We Must Leave the Crops in the Field

Anthony Robinson Jr.

“O

ne of the greatest obstacles to the achievement of liberation is that oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge human beings consciousness. Functionally, oppression is domesticating.” –Pedagogy of The Oppressed: Paulo Freire

The mass of prisoners have become domesticated by the rules and regulations that purport to govern them, but actually are implemented to carry out the results of their enslavement. As a prisoner class, it is our labor that carries out the cause and effect of not only the inordinate sentences we are given in the kangaroo courts of our system, but also the implementation of laws and policies that keeps us in prison and bargains on our return to prison via high recidivism rates.

The “prison industrial complex” through the multifaceted contradictions socially constructed into the regulating tendencies of its agenda (inflicted upon prisoners’ consciousness) acts as the agency which keeps him domesticated towards his own demise.

“I must intervene in teaching the peasants that their hunger is socially constructed and work with them to help identify those responsible for this social construction, which is, in my view, a crime against humanity.” –Paulo Freire

The prison finds himself in the same reality—your hunger, your oppression, your imprisonment: is socially constructed; and identifying those who are responsible is not just a matter of justice, but of their own salvation.

Quick Sand Injustices

Santana Williams

“Quick Sand Injustices are the kind of problems the female prisoners are having to succumb to on a daily basis here at Central MS Correction Facility. These injustices are sinking the population of African American Prisoners deeper into the corrupt injustices which we are already facing. How can anyone win a game of spades when the trump cards are missing? Solidarity confinement is being used to inflict cruel and unusual punishment upon our fellow women prisoners. The Warden is sinking these women down into a bottomless pit in hopes that his corrupt decisions will enable these women to undergo psychological torture due to allegations from vindictive, manipulative enemies. There is so much corruption taking prison officials to the point where the convicts are monopolizing any way they see fit. These women’s dignity is annihilated so badly to the point where most just want to give up. Solitary confinement standard operation procedure (SOP) policies are being unlawfully broken by these prison officials. The superintendent and commissioner is intentionally overlooking it. Cover ups for mishandled situations, circumstances beyond institutional intelligence prison snitches, and poor disciplinary decisions are the major contributing factors to these quick sand injustices. Everyone an SOP policy is deliberately violated obviously the administration

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects free speech. Regulations that permit the government or its employees to discriminate on the basis of the content of the message cannot be tolerated under the First Amendment (i). Further, prisoners retain free speech rights. Thought control, by means of prohibiting beliefs, would not only be undesirable but impossible (ii). Fact of confinement and needs of the penal institution impose rational limitations on prisoner free speech rights (iii), but those restrictions must have a “valid, rational connection” to “legitimate penological interests” not related to the content of ideas (iv). Regulations and practices can only be justified when the practice “furthers an important or substantial government interest unrelated to the suppression of expression” (v).

This means you cannot legally suppress the expression of ideas. Prison walls do not serve to form a barrier separating prisoners from the protections of the constitution (vi). Core political speech is most zealously guarded and there is a public interest “in having free and unburdened debate on matters of public importance—the core value of the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment” (vii).

Thus, exclusion of printed material on the basis of its political perspective amounts to free speech retaliation and discrimination, which is illegal (viii).

If you exclude printed material for an unlawful basis, or if you simply conjure up a false pretext for its exclusion, you have broken the law. The prisoner recipient of this mail has cause for bringing a civil rights action against you and has cause for gaining punitive damages—which means money. You and everyone who permits this action, from your supervisor to the director of the prison system, may be named in those civil actions, and you may also be subject to termination from your employment. Because this primer is included in this mailing, you will not be able to claim you did not know your actions were illegal.

For these reasons, we ask that you conform to federal law and refrain from unlawful discrimination against the enclosed materials, permitting mail service of this literature that objectively meets all legitimate criteria set forth in prison regulations.

**ATTENTION MAIL ROOM!!!**

IWOC
PO BOX 414304
KANSAS CITY, MO 64114

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Incarcerated Worker Organizing Committee
Statement of Purpose
July 31, 2014

1. To further the revolutionary goals of incarcerated people and the IWW through mutual organizing of a worldwide union for emancipation from the prison system.
2. To build class solidarity amongst members of the working class by connecting the struggle of people in prison, jail, and immigrant and juvenile detention centers to workers struggles locally and worldwide.
3. To strategically and tactically support prisoners locally and worldwide, incorporating an analysis of white supremacy, patriarchy, prison culture, and capitalism.
4. To actively struggle to end the criminalization, exploitation, and enslavement of working class people, which disproportionately targets people of color, immigrants, people with low income, LGBTQ people, young people, dissidents, and those with mental illness.
5. To amplify the voices of working class people in prison, especially those engaging in collective action or who put their own lives at risk to improve the conditions of all.

