

Our All of Us or None newspaper serves to link those of us who have been locked up, those who are locked up, as well as our families and allies in this struggle.



ALL OF US OR NONE

NEWSPAPER

We want to ensure that the voices of our people inside are heard and the inside artists are recognized for their contributions to this movement.

Your stories matter!



Juvenile convicts at work in the fields in Southern chain gang. Southern jails made money leasing convicts for forced labor in the Jim Crow South. Circa. 1903 Photo: Shutterstock

Not Worker, But Chattel

by Ivan Kilgore, CSP-Solano CA

Excepts taken from the essay previously published in Propter Nos Vol. 3 (2019)

One of the most overlooked contradictions that imprisoned abolitionists face today is not merely the issue of our resistance meeting a master's repression, nor is it a matter of fending off the Democratic Party's attempt to co-opt—to steal and covertly misdirect—our efforts into the legal machine of Civil Rights reform. What we prison slaves and millions of other “prison-slaves-in-waiting” I have yet to comprehend is the extent to which an internal ideological struggle must be waged among ourselves, within a segregated prison population, as well as in our neighborhoods and communities, if we are ever to realize our potential as revolutionary class.

Rendered civilly dead by U.S. law, I am to the State as the slave was to the plantation Master. The same relation of coercive racist violence applies: my black body is always vulnerable, open to an enveloping State terror. As property of the State, I exist in direct confrontation with the punitive core of capitalist relations of force. Every movement I make carries with it the possibility of authority's lash. I am the bodily raw material that gives the prison industrial complex purpose and social meaning. Beyond recognizing the structure of violence that I inhabit, it should also be noted how the very act of naming myself—a slave held captive by the State—as “worker” enables various tactics of seduction which operate to displace the gravity of the situation. Because job assignments are seen as a relative privilege behind these walls, we are lured into conformity and compliance to work, often merely out of a need to survive. While I discuss this latter dilemma for the majority of this essay, I would first like to begin by unpacking the former, clarifying the structural position of the (prison) slave.

There are two essential dilemmas that prisoners face when organizing as the worker-on-strike instead of the slave-in-revolt. One is that a prison strike must be organized differently, its operations conducted differently, and requires a level of active solidarity (from others not in our position, non-imprisoned people) far greater than any other united workplace action. Many on the outside need to take up more of



Two incarcerated men sew uniforms. Photo: Shutterstock

the risk. For example, there are numerous ways that free-world people can participate in a prison strike that does not mistake symbolic action for direct, disruptive tactics. We need mass civil disobedience, not more civic performance. If our goal is to clog the arteries of the prison regime from within, it might be more effective to choose methods that interrupt the prison's reproduction from without. While we are staging sit-ins, boycotts, stoppages, and refusing trays inside, freeworld activists could occupy the offices of a Department of Corrections, stage protests at a prison warden's private house, or stage sit-ins in the buildings of government institutions and corporations that benefit from the smooth functioning of the prisoncrat's political-industrial machine. As an outside comrade once pointed out, “phone zaps” are effective in certain historical

Continued on page 4

Plan to Close Ten Prisons by 2025

by By Robert J Hansen

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www.davisvanguard.org



CURB Executive Director, Amber-Rose Howard

Sacramento, CA – Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB) held a statewide online rally calling on Governor Gavin Newsom and the state to adopt a comprehensive plan for future prison closures and to halt CDCR spending increases.

CURB is calling on California to close at least 10 prisons in the next 5 years.

CURB Executive Director, Amber-Rose Howard said the legislature and Newsom need a serious roadmap for prison closures.

“A serious roadmap for more prison closures means closed prisons must be torn down and repurposed for positive non-carceral use,” Howard said to over 200 attendees.

Howard said that deactivated facilities historically are still used for carceral purposes by the federal government or immigration prisons.

The rally came two days after Gov. Newsom released his 2023-24 budget proposal funding \$14.5 billion for CDCR, \$500 million more than this fiscal year.

Howard said that as more prisons are shut down and the prison population continues to decline, so should the amount of funding.

“Going up another half a billion dollars ain't it,” Howard said.

Of this amount, the \$3.8 billion General Fund is for health care programs, which provide incarcerated individuals with access to mental health, medical, and dental care services.

The adult incarcerated population for 2022-23 is projected to be about 96,000 and a decrease of 6.6 percent since the last projections, according to the Governor's Office.

Fall projections indicate the adult incarcerated population will trend downward, decreasing by 2,761 individuals between 2022-23 and 2023-24, from 96,157 to 93,396, respectively.

In September 2021, CDCR closed the Deuel Vocational Institution in Tracy and California Correctional Center (CCC) in Susanville is scheduled to be closed by June 2023.

Woods Ervin, Critical Resistance, said the CCC closure is an example of what to avoid in future

Continued on page 7

Many of the country's largest corporations rely on exploitative prison labor for profit. For little to no wages, people who are incarcerated manufacture goods, farm, clean medical waste, and more. It's estimated that more than \$14 billion in wages is stolen from incarcerated workers each year.

