August is a month of significance and remembrance for the Black community, as it marks the annual commemoration of Black August. This prison-based holiday serves as a tribute to Black freedom fighters and political prisoners, while highlighting the resilient spirit of Black resistance against racial oppression. With historical events intertwined throughout the month, August becomes a time to reflect upon the struggles, sacrifices, and triumphs that have shaped the fight for equality. Let us delve into the events and figures that have contributed to the significance of Black August.

The inception of Black August can be traced back to 1979, within the walls of San Quentin State Prison, where incarcerated individuals from the Black Guerrilla Family initiated the commemoration. It was during this time that a group of prisoners came together to honor the lives of brothers Jonathan and George Jackson, both of whom tragically lost their lives in the month of August. This solemn occasion became a rallying point for the recognition of Black freedom fighters and a reminder of the ongoing struggle against systemic oppression.

One of the pivotal events in the history of August is the arrival of Angolans in the British colony of Virginia on August 20, 1619. These "20 and odd" Angolans, who were kidnapped by the Portuguese and subsequently sold to English colonists, represent the harrowing beginning of chattel slavery in what would become the United States. Their arrival marks a somber reminder of the deep-rooted history of racial injustice and the enduring fight for liberation.

The Haitian Revolution, the largest and most successful rebellion by enslaved people in the Western Hemisphere, holds tremendous significance in the struggle against racial oppression. Commencing on August 14, 1791, the uprising lasted for over a decade, culminating in Haiti declared its independence from French colonial rule on August 21, 1804. This revolutionary event not only ended chattel slavery but also established Haiti as the world's first Black republic, serving as an inspiration to future generations fighting for freedom.

Nat Turner's Rebellion on August 21, 1831, stands as a testament to the unwavering spirit of resistance against slavery. Nat Turner, an enslaved Black freedom fighter, led a courageous insurrection against chattel slavery with the assistance of over 40 other enslaved individuals. The swift and brutal repression that followed, including the execution of Nat Turner and the subsequent murder of nearly 200 Black people by white mobs, underscored the threat that these rebellions posed to the deeply ingrained system of white supremacy.

The Fugitive Slave Law Convention, chaired by the renowned abolitionist Frederick Douglass, took place on August 21-22, 1850, in New York. This convention aimed to organize opposition against the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which legalized the capture of escaped enslaved people in every state. Despite the increased risks, the 1850s witnessed thousands of enslaved people fleeing to freedom, often through the Underground Railroad. The convention's efforts were instrumental in amplifying the resistance against the oppressive legislation.

Frederick Douglass, a prominent figure in the fight against slavery, delivered his notable "West India Emancipation Speech" on August 3, 1857. On the twenty-third anniversary of the West Indian slaves' struggle for emancipation, Douglass highlighted the role of British efforts in achieving freedom. Importantly, he also emphasized the crucial truth that progress is only possible through struggle, a sentiment that resonates strongly with the ongoing fight for racial equality.

In a significant moment for sports and civil rights, on August 28, 1945, Jackie Robinson met with Branch Rickey, the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Following a legendary interview, the two signed an agreement that broke the racial barrier in Major League Baseball (MLB), paving the way for Robinson to become the first African American to play in the MLB. Robinson's groundbreaking achievement challenged racial discrimination and marked a significant step forward in the ongoing struggle for equality.

The Rivonia Trial, which commenced on August 5, 1962, played a pivotal role in the fight against South Africa's apartheid system. Nelson Mandela, a renowned South African activist, was initially sentenced to life imprisonment. This trial marked a significant turning point in the struggle for freedom and equality.

We Got it Good!?
by Ojore McKinnon, San Quentin, CA

"The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons." -Fyodor Dostoevsky

I have no experience inside country clubs; however, any country club that can be compared to America’s penal colonies should be shut down, and their operators arrested.

For those who truly believe such nonsense, I challenge you to trade places with me for those hours spent inside a country club.

The San Quentin News (an institutional newspaper written by S.O. prison journalists) published an article about “The world’s worst 5 Prisons,” which had death row inmates abuzz with appreciation for being imprisoned in the United States. I was falsely imprisoned in the United States. I was

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.

