

THE OREGON PRISONER FORUM

A NEWSLETTER FOR INCARCERATED PEOPLES AND THEIR SUPPORTERS.

Welcome to the Oregon Prison Forum

A Free and open market of ideas from the perspective of the prisoner mind. The creators of this publication are focused on the rights and struggles

political sciences so that we can become more functional participants in society and our own lives; to eliminate prisoner-on-prisoner violence so that we can more effectively focus on issues common to all prisoners; to report on abuses and violations of



of prisoners in Oregon and beyond. Designed, managed and maintained by Prisoners and our advocates: This publication and its creators reject any connections to any entity which contributes to, or is sympathetic to, the so-called Justice System and its Program of Mass Incarceration. We maintain a critical analysis of the Prison Industrial Complex and we contend that any chance of success we have cannot come from the coils of this system, but must be obtained in spite of it.

Our immediate goals with this publication are to identify and define our adversities so that we can explore strategic means of overcoming them; to educate ourselves in the social and

our rights and to explore legal remedies to those violations; and in general, to facilitate the exchange of ideas.

All funding for production and distribution of this publication comes straight off of our own books, and from the pockets of our advocates. That is to say this vehicle of ideas belongs to us alone. It is ours to shape, but it can only exist as long as we make it so. We'd also like to expand distribution to outside the fences in order to spread awareness, gain support and to build positive bridges between the prisoner class and the communities we will be returning to.

This publication is a forum for prisoners to express ourselves and

Thanks

By: Patrick Morris

Thank you comrades for your participation in the common struggle, It can be a weight sometimes, I know. Also, It can be stressful when dealing with people who don't care as well. Also the opportunist's who use the collective to gain material, for their own individualist gain. Its tough. Yet ABC and supporters, as well as myself are revolutionary's. We have each other and we seek to gain more revolutionary's. Always! ABC encourages this indefinitely to the max. Whoever

hears this or reads this should work for all and not only for themselves. Educate ourselves and other's, defy the complicity. Its a war, a perpetual

battle and ultimate war against the machine. Actions will always speak louder than words!

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DO they See Things from the same perspective as us?

A.A.: So, you're asking do they care. And do they relate. um. I'd say the answer to both is probably no. People mostly don't care, and they definitely have trouble trying to relate. But one reason we think its important to examine those points is because historical and social analysis shows that a pretty wide section of our greater social dynamic is very strongly dependent on the conditions of the prison apparatus in our society. Just like the institutionaliza-

tion of the prison system being deeply intertwined into the mechanics of our entire social, economic, and political system. So too are the interests of prison-

ers deeply intertwined with the interests of people in the so called "free-society".

The problem with both cases is that we, as people, are largely uninformed of the facts pertaining to these issues. So I think people mostly don't give a shit. But they should. And part of our objective is to make the case for why it's so important.



Oh Jason, all I want to hear are those three little words.

Agitate
Educate
Organize

communicate. We don't just accept submissions, we NEED them. Articles, essays, reports, book reviews, prisoner support contacts, artwork, poetry, rants, criticisms, arguments, questions, suggestions and snide remarks are all encouraged. Though the creators of this publication work from an extreme ideological viewpoint, we will make a conscious effort to be include (non-discriminate) to all ideological angels and will publish all submissions un-edited. But be clear, our goals are to irradiate class division and build class unity and to focus on issues common to all prisoners.

“He that would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he fails in this duty. He establishes a precedent that will reach to himself” -Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

OAR, security threat management, effective 5-19-08- no part of this publication or its creators will actively promote, advocate, participate in, or encourage “behavior which poses a significant threat to the safe and secure operation of (any DOC) facility”. Including threats or infliction of injury to any other person, escape risks, disruptive group behaviors, involvement with controlled substances or “any other activity that could significantly threaten the safe and secure operation of (any) facil-

ity”. PER STG this publication will not “promote, recruit, participate in, support, display or endorse any group of two or more persons” which has a “common group name, ID symbol, or characteristic which distinguishes them from others’ has members, affiliates, or associates...



who engage in illicit activity, actions of misconduct...” and on and on...