Do you shop or eat at these businesses that use prison labor?





(Vol. 4, Issue 2)

Cover Stories

Not Worker, But Chattel
Plan to Close Ten Prisons by 2025

Page 2

Message From Dorsey Nunn
Movement Maker
Comic

Page 3

Jesse's Corner
Canteen Bill Proposal

Page 5

The Most Valuable Gift

Page 6

Celebrate Black History Month
Artist Spotlight

Page 7

Mailbag
Lifelines is Back

Page 8

Chapter Contacts

All of Us or None is an organizing movement started by people who have been in prison in order to challenge the pervasive discrimination that formerly incarcerated people, people in prison, and our family members face. Our goal is to strengthen the voices of people most affected by mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex. Through our grassroots organizing, we are building a powerful political movement to win full restoration of our human and civil rights.

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4400 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94608

www.prisonerswithchildren.org



SELF DETERMINATION PLEDGE

As members of All of Us or None, we pledge:

To demand the right to speak in our own voices

To treat each other with respect and not allow differences to divide us

To accept responsibility for any acts that may have caused harm to our families, our communities or ourselves

To fight all forms of discrimination

To help build the economic stability of formerly-incarcerated people

To claim and take care of our own children and our families

To support community struggles to stop using prisons as the answer to social problems

To play an active role in making our communities safe for everyone

Message From Dorsey

by AOUON Co-Founder Dorsey Nunn



I wish you all a Happy New Year. 2023 is LSPC's 45th Anniversary, and a look back lets us see how far we've come, and how we're in such a great position now to continue our critical work. When Ellen Barry started LSPC in 1978 as Network of Women in Prison, she did so with grants totaling \$12,000. She had a staff of 4, including a woman incarcerated at FCI Pleasanton, and a legal intern from UC Berkeley Law.

45 years later, LSPC has an over-\$3 million budget, owns our own building, employs 27 people—mostly formerly incarcerated and system-impacted—and has had hundreds of interns, many of whom became lawyers and are doing amazing work at organizations such as the Center for Constitutional Rights and the Equal Justice Initiative, or writing books that impact our national consciousness, like The New Jim Crow. And that first legal intern, Pamela Price, was just elected as the first Black District Attorney for Alameda County.

Over the past 45 years, LSPC founded or fiscally sponsored All of Us or None, California Coalition of Women Prisoners, and the first Critical Resistance conferences, groups that have produced fundamental change in both policy and culture. Not only is the majority our staff formerly incarcerated, but we also

created the Elder Freeman Policy Fellowship to train our future leaders.

I'm very proud that over the course of the COVID pandemic that we've been able to maintain and support all our staff. It wasn't too long ago—less than a decade—that Administrative Director Hamdiya Cooks-Abdullah and I were taking serious pay cuts to keep as many staff as possible. Our current financial stability is a sign of the scope and quality of our legislative, litigation, and grassroots organizing work.

We now have a great mix of people who will allow us to accomplish more than we've been able to before. We have a team of four attorneys who are committed to the work in a real, personal way. They are doing everything from training lawyers at other legal service organizations, to crafting legislative policy, to continuing our suit to end long-term solitary confinement, to responding to the hundreds of letters we receive each month requesting legal advice.

I'm very excited about the next generation of organizers and civil rights attorneys. For example, our Housing Advocate Taqwa Bonner, after having served decades incarcerated in prison, has successfully helped pass Fair Chance Housing ordinances in Berkeley and Oakland, and soon in Alameda County. Not only does this continue All of Us or None's initial Ban the Box campaign we started in 2003, but these campaigns provide a model for other counties, like Los Angeles, and across the nation.

We look forward to continue our campaigns into 2023, especially our work to expand visiting rights for family members and to remove the exception clause from Article 1, Section 6 of the California Constitution that legalizes involuntary servitude and perpetuates the practice of prison slavery. And we look forward to welcoming you to our 45th Anniversary Gala later this year!