JOIN THE IWW

The Incarcerated Worker is a publication of the Incarcerated Worker Organizing Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World. Join the rank-and-file union that’s organizing prisoners internationally! Send name, ID #, and address to:

IWW IWO
PO Box 414304
Kansas City, MO 64141-4304

CONTRIBUTE TO THE IW

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
Kenton, OH 44242

Contribute to the IW

However, this fluid policy is subject to change at the democratic will of incarcerated 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. The more articles you send the more we can put in rotation. The articles should teach and motivate each other. The paper’s goal is solidarity through communal knowledge; each one teach one!

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? 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.

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Secretary/Coordinator: Mr. Anthony Robinson Jr. cP-67144 T.C.C.F. MC 67 415 US HWY 49 NORTH Tunwider, MS 38963

The New Underground Railroad Movement

We must discuss and debate how the system of mass incarceration actually works (as opposed to how it is advertised) so that our discussions about how best to respond can be grounded in fact, not popular myth. We must be willing to search for the truth and admit the truth about ourselves, our own biases, stereotypes, and misconceptions, and the ways in which we might actually be part of the problem. If we muster the courage to face the truth about ourselves, our history, and our present, we have reason to hope for a radically better future.

The New Jim Crow—Call to Action

This questionnaire allows the reader to address themselves and their perspectives (biases, misconceptions, stereotypes) on mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex and face the truth about what role you are playing in the institutionalization of mass incarceration.

1) True or False: There are more people incarcerated in America today than there were at the height of apartheid in South Africa?
2) Statistics show which crimes to be more damaging to society as a whole: property crimes committed by the poor or white collar crime committed by the rich?
3) 70% of all crimes in America are committed by which group?
4) Since the 1985, what is the ratio of prisons to colleges California has built?
5) Approximately how much or what percentage of labor/goods of the GDP in America comes from prison manufactured goods?
6) Should employers and housing officials ever have the right to discriminate against people with criminal records?
7) Did you know that the U.S. military dictates that contracts for cheap labor are sought in prisons first before society?
8) What impact has this tentacle of the prison industrial complex had on the free labor market in communities?
9) In order to finance the WWII Hitler insured soldiers, then insured prisoners and created reasons/laws to incarcerate as many people as he could; today the U.S. has adopted Hitler’s pattern of bonding/insuring prisoners and locking up more people than any other country in the world. How is criminal justice being served by trading prisoners bonds and selling them as mutual funds on the stock market?
10) The National statistic is that 3 out of 5 African American men are in prison, on their way to prison, or have been to prison; what does it reveal about the makeup of society when a statistic predicts sending citizens to prisons?
We Believe: Today's prisons have undermined and dismantled social, vocational, and educational opportunities; creating a nihilism and double incarceration for those released from prison and it will take the organized efforts of us all to change this system. The New Underground Railroad Movement

We Believe: If you are organizing a group or social movement working on behalf of prisoners Rights in any way: you can help by developing a dialogue with prisoners organizing in your area to set up a curriculum around the work you are already doing, developing an inside/outside Think Tank and Board Of Execution to come up with strategies and material to develop awareness on the inside/outside. You can also set up a page advertising prisoners' grassroots movements from the inside and a donations or how you can help link from your website.

Prisoners: If you are doing time in a prison or county jail then your role is pivotal! Your feet are already planted in the grass of this grassroots movement. We need you to understand your value in terms of social change organizing. You must develop the courage to see, speak, and hear the truth; creativity to chart the needed often unseen course; and compassion for ourselves and Our companions along the way. You must organize around your labor value and class consciousness utilizing your value to labor as the collective bargaining chip to push labor strikes to demand a restructuring of prison and it will take the organized efforts of us all to change this system. The New Underground Railroad Movement

You Can Help:

Groups: If you are an organization/group or social movement working on behalf of prisoners. Rights in any way: you can help by developing a dialogue with prisoners organizing in your area to set up a curriculum around the work you are already doing, developing an inside/outside Think Tank and Board Of Execution to come up with strategies and material to develop awareness on the inside/outside. You can also set up a page advertising prisoners' grassroots movements from the inside and a donations or how you can help link from your website.

