Why Should Prisoners Join The IWW?

The majority of people in prison will get out and return to prison again. The prison system creates a class of people unable to successfully advocate for themselves, robbing them of necessary skills, catching them in a revolving door.

Prisons are used for economic purposes. Prisons are a way to lock up the unemployed and to create desperate people to work rotten jobs at low pay. This serves the interests of the rich and powerful and it harms the workers and the poor.

Prisons are used for political purposes. Prisons lock away the poor, those who are in favor of more "radical" solutions. Taking away votes and power from the poor communities, prisons ensure that politicians will be puppets of the war mongers and fear mongers.

Prisons are used for demographic purposes. Black men are the largest segment of the prison population. Black women are the fastest growing segment of the prison population. Prisons are used to maintain racial inequalities.

Children with at least one parent in prison are far more likely to go to prison also. Children of prisoners are the prison population of tomorrow. The cycle continues for generations.

You cannot change this situation through a grievance process that doesn’t work... or through courts that are clearly against you... or through petitions to lawmakers who don’t care about you because you don’t vote... or through hungerstrikes against prison officials who want you to starve... or through letters to newspapers who have ignored this situation for decades...

We know what will happen if you DON’T join the Industrials Workers of the World. Let’s see what happens when you DO.

Prisoner membership is FREE. Join the Industrial Workers of the World TODAY!

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

As a prisoner, you have a constitutional right to join a union and prison officials cannot legally punish you. Don’t take our word for it; look up the U.S. Supreme Court case for yourself: JONES V. NORTH CAROLINA PRISONERS LABOR UNION, INC., 433 U.S. 119 (1977).

Letter: May 10th Strike Repressed in Nebraska

Greetings my friends. My name is Chadrick Fitzgerald, IWW membership number X385061. As I write these words, I am sitting in a cell on the SMU gallery in Tecumseh Corrections Facility under investigation for the uprising that took place on 5-10-15. The Nebraska DOC has been run poorly for some time, we have had a number of changes in directors and that’s about it. The number of problems are too long to list but somewhere at the top of that list sits overcrowding, lack of programming, and the mis-treatment of the inmates.

To give you an idea of how out of control it has become, prison guards themselves have sued the state of Nebraska and won because they were being abused by coworkers via racial slurs at work. The ACLU has threat-ened to sue over the amount of overcrowd-ing and current living conditions. The in-mate population has tried many times to get programming that would help us upon release and time and again, nothing.

There are a few jobs that pay more than $24.00/month ($1.21/day) and they are restricted to less than 200 +/- inmates of

Promoting Proletarian Consciousness as Prisoner Rehabilitation

Since our inception, the NABPP-PC has emphasized the leading role of the proletariats in any genuine revolu-tionary struggle. In our founding ar-ticle, “the NABPP-PC: Our Line,” we explained this position and contrasted the revolutionary character of the pro-letatrat with the counter-revolutionary character of the lumpen (or “broken”) proletariat. That discussion bears quot-ing at length:

“Many people when presented with the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist idea that only the proletariat can lead in making all-the-way revolutionary class struggle question why it is, and why some oth-er class (without changing its class per-spective) cannot lead such a struggle. One reason is because the proletariat is the only class that has no real stake in preserving the class relations of the cap-italist system, but has everything to gain in taking control over the social wealth it has itself created by its labor and the tools it uses to create it. Another reason is that the proletariat (in contrast to the lumpen), has the conditioning in patient work, social unity and cooperation nec-es-sary to wage the protracted class strug-gle required to abolish all exploitation.
While the majority of prisoners committed crimes to end up in prison, we have to keep in mind that the extremely wealthy who control the “commanding heights” of the economy have created desperate situations that lead to crime. Poverty, crumbling schools, widespread unemployment and under-employment—these are all conditions created by a maldistribution of wealth and power. Prisons, then, are a way to punish those without opportunities; prisons punish those affected while giving a free pass to the wealthy who are the cause of crime.

While the vast majority of prisoners commit crimes to end up in prison, we also have to keep in mind that government has criminalized just about every human activity. The U.S. has more criminal statutes than any other nation in history. As a consequence, selective enforcement of these laws in poor areas where police are most heavily concentrated serves political, economic, and demographic interests totally unrelated to crime or crime control. The more “radical” element who may pose a challenge to the wealthy and powerful is silenced and neutralized while more wealth and power is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands.