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!
AOUON Editor in Chief: TaSin Sabir
4400 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94608

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

ALL OF US OR NONE
NEWSPAPER

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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.

www.prisonerswithchildren.org

Jesse's Corner
by Jesse Barleson LSPC/AOUON In-Custody Program Coordinator

“I have given them all I know” – Marcus Garvey, UNIA

In the spirit of this celebrated month of August, and all those who led, struggled, fought, organized, and supported movement for the well-being and advancement of People, I would like to share a few passages from one of our beloved Brothers and Leader Marcus Garvey, who left behind his valuable insights and wisdom relating to HOW to build, HOW to move forward, and HOW to get up!

Marcus Garvey started The Universal Negro Improvement Association and created multiple streams of income by creating small businesses across the country. I encourage you to study the writings of this highly successful organizer, leader, and businessman.


LESSON 18 – Commercial and Industrial Transactions

Commerce and industry are the feeding props of the economic life of the state, the community or society as a whole. On these two foundations rest the universal system of exchange with its financial factors.

Every progressive people and nation indulge in some form of commerce and industry, manufacturing or agricultural industry. It is by such activities that individuals find occupation within the normal life of the state.

You are either an employer or an employee, big or small … Those who do not work in this way are either wards of the state or recipients of charity or people who live off the earnings of others which flow from those who are industrious enough to work either as an employer or an employee. Every self-respecting man finds an occupation, either as an employee or as an employer; according to his choice … All men try to earn as much as they possibly can. To do so, they generally equip themselves for their occupation …

The man without a business of his own or without training to perform a particular type of job is always at a disadvantage in making a living … The examples of small men starting small businesses and building them up to massive concerns are common …

The industrious man must find an occupation in one or the other of these enterprises or professions if he is to be a proprietor or employer … Find a particular kind of business that you would like to engage yourself in, because you can make it profitable, and start it with whatever capital you have … Find out what your neighbors want most and are willing to buy. Start selling it to them, if not in a shop, by going door to door …

The Negro must start from the ground floor of commerce and industry and climb up … Without commerce and industry, a people perish economically. The Negro is perishing because he has no economic system, no commerce and industry …

If you like to indulge or engage yourself in a certain line of business, spend as much time as you possibly can investigating from your friends, acquaintances or whoever you can approach who is already in that business or knows about that business, so as to have all the information necessary about it before you start. It is the people who know of the tricks in trade that make the most profit out of the trade.

These excerpts are a reminder to study. As we build movement, we must continuously educate ourselves through non-fictional literature on history and business. We must learn what we don’t already know so that we can work together industrially, each person doing his small contribution so we can build and run any political or business enterprise, together.

Comic by Jessie Milo
San Quentin, CA
A Softball Game Inside San Quentin

taSin Sabir, AOUON Editor and LSPC Communications Manager

In a heartwarming and inspiring initiative, a formerly incarcerated clean and sober softball team recently made history. Sunday, July 23, 2023, by playing against the Hardtimers—the San Quentin softball team—inside the walls of San Quentin Prison. The game marked a rare occasion where an outside team of formerly incarcerated players would compete within the walls of San Quentin.

The idea for the game came from John Sommer who served 12 years in prison with friend Nathan Venegas, current player of the Hardtimers. With the help of Venegas’ coach Sommer and his fiancé Mei Lia Storelee found a outlet that allowed me to reclaim my life from drugs and jail. When the opportunity arose to play inside prison for their first game calling themselves “Dreams Awaken”. A name inspired by the passage from Narcotics Anonymous which states, “Lost Dreams Awaken”. Despite the red tape and lengthy processing time, redemption.

As the game began, cheers echoed through the prison yard, with spectators showing their unwavering support for both teams. Despite the disparity in skill and experience, Dreams Awaken displayed remarkable determination and sportsmanship, holding their own against the formidable Hardtimers.

