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Bring About Some Change: Radical Politics' Influence on *The Attica Liberation Faction  
Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*

On September 9, 1971, The Attica Liberation Faction, a politically minded group of over 1000 Black, Brown, and White prisoners at Attica Correctional Facility in New York State, seized control of the facility and held 40 guards hostage. They then presented the state with *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*<sup>1</sup>, a manifesto of political, idealistic, and logistic demands to make reforms of their current conditions. After four days of fruitless negotiation, New York State Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered thousands of correctional guards, State Troopers, and National Guardsman to open fire on the prison, slaughtering hostages and prisoners alike. This massive use of force took only 15 minutes to amass the death of 39 men and injury of 80 more, and is often described as “the bloodiest one day encounter between Americans since the Civil War”.<sup>2</sup> The severity of the State’s response points to the notion that the ideals presented by the prisoners were a threat to the government’s authority. In fact, the opinions described in the Manifesto were influenced by many outside causes that led to authorities’ unrest. Rooted in anti-capitalist, anti-racist, neoslavery, and constitutional equality themes proclaimed by radical political groups such as the Black Panthers,

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<sup>1</sup> See attachment at end of essay for complete Manifesto.

<sup>2</sup> *Attica; the Official Report of the New York State Special Commission on Attica*. New York: Bantam Books, 1972. Xi.

Young Lords, and Marxists, The Attica Liberation Faction and its ensuing Manifesto presented major critiques of the oppressive inequality prison culture fosters.

Although the massacre skyrocketed Attica in to the public eye, there had been radical impressions on the prison population long before this culminating event. A look at the makeup of Attica's inmate population reveals the prisoners came from varying backgrounds. However, the ones with the greatest inter-inmate influence had ties to outside radical political and religious organizations: The Black Panthers<sup>3</sup>, the Young Lords<sup>4</sup>, The Nation of Islam<sup>5</sup>, and the Five Percenters<sup>6</sup>. Woven throughout the doctrine of these parties were themes of racial equality, moral justice, religious autonomy, and socialism. Five of the affiliates of these political organizations went on to start the Attica Liberation Faction and brought their influence into the prison setting.

As Lee Bernstein describes,

These five – Frank Lott, Herbert X. Blyden, Donald Noble, Carl Jones-El, and Peter Butler – were among the most experienced activists in Attica. Blyden had participated in a rebellion at the Tombs prison in New York City the previous year, helping to write the rebels' list of demands. Others had been involved in a sit-down strike at Auburn prison... While deemed impractical by one of the outside observers, [the] demands grew logically from the political education many inmates received while in prison. Blyden and Jones served on the negotiating committee during the takeover. Blyden was a member of Attica's Nation of Islam

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<sup>3</sup> The Black Panther Party is a militant Black socialist and nationalist party founded in 1966. See Baggins, Brian. *History of the Black Panther Party*. Marxists Internet Archive (marx.org)

<sup>4</sup> The Young Lords are a Puerto Rican nationalist gang motivated by defeating racism, classism, and sexism. See Wanzer, Darrel, and Iris Morales. *The Young Lords a Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> The Nation of Islam is an Islamic religious movement popularized in 1960's Detroit, Michigan whose goals were to improve the spiritual, mental, social, and economic condition of African Americans. See *History of the Nation of Islam*. Atlanta, GA: Secretarius Mempis Publications, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> The Five Percenters are a former Nation of Islam sect that focuses on the divinity of the Black man and considers themselves agents of eradicating racial and spiritual ignorance. See Knight, Michael Muhammad. *The Five Percenters: Islam, Hip-hop, and the Gods of New York*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2007.

community, and Carl Jones-El and Donald Noble were members of the prison's Moorish Science community."<sup>7</sup>

These men combined their apathy for prison experiences with their revolutionary pretenses beyond the gates to foster a fusion between the issues of civilian and inmate. As Carl Jones-El suggests in an interview, these men accomplished this goal by chartering the Attica Liberation Faction in an attempt to "to try to bring about some change in the conditions of Attica"<sup>8</sup>. Bringing about change, though, required the Attica Liberation Faction to garner support in massive numbers. To accomplish this, the Faction ensured inclusion of all parties, even those of differing racial affiliations.