The modern prison system is the government’s “canary in the coal mine.” All of the strategies and tactics for surveillance, crowd control, and population pacification have been perfected on prisoner populations before being employed in the free world. Mass surveillance including centralized monitoring via security cameras and the collection of communications meta-data originate in prison; response tactics such as the use of tasers and pepper spray; “kettling” unruly mobs, and formations of phalanxes behind riot shields all arise from corrections applications. Even the use of torture was employed on prisoners before going mainstream. How authorities have pushed prisoners is soon how the authorities push the workers. So, the conditions that prisoners are allowed to suffer today become the conditions imposed on workers tomorrow.

Why Should Free World Workers Care About Prisoners?

The Incarcerated Worker features writings of prisoners, welcoming contributions of writing and art particularly from a revolutionary labor perspective, all subject to editing for space and for content. Contributions should be sent to:

Kent Books to Prisoners
CSI Box X
KSU Student Center
Kent, OH 44242

Editorial Policy

Collectively, we may not know exactly what we’re looking for, but we’ll know it when we see it. And we may not know what we’re not looking for, but we’ll definitely get plenty of it.

We have to decide: Do we want to produce quality that will inspire and move people and contribute to a goal, or do we want to be a forum for terrible material no one else will print?

However, this fluid policy is subject to change at the democratic will of incarcer-ated workers like YOU! Fellow workers in Missouri prisons suggested a rotation of contributing authors. Authors shall be set in rotation each issue, so each gets a turn to share their voice.

I opt for the first. So, I suggest our editorial policy should be fluid and evolving and organic, case by case, issue to issue. In other words, no real policy at all.

“…”

Additional help: Though membership is fire, if you have any stamps or pre-stamped envelopes to help us distribute more mail to fellow workers behind bars it will greatly help the union.

—Outside Editor, Mike L

Call for editors: We are growing! This is great news, but in addition to membership and contributions to the newsletter, we need more editors in various locations to help the newsletter grow. If you’d like to edit articles from your fellow incarcerated workers, please let us know!

Due to limited printing capacity, content should be kept shorter than 5 pages.

Send your self-addressed stamped envelopes with requests for back issues, so we can save on postage.

Remember to share and spread things around so we can all grow!
Kent Books to Prisoners provides prisoners with books and other reading material on request.

Prison Books Collective provides a catalog of political pamphlets, and any of the pamphlets contained within, free to prisoners. Prisoners in MS, AL, and NC are eligible to request and receive books.

Prison Books Collective and Prison Books Collective are not affiliated with the IWW.

February 19th transferred to Lacawicke along with the rest of the prisoners of his security level. The administration wanted to transfer the whole level of prisoners to disguise the fact that this was retaliation to Sean’s strike, and to pit the prisoners against Sean. However, these efforts by the administration backfired because it actually built more solidarity and respect for FW Sean.

On May 5, all of my outgoing communications were cut off. (This happened immediately after Swain sent edited articles and contributions for this issue of The IW.)

Remembering Phil Afrika

Editor & Fellow Worker

Sean Swain’s status

In early February, our editor and FW Sean Swain had his video visits with his comrades and supporters cut off unexpectedly. The administration at Ohio State Penitentiary said that these privileges were being denied to prisoners of Sean’s security level but this was obviously targeting Sean since the Ohio Department of Corrections had put him on communication embargo several times before this. He went on hunger strike, medical strike, and was transferred to the Southeast Ohio Correctional Facility in Lucasville, a notorious prison that is home of the longest prisoner mutiny in the U.S. The following is an edited version of Sean’s conflict, which was posted on his website seanswain.org.

Hunger strike declared Monday February 2, and without his blood pressure medication since Monday February 9.

John Bouden is currently resident at HMP Shotts.

