

HUMAN RIGHTS/ PRISONER RIGHTS

Today's Human Rights issues must encompass a broad range of issues. These issues must include decent employment in which workers have a relevant voice, decent and safe housing, quality medical care, elder care and participation in societal issues, child care and development, overall youth development, an educational process geared toward empowering all people, giving people a political voice with the capacity to direct the political system in a communal oriented fashion, cultural & religious freedom, governmental and corporate control, the cessation of internal & domestic exploitation and oppression, an end to police brutality, an end to mass incarceration, etc. Coalition building is essential, and it must be driven in the direction of movement building as well. Each group must be allowed to express their unique interest and position, and if this is done in a cordial manner everyone's interest could be addressed. Naturally issues such as racism and race relationship must be dealt with as we move forward.

The ultimate goal is the total eradication of the current governmental structure which has proven its self incapable of addressing the needs and interest of the people living in this country and beyond. This putrid structure must be replaced with a truly humane and free social arrangement. There is no way that we can have a truly free and just country while living in a police state which sees the massive imprisonment of it's Black and Latino population as a feasible means of building a political and economic system. Moreover, we cannot have a free society built off of racism, exploitation, hatred, and the miseducation of its own citizens. Therefore a total structural eradication is required if American society can ever live up to its often stated claims of being a free and just society.

It would be totally foolish of us to think that such a movement will be built overnight because this will require serious work. The idea is to educate and mobilize the people of this country and connect our struggle for freedom and human rights to the international struggle for human rights and freedom. As prisoners serving life/death sentences we realize that there is a limitation to our ability to participate in the movement building process, but we have the time available to us where we're able to study and research strategies and issues. With the assistance of the outside we can organize within these prisons. In our efforts to address prison issues we cannot limit

the conversation just to American laws because we would only be trapping ourselves in a no win situation. American laws were designed to empower a certain class of people in this country, and that naturally excludes the masses. Nor can we focus on parole eligibility for lifers without focusing on abolishing the death penalty, on good time for everyone else serving time, on pre release, on introducing educational programs which really educate, on abolishing SMU's, on the humane treatment of prisoners, and on abolishing the concept of imprisonment altogether. How is this even considered to be the best country in the world while at the same time you have the worlds largest prison population? This is a contradiction which must be aggressively addressed. How is it that other societies like Copenhagen, Denmark can live crime free while the greatest country in the world has the largest prison population in the world? A prison population which is full of Black and Latino people. These are issues which must be thought about and addressed as we move forward in the building process. These are issues which affect all prisoners in some way or another. The struggle for prisoner rights must be all inclusive in order for them to have the intended impact.

The imperial ambitions of the United States government and her corporate allies must be stopped if America can ever be a true world leader because as of right now America is only a leader in the sense of leading other pirate nations to the plunder of nations which has been intentionally under-developed by western interests. If such imperial exploitation and oppression is not stopped the people living in America will never be able to live in peace. You cannot support, or idly stand by and observe the oppression of other people and expect to be left in peace. Other nations, and people will eventually respond to the brutality, theft, rape, and murder of their peoples and land with violent attacks. Thus if people living in this country truly want to live free lives then it is encumbered upon them to stop the American government from exploiting, oppressing, and murdering innocent victims around the globe. Thus true human rights must be about the elimination of all forms of exploitation, oppression, tyranny, imperialism, etc.

Another important issue which is often over looked is the fact that most prisoners in this country come from intentionally under-developed communities. From an educational, political, economic standpoint most prisoners were intentionally under-developed, thus they were themselves victims of governmental and corporate exploitation and oppression. No one ever goes to prison

for such crimes! However, this very same government has the most draconian stance when it comes to the acts of those of us serving time in prison for violation of laws which we did not even have a voice in creating. Corporate billionaires and millionaires use the American military as muscle to violate the lands and peoples of other countries all the time. But who pays for these crimes? When military personnel step into someone else's country and kill innocent men, women, and children, and reenter the United States with bloody hands, who pays for those crimes against humanity? So, I would like to know who is really the threat to society? The young under-developed person who in a desperate state violates American laws, or the trained killer who kills innocent men, women, and children on command? How can we sit by and watch people be killed by drones without trial or any sort of say, and consider this humane because the president of the country says that they're terrorists? How do we really know that these people are guilty of committing any crimes? They had no say in the matter at hand? I am talking about an honest court with the ability to judge people by the totality of their being rather than just based on some accusations made against them by their enemies. Moreover, what about the innocent people killed in these drone strikes, people who just happen to be in the area of the strike? They call those morbid and deadly attacks collateral damage.

If we're going to build a true Human Rights Movement then we must truly be ready to take a long look at all the issues affecting humanity, and at who is causing people all this suffering! This will require honesty and integrity on the behalf of those involved in such a movement. We must look at what is taking place in all these prisons around the country and understand that this is a prison nation. It will continue to swallow our children until we do something to stop this insanity. This prison nation will do everything within its power to convince us that our children are inherently criminal and deserve what is happening to them, but the real criminals are the people who create and profit off of the agony of others.

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