The group's ability to cross racial lines in a historically intolerant country, and in one of said countries most bigoted settings, was astounding. Attica displayed the racial tensions present in the greater American context. The majority of inmates were Black or Puerto Rican, and some poor urban whites, whereas every single correctional officer, sans one hispanic, was a rural white man.<sup>9</sup> Yet, the influence of their civilian revolutionary affiliations led the founding members of the Attica Liberation Faction to claim that racial unity among inmates was crucial to actualizing any real change.

Outside the prison gates, The Black Panthers and Young Lords dealt with struggles of ethnic oppression and asserted that solidarity among oppressed groups was essential. In their Ten Point Program, the Black Panthers quote the Constitution's affirmation that "all men are created

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<sup>7</sup> Bernstein, Lee. *America Is the Prison Arts and Politics in Prison in the 1970s*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. 67-68.

<sup>8</sup> *Voices from Inside: 7 Interviews with Attica Prisoners*. New York: Attica Defense Committee, 1972.

<sup>9</sup> *Attica; the Official Report of the New York State Special Commission on Attica*. New York: Bantam Books, 1972. 28.

equal” as a statement of necessary egalitarianism for all people.<sup>10</sup> Similar to the Black Panthers, the Young Lords’ Thirteen Point Program and Platform says of racial groups, “We each organize our people, but our fights are the same against oppression and we will defeat it the same”.<sup>11</sup> Jones-El describes the value of unity when he maintains that “We had to get along with the different [people] here: the Muslims, the Fiver Percenters, Lords and all the other factions to become one solid movement, rather than just be separate parts here trying to accomplish the same things, better conditions for the inmates”.<sup>12</sup> So, the Attica Liberation Faction took principles of cooperation and implemented them intentionally to fortify a powerful movement. Nonetheless, achieving this type of racial unity required deliberate efforts to educate and incorporate a vast array of opinions among the Faction.

Due nearly exclusively to persistent education of the imprisoned masses, racial harmony was rooted in the sharing of narratives and political or sociological material to provide new perspectives. According to Carl Jones-El, the politically conscious inmates would “hold open house and whoever wanted to come and listen to political ideology were welcome” and could “point out that certain conditions were taking place”. The prisoners’ ability to spread this knowledge was heightened by the restrictions of their captivity.<sup>13</sup> The Faction members used the arguably overbearing structure of the prison to, counterintuitively, create a well researched Manifesto that accurately reflected the beliefs and desires of the greater Attica Prison population. Jones-El describes the process of self education through mobilization as such,

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<sup>10</sup> *The Ten-Point Program*. California: Black Panther Party, 1966.

<sup>11</sup> Wanzer, Darrel, and Iris Morales. *The Young Lords a Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> *Voices from Inside: 7 Interviews with Attica Prisoners*. New York: Attica Defense Committee, 1972.

<sup>13</sup> Berger, Dan. *Captive Nation: Black Prison Organizing in the Civil Rights Era*.

We more or less had to educate ourselves. When we came here [Attica] we knew the conditions and we felt that people should come together and get a better understanding of the conditions here, what was being done to them by the administration.... And we sought support from the entire population, the four different blocks... One of us would go to different blocks, and there we would set up an educational program, and bring to their attention what the manifesto was going to be about. So we got a lot of support on this. Then we moved on it.<sup>14</sup>

This process of collective consensual indoctrination led to specific ideals of anti-capitalism, anti-racism, neo-slavery, and constitutionality being presented in *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*.

Apparent in the rhetoric used in the Manifesto, the same radical schools of thought that were sources of rebellion for the nation had permeated into the prisons through their use of self education. First was the popular critique of economics and the inequality of capitalism, as is communicated in Marxist propaganda and further supported by race oriented groups such as the Black Panthers and Young Lords. Marxism argues that private ownership of the means of production enriches capitalists (those who own capital) at the expense of workers.<sup>15</sup> It also posits that the owners of the means of production exploit the workforce. Applying these same judgements to the economic and labor structure of Attica, *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform* declares, “many prisoners believe their labor power is being exploited in order for the state to increase its economic power and to continue to expand its correctional industries (which are million dollar complexes)”.<sup>16</sup> By this

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<sup>14</sup> *Voices from Inside: 7 Interviews with Attica Prisoners*. New York: Attica Defense Committee, 1972.