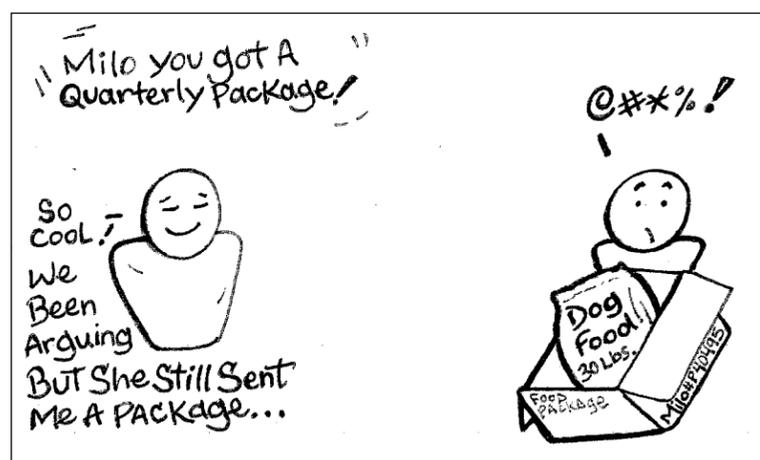
Movement Maker



Answer key on page 7

- CELEBRATE
FEBRUARY
BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH
PROTEST
SLAVERY
FAIR
ABOLITIONIST
COMMUNITIES
COMRADE
ROADMAP
CONSTITUTIONAL
RIGHTS
VALUABLE
INVOLUNTARY
SERVITUDE
LIFELINES
CANTEEN
ESSENTIAL
POWER
DREAMS
INFLUENCE
HUMAN
SPIRIT

Comic by Jessie Milo - California State Prison - Corcoran



Call For Art
AOUON wants to feature your original drawings, paintings, or comics!
Submit your artwork
AOUON News Editor
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

Jesse's Corner

by Jesse Burlison LSPC/AOUON In-Custody Program Coordinator

Bills happening this year



Taqwaa Bonner, LSPC Housing Advocate and lead organizer (r) with his brother Jabar (l), outside the Alameda County Administration Building to push Fair Chance Housing.

Today's corner highlight a few of the bills happening this year. (FYI - a bill is a new law "proposal" that if passed becomes the new law.) These bills are important as we fight to roll back these antiquated (outdated) laws from segregation that continue to hold us down!

1) The Wilma Chan Fair Chance Housing Ordinance (Alameda County) May go state-wide soon!

February 28, 2023, marks the date of the second reading of the Fair Chance Housing Ordinance which would make formerly incarcerated persons "eligible" for section 8 housing and removing the question "have you ever been convicted of

a felony?" from apartment rental applications throughout Alameda County. This matters because housing is limited in poorer communities already, and with discriminatory anti-black laws made during segregation and Jim Crow days still on the books barring us from housing opportunities, such as section 8, and screening us out during the application process, we are constantly susceptible to the designs of homelessness. Being unhoused is not a crime, but it is a crime against us because blocking us from housing perpetuates crime when you force people into not having a place to stay. So Fair Chance Housing opens another door that was mended shut by those who don't care about us. Shout out to those Alameda County board of supervisors who voted to pass this ordinance at the first hearing in the face of strong opposition from the landlords and their associations.

2) Restoring Visiting Rights Inside California Prisons (AB 990 2022)

In the 1970's prisoners established their "right to personal visits". It was codified in the penal code section 2601(d). However, that "right" was changed to a "privilege" in the mid 1990's by former governor Grey Davis. That was also when lifers had their right to family visits taken. Last year we moved a bill called AB 990 through both of the state capitol houses (the senate and assembly) to restore the visiting rights taken from us by former Governor Grey Davis. Even Republican Assembly Member Marie Waldron of the 75th district, San Diego County, voted to restore our visiting rights. But the oft-praised Governor Gavin Newsom "vetoed" our bill siding with the prison guards. So now we are

coming back to the legislature again to fight for visitation rights! What will the bill do when passed? It would mean your visits can't be canceled, your visitors cannot be turned away, and you can appeal or sue for violations of your visiting rights. Without "rights" you only have "privileges" and privileges are things that can be lost, forfeited, taken from you by prison staff, and not challenged in court. But your "rights" cannot be touched! So tell your folks to support the Coalition for Family Unity who is leading this bill. (Assembly member Santiago, district 54, Los Angeles)

3) Minimum wages for all prisoners and no more 115's for refusing to work

Yes, you read that right. There is a bill that proposes to raise the minimum wage in California and we made sure that prison labor was included in that bill. If passed, then prison jobs would pay the same minimum wage that gets paid outside.

We also have a bill that would remove from the state constitution language allowing for the state to force prisoners to work. Specifically, "involuntary servitude" (as a punishment for crime) would be removed from the state constitution and prisoners would no longer be penalized (written up) for refusing to work jobs that they don't like or want. The bill would take the pen (modern-day whip) out of master's hand and allow prisoners the freedom to decide if they want the jobs that they are assigned to without any penalties if they decide they don't want it. This would empower prisoners to seek higher wages for their own work.

Canteen Bill Proposal

End price gouging on essential supplies for incarcerated people

Senator Becker will be authoring the Canteen bill proposal! Senator Becker was the successful author of SB 1008 that made free phone calls in state prisons and juvenile detention centers.

Bill Proposal:

Legislation that would prohibit items sold in California state prisons' canteens from being sold to incarcerated people at a price beyond that paid to the vendor.

This bill would end price gouging on essential supplies for incarcerated people (including food and hygiene products), a burden which is mostly carried by poor families.