Front Page: Promoting Proletarian Consciousness as Prisoner Rehabilitation - Kevin “Rashid” Johnson
Letter: May 10th Strike Repressed in Nebraska - Chadwick Fitzgerald
Artwork by Kevin “Rashid” Johnson

Page 2: Artwork by Anan (c/o Shyheim ElMumin)

Page 3: Editor & Fellow Worker Sean Swain’s Status
Page 4: Timeline: Prison Uprisings Since Last Issue Hunger Strike at Ohio State Penitentiary

Page 7: What They Don’t Want - De’Andre’ Je’Rod Cohran
Page 8: Prisons: Factories of Hate The Keeper vs. The Kept - King A
Page 9: Artwork by Kevin ”Rashid” Johnson
Page 14: Why Should Free World Workers Care About Prisoners? Remembering Phil Afrika Artwork from onamove.com
Back Page: Why Should Prisoners Join The Industrial Workers Of The World? Artwork by Grafica Nera

The American “treatment model” of prisons probably finds its most extreme expression in the U.K. prison system in the form of “Dangerous Personality Disorder Units” (DPPDU) created and overseen by psychologists from the psychopath-spotter school of psychology that defines all “anti-social” behaviour on the part of the least powerful and least wealthy as symptomatic of psychopathology. In the totalitarian world of prison, either fighting the system or confronting the institutionalised abuse of power that prevails there is sufficient to be labeled a “psychopath” by psychologists who are anchored—mind, body and soul—to the prison system. In the case of life-sentenced prisoners, such psychologists now have the power to decide if they are sufficiently risk-free to ever be released.

It is not just within the prison system that the American influence is apparent, it is also recognisable in the radically changed role of probation officers and criminal justice system social workers, from what was traditionally “client-centerd” liberal occupations to an overtly “public protection” centred extension of the police and prison system. Now a closer equivalent to the American parole officer, probation officers and criminal justice system social workers in the U.K. now see their role as policing parolees or “offenders” on supervision orders and returning them to jail for the slightest, technical breach of their license conditions.

The massive increase in the use of community supervision orders as a form of social control has created a veritable ghetto of marginalised people in poorer communities who exist constantly in the shadows of imprisonment and the omnipotent power of their supervising officers. This mirrors what has been taking place in some U.S. states as the global economic crisis has virtually eradicated legitimate employment for multinational private-security corporations that now own and operate a significant portion of the American prison system. This new prison industrial complex is laying roots in the U.K. too, and it is from the poorest industrialised communities that it draws its sources of cheap labour and human commodities.

In the totalising world of prison, either fighting the system or confronting the institutionalised abuse of power that prevails there is sufficient to be labeled a “psychopath” by psychologists who are anchored—mind, body and soul—to the prison system. In the case of life-sentenced prisoners, such psychologists now have the power to decide if they are sufficiently risk-free to ever be released.

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This U.S. cultural influence on the criminal justice system is far greater in the U.K. than anywhere else in Europe, which accounts for the U.K. having the largest prison population and the longest prison sentences in Europe. It is also forever vulnerable to the American-style prison riot when despair and hopelessness overshadow prisoners’ lives completely and there is essentially nothing left to lose. As a model of either justice or retribution, the American criminal justice system is riddled with corruption and failure, and yet Britain slavishly attempts to imitate it—in its quest to achieve absolute social control at a time when the lives of the poor are being made increasingly unendurable, and society continues to fracture and polarise.

John Bouden is currently resident at HMP Shotts.
Sean Swain continued

4 June, the warden calls me to an office to discuss my early recommendation to level 3 and makes the polite request to ask me what level 3 prison I would like to go to. He assures me that SOCF is not going to be involved in central office’s nonsense. No warden has ever been this nice to me.

5 June, Mahone, Stephens and I are called to sergeant’s office. Investigator is present. Investigator assures me that this institution is not taking part in the Renee games. Conduct report related to the J4A devices is dismissed. Mahone and Stephens get their devices back. No investigator has ever been this cordial with me before.

Later, 5 June, the case manager gave me the initial paperwork related to my security review and status drop.

Hunger Strike at Ohio State Penitentiary

Shortly after the mass transfer of prisoners along with FW Sean Swain, new restrictions were set in place at the Ohio State Penitentiary. Religious and educational programs were cut, and the recreational yard was completely banned. The administration said that the restrictions were set in place as a response to an assault on some correctional officers by an inmate named Cornelius Harris, who was dismissed of former assault on officer chasers in the past as the strike he and the other Lucaville Up-rising political prisoners engaged in to win contact visits with family and friends. The following is a brief timeline of the strike:

March 16 – Hunger strike begins with over 40 inmates at Ohio State Penitentiary in response to limited religious and education- al freedoms, ban of recreational yard, and grotesque food servings. FW Imam Siddique Abdullah Hassan is one of the leading

Justice my assessment, but I think we have managed to reach a critical threshold. Not only is the institution here telling central office to f**k off, not only are they not getting involved, but it appears that there is an effort to flush me to lower security.