<sup>15</sup> "Marx and Engels Internet Archive." Marx and Engels Internet Archive. Accessed April 24, 2015. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/>.

<sup>16</sup> Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

line of thought, the State represents the capitalists enriched by the private ownership of million dollar prison systems which disregard and devalue the labor of its workers, the inmates.

Marxism is also heavily rooted in unveiling the tensions between classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the former who gained wealth by abusing the latter. The inmates argue that this same tension is present in the use and abuse of their labor because it “is class legislation, class division and creates hostilities within the prison”. The inmates expanded the scope of Marxist influence by identifying a class structure within the sociology of the prison culture, and supporting attempts to lessen (and eventually eradicate) their gapped social structure. The applicability of Marxism within prison labor is further made apparent when comparing the wages of inmates and guards. According to the Manifesto, inmates made approximately 40 cents a day.

<sup>17</sup> However, economic analysis presented in *The Story of Attica* declares, “it cost \$8 million dollars to run Attica Prison in fiscal year 1971-72; that amounted to about \$8,000 per prisoner. Most of this money was spent on correctional officers’ salaries (62%)”.<sup>18</sup> The fact that bourgeois correctional officers gained capital by hoarding the majority of funds -that were meant to be allocated towards proletariat inmates- suggests an accurate application of Marxist cynicism by the Attica Liberation Faction members.

As aforementioned, the Faction also felt racial unity would be an imperative component of staging a successful revolutionary movement. The American state has long used racial segregation, stratification, and classification as a tool to crush revolutionary movements; rebellion necessitated disarming this weapon. Revolutionary philosopher Michael Foucault said

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<sup>17</sup> Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

<sup>18</sup> Wallace, Lewis, and Mariame Kaba. *A Story of Attica*. Project NIA. 1.

it well when he posited, "the front of the war [of prison revolutions] no longer lies between the black inmates and white inmates but, rather, all the revolutionary inmates on the one side and the administration (and all those who serve it, be they guards or inmates) on the other".<sup>19</sup> Racial unity was also emphasized in the Young Lords' Thirteen Point Program and Platform when they declare, "We know that Washington, Wall Street, and City Hall will try to make our nationalism into racism; but Puerto Ricans are of all colors and we resist racism. Millions of poor white people are rising up to demand freedom and we support them".<sup>20</sup> The significance of racial harmony was a major component to the Faction's mission, supported by the Manifesto's statement that they "demand an immediate end to the agitation of race relations by the administration of this state".<sup>21</sup> They further demanded, "an end to the discrimination and judgment and quote of parole for Black and Brown People". These stern requisitions pointed to the crushing racial manipulation by the state that Foucault spoke of.

The Manifesto moved beyond theories of racial unity into neo slavery rhetoric. Neoslavery, as defined by Black Panther and prison reform activist George Jackson, is, "an economic condition which manifests itself in the total loss or absence of self-determination... [Slavery] merely changed at the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation from chattel slavery to economic slavery".<sup>22</sup> The Faction members made it clear that this neoslavery applied to them, for they felt economically and figuratively oppressed by the prison system. In the Manifesto they

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<sup>19</sup> James, Joy. "The Masked Assassination by Michael Foucault." In *Warfare in the American Homeland: Policing and Prison in a Penal Democracy*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Wanzer, Darrel, and Iris Morales. *The Young Lords a Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

<sup>22</sup> Jackson, George. "1970, April 17." In *Soledad Brother; the Prison Letters of George Jackson*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1970.