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We Believe: The people in society, and especially impoverished communities, have a right and obligation to demand that congress, and elected officials, hold prisons accountable for lack of rehabilitation and high recidivism rates; through regulations, fines, and budget cuts for prisons whose policies and character display a lack of programs and results.

We Believe: That the incarceration of blacks and minorities has reached such extreme levels that a prison sentence/felon label poses a much greater threat to urban families than crime itself.

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workers adequate amounts of clean water after a chemical spill polluted the Elk River. The spill was caused by the coal company Freedom Industry and incarcerated workers who were exposed complained of health problems.

22. An International Trans. Prisoner Solidarity Day was called for by Marquis Mason, IWW member and Earth Liberation Front prisoner held in Texas. Comrades and supporters organized rallies and events across the globe!

February

1. Delaware Supreme Court freezess all 9 death penalty cases, until it rules a final decision on the constitutionality of the policy.

During the Flint, MI water crisis, inmates of Genesee County Jail were blocked from any information regarding the state of emergency declared in regards to lead contaminated water. Thus, the inmates of Genesee County Jail continued to shower, cook, drink, and eat in the lead contaminated waters while the National Guard delivered bottled water to the residence outside.

3. Trans. Prisoners win right to hormones in Texas! A change in Texas prison system policy means transgender inmates who had started hormone therapy before incarceration can do so behind bars if they go through a thorough process to confirm the diagnosis. This is a major battle won for our trans, fellow incarcerated workers!

5. Incarcerated workers at Regina jail in Canada start a hunger strike in response to the disgusting privatized food that is being served to them. Most of the inmates in the strike are Aboriginal, who make up a quarter of Canada’s prison population. Strikers reported that all in the jail were participating except a select few for diabetic reasons.

January

8: Incarcerated workers at Regina jail in Canada start a hunger strike in response to the disgusting privatized food that is being served to them. Most of the inmates in the strike are Aboriginal, who make up a quarter of Canada’s prison population. Strikers reported that all in the jail were participating except a select few for diabetic reasons.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is suing the state of West Virginia for denying incarcerated

The Free Virginia Movement continued

system of legal jurisprudence, and work-class are left to foot the bill for mass incarceration.

Economic Impact

As of 2014, the VA Dept. of (In) Corrections’ annual operating budget has grown to over $1 billion, which is paid with tax dollars, as well as with capital generated from the cheap slave labor of prisoners who roll in Virginia Correctional Enterprises (VCE)-operated sweatshops, disciplinary fines, kickbacks from Keefe Commissary Group, Global Tel Link, JPay, etc., and interests gained from inmate Savings Accounts.

It costs almost $30,000 a year to keep long-term, rehabilitated prisoners locked up for crimes we committed in our youth.

A question that we want answered is: If Virginia stopped receiving VOITIS grants in 2007, and VOITIS grants were a key (or partial) factor in Virginia’s parole board’s decision to abolish parole and implement Truth-in-Sentencing laws, why are prisoners convicted and sentenced under the so-called “no parole” (85%) law still required to serve 85% of our sentences?

The abolition of parole has not prevented, reduced, or deterred crime any more than it did prior to 1995 but has succeeded only in increasing the prison population in the country, while confining long-term, rehabilitated prisoners for decades with no realistic opportunity for release.

On June 24, 2015, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe sought to correct these problems when he signed Executive Order #44, creating the Parole Review Commission to “address five significant priorities related to Parole Reform:”

Conduct a Review of Previous Goals and Subsequent Outcomes. The Commission shall review whether abolishing parole achieved the intended goals of preventing new felony offenses, reducing crime, and reducing recidivism. The Commission’s analysis shall include, at a minimum, a qualitative analysis of pre- and post-1995 trends in crime rates, incarceration rates, sentence lengths, and recidivism rates. Examine the Cost of Parole Reform/Abolition. The Commission shall conduct an analysis of the fiscal impact abolishing parole has had on the Commonwealth, as well as an analysis of the societal costs on communities and families from longer incarceration. Evaluate the Best Practices of Other States. The Commission shall research and evaluate what policies and practices have proven successful or unsuccessful in other states, and explore the application of the most successful approaches in the Commonwealth.