Incarcerated Worker, the Free Alabama movement has been organizing resistance against the exploitation and inhumanity of the prison system; including a mass-strike that made the private prison corporation, GEO corp. lose almost one million in profit.

be able to provide some support for his (or her) family, continue payments on social security...make some payment for room and board, and save them from being hounded (or herself) upon return to society.

“Defending prison labor unions is also a pra- tical goal, as such institutions presently exist with beneficial results in other countries. 

“Prison labor unions are not an American invention. The first successful prisoner la- bor union was organized in Sweden. Since 1966, the union, which represents the vast majority of Swedish prisoners, has carried out a long series of successful negotiations with the government. Every effort has been made to make the prisoners’ wages the same as docile workers. Prisoners pay rent for their cells and board for their food. They are en- couraged to pay their debts in the free com- munity, including restitution to the victims of the crimes. They pay taxes and generally have enough left at the end of the month to save around $50.

“Additional benefits from unionization have been a good working relationship with Swedish industry, widely available vocation- al training, safer prison factories, eligibility for workmen’s compensation and, perhaps most important of all, the democratic in- volvement of prisoners in forming their own destiny.

“The union is credited with diminishing vi- olence in prisons, lowering recidivism and making prisons more open institutions in Sweden society.” – Paul Comeau, Labor Unions for Prison Inmates

Amerika’s liberal democratic revolution of 1776, of which the Civil War (1861-1865) was a continuation, remains an unfinished revolution. The most glaring examples of this are the U.S. prison system and the con- tinuation of the status of “slave,” the racist death penalty (legalized lynching) and the institutionalized racism, sexism and humyn rights abuses that constitute “legally sanc- tioned torture.” Until the inalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happy- ness” is extended to all in America—including those convicted of crimes—the Liberal Democratic Revolution remains unfinished. To bring this stage of its advancement one step forward to socialism the proletariat must lead this struggle. Democracy leads to socialism and Democratic Revolution leads to Socialist revolution. The slave emancipates her/himself by be- coming a proletarian and the proletarian emancipates her/himself by the abolition of classes. Recognizing that the bourgeoisie are no longer a progressive and revolution- izing force as they were in 1865 when they overthrow the chattel slave system, in fact they have become reactionary to the core and increasingly fascist and anti-democrat- ic, the proletariat must lead in completing the democratic revolution and carry it for- ward to make socialist revolution to put an end to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

We are not calling for an all new Demo- cratic revolution, but there is unfinished business that clearly falls under liberal de- mocracy, and resolving it moves us forward towards socialist revolution.

Towards this end, the New African Ser- vice Organization (NASSO) should out- line a comprehensive program for Trans- forming the Razor Wire Slave Plantations into Schools of Liberation. This program should be based upon the

Towards this end, the New Afrikan Ser- vice Organization (NASO) should out-line a comprehensive program for Trans- forming the Razor Wire Slave Plantations into Schools of Liberation. This program should be based upon the

The program should be based upon the NABPP-PC’s 10 Point Program in its min- imal form—ending the slave status for pris- oners and establishing our status as prole- tarians, and from there moving forward to proletarian socialist revolution.

Dare to struggle—Dare to win! All Power to the People!
humyn rights abuses. But an additional step in organizing prisoners, advancing our revolutionary consciousness and ranks, and preparing us for a future classless society is to demand prisoners' right to work for minimum wage and to union representation.

As part of and in addition to advancing proletarian consciousness, paying prisoners a real wage for their labor could help them support their families and build up a nest egg for when they get out to get a place to live, a car, to survive and therefore reduce and to strike. This would not be a move to legitimize the Prison Industrial Complex and the use of convict labor for profit (which the imperialists are already doing). But turning the conditions that they have created against us to our benefit and that of revolutionary organizing.

As Karl Marx pointed out, productive work is essential to women and mankin’s very existence, that independent of meeting financial needs, people need productive labor—enforces idleness, corrupts and deteriorates the humyn character and is itself a humyn rights violation.

