

A JOURNAL OF ANTI-RACIST ACTION, RESEARCH & EDUCATION

# TURNING THE TIDE

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Anti-Racist Action-LA/People Against Racist Terror ★ PO Box 1055, Culver City, CA 90232 ★ [antiracist.org](http://antiracist.org) ★ [tideturning.org](http://tideturning.org)



Historic March to the Compton City Hall for Black and Brown Unity! Black Riders - New Generation  
Black Panthers reconnects with the National Brown Berets.

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# TURNING THE TIDE ANTI-RACIST AWARDS EVENT

A quarter-century ago, in the fall of 1988, the first issue of *Turning the Tide* was published. Subtitled "L.A. Anti-Racism Newsletter" at the time, the two-sided, 8-1/2 X 14 news-sheet was produced by

It's at the West Side Peace Center, 3916 S. Sepulveda Blvd. in Culver City, CA. The West Side Peace Center is adjacent to the 405 Freeway, between Venice Boulevard and Washington Place).

Join us in marking 25 years of uninterrupted grassroots agitating, organizing and critical analysis, and in helping *Turning the Tide* continue going forward as a voice of uncompromising anti-racism, an-

The Adrienne Rich Culture of Resistance and Liberation award, going to Sheila Pinkel, Mary Sutton and Carol Wells of the Center for the Study of Political Graphics (CSPG).

The Sarah & Angelina Grimke Anti-Racist Communicators award, going to Ariana Manov and Leslie Radford (both of whom have been involved with KPFFK Pacifica radio in Los Angeles).

The Rose Friedman Working People's Survival award, going to Vanessa Carlisle, Lindsey Cristofani and Charlotte Moore, who work together doing outreach to and organizing of sex workers.

A few words about the titles of the awards. Adrienne Rich, a poet who passed

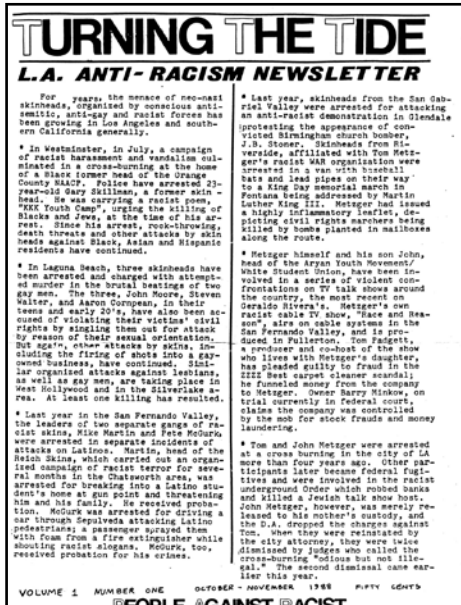
women's rights as well. They had to flee to the North when Southern slave-owners placed a bounty on their heads.

Rose Friedman is one of the many unknown victims of capitalist exploitation. The great-aunt of *TTT* editor and founder Michael Novick, she died at age 18, (before Novick's mother was born) in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in 1911.

### ADVERTISE IN THE COMMEMORATIVE BOOK

In addition to the awards event, to mark the anniversary we will also publish a commemorative book with ads and good wishes and content from the "best of" 25 years of *Turning the Tide* since 1988.

Business card-size ads are \$25; quarter-page ads are \$50, half-pages \$90, full pages are \$175, payable to Anti-Racist Action. Make checks payable to "Anti-Racist Action" and send to ARA-LA/PART, PO Box 1055, Culver City CA



the year-old People Against Racist Terror (PART). It appeared on the occasion of the revived trial in Los Angeles of Tom Metzger of WAR (White Aryan Resistance) for a 1983 triple cross-burning in the San Fernando Valley.

Optimistically numbered "Volume 1 Number 1," the issue sported the slogan "Be PART of the solution." The next year, the publication underwent the first of many format changes, appearing as an 8-1/2X11 multi-sheet photo-copied bimonthly newsletter. It included lists of Anti-Racist Resources, a "Rogue's Gallery" of local racist and fascist groups, a section of reports of racist and anti-racist activity called "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," letters, news and political analysis. *Turning the Tide* has been published at least quarterly ever since.

You are invited to come celebrate this auspicious anniversary at the first annual Anti-Racist Awards presentation and buffet dinner on Saturday, December 7, 2013, at 7 PM.

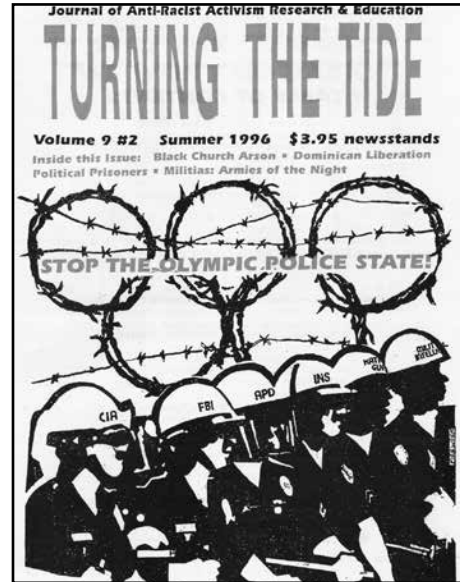
ti-sexism, anti-fascism, anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and commitment to human liberation and environmental sustainability. Admission to the event is \$20 payable to Anti-Racist Action (or \$30 with a one-year subscription to *Turning the Tide* added). Larger donations of course would be gratefully accepted. Call us at 323-636-7388 or email [antiracistaction\\_la@yahoo.com](mailto:antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com) to get tickets now.

The program will feature a buffet, live music and the initial presentation of three awards focused on people of European descent who have contributed to anti-racist struggles. The award recipients will be present and have the opportunity to address their work. Each award is going to two or more people because we think anti-racist struggle is collective and multi-generational struggle. The awards:



away last year, exemplified the spirit of collective efforts for liberation and opposition to oppression and hypocrisy. She won the National Book Award in 1974 for her often angry, feminist and anti-war poetry, and accepted the award on behalf of all women. Rich shared it with her fellow nominees, Alice Walker and Audre Lorde.

Sarah and Angelina Grimke were radical abolitionist organizers and speakers from pre-Civil War South Carolina. They sought to eliminate not only slavery but also racial discrimination, and fought for



90232. Ad copy and graphics can be sent either as camera-ready "hard copy", or with design instructions, or as electronic files (.doc for text, .jpg for graphics) to [antiracistaction\\_la@yahoo.com](mailto:antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com). A submission form will be available at [www.tideturning.org](http://www.tideturning.org) with arrangements to pay on-line. Look for it! And join us!

## BEYOND TRAYVON

by Mumia Abu-Jamal © 2013

The Trayvon Martin case is rightly "the straw that breaks the camel's back." For it shows with unusual clarity how Black life is so easily trivialized. But it is not alone in this endeavor. How the corporate media has responded to this tragedy is its own form of trivialization – a feeding frenzy of sheer spectacle, the exploitation of emotion, an endless, directionless discussion, leading less to light, than to commercials.

For the media explores the episodic, while it ignores the systematic.

Thus, Trayvon's case attracts the lights and videos, but the many, many others who fall, especially to police violence, draws little interest.

Absent from most discussion is the targeting of a system that cages more people than any in history. Lost from the orgy of spectacle is the hidden faces of mass incarceration, that impacts millions. For attention to the episodic elicits tears, while contemplation on the systematic brings the challenge of change.

If "Stand Your Ground" gets repealed, it does not change the system that treats many thousands of youths as expendable. Several months ago, by just one vote, the

Supreme Court condemned the practice of sending juveniles to life terms in prison without possibility of parole. Of all the jurisdictions in America, indeed, in the whole wide world, Pennsylvania ranked first in juvenile life incarceration, FIRST!

But juveniles aren't only the targets of the prison industry. They face shuttered schools, joblessness, and the fear and contempt of their elders. They face tomorrow of emptiness. They face the faceless fury of a system that damns them to half-life at their birth.

Trayvon is the one – they are the many.

From imprisoned nation, this is Mumia Abu-Jamal. [Cell clangs shut.] (These commentaries are recorded by Noelle Hanrahan of [prisonradio.org](http://prisonradio.org).)

International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal  
P.O. Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143  
Tel: 215-476-8812 web: [www.mumia.org](http://www.mumia.org), email: [icffmaj@aol.com](mailto:icffmaj@aol.com)  
Write to Mumia:  
**Mumia Abu-Jamal #AM 8335**  
SCI Mahanoy, 301 Morea Road, Frackville, PA 17932



Trayvon Martin

## Native Americans, Anti-fascists Chase Neo-Nazis from North Dakota Town

This article is from <http://politicalblindspot.com/neo-nazis-trying-to-take-over-north-dakota-town-sent-running-by-native-american-and-anti-fascist-activists/>



A Native-led group of multi-racial activists confront Neo-Nazis, who hid behind police.

In an update to the story we ran yesterday on the town of Leith, North Dakota being taken over by Neo-Nazi racists, Michael Pugliese tells us from the ground that "Lakota, Dakota, Anishinabe, Apache, African, Irish, German, Norwegian, Spanish, and other anti-racist individuals stood together to fight against the attempted nazi takeover of Leith, North Dakota."

Pugliese documents the activism "led by indigenous resisters" who are seen "making a presence to ensure that neo nazi/confederate fascists know they have no chance of taking over Leith."

In the photos we see police protecting Neo-Nazis, "making sure they're allowed to continue with their white power nonsense" according to Pugliese.

"In the end, it was people power that sent the supporters of these nazi cowards home."

"Today," Pugliese said, "anti-racist resistance made it quite clear that the

attempted nazi takeover of Leith will be a total failure."

Stay tuned for more updates on the critical situation in Leith, North Dakota. And SPREAD THE WORD about these clowns who are trying to run out Native peoples, African Americans and others from the small town of Leith.

(Article compiled by Micah Naziri, with reporting and photos by Michael Pugliese).

Primary sources for photos and info via [@drjumping eagle](http://drjumping eagle), [@245NorthMain](http://@245NorthMain), and [@lastrealindians](http://@lastrealindians) on twitter.

More photos at <http://revnews.tumblr.com/post/62030867758/today-lakota-dakota-anishinabe-apache>



# REVIEW: ORANGE IS NOT NEW AND PRISON IS NOT OUR BEST COLOR

by Susie Day

Twenty-five years ago, I, a hapless reporter on assignment, went to the DC Jail and met the woman who was to be my life's partner. I interviewed her about her political bombing case. We fell in love; I visited her in various prisons for 11 years; she was released; we're now spending the rest of our lives working out our relationship, which has much to do with politics and everything with what she went through in prison.

What a story, right? I haven't written much about this because I've found it impossible to convey what prison did to us. But when I read Piper Kerman's smart, funny, heart-grabbing book *Orange Is the New Black*, chronicling her year behind bars, I thought, "Whoa, she gets this." Then I caught the Netflix series based on Kerman's book. I now suspect the most lethal thing you can do to the truth about prison is to bring it anywhere near the entertainment industry.

From her book, Piper Kerman seems a standup person. Yes, she's a thin, white Smith graduate; she's got the confidence

that comes from being told all your life that you and your people matter. But during her 11-month stint in the Danbury prison camp on a drug conviction, Piper, for all her legal reserves, family support, her fiancé's devotion, realized she was as powerless as the scores of mostly poor women of all colors and cultures who did time alongside her.

Prison corrodes humanity with absurd, bureaucratic cruelties. Inside, as my partner found, the best way to hang on to your soul is to actually see the people around you. This is what Kerman did, and the bonds she forged with the women at Danbury changed her life. She came alive to the fact that each of the 2.4 million women and men locked into U.S. "correctional" facilities -- disproportionately of color; almost all poor -- possess souls that weigh the same as her own. Kerman angled her book that way, and now, she's on the board of the Women's Prison Association, working to change the punitive mentality that created this nation's prison system.



Still image from *Orange is the New Black* on Netflix

Which is why it hurts to see what was, in book form, a credible, compassionate story of women surviving prison, stream online as voyeuristic entertainment about mean-girl-sex-drug-snake-pit lockups. In this hierarchy of intimidation and deceit, shame trumps compassion almost every time. No wonder America loves this show.

Prison on Netflix looks authentic. Women have bad skin, rotten teeth, lumpy figures. But this also works to shield shal-

lowly conceived characters, many who verge on class/race caricatures. Black, Latina, poor white women, and lesbians are trashy, self-hating, predatory, and come with precooked back stories involving poverty, drugs, abuse, etc., to explain how they got that way. Piper, on Netflix, is a self-avowed WASP narcissist. Inside, she likes fucking the ex-girlfriend who got her arrested. She also isn't above turning

*Continues on page 7...*

# WILL THE LEGISLATURE DUPE US TOO?

by Mutope Duguma

Sept. 8, 2013 – First and foremost we want to give a lot of respect and love to all the human beings who made their voices heard and the countless dedicated supporters and organizations who beat the drum as well as the pavement demanding an end to LONG TERM solitary confinement.

To the 30,000 hunger strikers who courageously stood up, we commend each and every one of you, no matter if you did one day or the whole 60 days. We have had three hunger strikes in which none of us could imagine such courage would stem from such a peaceful protest. But as I have written in an article called, "Because I've seen men," my own personal strength and resolve has been improved on. I could not have ever expected to be among such courageous individuals. I salute each and every one of you.

We want to always give much respect and love to the six prisoners who sacrificed their lives despite what CDCr propagated against you. We know each and every one of you died for a cause that's more honorable than anything, especially in a world where men and women die every day for nothing. We also know none of you were suicidal. We will forever hold you all in our memory, high before the world.

Now, where do we go from here? We've been promised change, which we will humbly allow to take its course. One thing we have learned throughout our protracted struggle is that there is a solid 100 hunger strikers who we know now will be willing to lay their lives down for our cause, and I am among that 100.

These individuals are remarkable, so our protracted struggle continues.

We all signed up collectively to move in unison; therefore, we will allow the voice of our 20 representatives to be the voice that makes the decisions in the interests of us all, based on their collective judgment. This has always been an inclusive protracted struggle. Our New Afrikan collective, Latino-Mexican collective, white collective and Asian collective – these brothers and sisters joined forces in order to end torture in Amerika's solitary confinement units. We now allow the system to work, while being very vigilant as to what kind of change we will receive.

We continue to hit the pavement, make the calls, write the Legislature and governor. We do not know at this time what the time period would be on that change, but I am sure there will be one, and each and every one of us will be informed of that time period, especially prisoners who are suffering in solitary confinement each second, minute and hour of the day inside these torture chambers. The world has heard your screams.

We continue to educate the public about our individual horror stories inside solitary confinement units, whether they're called SHUs or Administration Segregation Units. We can never go back to accepting solitary confinement as an indefinite placement for any Americans, foreigners, refugees or immigrants.

Our protracted struggle continues. Those of us who did the whole 60 days, like myself and our main four representatives, need to take the time to get your health back in order. It will take anywhere

from 90 days to six months depending on the severity of damage.

Demand blood work be done and your organs screened before you go back to exercising. We all may be called on to make that ultimate sacrifice and I personally know that we will see that courageous 100 front and center.

Our protracted struggle continues in memory of the following courageous prisoners:

Christian Gomez  
Alex Machado  
Alonzo Hozel Blanchard  
A. 'Baby Paya' Morales (Watts native)  
Billy "Guero" Sell  
Johnny Owen Vick  
Will the Legislature dupe us too?

The 20 representatives have to do what they believe is in the best interest of our collective and that means negotiating with CDCr, politicians or any officials who are part of that process.

We are demanding that our five core demands be met, and to those who don't know, the 40 supplemental demands are part of Core Demand No. 5. The 20 representatives have a responsibility outside of making decisions: They each have to make sure that they don't subject you or me to unnecessary suffering when they do not have to.

If the Legislature turns around and dupes us, then we will be forced to continue our peaceful protest in the interests of every solitary confined prisoner.

So the reality right now is that Sen. Loni Hancock and Assemblymember Tom Ammiano have basically said that there has to be change. Now the people have to

get behind these two politicians and make sure that they are empowered to make that change possible: Relieve prisoners of their on-going suffering inside these solitary confinement units that serve no purpose whatsoever.

There have already been countless dialogues, interviews, books written and legislative hearings on solitary confinement and they have all been fruitless to date. So it is our hope that these current hearings will render that change that we so desperately seek, in the interests of all prisoners held throughout California in these isolation units and hopefully throughout the United States of America. We do not know to what degree CDCr will involve themselves in making these meaningful changes possible, but we hold hope.

We will be following these future events very closely and ask everyone to do the same, because if the Legislature turns around and dupes us, then we will be forced to continue our peaceful protest in the interests of every solitary confined prisoner.

In Solidarity,  
One Love, One Struggle  
Mutope Duguma

<http://sfbayview.com/2013/hunger-striker-considers-where-we-go-from-here-wonders-will-the-legislature-dupe-us-too/>

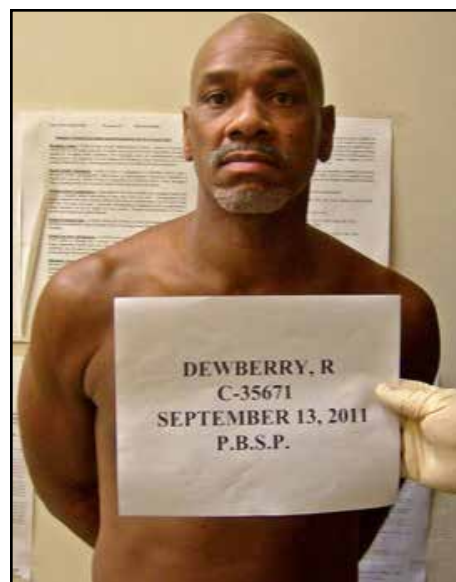
Send our brother some love and light: Though he was still at New Folsom Prison when he wrote this, his transfer back to Pelican Bay is believed to be imminent, so write to Mutope Duguma, s/n James Crawford, D-05996, PBSP SHU D1-117, P.O. Box 7500, Crescent City CA 95532.



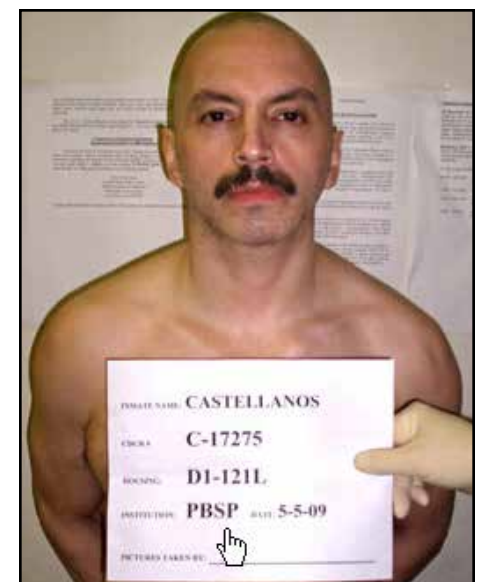
Todd Ashker



Chuco Guillen



Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa (Dewberry)



Arturo Castellanos



# SEX WORK AND SOCIAL CHANGE

## CONFRONT YOUR PREJUDICE BECAUSE WE AREN'T LEAVING

by members of the Sex Workers  
Outreach Project

Back in 1997, a group of radical activist sex workers in India called the First National Sex Worker Congress, wrote a manifesto, and became some of the first to articulate the values of what has become known internationally as the "Sex Worker's Rights Movement." Their documents continue to inform a global struggle. They wrote that "this movement is for everyone who strives for an equal, just, equitable, oppression free and above all a happy social world." They also acknowledged that "sexual inequality and control of sexuality engender and perpetuate many other inequalities and exploitation too." According to the First Congress, and most importantly, we are faced with a singular opportunity, a chance to get at the roots of multiple forms of injustice because the sex worker rights movement addresses racism, sexism, classism, and any and all other -isms that keep people oppressed. At the intersection of economic transaction and sexuality, one can find most of the darkest contradictions of the dominant industrialized, global capitalist paradigm we live under. Perhaps because of this, one can also access some of the most potent revolutionary potential.

We use the term "sex work" to refer to ourselves when we talk politics. Why should you use it too? First reason: sex workers came up with it for ourselves. We use it because it is gender neutral, and because it reminds us that the erotic industries are myriad, and our trajectories in the industries tend to be wildly unpredictable mixes of cultural, political, economic, and personal factors with some very real commonalities among our varied experiences. We are sometimes doing legal work, sometimes extra-, para-, or straight up illegal, and saying "sex work" protects us from legal consequence while we try to find each other. When a person tells you s/he is a sex worker, your first question should not be "does that mean you're a prostitute?" Your first question should be: "How can I be supportive to your struggle?"

Sex workers are operating in every neighborhood. We are working in every city, in every county, in every state, and, particularly in the United States of Amerikkka, we are subject to some of the most insidious divide-and-conquer tactics invented by the carceral state. A sex worker is the person most likely to be murdered, worldwide. Even those who work in "high-end" escorting have no recourse to community help or protection if they are in danger.

We are accused of spreading disease, when we have some of the most sophisticated safe sex practices available and often act as sexual health educators for our clients and communities. We are arrested for carrying condoms in New York, Los Angeles, and many other places, even though those condoms can save lives. We are the butt of "dead hooker" jokes, we are blamed for other people's sexual problems, we are assumed to be broken people, children of molest or broken homes and addicts, and when we do suffer from sexual trauma or drug dependence, we do not receive compassionate care. We have to stand before judges in the courtroom, but we also are judged the instant we "out" ourselves to almost anyone.

Please note: the "we" spoken here is an important problem: some sex workers are laboring indoors, in privileged contexts, while some are working outdoors and barely surviving. As one might expect, people of color are disproportionately represented in this country's jails and prisons, even though white women make up the majority of the American sex worker population. While it may seem that all this stigma and repression spells disaster for us, we have increased in number at every epoch. This creates a potential for solidarity among us: a shared struggle against state repression is always a good place to start.

However, sex workers organizing ourselves is only part of the picture if we are to build a movement against oppression that is intersectional, inclusive, intercommunal, and powerful. We need our allies in radical communities to answer our call to stand with us as workers, as women, as men, as trans people, as straight-gay-queer-bi-pan-other. As the sex workers at the First Congress knew, many sex workers absorb the societal stigma of shame and unworthiness. We need allies to recognize that stigma is a commonality that links all of us, despite the enormous diversity in our realities at work and in our lives. Our allies are people who fight for an end to social injustice, but they don't always recognize us as allies to them. The tacit exclusion of sex workers from radical groups necessarily means a loss to the revolutionary community, considering that we are everywhere. A political activist



Sex workers are marginalized and stigmatized by mainstream culture as well as the radical left.

doesn't need to agree with a sex worker's choices to stand in solidarity with her, just as we don't need to agree with every choice made by every comrade in prison in order to stand in solidarity with them, particularly when we all call for the abolition of prisons! But we often find that the radical left would prefer to rescue, rather than join hands, with us.

Kthi Win, the chairperson of the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers writes of her experience this way:

"The violence happens when feminist rescue organizations work with the police who break into our work places and beat us, rape us and kidnap our children in order to save us. As a movement, feminism is meant to believe in agency. Even oppressed women in sex work can make choices. But we cannot chose not to be saved when a policeman or police women has a gun pointed at our head.

What we need is for the mainstream women's movement to not just silently support our struggle but to speak up and speak out against the extremists who have turned the important movement against real trafficking into a violent war against sex workers."

Sex work is by definition consensual sex. Non consensual sex is rape, slavery, or trafficking. The Sex Worker's

Rights Movement has been instrumental in bringing trafficking cases to light; however, we are often regarded as trafficked persons against our own assertions of freedom and agency. We must, according to sexist capitalist logic, be either criminals or victims.

So ask yourself how you feel about sex work. Do you believe all people in the sex industries should be rescued from degradation? Are we disrespecting ourselves? Are we disrespecting decent, hard-working revolutionaries who know how to be good heterosexual monogamous partners? Are we disrespecting women's liberation to assert that some of us prefer working with pimps or madams than working independently, given our choices? Are we lost to the cause of destroying the capitalist state, because we are already slut-shamed and ostracized?

We imagine an autonomous sexuality in which all people have the right to say "yes" or "no," in which there is no space for guilt or oppression, in which people are communicating respectfully about their desires and needs. We invite those on the radical left to: consider your own internalized shame about sex, demand a higher consciousness about your own prejudice against sex workers, and demonstrate a commitment to fight alongside us, because we are already fighting alongside you.



General Taco (Taking All Capitalist Out)  
aka Wolverine Shakur

## ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

On April 21, 2013 the Black Riders New Generation Black Panther Party for Self Defense was honored by the Black Panther Party Alumni Association with the "Continuing the Struggle" Award Kathleen Cleaver and many other elders from the original Black Panthers presented this award to General TACO for 17+ years of revolutionary service to the community.

Much respect and love goes out to our community supporters who donate quarters nickels and dimes to keep us riding and building positive programs to serve the people. We will be freed by any means necessary. Black Power. All power to the people.

Join now! (323) 289-4457  
To create a prison chapter write:  
BRLP  
P.O. Box 8297  
Los Angeles, CA 90008

BLACK PANTHER PARTY  
ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION

Presents to:  
GENERAL T.A.C.O.  
&  
THE BLACK RIDERS  
LIBERATION PARTY

In recognition of their commitment to  
CONTINUING THE STRUGGLE

Presented by Kathleen Cleaver

April 21, 2013  
DATE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
STEERING COMMITTEE



## TEACHERS IN MEXICO, GREECE STRUGGLE AGAINST PRIVATIZATION AND AUSTERITY



Teachers and police battle in the streets of Mexico

According to “Teacher Solidarity” ([www.teachersolidarity.com](http://www.teachersolidarity.com)), teachers in Mexico are struggling against a corporate agenda with its origins in the US. President Enrique Peña Nieto is imposing neo-liberal solutions on Mexico’s schools, including standardized tests and tying teachers’ pay and tenure to test results.

In Oaxaca, at the forefront of the struggle against such measures for a decade, a new education reform has been proposed by teachers’ leaders to put teachers and communities at the heart of developing education. Meanwhile a corporate lobby, led by groups like the DC think tank “Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas” and *Mexicanos Primeros*, which is supported by business leaders and corporations, is mounting a sustained propaganda attack on the country’s teachers. It holds them responsible for a perceived education failure, while ignoring gross under-funding of schools in low income communities as well as endemic poverty for which neo-liberalism is largely responsible.

- See more at: <http://www.teachersolidarity.com/blog/understanding-the-struggle-of-mexico-teachers/#sthash.jc9Mpm-by.dpuf>

After a vicious police attack on teachers, the National Coordinator of Education Workers in Mexico (CNTE) declared: “Sept. 13, with a massive deployment of riot police and federal forces, Peña Nieto is cracking down on teachers to evict them from the central square (Zocalo) of Mexico City [and] unleashed a campaign of terror to destabilize the movement, and pave the way for repression in all states of the country in which the teachers are struggling.

“The government lied, cheated and imposed laws that shredded teachers’ rights and strips recognition from the union and its contractual working conditions. Given the seriousness of the situation and against this new attack, we call URGENTLY for all supporters to come to embassies and consulates of Mexico in their countries. Demand that the Mexican government cease the repression of teachers from the CNTE. Request immediate satisfaction of their demands: repeal of laws that strip them of their labor rights and the opening of a genuine national dialogue for educational reform that addresses the needs of the people of Mexico. Write to:

LIC. ENRIQUE PEÑA NIETO,  
Presidente Constitucional de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos  
[enrique.penanieto@presidencia.gob.mx](mailto:enrique.penanieto@presidencia.gob.mx)  
LIC. CHUAYFFET CHEMOR  
EMILIO, Secretaria de Educación Pública  
[emilio.chuayffet@sep.gob.mx](mailto:emilio.chuayffet@sep.gob.mx)  
Copy to [seccionmexicana.coali@gmail.com](mailto:seccionmexicana.coali@gmail.com), to Maestra Graciela Rangel: [rasagas@live.com](mailto:rasagas@live.com), and to Prof. Eligio Hernández: [eligiogonzalez@hotmail.com](mailto:eligiogonzalez@hotmail.com)  
According to Rafael Azul on southweb.

org, repression at the state level in Mexico was taking place before the Mexico City attacks. Gov. Ángel Aguirre Rivero of Guerrero issued arrest orders in April against two leaders of the Guerrero Teachers Union (CETEG): Minervino Morán and Gonzalo Juárez. They are charged as “intellectual authors” of popular upheavals that erupted with the escalating struggle of Guerrero state teachers. “They’re vandals; delinquents,” said Aguirre, accusing CETEG of being connected to the ERPI guerrilla movement (Insurgent People’s Revolutionary Army – Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo Insurgente) that operates in the state.

Leonidas Oikonomakis wrote on [roar-mag.org](http://roar-mag.org)\* about what teachers in Mexico and Greece had in common. “The struggle of teachers in Greece and Mexico is a Thermopylae of our times: a battle to defend our social rights in a global class war. I had the opportunity to pass the Zócalo in Mexico City in August 2013 and see the occupation of the square by the public school teachers of CNTE. It was impressive to see the huge square of Mexico City transformed into a massive tent-city by the teachers on strike, and even more impressive to sense how determined they were in their struggle.

“In austerity-stricken Greece, the Federation of Secondary Education State School Teachers (OLME) announced a national five-day rolling strike starting on Sept. 16.”

The Greek teachers explained: “The government has passed a new law on education without a dialogue establishing a harsh, exam-centered system in all grades of upper secondary education, forcing students to seek private tuition and leading to school drop-outs.” The government is also shutting schools, laying off teachers and privatizing vocational education. According to Oikonomakis, it had been students protesting such cuts and privatization. “Yet, this time, it was the Greek teachers who picked up the baton from their Mexican counterparts to fight for free public education and for dignity. As they stated in one of the videos on YouTube: ‘I go on strike — and I think we all should — because it’s the only thing left to do for our dignity...’ There’s a war out there, don’t forget. And, so far at least, ‘their’ class is winning.”

OLME, knowing that the struggle will be long and in an effort to assist teachers who’ve already seen their salaries cut 30%-40% in their strike, has created a Solidarity Fund. Those willing to help can contribute to the following bank account in Greece: 114-00-2002-005457, ALPHA BANK.

\*ROAR Magazine is an online journal of the radical imagination that seeks to amplify the voice of our generation amid the cacophony of a changing world.

## TRIQUI AND MIXTECO STRAWBERRY PICKERS ON STRIKE FOR DIGNITY

Burlington, WA – It starts with a whistle, that ruptures the relative quiet of working as fast as you can, on your knees, back bent over, searching for the tiny ripe strawberries that stain your hands, trying to make the minimum weight. The whistle is answered, meaning someone else agrees with the original whistle’s discontent, and soon a chorus erupts in resounding symphony of agreement and workers walk off the field en masse. This was one of the first Triqui sitdown strikes in the region in the mid 2000s, as described by anthropologist Seth M. Holmes in his book *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the US* (2013) exposing the plight of migrant Triqui farmworkers. That strike ended when the farm’s executives agreed to a policy against intimidation and violence in the workplace, slightly higher pay and lunch breaks for pickers. The gains were silently rescinded a year later.

On July 11, a little over 200 farmworkers walked off the fields at Sakuma Brothers Farms (<http://sakumabros.com>) in Burlington, WA. Triqui and Mixteco strawberry pickers and their families organized the strike. They met with Ryan Sakuma, a crop manager and several foremen. Meeting for just over an hour, the farmworkers voiced their grievances over the unfair wage (30 cents/lb) for berries compared to CA (70 cents/lb), the unjust firing of Federico Lopez, and the undignified mistreatment they receive at the hands of the foremen in the fields and at their labor camps.

Lopez was fired for organizing other pickers to strike. Sakuma, hearing about the incident second hand from his foreman “El Güero,” interpreted labor organizing as an act of intimidation against other pickers, and cited the Sakuma Brothers Farm company policy against “intimidation, threats and violence in the workplace.” Sakuma apologized, but he said he had to stand firm with company policy.

Rosalinda Guillen and Angelica Villa from Community to Community Development (<http://foodjustice.org>) were on hand to serve as mediators and translators for the striking farmworkers. When she translated what Ryan Sakuma had explained, the workers and their families said that Lopez hadn’t intimidated them; on the contrary they’d felt intimidated by the foremen.

One farm-worker said that many pickers were only making \$45 to \$53 a day. Washington’s minimum wage is \$9.19 per hour, or \$73.52 a day. She explained that they were also worried about being evicted from the labor camps because the minimum weight of 246 lbs. per day based on an 8-hour day was too difficult to meet. Farmworkers of course work more than an 8-hour day. The same picker explained that the strawberry field they were working was sparse and the berries were small. This meant they had to work extra fast, and the foremen and checkers would yell at them, and would consistently undercount the weight of each 30-pound bin.

This corresponds with what Holmes documented in the early 2000s when he conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Burlington. “The white checkers are given power over how many pounds are marked for the pickers, and I observed more often than not that checkers marked less weight on the cards than the scale displayed.” (Holmes, p. 70). Holmes maps out the class, ethnic and racial hierarchical structure of a Skagit Valley berry farm in his

study. His findings demonstrate that Triqui and Mixteco migrant farm-workers are on the bottom rung when it comes to respect, earnings and working conditions.

The picker I was speaking to was a young Triqui mother, her daughter hugging on her leg as we spoke. She was adamant that she had grievances of her own and wanted them heard, expressing frustration with the patriarchal structure of the farm’s hierarchy. She later sought me out to explain to me that there was also preferential treatment by farm managers as far as who got to pick the better fields or work at hourly-paid positions. She accused a foreman’s wife of being verbally abusive to workers when she worked as a checker, and she also accused the foreman of favoritism when it came to allocating fields. His wife and her crew always got preference for easy-to-pick fields.

Another Sakuma foreman was confronted by the farm-workers for yelling at them, treating them like children. The list of demands asks for no retaliation against Federico Lopez. The workers demand a raise in piece rate wage from 30 to 70 cents. Workers demand to know why Sakuma only asked for guest workers for blueberries and not for strawberries (harder work) if there’s really a labor shortage. Pickers want to be paid overtime, and to resolve problems with childcare.

The farm-workers have met with representatives from the Northwest Justice Project who have organized their labor claims. To support this labor struggle get the word out, or join a boycott against Häagen-Dazs strawberry ice cream and any other strawberry dairy product that uses Sakuma Brothers Farms Northwest Variety strawberries.

On Sept. 25, *Familias Unidas por la Justicia* and individual plaintiff Felimon Pineda won a victory when Skagit County Superior Court Judge John Meyer ordered Sakuma Brothers Berry Farms to remove

security guards from their housing. Meyer issued a restraining order prohibiting Sakuma Brothers from further violations of Washington’s primary labor law, the Little Norris LaGuardia Act. It prohibits employers from interfering with workers organizing

themselves in order to improve wages and working conditions. The judge ordered Sakuma to immediately remove security personnel from areas where they could observe or eavesdrop on the workers. They may not follow workers or community supporters on public roads and highways. “Security does not belong in a camp with families; our struggle is peaceful and for the future of our children,” said Felimon Pineda vice-president of *Familias Unidas*. Further, the Judge found that the workers have a right to choose their representatives for negotiations, and to publicize their labor dispute, such as the ongoing boycott, but he declined to grant injunctive relief on those two issues at this time.

Join the solidarity efforts on the ground or to support this work financially you can contact Community to Community Development at 360-381-0293 or 360-756-2330 or e-mail [decomunidad@qwestoffice.net](mailto:decomunidad@qwestoffice.net), for updates visit our website at <http://foodjustice.org> and look for us on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Community-2Community> or <https://www.facebook.com/c2caguiladelnorte>

From: <http://karani.wordpress.com/2013/07/12/triqui-and-mixteco-strawberry-pickers-on-strike-for-dignity/>





# REVIEW: THE RED ARMY FACTION

by Michael Novick, Anti-Racist Action-Los Angeles/  
People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)

*The Red Army Faction, A Documentary History*

Volume 1: Projectiles for the People (February 2009);

Volume 2: Dancing with Imperialism (June 2013)

Edited by J. Smith and André Moncourt,

Published by PM Press and Kersplebedeb

Volume 1, Forewords by Russell “Maroon” Shoats and  
Bill Dunne

ISBN: 978-1-60486-029-0, Paperback, 736 pages, \$34.95

Volume 2, Introduction by Ward Churchill

ISBN: 978-1-60486-030-6, Paperback, 480 Pages, \$26.95

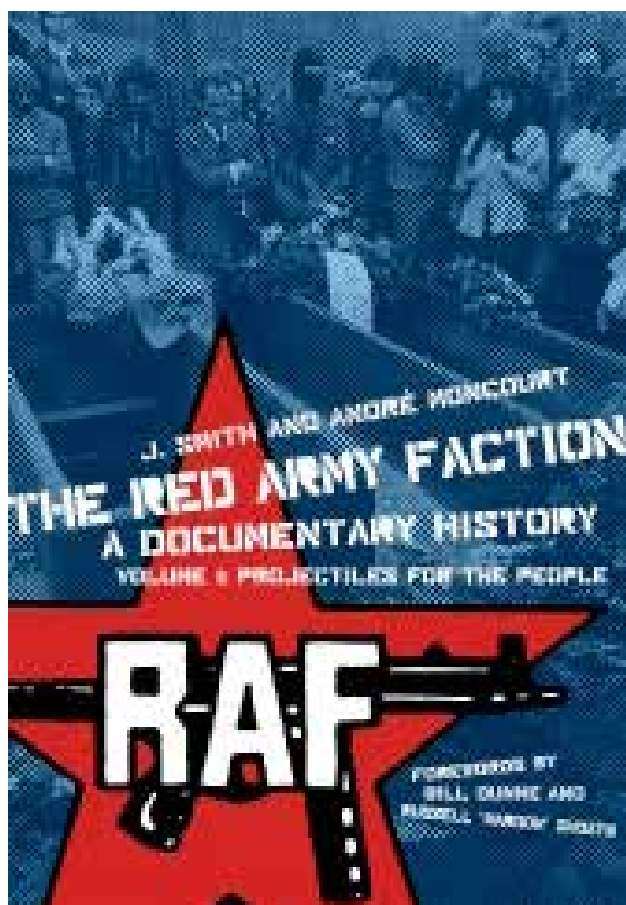
Volume 3 forthcoming

Much documentation in the books available at:

<http://www.germanguerrilla.com>

Graphics used in the volumes online at:

<http://plakat.nadir.org/>



*The Red Army Faction, Volume 1*

Far from being a relic of the '60s and '70s, the German Red Army Faction (RAF), an urban guerrilla formation in the “metropole” of imperialism, has continued to be a target of state repression well into the 21st Century. In a 2010 statement issued by “some who have been RAF members at various points in time,” they addressed the prosecution of a former RAF member, who had secretly become a cooperating “crown witness” years before, for the assassination of German Attorney General Siegfried Buback more than 30 years ago. They wrote: “The apparent purpose is to obtain individual ‘recriminations,’ i.e. to pressurize individuals to say who exactly did what. ... Not enough that we have stated our collective responsibility for the attacks of the RAF. We should ‘finally’ squeal in order to ‘give up the logic of conspiracy.’” They describe the effort by the state and the corporate media to reduce their struggle to personal aberrations, an effort that goes back to the bourgeois designation of the RAF as the “Baader-Meinhof Gang,” after the names of two of their founding members.

They continued, “What it is really all about is to pull ... the debate on the history of armed struggle [down] to the mere level of murder and violence. ... The RAF was dissolved in 1998, based on its assessment of the changed political situation globally. The fact that it was its own decision and that it has not been defeated by the state, obviously remains a thorn in the flesh [of the state]. Hence the eternal lament of the “myth” yet to be destroyed. Hence the political and moral capitulation demanded from us. Hence the attempts to finalize the criminalization of our history. ... Whereas the search for those who are still underground, the smear campaigns in the media and the legal procedures against former prisoners continue, we are expected to kowtow publicly. As in all these years, it didn’t work by ‘renunciation,’ we are now to denounce each other.”

They explained why they continue to refuse to testify. “Not to testify is not a RAF invention. It has been an experience of the liberation movements and guerrilla groups that it is vital to provide no information whatsoever when in custody, in order to protect those who continue the struggle. We have the historical examples of the resistance against fascism. ... But also like this. We don’t testify because we are no state witnesses, not then, not now.”

“Through all these years, despite ‘screen search’ technologies, the highly armed state security apparatus hasn’t been able to obtain a reasonably comprehensive picture of our movements.... The bits and pieces put together by state security agencies haven’t been very useful for general counterinsurgency purposes. They have no clue of the approach, the organization, the traces, the dialectics of an urban guerrilla in the metropolis. And there is no reason to help them out on this. ... The RAF’s collective structure has been attacked right from the start. It was not supposed to exist, it had to be old school, authoritarian relationships, ‘officers and soldiers,’ ringleaders and followers. Those were the compulsory terms for the police, for the propaganda, and those are their terms today. The judiciary, however ... was lacking evidence in court due to our lack of collaboration. Its solution was the ‘conspiracy’ paragraph 129/129a, with which everyone could be made responsible for everything. That’s what the verdicts have been based on... In contrast, testimonies which we sometimes provided in the trials against us, during the years of prison, have been determined collectively, as a possibility to say something against the worst shithouse propaganda.”

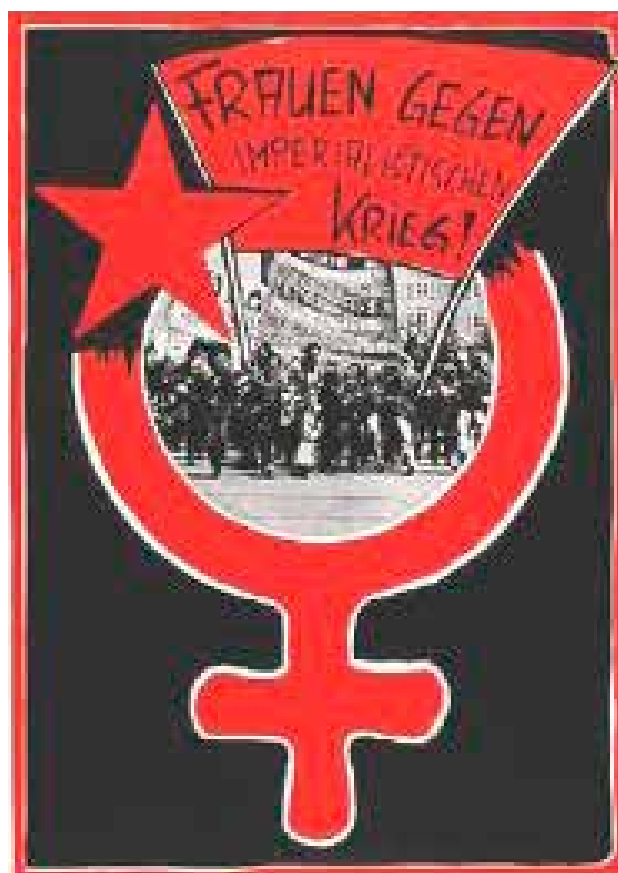
They concluded: “We were in prison because we started armed struggle over here, and our interest during the trials in court was, at best, to convey the contents and aims of our policy. A policy of attack in the metropolis which understood and determined its praxis in the context of struggles worldwide for liberation from capitalism.”

This represents the strength of political commitment demonstrated by the RAF through torturous, sensory-deprivation isolation incarceration, being “suicided” in prison, and continuing almost 35 years after the creation of the organization in the face of continuing persecution. It demonstrates why they merit serious study of the content and history of their political thinking, practice and development.

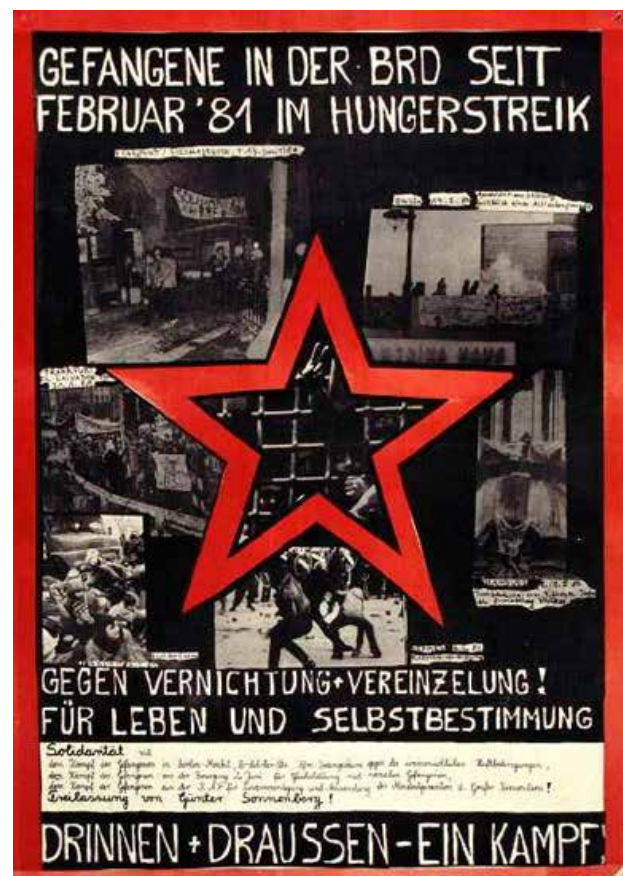
That study has been well served by the “Documentary History” of the Red Army Faction being meticulously produced by J. Smith and Andre Moncourt, with two volumes completed and a third in preparation (probably some additional years until publication). Profusely illustrated, and carefully researched, the books present the RAF in their own words and in well-explicated context. Smith and Moncourt’s narrative amounts to a history of mid- to late-20th Century imperialism from the perspective of the so-called “Federal Republic” of West Germany (plus West Berlin, a separate entity until the reunification of Germany after the communist East German Democratic Republic was absorbed).

Its relevance today is magnified by the central role the series of hunger strikes by the imprisoned members of the RAF played in exposing the militarist nature of the German state, and in helping to attract new combatants to the ranks of the “guerrilla” in Germany and throughout Western Europe. We have recently seen in California the power of that bodies-on-the-line commitment by prisoners to impact consciousness, not only in the prisons, but also on the streets. The RAF’s prescience about the offense-oriented nature of the NATO alliance also makes its analyses important reading today.

It’s impossible to summarize such a voluminous work. The division into 3 volumes roughly parallels the history of the RAF in three periods, or generations. The first is



German poster: “Women Against Imperialist War”



Solidarity with RAF-prisoner-led 1981 hunger strike from their founding until the 1977 kidnapping and killing of German industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer and the deaths in prison of many of the allegedly leading RAF members. The second is from that point through the 1984 arrests of (unbeknownst to the state at the time) virtually the entire ranks of combatants then in the field. They were attempting to put into practice a plan to develop a “front” between the German guerrilla and both similar formations in other mostly European countries and semi-legal anti-imperialist and radical groups. The third volume will address the period from the second reconstitution of the RAF from a major counter-offensive in 1984 through the group’s self-dissolution in 1998.

The question of whether and how armed struggle relates to the much different political circumstances of the 21st Century is a critical one. Even more important is the question of what politics can guide the development of a successful strategy for revolutionary change and develop appropriate tactics, as well as undertake the necessary transformation and development of committed, consistent and capable revolutionaries.

Smith and Moncourt’s detailed, methodical presentation of this history provides valuable insights, including into the differing politics that guided various German clandestine and semi-clandestine armed struggle groups and actions over almost two decades. In addition to the RAF, the June 2nd Movement (2JM), the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) and their women’s off-shoot Rote Zora built fairly consolidated underground formations from different political and organizational perspectives. Thousands of other armed and otherwise illegal actions were carried out by elements of the German anti-imperialist and autonomist movements between the late '60s and the '90s.

Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses, the differences – particularly between “social revolutionary” and “anti-imperialist” orientations – and their impact, can make a vital contribution to understanding the true nature of our enemy, and the most effective strategy for defeating it once and for all. The contradiction between the “autonomist” and “anti-imp” tendencies in the German movement, paralleled similar differences between guerrilla groupings.

A similar division, minus the armed underground organizations, existed in the South Korean movements against militarism and dictatorship, between “national liberation” and “peoples democracy” formations (see my review of *Asia’s Unknown Uprisings* in the last issue of *TTT*). The comparison of the South Korean and German movements over roughly the same time period also highlights the necessity of correctly linking clandestine guerrilla capacity and mass insurrectionary activity. Deeper study and struggle aimed at developing a revolutionary synthesis of all necessary aspects of understanding both the Empire and how to defeat it is an essential part of a current revolutionary process.

Smith and Moncourt have made and are making a tremendous contribution to that process, and to recuperating the lessons that the RAF and others learned at a tremendous cost. Learning about and from the contributions and errors, the successes and failures, of past revolutionary efforts, can contribute mightily to ending all forms of oppression and exploitation, and to the ultimate triumph of the forces of decolonization, liberation, and a better, sustainable world.



# A DISPLACED AND DISCARDED LABOR FORCE

## THE MYTH OF PRISON SLAVE LABOR CAMPS IN THE U.S.

by James Kilgore

As Adam Gopkin reminds us, “mass incarceration on a scale almost unexampled in human history is a fundamental fact of our country today—perhaps the fundamental fact, as slavery was the fundamental fact of 1850.” The racialization of this process, popularized by author Michelle Alexander as *The New Jim Crow*, has meant that African Americans in the U.S. now have more than triple the incarceration rate of Blacks in South Africa at the peak of apartheid.

In the haste to impart some rationality to all this, many activists and analysts have been quick to point to corporations as the sole culprits behind the prison-industrial-complex (PIC). An important component of this perspective is the notion of prisons as “slave labor camps”. In this scenario a sea of multinational corporations super-exploit hundreds of thousands of contract prison laborers to heartlessly augment their bottom lines. Late last year researchers Steven Fraser and Joshua Freeman took up this point in a study which they presented in a *Counter-Punch* article, arguing that “penitentiaries have become a niche market for such work. The privatization of prisons in recent years has meant the creation of a small army of workers too coerced and right-less to complain.”

Their perspective has resonated with a number of news services, anti-mass incarceration bloggers and activists. For example, a recent report from Russian news service RT claimed that prisons are “becoming America’s own Chinese style manufacturing line”. Huffington Post picked up the story, quoting Fraser and Freeman:

“All told, nearly a million prisoners are now making office furniture, working in call centers, fabricating body armor, taking hotel reservations, working in slaughterhouses, or manufacturing textiles, shoes, and clothing, while getting paid somewhere between 93 cents and \$4.73 per day.”

The HuffPost went on to name Chevron, Bank of America, AT&T, Starbucks and Walmart as major participants in what they called a “competitive spiral” to capture prison labor at the lowest possible wage levels. Vicky Pelaez, writing for Global Research earlier this year called prison industry a “new form of slavery” identifying more than twenty corporations involved in contract arrangements. Her list included IBM, Pierre Cardin, Target and Hewlett Packard. She concluded that, “thanks to prison labor, the United States is once again an attractive location for investment in work that was designed for Third World labor markets.”

As appealing as these scenarios are to our sense of moral outrage and the role of multinational corporations as the villains of our era, such assertions about prison labor are off the mark. I spent six and a half years in Federal and state prisons at high, medium and low security levels. In all these institutions, very few people, if any, were under contract to private corporations. My memories of prison yards feature hundreds and hundreds of men trying to pump some meaning into their life with exercise routines, academic study, compulsive sports betting, religious devotion, and a number of creative and entrepreneurial “hustles.” But being under the thumb of Bill Gates or entering a Nike sweatshop was just about the farthest thing from our warehouse reality.

Statistics bear my memories out. Virtually all private sector prison labor is regulated under the Prison Industries Enhancement Certification Program (PIECP). Any prison wanting to publicly market goods worth more than \$10,000 must register with PIECP. The PIECP statistical report for the first quarter of 2012 showed 4,675 incarcerated people employed in prison or jail PIECP programs, a miniscule portion of the nation’s more than two million behind bars.

Likely the largest single user of contract prison labor is Federal Prison Industries, which handles such arrangements for the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). Of the nearly 220,000 people housed in BOP facilities, just 13,369, representing approximately 8% of the work eligible “inmates” were employed as of September 30, 2012. However, the overwhelming majority of this production was for government departments like Defense and Homeland Security, rather than private corporations.

There is an economic rationality to why prison labor is so infrequently used. While incarcerated people may constitute a captive workforce, in the era of mass incarceration security trumps all other institutional needs, including production deadlines. A fight on the yard, a surprise cell search, even a missing tool can occasion a lockdown where all activities, including work assignments, come to a halt for hours, days, or, in some cases even weeks or months. Multinational corporations accustomed to just-in-time production systems and flexible working hours don’t respond well to this type of rigidity.

Portraying our prisons as slave labor camps satisfies a certain emotional appeal, but hunting down multinationals that are extracting superprofits from the incarcerated diverts us from the crucial labor issues at the heart of mass incarceration. Those behind bars constitute a displaced and discarded labor force, marginalized from mainstream employment on the streets by deindustrialization in their communities and the gutting of urban education in poor communities of color. More than half of all Black men without a high-school diploma will go to prison at some time in their lives. The school to prison pipeline is far more of a reality than slave labor camps.

Plus, the shift of the prison system’s emphasis from

ers of “ban the box” argue that questions about previous convictions amount to a form of racial discrimination since such a disproportionate number of those with felony convictions are African-American and Latino. Advancing these *Ban the Box* campaigns will have a far more important impact on incarcerated people as workers than pressing for higher wages for those under contract to big companies inside.

However, even without the box, the rights of the formerly incarcerated in the labor market remain heavily restricted. Many professions, trades and service occupations which require certification, bar or limit the accreditation of people with felony convictions. For example, a study by the Chicago Mayor’s office found that of 98 Illinois state statutes regarding professional licensing, 57 contained restrictions for applicants with a criminal history, impacting over 65 professions and occupations. In some instances, even people applying for licenses to become barbers or cosmetologists face legal impediments.

Those with felony convictions face further hurdles when trying to access state assistance to tide them over during times of unemployment. In most states, those with drug convictions are banned from access to SNAP (food stamps) for life. Many local public housing authorities bar people with felony convictions even if their parents or partners already reside there.

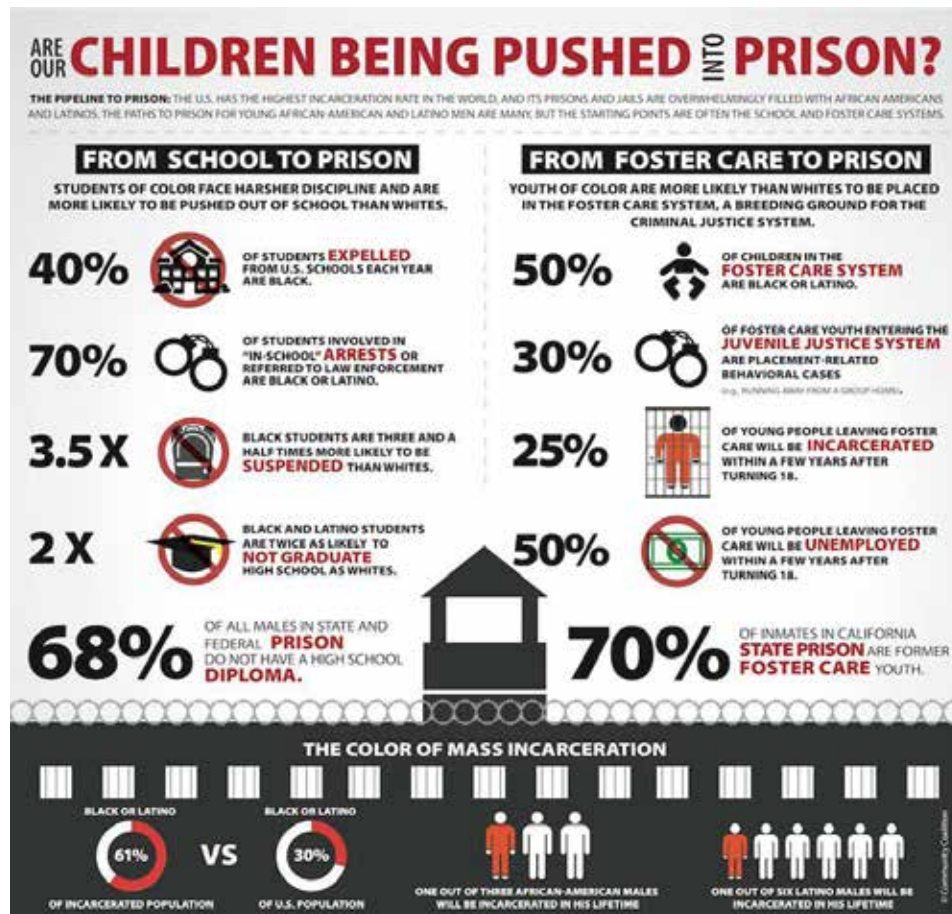
Lastly, the very conditions of parole often create obstacles to employment. Many states require that an employer of a person on parole agree that the workplace premises can be searched at any time without prior warning - hardly an attractive proposition for any business. In addition, tens of thousands of people on parole are subject to house arrest with electronic monitors. All movement outside the house must be pre-approved by their parole agent. This makes changes in work schedule or jobs that involve travel an enormous challenge. Some basic changes to the conditions of parole could constitute an important step to easing the labor market conditions for people coming home trying to secure and keep a job.

All of this is not to deny that many corporations have made huge amounts of money from mass incarceration. Firms like Arizona’s Kitchell Construction, which has built more than 40 state prisons and 30 adult jails have made millions. The Tennessee-based Bob Barker Enterprises is a “household” name among the incarcerated. With a corporate vision of

“transforming criminal justice by honoring God in all we do,” Barker has reaped massive profits from producing the poorest quality consumer goods, including two inch toothbrushes, for people behind bars. Then, of course, we have private prison operators like CCA and the GEO Group. Although the privates control only 8% of prison beds nationally these two firms managed to bring in over 3 billion in revenue last year.

While such profiteering continues, the prison-industrial complex remains driven by an agenda that is more about politics than profits. State-owned prisons and political agendas continue to lie at the center of mass incarceration. The combined revenue of CCA and the GEO Group for 2012 was less than half of the California state corrections budget. Politicians, with important influence from pro-corporate organizations like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), have made the PIC possible by passing harsh sentencing laws, funding the War on Drugs, tightening immigration legislation, and creating isolation units like Pelican Bay, Corcoran, Tamms and Angola. They have built a base of popular support for the “colorblind” approach of “lock ‘em up and throw away the key.” So while we need to curb the opportunities for corporate profit from putting people in cages, the main target of any campaign against the PIC must be to counter the racist ideology of “punitive populism” and reverse the political processes which perpetuate mass incarceration and the criminalization of the poor.

James Kilgore is a research scholar at the Center for African Studies at the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign). He writes on issues of mass incarceration with a focus on electronic monitoring and labor.



rehabilitation to punishment in the last three decades has blocked opportunities for people to upgrade skills and education while incarcerated. As the nuns used to tell me in grade school: “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop and idle hands are the devil’s tools.” The brains behind our prison system clearly had the devil’s welfare in mind when they reoriented our institutions away from rehabilitation into warehousing millions of people while stripping away their opportunities for personal and collective development. As a result purposelessness and excruciating boredom, not overwork, are the dominant features of most prison yards.

For those trying to put an end to mass incarceration, framing the labor issues of the prison industrial complex in this way takes us down a very different road than upgrading the conditions of the minute numbers behind bars who are under corporate contracts (or as some unions are want to do—portraying prison laborers as scabs who undermine hard won working class gains). The chief labor concerns about mass incarceration are linked to broader inequalities in the economy as a whole, particularly the lack of employment for poor youth of color and the proliferation of low wage jobs with no benefits. Employment creation and the restoration of much needed state provided social services like substance abuse or mental health treatment are the measures that will keep people on the streets. Forget about minimum wages for the mythical millions working for Microsoft in Leavenworth and Attica.

But the labor aspect of mass incarceration doesn’t end there. People with a felony conviction carry a stigma, a brand often accompanied by exclusion from the labor market. Michelle Alexander calls “felon” the new “N” word. Indeed in the job world, those of us with felony convictions face a number of unique barriers. The most well-known is “the box”—that question on employment applications which asks about criminal background. Eleven states and more than 40 cities and counties have outlawed the box on employment applications. Support-

**Correction:** In the last issue of *Turning the Tide*, we printed the wrong address for the Prison Library Project.

The correct address is:  
Prison Library Project  
915-C West Foothill Blvd.  
Claremont, CA 91711

# TEXAS & OREGON PRISON OFFICIALS CONSPIRE TO SILENCE NEW AFRIKAN BLACK PANTHER PARTY (PC)

## REVOULTIONARY GREETINGS

### By Comrade Malik in Texas (Captain of Information)

2013 is shaping up to be the year in which the imperialist-fascist oppressors are focusing their attack on political prisoners in Amerika.

#### Seek and Destroy

Earlier this year, February 2013, the Minister of Defense for the New Afrikan Black Panther Party (Prison Chapter), Kevin 'Rashid' Johnson, was the victim of what on its face looked to be a childish prank by a fellow prisoner. However, with the aid of Oregon State Prison employees, this "prank" nearly cost Rashid his life.

On the evening of Jan. 31, Rashid was given a pizza spread prepared by his neighbor. Unknown to Rashid, the food contained a mixture of psychotropic drugs. These had such an effect on Rashid that he felt the urge to kill himself! We are talking about a true soldier of the people, who has never attempted to take his life. Nevertheless, Rashid ingested an undisclosed quantity of anti-inflammatory medication, and then, as OSP officials saw their "quarry" in a vulnerable state of mind, they placed Rashid in a suicide observation cell which 'coincidentally' had a razor blade in it. Rashid proceeded to break the blade in three pieces and swallowed them. All this activity was witnessed by Oregon prison employees and captured on film. However, in a blatant attempt to cause harm to comrade Rashid, an Oregon prison doctor, Dr. Garth Gullick, refused to order x-rays which would have identified the location of the pieces of razor blade in Rashid's body in order to protect him from further injury. In a nutshell, Dr. Gullick ignored his Hippocratic oath to do no harm and acted as an agent of the state. He was deliberately indifferent to Rashid's medical needs.

#### Political Prisoners the Greatest Threat to National Security?

Comrades, it's not that Rashid is a physically imposing or violent man; he is not. As Minister of Defense of the NABPP (PC), Rashid continues to write provocative, politically charged articles which expose the true nature of this decadent



Drawing by Rashid

Amerikan society. Comrade Rashid and many of us who are housed in AmeriK-KKa's gulags utilize our pens, hearts and minds to push back against imperialism. If we had to rely on the corporate media, our voice or cries for help would never be heard. After exposing and protesting his treatment, Rashid was shipped to Snake River, a more restrictive OR prison

Then, a piece Rashid wrote was printed in Socialism and Democracy No. 61 (Vol. 27 #1) and posted online by the Huffington Post UK. The title: Political Struggle in the Teeth of Prison Reaction:

From Virginia to Oregon. Apparently the director of the OR DOC took issue with the subject matter.

Rashid filed a federal civil complaint. Rashid was given an ultimatum, cease all legal actions against OR DOC or we will send you somewhere you don't want to be. Rashid did not budge from his position and as a response, OR transferred Rashid to Texas in June 2013. Not only had OR attempted to cause physical harm through medical neglect, but they were guilty of retaliatory actions connected to Rashid's lawsuit and to the Huffington Post UK piece and S&D article.

#### Why Texas?

Rashid was not sent to just any TX prison, he was sent to the infamous Estelle High Security Unit in Huntsville. I was housed there myself between May 2012 and March 2013 during which time I was degraded, dehumanized, mistreated and abused. Upon arrival, I was placed on C-Wing, which is infested with roaches, there's a pervasive stench of sewage, and the cells on one row have no electrical outlet for portable fans. In-cell temperatures sometimes exceeded 95°. I was called "Nigger" frequently by staff and prisoners alike. This is Texas, where Rashid is being housed right now! [Ed. note: In what amounts to a conspiracy between the prison systems of Virginia, Oregon and Texas – Rashid was a state prisoner in Virginia who has now been shipped to two other states under "inter-state compacts" usually used to deal with over-crowding issues – most of Rashid's extensive legal paper-work and other possessions are somewhere in limbo, further denying him exercise of his legal rights.]

Comrades, we of the NABPP (PC) are revolutionary socialists. The Black Riders Liberation Party are our 'free world' comrades and allies – we want the same things, pursue the same goals. Serving the people is Job #1. However, serving the people in this day and age comes with a price.

Rashid was sent to Texas with the express intent to break his revolutionary spirit! Texas operates with impunity, abusing and beating prisoners who are housed in their many Ad Seg, High Security, and Death Row units, all control and communication management units. Texas has perfected the art of modern torture which is prevalent throughout Amerika's prison system. The Feds have communication management units like the ones in Marion, IL and Terre Haute, IN. Sensory deprivation and behavior modification experiments take place every day. These units have been set up for the purpose of torturing the politics out of political prisoner. TX has utilized Estelle-HS Unit with that mission in mind. TX has targeted Black men and women, Latino men and women and white men and women who are politically advanced and dare speak truth to power. Muslim prisoners are of special interest to the racists and bigots who manage the TX Dept. of Criminal Injustice.

So Rashid was sent to TX because he dared to confront the imperialists. His voice is dangerous to the oppressors. His keen understanding of the revolutionary

science brought into existence by Marx, Lenin and Mao is unique. It was Rashid's voice among other key events that awakened me 5 years ago. It's my duty to come to my comrade's aid and defense by exposing these sadistic crooked liars who violate the public's trust. Will you stand by while they attempt to silence his voice? Our voice? Won't you stand with me to confront these oppressors in TX?

Comrade Sundiata Acoli has said: "Political prisoners are those in every land and throughout every era who are imprisoned for fighting injustice in their societies, and the same holds true today for the relationship between mass injustice, mass incarceration and political prisoners in US society, and who must be freed! Not only political prisoners, but ALL those imprisoned by unjust policies."

Comrades, in this quote, don't you hear the mantra of the Jericho Movement? Isn't the spirit of the Panther resonating in his voice? We must unite and strive hard against the imperialist-fascist agenda that is taking over Amerika.

It's a blatant lie and false propaganda that says comrade Assata Shakur was planned or participated in terrorist acts against any human being. This simply is not the truth. Comrade Assata has used her voice and intellect to awaken and educate the minds of those held captive and enslaved by an imperialist system which preaches financial gain by any means. The needs of the people remain absent in their equations. Comrade Assata is far from a criminal – she is a hero. Keep your hands off Assata!

What about Patrice Lumumba Ford of the "Portland 7"? Oh, you oppressors thought we forgot? Abdullah, my Muslim brother, railroaded by a neo-con government that portrays devout Muslims as enemy combatants. Stay strong, Abdullah, freedom is coming, Insha-Allah. And what of Ms. Lynne Stewart? How long will we remain silent while she is ravaged by cancer and suffers in federal prison? What was her crime, Pres. Obama? She gave her client, the 'Blind Sheikh,' the best legal representation she could muster? If Trayvon could have been your son, couldn't Lynne have been someone close to your heart, as she is to ours? Oh, you don't hear me? Does she really deserve a death sentence?

There are too many comrades held captive, too many stories of injustice to tell. General T.A.C.O. of the Black Riders says the Dragon will soon fly out – and it will, but in the mean time, we must sharpen our intellects and prepare for the battle at hand and the one to come.

"...The determined will is rare, but it is not invariably benevolent. Furthermore, the American equation of success with 'big times' reveals an awful disrespect for human life and human achievement. This equation has placed our cities among the most dangerous in the world and has placed our youth among the most empty and most bewildered. The situation of our youth is not mysterious. Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them. They must, they have no other models. That is exactly what our children are doing..."—James Baldwin, *Nobody Knows My Name*

With that, I leave you with the question to ponder – Am I setting an example for our youth that will lead them to failure or true success? Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win! All Power to the People!

Comrade Malik in TX  
Capt. Of Information, NABPP (PC)  
You can contact Rashid or Malik via Twitch, Central Texas ABC & ABC Para-

legal Services, PO Box 7187, Austin TX, 78713.

Write to Comrade Malik directly at Keith H. Washington (Comrade Malik), TDC #1487958, Wynne Unit, 810 FM 2821, Huntsville TX, 77349.

Write to Rashid directly at: Kevin Johnson, TDC #01859887, Bill Clements Unit, 9601 Spur 591, Amarillo TX, 79107-9606.

Panther love!



Drawing by Rashid

## ORANGE IS NOT NEW

...continued from page 2

in someone's contraband to get what she wants from the guards -- who are either one-dimensionally sadistic or two-dimensionally pitiful.

In transferring a work from the page, it's legitimate to alter the original. But *OITNB* goes way beyond this to disfigure the basic spirit of the book, refitting characters and story to suit TV's definition of "gripping."

In the book, for instance, Piper, new to prison camp, remarks that the food is so bad, there ought to be a hunger strike. She doesn't know the middle-aged Russian woman across from her is the cook. The cook, though hurt, warns Piper not to mention hunger strikes if she wants to avoid solitary. But on Netflix, the cook seethes, and next day at breakfast, Piper finds a bloody tampon on her muffin -- a cue to the camp's women that Piper is to be starved. Piper doesn't eat for days, til she figures out how to make amends.

Crazy Eyes, in the book, is a Latina who had a crush on Piper, but who backs off after Piper explains she isn't interested. Crazy Eyes, in the series, is a wiggled-out Black butch, who after being refused, sneaks into Piper's cubicle to piss on the floor.

Occasionally, Netflix offers pockets of clarity: Poussey, a young Black woman, is able to catch a last desperate glimpse of her friend Taystee as she's released; Sophia, the only transgender woman, confides in the activist nun. Despite the show's moral flaws, the actors are competent, dimensional, skilled -- and deserve better.

Here's the thing. I've been visiting prisoners since 1988. I haven't known life inside, but I know what it's like to be the good friend of someone who may never get out. My partner's years inside color every aspect of our relationship. And whether you know it or not, prison colors every aspect of your life this country.

You want to see women in prison? Turn off your flat screen. Get involved. Teach a class. Write or visit someone inside. What will probably shock you most is how much you have in common.

Susie Day is a writer.

<http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2013/day180913.html>

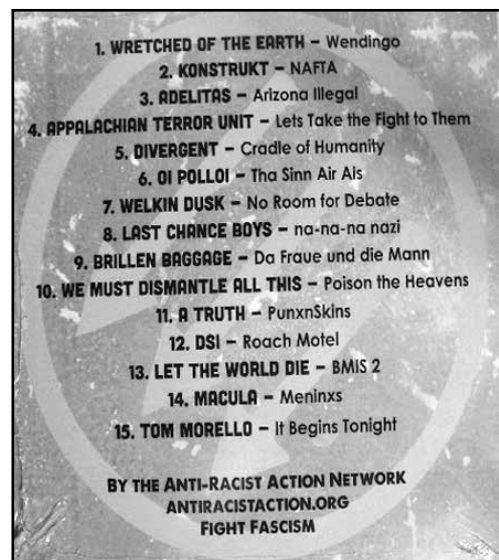
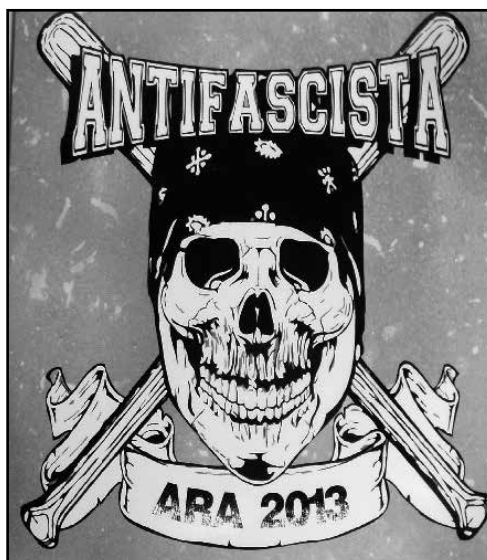


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