Recommend Other Mediation Strategies. The Commission shall examine what other approaches could be achieved to use similar results in terms of preventing new felony offenses, reducing crime, and reducing recidivism. Virginia must pursue cost-saving, evidence-based, and multifaceted approaches to reducing crime while also improving outcomes for offenders, families, and communities.

Provide Recommendations to Address Public Safety Challenges. The Commission shall provide its recommendations on how Virginia may best position itself to reduce public safety challenges. The Commission shall provide its recommendations on how Virginia may best position itself to reduce public safety challenges. The Commission shall include any proposed legislative or executive branch necessary, as well as any potential private sector engagement.

Per this Executive Order, the Commission was required to provide an interim report to Governor McAuliffe no later than November 2, 2015, with a final report due by
We have an opportunity to demand fair and up to date education and rehabilitative programs with certificates that are valued in the larger society: enabling us to demand a stake in a real opportunity for freedom. We have an opportunity to measure our value by our labor and the quality of products that result from it. We have an opportunity to confront ourselves realistically, to have a stake in a real opportunity for freedom. We have an opportunity to measure our value by our labor and the quality of products that result from it.

When we take our labor back, only then will prisoners get back to the corrections and Rehabilitation that we deserve. We Believe: The premise of the prison system and inherent promise to the people of society is that there will be a viable program and effort to rehabilitate those incarcerated individuals and enable them to re-integrate into society in productive ways. We Believe: That prisons have become “profit motive” institutions which warehouse prisoners as “investments” and through a lack of rehabilitation ensures a return on their investment through high recidivism rates. We Believe: “The lawmaker comes to need the outlaw, and in conditions and the fact that we aren’t doing anything about it.

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The New Underground Railroad Movement

Anthony Robinson Jr.

If Martin Luther King Jr. is right that the arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice, a new movement will arise; and if civil rights organizations fail to keep up with the times, they will be pushed to the side as another generation of advocates comes to the fore. Hopefully the new generation will be led by those who know best the brutality of the new caste system—groups with greater vision, courage, and determination than the old guard can muster, trapped as they may be in an outdated paradigm. Those of us who hope to be their allies should not be surprised, if and when this day comes, that when those who have been locked up and locked out finally have the chance to speak and truly be heard, what we hear is rage. The rage may frighten us; it may remind us of riots, uprisings, and buildings ablaze. We may be tempted to control it, or douse it with buckets of doubt, dismay, and disbelief. But we should do no such thing. Instead, when we see a young man who was born in the ghetto and who knows little of life beyond the walls of his prison cell and the invisible cage that has become his life, turn to us in bewilderment and rage, we should do nothing more than look him in the eye and tell him the truth.” —Michelle Alexander

The New Underground Railroad Movement is that Truth. Our Moro is: “We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” The New Underground Railroad Movement was born out of the premise that the prisoner must be involved in his own liberation. If the prisoner is not involved in the transformation process of his oppressive reality; if he is not involved in the praxis of developing an inquiry of his own humanity—in order to first recognize his chains, then break free of them—then the prisoner is submerged deeper in the reality of his oppression by failing to be recognized for his role as an active participant in his Freedom.

Submerged into the dynamics of incarceration and imprisonment, the prisoner adopts the guidelines of the systems that exploit him: due to conforming to his environment out of fear of the consequences, but mostly due to the fact that he has not been involved in the guidelines of the transformation process of his freedom. Therefore, the prisoner must not only see and carry out his role in the transformation of his chains, but must be recognized as playing a pivotal role in the abolition of the prison industrial complex. The prisoner must be his own savior in the struggle for his liberation. And any individual, group, or organization whose work involves abolition of any part/aspect of the prison industrial complex cannot deal with the prisoner, in ideology or practice, as mere subjects waiting to be saved or answered for but must work in solidarity with prisoners; understanding that it is only in dealing with the day-to-day realities that prisoners face articulated from the prisoners praxis of experiences, that the true and sustaining solutions are to be found and sought for.

All work done on behalf of prisoners must start with the prisoner’s needs, and the ascertaining of the prisoners needs must start with a dialogue that grants the prisoner the opportunity to deal critically and creatively with his reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their chains. A person learns to swim in the water, not in a library. As well, the prisoner will not become free by reading about work organizations are initiating on his behalf; he or she must get in the water! “History suggests that it is crucial to the success of social Movements that the people on whose behalf the Movement speaks and acts need to themselves have a seat at the table when Movement decisions are made and the character and culture of the Movement is developed.” The New Jim Crow Study Guide/Call to Action.