The lumpens are distinguished from unem-ployed workers because they do not look for work and avoid—it is in this sense that they are “broken.” They prefer to steal, deal, hustle or pimp, living as parasites and preying on others—even while fellow’s lumpen people. Proletarianizing the lumpen is the highest and only legitimate form of “rehabilitation.” Prisoners have a right to be rehabilitated as opposed to the humyn rights violations of being merely warehoused (unless the “criminal justice” system admits its real design and intentions to be that of creating and unleashing predators to prey upon the general society), and this means freedom to sell their labor power and collectively bargain over the terms of sale.

Enforced slavery contradicts the “inalien-able” rights, as declared in the US Declara-tion of Independence, of all people to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Be-yond the security consideration inherent in incarceration, the state cannot be allowed to kill, cannot be allowed to deny the right—the liberty—to be a proletarian or to pursue meaning and purpose in life.

If society accepts that one must do time for a crime, then it follows that the time must productively serve the needs of the society by promoting the genuine rehabilitation of the incarcerated individ-u-al so that s/he will function as productive members of the society upon release.

Enfragement does not teach one how to be free. Abuse does not promote good citi-zenhood or emotional stability. A criminal justice system will still be needed under socialism—to deal with anti-social criminal behavior. But our model must be a "school of liberation." The principles of a genuine correctional system must be articu-lated and struggled for as part of the overall revolutionary struggle. The question is how should these prisons be run and what rights should the prisoners have that are inalien-able and will promote rehabilitation and good citizenship.

Revolution is a birthing process, the new society forming in the womb of the old one. Through struggle we create new favorable condition for greater struggle. Nothing comes instantly. Change comes from struggle. The changes in social relations must proceed and develop from a lower to a higher level.

As revolutionaries we want to transform the prisons into “Schools of Liberation” to pro-vide the revolution with trained cadre and fighters. But on a deeper level we want to revolutionize social relations under capi-talism to better enable us to revolutionize social relations under socialism and in the advance to a classless society.

Our goal is not to make acceptance of slave-ry more palatable and thus pro-long the inequality, exploitation and injustice of capitalist-imperialism.

Our goal is to serve and advance the inter-ests of the world proletarian revolution to abolish the system of capitalist-imperialism. Toward this end we should seek to proletar-ianize the prisoner population through rev-olutionary political education, promoting revolutionary culture and as much as pos-sible drawing them into proletarian social relations to the means of production.

Can the system altogether oppose the de-concession on this issue would force the state to expand work industries bringing more prisoners into the workforce and counter the present model of long-term segregation.

Free world unions could be won to support the prospect of 2.5 million new dues pay-ing members and an equally large electoral voting bloc. It’s also possible to win crimi-nologists and people in the criminal justice system to support this program.

Organizations like the National Council on Crime and Delinquency are already actively advocating increasing prisoners’ wages to free world levels. The policy statement of the NCCD’s Board of Directors reads in part: “The present condition of prison industries limits the value of [work programs]. The deficiencies vary from prison to prison… The pay for inmates employed in prison is too low to be regarded as wages. The aver-age prison laborer receives from ten cents to 60 cents a day. This is not adequate for female workers for a day’s work what the federal minimum wage law requires for an hour’s work. The rate of pay…is only a token… a daily rebate to the inmate, reminding him [or her] of society’s power to exploit at will.”

“Counterproductive prison labor sys-tem must be changed. An inmate receiving equitable payment for work performed will ready been informed that 58 group program-ming, among other things, will be reinstated. If the meeting is not productive, then we are prepared to continue with our hunger strike. Come what may, and let the wind blow wher-ever! Since the IV treatment Joseph Nagle seems to be doing all right. David Worley has high blood pressure and his blood level is still; thus, the medical staff is monitoring him very, very closely. Keith DeWitt is also being mon-itored by the medical staff. Everyone has a lot of weight—between 20 and 30 pounds. Some days are better than others, but we are continuing because we fully believe in the righteousness of our struggle. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. so eloquently stated: ‘Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.’ In closing, know that I’m well and determined to see this struggle through.”

April 14 - Warden starts to negotiate with the strikers around April 14th. To parallel the negotiations with the warden, activists start a solidarity rally for the strikers outside of Ohio Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (ODRC) office in the capital of Ohio, Columbus. BW Hassan states “Alice Stoughton and I met with Warden Forshey last Friday and we are scheduled to meet with him again tomorrow. Depending on what he say about range rec, there is a possibility this strike can end tomorrow or soon. We have al-ready seen many threats by the state to break the strike, including a federal judge’s order. Of course the state will try to put pressure on the strikers.”