Memorable moments punctuated the game, with one of Dreams Awaken’s players, Solo, striking out his own coach from the Hardtimers—a feat that elicited roars of laughter and admiration from both teams. Another heartwarming instance was when a female player, Star, scored a run, and Storelee and her teammates rallied behind her with words of encouragement, emphasizing the importance of women supporting each other.

Despite their valiant efforts, Dreams Awaken ultimately faced defeat against the Hardtimers, yet the loss did little to dampen their spirits. After the game, both teams came together for a post-game circle, where emotions flowed freely as they talked about their experiences. Storelee tearfully expressed her gratitude, saying, “I wouldn’t have had this experience for both the players and spectators.

The day of the game dawned with excitement and anticipation as Dreams Awaken was escorted, by a volunteer, onto the field. Amidst the towering walls there was a sense of camaraderie as players from both teams came together on the field. The Hardtimers, reigning champions, lent a few players to Dreams Awaken to ensure a fair competition.

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Following the game, Timothy Hicks, the San Quentin newspaper's sports editor, interviewed the players to learn more about their experiences. This interaction further strengthened the bond between Dreams Awaken and San Quentin’s community.

The sense of shared humanity was palpable as Storelee interacted with everyone, who eagerly surrounded her after discovering her connection to Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. Speaking on this endeavor, Storelee stated, “I may not be an organizer, but I am committed to doing whatever needs to be done to maintain this connection. Having a fellow inside will ensure continued collaboration and advocacy for those in need.”

For those involved, the game at San Quentin Prison was a powerful reminder of the transformative power of sports and human connection. Through softball, Dreams Awaken has found a way to rewrite the narrative of life after incarceration and addiction, demonstrating that with perseverance and support, the possibilities for rebuilding lives are limitless.

Softball is more than just a game—it is a path to healing, hope, and a brighter future.

We Got it Good!? (Continued from page 1)

disturbed by those prisoners who proclaimed, “We got it good!” and “we have nothing to complain about” in response to the article. What I heard was condemned prisoners dismissing our daily suffering and strife simply because we were imprisoned in the United States, and not one of those five worst prisons in the world.

From where I reside, there is nothing cushy or cozy about California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row. Prison is a place of confusion, chaos, contempt, and excommunication. There is not one thing good about being stranded on California’s death row.

Everything has its pros and cons; however, incarceration and all its repressive elements are not meant to cultivate sound human beings. Prison is designed to break people, then shape them to endure the controlled conditions imposed on them by goons and designed by Correctional Departments.

How do I begin to compare one man or woman’s solitary confinement or isolation to mine, or China’s death row to Texas’ death row, or both to California’s death row? How do I measure the suicides in East Block to those in Cuba? Is there a just way to measure another person’s suffering, or do I use a sliding scale, with the U.S. as the barometer?

Have you heard this saying: “If Democracy is so good, why isn’t the world dying for it?”

I ask, “If we got it so good, why are East Block inmates committing suicide?” My answer is, “To escape the decades of isolation, the harsh conditions, the mistreatment, the mental strain caused by the daily monotony.”

Every moment of joy, laughter, or hope I experience or express while stranded on death row will never change my perception of my present predicament as good; nor will I exist here without complaint. The real threat of death and the ever-growing chasm that is the great divide between my family, my friends, and myself is sorrowful. It is these realities and hardships I endure that make my confinement all bad!

From my stance on maa, this is a voice for death row prisoners. I have to bring to light the stark reality of being a prisoner in an American prison, stripped of all human rights, and treated as less than human.

We Got it Good!? (Continued from page 1)
Sacramento, CA — On Tuesday, June 27, the Assembly Public Safety Committee unanimously passed SB 474 (7-0), a bill authored by Senator Josh Becker that will reduce canteen markups. A markup is the percentage the state prison system adds to goods, allowing them to sell items at 40% above retail prices. The cost to prisoners for items like toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, food, and hygiene supplies is often higher than the price paid to vendors. The total markup that CDCR has added to goods is 65%, a markup much higher than the 40% markup often seen in grocery stores.

