** ISC joins many others outside Corcoran State Prison in solidarity with hunger strikers. Black Riders lead community outrage against acquittal of Trayvon Martin's killer with solidarity from the ISC in Leimert Park, Hollywood, and Westwood.

– **August 2013.** In response to the pigs' threat to force-feed prisoner hunger strikers, ISC joins the BRLP's call and form a coalition that shuts the main local CDCR office for a day.

– **September 2013.** ISC and others pack the Inglewood courtroom for two Black Rider sisters, Mecca & Etana Shakur, who successfully defended themselves against a racist male pig, and face charges of battery on an officer.

– **October 2013.** ISC chapter consolidates in the Bay Area in conjunction with the Oakland chapter of Black Riders.

– **November 2013.** On Assata Shakur Liberation Day, BRLP organizes and the ISC supports a screening of "Let Um Hear Ya Comin," a documentary that highlights the Black Riders 18 years patrolling with their Watch-a-Pig program, featuring comrades in the Oakland/Bay Area.

– **December 2013.** ISC participates in "Prison Bars Can't the Flow" a spoken word benefit for *TTT*.

# Martin Luther King, Women, & the Movement

[Speech written 1/3/14] © 2014 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

We meet today in the vast shadow of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and that is fitting for much like his contemporary, Min. Malcolm X, he had the capacity to grow beyond his social, cultural, religious and even class programming.

But before we go deep, it is fitting that we thank Drs. Tanisha Ford and Hakima Abbas, your forum co-chairs of this event, for their kind invitation; and our fellow forum contributors, Dr. Johanna Fernandez, Alexis Pauline Gumba, Christopher Tinson, Jamilah Wilson, Walidah Imarisha, Noelle Hanrahan, The Cornel West Theory –and others to come. Thank you, too, to The Feminist Wire, for covering this event.

How does Dr. King's life inform our discussion of issues that we face today, at the dawn of a new century? Issues as complex and diverse as the LGBT community's trek and treatment through the criminal justice system; Black women, the nation's fastest-growing prison population; social and systematic violence against Black women and girls; the rape culture that permeates modern day American society; or feminism as a social force which broadens our perspectives of the prison-industrial-complex?

If Dr. King were alive today, he'd be 85 years old. But, he is not. Yet, his ideas deepened through the experience of movements, and perhaps more importantly, his inspiration, remains.

For the Civil Rights Movement has had a profound impact on the nation, the world and movements to come. But Martin, reared as he was in the bosom of a conservative, privileged, middle class Baptist family, seemed ill-prepared for the topsy-turvy, hurly-burly struggles of the era, when Blacks were compelled to struggle against their racial, class, gender and national oppressions.

Given his background of privilege, he found confident, outspoken, activist women hard to take. This was perhaps best seen in his interactions with activist/organizer Ella Baker. For, let us be clear. Like many, perhaps most men, King was sexist and chauvinistic. As a man of his class, and his profession, he expected deference – especially from women.

Ella Baker, a brilliant skillful organizer, was unable to defer to any of the spiritual and national leaders of the time. She opposed, on principle, the idea of charismatic leadership, preferring instead, for collective leaders drawn from their work among the people. She was among the founders of SCLC, founded the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and had traveled the country organizing as field secretary for the NAACP. In Baker's words, she knew she wouldn't make it among the ministers of SCLC, explaining:

"There would never be any role for me in a leadership capacity with SCLC. Why? First, I'm a woman. Also, I'm not a minister. And ...I knew that my penchant for speaking honestly... would not be well tolerated. The combination of the basic attitude of men, and especially ministers, as to what the role of women in these church setups is – that of taking orders, not providing leadership – and the ...ego problems involved in having to feel that there is someone who... had more information about a lot of things than they possessed at the time. This would never have lent itself to my being a leader in the movement there." (Dyson 195)

King felt "uncomfortable" around Baker, and other women of her type. She had a saying: "strong people don't need strong leaders. (Abu-Jamal 159). She also wasn't keen on building national organizations, she believed in building movements.

King, as a man transformed by the burgeoning movement around him, tried mightily to adapt to it, but it wasn't easy. For, like many men, King had a weakness for female flesh. He felt guilty about it, yes –but he indulged, for he couldn't say no. In this conflict between flesh and spirit, flesh inevitably won out.

Many of us associate Dr. King with his last big movement push: the Poor People's Campaign.

When he accepted the invite of National Welfare Rights Organization executive director, George Wiley, to address their board, he experienced a rude awakening. For the NWRO board was staffed by women, and they felt offended because they had advanced the idea of a poor people's campaign before the SCLC. When King sat down with the board they shocked him with their aggressiveness, and their radical thinking. When King was given the floor, he stated his ideas, and solicited their support.

NWRO first vice-chair Etta Horn asked him for his

views on Public Law 90-248. King was dumbfounded. NWRO leader Johnnie Tillmon (a woman), told King that Horn "meant the Anti-Welfare Bill, HR 12080", passed by Congress the year before and signed into law by President Johnson in January 1967. King, again, had no clue. Tillmon pressed her advantage, asking pointedly, "Where were you... when we were down in Washington trying to get support for Senator Kennedy's amendments?"

King, the leader of the movement, was helpless before welfare mothers on top of their game. Johnnie Tillmon, seeing him and his staff getting defensive said, "You know, Dr. King, if you don't know about these questions, you should say you don't know, and then we could go on with the meeting." King agreed, saying, "You're right,



Mrs Tillmon, we don't know anything about welfare, we're here to learn." Dyson 208-9

And he did. He listened. He learned. That learning reshaped, deepened and broadened his ideas. He outgrew many of his earlier notions, and became, increasingly, socialist in his economic orientation, anti-capitalist, and, quite rare for the time among Black civil rights leaders, deeply anti-war.

While Martin, as preacher, might've brought women to church, it must also be said that women, as teachers, took him to school.

For, at the heart, at the very core of both church and the movement, were women. Their faith, their wisdom, their knowledge, their visions of a better tomorrow, fed those expressions, and gave them life.

Martin's martyrdom may've ended his individual existence, but it did not still the movement. For movements spread, grow, deepen and develop. The civil rights movement gave space and life to the Black Liberation movement, the women's movement, the Latina movement, the gay movement – and beyond. That's because those democratic energies could not be repressed forever. When King burst through, he opened doors that had been soldered shut in American society.

One of the most radical of the Black Liberation groups to sprout in the post-King period was the Black Panther Party, founded two years before King's assassination, by two college students. Although assuredly the BPP was weighted with a decidedly macho image, what with the berets, the Black leather jackets, and, lest we forget – guns. It was most assuredly, not an all male collective. Indeed, quite the reverse is true.

The BPP had a majority of female members and a good number of women led local sections, or even captaincies in cities. Indeed, the BPP was the only formation of the era to have a woman in complete command of the group (under Elaine Brown) (LeBlanc-Ernest 309).

Was the Black Panther Party sexist? Yes, without question. But within a sexist society, who was not? If King, with all of his extraordinary education and gifts, was trapped within the dark amber of sexism, what of men who had no such learning, who learned from the streets? That said, the BPP leadership announced at this very time that it supported women's liberation -- and gay lib, to boot. Party co-founder, Huey P. Newton mused, "...Maybe they might be the most oppressed people in society."

Frankye Malika Adams, from the Brooklyn chapter of the Party, said, "Women ran the BPP pretty much. I don't know how it got to be a male's party or thought of as a male's party." She knew what every male Panther knew, that despite what the newspapers reported, without women, who made sure the work got done, every day, the organization would not have lasted as long, nor did as well, as it did. Period. (Abu-Jamal 164)

Women form the core of movements. They organize, as did Ella Baker. They lead, as did Elaine Brown. They do the work, to make organizations – and movements – work. And given the sexism extant in a capitalist society, it rarely gets reported, much less known.