In our favor, the 1st amendment was designed specifically to preserve and protect our rights to freedom of speech, freedom of press and freedom to peacefully assemble and petition the government for redress of our grievances against the federal government.

In 1868 the 14th amendment was adopted into the constitution to extend the protection of our rights against state government infringements.

Folks in isolation for prisoner activism. We also want to expand distribution to people in free society, starting with our facilities and others with interest in the prison situation. And the reason for this is to help build bridges of support and understanding between us and the communities we'll be returning to.

That said, we're not going to exclude anyone, prisoner or “free” person. If a person has something worthwhile to contribute, they're welcome to these pages.

As far as our potential for expansion, that really, depends on us prisoners and ours supporters. Mostly us prisoners though. A lot of it comes down to two things: our participation and our resources.

Participation is critical, so write us. Draw us some shit we don't care what, just draw. Write poems, ask us questions, tell us why we're wrong. Tell us your ideas. Why you love us, why you hate us. Send us your rants, your complaints, your political views. Well print it rather we agree 100% or not. Just send us your shit.

But we also need supporters on the outside. Printing and mailing costs add up, so we can use donations. Send us stamps. Tell your families to check us out and ask how they can help.

Richie” So anyone can participate? All prisoners? People in free society? What about people who do discriminate?

A.A. Okay dude I see what your getting at. So lets be absolutely clear. The cre-

ators of this newsletter are professional revolutionaries. We're not concerned with small scale prison politics or your opinions about who's a so-called “good dude” or a “punk”. The only war we're interested in is a war of classes and any success we might see would be measured by the dynamics of our social constructs, not by the number of attacks upon each other. IF you wanna get really real for a minute, I'd say that a person is only as good as what they're doing in the here and now, and quite frankly all I see from all the lame ass “good dudes” politics is a bunch of people trying to manipulate each other into getting themselves into a wreck for no reason. This is definitely one thing we mean to talk about in these pages and we want to hear from all sides.

As for anyone who insists on maintaining the illusion that they are somehow superior to the dude in the next cell...well, look man. I've been that guy and I'd just say that when you spend so much time keeping yourself propped up on some pedestal in your own mind, the reality is that the only person you're isolating is your own self. Not only is it lonely at the top. But its boring as fuck. So anyone is free to sit with their heads in the clouds. But we're not going to go out of our own way to accommodate anyone's philosophical hang ups. Make sense?

Richie: So one of the goals is to reach out to people in Free society. But will they have much interest in the issues we want to talk about in these pages?

more sense it all begins to make. The same is true for the language you'll run across in our publications.

Still, a lot of us do try to "dumb it down" for the sake of communication. And I for one try to give some type of brief definition as I use some of the more lofty words. I can only speak for myself though.

On the other hand though. I feel like anyone who's really interested in developing themselves whether it be intellectually or whatever else- should be responsible for taking their own initiative. Really its nothing a dictionary can't solve for you.

Lastly, Ill say that I do know a lot of folks who seem interested in flossing big language for its own sake. I call it "verbal acrobatics" and I think its something most true revolutionaries try to avoid. Our language is meant to simplify complex concepts. So when people purposefully aim to construct strings of big words, I find it pretty boring and pretentious and ultimately it only confuses shit and is counter productive. I'm here to agitate, not talk. And so I only talk when it serves to agitate. But as I said, I can only speak for myself. What I can promise you though is that we will explain shit as we go.

Richie: What are the actual goals and agenda of this newsletter? I mean what are we actually trying to achieve here? And who are the people running it?

A.A.: This newsletter belongs to us

prisoners. Period. The people running it are anyone who's willing to write in and participate. Period. We got it off the ground. Now its up to all of us to keep it in the air. But to answer the question as you intended. The creators of this newsletter are a small range of revolutionaries and social activists. Some of us are prisoners, some are lawyers, some are school teachers, etc. Ultimately we're just. People united under a common vision. For a better world free of corruption. We're pretty open and transparent except where safety may be of concern. Our goals, values, principles, agenda, etc will be reflected in the pages of our writings. No big secret.

