I keep taking shapes congenial or not depends on circumstances.
-Marilyn Buck
INTRODUCTIONS

IN THE PAST there have been many attempts to bridge the gap dividing organizing inside and outside of prison. While movements outside the prison walls have the ability to experiment and flourish those inside are left isolated and without support; subject to the terrors of repression that those out here rarely have to face.

In the last few years the anarchist movement in the US has been forced to face that repression. Operation Backfire focused on the earth liberation movement, and sent many comrades to prison for 20 plus years. The offensive against the SHAC 7 and the RNC 8 resulted in more than one prison term. Locally the Asheville 11 face several cumulative years in jail. Our lovers, comrades and friends are increasingly facing the confinement of prison walls. This is not the way we wanted anarchists in the US to remember the other 2.3 million people behind bars, but it is the unfortunate reality.

What you hold in your hand is the first issue of a publication with the aim of bridging some of those chasms. One of the functions of prison is to isolate and separate: the guilty from the innocent, the inside from the outside, the "political" prisoner from the social "inmate." This publication aims to aid prisoners in communicating their opposition to such isolation.

Proposals is a place for critical dialogue, a place to share news and debate ideas and strategy. To us this effort is an appendage of a larger body of conflict and possibility. It is also an experiment, one that may prove a lasting effort or transform shortly into something else entirely. We believe there is strength in the flexibility of experimentation, that movements become stronger through such alchemy.

We should stress that while we find affinity with prisoners' struggles, we do not seek to fill the role of "supporters" or "allies." To us the prison is not an abstraction but a real thing that has stolen our family members, friends, and comrades, a location we may find ourselves in one day. It is a threat that haunts all we do like a storm on the horizon. And, the poverty of life under the prison roof does not stop at the prison wall. Whether through policing or wage labor or even just apathy and isolation, "prison" increasingly has come to define much of

WRITE TO US

To be added to or removed from the mailing list, or to submit materials for future issues, write to us at:

Chapel Hill Prison Books Collective
405 W. Franklin St. Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Support for Kids of Incarcerated Parents (SKIP)
115-A South Walnut Circle
Greensboro, NC 27409

North Carolina Prisoner Legal Services
PO Box 25397 Raleigh, NC 27611

National Lawyers' Guild
132 Nassau St. Ste. 922
New York, NY 10038

Proposals
PO Box 325, Chapel Hill, NC 27516
If one prisoner rides for a cause, we back him. There will be no pig brutality without consequences. Our solidarity has produced results every time and will continue to do so.

2011: Year of the Rebellion

"United we stand, divided we fall" is not just a phrase. It’s something we live by here in the Danger Zone. The movement is P.O.P. (Prisoners Over Pigs). If one prisoner rides for a cause, we back him. There will be no pig brutality without consequences. When prisoners realize who their oppressors are and stop being victims of the “divide and conquer” tactic, things will get done. Our solidarity has produced results every time and will continue to do so. Even though there are passive-minded pig sympathizers here, the revolutionary spirit is stronger than that. As far as the Danger Zone is concerned, 2011 is the year of the rebellion!

In Solidarity,

A Bartie C.
Windsor, NC

everyday life in society. We have our own conflicts and struggles out here, different though related to yours on the inside, and therefore have our own ideas and goals about how such struggles can move forward. We seek a complete break with the carceral form; we do not want the reform of prison but rather the end of prison, in the broadest sense possible. This publication will surely reflect those desires, as it will reflect the goals and strategies of the prisoners who write for it.

This publication is the outgrowth of a number of collective projects, actions, discussions, and personal relationships on both sides of the prison wall, and we hope it can serve to foster more relationships in the future. In that spirit we encourage you to send writings for the next issue, to be printed at the beginning of the month.

We are looking for editorials, communiques, critiques and analyses. Report backs from study groups and organizing initiatives, as well as personal accounts of life inside are welcome. Please give us the group or name you wish pieces to be published under. As an editorial body we will respect everyone’s anonymity. Our hope is to create an ongoing dialogue with those submitting works to this publication. The editorial process will include constructive critique on writing styles and content with the intention of building our capacity to articulate our desires. Because of the nature of this publication, we as editors are reserving the right to refuse to print material we find objectionable or that would threaten the continuation of the project. Please be wary of using terminology that prison officials and censors would deem to be “gang related” or could be labeled as a “security threat group” (STG). We can not return unused submissions, so be careful about sending us originals of your work. Our intention is to publish this as close to the first of every month as possible. If your submission does not appear in the following issue, it may still make it in a later issue.

Many understand the prison to be a permanent and inevitable feature of modern life. This publication is printed in the belief that the inevitable is not ineluctable, that the way things are will not last. In that spirit, here is the first issue of Proposals.

Until every cage is empty,

Proposals Editing Crew
ON DECEMBER 9TH, thousands of prisoners in eleven different facilities across Georgia began an unprecedented strike in a historic show-down with the Georgia Department of Corrections. Among many concerns expressed by inmates were not being paid for their labor; being charged excessive fees for basic medical treatments and money transfers; language barriers suffered by Latino inmates; arbitrary, harsh disciplinary practices; too few opportunities for education and self improvement; and unjust parole denials.

The strike, in which prisoners refused to leave their cells to go to work, lasted 6 days. On Wednesday December 14th, prisoners chose to end their protest on their own terms, in order to communicate, re-group, and have access to facilities like law libraries. The protest was unprecedented in at least three ways: it was organized by mobile phones that were smuggled into the prisons, it reached across numerous facilities, and it has united prisoners across ethnic and religious lines in an environment where racial-ly based gangs often fight each other.

Prisoners began planning the strike at the end of the summer, when prison authorities cut the cigarette supply. For the past three months, they have organized largely by word of mouth and text message. “They have set aside their differences,” said Elaine Brown, a former Black Panther leader and adviser to the prisoners, whose 27-year-old adopted son is incarcerated at Macon State prison. “You have black, Mexican, whites, Muslims, Christians, Rastafarians, you name it. They are all united and they are conscious that they are united around their common interests.”

The strike was total in affected prisons, Ms. Brown said. “If you’re at Macon or Smith or Hayes, you’re participating in the strike. It’s not five people. This isn’t rabble-rousing. It’s a universal, unified effort on the part of men who have been treated like slaves, whether they are black, white or Latino.”

Family and comrades organized solidarity demonstrations outside of prisons and jails across the country. One such protest occurred at Raleigh’s Central Prison on December 17th, with anarchists and anti-prison activists banging loudly on drums and holding up banners that read, “Solidarity with All Prison Rebels” and “Free All Prisoners.”

Prison officials responded to the strike by cutting off prisoners’ heat and water, beating supposed “leaders,” and putting many of the affected facilities on lockdown. According to witnesses, one prisoner targeted for his participation in the strike was dragged from his cell in handcuffs and leg irons, removed to the prison gym and beaten unconscious. Mike McNealy, a Concerned Coalition to Respect Prisoners’ Rights held a press conference to draw attention to these acts of repression. Ed Dubose, the president of the NAACP in Georgia, declared to the media present, “Some inmates have been targeted and others have simply disappeared. We are urging the Department of Corrections and Governor-Elect Nathan Deal to act now to halt these unjust practices and treat these men like human beings.”

Although the authorities have done little, the repression has not ended prisoners’ organizing or weakened their resolve. After choosing to end their strike, several prisoners warned officials that their struggle was not over. One prisoner interviewed by the press, who identified himself as Mike, said, “We let them know if they didn’t fulfill the requests, the next time it would be pretty bad and it was not going to be inmate on inmate; it would be inmate on administration.”

There’s a brother that lives in the Danger Zone named S. He has an unknown medical condition that causes him to cough and throw up blood. The medical staff at the facility have been very competent to say the least. Prior to this incident, S. had informed and showed everyone a report that he had been coughing up blood and that he needed a medical emergency to be called in. He was told to fill out sick call form, which could take up to a week to be seen by a nurse or even longer by a physician’s assistant, and was told that whenever the nurse came around to pass out medication he could have his concerns addressed. A week later, S. told a brother beside him to call the guards because they weren’t answering the emergency call button and was throwing up blood.

A guard finally came in to see what was the problem. This brain dead motherfucker was asking S. what was wrong while looking at him lying on the floor in blood! I got pissed off and told the guard to call a code and get the brother some medical attention. When other brothers realized the severity of the situation, we all began to kick and beat on our cell doors. The results? A code was called and medical personnel rushed down here, along with administrative officials, and S. was taken to get checked out.