Senator Becker described the situation of incarcerated people as “unjust and regressive,” adding “It is unacceptable for CDCR to force incarcerated people and their families over $30 million each year. No one should have to worry about where their next meal will come from. No one should have to send me money so I could afford food and basic hygiene supplies. No person should be reduced to a burden because of insurmountable canteen prices.”

“This is not just a matter of money,” Becker continued. “For too long, incarcerated people and their loved ones have suffered under unfair financial burdens from high markups of canteen items in correctional facilities,” said Senator Becker. “Today’s vote in the Assembly Public Safety Committee on SB 474 brings us closer to creating financial viability for the loved ones of incarcerated individuals to continue to provide basic necessities and help reduce the risk of recidivism.”

Over 2,000 support letters from currently incarcerated people and their loved ones speak to the impact that canteen prices have on families across the state. For at least the past decade, the California Department for Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has marked up prison canteen items 65% over the price paid to vendors — regardless of inflation — for items like toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, food, and hygiene supplies. This financial pressure falls heavily on Black, Brown, and Indigenous families who support their loved ones while incarcerated. The BASICs Act, if signed by the Governor, would save incarcerated people while incarcerated. The BASICs Act, if signed by the Governor, would save incarcerated people $1 million per year, a sum that would be cut in half. I didn't want my sister and mom to have to decide between me and (paying a bill).”

For example, recent canteen prices at California State Prison Solano show toothpaste costs $4.45 in the canteen store, meaning the purchase of one tube of toothpaste can cost up to 37% of an incarcerated person’s monthly income.

Women in prison need canteen items in order to survive. I was considered an “indigent” woman inside prison because I had no money,” said Barbara Chavez, a member of All of Us or None and Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. “Not being able to contribute food when other women cooked inside was hungry and painful. I would just sit there and smell the food being shared. I wanted to belong and be a part of it, but I didn't have a family to support me with canteen items.”

The BASICs Act builds off of the successful campaigns that made phone calls free and eliminated commissary markups for people in San Francisco county jail, as well as SB 1008 championed by Senator Becker last year that made phone calls in all California prisons free.

SB 474 is co-sponsored by All of Us or None, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, Legal Aid at Work, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, MILPA Collective, and the Women's Foundation California Solis Policy Institute.

Unyielding Spirit (Continued from page 1)

arrested on charges related to leaving the country without a passport and inciting opposition to apartheid. A year later, during the Rivonia Trial, Mandela faced additional charges under the 1962 sabotage Act. Despite being sentenced to 27 years in prison, Mandela’s resilience and determination remained unwavering, eventually leading to his release and the dismantling of apartheid.

Martin Luther King Jr’s iconic “I have a dream” speech, delivered on August 28, 1963, during the March on Washington, became a central part of his legacy. King’s powerful words called for a future in which individuals would be judged by their character rather than the color of their skin. His vision of equality and unity resonated with millions of people worldwide, inspiring generations to strive for a more just and inclusive society.

The Watts Rebellion erupted on August 11, 1965, in Los Angeles, fueled by a history of police brutality, housing discrimination, and inadequate educational opportunities for the Black community. This five-day uprising was a response to the mistreatment of a Black man during a traffic stop. Although a gubernatorial commission recognized the underlying issues, little progress was made in improving the social and economic conditions in the Watts neighborhood, highlighting the systemic nature of racial oppression.

Tragedy struck during the Marin County Courthouse incident on August 7, 1970, when Jonathan P. Jackson led an uprising demanding the release of the Soledad Brothers, including his elder brother George Jackson. The attack resulted in the deaths of Jackson, Superior Court Judge Harold Haley, two prisoners, and left prosecutor Gary Thomas paralyzed. Political activist Angela Davis, who supported the Soledad Brothers, faced trial for her alleged involvement in the incident but was ultimately acquitted of all charges.