But the simple truth is that revolution is women's work. And men's work. It is the work of all of us, working as comrades. Kathleen Cleaver was a member. She joined the Party, and is today a law professor working against the prison-industrial-complex. Safiya Asya Bukhari was a college student, who was intrigued by the Party Breakfast for Children Program. When she was threatened by cops, she quit college, joined the Party, and later ran the Party's East Coast organization from the Bronx headquarters. She later led and commanded units of the Black Liberation Army, before she returned to the ancestors.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was made, both literally and figuratively, by women. They educated him, even when he didn't want to be educated. Again, as Baker stated, "Martin didn't make the movement; the movement made Martin."

Progressive and liberatory social movements are energized and sustained by the gifts women bring with them. They broaden our perspectives on issues of women, gender, and how, under capitalism, all within the prisons of capital are exploited, atomized, made to war against each other, to preserve the rulers.

Martin opened doors to rooms he did not know existed; but he did so, with the hope that it would lead to greater social justice, and fairness. In one of his latter speeches before SCLC, King presented a synthesis of his ideas, calling for a radical

restructuring of the entire system: "We are called upon to help the discouraged beggars in life's marketplace. But one day we must come to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring." He continued this questioning, openly, in ways he had done privately: "... Who owns the oil?... Who owns the iron ore? Why is it that people have pay water bills in a world that is two-thirds water?" King of 1967, was a different man than that of 1965; a deeper man. Such a man as this would say this:

"A nation that would keep people in slavery for 244 years will "thingify" them, make them things. Therefore they will exploit them, and poor people generally, economically. And a nation that will exploit will have to have foreign investments... and will have to use its military might to protect them. All of these problems are tied together." (Dyson 84)

It is a measure of some irony that King couldn't bring himself to work closer with one of the most talented organizers of the era: Ella Baker. For, some 30 years before her career as a civil rights organizer bloomed, she co-wrote, with colleague, Marvel Cooke, a remarkable article published in the NAACP journal, *The Crisis*, which revealed the venal nature of capitalism for poor Black women in Harlem. They wrote: "Not only is human labor bartered and sold for the slave wage, but human love is also a marketable commodity. Whether it is labor or love, the women arrive as early as eight am and remain as late as one pm, or until they are hired. In rain or shine, hot or cold, they wait to work for ten, fifteen, and twenty cents per hour." [Zinn 404]

This, the naked face of capitalism, where one sells their flesh to eat, was an insight that Baker knew, but it took a lifetime of King to glimpse. Capitalism eats its own, for there are no Chinese walls, nor sacred barriers – it is buy and sell – money–trading as the highest value of life.

It shows us all how far the Movement has yet to go. References:

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# An Armed People in Mexico and Their Threat to the State



Armed self-defence groups in Michoacan retake a town from Narcos.

by **Juaquin Cienfuegos**

The current situation in Mexico is tense, one that has put social movements and the people in general on one side, and the government and other organized criminals on the other. Where the Mexican government has shown over and over where their true interests lie, the people are not only fending for themselves but building on the possibility for a much larger struggle to take place in Mexico.

In Mexico the government has passed “reforms” that benefit capitalist interests and neo-liberalism, along with other organized crime cartels. Local and federal police and military have terrorized communities throughout Mexico and indigenous people in particular. One can get a sense that the people have had enough. There have been a resurgence of social movements throughout led by students and teachers ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7ydRS9G56Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7ydRS9G56Y) - Interview with member of the Seccion XXII – Teacher’s Union Oaxacan Section) to combat some of the privatization that is coming from imperialist countries like the U.S. and Canada, and their puppet Pena Nieto PRI regime. There have always been armed resistance movements in Mexico, such as the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional, and other guerrillas who have also openly declared war against the government ([www.signalfire.org/?p=26168](http://www.signalfire.org/?p=26168)).

Along with these movements, communities, and in particular indigenous communities, have taken it upon themselves to arm, and defend themselves against not only the cartels, but also local police and local politicians. These cops and officials

not only work with the cartels, they have proven to be on their side or one and the same. In some cases as in the Purepecha indigenous community of Cheran, Michoacan, the people rose up to drive out the local police and politicians, and reinstate their indigenous model of self-organization and self-defense (for further reading [www.elenemigocomun.net/2013/01/self-determination-defense-cheran](http://www.elenemigocomun.net/2013/01/self-determination-defense-cheran)).

The self-defense groups have been organizing themselves and have seized towns throughout Mexico in over 11 states to fight against cartels like the Knights Templar in Michoacan, under the Consejo de Autodefensas Unidas de Michoacan (Council of United Self-Defense Groups of Michoacan). The Mexican government just sent their military to disarm them in Paracuaro, according to reports shooting 7-12 and killing 4 people, including an 11 year old girl, only to later return their weapons due to public pressure. People from Paracuaro came out to the main road to confront the military with sticks and stones, which forced them to return the weapons to the Autodefensas (Self-defense Groups).

The Mexican government definitely understands the situation and sees an armed and self-organized people as a threat, but understands there will be political consequences. The self-defense groups know very well what they are fighting for, and what side the government is on. After the clash between them and the military, the spokesperson for el Consejo de Autodefensas Unidas de Michoacán was quoted saying “What we are doing is fighting for the freedom of our families... the people don’t trust the government... there are sectors of the government working with organized crime... We are never going to lay down our arms or sit down to negotiate until they stop the criminals. ([www.aristeginoticias.com/1401/mexico/el-ejercito-rafagueo-a-nuestro-pueblo-autodefensas-en-michoacan](http://www.aristeginoticias.com/1401/mexico/el-ejercito-rafagueo-a-nuestro-pueblo-autodefensas-en-michoacan))”

The military attacking the Autodefensas shows what side they’re on. It shows that not only are they protecting the Knights, but also that an armed people pose a bigger threat to their power. They are not trying to combat “organized crime” at all, because they are the criminals who benefit from the “drug war.” People having autonomy, self-organization, and self-determination of their own communities exposes the illegitimacy of their neo-colonial government, so they will not only try to disarm them, but destroy them. The state does not care about the people dying in the first place, that is why communities saw that there was a need to come together. But not only that, they understand their movement is part of a larger struggle in Mexico:

“We are simply not just a group of armed persons, we are a people, we are thousands, We are a CONSEJO DE AUTODEFENSAS DE MICHOCAN, formed by small businessmen and women, farmers... students, parents... we are a people united, and we all will participate.”

They now control 14 municipalities and 67 towns in Michoacan. Having a defense for your community, is something indigenous people have always done. These warrior societies and organizations have always existed and do to this day. What Mexico needs is a revolution... an armed and organized people is the first step.

*This article was originally published at [www.joaquincienfuegos.blogspot.com/2014/01/an-armed-people-and-their-threat-to.html](http://www.joaquincienfuegos.blogspot.com/2014/01/an-armed-people-and-their-threat-to.html). For additional perspectives and information about the armed self-defense groups, see [www.apivirtual.net/2014/01/20/invierno-caliente-en-michoacan/#more-63023](http://www.apivirtual.net/2014/01/20/invierno-caliente-en-michoacan/#more-63023) and other commentaries on [apivirtual.net](http://apivirtual.net).*

## FEMINISM, FREE TRADE & COLONIAL/CAPITALISM

By **Swaneagle Harijan**

Molly Molloy recently contributed a piece in the Texas Observer debunking the supposed “myth” of femicide in Juarez. It’s too easy to dismiss such a deeply disturbing grisly reality. Yes, as she says, more men have been killed, which is also the case in Guatemala City, which has surpassed Juarez and Chihuahua in numbers, well past several thousand as far as sexualized killings of women. More women die in Houston, as she says. But that other situations are even worse only means that something is terribly wrong in the Amerikkkas. Free Trade is at the root of globalized abuse. The sharp increase in violent deaths escalated with NAFTA as well as increases in trafficking, weapons and drugs.