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IF YOU KNOW THE ENEMY AND KNOW YOURSELF, YOU NEED NOT FEAR THE RESULT OF A HUNDRED BATTLES.

LUCASVILLE REBELS’ HUNGER STRIKE ENDS IN VICTORY

“So much energy coming is from all over. I'm just trying to hang on and ride the wave,” wrote political prisoner Bomani Shakur on Jan. 8, the third day of his hunger strike at Ohio State Peniten- tiary. Convicted as Keith LaMar, Bomani and two other death-sentenced prisoners started refusing food on January 3 to demand better treatment.

The other two hunger strikers were Siddique Abdullah Hasan and Jason Robb, both prisoner ne-gotiators during the 1993 prisoner rebellion at the prison in Lucasville, Ohio. For their participatory role in the Lucasville rebellion, they received not only the death penalty, but the equivalent of more than 12 years of confine- ment in the “hole” — solitary confinement stripped of even rudimentary privi- leges.

Robb has point-ed out that other death-row prisoners have been transferred out of the super-max prison or have had their security level relaxed. Along with Namir Abdul Mateen (James Were), these men are the only four prisoners who have been kept relentless-ly on OSP's highest secu- rity level.

Prisoners whose death sentences were for heinous crimes are able to win privileges based on good behavior, but not the death-sentenced Lu- casville uprising prisoners. The men's dispropor- tionately brutal treatment demonstrates the fear of prison officials towards the rebellious and orga- nized prisoner.

Bomani also expressed his reasons for pro- testing the conditions of his confinement in a message of poetic eloquence, stating, “We have undergone penalty on top of penalty, kept from fully participating in our appeals, from touching our friends and families, denied adequate medical treatment, and so many other things that are too numerous to name. In a word, we have been tor-

uaged. And, yes, I'm aware that the word 'tortured' is a strong word to use, but I know of no other word that more adequately describes what we have been through. We have been put through hell.”

He also stated his demands in a Jan. 3 let-ter on Facebook to OSP warden David Bobby: “1. Full recreation privileges. 2. Full commissary privi- leges. 3. Full access to Access SecurePac catalog. 4. Semi-contact visits. 5. Access to computer data-base so that I can assist in the furtherance of my appeals.”

Desire for justice for the hunger strikers is so widespread that emails within the Lucasville Upris- ing Freedom Network have been posted as articles on many websites, including many sites of the An-archist Black Cross Federation. An “Open Letter” of support had already gained over 1800 signatures in less than a week.

The response has been overwhelming. I have gotten calls and emails from Detroit, Colum- bus and Philadelphia about bringing car-loads of people to the rally, and calls from Los Angeles, Denver and Washington, D.C., wanting to help,” ex- claimed Sharon Da- nann, organizer with the Lucasville Upris- ing Freedom Network. “Ohio Prison Watch and Prison Watch In- ternational were posting information as fast as I could provide it to them, and the woman I was working with was in Europe. Updates are going out by Twitter. It feels like a new era in organizing.”

On January 15th, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a large protest was held outside of the Ohio State Penitentiary.

The very next day, prison officials agreed to meet virtually all of the demands set out by the prisoners, and the men decided to end their strike. The full details of the agreement have not yet been released, but the hunger strikers and supporters alike are celebrating it as a victory.

Wrote one supporter after receiving the news, “We need to take some of this energy that was created around the hunger strike to help these men fight for their lives.”
The state has always defined us as de facto criminals; we can only hope to find affinity with as many others as possible who also face this reality, to bridge the gaps of communication, culture and desire.

With the charge, which allows for a 50% increase in the maximum penalty. They later received more charges—conspiracy to commit property damage, conspiracy to commit property damage in furtherance of a criminal act—exploiting and promoting the terror of those they hoped to face the reality of prison head on. Despite the obvious drawbacks of having friends and comrades stolen from our communities for years at a time, the repression has also had its benefits, demonstrated both with attempts to increase the inter-generational dialogue with those still held in the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) organization, the commitment of some anarchists in engaging with and enabling broader rebellion behind prison walls.

The state has always defined us as de facto criminals. We can only hope to find affinity with as many others as possible who also face this reality, to bridge the gaps of communication, culture and desire. We feel this affinity in many different ways, on a variety of levels but our resolve must be total. The nature of our lives and the structures we live under force us to realize prison, and to respond to it in kind.