On average, canteen items are marked up roughly 65% beyond the cost paid to the vendor. The revenue generated from canteen sales makes up the majority of the Inmate Welfare Fund, a fund that is intended to be used for the benefit, education and welfare of incarcerated people. The greater portion of the Inmate Welfare Fund is used to fund the operational costs of CDCR canteens, while a small portion funds innovative programs, recreation, etc.

Due to CDCR's failure to provide adequate food and essential hygiene supplies to incarcerated people, the ability to purchase items at canteen is a necessity for incarcerated people. Given the essential nature of prison canteens, the cost of operating canteens

across CDCR institutions should be a responsibility held by the state and taxpayers, rather than one pushed onto low-income families via exorbitant mark-ups.

Markups on canteen items make it difficult, if not impossible, for incarcerated people to meet their basic needs. In California, the minimum wage for prison labor is only eight cents an hour, before fees and deductions. In many cases, an incarcerated person's income after a month of full-time work would not be enough to afford a single 8 ounce cup of coffee, which is currently priced at \$7.80. In a 2020 report from Impact Justice, three-fifths of the formerly incarcerated people surveyed said they could not afford commissary purchases, and 75% reported that access to food, including commissary items, was limited by their own or their family's finances. Many people reported having to choose between buying food and purchasing necessities such as toothpaste, tampons, and ibuprofen, or even at times going hungry to make expensive phone calls.

CDCR's failure to provide adequate nutrition and essential supplies to the people it incarcerates makes the cost of items at canteen a crucial factor in determining incarcerated people's well-being and health.



This bill will impact families of incarcerated people who are often the sole economic support for their incarcerated loved ones - majority of whom live in low income communities. Data show that family members who supported their loved ones through incarceration also experience trauma and long-term stress that can result in mental health issues and physical health conditions. This also leads to economic stress for these communities.

Bill Sponsors: Women's Foundation California, Solis Policy Institute, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Legal Aid at Work, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, MILPA Collective, and UnCommon Law.

Not Worker, But Chattel (Continued from page 1)

situations, but disrupting this fascist regime requires a whole lot more.

In the antebellum South, plantation slavery was not only an institution for the production of material goods at a cheap cost for the ruling class. Slavery established the very structure through which white freedom was, and is, made legible. The machinery of slavery was foundational to the non-slave's experience of freedom at a psycho-social level. In fact, there would be no need to use the word "freedom" at all had there not first been the creation of a structural position called the Slave. It has always been white freedom and life produced in opposition to Black unfreedom and death.

State power is not only repressive but productive of social relations. It creates traps that lure us into complicity and participation whether it is for our own benefit or not. We need to understand work in prisons as such, and promote an abolitionist politic that is profoundly anti-work. We can't see the struggle as merely a fight for better wages, because the majority of us don't have wages at all. We have to abolish the apparatus that cages us, separates us from our families, and disappears us from our communities.

Often when I tell fellow prisoners of my reluctance to work in one of the many prison factories or so-called "job assignments," I am looked upon as if I have said something foolish. They always defer to the question of "Why?" As if being exploited for pennies on the dollar or no wage at all for our labor is an acceptable situation. In answering their question, I explain to them my experience in the Seminole County Jail in Wewoka, Oklahoma.

For twenty-three months, I was trapped in that Barney Fife of a hellhole, fighting for my life on a capital murder charge. It had no commissary. No TV or radio. No outside cell activity. No library. Nothing. We were housed six to a cell, and all we had were our bunks, a few card games, and what few books we could get our hands on. Lunch was reheated for dinner and, needless to say, the food was terrible. So terrible that almost twenty-five years later I still can taste that stale Thursday morning breakfast. It was degrading; an army ration of dehydrated ham and egg. Mixed with a little hot water it swelled up like dry dog shit on a rainy summer day. After flushing it down the toilet for about six months I finally relented. When you lose thirty pounds from starvation you begin to acquire a taste for this sort of shit.

Of course, the trustees (i.e. slaves with "work privileges") were allowed to watch TV, listen to radio, and to use the soda machine upstairs in the courthouse. Every now and then, the jailer would also allow one of them to go across the street to the Dollar General to purchase candy, underwear, deodorant, or some other miscellaneous item that seemed to make life in that shit-hole that much more tolerable. (In case you're wondering, the only clothing the jail provided were the oversized, bright orange jumpsuits; no coats, underwear, etc.). They also were allowed a hug and kiss from their visitors and, on the weekends, they worked maintenance on the courtyard.

As for the rest of us, we were allowed nothing. No commissary, no TV, no outside cell activity. Nothing. Old cornbread, wrapped in some toilet paper wrapper, was the only thing we had to eat that kept our stomachs from growling at night. Man, how I wished to be a "trustee" during those days. The "perks" alone made it to where nobody in that situation, including myself, cared that we were in fact being paid nothing for our labor.

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Incarcerated African Americans in a Southern work gang breaking up rocks with sledge hammers. Ca. 1940. Photo: Shutterstock

For twenty-three months, I was forced to live under the foregoing conditions, wanting nothing besides freedom, and willing to slave just to get a small taste of it. Yet because I was charged with a M1 (i.e., 1st-degree-murder-charge) and would later face a death penalty trial, there would be no listening to country music or enjoying the sliver of mobility awarded to a trustee.

Looking back on that situation today, I cannot help but think of how unfreedom and "gut" starvation conditioned me. I internalized so much stress, fear, and anger that it tempered my spirit. I failed to even realize how profoundly it suspended my reluctance to work in a carceral setting. Essentially, I was disciplined to withstand the taunting effects of my incarceration which prompt so many of us slaves to relent to the illusive "perks" associated with prison labor and a life of hardscrabble.

Eventually, I was able to place those so-called perks in their proper perspective: They were but a distraction, misplaced values and desires I had yet to conquer; things that I had been manipulated to hold in esteem that, with exception of food and exercise, were not necessarily needed to sustain life. They were but a carrot on-a-stick, an inducement used to exercise power over my being by misleading me to believe they were privileges.

Yet because I could not value a privilege I did not have, or be made content by it, the power my captors sought to exercise over me was ineffective. Little did I realize at the time how this enabled me to see my situation for what it truly was—a grave injustice—and respond accordingly. Instead of submitting to the distraction and attempting to ameliorate the harsh conditions of my incarceration with an illusive perk, I learned how to use those conditions as a source of motivation to fight for my freedom and just treatment.

In short, I TURNED UP! Food trays were thrown at the jailers and trustees. Mattresses burned. The entire jail flooded, and the power short-circuited. I fired attorneys left and right, and began the process

of learning how to represent myself in court. Ultimately, I won and was back on the streets in 36 months.

In time, I was to discover my experience in Oklahoma was not typical compared with most county jails and prison systems created by this settler colonial nation. To put it mildly, the Seminole County Jail was a relic of the Old South, where doing time was and still is, in many aspects, harsh and unbearable.

Years later, when I was committed to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), one of the first of many cellies I was to have over the years called himself schooling me on the hustle and perks of prison work assignments. The perks, he explained, ranged from something as simple as stealing extra food from the kitchen, to manipulating staff for sex and other "contraband." Indeed, the inducement to work seemed to have its advantages.

However, as he explained all of this, I could not help but think that while he meant no harm with his advice, he was thinking ass-backwards. At this point, he had done almost twenty calendar years. And what he was kickin' to me was hustling to be content with his life in prison and being "penitentiary rich." As time passed and we became better acquainted with one another, I eventually pointed out to him that neither the "perks" or anything he had hustled for in almost 20 years of being incarcerated has purchased his freedom, or created any kind of financial stability either inside or outside these walls. I explained that hustling in prison, more so than hustling on the bricks, is short-lived.

It's corner hustling at its worst, dealing with shifty-ass scavengers, opportunists and scalawags—REAL LIFE DOPE FIEND SHIT! Where snitching is at an all-time high and it's a hit-and-miss inconsistent game where the hustlers, often more than not, wind up in the "hole" with more time, restrictions, and defeated, giving their hustle stacks back to the canteen or their own habits.

Despite having explained all this, none of it seemed to register with him or countless other prisoners who, because of a lack of productive opportunities, confidence, knowledge, discipline, and plausibility of instant gratification, disregard the odds and relent to the bullshit.

In time, I observed that it wasn't even about the hustle and perks for most prisoners. Many were simply looking for an escape from the daily monotony of an otherwise drab existence. Prisons, we know, are idle and mundane places. They are isolating. And the majority of us do not have the fortune of frequent, or any, interaction with the outside world. Therefore, to be able to get out of the cell to work—especially in a maximum security setting—and to be able to fraternize with other inmates or staff—especially those staff who are comfortable sharing their life experiences, which many prisoners have yet to have, if ever they will—is vicariously and psychologically rewarding in and of itself.

Having observed the foregoing, it became abundantly clear that while the majority of us are conscious of the fact that our labor is being exploited, the value we have come to place on a work assignment has been manipulated by the structural environment created by prison officials. To this end, we know prisons are purposefully designed to be cruel and unusual places. And despite countless court rulings ameliorating the abuse we frequently encounter at the hands of prison administrators, the intent remains to maintain oppressive conditions that, in effect, aim to keep us impoverished, dependent and, thus, powerless. Consequently, this has given life to the culture

that we subscribe to where, for example, pushing a broom on the tier for 20 years with little to no compensation is accepted as a norm so long as we may entertain the illusion of a “come up.”

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”

—13th Amendment of the United States Constitution

In 2014, Free Alabama Movement co-founders Melvin Ray, Kinetic Justice, and I were discussing the prospect of kicking off a “Free California Movement” in which California prisoners would join the international movement to abolish prison slavery. My initial response was, “It’ll never work in Cali.” Why? To be clear, in no way was my response a reflection of my own disposition, but rather it was a reflection of the many conversations I have had on the subject over the years with fellow prisoners.