The term femicide was coined after the mass rapes and killings of women in Sudan and the term spread wherever mass sexualized killings of women occurred. Such sexualized killings have spread from tens of thousands of women in the Congo, many left alive to cope with hideous wounds to their vaginas, to men as well. Rape is now targeting more and more men. Still, it is femicide that continues being a growing norm in many more countries. It is the ultimate degradation of women and I believe its roots reach back to the Inquisition and Spanish colonization, and to the US military, Kit Carson, Sand Creek, Vietnam and so many cases where rape and sexual mutilation is used as a weapon of war. It is complex and horrific.

The Molloy interview does a grave disservice to the families whose mothers, daughters and sisters were hideously violated on their way to death. I first learned of the killings from Cecelia Rodriguez, a US spokesperson for the Zapatistas brutally gang raped by Mexican soldiers in Chiapas, when she spoke in Olympia in 1999. At that time she placed the number of women killed at 100. By the way, domestic violence leading to death is considered femicide as well, even if the perpetrator is known and related to the victim. Molloy seems to feel that if the perpetrator is known, it’s not femicide.

In 2004 I drove the mother of one of the murdered young women of Juarez on a West Coast speaking tour. It was torture for her to recount the nightmare of her 16-year-old daughter’s disappearance, then the discovery of her mutilated, raped body, but she felt she had to in order to alert people to the problem and help find a

solution. When women’s bodies are so disfigured, nipples cut or bitten off, vaginas torn and signs of torture for days before death, one has to wonder what kind of monsters are we dealing with? Have any of these heinous killers



been apprehended? I have yet to really feel that the most disturbing murders have been solved.

Last I checked there were over 1000 women killed in Juarez and Chihuahua. I do not mean to discount the much more numerous deaths of men. I have been a marginalized woman most of my life as a single below-poverty-level grandmother who raised several mixed race children alone. I have been raped several times by men I knew. I am very familiar with the disdain of Amerikkkan patriarchy and all its trappings of misogyny. It’s this frame of reference, and the countless stories women have told me about being raped and/or battered, that led me to become involved in doing what I could to educate others about femicide in Juarez, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, US, and on and on.

The way women are demeaned is not to be ignored. One has only to look at the sexual assault by the tens of thousands each year in the US Military, many are men raped by other men, to see that there is a serious strain of depravity being perpetrated. It can’t be cut off from what is happening to women and men all over the Amerikkkas and anywhere the US military is based and its trainees carry out their heinous deeds. In the Pacific NW alone, we had our Bermuda Triangle of femicide of prostitutes in Spokane, Seattle and Vancouver, BC carried out by

Robert Yates, Gary Ridgeway (Green River Killer) and Robert Pickton respectively. All three had once been apprehended by police but were released to go on killing more women. Robert Yates was in the military and part of a 2nd amendment militia in New York State before being based at Fairchild AFB in Spokane. Gary Ridgeway was a conservative Christian who believed he was helping police by killing prostitutes. The School of Assassins in Fort Benning, GA has produced many death squads and dictators who learned rape as a weapon of war. Los Zetas, one of the most notorious Mexican Cartels, were founded by mutinous Mexican troops trained at the SOA. Kaibiles, US-trained death squads in Guatemala, were known for hacking open pregnant Mayan women and were involved in doing the same in Acteal, Chiapas, Mexico in 1997, killing 45 people total. Many Kaibiles also mutinied and joined cartels in Mexico and Central America.

What I want to know from Molly Molloy, is why she does not even mention the fact that sexualized killings of women occur with increasing numbers in Guatemala, Honduras, etc. The guns used by cartels came primarily from US gun shows along the Mexican border. What is also worth noting is that the young women killed in Juarez were not prostitutes, but maquiladora workers or students, for the most part. Being poor and brown is a marked disadvantage in the free trade atmosphere. Marginalized women are most vulnerable. All of the killing must stop. The men are not less valuable, but it’s men who do most of the killing, and many of them ‘play’ with women before snuffing them.

The killings must be examined in the context of free trade, development and profit. We can’t ignore the criminal disaster-capitalism that impacts all our lives or separate it from the loss of life to the most marginalized peoples in our communities. Indigenous women are the most murdered cultural group in the US and Canada. Right now there are two particularly disturbing deaths of indigenous women in Seattle that remain unsolved. I know the family of one of those women. It does not take long before the structural violence of these killings reaches each one of us one way or another. Unprecedented apathy harms all life and we all face terminal times. Will we continue to ignore the glaring crisis?

# Razor Wire Plantations: Amerika's Addiction to Slavery, Cruelty and Genocide

by Kevin "Rashid" Johnson (excerpts)

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) has been recognized by the federal courts to be among Amerika's most abusive prison systems, where a "culture of sadistic and malicious violence" reigns, involving the seeming inability of correctional officers to keep their hands off prisoners. Though this is acknowledged, Texas officials have done nothing to rein these abuses in. Because, like the inherently abusive and oppressive nature of the overall Amerikan criminal injustice system - it's all by design.

## Compelling Submission to Slavery

Government sanctioned brutality underlies the U.S. prison system; just as it did the U.S. chattel slave system of which the prison system is a continuation; and just as it did the German Nazi concentration camp system. Under the old Amerikan slave system it was admitted that people will not willingly submit to bondage. The human spirit rebels against such a condition. Therefore the wealthy interests whose power, prestige and wealth itself relied on slave labor, had to devise a system which would compel the submission of those kept in bondage.

So they dehumanized their victims to strip them of all claims to human dignity, compassion and consideration. But this was not enough to force them to submit to slavery. "This was to be done... by means of beatings, whippings, or any similar form of violent...punishment or humiliation. Sociologically speaking, this illustrates clearly that the South had become a society...compelled to resort to...coercive force because of the ultimate failure of law to support or enforce subservient behavior in slaves."

Because slavery is the basis of the U.S. prison system, (as embodied in the 13th Amendment to the Constitution), this same resort to brutality to exert "control" pervades it. So as was done with the slaves, U.S. prisoners are projected to the public as objects of suspicion, fear, and hate. In this sense, we are the new "niggers." When guards wish to demean us, we're often told we're only "offenders," which means, less than human. Yet in reality, the only thing that differentiates us from the 'public' (and who can say they've never violated any laws of the oppressive state?), is we've suffered the indignity of having the government brand us 'criminals'.

As the guards who run these prisons frequently admit to us, the only difference between us and them is they've "never been caught." Which makes them the worse hypocrites, who devote their lives to punishing others (breaking up homes, families and communities, and subjecting us to all manner of abuses in the process) for violating laws that they don't respect themselves.

In Amerika, people of color and the poor (traditional "niggers" and poor social "trash") are the primary targets of aggressive policing, criminal prosecution and mass imprisonment. Criminal injustice in Amerika is far from blind - and definitely ain't colorblind.

The boom of mass imprisonment in the last decades is aptly recognized as a "New Jim Crow" system for disparaging and disposing of marginalized racial and national minorities. But what accompanies this system, that many aren't aware of, is raw slavery, which could not exist without dehumanizing its victims. Once U.S. prisons are recognized to be a system of enslavement, and the lie is exposed that slavery in Amerika was ever abolished, the abusive conditions that pervade them make perfect sense. Let's take the TDCJ where I'm presently imprisoned for example.

## Post-bellum Slavery

With 109 prisons and over 152,000 prisoners, Texas operates Amerika's largest state prison system. And every prisoner confined in Texas is forced to work without pay. Only those few with documented serious medical or mental health conditions which impair work performance, and those held in the TDCJ's torturous segregation units, are not made to work. Often those with health exemptions are still forced to work -- their exemptions being simply ignored. Those who refuse are punished, thrown in segregated confinement, and their imprisonment is extended.