As Black August unfolds each year, it serves as a reminder of the countless individuals who have fought, sacrificed, and contributed to the ongoing battle for racial equality. These historical events and figures underscore the indomitable spirit of resistance against oppression and provide inspiration for future generations in their quest for justice. Black August stands as a powerful testament to the resilience and determination of the Black community, serving as a call to action for all individuals committed to creating a more equitable society. The memory of George Jackson, along with his unwavering dedication to prisoners’ rights and the fight against injustice, remains an indelible part of the legacy honored during Black August.
Black August is a powerful month, sinking deeply into the history of liberation of Black Americans, political prisoners, and the pursuit of freedom. August collectively holds a wealth of Black history and revolutionary struggle. What may be most significant, though, is the amplification of voices that the prison industrial complex attempts to erase.

The catalyst for Black August stems from George Jackson’s rebellion and eventual assassination at San Quentin State Prison in 1971. Jackson had been incarcerated for 10 years in a 1-year-to-life sentence for his affiliation with a gas station robbery when he was 20-years old. For the rest of his short life, he was forced from freedom as his parole was regularly denied. He was punished to several years of solitary confinement, racism, and strenuous labor for little to no pay, akin to slavery. Despite this, Jackson embodied the revolutionary spirit and was self-educated by reading a variety of texts, co-led study groups, published books, and co-founded the Black Guerrilla Family.

Between 1970 and his death in 1971, a series of intense events catalyzed Jackson’s revolutionary tendencies. At CTF Soledad in 1970, a white prison guard callously killed three Black men during a minor conflict. Several days later, a different white guard was found beaten to death, and although no one admitted to the act, three men, including Jackson were charged with the murder. Dubbed the “Soledad Brothers,” the whole nation watched their case, many criticizing the charge for jumping to conclusions because the men were political figures. Eventually, Jackson transferred to San Quentin while his case pursued. On August 7th, 1970, Jackson’s brother Jonathan, with radical inspiration from his sibling, decided to avenge his brother’s indictment by storming into a Marin County courthouse and kidnapping the judge. Although his goal was to create enough pressure to acquit the Soledad Brothers, Jonathan was killed at the scene, along with three others.

It is no doubt that George Jackson is a powerful figure, influencing those around him while alive and after his death. His final act is the landmark of Black August, inspiring incarcerated people, organizers, and activists. On August 21st, 1971 in San Quentin, a riot against police brutality and poor economic conditions erupted. Finally, in August, we celebrate the births of revolutionaries, such as Black Panther Deputy Chairman Fred Hampton and Pan-Africanist leader Marcus Garvey. It goes without saying that this month deserves to be commemorated and a reminder of the ongoing movement to liberate our incarcerated community members.

Now published in his book Soledad Brother, Jackson wrote a letter to his lawyer on April 17th, 1970, where he accurately displays his poor conditions, specifically on how his basic needs, food and hygiene, were tied to forced labor for few to no pay. He writes, “The sense and meaning of slavery comes through as a result of our ties to the wage. You must have it, without you it would starve or expose yourself to the element…one’s entire day centers around the acquisition of the wage.”

In California’s prisons people are demanded, under law, to work or face repercussions such as an extended sentence or loss in privileges. These job assignments are performed for cents on the hour without any days off for sickness or injuries. LaRene Austin, currently incarcerated at Central California Women’s Facility describes her experience as dark. “I have worked in fabrics, silkscreen, and dental and each job has its own dangerous exposures. You do skilled work that makes a profit, sometimes working long hours to meet deadlines with a pay grade of .35 cents. These jobs put you at risk to to lose your fingers and damage your eyesight and expose you daily to cancer causing agents. The skills you gain at these jobs would be useful in the free world and would be rewarded if they were transferrable.”

To this point, Jackson writes, “Slavery is an economic condition. The classical chattel and today’s neo-slavery must be defined first in terms of economics. The chattel is a property, one man exercising the property rights of his established economic order, the other man as that property.”

This is where we are at presently. History is not in the past and the present language of the Article 1, Section 6, of the California Constitution outlaws slavery and involuntary servitude “except as a punishment for crime where of the party shall have been duly convicted.” Simply, involuntary servitute is another name for slavery. Our country’s economy functions extensively from the labor of our incarcerated loved ones. Considering the mass incarceration of people of color and especially Black Americans, involuntary servitude aka slavery is very much alive. This is why All of Us or None, a project of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, and a coalition of other organizations are sponsoring ACA 8, a bill to amend the California Constitution to remove the clause that allows involuntary servitude.