The New Underground Railroad Movement earnestly recognizes this as crucial to the success and empowerment of all organizations and Movements whose goals, agendas, and missions revolve around the transformation of the prison industrial complex and the restorative justice population.

The Free Virginia Movement continued

past when compared to programs offered to American citizens out in society. VA prisons must move towards a technological educational & career programming system, and to not do so is a disservice to VA inmates and the communities we’ll eventually return to. Therefore, educational & career (vocational) training must be up-to-date and resemble as closely as possible that of education & career (vocational) training offered to the average American citizen so as to prepare inmates for the conditions of normal occupational life.

Why the Free Virginia Movement Violent Offender Incarceration & Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive Grants and the birth of the Abolition of Parole (85%) Law in Virginia

A federally law known as the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 included a provision called the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing Incentive grants (VOITIS) which provided grants (funding) to state and local correctional systems to expand their capacity to incarcerate violent offenders and to impose longer and more determinate sentences. VOITIS, codified into federal law as Title 42 US Code Sections 13701, 13702, 13703, and 13704, was sponsored and introduced into the US Congress by former Representative Jack Brooks (TX-9) and signed into law the following year by then-President Bill Clinton. Before states could qualify for VOITIS grants, they were required to pass (adopt) Truth-in-Sentencing legislation which effectively abolished parole and mandated prisoners convicted of a class 1 felony to “serve not less than 85 percent of the sentence imposed...” (Title 42 US Code Section 13704).

Lacking the funds necessary to build more prisons to account for its expanding prison population, VOITIS provided Virginia with the inspiration to abolish parole for crimes committed on or after January 1, 1995. This legislation (House Bill No. 5001) was sponsored and introduced into the 1994 General Assembly Session by then-Republican Governor Allen during the 1994 Special Session. It must be noted that this legislation was heavily favored by the democrats who controlled both the House and the Senate in 1994.

House Bill No. 5001 was codified into law as Virginia Code Annotated (V.A. Code) Section 53.1-165.1. Consequently, the amount of good time prisoners could earn to reduce their period of incarceration for good behavior was reduced from a maximum of thirty days credit for each thirty days served per V.A. Code 53.1-201 (before parole was abolished) to a maximum of four and one-half days credits for each thirty days served under V.A. Code 53.1-202 (after parole was abolished). Prior to the abolition of parole and dramatic reduction in good time credits, Virginia’s prison population was approximately 18,000. As of 2013, the prison population had ballooned to almost 40,000.

Between 1996 and 1998, twenty-eight states that enacted truth-in-sentencing collectively received over $680 million in VOITIS grants, according to the U.S. Dept. of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

Fifteen out of twenty-seven states that received VOITIS grants in 1997 indicated that these grants were either a key or partial factor (motivation) in their enactment of truth-in-sentencing legislation which required prisoners to serve 85% of their sentences, including Virginia.

Between 1996 and 1998, Virginia alone received a total of $11,201,786 in VOITIS grants which partly funded the construction of two maximum- and two super-maximum-security prisons: Sussex-1 State Prison, Sussex-2 State Prison, Red Onion State Prison, and Wallens Ridge State Prison. All four of these “state-of-the-art” prisons began accepting warm bodies in 1997 and 1998, many of them contract-ed from out of state.

Because of tough-on-crime policies like Three Strikes, Mandatory Minimums, Truth-in-Sentencing, and the Abolition of Parole, the overall U.S. prison population has increased 700% between 1970 and 2010. As a result, the U.S. now holds the distinction of having the largest prison population (2.5 million) in the world.

In Virginia, African-Americans make up only 20% of the state population, but 60% of the prison population, and almost all prisoners come from poor or working-class communities.

Tough-on-crime policies like those mentioned above represent a gross social and racial injustice embedded within America’s
The uprising at Holman prison in Atmore Alabama continues, despite prison being on lockdown status. Seventy prisoners have barricaded themselves in a part of the prison early this morning, just two days after the Correctional Emergency Response Teams (CERT) regained control of the prison after a riot involving hundreds of prisoners on Friday night.

An anonymous prisoner describing himself as a mediator who hopes to quell the riot says that prisoners are fed up with un-sanitary and inhumane living conditions and double ... because then they'll lose their source of free labor” one member of the Free Alabama Movement (FAM) stated at the time.