Time and time again, what they say is, “Man... I ain’t got no outside support. I can’t risk losing my job. That \$10, \$50 and, in some cases \$200 pay number, counts!” or it’s “I’m trying to ‘come up’!” And I can’t forget the chowhall workers. They like to eat! It’s that simple. (And that’s not to mention how all the recent changes in law that now provide earned time credits and parole consideration have impacted them in such a way that “protesting” anything is the last thing they’re concerned about). For them the inducement to work is simply too strong. Then, of course, there are those who honestly believe they owe a debt to society.

Therefore, they see nothing wrong with their enslavement.

All this Melvin and Kinetic Justice couldn’t believe. They were simply astonished and under the impression that there would be a strong resistance to injustice within California’s prison population, on account of George Jackson’s legacy and the 2011/2013 hunger strikes in which a reported 30,000 prisoners protested the renegade administrative process that landed countless people in the SHU indefinitely. To my dismay, I had to explain to them that the hunger strikes were a gradualist reform movement, not a militant abolitionist movement; that they had nothing to do with abolishing prison slavery or genocide more generally; that the majority of prisoners in California would view a general strike as counter-productive to their own selfish reasons for working in a prison setting, and like prisoners anywhere many simply lacked the necessary vision, discipline, knowledge, and willingness to sacrifice those crumbs for the bigger picture.

Having said that, I’ve noticed a slight change of disposition amongst many prisoners in California. Before and during the hunger strikes, many were doubtful, if not pessimistic, as to our ability to bring about change and abolish many of the oppressive and inhumane aspects of prison. However, after the hunger strikes lead to the 2015 settlement in “Ashker v. Brown,” which supposedly abolished indefinite SHU terms, the conversation on the yard has been somewhat optimistic. That said, the most significant result of the hunger strikes was not forcing CDCR to reform its bogus gang validation process and indeterminate SHU scheme, rather it was the cultivation of faith that we as prisoners—as a collective and enslaved political body—have the power to dismantle the oppressive and inhumane

circumstances we find ourselves in.

We still have our work cut out for us. The entire structure of prison slavery/genocide must be challenged as a whole. I believe it is important that we acknowledge the policing and imprisonment regime as the central target we rally around and develop the capacities of “power” that reside—dormant, always—within our communities. Just as it took slaves refusing trays, street protesters, progressive lawyers, university workers, and many others to build the 2011/13 resistance and provide documented evidence that long term solitary confinement is psychologically damaging and “cruel and unusual punishment,” so too will the same effort be required to demonstrate that prison slavery in fact is programmatic.

Notably, the recent 2016 and 2018 nationwide prison strikes show promise. But we need more. We need to build a mass movement that wages an offensive for genocide abolition. What is needed is not merely slavery abolition, but the abolition of the prison as a lethal mechanism of social death. We must resist the seductions of work in an environment of forced isolation and (the always-present-potential for) extermination. In turn, we must not misconstrue our status as mere exploited workers, or model our operations on the lessons of striking wage workers. The position of the (prison) slave is a structural juncture of improvised unity with which we can all rally behind, whether locked in the gulag already, or as peoples struggling together on the outside to avoid/defend-against/abolish the possibility of capture. There is a power that we can utilize, a power that can be unleashed in the domino effect of the revolting slave. We are not workers for the most part. We are enslaved. Captive. Captured. Property of the U.S. nation state.

The Most Valuable Gift

Authored by a collaboration of grateful women in CCWF

To assist in the reduction of incarceration, laws are being formulated and rewritten however, it is more of a struggle to get out of prison because the laws exempt those that are in post-conviction status or those that are serving LWOP sentences.

This senseless confined suffering plagues our loved ones as institutions induce isolation, intensifying their struggle for survival. Incarcerated women declare, “Despite the hope for a possibility to go home with our families our hearts are failing us as hope fades.” Many women have worked hard to change the dysfunctional belief system that once governed their lives. They have suffered, adjusted and adapted to an environment that produced additional trauma thus overcoming the struggle of a bitter and broken system. According to Brow, “All incarcerated persons have been dislocated, removed from their home and separated from their families thus producing further trauma. The hope of one day having the opportunity to show their change removes the stress of seeing what will eventually kill them, slowly suffocating as their mental or physical health decline. Thus, their resilience is their inspiration.”

How many of you have felt powerless, experienced anxiety, or depression?

One of every seven prisoners is serving a life sentence, one of every fifteen women are serving LWOP sentences, as they have been sentenced to death by incarceration. One of the most valuable gifts you can give to those who feel forgotten and left behind is emotional support. To improve the hearts and minds of those in desperate need of connection and wellbeing. Amie Ichikawa has met the challenge. She brings hope to the community.