The goals and agenda of this newsletter, specifically, are described in the introduction. These pages serve as a vehicle for the prisoners voice. A means for social awareness and unity among prisoners and those closet to us in class. An educational forum. A conduit for communication. All of these things. But without the oppressive and debilitating force of the pig class controlling it.

Richie: Can you tell me who all this newsletter reaches? How far is it distributed? Who are you guys trying to reach? How far do you think its able to go?

A.A. Thats a good question because the answer is elemental to our goals. Our first priority is reaching prisoners in Oregon. Especially political prisoners.

In 1925 the supreme court ruled that freedom of speech and press would be among the liberties protected by the 14th amendment, thereby securing our rights to speak freely and openly and to freely create and distribute press against federal and state regulations.

Any infringement upon these rights by federal or state governments, or its employees cannot be tolerated under the 1st and 14th amendments. Any attempt to do so will be grounds for legal action against the offending institution and the employees complicit in the violation and cause for obtaining punitive reparations. This means you will pay us. Any violation of these rights against us will be taken to task.

"above all else, the first amendment means that government has no power to restrict expression because of its message, its ideas, its subject matter or its content"... "the fact that society may find speech offensive is not sufficient reason for suppressing it. Indeed, if it is the speakers opinoin that gives offense, that consequence is reason for according it constitutional protection"... "these protections are extended to prisoners, and any restitution must have valid, rational connection to legitimate penological interests not related to the content of ideas"... "prison walls do not serve to form a barrier seperating

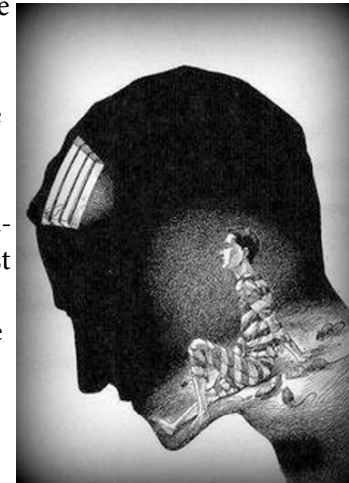
prisoners from the protections of the constitution. Core political speech is most guarded there is a public interest in having free and unhindered debate on matters of public importance."

U.S. V. Eichman (1990); Reagan V. Time inc (1984); Pell V. Procnier (1974), Turner V. Safley (1987); Pickering V. Board of Education (1968); Core value of Free Speech Clause of the 1st amendment.

And so it is within the spirit and the letter of these legal precedents that

we respectfully move all authoritative entities to honor the functions with which we exercise our rights to free speech and press.

-Zero



Open Letter by JT From EOCI

One of the biggest problems with being in prison is that the people that we know on the outs have absolutely no conception of the isolation that prisoners endure daily. One aspect of this letter is to bring awareness to a situation that all inmates live daily. Sure we can get a visit here or a visit there, however, as soon as that visits is over its back to being isolated again. Granted Having a visits is an awesome feeling, but the reality is that you leave knowing you can't leave with them. If you think about that for a mo-

ment you'll realize that you are "happy go lucky" for a moment and then left with a depressing emptiness within yourself. For myself, I told my family (in which it takes a minimum of 7 hrs to drive here for them) that I'd rather not have visit because it makes the isolation that much harder to deal with.

I truly hope that this brings insight to "our" families about prison isolation. Through awareness we bring hope to prisoners everywhere. Remember that!

Legalized Slavery

by Shawn Womack:
OSP

The prison Industrial complex is one of the last visible relics of colonial slavery. The inmate workforce located within the walls of (the Oregon Prisons) is not allowed to protest, not allowed to non-violently obtain a living wage. These inmates are mandated by laws, enforced by the state, to offer their bodies in service/slavery to the factories located within the prison complex. The highest paid position in any of the various factories/industrial plantations I.E. OCE furniture factory, call centers, metal shops is \$150 to \$200 a month. How can a man be expected to provide for himself or his family on such a paltry income?