April 24 - After negotiations, the majority of hunger strikers stop their strike. Several oth-er prisoners stay on strike until some of their fellow strikers are treated in the medical unit. FW Hasaan declared the strike to be a cease-fire, since some of the demands were met and other strikers need medical care. However, he says that a strike will resume in the future until all of the demands of the strikers are met. Reli-gious and educational restrictions were lifted, allowing incarcerated workers to congregate for religious services together and spiritual/educational aids can meet them in person in stead of through a food-slot on a metal cell door. Food improvements were implemented, such as the ban on the infamous “noura-loaf,” a whole meal crushed into a loaf served to inmates as a punishment. Atama, the pri-vate-prison food contact responsible for the food (including the loaf) still remains the state main contactator for prisoner food. Finally, one of the main demands that the warden re-fused to budge on was to access to the recreation yard, due to risk of correctional officers’ safety.
America’s Lap Dog: Britain Slavishly Copies American Penal Policy

John Bowden

Don’t want continued

in the entire Missouri Department of Correc-
ations—multiple stabbings, rapes, riots, cell burglaries, inmate and guard assaults
—and when you say, “I fear for my life, I need protective custody,” they punish you
by making you do 90 days in administrative
segregation (Ad-Seg) before even thinking
about putting you into a “PC” unit or
transferring you.

In Ad-Seg, you are forced to cell with anoth-
er prisoner wearing nothing but a shirt and
boxer shorts and socks, violating prisoners’
religion while promoting rape and also sex-
ual exploitation of prisoners by guards. You
are further subjected to overtly strict phone
restrictions, denial of meals (especially
breakfast) by guards like Sergeant Tidewell,
24-hour light exposure, and denial of show-
ners and recreation. Then there is the com-
mon abuse of the chemical agents known as
O.C. gas, mace, and pepper spray. Prisoners
are even being maced while handcuffed to
a bench.

One prisoner, Ray Draper, D.O.C. Num-
ber 1228338, was maced in the face and
slammed on the floor, all while cuffed, for
talking to another offender; guards were up
before making you do 90 days in administra-
tional segregation (Ad-Seg) before even think-
ning about putting you into a “PC” unit or
transferring you.

The motives behind revolutionary
violence are fundamentally different from
the reactionary violence of the lumpen who
model their violence after that of the big
gangsters. Revolutionary violence is rooted
in the collective resistance of the masses
organized against the violence of the big
gangster bourgeois system of oppression and
exploitation.

Without remolding their class outlook, the
lumpen will pursue ultra-leftist militant
acts of exhibitionism and spew forth, “Off
the pig!” rhetoric and when this provokes
repression from the Establishment they
will flip-flop to right opportunism, turn rat
and become enemy agents or run for cover.

Because lumpen values have been deeply
ingrained in the New African and general
urban and prison culture, advancing revolutionary proletarian ideology is
essential to building our Party, organizing
our mass organizations, revolutionizing
prisoners and the oppressed masses in
general, and consolidating the struggle
against capitalist imperialism.

As quoted above, we promote proletarian-
izing prisoners through ideologically and
politically training them in the principles and
practices of class struggle and in the sci-
cence of Revolution (Historical and Dialec-
tical Materialism). But, there’s yet another
approach (which can turn a negative into
a positive), namely by genuinely transform-
ing prisoners’ economic statuses from that
of slaves into wage earning proletarians.

This can be done within the prison setting.

Our Party has already taken a firm stand in
recent government announcement
promoting abolishing prisoners’ slave status (including amending the 13th Amendment to strike the clause that legalizes
slavery) and abolishing the racist death penalty, indefinite solitary confinement,
physical and mental torture, and other

A recent government announcement
that it is considering U.S.-style pris-
on sentences—like a hundred years for the most serious offenses—is, on one level, a
straightforward attempt to undermine a
recent European Court of Human Rights
Ruling, one that declared that life-sen-
tenced prisoners should be given some
hope that their sentences will be reviewed
before they die. And, on another level, this
is evidence that the Americanisation of the
British criminal justice system continues to
increase and deepen.