Amie Ichikawa has embraced a selfless journey, reaching beyond her home and into the hearts of countless women in CCWF and CIQ. Amie’s compassion is demonstrated through women’s outreach, in addition her zeal to act upon the

imminent need to minister in women’s recovery. While we could never amalgamate everything Amie has done for us we would like to share the creative ways she has brought greater possibilities to restore women’s worth. This advocacy has allowed women to know they are not a means of production but created for something more beautiful than the mistake they are judged by.

Amie has opened her heart and acquired financial obligations by providing transportation and devoting countless hours to aid the successful reentry of women who have no support, ie. She personally rented a car and drove hours to meet women at the gate upon release, brought them clothes, hygiene, and safely got them to their destination.

In support to preserving mental wellness and emotional release, Amie designs therapeutic postcards; each card reflects a wellness technique that aids in decontamination of the body and mind. The postcards are also a reminder that you are not alone in the struggle for freedom. M.J., who was sentenced to LWOP, conveyed her mental issues stem from being separated from her children and having no outlet. In pursuit of mental wellness she accredits Amie as her emotional support and refers to her as a “friend”.

Amie has attempted to restore women’s femininity, as prison structure purposely eradicates all appearance of softness and identity, by donating hair accessories. Colorful clips in forms of hearts, flowers and butterflies.

Attesting to the benevolence of Amie, V.N. stated, “Even with the smallest insignificant hair clips she has found a way to brighten our spirits and has allowed us to find a grateful cheer each time they are worn. Reminding me that in a forgotten world I am significant to someone by enabling us to have just a brief moment to feel as if I am a worthy human in



a place intended to house the human wreckage, and strip away all the color and humanness.”

J.H. an incarcerated woman for 21 years says, “Amie is a big asset to our community, helping us network with people in other countries to provide housing for those who were forced into deportation, she has remained supportive even after incarceration. At the end of the day, she love everyone the same, she love people for who they are and helps all those who she can.”

In conclusion, Amie has attended several hearings to support the release of prisoners in the BPH proceeding in which our freedom is contingent upon. Amie Ichikawa has empowered many incarcerated women throughout the state of California.

Amie Ichikawa is one the founders of WomanIIWoman, a non-profit organization providing re-entry services, parole hearing prep, and advocacy for the safety and dignity of incarcerated women in California. She serves as an advocate for women in the Central California Women’s Facility and the California Institution for Women, standing for justice for victims of State abuse.
www.WomanIIWoman.org

CELEBRATE

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

2023

*"My humanity is bound up in yours,
for we can only be human together."
- Desmond Tutu*

*"He who is not courageous enough to take
risks will accomplish nothing in life."
- Muhammad Ali*

*"Never be limited by other people's limited imaginations."
- Dr. Mae Jemison, first African American female astronaut*

*"The battles that count aren't the ones
for gold medals. The struggles within
yourself--the invisible, inevitable battles
inside all of us--that's where it's at."
- Jesse Owens, U.S. track & field athlete*

*"Real integrity is doing the right thing,
knowing that nobody's going to know
whether you did it or not."
- Oprah Winfrey*

*"One of the lessons that I grew up with
was to always stay true to yourself and
never let what somebody else says distract
you from your goals. And so when I hear
about negative and false attacks, I really
don't invest any energy in them, because I
know who I am." —Michelle Obama*

*"The cost of liberty is less than the
price of repression."
- W.E.B. Du Bois, author and activist*

*"We may encounter many defeats
but we must not be defeated."
- Maya Angelou*

*"In all things that are purely social we can be
as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand
in all things essential to mutual progress."
- Booker T. Washington, author and politician*