state that the “prison employees no longer consider or respect us as human beings, but rather as domesticated animals selected to do their bidding in slave labor” and refer to multiple official parties of the state<sup>23</sup> as “vile and vicious slave masters”.<sup>24</sup> When specifying the master-like tendencies of the prison, the Manifesto argues that their working processes “do not develop working skills acceptable for employment in the outside society, and... do not pay the prisoners more than an average of forty cents a day”. This aligns with Jackson’s argument that “ If you don't make any more in wages than you need to live, you are a neoslave”.<sup>25</sup> Further in the Manifesto, they “demand that inmates be granted the right to support their own families; at present thousands of welfare recipients have to divide their checks to support their imprisoned relatives who, without the outside support, can not even buy [necessities]”. These statements clarify the desire to be free from perceived economic oppression and the ability to gain economic independence. The text suggest the inmates witnessed their prison labor leading to an “absence of self-determination”. This delineation of systematic hindrances to the economic autonomy of prisoners is evidence of the language neo slavery permeating into the Attica Liberation Faction and its Manifesto.

Black Panther affiliates were not the only political body to align prison with slavery. In fact, the United States Constitution’s Thirteenth Amendment, which attempted to abolish

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<sup>23</sup> The Attica Liberation Faction addressed their demands to “The Governor of New York State, The N.Y.S. Department of Corrections, The N.Y.S Legislature, The N.Y.S. Courts, The United States Courts, The N.Y.S. Parole Board, and those who support this system of injustice”. See Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

<sup>24</sup> Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

<sup>25</sup> Jackson, George. "1970, April 17." In *Soledad Brother; the Prison Letters of George Jackson*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1970.



slavery, stated “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”.<sup>26</sup> Even the Constitution deemed “punishment for a crime”, or incarceration, as an appropriate form of slavery. However, the Faction was well aware of the fact that this amendment in no way granted the state the ability to remove basic rights from citizens of that state. In fact, the same Constitution maintains certain, “truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”.<sup>27</sup> The Manifesto applies this license to basic humanity in its conclusion: “[W]e demand, as human beings, the dignity and justice that is due to us by right of our birth”.<sup>28</sup> It also extends constitutional awareness beyond the realm of abstract notions to identify specific infringements on rights. In the Manifesto introduction, they insist that “in our efforts to assemble in dissent as provided under this nation’s United States Constitution, we are in turn... (attacked) because we seek the rights and privileges of all American People”. They follow with the first demand which proclaims, “the constitutional rights of legal representation at the time of all parole board hearings”. The Manifesto asserts that the current conditions of “authoritative inhumanity” at Attica were in no way reflective of the legal slavery described in the United States Constitution. This type of

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<sup>26</sup> "Thirteenth Amendment." In *The Constitution of the United States of America*. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1953.

<sup>27</sup> "Preamble." In *The Constitution of the United States of America*. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1953.

<sup>28</sup> Attica Liberation Faction. *The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform*. Attica, New York, New York, 1971.

constitutional consciousness exemplifies yet another source of ammunition for the Attica Liberation Faction to attack the prison model in which they existed.

*The Attica Liberation Faction Manifesto of Demands and Anti-Depression Platform* was rebellious in its blatant and fierce articulation of exasperation with the state of the prison experience. Through the use of self taught expositions of the maltreatment encountered at Attica Correctional Facility -specifically those surrounding capitalism, racism, slavery, and constitutional rights- prisoners from varying schools of thought and racial backgrounds united in their pursuit of insurgence. The core principles and afflictions that fostered this uprising were not exclusive to the Attica Liberation Faction, and the harsh subjugation of the Attica Massacre was not singular to the State of New York. As stated in the Official Report on Attica, “Attica is every prison; and every prison is Attica”.<sup>29</sup> More expansively, the continuity between the grievances experienced by prisoners, expressed in the Manifesto, and those of radical civilian groups beyond the prison walls, suggests that Attica is every oppressor; and every oppressor is Attica.

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<sup>29</sup> *Attica; the Official Report of the New York State Special Commission on Attica*. New York: Bantam Books, 1972. Xi.

THE ATTICA LIBERATION FACTION MANIFESTO OF DEMANDS AND ANTI-DEPRESSION PLATFORM (1971)

WE, THE IMPRISONED MEN OF ATTICA PRISON, SEEK AN END TO THE INJUSTICE SUFFERED BY ALL PRISONERS. REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED OR COLOR.

THE PREPARATION AND CONTENT OF THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE UNIFIED EFFORTS OF ALL RACES AND SOCIAL SEGMENTS OF THIS PRISON.