Apart from the probable introduction of
sentence terms that are, in effect, a slow
form of capital punishment, an American
penology has characterised the treatment
of British prisoners for quite some time in
the form of the “treatment model,” with its
psychology-based programmes and cours-
es. These programmes and courses are de-
signed and inspired by Canadian and U.S.
ideologies regarding “offending behavior,”
which is attributed not so much to social
and environmental causes, but more to
the individual pathology of the “offender.”
So, the fact that the prison population is
disproportionately from the poorest and
most-disadvantaged group in society is
absolutely no significance and, instead, a
crude behaviourist notion prevails; provi-
sing that prisoners can be re-socialised
behaving in a “normal” way, then “offend-
by exercising from their thinking—before they are released back
into the same desperate economic and social
circumstances. Predictably, the “treatment
model” with its programmes and courses has
absolutely no appreciable effect on recidivism rates.

As in American prisons, prison-hired psy-
chologists in Britain have carved out a ver-
itable industry for themselves in the pris-

continued on page 13

"Missouri Public Pretenders,“ A.K.A.
Missouri Public Defenders

Justin Johnson

I.

as one of many indigent defendants ac-
cused of crimes, am forced to proceed
with state-issued attorneys (public defend-
ers) who do not fully pay attention to the
ins and outs of their clients’ cases. They
are piled up with so many cases and often
neglect the attention, time, and effort needed
to properly prepare for trial. Yes, they have
passed the Missouri Bar Exam and have been
allowed to practice law in Missouri, but they
perform way below the customary skill and
diligence that a reasonable, compe-
tent lawyer would exercise under similar cir-
cumstances. As a result, thousand of defen-
dants are denied their constitutional rights
protected by the Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and
Fourteenth Amendments to the United States
Constitution and Article 1, Sections 10 and 18(a) of the Missouri Constitution.

Convictions in Missouri seem to come
from 75% neglect from the public defend-
er and 25% actual facts and evidence. I am a prime example: I went to trial with

This artwork has been
edited to assure that it
complies with prison rules
for distribution in your facility.

The Incarcerated Worker
Issue 2: Summer 2015
the 1000 plus that live here. Those jobs include CSG woodshop and laundry and a few in the kitchen. So once again a group of inmates came together to make a list of things that need to be changed. This list was to be presented to staff at 2:30pm on 5-10-15. If talks were not continued, then work was to stop on 5-11-15. At approximately 2:30pm, a group of about 65 inmates went to the main compound area when medical sick calls were called over the PA. When staff noticed the group, they were confronted. 17 staff members told the inmates who handed them the list to cuff up, at which time he asked why. Short-ly thereafter, there was a melee with staff spraying mace and inmates fighting back. Shots were fired from the gun tower and all became quiet as inmates and staff lay flat on the ground.

Staff regained control of the situation for a moment. They handcuffed a few and ID’d the rest but before long, their verbal tauts became too much. The group stood as one and began marching around the compound. Inmates inside the housing units joined in at this time. Staff ran for cover locking everyone out of their housing units. The group of in-mates marching on the compound tried to break into the gym to let out inmates that had been locked in. This is when they shot in-mate Washington in his upper leg. As inmates inside were firing the fire alarm, the public defender mentioned to the public defender who had been there that he was not in the room and that the public defender who had been there was not in the room.

At the time of this writing, that was 8 days ago. We have been receiving only (2) meals a day since with little or no way to make contact with our family or loved ones. What the future holds we do not know, but until there are no prisons left, we must fight.

Letter: Nebraska continued

Proletarian Consciousness continued

and oppression. Basically, it is our social practice that determines how we think and not how we think that determines our social practice.

“The proletariat has a strong sense of family commitment and unity and a sense of respect and commitment to the community. These values grow out of the routine of going to work and back to work, the commitment of the workplace to provide for the needs of one’s family and not only main-taining employment but also engage in do-mestic labor in the home, rearing children, and taking part in the social life of the com-munity. This requires and instills stability, discipline and responsibility as well as coop-eration with one’s peers.

“The class conscious worker can be of two sorts: the militant and the revolutionary. The militant worker takes the sense of com-mitment beyond the family into the work-place and will stand up to the bosses for workers’ rights, even to the extent of jeop-arizing one’s employment, freedom, and safety by participating in strikes and job actions. The revolutionary worker takes the sense of commitment even farther and chal-lenges the oppressive social order to change the social relations for all and put an end to class exploitation and oppression once and for all. The revolutionary is inspired by a great love for the populace and a sense of duty to the masses and to future generations.