The Texas prison system is organized around its prisoner labor, with prisoners performing every job short of running the cell blocks. Until federal courts banned it in the 1980's, prisoners were doing this too, working as "building tenders" whom guards armed with pipes, knives and bats, and gave impunity to terrorize other prisoners (through beatings, rape and extortion) to keep order for the administrators. Prisoners also substituted for medical staff.

TDCJ prisoners still do everything from growing all the food we eat (and which the TDCJ also sells commercially for profit), raising livestock and crops on TDCJ-owned farmland (which are aptly called "colonies"), to building and maintaining the prisons that hold us. Prisoners. "Hoe squads" of prisoners plant, tend and harvest everything using manual labor like field slaves or Third World peasants, while armed guards on horseback "oversee"

them. Prisoners, like the slaves, refer to the overseers as "bossman."

The TDCJ also runs Texas Correctional Industries, which uses prisoners' slave labor to make everything from the clothes we and the guards wear (made from prisoner-grown cotton) and commercial garments, boots, state and U.S. flags, to the cell doors, beds, lockers, commode units, and walls and fixtures that go into the prisons. Texas prisoners literally forge the chains that bind them.

TDCJ does not provide prisoners with clothing for cold winters or scorching summers, like long underwear, gloves, shorts, t-shirts, etc. We purchase such items (clothes the prisoners make without payment) from the commissaries using money we get from friends and family to send us. Most prisoners have little to no outside support. Those who don't receive money are allowed to mail only five 1-oz. letters a month, whose cost is a debt we must repay if we receive any money. Prisoners are forced to devise hustles and schemes to generate means of acquiring



clothes, hygiene supplies (which the TDCJ also does not give us), and even food.

Most TDCJ prisons lack air-conditioning, so slave labor is performed in the Texas heat, which is worse for those who work inside unventilated buildings. Even guards protest the lack of climate-control in the prisons. Prisoners have dropped dead from these conditions and have been forced to refuse life-sustaining medications to avoid the potentially fatal effects that these medicines can cause from extreme exertions in hot weather. TDCJ administrators, whose own offices are air-conditioned, could care less.

Typical of systems of enslavement, the 'owners' live in luxury at the slaves' expense, generally care nothing about the health of their workers, especially when the slaves are easily replaced from a steady supply of surplus workers. This was the case during the trans-Atlantic slave trade and Nazi concentration camps. Those slaves were starved, denied health care, and worked to death. But it was only called genocide when its focus was 'white' people.

## Real Genocide

Many don't realize it was the exploitation of slave labor that helped drive the Nazis' genocidal program against Poles, Gypsies (Sintis and Romanis), Jews, Slavs, the mentally disturbed, and others. People swept up into concentration camps were worked to death, to sustain German corporations and the Nazi state and military that served them. Similarly TDCJ's prisoner health care system has been recognized as unresponsive to the needs of its prisoners. But for federal court intervention in the 1980's, prisoners were made to rely on only their peers for health care. The property of U.S. prisoners is confiscated and kept by arresting police under "civil forfeiture" laws. Remember that the Nazis, like the slavers of North Amerika, legitimized their inhumane practices in laws.

Then there's the high incidence of communicable deadly diseases like chronic hepatitis, HIV and AIDS, which circulate in US prisons at pandemic levels and go largely untreated. One documented example was found in the VA Dept. of Corrections where I was confined for 21 years, and for whom TX is holding me. The situation was exposed by the ACLU in a 2003 report which found the VDOC was deliberately allowing deadly diseases to circulate untreated among its prisoners, while in violation of Virginia's laws VDOC officials deliberately falsified reports on the levels of prisoner hep-c infection and those dying from it. The report revealed that the VDOC was

refusing to treat over 10,000 known HCV cases (over a full third of its entire prison population). Note that one practice for which the Nazis were found guilty of "crimes against humanity" during the Nuremberg Trials, was their confining Germans and others under conditions where epidemics ran rampant. If such acts were crimes for which German leaders were punished with execution, they are no less crimes when committed by US officials.

Just as Nazi propaganda did, the Amerikan government and media join in villainizing minority groups. They selectively criminalize actions stereotyped as behaviors typical of these groups. Both societies systematically used prisons to dispose of mentally disabled people, and to portray 'criminal' inclinations as biologically innate to certain undesirable minority groups. While New Afrikans/Blacks are 13% of the US population, we are over half the prison population, a population forbidden to procreate. This has genocidal implications. While the Nazis were explicit in their eugenics policies, the U.S. objectively carries out similar practices in imprisoning Black males and undermining births within this social group.

Michelle Alexander revealed the economic incentive behind mass imprisonment of New Afrikan/Black males, because we no longer have economic worth to Amerika on the streets. She observed that genocidal policies have been applied to peoples who find themselves in this position.

"...we have witnessed an evolution in the US from a racial caste system based on exploitation (slavery), to one based largely on subordination (Jim Crow), to one defined by marginalization (mass incarceration). While marginalization may sound far preferable to exploitation, it may prove to be even more dangerous. Extreme marginalization, as we have seen throughout world history, poses the risk of extermination."

"The intuition of those residing in ghetto communities that they had become disposable was rooted in real changes in the economy - changes that have been devastating as factories closed, jobs disappeared, and all who had the means to flee the ghetto did. The sense among those left behind that society no longer has use for them, and that the government now aims to get rid of them, reflects a reality that many of us who claim to care prefer to avoid."

## Slavery Does Not Teach Freedom

As one Texas prisoner pointed out to me, the TDCJ's slave system teaches prisoners how to become thieves, swindlers and predators. Most have little or no outside financial support, and where the TDCJ doesn't pay them any wages for work, they can only obtain things they need and want by stealing, conning or preying on others. In some cases they are driven by necessity.

Like in the Nazi ghettos and prison camps, TDCJ prisoners do not receive nutrition adequate to maintain good health under conditions of hard labor. Per its own policy, the daily calorie intake of TDCJ prisoners does not exceed 2500 calories, which is the minimum daily calorie intake needed for a sedentary to only moderately active adult to maintain good health. These prisoners are performing the same grueling labor as yesterday's chattel slaves, and require the same level of daily nutrition. Yet TDCJ prisoners are provided less nutrition than were the slaves of yesterday. Chattel slaves were recognized as needing 4200 to 5400 calories per day to perform their labor, particularly as field hands. TDCJ does not serve any fresh fruits to its prisoners, and serves desserts at only one meal per week. This denies basic nutrients and glucose needed for health and energy. Leaving prisoners hard pressed to find ways to supplement their diet, which calls for their engaging in hustles, theft and preying on other prisoners - anti-social behaviors that will follow them back to society.

Slavery doesn't teach people to be free. It dehumanizes, which is why international law to which the U.S. is a signatory outlaws slavery in all its forms.

With the majority of TX's prison population being people of color, Texas one of the country's most notoriously racist states, and its prisons practicing old style slavery, it requires no stretch of the imagination to recognize a large percentage of its staff are racist. In fact in a recent *NY Times* article by a TDCJ guard, it was admitted that in Texas, "Employment screening for correctional officers is inadequate." TDCJ guards have the nation's highest arrest rate for prison employees, demonstrating that there's indeed no difference between us and them, with quite a few of them even getting caught.

Tough-on-crime and prison-industry-financed politicians howl about the need for more prisons, and to stay the course of mass incarceration. When we hear them, we should remember (as hard as it may be to accept) that what they're really promoting is slavery, genocide, crimes against humanity and a system that only teaches and reinforces criminality, not rehabilitation.

Dare to Struggle Dare to Win!

All Power to the People!

# ON REPARATIONS AND EXPROPRIATION

by E Da Ref, Minister of Public Relations,  
Black Riders Liberation Party  
(Oakland Chapter)

The Black Riders Liberation Party Black Commune Program Point B: We ride to put an end to the thievery by the capitalists of our Black community. We ride because the racist government has stolen from us. And now we demand the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules that was promised over 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept payment in currency, which will be distributed to our communities. The amerikkan racist has taken part in the slaughter of over 50 million Black people, therefore we ride to make sure we receive complete payment.