California must catch up! To learn more about ACA 8 and to hear more stories from current and retired slaves visit: CASlave.com
Policy Update
by Jeronimo Aguilera, LSPC Policy Analyst

*“Legislative Recess, but the movement never stops!”*

As we continue to move through another legislative session, I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge the incredible support of our policy work by sharing our posts on social media, making calls to your elected officials, and sending in letters to ensure they are supporting the important pieces of legislation. Not to mention the lobby days, Quest for Democriti, and all the legislative events we have been engaged in and are continues to be engaged in, can’t understate the value in these legislative offices hearing from us, the people, and especially those of you who have been directly impacted by mass incarceration in this state.

[Legislative Recess] The California State legislature has begun its annual recess which takes place from July 14th until August 14th. Most legislators take this time to go on vacations and take some time off; a luxury that we as advocates for can only dream about. For us, the struggle doesn’t stop, it slows down. As we are keeping our foot on the gas during this time to ensure we get as much work done as possible as it relates to our priority legislation.

[Letter to Assemblymember Lori Wilson] During our weekly meeting with our author for ACA 8, Asm Lori Wilson’s office, her legislative staffer Alida Garcia showed a moving testimony. An incarcerated individual wrote Asm Wilson’s office to thank her for highlighting the issue of forced labor, exploitation, and slavery/ involuntary servitude happening on a mass scale inside California’s carceral institutions via ACA 8. He shared that he is 69 years old, and has been in for the last 29 years inside and has consistently worked during his entire incarceration. For all those five years of faithful work he has been able to pay a little more than $400 dollars of the $10,000 restitution debt that he owed.

What’s more is in his letter he talked about how he is literally physically disabled and not able to perform the labor they are demanding of him. He shared that just recently, despite his physical disability, he was written up with a disciplinary infraction for not being physically able to report to his job duty.

The cruelty and injustice of this individual’s experience was eye opening. The letter was written by Alida Garcia and a clear illustration of the grave injustice running rampant within CDCR and all carceral institutions throughout the state. This individual letters demonstrate the power of our voices, our experiences, and our ability to articulate them in a way that is a catalyst for change.

Legal Corner
by Kellie Walters, JD, LLM, LSPC Staff Attorney

The concept of qualified immunity in the American legal system is a paradox that can be both complex and disturbing. Its original purpose was to safeguard government officials, particularly those in law enforcement, from being targeted by baseless lawsuits. However, it has now evolved into a formidable obstacle, preventing citizens from seeking justice for constitutional violations.

Qualified immunity operates under the rubric of maintaining law and order. Yet, its fervent application can be both complex and disturbing. Its original purpose was to safeguard government officials, particularly those in law enforcement, from being targeted by baseless lawsuits. However, it has now evolved into a formidable obstacle, preventing citizens from seeking justice for constitutional violations.

Qualified immunity means that the government official is not liable for the actions taken while performing their duties, so long as they did not violate a clearly established law. In other words, if a government official’s actions are within the bounds of their legal authority, they cannot be held liable for any actions that violate the rights of another individual.

In order to determine whether a government official is entitled to qualified immunity, courts must consider whether the official’s actions were reasonable in light of the legal rules that were clearly established at the time of the alleged violation. If the official’s actions were not reasonable, then qualified immunity does not apply.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has signaled a shift away from qualified immunity, recognizing that it can be overly broad and that it can pose a real threat to the public’s ability to hold government officials accountable for their actions. As a result, courts are more likely to find that qualified immunity does not apply in cases where there is a clear violation of a clearly established law.

However, the qualified immunity defense remains a powerful tool for government officials, allowing them to avoid liability for actions that may have been constitutional violations. This can make it difficult for victims of unconstitutional actions to obtain justice.