“The revolutionary worker does not swagger or boast and has little sense of ego. He or she is serious-minded and self-disciplined. The revolutionary knows that like a strike, the revolutionary struggle must be a united mass struggle, and that it will take quite some time to succeed. Each tiny victory is important, and the end result is to benefit the overall society. In contrast to the pro-letrarians’ practice and outlook, the lumpen schemes and preys upon others to acquire survival needs and personal wealth, which renders him or her indifferent to the effects visited upon others and society as a whole.

“The lumpen mentality mirrors—on a smaller scale and with less sophistication—that of the big gangster (the monopoly cap-

italists), and amounts to a ruthless drive for immediate self-gratification, power, control and “respect” (even though their lifestyle is anything but respectable), through deception, corruption, violence and intimidation of others. These tendencies are what lies behind certain lumpen aspiring to be perceived as “crazy” and unpredictably violent.

“Translated into the revolutionary move-ment, the lumpen tendency has some think-ing that militant swaggering, posturing, and “talking shit,” is acceptable behavior for revolutionaries which is very wrong and demonstrates political immaturity and lack of discipline.

In contrast to the revolutionary, the lumpen leads to actions of a reactionary, adventurer and provocateur nature, that invites enemy attack that the movement is unprepared to deal with and alienates the masses…

Also because they are conditioned to seek immediate and short term benefits in their practice, the lumpen generally lack the resolve to pursue and stick with tasks that require hard work and patience.

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Public defender: One of the most important stages of post-conviction relief is when the defendant has to file what they call a Form 40-29.15, pro se. “Pro se” meaning representing oneself. After a defendant sends this motion to the trial court, the court appoints another...
The Incarcerated Worker

The Keeper vs. The Kept

The American stamp as we know it is almost obsolete, and the lack of usage has caused the price to skyrocket. M.D.O.C. has conceded in a great many of lawsuits that they expect prisoners to experience Ad-Seg during some part of their prison stints, and therefore repute prisoners’ arguments as atypical hardships faced while being in the dungeon. It is not clear how does one expect justice (just us) to be served when faced with a cdv, when a co-worker is placed in a situation where he has the choice to find a prisoner guilty of a violation; doing anything other than that would be going against the same personnel he/she has pledged to serve with.

Comrades are requested to look at the cause and effect to overstated a particular situation, to gain insight at the overall view of it—to comprehend its purpose.

M.D.O.C. needs to be held accountable for their act of oppression. The corporal and blanket punishment used on an entire prison population is absurd, especially when they already have policy in place and rules that prohibit threats, exciting to riot, organizing civil disobedience, and so on. It serves absolutely no purpose to prohibit a federal right that’s guaranteed to even an alien in this country and, as such, the rule simply needs abolished... unless, of course, M.D.O.C. believes in spiritualism—the belief that spirits go to do what really needed to be done the second time? Of course not. She was going to do the bare minimum, talk lawyer talk over my head, and act as if she did her best, clearing the case off of her caseload.

This goes on constantly, public defenders representing men and women ignorant of the laws, rules, and regulations, and the public defenders know that they are dependent on the attorneys’ intellect; so the public defender fast-talks them, using their ignorance to the public defenders’ advantage, just to seem as if they are doing their job. Admittedly, not all of them act this way. Some truly care and take time to help clients and explain every step to the clients, and the majority of the good public defenders win their cases. I commend the ones who have their indigent clients’ best interests at heart.

My whole case was neglected by my public defender, and as a result of that, I am fighting to get my life back. I go through stressful times, times of feeling depressed and wanting to give up, times of being away from family and friends, times of feeling hopeless because I look at that paper that bears that “Life w/o” sentence with my name under it—all because the public defender failed to do her duty to her highest capacity.

A lot of guys I encounter take their public defenders’ words for face value and once it is all said and done, challenging convictions and sentences, they give up and leave it at that because they put their trust in someone who is not on their side. Without any other options, they take public defenders as their only life-line. Then they sit in prison for however the amount of time they are given, thinking they do not stand a chance of relief based on public defenders using phrases like, “I don’t think the judge will do this or that.” How would they truly know if they do not try?