Reparation - n. The making of amends for wrong, injustice or injury: Reparation for an injustice or payment in damages. Compensation is usually paid in money, material, resource, land, etc. Payable to another country or community by the country responsible for loss suffered during or as a result of a war.

Expropriate- v. the action of the state (or the people/communities) taking (redistributing) or modifying the property of an individual in an exercise of its sovereignty.

In 1865 after the confederate states of America were defeated in the US civil war, Gen. William T. Sherman issued the Special field order #15: the confiscation of 400,000 acres of land into 40 acre parcels for 18,000 black people to assure harmony of action in the area of operations. (Really just re-colonization in a pacified suppression fashion). However, Pres. Andrew Jackson reversed the order after Lincoln was assassinated.

Reparations are controversial. Mainstream media propaganda and political dialog on this issue are cloaked with white guilt and denial of white supremacy; false hope in a system that still considers Black people 3/5s of a human. It involves the struggle for liberation and justice from racism, capitalism, imperialism and colonialism. It involves demanding that this racist amerikkan government own up to its responsibility for repairing the damages done by the forced labor, rape, slaughter and genocide of our people.

It's time to stop begging for what they owe us and take it; because history shows us that this Anglo Saxon, white supremacy, colonial, capitalist power structure is not going to live up to its promises. Extreme conditions call for extreme actions in response to the oppression of our people. The amerikkan government's fascist police state forces patrol and enslave black communities, while protecting corporate interests and enforcing the systems' agenda. Armed struggle is inevitable! There is no bloodless revolution, rebellion or resistance. So quit playin' and get active! In the words of Elder Black Panther comrade Bobby Seale, "Stick em up m.f.! We come for what's ours!"

There have been many reformist attempts and proposals to receive reparations for slavery and genocide of Black people. On March 8, 2000 Reuters reported that Deandra Farmer Paellmann initiated a campaign for restitution from certain corporations that played a direct role in enslaving Africans. She filed a lawsuit against Aetna Inc. for their practice of writing life insurance policies on the lives of enslaved Africans with slave owners as beneficiaries. Another proposal was delivered by social activist Howshua Ameriel, at a National Reparations Convention in Chicago, requiring that the federal government make payments of reparations to "proven descendants of slaves." If the color of our skin determined whether we were slaves during chattel slavery, shouldn't that be all the proof needed to show we are descendants of slaves? He proposed that Blacks who want to stay in Amerikkka should receive free education, healthcare, and legal aid for 50 years with no taxes levied. (50 years for hundreds of years of

slavery and white supremacist genocide?) Black people who want to leave the US should receive a million dollars backed by gold in reparations.

There are some nations who did receive reparations. Under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 Ronald Reagan apologized on behalf of Amerikkka for the Japanese American Internment during World War 2 and provided reparation of \$20,000 to each survivor. But we didn't get restitution for the damages done by his Iran-Contra scandal, which put crack and guns in our community and shut down industries that employed us. Even the German government gave reparations to Israel for their "holocaust" of European Jews, where 6 million were killed (Compared to the +50 million who were killed in the "slave trade"). You thought Hitler was a racist but he's a small fry compared to the Amerikkkan imperial regime. They have mastered the art of racism.

You can clearly see the contradictions in the way the Amerikkkan Government has handled the reformist approach. This savage, greedy, system does not understand reason or logic. They benefit too much from our disadvantages and underdevelopment. This white supremacist system doesn't respect the interests of the Black community despite any attempt to conform and work within the judicial, economic, and legal system that they systematically designed to keep you enslaved and in debt in the first place. As our General T.A.C.O (Taking All Capitalists Out) says, "They only understand the knife, they only understand the gun, and we intend on communicating with them clearly!"

It's time to identify who benefited from slavery. Every major corporation that makes up the 1% that controls the majority of wealth in this country was built off slavery and colonial exploitation. I'll give some examples and highlight the companies that admitted to their role in slavery. Some apologized but none have ever paid restitution. In 2005, JP Morgan Chase and Wachovia both apologized for their foundation built on slavery but refused to pay any restitution deeming it "a mistake of the past." The Rockefellers, Merrill Lynch, Fidelity Investment, JG Wentworth, Johnson and Johnson, Union Pacific Railroad... I can go on and on. Name a corporate heavy weight and you can bet they participated in importation and exploitation of enslaved Africans.

Reparations are important in to the harmony of humanity and economic justice. We are at the root of this "economic crises" because the economic structure is built off our labor. And if we don't get free, the whole world will continue to be victim to capitalism. Harpers Magazine created an estimate that the total of reparations due for slavery is over \$100 Trillion based on 222,505,049 hours of forced labor from 1619-1865 with a compound interest of 6%.

Understand that the wealth of this country was built on the blood, sweat, and tears of enslaved Africans. The land that this economic superpower is built on is drenched in the blood of the indigenous people it was stolen from. European tyranny and greed sparked the colonial conquest of the "new world." Pre-colonial Africa, America and Asia lived in civilized societies. When the Europeans used up their own resources they came to take somebody else's. The more they took, the more they needed. This pattern of greed can be traced back to the Roman Empire or even back to their "Dark Ages" in the caves of the Caucus Mountains during our African golden ages in Kemet and Nubia, the cradle of civilization. Pre-Colonial Africa & America were rich because the indigenous inhabitants understood the value of balance. There was a deep respect for mother earth and every living thing because we are all spiritually connected. I wouldn't cause harm to you because I am you, and we are all one! The economy was not a system where if I have more currency that puts me in a position of power to



CAPITALIZE off your disadvantages.

The Amerikkkan economy is collapsing like Rome did. Is it over-production and under-consumption or vice versa? The answer is both and beyond. What goes up, must come down. This capitalist economic structure is heading for destruction and it must be destroyed to build a better and balanced structure. We cannot continue to beg this system for something they owe and promised us.

People don't understand what real democracy is. Democracy and capitalism don't mix. It's an oxymoron -two mutually contradictory terms. Big businesses and banks (the 1%) determine who you get to vote for, and they have to meet the needs of the 1% to run in the election. "Democracy is not simply majority rule but effective state power in the hands of the masses" - W.E.B Dubois ("Winds of time" Chicago Defender 9/15/1945). True democracy is supposed to be controlled by the people, for the people, not by and for a certain class of people controlling the masses. My political ideology is Revolutionary African Inter-Communalism which would fall under the category of socialism. It's an advanced term to describe the original form of communal socialism practiced by Africans since the birth of civilization until this very day. It's enhanced and modernized from Huey P. Newton's Inter-communalism upgraded by our General T.A.C.O (Taking All Capitalists Out) as African Intercommunalism with ideals including but not limited to Pan Africanism and Black revolutionary Nationalism plus socialism. "Socialism would mean the expropriation of wealth from the capitalist (Bourgeoisie) class and guaranteed employment, decent housing, education, and healthcare to all citizens." -- Manning Marable (How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America).

The top elite forces aren't going to give us anything no matter how much they know they owe. They've become accustomed to feasting off your starvation for too long. They're not going to let you take it back without a fight either. The fascist police state will guard corporate interest with their lives. They are preparing concentration camps around the world for you and your children. So what are you gon' do? Everybody wants peace and justice but they scared to go to war for it. In order for society to flow harmoniously the means of production must be put in the hands of the most oppressed and dispossessed, and the capitalist bourgeoisie class must be suppressed to the point where this caste class system is crushed and eliminated.

If it wasn't for the resources produced by slavery such as cotton, tobacco, rice, sugar, coffee, gold, diamonds, etc.; this country would never have been as prosperous. We built this and we must break it down to build it back up for the betterment of society and the future. This country is still feasting on slave labor in the prison industrial complex. We got nothing to lose and everything to gain. We must take back our resources that

were stolen from us. It's time to take power & justice in our own hands!

To make the record clear I'm not trying to promote riot, looting or theft. We must identify the real robbers, thieves and rapists. To strategically organize mass scale expropriation for reparations, there are certain items with symbolic value that must be taken and redistributed throughout the black community. Every bolt of cotton is yours, TAKE IT! Every parcel of sugar, coffee, rice or tobacco is yours, TAKE IT! Electronics that contain the African mineral Coltan (which cell phones and laptops are made of) are yours!

Groups of escaped slaves such as the Maroons, Quilombos, Palenque, and the Garifuna Nation would cleanse the land by burning the rice, cotton, and sugarcane fields on the plantations. They considered these crops foul and impure because they were grown on behalf of injustice by colonial and capitalist greed. Since the land and the people are spiritual in African and indigenous culture, they would redistribute the things they need throughout the communes but the unnecessary overstock was decomposed and recycled back to mother earth as a sacrificial offering. In this capitalist society we produce more than we will ever need. Yet since the intent is to profit off it, if someone who might really need it can't afford it, the item goes to waste. Globalization and industrialization go hand in hand with colonial exploitation and capitalism, and the waste pollutes the air, water and land. The things that we won't need should be cleansed and returned to mother earth. In the spirit of the ancestors. ASHE!

I know some of y'all are thinking, "But Ref, Massah aint gon' like this; he gon' lock you up and throw away the key." Well, we already make up over half the nation's prison population. There are more brothers locked up doing slave labor in these prisons, than there were in chattel slavery during the 1850s. (-- Michele Alexander, The New Jim Crow) You weren't scared to do time for tryin' to feed yo family! "But Ref, they gon' kill you for talkin like that." They killin' us off now. If you got nothing to die for, it ain't worth living for. I've risked my life for less. I wouldn't be a man if I didn't fight for the liberation of my people.

Martial Law and the National Defense Authorization Act are in effect. Time is running out on these reactionary pigs, who are scared because they know it's the end of their world. Quit hesitating and holding the people back from uprising because of fear of repression. Malcolm X says, "The price of freedom is death," so if you fear death, you fear freedom. I love the people too much to let this go on any longer. These reactionary guard dogs will try to silence me. If you're reading this that means they failed. My strap and sword is this pen, slicing through the chains of colonialism with every word I write. Our time is now! We got nothing to lose and everything to gain! The world is ours and we must TAKE IT!

**ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!**

# WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE POLICE MURDER OF KELLY THOMAS AND WHITE SUPREMACY

(c) 2014 by Thandisizwe Chimurenga

Homeless and schizophrenic. Two words that, for me, conjure up one word: vulnerable. The kind of person that, when Jesus says “the least of these,” means a person who should be protected. Kelly Thomas, 37 years old, mentally ill and “living” on the streets of Fullerton, CA, was one such person. But Kelly Thomas experienced the exact opposite of protection. Sickeningly and horrifyingly, Kelly Thomas was set upon and beaten to death in July 2011 by men who, in a perfect society, should have been his protectors. Kelly Thomas was murdered by law enforcement and this society’s legal system has now set his murderers free. The reason for this is very simple: Kelly Thomas was a castaway. In short, Kelly Thomas was “niggerized.”

Welcome to my world.

Cornel West stated more than 10 years ago that people of African descent in this country have long known what it is like to feel “unsafe, unprotected, subject to random violence, and hatred for who they are,” and that following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks, the U.S. government’s relentless erosion of civil liberties in the name of national security led to an “unaccustomed sense of collective intimidation for far too many Americans.” Thus, said West, whether or not they were of African descent, all Americans had now been “niggerized” by those attacks.

Kelly Thomas’ life was expendable. It no longer held any value to the state. Even the privilege of proximity to law enforcement, which in this society normally would have extended to him via his father, a former Orange County Sheriff’s Deputy, did not save him. Witnesses stated that Kelly Thomas cried out for his father 31 times during the 30-minute attack that led to his death: “Dad help me ... they’re killing me.”

Kelly’s parents, Ron and Cathy, were understandably shocked and angered by the jury’s verdict. No parent should endure what they’ve had to go through. Only the hardest of hearts can view the picture of Kelly Thomas lying unconscious in a hospital bed and not be taken aback by what Fullerton police did to him. But as a Black woman born and raised in the U.S., to hear Ron Thomas declare that “What this means is that all of us need to be very afraid now ... Police officers everywhere can beat us, kill us, do whatever they want because it was proven here today they can get away with it,” I automatically want to ask him, where has he been? But I also automatically know the answer to that question: he’s been here all along with everybody else whose white skin privilege has shielded them from the terrorism of the police.

When I hear Cathy Thomas exclaim, “They got away with murdering my son,” I can only think of how Wanda Johnson said the same thing about her child, Oscar Grant, three and a half years ago.

During the trial of his murderers, the defense argued that Kelly Thomas died not as a result of a brutal assault but due to an enlarged heart from drug abuse, even bringing up Thomas’ drug use as a 15-year old to underscore their point. And as a bonus, the defense said that Thomas was violent, once even attacking his own family members. Kelly Thomas was put on trial right alongside of those who murdered him. Black folks know all about that. Just ask the parents of Trayvon Martin.

In a perfect world, the government and those who enforce its laws would have protected Kelly Thomas, made sure he had the basic necessities of life, and that his right to life would have been respected. But Kelly Thomas didn’t live in that kind of society. Kelly Thomas lived in a society where value is placed on the whiteness of a person’s skin and what they can produce via their labor. In a white supremacist society such as the U.S., Kelly Thomas’ white skin privilege had been “sullied” by his social location and his mental illness. It could not save him.

For the most part in the U.S., homelessness does not conjure up images of hard-working people who have sold their labor to another in order to have the basic necessities of life and then, one or two or a series of mis-steps means that they have lost their homes, their security and thus they find themselves living on the street. In this country, homelessness conjures up images of filthy, unkempt, smelly and “dangerous people” who, as a result of their own actions – or in-actions – are pretty much SOOL (shit out of luck).

Schizophrenia, a form of mental illness that affects about 1% of the United States population, is said by the National Institute of Mental Health to be “a chronic, severe, and disabling brain disorder” whereby some persons “... may hear voices other people don’t hear. They may believe other people are reading their minds, controlling their thoughts, or plotting to harm them. This can terrify people with the illness and make them withdrawn or extremely agitated.”

Persons with such an affliction as schizophrenia will, more than likely, not be able to hold a job or maintain personal relationships for long. Thus, unable to “be productive” (sell their labor) or maintain family ties that can assist with their care and treatment, many schizophrenics find themselves living on the streets in cities across the United States. The existence of a safety net that could care for them or, in the alternative, provide substantive support and relief for their families/loved ones who want to care for them has been greatly weakened.

And now, because of this “sullying,” this “niggerization” of their child, the Thomas’ now feel the similar pain of far too many Black and Brown parents who have lost their children to police terrorism. They have now entered into our world.

The jettisoning of civil liberties that has occurred since 9/11 alluded to by West, coupled with the continuing attacks on a social safety net that can catch “the least of these,” and an increasingly reactionary political agenda administered from the highest levels of government strongly suggest that there will be many more Kelly Thomases. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

Police terrorism is a national crisis in the United States. A national movement against the police murder of all people – Black, Brown, Yellow, Red, White, Purple – is desperately needed in this country. Respect for the dignity and human rights of those who walk or drive the streets – or sleep in them – must be made manifest from coast to coast. The lack of accountability and privilege afforded to law enforcement nationwide simply has to come to an end.

A movement such as this must be built. And it can. Among other things, it will need for those who have had the protection of the state extended to them because of white skin privilege to renounce that privilege and see it for what it is: a ruse that continuously turns white folks against their own self-interest.

What a wonderful world this would be.

*Thandisizwe Chimurenga is a freelance, grassroots journalist based in Los Angeles. She is a long-time community activist and the author of No Doubt: The Murder(s) of Oscar Grant. She can be reached via her website, www.triplemurder.com.*



Kelly Thomas before and after being beaten to death by the Fullerton pigs. A national movement against the police murder of all people – Black, Brown, Yellow, Red, White, Purple – is desperately needed in this country.

## TORCH, AN ANTIFASCIST NETWORK



It’s with both great excitement and some sadness that we introduce TORCH, an anti-fa network. Out of the old Anti-Racist Action Network rises a new, militant anti-fascist network. This isn’t a fracture or schism coming from internal strife but the result of the realization that the blueprint laid out in a time before the Internet no longer serves as a

sufficient model for combating fascism. We acknowledge that many of our comrades have lost much, some their lives, under the banner of ARA. Their sacrifices will not be forgotten and their fight is still our fight. Because of changes in the current political climate as well as our own political development, our understanding of what fascism is and how it relates to other political entities such as the working class, capital, and the state has evolved. We wanted to build a new network that fit our needs and politics, one that is more relevant and appealing to a new generation of anti-fascists.

We are still on the prowl. We will still continue to expose, confront, and act. Fascists beware – we are TORCH.

### TORCH Points of Unity:

1. We disrupt fascist and far right organizing and activity.
2. We don’t rely on the cops or courts to do our work for us. This doesn’t mean we never go to court, but the cops uphold white supremacy and the status quo. They attack us and everyone who resists oppression. We must rely on ourselves to protect ourselves and stop the fascists.
3. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation. We intend to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement of oppressed people centered on the working class against racism, sexism, “nativism,” anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest, and the most oppressed people. We support abortion rights and reproductive freedom. We want a classless, free society. We intend to win!
4. We hold ourselves accountable personally and collectively to live up to our ideals and values.
5. We not only support each other within the network, but we also support people outside the network who we believe have similar aims or principles. An attack against one is an attack against all.

The founding chapters include Southside Chicago ARA, CenTex ARA, ARA-LA/People Against Racist Terror (PART), and the Hoosier Anti-Racist Movement (HARM) in Bloomington and Lafayette IN. Central Florida Antifa and then Philly Antifa joined shortly thereafter. Other chapters and individuals previously associated with the Anti-Racist Action network are discussing their relationship with the new network. Check us out at <http://torchantifa.org>

### First Annual TORCH Antifa Network Conference To Be Held In Chicago

On September 12th, 13th, and 14th of 2014, South Side Chicago ARA will be hosting the 1st Annual TORCH Antifa Network Conference. This conference has 2 parts: a private portion reserved for vouched antifascist chapters within the network (get vouched in now!) and a public portion for any and all antifascists interested in either the network or simply meeting other antifascists and having a good time. There will be workshops, tables, and more. We will post a detailed schedule in the coming months! If you have any questions or want to become a vouched chapter before the conference, email us at [southsidechicagoara@hushmail.com](mailto:southsidechicagoara@hushmail.com)

### Donate To Prison Release Funds For Anti-Racist Political Prisoners CeCe McDonald and John Tucker

We’d like to encourage you to donate to one or both of these brave individuals who were imprisoned for taking a stand against racism and fascism.

Cece McDonald is a trans Black woman who was attacked in 2011 by a group of trans-phobic racists, along with several friends. Cece was slashed in the face with a broken bottle, and her group defended themselves. In the ensuing melee, one of the attackers was stabbed and killed, and Cece was unjustly tried and convicted. None of the racists were charged. Cece was released on January 13 and her supporters are fundraising to give her some help. You can donate to Cece McDonald: [www.supportcece.wordpress.com/get-involved/donate/](http://www.supportcece.wordpress.com/get-involved/donate/) or email [mpls4cece@gmail.com](mailto:mpls4cece@gmail.com), or call 612.208.9762

John Tucker is one of the Tinley Park 5, 5 Antifascists imprisoned on trumped-up charges stemming from a disruption of a meeting of representatives of several Neo-Nazi/White Power groups. John is also slated for release this month. His supporters have also started a prison release fund. The Tinley Park 5 are 5 men from Indiana charged with multiple felonies for an altercation with active white supremacists at a restaurant in Tinley Park, IL. (more info here: [www.phillyantifa.wordpress.com/2012/06/19/anarchist-reflections-on-the-tinley-park-incident-by-some-anarchist-antifascists](http://www.phillyantifa.wordpress.com/2012/06/19/anarchist-reflections-on-the-tinley-park-incident-by-some-anarchist-antifascists))

John’s health has been neglected while incarcerated, so he is facing some medical expenses, including dentistry and dermatology, when he gets out, as well as court costs and the cost of court-mandated “anger management” classes.” You can donate here: [www.wepay.com/donations/john-tucker-prison-release-fund](http://www.wepay.com/donations/john-tucker-prison-release-fund) or by contacting your local antifa.

# Menard Hunger Strikers: We Need Support, Forced Feeding Threatened

The following information is drawn from letters received from prisoners in Administrative Detention at Menard Correctional Center in Menard, Illinois, and compiled by attorney Alice Lynd.

On Jan. 15, 2014, approximately 25 prisoners in Administrative Detention at Menard Correctional Center went on hunger strike. Officers shook down their cells and took any food they found. The hunger strikers were sent to medical staff and charged \$5 for medical treatment. On the way back from seeing medical staff, one prisoner (said to be Armando Velazquez) was pushed onto the stairs while in handcuffs by two officers. Those officers then kicked and stomped on his back, picked him up and then slammed his face into the plexiglass window on a door. One officer was sent home early that day. Prisoner Velazquez was moved to the Health Care Unit and the prisoners have not seen him since.

The hunger strikers have been told the prison administration is working on obtaining a preliminary injunction to force feed them. They expect to continue the hunger strike even if they are force-fed. "We need as much outside support as possible," the prisoners say.

Please call or email:  
Gov. Pat Quinn, (217) 782-0244,  
www2.illinois.gov/gov/Pages/ContacttheGovernor.aspx  
Warden Rick Harrington, (618) 826-5071  
IL Department of Corrections Director Salvador Godinez,  
(217) 558-2200, ext. 2008

Attorney Alice Lynd can be reached at salynd@aol.com.

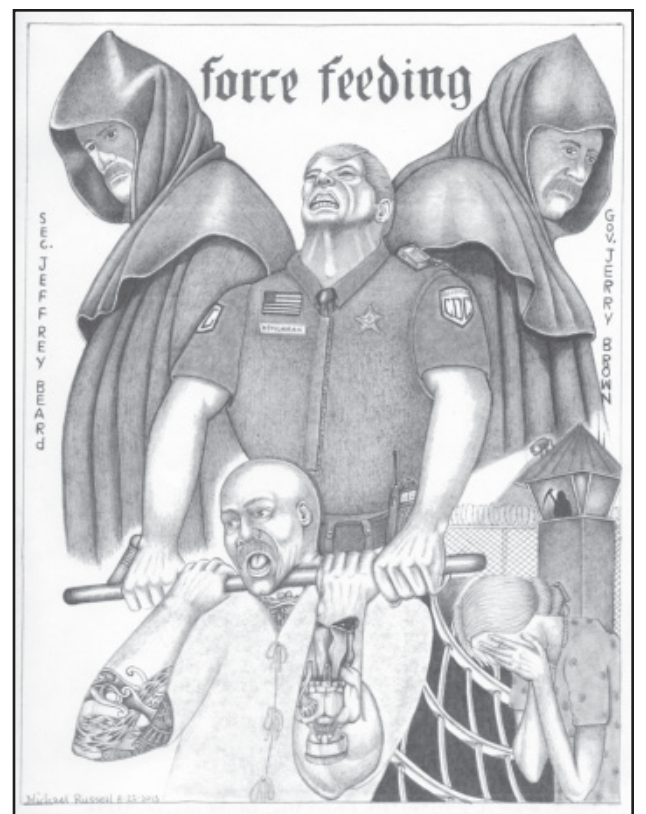
## Menard prisoners' demands

In a letter to IL DOC Director Godinez, Alan Mills

of Uptown People's Law Center in Chicago writes that prisoners formerly housed at Tamms and now in Administrative Detention at Menard in the High Security Unit, or HSU, "have contacted our office regarding both the process by which they were placed in this unit and the conditions of their confinement in the unit. They have advised us that due to the lack of response from anyone within the Department regarding their informal complaints and formal grievances they will begin an indefinite hunger strike today, Jan. 15. The men have forwarded the following demands to us in the hopes that we can facilitate resolution of the issues:

A hearing upon arrival and rationale for placement, as well as the written rules and regulations regarding their classification;

- Quarterly meaningful reviews of continued placement;
- Timely written responses to grievances in compliance with the departmental directives;
- The ability to have reasonable access to cleaning supplies for their personal cells;
- The common areas to be cleaned and sanitized (i.e., showers) and the vermin and rodent infestation eliminated;
- Adequate heat and hot water in cells and common areas;
- The ability to purchase basic commissary items (i.e., thermal clothing, shoes etc.), pursuant to departmental regulations;
- Access to individual razors and nail clippers held by departmental staff;



"Force Feeding" by Michael David Russell, C-90473, PBSP SHU D7-217, P.O. Box 7500, Crescent City CA 95532

- Timely addressed medical treatment (i.e., physical, mental and dental ailments); and
- Adequate access to legal property boxes and the law library."

Alan Mills, Uptown People's Law Center  
4415 N. Sheridan, Chicago IL 60640  
(775) 769-1411, www.uplccchicago.org

## 75 African Groups Demand Obama Stop Pushing Dirty Energy through Power Africa

Coinciding with the UN climate conference in Warsaw, 75 African groups from 18 countries sent a letter to President Obama concerning his Power Africa initiative. The letter was released as the world commemorated the anniversary of the murder of Nigerian playwright and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was sentenced to death on November 10, 1995 by the ruling military junta for speaking out against Shell's devastating dirty energy exploits in Nigeria's Niger Delta.

Dear President Obama,

We are African organizations working for the realization of a healthy and just environment for the people of our countries. We believe that every person has the right to a dignified life of quality on a livable planet. The climate crisis -- brought on by developed countries -- poses a monumental threat to this basic human right.

With this in mind we write to you concerning the Power Africa initiative, as well as congressional legislation meant to operationalize your initiative, including the Electrify Africa Act of 2013. Like you, we feel a great sense of urgency to address the pervasive energy poverty found in most African countries. It is shameful that in 2013, more than 2/3 of sub-Saharan Africa's population lacks electricity, with that number growing to more than 85% in rural areas.

We are therefore working hard to bring decentralized, clean, community-controlled renewable energy to all of our people. We do not need to poison communities in Africa in order to develop sustainably. Consequently, we reject any further extraction and exploitation of fossil fuels, including natural gas, oil, coal, and unconventional fossil fuels. These dirty fuel projects cause devastating impacts on local health, communities, and the environment. We similarly reject large hydropower projects, and other 'false solutions' such as carbon trading and offsetting. Smaller scale solar, wind, and geothermal, and mini-hydro, can provide us with sustainable lives and livelihoods without sinking our health along with that of the continent and the planet.

When we read statements from the White House about "new discoveries of vast reserves of oil and gas," or that "The recent discoveries of oil and gas in sub-Saharan Africa will play a critical role in defining the region's prospects for economic growth and stability, as well as contributing to broader near-term global energy security"[ - our response is to say:

"Leave the oil in the soil; leave the coal in the hole."

It's impossible to continue to exploit fossil fuels if we want to avoid climate catastrophe. Climate change

is already having a heightened impact in Africa, with increasing temperatures, more floods and droughts, and failing agriculture, which is increasing conflict and threatening the lives and livelihoods of many millions.

Furthermore, we know from decades of direct experience that the World Bank-driven development model pushing large-scale infrastructure and power projects rarely, if ever, alleviates poverty. Instead, such projects exacerbate inequality and conflict, devastate the environment, and frequently involve human rights



violations (i.e. the well-documented "resource curse"). These projects do not help us at home but rather are for export and to line the pockets of multinational corporations and local elites.

But even more troubling is how African poverty has been used to line the pockets of U.S. corporations and "experts." Much of the money given as "aid" to African countries actually returns right back to the "experts" and consultants of donor countries. It thus troubles us tremendously that Power Africa has been advertised to U.S. audiences as an initiative to benefit U.S. corporations. For example, upon Power Africa's launch, *Forbes* wrote that it "greases billions in deals for General Electric," saying the firm is "perhaps the biggest beneficiary" of the initiative, noting the US Export-Import Bank's central role in financing its ambitions in the region. Indeed, the chair of the Export-Import Bank was quite frank about this over Twitter, referring to Power Africa as a "\$7B plan to power up @General Electric", and he posted a picture of [your] speech on the initiative in Tanzania with a GE logo more than twice the

size of the presidential seal.

We therefore urge you to re-think any support for large scale power and infrastructure projects in the name of increasing energy access for Africa. We know that this hasn't worked in the past, and it won't work now. What will work are small-scale, decentralized, community-owned renewable energy initiatives throughout the African countryside and cities. The International Energy Agency has said as much. Its 2010 *World Energy Outlook* found that for universal energy access to occur by 2030,

70% of rural populations will need to be served by decentralized renewable energy. Electrification should focus heavily on decentralized renewable energy systems, such as small-scale, democratically controlled wind, solar and micro-hydro co-ops which meet local needs and end peoples' reliance on the corporate-controlled energy system. Advances in distributed renewable energy in recent years have made this technology more cost effective than outmoded grid extension from centralized fossil fuel projects; much like cheaper mobile phone technology has made extension of phone lines obsolete. When the externalized cost of fossil fuel projects is factored in -- including the cost of harmful health impacts, loss of land, environmental and agricultural damage, and conflicts -- distributed renewable energy solutions become even more cost effective than fossil fuel projects.

Unfortunately, to our dismay, we have learned that fossil fuel companies, the ONE Campaign, and even some in

the Obama administration are using Power Africa and the Electrify Africa Act to try to weaken crucial gains in U.S. development financing at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). OPIC's landmark climate and development policy, which is already having a positive effect in directing the agency's portfolio toward renewable energy, requires the agency to reduce its fossil fuel financing and increase its renewable energy financing, bringing cleaner energy access to the poor. OPIC's cap on greenhouse gas emissions must not be tampered with, most certainly not in the false name of supplying power to Africa's poor. Weakening this policy will mean more polluting energy for Africa. What's more, it may result in increased numbers of large centralized fossil fuel power projects that serve industrial customers but do not increase energy access for the poor, particularly in rural areas.

We thank you for your attention to these most important matters as we all move boldly toward sustainable livelihoods in the face of the climate crisis.

Sincerely, [signed by 75 organizations across Africa]



Inter-Communal Solidarity Committee  
PO Box 1055  
Culver City, CA 90232-1055

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ★ Feb. 8, 5:00 PM Film: "The Black & the Green": African-American leaders in Ireland  
1226 N. Alvarado, L.A. Info on Occupied North of Ireland: cirw32@yahoo.com
- ★ Mar. 1, 6:00 PM, Michael Parenti on "Capitalism: Lost Prosperity, False Democracy"  
1226 N. Alvarado, L.A. 90026. Union of Progressive Iranians, 323-679-5023
- ★ March 15: International Day of Action Against Police Brutality
- ★ March 22: ISC members lead workshop on radical sex work politics at Bay Area  
Anarchist Bookfair
- ★ Check us out via <http://tideturning.org> or [facebook.com/intercommunalsolidarity](https://www.facebook.com/intercommunalsolidarity)

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**- MUMIA ABU JAMAL**

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