In conclusion, while the qualified immunity defense is not new, recent Supreme Court decisions have signaled a shift away from a broad application of the defense. This shift has the potential to increase accountability for government officials and provide a greater opportunity for victims of unconstitutional actions to obtain justice.

Legal Corner
by Kellie Walters, JD, LLM, LSPC Staff Attorney

Qualified Immunity: The Notorious Legal Shield that Destroys Confidence in the Judicial System

The Supreme Court has granted law enforcement agencies a free pass to perpetrate violations of constitutional and statutory law with absolute impunity. This is because the defense of qualified immunity has been consistently employed by judges to protect the accused from liability for any actions that may have been unconstitutional.

Qualified immunity is a defense that is available to government officials who are sued for constitutional violations. It is designed to protect government officials from being held liable for actions that may have been unconstitutional.

Qualified immunity is granted to government officials who are sued for constitutional violations. It is designed to protect government officials from being held liable for actions that may have been unconstitutional.

Qualified immunity is not absolute, however. It can be overcome in certain situations. For example, if a government official’s actions were clearly unreasonable, or if the official’s actions were in violation of a clearly established constitutional right, qualified immunity may not apply.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has issued several decisions that have weakened qualified immunity. In the case of qualified immunity, the Court has held that qualified immunity does not apply when the government official’s actions were clearly unreasonable, or if the official’s actions were in violation of a clearly established constitutional right.

In conclusion, while qualified immunity remains a powerful defense for government officials, recent Supreme Court decisions have signaled a shift away from a broad application of the defense. This shift has the potential to increase accountability for government officials and provide a greater opportunity for victims of unconstitutional actions to obtain justice.

In order to restore the trust of the public, it is crucial to conduct a thorough review and reform of qualified immunity or even consider its complete elimination. As a society, we all require protection against unjust lawsuits and government officials. However, our commitment to justice and upholding the Constitution is fundamental to the protection of our civil liberties. The current form of qualified immunity unfairly favors officials over regular citizens, which undermines our commitment to justice.

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Legal Corner
by Kellie Walters, JD, LLM, LSPC Staff Attorney

Qualified Immunity: The Notorious Legal Shield that Destroys Confidence in the Judicial System

The Supreme Court has granted law enforcement agencies a free pass to perpetrate violations of constitutional and statutory law with absolute impunity. This is because the defense of qualified immunity has been consistently employed by judges to protect the accused from liability for any actions that may have been unconstitutional.

Qualified immunity is a defense that is available to government officials who are sued for constitutional violations. It is designed to protect government officials from being held liable for actions that may have been unconstitutional.

Qualified immunity is not absolute, however. It can be overcome in certain situations. For example, if a government official’s actions were clearly unreasonable, or if the official’s actions were in violation of a clearly established constitutional right, qualified immunity may not apply.

In recent years, the Supreme Court has issued several decisions that have weakened qualified immunity. In the case of qualified immunity, the Court has held that qualified immunity does not apply when the government official’s actions were clearly unreasonable, or if the official’s actions were in violation of a clearly established constitutional right.

In conclusion, while qualified immunity remains a powerful defense for government officials, recent Supreme Court decisions have signaled a shift away from a broad application of the defense. This shift has the potential to increase accountability for government officials and provide a greater opportunity for victims of unconstitutional actions to obtain justice.

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America’s Slave Ships on Dry Land: The present Day Sale and Trade of Africans

By Asar Imhotep Amen (Troy Thomas)
California Health Care Facility, CA

As a direct result of black codes developed specifically for our people, Africans were arrested for petty violations of those codes and sent to prison where we not only toiled in slave labor camps and worked in chain gangs, but were also contracted out to private companies to work for railroads, mines and mills.

We became the main slaves in a new convict-lease system that was created by colonial capitalism so that it could acquire a steady supply of cheap labor to exploit for the greatest profit without paying for that labor because we were slaves of the State.

After enduring the captivity of formal chattel slavery, Africans began to endure the captivity of imprisonment under colonialism. We went from being slaves on plantations to convicts in prison.

With the dawn of Jim Crow, Africans began leaving the South as refugees fleeing white nationalist violence.