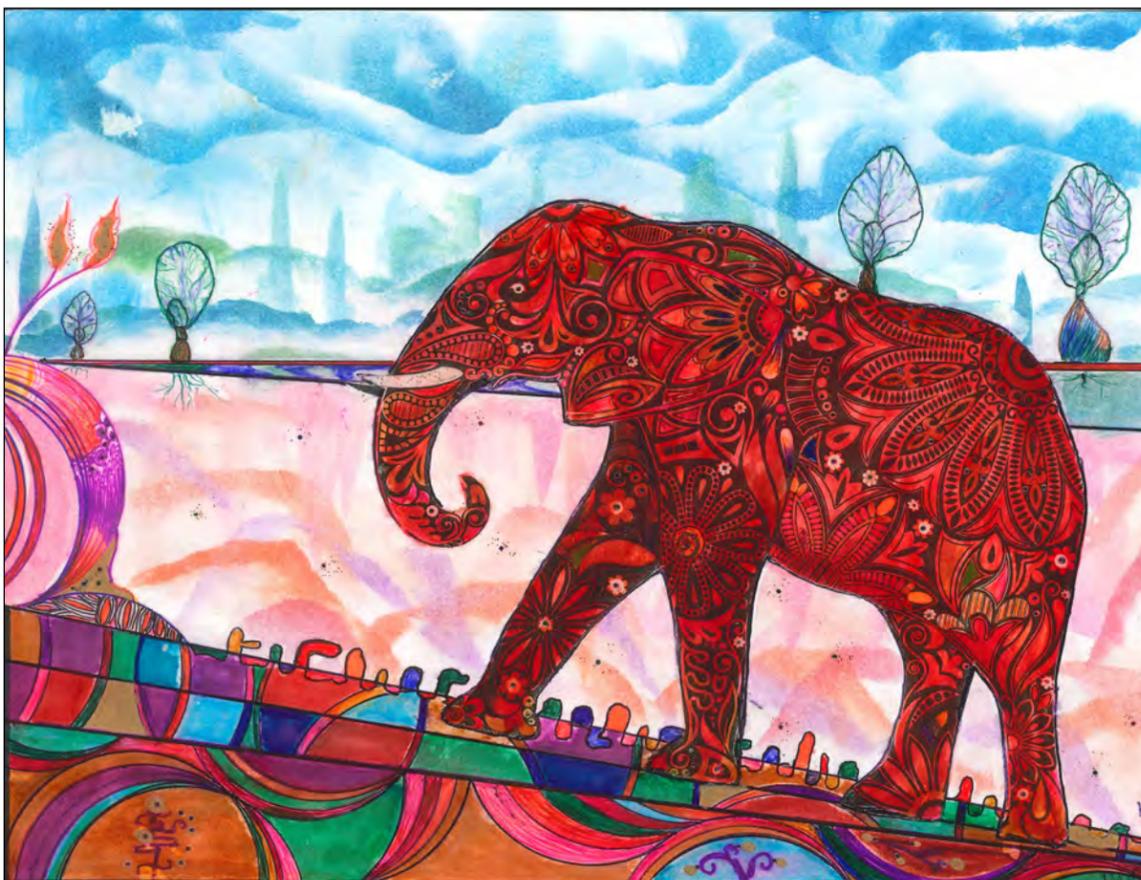
*"Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is
a broken winged bird that cannot fly."
- Langston Hughes*

*"Each person must live their life as a
model for others."
- Rosa Parks*

*"When I found I had crossed that
line, [on her first escape from slavery,
1845] I looked at my hands to see if I
was the same person. There was such
a glory over everything."
- Harriet Tubman*

*"I've missed more than 9,000 shots in
my career. I've lost almost 300 games.
Twenty-six times, I've been trusted
to take the game winning shot and
missed. I've failed over and over and
over again in my life. And that is why
I succeed." - Michael Jordan, Hall of
Fame shooting guard*

*"Never underestimate the power
of dreams and the influence of the
human spirit. We are all the same
in this notion: The potential for
greatness lives within each of us."
- Wilma Rudolph, first American
woman to win three gold medals at a
single Olympic Games*



Artwork by Donald Diggs
Untitled, mixed media, 2022

ALL OF US OR NONE

Slave, who is it that shall free you?
Those in deepest darkness lying.
Comrade, only these can see you
Only they can hear you crying.
Comrade, only slaves can free you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone our lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

You who hunger, who shall feed you?
If it's bread you would be carving,
Come to us, we too are starving.
Come to us and let us lead you.
Only hungry ones can feed you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone her lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Beaten one, who shall avenge you?
You, on whom the blows are falling,
Hear your wounded comrades calling.
Weakness gives us strength to lend you.
Come to us, we shall avenge you.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone his lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Who, oh wretched one, shall dare it?
We who can no longer bear it.
Counts the blows that arm our spirit.
Taught the time by need and sorrow,
Strikes today and not tomorrow.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.
One alone our lot can't better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)

AOUON is a grassroots organizing project of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) fighting to restore the civil and human rights of formerly and currently incarcerated people and our families. Started in California in 2003, AOUON currently has chapters all over the country advocating effectively to Ban the Box, restore voting rights, increase access to housing and education, and end mass incarceration. We demand a voice in building healthy communities.

LSPC organizes communities impacted by the criminal justice system and advocates to release incarcerated people, to restore human and civil rights, and to reunify families and communities. We build public awareness of structural racism in policing, the courts, and prison system, and we advance racial and gender justice in all our work. Our strategies include legal support, trainings, advocacy, public education, grassroots mobilization, and developing community partnerships.



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All of Us or None Membership Form | Yes, I want to become a member of ALL OF US OR NONE!

Name & Number: _____

Institution: _____

Address: _____

Country of Origin: _____

Do you have children? YES / NO. Do you need support with family issues? YES / NO

Earliest Parole/Release Date: _____ County of Parole/Probation: _____

- I can organize & facilitate group meeting
- I can help with membership outreach
- I can distribute materials & resources
- I can address & pass along feedback

Mail this form & any questions to:
AOUON
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

