

# Coalition For Prisoners' Rights Newsletter

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August 2021

## ANNIVERSARIES

### George Jackson's Struggle & Death

On August 21, 1971, 29 year old imprisoned Black Panther, died from multiple bullet wounds sustained during an alleged escape attempt from California's San Quentin State prison. Many believe his influence was responsible for the emergence of a huge wave of prison struggles and uprisings across the country. The rebellion at Attica is often cited as one direct effect of his killing.

In January 1970, Jackson was charged, along with two other Soledad Brothers, with the murder of a guard purportedly killed in retaliation for the shooting deaths of three prisoners by another guard the year before. If found guilty, the three would have been given death sentences. This led to Marin County courthouse incident during which George Jackson's younger brother led an attempt to free three other prisoners at trial to demand the release of the Soledad Brothers. Police killed two of the prisoners, the brother and the judge. The only prisoner who survived was Ruchell Cinque Magee, who continues to be imprisoned to this day.

On August 21, 1971, George Jackson, received a gun which had been smuggled in to him in a still unexplained manner. Using it, Jackson took some number of guards as well as two inmates, hostage. Jackson was shot dead from a tower. He was killed 19 days before the Attica prison uprising. At the trial resulting in Jackson's death, among others, three prisoners were acquitted and three were convicted. They became known as the "San Quentin Six."

George Jackson's original adult conviction was in 1960, at the age of 18. He was arrested in Los Angeles as an accomplice in a gas station robbery of \$70. His lawyer convinced him to plead guilty. The judge sentenced him to one year to life in state prison.

Many consider the most direct effect of the George Jackson murder to be the rebellion at Attica prison 19 days later which remains still relevant today.

### Attica Prison Uprising

From September 9 to 13, 1971, prisoners took control of the Attica Correctional Facility near Buffalo in New York state, the most well-known prison uprising of the 20th century. The prisoners made a series of demands to prison administrators and officials and held about 40 people as hostages. Hundreds of state troopers arrived at Attica and the governor called in the National Guard. The prisoners' manifesto stated:

"In our peaceful efforts to assemble in dissent as provided under this nation's U.S. Constitution, we are in turn murdered, brutalized, and framed on various criminal charges because we seek the rights and privileges of all American people.

"In our efforts to intellectually expand in keeping with the outside world, through all categories of news media, we are systematically restricted and punitively remanded to isolation status when we insist on our human rights."

Among the frustrations of the prisoners were chronic overcrowding, censorship of letters and living conditions including limitations of one shower per week and one roll of toilet paper each month.

The governor refused to come to Attica. After four days of fruitless negotiations, Gov. Nelson Rockefeller ordered that the prison be retaken; 39 people were killed in a 15-minute assault by state police.

The New York State Special Commission on Attica later commented: "With the exception of Indian massacres in the late 19th century, the State Police assault which ended the four-day prison uprising was the bloodiest one-day encounter between Americans since the Civil War."

In September 1971 at Attica there were over 2,200 people locked up in dehumanizing conditions in a facility built to accommodate 1,600.

In 1970, there were 48,497 people in federal and state prisons in the U.S. By 2009, there were 1,613,740 individuals locked up in our federal and state prisons.

## EN APOYO A CUBA

En julio, decenas de policías estatales y federales (U.S.A.), estaban apostados alrededor del edificio del tribunal federal de Estados Unidos de Norteamérica, mientras cientos de puertorriqueños se manifestaban en apoyo a Cuba y reclamando el cese el criminal bloqueo. Esta manifestación en solidaridad con la Revolución Cubana, se realizó en la tarde del 17 de julio de 2021, en el Viejo San Juan, Puerto Rico. La protesta fue convocada por varias organizaciones políticas.

### **WALL CITY Nuestra Mision— producida por: *San Quentin News***

**escrito por prisioneros - avanzando en la justicia**

La revista de Wall City se enfoca en informar a la gente fuera de prisión acerca de la vida de los hombre y mujeres encarcelados. Además los lectores encarcelados reciben historias que pueden usar para mejor sus vidas y convertirse en mejores ciudadanos.

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### **THE LEAST READ PART OF THE NEWSLETTER**

To receive the *CPR Newsletter* by postal mail monthly send us a self-addressed stamped envelope for each month's issue you are requesting up to 12 at one time. Put the CPR return address in the upper left-hand corner of each envelope you send us.

Five pages (1 ounce) can be set for one Forever stamp. Ten pages (2 ounces) can be sent for a twenty-cent stamp more.

Please continue to send us address changes, as soon as you can, including both your old and new addresses, to help us keep our mailing list up-to-date.

**NONE OF US ARE LAWYERS OR LEGAL WORKERS.** Letters sent to us marked "Legal Mail" are not going to a lawyer and could possibly result in our losing our access to the prisons they come from. Please don't do it!

Many, many thanks to the Real Cost of Prisons project, which posts our Newsletter on-line monthly for free downloading and distribution. All issues since 2009 are at its great site: [realcostofprisons.org](http://realcostofprisons.org)

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### **Intensive Management Unit Challenge**

At SCI Phoenix, the largest Pennsylvania state prison, there was a 10 day hunger strike of 13 prisoners in late June. The Intensive Management Unit (IMU) is filled with people kept on the Restricted Release List (RRL), which appears to be a new form of solitary confinement. The strikers demanded a handbook describing the IMU program and how to return to the general population. Also programing when held in IMU and concrete ways to be removed from the RRL. Some concessions were made by the administration, including a handbook.

## **DIVERSITY ACCEPTED: PRIDE Celebration**

July 3, 2021, was an historic day at the Moberly Correctional Center (MCC) in Missouri. It was the first official gathering of its PRIDE Community. While the voices of the LGBTQ culture have been concealed in the past, MCC has made great strides in focusing on equality, understanding, and the freedom of self-expression. Three imprisoned individuals organized this first annual PRIDE celebration with only two weeks of preparation. Food, which was donated by the prison's LGBTQ community and supporters included 270 hot dogs, 17 bags of chili, and 14 bags of chips. Water coolers contained a perfect blend of canteen drink mixes, while the party's theme was to B.Y.O.B.—Bring Your Own Bowl.

Sixty-five red, white, and blue armbands were given to those who attended the event that lasted from 1:45 p.m. to 3 p.m. Multiple non-LGBTQers stopped by, hung out, asked questions, and participated in this historic act of unity. — S.P.

## **UC DAVIS BOOKS TO PRISONERS**

[as published in *The Fire Inside of the CCWP*, #64]

Send to the address below a request on any topic and you will be sent those books if they have them. They do NOT send specific titles. Their topics are: Fiction, Fantasy, Classics, Science Fiction, Historical Fiction, History, Science, Psychology, Health, Faith, Black & African Studies, Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, Labor Movement, Native American Studies, Environmental Studies, Women's Empowerment, LGBTQ Studies, Languages, The Arts, Political Science, Skills & Self-Help. Address: UC Davis Books to Prisoners, Center for Student Involvement—Box #157, One Shields Ave., Davis CA 95616.

## **CA Coalition for Women Prisoners**

Their many programs include:

Across the Walls prison visiting program, Writing Warriors Advocacy Through Correspondence, *The Fire Inside Newsletter*, Spitfire Speakers Bureau, Cross Bars & Borders global solidarity building project, Drop LWOP, Reparations 4 Reproductive Justice Behind Bars, Cross Bars and Borders; and they are members of: Californians United for a Responsible Budget (CURB), and Survived and Punished, and Participatory Defense Hub—San Francisco

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