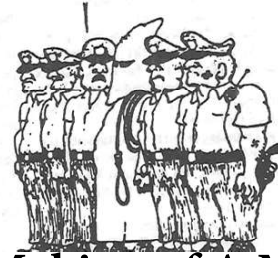


Corporate executives and capitalist elites have engineered production facilities that bear a shocking resemblance to third-world neo-colonies right here on amerikan soil. Not that this is a new phenomenon. We can see quite plainly in the annals of American history how society has been purposely structured to allow for a maximization of profit for a relatively small group of individuals at the expense of impoverishing the workers who actually produce the nations wealth. From the steel mills to the coal mines the worker has always been at the mercy of his employer. The worker is viewed as an expendable asset; something to be used, exploited capital until he /she can no longer produce. The strike was one of the workers most effective tools. It

allowed him/her to forcefully change the relationship of labor V. capital. Nevertheless, we all know too well what happened to the workers who chose to strike. They were beaten by police officers, gunned down by national guardsmen, hauled off to penal/concentration camps; forever denied employment within the matrix of American Mainstream economics; marginalized and stripped of all human, social and political rights.

The Saying goes "those who forget history are doomed to repeat it". The strike has been unceremoniously

You're out of uniform!



The Making of A Modern Day Police Officer: The Story of Everyone's Favorite Cop "Officer Down". By Candice Jones

Here's the story of a bitch from the start a little punk kid who's a coward at heart. He says "everyone picks on me, what can I do! I got a little dick, no one likes me at school!" No women, no friends, he sits alone and cries, stuffing his face with chocolate and lies...

Now all this shit goes on for years, till his weak, useless ass can weep no more tears. One day he jumps up, says "I know what Ill do!

Ill be a cop and Ill show all of you!

So he signs up for training, which isn't so hard

prowling and peeping from the safety of his car

He's a coward, a pig, one of the boys in blue

with little dick syndrome, hes looking for you!

Dedicated to the brave men in law enforcement.

Go get em!

Common Questions about Alternative Literature and Alcoholic Anonymous

Richie: Regarding some of the language used in the Newsletter and some of your other literature. Its sort of difficult for some of us to understand who have little schooling. Including myself. Can you tell me why you guys use such complex language? And can you try to make it more understandable?

A.A.: Personally I try to keep the educational barriers in mind when talking about a lot of the topics we're dealing with. As I know from first hand experience how frustrating it is trying to grapple with the language without much guidance.

Its sort of ironic. But the complex language actually serves to simplify the concepts we're talking about. Every trade, profession, hobby, etc has language that is specific to that subject. The same is with social and political topics. For instance as a skater it would be a pain in my ass to describe the motion of my board every time I wanted to do a certain trick; so instead, we ascribe certain language to it. Tre Flip, smith grind, front-side, blunt slide. These terms are foreign to anyone outside of the skate culture. But you'll find that the more interest you take in learning the tricks, the

point, is that we don't really experience much resemblance to our traditional idea of slavery. And let's be honest, here in the Oregon System we have it pretty good as far as civil treatment and labor practices. But I have a couple bones about that. One is that this so-called nation is made up of 50 states. Oregon is only one of those. The Oregon system looks a lot different than the rule of the carceral system across the country. And for those who accept this fact but turn their head simply because they don't feel the full impact of their slavery, that's like hanging out in a room while the rest of your house is on fire. If you think the flames won't touch you, your fucking delusional. And second of all, just because Oregon inmates experience some degree of less injustices as other states inmates, does not negate the fact that we still experience injustices. The turd we are in happened to stink a little less than other turds. But it's still a fuckin turd man!

Two last points. I'm wondering if you can talk a little more about Oregon Corrections Enterprises. What exactly is OCE? Is it a part of the DOC? Is it a separate entity? How does it work? And you say OCE pays up to \$200 a month? To me that doesn't sound so bad. Especially since I get free room and board. If some of my expenses are already paid for. \$200 seems somewhat equivalent to something like a living wage. Am I missing something? And besides, we don't have to "provide for ourselves and our families" because we've been ripped out of the fabric of our households, so

that's not an expense we need to factor in.. ist? Or is it there in which the problem lies?

Very lastly.... your essay is not merely an intellectual exercise. Okay, I accept that. It's a piece designed to reveal and explain certain functions and elements of our condition. That's great; awareness is the first step to changed right? But your essay sorta leaves a question hanging in the air. Okay, so this is the situation. Well... then what? What's the actual heart of this problem? Why is it even a problem to begin with? I mean after all, we committed "crimes" didn't we? So what's the problem? And mostly, if it is a problem which you leave me unconvinced of then can you also present some type of solution or what? I feel like these answers are eluded to in your essay but only vaguely. Explain a little more will you?

Comradely: Zero

"Government was intended to suppress injustice, but its effect has been to embody and perpetrate it" -William Godwin (1756-1836)

"corporations are many lesser commonwealths in the bowels of a greater like worms in the entrails of a natural man"> -Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

bartered away by the so-called leadership of many trade unions in the workers movement. What is left can only be seen, in its proper light, as begging for relief and tokenism. This mentality is not only found within the operating in "free" American Society. It is also the subject of this essay regarding the treatment of inmate workers. The inmate population has very little incentive to work. If it weren't for the fact that our collective stomachs compel us to eat. I daresay the revolution would be complete. These inmates know, I mean they are conscious of how, and by who, they are being exploited. IT is common knowledge that Oregon Corrections Enterprises is a corporation that makes ample use of employing slave labor. Slaves do not have to be justly compensated for their labor. Nor do they have any real rights that the courts would respect or defend. These inmates will not strike because they are all aware of the retaliations that will commence on the part of (the D.O.C.'s) administration. Capitalists use the government and its military agencies to break strikers. Prison administrators use isolation/solitary confinement, physical violence by highly trained storm troopers, and the fear of being transferred to another state away from loved ones as a deterrent to any inmate who wishes to organize the inmate workforce against those who would exploit them for private gains.

I don't want to give the impression that this essay is merely an intellectual exercise. I am trying

to demonstrate the historical nature of my observations. What I am witnessing right now is not a coincidence. It is the product of much thought, time and preparation. This system is designed to crush anyone who opposes it, to silence anyone who would speak out against it. Most decent human would say that what the state is doing is criminal. Slavery is abolished right? No! The U.S. Constitution allows for the imposition of slavery for anyone convicted of a crime. This is an actual fact. No man in this place, if he be of sound mind will deny the sheer brutality and dehumanizing effect of being identified as a slave. A number. These men are my brothers, and yet they are being conditioned to think of themselves as something inferior to human beings. Their struggle is my struggle. It's not a matter of races, it's a matter of class. My place is with the people. Those who live but never know Freedom. Our leaders have failed us entirely. They have either joined our oppressors in exchange for a piece of the devil's pie, or have co-opted the revolutionary struggle in favor of meaningless reform. The inmate is the new steel worker, coal miner, assembly linesman. One made a slave by economic policy, one by judicial policy. There is only one winner in all this: the policy maker

Zero responds: Shawn, you're absolutely correct in your facts and analysis. I've been using this essay of yours from time to time as I introduce folks

to some of these points and modes of thinking. You nailed your target completely.

That said though, there's a couple points of contention that are raised. Some I will clarify. But others I will leave to you or someone else to iron out.

First thing. I get a lot of arguments about the slavery issue. People falsely believe that slavery has been abolished in this so-called nation. People will argue this even though they are willfully uninformed. But your claim is supported by fact. The so called "civil war amendments", amendment #13 "section one" clearly states: "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, EXCEPT AS PUNISHMENT for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted. Shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction".

"section two" of the same amendment states: "congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation".

So the article the congress is given power to enforce is not the freedom aspect. The article's specific subject is in regard to "slavery" and "involuntary servitude" (which is a redundant term for slavery). Where one has been convicted of a crime-felony or misdemeanor- the congress has sole power to conscript one into slavery.

The facts behind this, further, are that Abe Lincoln signed the so called "emancipation proclamation" after the confederated states had already

rejected allegiance to the Union. The rest of the United States. So it goes like this:

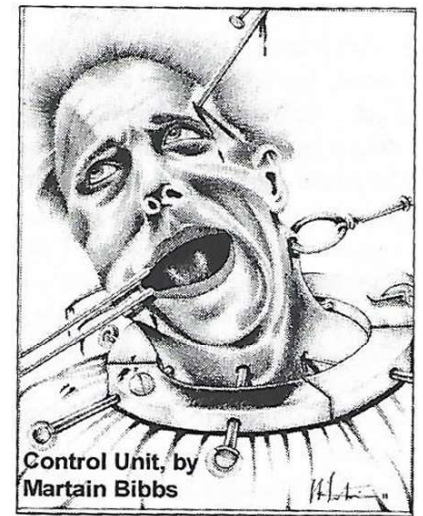
The Confederated States of America formed and armed themselves against the union in February 1862. In march, Lincoln declared his own passive support for slavery in those states. The confederates continued agitation against the Union. Then, in January 1863, food ole Abe wrote that he frees the slaves "because I believe it helps the union" and by that he means that it would serve the Union's war objective. So it was a political move, not a moral one: and by previous statements, all evidence shows that Abe was not anti-slavery. His hand was forced. In December 1863, the 13th amendment was put into the constitution. Only months after the defeat of General Lee and the victory of the Civil War. The slaves had been, not only freed, but armed. He had no option. But slavery is essential to American Economics, and even American culture and values. The solution is in a loophole- one very plain to see. Slavery is NOT abolished, only transformed and given a hero's face. So Black people were "freed"-but for almost a hundred years later were subject to a new system of slavery under Jim Crow segregation laws called "convict leasing". Hundreds of thousands of freed slaves were then incarcerated under "vagrancy laws" for things like being out past curfew and for speaking to white women. Prisons were then built on old slave plantations such as the Angola State Prison in Louisiana

where prisoners (Slaves) were then forced to work the same cotton field they did when they were slaves and with the "war on drugs" in the 1980's this system has only grown to be what it is today. The largest prison industrial complex in the world with millions of slaves under what authors like Micheal Alexander are now calling "the New Jim Crow".

Slavery is only less apparent now. Prisons are built in rural towns far away from big cities and the public eye. You have a small number of white folks in the mix as well. But as you say. This is the product of much thought, time and preparation. It is a very carefully designed system built to camouflage and secure the practice of slavery.

Secondly, in your essay you mention the workers most effective tool- the labor strike. As an anarchist and a member of labor myself, the methods and organization strategies behind effective labor strikes sorta gets my blood pumping. But I think a lot of people have a real ignorant idea of the functions of effective striking. Mainly they are organizationally fucked up. They don't know what their doing. They don't have fully formed plans or correct strategy. One of the purposes of this entire newsletter is to teach people the historical lessons on these types of things. But also, you left out one very critical element regarding the early labor Unions of the late 1800's and early 1900's/ Yes, strikers were beaten, hauled off to concentration camps, even hung in the streets, shot down by pigs of different sorts. But the biggest bullies of all were some of the mafias that capitalized

on union busting. Employers would pay mafia's to kill union organizers and small wage laborers. And so it's ironic that now, our peers, who are victims of the same system, idolize and emulate these early "gangsters". Like then, we still are our own worst enemies. This is why one of the goals of this newsletter is to eliminate that self-defeating mentality of click-ism that keeps us at each other's throats.



Also, you mention that workers in general as being expendable as- set. Again, your absolutely on-point. Especially we, the incarcerated slave laborers. I was going to ask you to go further in depth on the mechanics of this, but I found a piece by Alexander Berkman called "the wage system and Govt." that comrade Looney sent to me about a year or two ago that breaks this shit down BEAUTIFULLY, we'll include separately.

But now to be fair, an argument brought to me often on this