According to the Equal Justice Initiative, the murder rate in Alabama prisons set a new record last year. The ADOC is failing in its most basic responsibility of keeping their captives safe. Meanwhile, other prisoners are rising above the fray to organize principled and effective direct action protests. In January 2014, FAM organized a historic non-violent work stoppage, refusing to perform tasks they say amount to slave labor, without which the prisons could not operate. Holman was the first prison to start that protest, and in response, the administration threw those it identified or suspected of leading the protest into solitary confinement for years.

What followed was a weekend of intense prisoner shake-downs, where the prison was put on lockdown status, and guards came through, cell by cell, destroying prisoner property and tossing their cells to find contraband. At least five prisoners were sent to isolation and threatened with additional charges. This morning, despite the warden’s best hard-case efforts to lock down and control the institution, another prisoner was stabbed and in response, 70 committed prison rebels gained access to and barricaded themselves inside another part of the prison.

The ADOC’s response, on the other hand, has been consistent: botched attempts to impose greater controls and retribution onto the prisoners. Friday night is typical. When prisoners ... ordered the staff to initiate lockdown status, and hours later the CERT squad had to come in to regain control of their institution.

The Free Virginia Movement continued

The Free Virginia Movement echo John F Kennedy’s adage that “those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.” One of the men confined to solitary in Holman since Jan of 2014 (and thus separated from the unrest in the general population) said this: “We’ve appealed to the courts. We’ve appealed to the Legislature. We’ve appealed peacefully and nonviolently. So, I can only see this past weekend’s events as a continuation of the prisoners’ plea for Help. Warehousing Overcrowded Dormitories are unsanitary and unsafe. Opposition breeds Resistance.”

The Amendment & Reenactment of VA Code § 53.1-43.1 which allows the VA Dept. of Corrections to profit off peoples incarceration by investing the interests gained from inmates’ funds in bonds & federally-insured investments. ALL income, profits, etc. gained as a result of these investments MUST ONLY be used for the benefit of inmates (i.e., education, rehabilitation, recreation) and not the VA Dept. of (In) Corrections or the VA State Government.

The Free Virginia Movement continued

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Greetings Fellow Worker,

I hope this message finds you in good spirits and in good health! We would like to hear from everyone at least twice a year to verify your membership so that you may vote in the annual referendum and continue receiving the newsletter. You may send us the slips you tear off from this portion of the page and mail it back to us at IWOC, PO Box 414304, KC, MO, 64141 or if you want to keep your newsletter intact, you can just write the information on a separate sheet of paper. In Solidarity

Date _______________________

Your Name ___________________________________

Your IWW Membership Number ____________________

Your DOC # ____________________________________

Your Emergency Contact Phone ____________________

Your Email ____________________________________

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The New Underground Railroad Movement

Our Purpose:
The New Underground Railroad Movement is an Inside-Out, multiracial, statewide movement founded and organized by people incarcerated in Virginia prisons affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Union and sentenced under the so-called “no parole” or “85%” law.

Our Organizing Strategy:
The FVM seeks to bring the entire VA prisoner-class sentenced under the “no parole” or “85%” law & outside Human Rights & Prison Advocacy Groups together across Racial, Gender, Ideological, Religious & Geographical lines—thereby creating a cross-denominational United Front unlike anything ever seen in the VA prison system.

At every stage of the struggle we have petitioned the courts, filed grievances & patiently waited for the VA State Government to take corrective action in the most humane manner. But just like the institution of Chain Gang Slavery, mass incarceration is in essence an economic system which uses human beings as its nuts & bolts. Therefore, our new approach must be economically based. As such, in the event our concerns continue to fall on deaf ears while the VA State Government, the VA Dept. of InCorrections & private corporations like JPay, Keefe Commissary, Global Tel Link, etc. continues to benefit from our exploitation & prolonged confinement, we agree that it will be necessary to engage in a statewide, proactive, peaceful & nonviolent collective work strike/stoppage, hunger strike, boycott, etc. to compel the VA State Government & the VA Dept. of InCorrections to be more receptive to our concerns & demands listed below. The accumulation of wealth & the oppression & social control of New Africans, poor people & other people of color is the motive behind mass incarceration here in VA. Therefore, an economic response (work strike/stoppage) and other forms of strikes & demonstrations will be our most effective strategy.

Our Goals (What We Want):
The Reinstatement of parole for all incarcerated people currently serving a sentence under the so-called no parole (85%) law by repealing VA Code §§ 53.1-1651 & 53.1-202.3, & re-instituting parole eligibility under VA Code § 53.1-201. The above restoration of Parole & Good Conduct Allowance must be retroactively applied to ALL incarcerated people currently serving sentences under the no parole (85%) law.

The Amendment & Reenactment of VA Code § 19.2-303 so that all people currently incarcerated in the VA Dept. of InCorrections can petition the Court that heard their case for a suspension/reduction/modification of their uncor bought sentence (the petitioned sentence after 1) serving a base minimum of twenty (20) consecutive years in prison, and 2) after the completion of an Education/Rehabilitation/Reentry Preparedness Program.

The Amendment & Reenactment of VA Code § 19.2-303.01 must be retroactively applied to ALL people currently incarcerated in the VA Dept. of InCorrections.

The Amendment & Reenactment of VA Code § 19.2-298.01 (B) & (F) so that the sentencing court must provide an adequate written explanation when it sentences a defendant who is serving consecutive terms because he was a “career” offender.

The Amendment & Reenactment of VA Code § 19.2-298.01 must be retroactively applied to ALL people currently incarcerated in the VA Dept. of InCorrections.

The New Underground Railroad Movement GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- To promote the development and organizationalization of our common praxis as a prisoner/worker class with the understanding that the prisoner cannot be truly rehabilitated unless he is allowed to create his own world through his labor, not be exploited by it.

- To promote and develop the understanding that as a prisoner class, it is our labor that carries out the cause and effect of not only the inordinate sentences we are given in the unjust courts of America, but the perpetration of laws and policies that keeps us in prison and bargains off our return to prison via high recidivism.

Quick Sand Justice continued

is creating their own rules and since there isn’t anyone overrid ing these cruel practices MDOC has become run down with age old scandalous self-appointed owners of a multi million dollar ran agency. Now if these prison snitches, with their ultramile moti ves, write a letter against their enemy(ies) (shooting them in a cross fire) just like magic, a captain or warden will have that complaint style lie chained up as (what should be factual) evidence to transfer the alleged female into solitary confinement for so called investigation. A terrible injustice because why are investigators by lock ing an accused prisoner down without any concrete evidence. It is totally illegitimate. Then these prison officials are saying a maximum security unit such as a Women’s Max is a permanent housing unit. Nowhere in the SOP’s does this such statement appear. These women have no rule violation report (RVE) nor incident report. This kind of malicious, destructive practice suggests obvious intentional cover up. Even if the prison files a grievance through the administrative remedy program (ARP) it is going to fall into the same hands which are dealing teach-
Standing that the “criminal justice system” is a commercial instrument and is concerned about capital investments gained by warehousing prisoners for profit; and working with individuals and organizations to wake up the masses and seek solutions where we are no longer exploited by this system. To promote and develop the understanding that we could have a real impact if we organize around our labor contribution. The prison industrial complex cannot afford to lose our labor and the economic support given by citizens who buy prison-made products or do business with companies allied to the prison industrial complex. Cut off the economics in order to change the policies!

To promote and develop the understanding to all prisoners that: We have to start being honest with ourselves about our mistakes. We need to take the power of the pen and speaking out against these harsh injustices face-to-face in an effort to help solve the root of the dehumanizing tactics. When we are the lambs willing to be a sacrifice for the servicing of our people. Finally pt. 3 of the quicksand injustices is for the many men and women in segregated or restricted housing for mentally ill, major violations (RVR’S) like C5-C11, and death row prisoners who don’t have much of a choice other than to reach out with stability of mind and ability of hand to write and pray for a better opportunity at reaching to the top pressing on up these pits. Tonight 1 sit up writing this article after spending 12 plus months on long term segregation for an alleged C8 (assaultive action resulting in serious bodily harm). The SOP#19-01-01 states that if the District Attorney doesn’t present the violation to the grand jury in 30 days the prison officials will have and additional 10 days to dispose of the RVR. The DA didn’t pick up the charge, but the prison still operated against the SOP policy. This has been a terrible burden and injustice upon myself and any other prisoner who has to deal with the same incident. These are the obstacles that the women of CMCF have faced within the past year. It’s awful having water poured on your head when you are already drowning. U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder quoted unique “unchangeable factors that a person cannot control or on the possibility of a future crime that has not taken place” these are the circumstances which criminal sentences should not be based on. (para-phrased)

On the issue of death row prisoners many who are struggling to die a peaceful death (so to say) because death penalty opponents are pressuring the government to move on sodium thiopental. My life represents the sacrifice for the quicksand injustices but when do these injustices wash away.