Colonialism is global

We sought refuge in the East, the Midwest and the West, but we found the same treatment from the colonizer population. There was no shelter for us anywhere.

In the “ghettos” where Africans are crowded into every major city within the U.S., we exist in the same penury that nearly two and a half centuries of slavery had left us in.

That extreme poverty was seemingly inescapable and it doomed us to a hardscrabble existence of deprivation, destitution and desperation.

The ghetto is a breeding ground for violence, and Africans are arrested by the colonial police for so-called “crimes” and sent to prison in ever increasing numbers. The police are here to protect and serve the colonial order so it's nothing but an occupying army.

Colonialism law was established and created to protect the colonial system and primarily criminalize and punish Africans and other colonized peoples.

As Africans spoke out against Jim Crow laws, lynching, police brutality, and struggled for freedom, prison became a solution for the colonial State for those it deemed agitators or terrorists.

Colonial world retaliates.

During the Black Revolution of the 1960s, the police arrested and jailed Africans such as Fannie Lou Hamer for “civil disobedience”. They arrested Dr. Huey P. Newton, Dr. Ben Chavis, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, Mumia Abu Jamal and Geronimo Pratt on trumped up charges, railroading them into prison.

The FBI assassinated leaders like Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Black Panther Party Chicago Chair Fred Hampton through CONTELPRO, as part of a counterinsurgency to destroy the Black Panther Party who were captured and tortured in prison became political prisoners and prisoners of war.

At the height of the Black Revolution, the CIA flooded African colonies within the U.S. with heroin from the Golden Triangle in Southeast Asia, where it had long worked to finance its covert operations against China and Vietnam. At the same time the U.S. was waging a war of imperialist aggression in Vietnam.

As part of colonialism’s counterinsurgency to crush the Black Revolution, the CIA inundated our neighborhoods with heroin to destroy our will to organize or challenge the colonial status quo.

With this process of narcotization, our communities fell under the control and influence of drugs; the illegal drug business and drug traffickers began a deadly epidemic of addiction.

This was the justification for the “War on Drugs”, which the colonial State claimed to be “combating” the surge of drugs circulating in the African American community, coming before the colonizer’s courts, facing colonial judges, prosecutors and juries, receiving longer sentences for colonizer-defined crimes. We became the main casualties of that ongoing war.

Get rid of modern-day slavery!

As slave-prisoners, we are just bodies that fill cells and dorms in for-profit prisons, situated in economically depressed rural areas, providing jobs for settlers.

The State contracted us out to private prisons just as it once contracted us out to private companies with the convict-lease system. Today, Africans comprise the vast majority of prisoners in the U.S. There are more Africans in prison in this country than there are people in countries like the Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada and Trinidad.

America has the largest prison system in the world. More Africans are now convicts in prison in 2023 than we were slaves on the plantations in 1852, and we hardly have anymore rights than we had when we were first enslaved.

For Africans, colonial prisons are nothing but concentration camps. Crime simply provides the justification for locking us up behind the razor-wire topped, electrified fences.

Imprisonment is an integral and inseparable part of the colonization of Africans in America. It is just another form of the captivity we have experienced and endured under colonialism (or so-called “Democracy”). As colonial subjects we have always been captives of colonialism.

America has never been anything other than one big prison for Africans. Minor and gradual criminal justice “reform” won't reduce the high rate of imprisonment for Africans or otherwise reverse the mass imprisonment. The imprisonment of Africans in the U.S. and elsewhere will only end when we throw off the chains of colonial-capitalism and free ourselves from the rule of the colonizer. To believe or argue otherwise makes no historical sense!

This is what “Democracy” looks like. If you as a citizen do not like what you see then by all means feel free to change it. If you’re a California voter, vote yes on ACA 8. www.endslaveryincalifornia.org or for more information.
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. 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. 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.

AOUON is a grassroots organizing project of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) fighting to restore the civil and human rights of formerly incarcerated people and our families. Started in California in 2003, AOUON currently has chapters all over the country advocating effectively to end mass incarceration. 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.

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: