

# !ROCK!

★ Working to Extend Democracy to All ★

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## CA'S SAVAGE PRISON SYSTEM

### An End to Solitary is Long Overdue

By Marie Levin

Less than two weeks ago the United Nations Committee against Torture issued a report strongly criticizing the U.S. record on a number of issues, among them the extensive use of solitary confinement. While the U.S. uses long-term solitary more than any other country in the world, California uses it more than any other state. It's one of the few places in the world where someone can be held indefinitely in solitary. This practice is designed to break the human spirit and is condemned as a form of torture under international law.

Despite these repeated condemnations by the U.N., the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is harshening rather than easing its policies, currently with three new sets of regulations. The administration's iron-fisted strategy is

emerging: project the appearance of a reforming system while extending its reach, and restrict the ability of prisoners and their loved ones to organize for their rights.

First, the CDCR has instituted a "Step Down Program" ostensibly to create a pathway out of indefinite solitary. However, the program actually widens the net of who can be considered a threat and therefore eligible for placement in solitary. Recently adopted regulations replace the old language of "gang" with "Security Threat Group" (STG) and the previous list of a dozen identified gangs is now replaced with a dizzying list of over 1500 STGs. Under these new regulations, even family members and others outside the prisons can be designated as part of an STG. Given the fact that indefinite solitary is used disproportionately against people of color – in Pelican Bay, 85% of those in isolation are Latino – the language used to justify placement in solitary eerily mirrors the rhetoric of the federal government and its permanent state of war against its declared enemies, all of whom are people of color.

The CDCR promulgated a second set of rule changes last summer with sweeping new "obscenity" regulations governing mail going both in and out of prisons. The original proposal was to explicitly ban any "publications that indicate an association with groups that are oppositional to authority and society," yet after coming under heavy criticism, CDCR decided to mask its Orwellian motives by hiding behind the above mentioned language of STGs. This ominous language violates First Amendment rights, and reveals a broader agenda: to censor writings that educate the public about what is actually occurring inside the

prisons, and to stifle the intellectual and political education and organizing of prisoners themselves.

A third element of CDCR's strategy of containment is the implementation of highly intimidating visiting procedures designed to keep family members away from their loved ones. Draconian new visiting regulations authorize the use of dogs and electronic drug detectors to indiscriminately search visitors for contraband, even though both methods are notoriously unreliable. These procedures effectively criminalize family members and deter them from visiting, especially in a period of a growing family-led movement against solitary.

The three new policies are also intended to extend CDCR's reach beyond the prison walls. As an organizer and family member of a prisoner, I'm censored when sending letters to my brother, Sitawa N. Jamaa, subjected to gratuitous and intimidating searches during visits, and susceptible to being labeled an STG associate. These are all ways that CDCR is trying to keep me from knowing how my brother and others are doing, and to repress my organizing.

Taken individually, these regulations may seem to address unrelated issues. But given they are all coming down simultaneously – just a year after the last of a series of historic hunger strikes by people in California prisons has given rise to the highest level of self-organization and empowerment among imprisoned people since the 1970s – these regulations are nothing less than a systematic attempt to silence and retaliate against prisoners' growing resistance. Over 30,000 prisoners participated in 2013's strike, some for 60 days, risking their health and lives for an end to indefi-

### CONTENTS

CA's Savage Prison System ....	1
Immunity to Kill.....	2
Death for a Cigarette.....	2
Police State.....	3
Editorial 4-2.....	4
Hands Up - Don't Shoot.....	6
Better to Kill than Imprison.....	7
Rotten Apple Broken Window ..	7
Uncle Sam's Big Top.....	9

nite solitary. Prisoners' family members and loved ones also took up leadership roles in political organizing in unprecedented ways. The movement to abolish solitary continues to gain momentum around the country.

The hunger strikes were a significant part of an ongoing national sea change regarding the use of solitary, as states are waking up to its dangers. Illinois, Maine and Mississippi have closed or drastically downsized their solitary units without any loss of institutional safety. New York and Arizona were recently forced to reduce their use of isolation, with Colorado and New Jersey following suit.

Yet California steadfastly remains an outlier seemingly impervious to change, led by an administration that relies on tired rhetoric about "the worst of the worst" to justify torture. People locked up in California have a decades-long history of fighting for the rights and dignity of prisoners, affirming their humanity in the face of inhumane conditions and demanding change. The U.N. report calls on this government to "ban prison regimes of solitary confinement such as those in super-maximum security detention facilities." It's time for California to listen. ●

*[Marie Levin is the sister of Sitawa N. Jamaa, a prisoner in solitary confinement at Tehachapi. She is a member of California Families Against Solitary Confinement (CFASC) and Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition (PHSS). Mohamed Shehk is the Media and Communications Director of Critical Resistance, and also contributed to this piece.]*

## IMMUNITY TO KILL

By Lorenzo Johnson

It's not a coincidence that minorities are being killed by police at an alarming rate. Simply no regard for Human Rights! By not having safeguards in place, when an unarmed person is killed this gives the police the okay to continue to kill. The first thing society is told is: "The Grand Jury is reviewing evidence to see if a crime occurred." This is all a smoke screen, just look at the murders of Michael Brown and Eric Garner to name a few. Mr. Garner's death was recorded by a phone showing his assassination; still no police were indicted for using a Banned Choke Hold on Mr. Garner. Until the police are held fully accountable, Minorities will continue to be targeted and unfortunately killed.

There have been over five hundred (500) Exonerations of Innocent Prisoners that we know about. The average time frame an Innocent Prisoner spends in prison is between thirteen and a half (13½) to fifteen (15) years, and that's only if they get the necessary representation needed. In some cases, Innocent Prisoners die in prison before their Innocence comes out.

Prosecutors continue to fight tooth and nail to maintain their False Convictions. They hide favorable material that can show a prisoner's Innocence. They let False Testimony stand just to secure a conviction. Out of all the Exonerations of Innocent men and women, NOT ONE percent (1%) of the prosecutors were held accountable for their Malicious Prosecutions. One fact that can't be disputed, minorities make up NINETY PERCENT (90%) of Wrongful Convictions. Until prosecutors are stripped of their IMMUNITY and held fully accountable, this will unfortunately continue to happen.

Mass Incarceration has been going on for decades under a lot of different umbrellas. The biggest one was and is the "War On Drugs." Once again the minorities are the targets. I keep hearing politicians saying: "Our Judicial System is off balance, we must trust and strengthen it. As an Innocent prisoner, the last time I checked, the Judicial System has been our worst nightmare. Our Judicial System is no longer about Justice; it's about politics and votes for politicians. When there are special Laws that target the Inner Cities that differ from Suburbia, the message is loud and clear. Thanks to Social Media the WORLD is finally seeing what's been taking place in our communities. ●

## DEATH, FOR A CIGARETTE!

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

The name Eric Garner is now enshrined in the grim annals of history. It joins Mike Brown, Rahmarley Graham, Alan Blueford, Dontre Hamilton, Tamir Rice, and thousands of others, who were murdered by those their taxes have helped pay: cops.

In many ways, Garner's case is even more egregious than Brown's, for it was videotaped, and one sees his takedown, his incessant choking, his unconsciousness - and shortly thereafter - his death.

Now, the words "I can't breath" have become joined with the cry "Hands Up!" - reminders of the Garner and Brown killings at the hands of police.

Both cases are also noted for the behavior of grand juries, which now appear reckless beyond belief, in their inability to return indictments against cops.

The grand jury emigrated here from England, where, as it was then called, 'grand assizes', a body of about a dozen knights, under the direction of a baron (or some other noble), would investigate cases and charge people.

Later, they became tools of the king. Today, they are instruments of the prosecutors, and used, just as under kings, to target whom they wish - and to clear whom they wish.

Outrage stems from the long history of its use to protect cops -yes-even killer cops.

This, while the nation is awash in mass incarceration, the majority of whom have never had a grand jury indictment, unlike the average cop.

The System is constructed to protect their minions (the cops), no matter how outrageous their behavior. That's just a fact.

And as the nation now celebrates historic events from the civil rights movement of a half-century ago, the grim and ugly present of Black life-and Black Death-in America, makes that glowing history feel hollow indeed. ●



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IN HONOR OF OUR IMPRISONED COMRADES. \$7

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RAGANA OAK  
- SENTIMENTAL DESTRUCTION JAMS

SBSM OAK  
- QUEERCORE SYNTHPUNK

SORRY, NOT SORRY SF  
- QUEER PUNK FUN

DJ DURT  
- DANCE PARTY MIX

HOMOCOMING PHOTO BOOTH - DRESS UPI  
PHOTOS OF LOVE FROM FROM FABULOUS SF WILL BE SENT TO MARIUS & LUKE TO BRIGHTEN THEIR WINTER

THIS IS A QUEER EVENT, EVERYONE IS INVITED. IN SOLIDARITY WITH QUEER AND TRANS PRISONERS!

# THE TRUTH ABOUT WHO IS REALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR CURRENT POLICE AND PRISON STATE

December 5, 2014 |

The 200 protesters arrested last night in New York City and others being arrested elsewhere in demonstrations against police brutality are confronting a police and prison system that has put more people behind bars than any other [3] country. Some have pointed out that those doing the arresting are not exactly far-right Republican and conservative-led jurisdictions, but solidly Democratic strongholds. Cities like New York City, where Eric Garner was tragically killed – are run by the Democratic Party from top to bottom, with one of the country's most progressive mayors, Bill De Blasio at the helm. Given that the party is, at least, traditionally associated with liberalism, civil rights and a more permissive society, some observers find that ironic. But the recent past tells us that the Democratic Party in the past three decades has abandoned concerns for civil liberties and civil rights in the pursuit of appearing to be just as tough on crime as their Republican counterparts.

This is a story that begins when Bill Clinton embraced the law-and-order policies of his Republican predecessors. Let's review:

## Clinton: The New Democrat With An Old Approach To Crime

First some background: The first president to declare a "War On Drugs [4]" was a Republican, Richard Nixon. Nixon began a heavily police-focused drug policy, which was then escalated by Republican Ronald Reagan, who made his wife Nancy the face of "Just Say No" – a more innocuous phrase that was accompanied by a ramping up of prisons and policing.

During this period, many Democrats resisted these policies, considering them to be conflicting with the civil rights coalition they had absorbed into their party since the 1960's. The big change came when President Bill Clinton came into office.

Clinton was a "New Democrat" – part of a new coalition of Democrats [5] who believed that the liberalism represented by the New Deal and Great Society had run its course, and that Democrats must court Big Business and certain right-wing interest groups in order to forge a new party.

Included in this policy shift were things like "welfare reform," the North American Free Trade Agreement, and deregulation of

the telecommunications and banking industries. But perhaps Clinton's earliest and most intense shifting of traditional Democratic Party liberalism was with respect to crime. This took the form of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (later commonly known as the crime bill). To helm its passage, Clinton tapped none other than our current vice president, then Senator Joe Biden of Delaware.

## Joe Biden: Clinton's Crime Bill Enforcer

Biden was the chief author of the 1994 crime bill [6], which vastly increased the number of police officers on American streets, eliminated Pell Grants for prisoners, expanded the federal death penalty and upped the Border Patrol presence (recall that this bill was passed around the same time as NAFTA, which increased migration from Mexico [7]).

The bill was passed in a political climate of hysteria about crime and Biden and Clinton used that climate to their advantage. Recall that during the earlier 1992 presidential campaign, Clinton himself flew back to Arkansas during the presidential campaign to ensure a mentally ill black man was executed. Following the execution, Clinton said [8], "I can be nicked a lot, but no one can say I'm soft on crime."