A CALL TO ACTION

BY: SANTANA WILLIAMS # 80801CMCF/Womens Max 113 zone/Cell#450 P.O. Box 88550 Pearl, MS 39288

God chose me to walk through the fire barefoot with no heels. He desired not the burnt offering, but the sacrifices of a natural-born soldier who didn’t stop to observe her wounds nor to cry her weeping eye blood, sweat, and tears streaming down a two-edged sword. The word disciplined me for the struggle so fit for the battle on the front line I caused others to fall in line there is a war raging on the battle field and we are behind enemy lines.

The New Underground Railroad continued

Quick Sand Justice continued

Opposing Piece From an Unidentified Incarcerated Citizen in Holman Prison continued

Standing that the “criminal justice system” is a commercial instrument and is concerned about capital investments gained by warehousing prisoners for profit; and working with individuals and organizations to wake up the masses and seek solutions where we are no longer exploited by this system. To promote and develop the understanding that we could have a real impact if we organize around our labor contribution. The prison industrial complex cannot afford to lose our labor and the economic support given by citizens who buy prison-made products or do business with companies allied to the prison industrial complex. Cut off the economics in order to change the policies!

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Quick Sand Justice continued

The New Underground Railroad continued
The attorney general of California in her speech labeled “violent” they were forced to partially unveil the value of the “inmate worker” to the prison industrial complex. This gives the prisoner class a momentous opportunity and obligation to recognize the value of our labor to the system and to use that value as a bargaining chip; and to demand a restructuring of the prison system, based first and foremost on the recognition that we are human and because of that soul fact, Incarcerated Lives Matter!

“We have an opportunity to be paid an honest and fair wage: an hourly wage where at the end of the month we make enough to pay for our basic food and hygiene needs for the following month until the next pay period.

Job Opportunity: Prison Branch Builder - Traveling Organizer

The IWW’s Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee is incarcerated people and their allies organizing to transform prison conditions and end mass incarceration. We work in solidarity with all human beings behind bars. Our purpose is to organize prison labor to make the current prison system unprofitable, unmanageable, and unattractive. We stand for revolutionary democracy in the free world as well.

We have an opportunity to be paid an honest and fair wage: an hourly wage where at the end of the month we make enough to pay for our basic food and hygiene needs for the following month until the next pay period.

Job Duties:

- Connect and support organizers in prison to assist the creation of inside branches inside prison and coordinating inside-outside support
- Connect and support with families and outside allies to grow powerful outside chapters
- Travel to; grow or strengthen IWOC groups, coordinate outside support for prison strikes and other inside actions, and speak to the media when necessary

Qualifications:

- Has served time. An ideal candidate will already have organized inside in some capacity, with outside experience too. Self starter, hard worker, willingness to learn and ask for help when needed
- Commitment to growing a bottom-up, working class movement to end capitalism and prisons, organizing prison labor and outside workers to end these systems, and deep belief in the revolutionary power of liberation struggles: poor, black, brown, indigenous, women’s, queer, etc.
- Ability to speak in a way that inspires and motivates change, and illustrates the unnecessary horror that is the prison system Comfortable meeting new people, going to new places, staying in someone else’s house, etc
- Ability to support new organizers, particularly people who have been in prison and their families, grow into strong, politically educated movement leaders
- Experience with work against prisons, campaign strategy, direct action, media, etc. is a plus

By hiring date, any candidate must be a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)

A current campaign is underway in the US Deep South, so experience organizing in this region would be of added value. The ability to live well on the salary provided so as to not need another job during the course of employment

Salary and Work Week:

$20,000 plus health care and other benefits

30+ hours a week, 7 days vacation at times of your choice

1 year contract, with the expectation that this will likely only be a one year position

How to Apply

Applications should include the following: Letter explaining what you bring to this position and why you want the job

List of relevant experiences and/or resume

Three (3) references with phone numbers

Final applications or questions can be sent to iwoc@riseup.net. We welcome your input, questions, ideas, and are also happy to take questions at our group hotline 816-866-3808.

Note that we are an all volunteer run-organization so may actually be more reachable after business hours, etc.