That was a sentiment Biden and congressional Democrats also sought to project. During the debate over the 1994 bill, then-Rep. Mel Watt (D-NC) introduced an amendment [9] to eliminate death penalty provisions for drug kingpin crimes where no death occurred. Most Democrats voted against the amendment, and it went down in flames. In 1996, Biden joked that "someone asleep for the last 20 years might wake up and think Republicans were representing Abbie Hoffman and Democrats were representing J. Edgar Hoover."

The death penalty alone was huge for the Democratic Party's image projection; Clinton's Attorney General nominee, Janet Reno, boasted of "regularly" seeking the death penalty as Dade County state attorney. The Department of Justice boosted its defendants submitted for death penalty review from 47 (1988-1994) to 682 between 1995 and 2000.

A small group of progressive Democrats, mostly African Americans, requested that

federal death penalty legislation include the Racial Justice Act [10] (RJA), which sought to allow those convicted of the death penalty to use statistical data to support allegations of racial discrimination.

The Clinton White House was silent on the RJA, and it didn't make it into 1994 death penalty legislation. A memo later released to the public revealed why. As author Naomi Murakawa notes [9] in her book *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America*, a White House document titled "Draft Q&A/Racial Justice Act" wrote "[President gives his statement on the urgency of the crime bill. No mention of RJA.] If the administration were to be asked about the RJA, it would reply that Clinton's initiative was to 'pass the bill and get those cops out on the streets,' whether there was an RJA included or not.

Thus, the prison population saw a dramatic increase under the Clinton administration, with the support of most Congressional Democrats (and of course most Republicans, who continued to egg on the Democrats to go even further to the right). Here's what the prison population boom looked like, illustrated by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities:

## The Failed Effort To Stop Police Militarization

The crime legislation of the 1990's didn't just put more cops on the streets and build more prisons, it also made sure those cops were armed to the teeth. Throughout the 90's, there was an expansion [11] of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and Byrne grants, which financed local police departments to wage a heavy-handed drug war (both programs increased under President Obama).

This past June, progressive House Rep. Alan Grayson (D-FL) introduced an amendment [12] to the defense appropriations bill that would block the "transfer" of "aircraft (including unmanned aerial vehicles), armored vehicles, grenade launchers, silencers, toxicological agents, launch vehicles, guided missiles, ballistic missiles" from the Department of Defense to state and local police forces. The amendment received the support of only 62 Members, [11] and those voting against it included Rep. William Lacy Clay (D-MO), who represents Ferguson, and every senior member

of Democratic Party leadership including Reps. Nancy Pelosi (CA), Steny Hoyer (MD), and James Clyburn (SC).

These Democrats (and Republicans, most of whom joined them) were courted by police unions such as the National Fraternal Order of Police and by weapons manufacturers who develop the Pentagon armaments that are now finding their way to the police.

### **Can The Democrats – And Republicans -- Shift Back Towards Crime Sanity?**

Despite all this, there is evidence that we are starting to see a real shift – driven by increasing hostility to the police state by Americans of all political ideologies – by both the Democrats and Republicans towards less militarization of the police and less authoritarian crime policy.

None other than Bill Clinton, the man who oversaw the largest expansion of the federal death penalty in history, admitted as much [13]. “We basically took a shotgun to a problem that needed a .22 – a very significant percentage of serious crimes in this country are committed by a very small number” of criminals, he told an audience in October. We took a shotgun to it and just sent everybody to jail for too long. “I think in this next step where we’re going to be apparently debating all this and as the presidential election approaches, we’ll start to have a discussion of all of this,” he continued, pointing to Republican support for reducing prison time, particularly among the religious wing of the party.”

Many of the Members who voted against Grayson’s amendment, prodded by thousands of protesters in the streets, are now calling for oversight of police militarization. Clay now says [14] he’s “alarmed” by the way Ferguson’s police are armed; the President has pledged to fund a new program [15] to make 50,000 body cameras available for police to wear to reduce incidents of brutality, although many commentators have observed that having his death by chokehold videotaped did not help Eric Garner or his family get much justice.

On the other side of the aisle, the Republicans who goaded the Democrats into becoming the new party of crime authoritarianism, are starting to shift as well. A number of Republican governors [16] have embarked on ambitious criminal justice reform programs, lowering their prison populations. Likely 2016 presidential candidate Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) has been outspo-

ken [17] about police brutality, and has gone further than any leading Democrats in calling for an absolute end to the War On Drugs [18].

None of this is to say that these Democrats or Republicans who have flip-flopped and are now calling for reforms are in any way sincere in their convictions. Who is to say that Bill Clinton was more honest when talking about executing the mentally ill than he is about reducing the prison population today?

But politicians are fundamentally opportunistic, and the fact they are talking about rolling back decades of harsh policies is a testament to the hard work activists are doing across the country, and to the sacrifices of men like Eric Garner who lost their lives, and, in the process, showed us why today’s prison and police state is a failure and why both the Democrats and Republicans must change course. •

Source URL: <http://www.alternet.org/civil-liberties/truth-about-who-really-responsible-our-current-police-and-prison-state>

Links:

- [1] <http://alternet.org>
- [2] <http://www.alternet.org/authors/zaid-jilani-0>
- [3] <http://thinkprogress.org/justice/2014/09/17/3568232/the-united-states-had-even-more-prisoners-in-2013/>
- [4] <http://www.drugpolicy.org/new-solutions-drug-policy/brief-history-drug-war>
- [5] <https://medium.com/@matthewstoller/its-al-froms-democratic-party-we-just-live-here-5d0de7f89c3e>
- [6] <http://www.politifact.com/truth-ometer/statements/2008/aug/24/barack-obama/bidens-crime-bill-helped-some/>
- [7] <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/18/weekinreview/18uchitelle.html>
- [8] <http://books.google.com/books?id=cZe1AQAAQBAJ&pg=PA108&dq=clinton+flew+back+arkansas+execution&source=bl&ots=pHk3XkOik5&sig=xu3S6qrYFWY3-06RppN3WoRKGA&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ue2AVPyGLY6jyAS9tILIBg&ved=0CDQQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- [9] [http://books.google.com/books?id=b6\\_DAAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA244&dq=1994+crime+bill&hl=en&sa=X&ei=W9eAVIH\\_CYWvggSci4DQCw&ved=0CCgQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=b6_DAAwAAQBAJ&pg=PA244&dq=1994+crime+bill&hl=en&sa=X&ei=W9eAVIH_CYWvggSci4DQCw&ved=0CCgQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false)

[10] [http://articles.latimes.com/1994-04-22/news/mn-49044\\_1\\_death-penalty](http://articles.latimes.com/1994-04-22/news/mn-49044_1_death-penalty)

[11] <http://www.vanityfair.com/online/daily/2014/08/militarization-police-force-ferguson-congress>

[12] <https://beta.congress.gov/amendment/113th-congress/house-amendment/918>

[13] <http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/bill-clinton-prison-sentences-take-center-stage-2016>

[14] <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/ferguson-congressman-alarmed-by-militarized-police/>

[15] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2014/12/03/obamas-body-camera-argument-just-took-a-big-hit/>

[16] <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/02/conservatives-prison-reform-right-on-crime>

[17] <http://time.com/3605426/ferguson-michael-brown-darren-wilson-rand-paul/>

[18] <http://reason.com/blog/2014/11/18/rand-paul-last-week-i-want-to-end-the-war>

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## **EDITORIAL 4-2**

It’s been awhile since I’ve written an editorial. Mayhaps I’ll start this one off with a bible quote from Genesis 6:4: “The Nephilim appeared on earth in those days, as well as later, after the sons of God had intercourse with the daughters of human beings, who bore them sons. They were the heroes of old, the men of renown.” Being a godless commie, I have no use for gods of any sort. But I thought it interesting that, according to this quote, god had many sons. Why’d we just pick the one to worship?

### **Police, A Part of The State’s Apparatus of Repression**

While recent killings by police in Ferguson, Missouri, and New York City receive national attention, the fact is that from 1999 through 2011, American law enforcement officers killed 4,531 people, 96 percent by firearms and 96 percent of them men, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. African Americans, 13 percent of the population, are victims in 26 percent of police shootings. Law enforcement kills African Americans at 2.8 times the rate of white non-Latinos, and 4.3 times the rate of Asians.

Hundreds of police killings have been left out of a nationwide database that keeps tabs on these acts, according to an investi-

gative report published by the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ). The newspaper collected information from more than 100 police agencies across the country [out of tens of thousands] all among the largest departments in the US. According to the report, more than 550 killings by police had not been included in the national data kept by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In its report, WSJ took data from the FBI and compared it with information provided to the media outlet by 105 police agencies. The paper tallied 1,800 deaths at the hands of police between 2007 and 2012, which is 45 percent more than the number of “justifiable homicides” recorded by the FBI in the same time period.

### The Newsletter

This is interesting. After announcing my illness and complaining about the lack of stamps from the inside, people evidently figured the newsletter was at an end and so their payment strategy changed. What I am getting now (with the exception PBSP’s B-5 unit, which sent me 80 stamps) is letters with only two, three, or four stamps. Folks are hedging their bets, and that’s okay. You won’t lose much money, only the cost of postage needed to send those few stamps each month or so. Whatever works with you is fine with me. Since I cut off the 550 freeloaders from the mailing list this whole process of cranking out the newsletter has been made much easier. It’s wonderful not having to beg you for money each month. Now the mailing list is almost up to 100, all paying customers (there is no such thing as a “free lunch,” someone pays for it).

For those who are reading *Rock* for the first time, Mark and I have put thousands of dollars of our own money into getting this newsletter in to prison readers. We are now broke. There are no free subscriptions. Nor is your promise to send stamps at some future date going to get you a subscription. If you are too lame to hustle a few stamps, then clearly this is not the publication for you. You need to be reading the sports page from one of the bourgeois media outlets, to see how billionaire A’s team beat billionaire B’s team (as if you had a horse in that race).

### War and Peace

So, Republicrats, how’s that whole global war thing going—you know, the War Against Terrorism? I have got admit that when you first started out on this latest series of wars, I was somewhat be-

fuddled. How, I wondered, can you wage a war against terrorism, which is nothing but a tactic (like a war against the tactic of a flanking maneuver)? Terrorism is a tactic most often used by the weak against the powerful, but is also frequently used by the powerful against the weak (only it’s not called “state terrorism” when done by the U.S.).

This war against a tactic did not start with the attack on September 11, 2001 on the Twin Towers in NYC. It was going on long before 2001. No need a lot of jibber-jabber, are we winning or not? Have there been many terrorist attacks since 2001? Well, in 2013 there were just under 10,000 such attacks, killing 17,958 people, including large numbers of women and children. Draw your own conclusions.

As Gwynne Dyer notes, “The invasions, the drone strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Africa, the whole lumbering apparatus of the “global war on terrorism” have not killed the terrorist beast. They have fed it, and the beast has grown very large.” Can you spell ISIS? Worse, we are pissing off more and more people around the globe with our indiscriminate killings. If drone strikes are okay, then so too should be suicide bombings. Why is one terrorism and the other not? State sponsored terror is still terror. It’s the ‘war on terror’ that is producing more terrorism.

But not to worry my dear Republicrats, to paraphrase Mike Whitney, “the glorious US military has spent the last 13 years fighting sheep herders in flip-flops in Afghanistan in a conflict that, at best, could be characterized as a stalemate. And now the White House wants to take on Russia?” After thirteen years of war against terrorism, and after trillions in treasure wasted on pointless goals, your reward of an even wider war is looming large. But not to worry, Regardless of who might win these little wars of convenience, the military industrial complex will get even richer. And while the youth outside of prison might have to fight and die in these pointless wars, it is a small price to pay for the ever greater profits of the rich and the maintenance of the best government their money can buy. As journalist Benjamin Dangel writes:

The 85 richest people in the world now have the same wealth as the 3.5 billion poorest. That was one of the findings of a report from UK-based Oxfam International, which also concluded that the wealthiest 1% of the global population owns roughly half of

the world’s wealth. Inequality is rising most rapidly in the US, where the richest 1% have benefitted the most from economic growth since 2009. During that same period, the poorest 90% in the US became poorer. This massive concentration of economic resources in the hands of fewer people presents a significant threat to inclusive political and economic systems,” the Oxfam report stated.

The bourgeois politicians here in the U.S. should be offering citizens dreams of a better world, instead they claim to be protecting us from nightmares. Just as the dreams of something better were a lie, also false is the nightmares of the terrorist boogiemani. Whatever happens you can rest assured that not only do the American people have the best government the rich can buy, they also have the government they deserve.

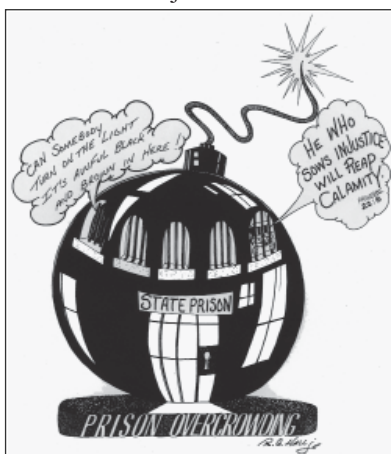
Why would I say something that mean? In today’s *Seattle Times* are the results of a poll of U.S. citizens on the subject of torture. The article said “Just over half of Americans say they believe the interrogation methods the CIA used against terrorism suspects ... were justified.” Breaking the bones in their feet and making them crouch in a tiny box on those same feet. Stringing them up naked to a wall and beating them, leaving them in the cold, at least one died from the cold (oh, and come to find out, the one who died was innocent). Don’t get the idea that only one died, there were dozens, possibly hundreds or thousands (we only see the tip of the iceberg). I personally have read accounts of many such killings in the bourgeois press.

The American people are the “good Germans” of today; like their counterparts of old who blissfully believed every lie the Nazi’s cynically fed them. The problem is that, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said (Adapted from Dante) “He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.” Torturing people is evil, period! The majority of Americans who today support torture are complicit in those war crimes. The thing of it is, there is a second torture report locked away at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. The agency says the document is so sensitive that national security would be at risk if any details about it were publicly revealed. It must be like the recent Wikileaks revealing that the CIA admitted drone strikes are ineffective. Indeed, according to a leaked CIA document released by Wikileaks, the controversial U.S. drone strikes may be

helping rather than hindering the Taliban in Afghanistan. Similarly, the U.S. State Department is delaying the release of a volume from its U.S. foreign relations history that deals with the CIA-backed overthrow of an Iranian prime minister in the 1950s out of concern that publication could undermine nuclear diplomacy with the Islamic republic.

Uh, no. Iran already knows you overthrew their democratically elected government in order to install the hated dictator, the Shaw of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who butchered his people until the masses finally drove him out of power. By that time, however, all of the progressive elements had been killed by the Shaw, leaving only the religious sector remaining to pick up the reins of power. So in effect, it was the U.S. who is ultimately responsible for the religious elements currently ruling Iran. Just like the murderous regime currently in power in Guatemala, there too the U.S. overthrew a democratically elected government to install yet another fascist. In 1971, in a coup orchestrated by then President Nixon and his crime partner Henry Kissinger, the democratically elected government of Chile was overthrown and a fascist dictator (Augusto Pinochet) was installed (after the elected president was murdered in his office by Pinochet's soldiers). These are just a few examples of the many instances of our deadly meddling in the internal affairs of other sovereign nations. Might does not make right.

Indeed, if you had broken someone's bones and shoved anything up their asses, you'd be charged with rape and who knows what. You'd never see daylight. Just as you would be held accountable for such crimes, so too should the torturers of the Bush and Obama administrations. If they are not held accountable in the United States, they must be pursued internationally under the principles of universal jurisdiction. ●



## HANDS UP – DON'T SHOOT

By *Jalil A. Muntaqim, s/nAnthony Bottom*

Contrary to the refrain from the tragic Ferguson, Mo., shooting of Michael Brown, we know that keeping your hands up does not mean you will not be shot. Assata Shakur had her hands up when she was shot on the New Jersey turnpike by a State Trooper, Oscar Grant was lying face down on a subway platform when he was shot in the back by a Bay Area Transit cop, Sean Bell was executed in a hail of bullets by a half dozen N.Y. city cops while sitting in a car, and Trayvon Martin fought to defend himself when he was murdered by a wanna-be cop just yards from his home. Obviously, I find this plea for mercy sorely insufficient, in fact, indefensible when a trained killer has a weapon pointed at you under the guise of Blue authority. Needless to say, this passive posture generally supports the inferior and superior paradigm, creating a social environment in which Black lives do not matter. Brooke Reynolds, in an essay titled “Policing Race,” informed:

“This 'order' was created and protected by US law. From slavery to today's militarized ghettos, it is clear that racial violence has almost always occurred explicitly or implicitly in cooperation with the law. William and Murphy trace the relationship between the law and social order: “The fact that the legal order not only countenanced but sustained slavery, segregation, and discrimination for most of our nation's history and the fact that the police were bound to uphold that order sets patterns for police behavior and attitudes toward minority communities that has persisted until the present day.” (Parenti). In terms of the relationship to the police themselves, “Government-sponsored racial discrimination and segregation have deeply affected the organizing ethos and practices of US policing.” (Parenti)—thus, it becomes clear that “... relationship between police violence and social institution of policing is structural, rather than incidental or contingent.” (Martinot, Sexton). Wielding an arsenal of moralist rhetoric and trained over hundreds of years of historical practice, the police work in conjunction with white society and its government to keep white lawlessness understood as nothing other than “public order,” enforcing “the law of white supremacist attack” with determination and fervor.”

In response this reality, Robert Williams

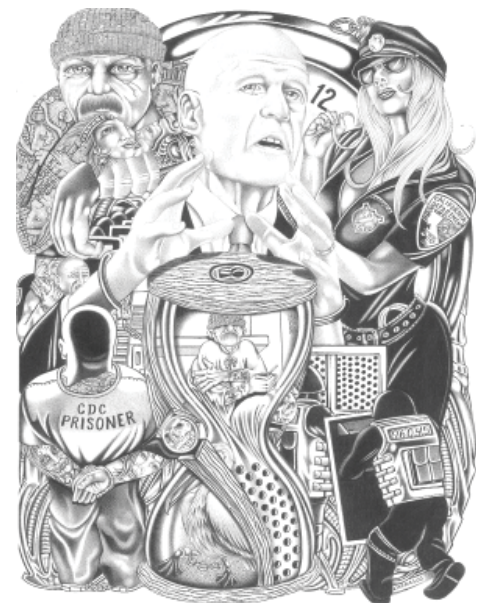
wrote the book “Negroes With Guns,” reflecting on the institutionalization of State violence and the inherent human rights of Black people to defend themselves, that was also practiced by the Deacons for Defense opposing Klu Klux Klan violence.

Reynolds continues:

“By confronting the perpetration of police racial violence with the maintenance of social order, it is rendered unidentifiable, ignorable, and inarticulable. Having been so deeply written into our very conception of social organization and policing, police brutality and racism becomes invisible to white society (who also has an investment in denying the reality of racial violence). Shocked by stories of police violence and unmoved by the dehumanization of racial profiling, white people simultaneously reveal their ignorance of and investment in the violent inherent in the protection of white supremacy.”

Furthermore, Reynolds states:

“The ignorability and inarticulability of racist police violence to white society is directly related to its historical and current impunity. Authorized by the government end white society as a whole, the police are given the freedoms necessary in order to guarantee the stability of white supremacy and to continue constructing racialized identities. Within this system, injustices done to people of color are not classified as injustices, if they are recognized at all. Police murders, abuses, and terrorization of people of color, no matter how gratuitous, are more often than not met with legal indifference, public support, and are virtually



“Time” by Chris Carrasco

bereft of consequences. Martinot notes the relationship between modern-day police impunity, slave patrols, and white supremacist law:

“Both the police and the impunity of slave masters belong to the same paradigm of dual systems of law, sanctioned by the law, in producing the subjection of people of color. What contemporary juridical procedure has done, by valorizing police impunity, is regenerated the doubled system of law of the slave system... Thus, both manifest the component elements of white racialized identity paranoia..., violence..., and white solidarity...” (Martinot).

“The racist police violence which pervades the landscape of US society today is not incidental, nor [is it] the work of ‘rogue cops,’ [It is] an essential part of the larger campaign of social re-racialization” (Martinot). Historically rooted in a very real desire to subjugate and control people of color in America, and operating in a way which inscribes and deepens whiteness as an identity and a value, today’s police forces operate along the same paradigm as their predecessors.” (Reynolds)

These lengthy quotes from Reynolds “Policing Race” establish the lens in which we are to view the recent rash of police killings of unarmed Black people. It is extremely important that conversations and national debate about the relationship between the police and the Black community is not the same as the relationship between the police and the white community. The historical ramifications of this dynamic relationship today are subject to the reality of the racist culture in law enforcement. Law enforcement modus operandi, for all intents and purposes, are based on outside armed forces, albeit white people, patrolling communities of color, with all of its inherent racial implications.

Over forty years ago, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense raised the e very same issues, establishing their patrols to ensure police officers conducted their business in accord with the law. For their actions and concerns for the welfare of the Black community, the BPP became the number one target for extermination by law enforcement across the country. The primary reason is because the BPP did not believe or practice passive resistance, they were not in the streets chanting “Hands Up Don’t Shoot.” Such passive pleas would be considered a misguided belief protesters would be safe challenging a system of armed forces with innate disdain for the

well-being of Black people’s lives. Rather, such modus operandi parallels the racial attitudes of the slave patrols out of which the police system evolved. (See, Hadden, Sally E., *Slave Patrols*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) (Reynolds, pg. 3-8).

The task of young people today is to increase pressure and define the national debate on the relationship between the Black community and police. De-Militarization and De-Centralization must become the primary demand. The call for community control of the police was what the BPP fought to achieve, and that objective is what needs to be demanded now. The police need to live in the community, not come from outside the community. There must be more diversity in the command and structure of the police, reflecting the composition of the community they patrol.

It is time to reverse the chant ‘No Justice No Peace’ to “No Peace Without Justice,” it is time to ensure Black lives matter as much as white lives, and that all people’s lives are as sacred as police lives.

The First Line of Defense IS power to the People!

Remember: We Are Our Own Liberators

*Jalil A. Muntaqim # 77A4283*

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## CIA: "MANDELA SHOWS BETTER TO KILL THAN IMPRISON"

A study by the Central Intelligence Agency that evaluated the pros and cons of assassination programs has revealed significant insights into the agency’s thinking about targeted killings, including potential backlash. The study was published by Wikileaks on Thursday.

The study is titled “CIA Best Practices in Counterinsurgency” and evaluates assassination operations against the Taliban, al-Qaeda, the FARC, PLO, HAMAS and the Shining Path, among others, including those managed by other countries.

One of the determinations is that most assassinations of “high-value targets” do not usually produce the desired result. The booklet notes a few exceptions: the 2008 assassinations of FARC leaders Raul Reyes

and Ivan Rios is thought to have eroded cohesion among the FARC ranks and the assassinations of HAMAS founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin and co-founder Abdel Aziz is thought to have demoralized the ranks of that organization.

Despite its low rate of success, however, the review does suggest that assassination of high-value targets is sometimes preferable to attempts to capture. Captured targets may often become icons of resistance while they serve in prison. The example in that case is none other than Nelson Mandela who served 27 years in prison for his anti-apartheid activities in South Africa.

“Capturing leaders may have a limited psychological impact on a group if members believe that captured leaders will eventually return to the group,” the review reads, “or if those leaders are able to maintain their influence while in government custody, as Nelson Mandela did while incarcerated in South Africa.”

Perhaps as a result of the analysis, such assassinations radically increased over the years after the publication of the 2009 booklet. The following year became “the year of the drone” with 751 people killed by UAV strikes in Pakistan alone in 2010, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

After that, however, one of the report’s prognosis seems to have come true with the radicalization of areas devastated by drone-based assassinations such as Waziristan.

“The potential negative effect of HLT [high-level targets] operations include increasing the level of insurgent support..., strengthening an armed group’s bonds with the population, radicalizing an insurgent group’s remaining leaders, creating a vacuum into which more radical groups can enter, and escalating or de-escalating a conflict in ways that favor the insurgents.”

<http://us.sputniknews.com/us/20141218/1013345124.html>



## "ROTTEN APPLES" & "BROKEN WINDOWS"

By Mumia Abu-Jamal

The massive demonstrations rocking U.S. cities from coast to coast are loud and visible reflections of the deep anger and antipathy rising up against the long and bloody train of police terrorism.

If you have read my writings or listened to my commentaries, you know that I describe the police violence as what it is: terrorism, not 'brutality'.

For the aim of all police violence is to instill terror in Black populations, just as was the aim of white terrorists of the past, like the Ku Klux Klan, which lynched Black men, women and yes- children.

And although these protests by young people across the country are remarkable, we must remember that cop violence against African American communities ain't a new thing.

It was Dec.4, 1969 – 45 years ago, when cops raided the Monroe Street apartment building of young Black Panthers, including Deputy Chairman Fred Hampton, of Chicago. There, police, armed with sub-machine guns, shot Capt. Mark Clark, of Peoria, Illinois, and Deputy Chairman Fred Hampton, as he slept in his bed, next to his pregnant wife. Both Mark and Fred were killed; at least 7 other Panthers were wounded by police gunfire – as they lay in their beds.

Not a single cop was ever charged with these murders or these attempted murders and aggravated assaults on members of the Illinois Black Panther Party.

Next spring marks the 30th anniversary of the MOVE Bombing – where cops dropped bombs from a helicopter, and killed 11 men, women and children – members and relatives of the Black Naturalist group, MOVE.

Eleven people burned and/or shot to death – and 2 city blocks in Philadelphia turned to glowing red bricks and ashes. And again, not a single cop ever even charged with anything. Only MOVE survivor, Ramona Africa would ever get to prison – for Riot! 7 years.

The movement protesting police terrorism is a remarkable thing; but it didn't begin yesterday.

Police terrorism is decades long, and it ain't about 'rotten apples' nor 'broken windows'. It's about blocking a popular freedom movement, and protecting a system of repression. ●

## ORGANIZING AGAINST POLICE TERROR

By Ed Mead

You have listened to me prattle on and on about the necessity for peaceful protest on the inside, that violence in the prison struggle only serves the interests of the state, and that those advocating violence are provocateurs who will give the Green Wall exactly what they need to put an end to all forms of resistance to slavery. From this one might have concluded that I'm a pacifist. Not so. As regular readers know, I've bombed the federal and state governments numerous times, and have been in fire-fights with police too.

Indeed, last night I was watching the TV news when a story came on about the Federal Courthouse in Tacoma, I said to the person next to me "I've bombed that courthouse." I'm not a pacifist, but I am somewhat of a strategist. Prisoners and ex-prisoners must not use violence in the furtherance of the struggle. Period. If you feel you must implement some form of protest beyond the confines of bourgeois law, then take those impulses to another struggle, not the prisoners' movement.

As long as the capitalist state exists there will be violence between the oppressors and the oppressed. Often, as demonstrated in the rash of recent police killings of unarmed Black people who did not even rise to the level of "suspect" in a crime, the person killed can be a 12 year old child with a toy gun. This is police terror. One of the dictionary definitions of the word "terror" is to rule through the use of fear. George Jackson wrote "If terror is going to be the choice of weapons, there must be funerals on both sides" [*Blood in My Eye*, p. 26].

We have a Black man sitting in Seattle's jail charged with stalking and shooting two police officers while they sat in their patrol car, one cop was killed the other wounded. He too was responding to the police killings of Seattle's youth. They busted the alleged killer two days later. Mark Cook and I both wrote to him in the King County Jail, offering our support. His lawyers made us stop contacting him, saying it would not help the defendant's case to be associated with the likes of us. This morning I picked up the *Seattle Times* newspaper and on the front page was an article titled "2 NYC Police Officers Shot Dead in Patrol Car" with a subtitle of "Gunman vowed online to re-

taliate for chokehold death of Eric Garner." Just as the Seattle suspect was responding to police terror, so too was today's case in NYC.

Police terror is a national problem in America's poor and minority communities. One might understandably respond to such provocations in a violent way. But prisoners cannot stoop to engage in the luxury of revenge. The prisoners' struggle must be peacefully waged, both inside and out. And yeah, I did bomb the headquarters of the Department of Corrections in the state capitol, but that was then and this is now. In my day we did not have 30,000 prisoners we could draw on for support, we did what we did in the absence of a mass movement. Today, to one extent or another, that movement exists on the inside of California's prisons. Remember, without mass struggle there can be no revolution. Our job is to build that mass movement on the inside, without provoking additional repression in the process. Every GP tier should have an elected representative, one accountable to those who elected him or her, not to the prison administration. Dormitory and other open housing units should similarly elect prisoner representatives.

The International Declaration of Human Rights, a treaty the U.S. is a signatory to, states that we have a right to peacefully organize ourselves. ●





"\*" equals new paragraph)

By Josua (Zero) Cartrette, Pendleton OR

**H**ark now all you merry souls  
And listen as the drumbeat rolls  
Oh what sounds and sights abound  
Come one and all, let's strap you down  
No worries friends. No danger here  
No cause for panic, fright or fear  
We're your friends, make no mistake  
Don't mind those guards, guns, dogs and gates  
Just follow me. Yes right this way  
'Cause in the tent you're sure to stay. \*  
Now step to the right folks, here you'll see  
Rows upon rows of new TVs  
What a marvel, just sit and watch  
These flashing pictures as you rot  
Pay close attention. Here comes the end  
So smile and nod at the message they send.  
As they tell you what to want and wear  
On what to spend, and when to care.  
And who hate, and emulate,  
And who should run this police state. \*  
It's all for your own good, you see?  
Freedom of thought saps your energy.  
Yes that's it, makes perfect sense.  
Now sit and stare, and let's commence.... \*  
Now once you've gone through the program phasing,  
We've something else that's just as amazing!  
A feast for the mind now, if you will  
Euphoria! In just one tiny pill.  
We've got Prozac, and valium, we've got Vicodin!  
And Xanniies, and Oxies, and sweet Ridalin!  
We've got Benzos and Dexos, and Xicabilferal!  
We've got shit that you can't even pronounce at all!  
We got you're your stuff, no matter your vice.  
Opiat derivatives to the pharmaceutical ice.  
We'll fix your brains, your chondriatic disease,  
Your moods, your stress, even your shaky knees!  
With only the safest new medications,  
Designed by private health care corporations,  
Profiteers in big business completion  
For capital gain and political position.  
So pay no mind to that small print warning  
Just pay for your drugs and take two every morning.... \*  
Ahh, good. I see you're all pacified on your new medication!  
Well then come right this way to the next demonstration  
Onward we go, deeper into the tent.  
Now give me your money, you have to pay rent.  
Oh yes, now here I should tell you,  
We also reserve our full rights to sell you.  
And to buy you. And to steal you.  
And to enslave you. And even kill you. \*  
But never mind all that just yet,  
I'll explain it all later (once you forget).  
Now come along for this great demonstration.  
It's about to begin, on what a sensation!  
Oh what brilliance! Oh what drama!  
The procession is even being led by Obama  
It's the greatest of shows, the biggest one ever!  
The world's never seen such audacious endeavor! \*

## UNCLE SAM'S BIG TOP

You see, our directors run our show from the shade  
And they've learned from the mistakes that others have made.  
They won't use the same tricks as say Hitler or Stalin.  
We all know how those big tops have fallen.  
No, we'll use balloons! And face paint! And clowns!  
And gadgets and gewgaws! Distractions abound!  
It's fun for the family, a glorious ride!  
(But if you resist, force will be applied)  
We'll sit you in rows, correct social class stations,  
All facing front toward the big presentation  
While little you notice the stage hands behind  
All locking the exits and changing the signs.... \*  
Now the music has stopped. The lights have gone low.  
The ringmaster enters to kick off the show.  
What will they do? What will they say?  
For what grand display did we come all this way?  
The excitement mounts. Oh the suspense!  
He raises his arms, and here he comments...  
"A worldwide welcome to our global mistake!  
In which you get nothing for the tolls that we take.  
You've read the signs wrong, yet now they are gone.  
But since you're all here, the show must go on.  
"So you there," he points to the bottom rung seating,  
Cracking his whip at those of us retreating.  
"You minorities, poor folks, and freaks with mohawks,  
Into the freak show cages with locks!  
And don't waste your time trying to resist  
'Cause our guards are on 'roids, and you *don't* want them pissed  
And the rest of your lower class ladies and gents?  
You'll be the labor to prop up my tents.  
You best not resist, get your asses in gear.  
As we control you with cops and tactics of fear.... \*  
"For you in the middle, lest I forget,  
You're too unpredictable, therefore a threat.  
We're removing your station, so move down below.  
We need gaps in the middle, and distinguishable rows.  
But don't worry folks, no cause for alarm.  
Cooperate and I promise we'll bring you no harm.  
Have a laptop, and iPhone, a "binky" of sorts,  
A gesture of thanks for being such good sports.  
We'll keep you medicated, and very well fed,  
We'll play your favorite cop shoes, then send you to bed.  
Just make no sudden movements, don't stray from your places,  
Or we'll send in the drones to drop pies in your faces.... \*  
But for you in the *toppest* of social class stations?  
It's all just for you, such vast exploitation.  
Such death to those workers in third world countries,  
Death to the ecosystem and its cute little monkeys,  
And death to the dissenters who don't like our shows.  
And death to nature, care of new G.M.O.s  
And human progress itself, by way of oppression.  
And death to all those who we can't squeeze for money.  
And death to anyone who even *looks* at us funny.  
As we pump tons upon tons of poisonous fumes  
Up into the atmosphere in visible plumes.  
It's all for us here, in the toppest of rows.  
For wealth and for power, now on with the show!  
It's the greatest one ever, too big to be stopped!  
Come one, come all, to Uncle Sam's bit top!

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### On Jailhouse Lawyers

"...jailhouse lawyers often unwittingly serve the interests of the state by propagating the illusion of 'justice' and 'equity' in a system devoted to neither." They create "illusions of legal options as pathways to both individual and collective liberation."

*Mumia Abu-Jamal,  
JAILHOUSE LAWYERS: Prisoners  
Defending Prisoners v. The U.S.A.*

### Important Notice

Articles and letters sent to the *Rock* newsletter for publication are currently being delivered and received in a timely manner. Please do not send such materials to third parties to be forwarded to *Rock* as it only delays receiving them and adds to the workload of those asked to do the forwarding.

Letters sent to *Rock* (located in Seattle) in care of *Prison Focus* (located in Oakland) can take over a month to reach us. Send *Rock* mail to this newsletter's return address (below). Anything for publication in *Prison Focus* can be sent either to me or to CPF in Oakland.

### SHOUT OUT BOX

**A hearty shout out to the men of PBSP's B-5 unit for the eighty stamps they sent for the *Rock* newsletter.**

**Rock On!**

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