IT IS A MATTER OF DOCUMENTED RECORD AND HUMAN RECOGNITION THAT THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEW YORK PRISON SYSTEM HAVE RESTRUCTURED THE INSTITUTIONS WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO SOCIALLY CORRECT MEN INTO THE FASCIST CONCENTRATION CAMPS OF MODERN AMERICA.

DUE TO THE CONDITIONAL FACT THAT ATTICA PRISON IS ONE OF THE MOST CLASSIC INSTITUTIONS OF AUTHORITATIVE INHUMANITY UPON MEN. THE FOLLOWING MANIFESTO OF DEMANDS [IS] BEING SUBMITTED:

“MAN’S RIGHT TO KNOWLEDGE AND FREE USE THEREOF”

WE, THE INMATES OF ATTICA PRISON, HAVE GROWN TO RECOGNIZE BEYOND THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT, THAT BECAUSE OF OUR POSTURE AS PRISONERS AND BRANDED CHARACTERS AS ALLEGED CRIMINALS, THE ADMINISTRATION AND PRISON EMPLOYEES NO LONGER CONSIDER OR RESPECT US AS HUMAN BEINGS, BUT RATHER AS DOMESTICATED ANIMALS SELECTED TO DO THEIR BIDDING IN SLAVE LABOR AND FURNISHED AS A PERSONAL WHIPPING DOG FOR THEIR SADISTIC, PSYCHOPATHIC HATE.

WE, THE INMATES OF ATTICA PRISON, SAY TO YOU, THE SINCERE PEOPLE OF SOCIETY, THE PRISON SYSTEM OF WHICH YOUR COURTS HAVE RENDERED UNTO IS WITHOUT QUESTION THE AUTHORITATIVE FANGS OF A COWARD IN POWER.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE PEOPLE AS A PROTEST TO THE VILE  
AND VICIOUS SLAVE MASTERS:

THE GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK STATE  
THE N.Y.S. DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS THE N.Y.S. LEGISLATURE  
THE N.Y.S. COURTS  
THE UNITED STATES COURTS  
THE N.Y.S. PAROLE BOARD

AND THOSE WHO SUPPORT THIS SYSTEM OF INJUSTICE

THE INMATES OF THIS PRISON HAVE VESTED THE POWER OF  
NEGOTIATION REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT OF THE STIPULATED DEMANDS  
WITHIN THE JUDGMENT AND CONTROL OF THESE MEN:

DONALD NOBLE 26777 PETER BUTLER 26018 FRANK LOTT 26148  
CARL JONES-EL 24534 HERBERT BLYDEN X. 22480

ALL AND ANY NEGOTIATION WILL BE CONDUCTED BY PRISON AND STATE  
AUTHORITIES WITH THESE FIVE MEN.

THESE DEMANDS ARE BEING PRESENTED TO YOU. THERE IS NO STRIKE OF  
ANY KIND TO PROTEST THESE DEMANDS. WE ARE *TRYING* TO DO  
THIS IN A DEMOCRATIC FASHION. WE FEEL THERE IS NO NEED TO DRAMATIZE  
OUR DEMANDS.

WE, THE MEN OF ATTICA PRISON, HAVE BEEN COMMITTED TO THE N.Y.S.  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS BY THE PEOPLE OF SOCIETY FOR THE PURPOSE  
OF CORRECTING WHAT [HAVE] BEEN DEEMED SOCIAL ERRORS IN BEHAVIOR.  
ERRORS WHICH HAVE CLASSIFIED US AS SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE UNTIL  
PROGRAMMED WITH NEW VALUES AND MORE THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING AS  
TO OUR VALUE AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS MEMBERS OF THE OUTSIDE  
COMMUNITY. THE ATTICA PRISON PROGRAM IN ITS STRUCTURE AND  
CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN ENSLAVED ON THE PAGES OF THIS MANIFESTO OF  
DEMANDS WITH THE BLOOD, SWEAT, AND TEARS OF THE INMATES OF THIS  
PRISON.

THE PROGRAMS WHICH WE ARE SUBMITTED TO UNDER THE FAÇADE OF  
REHABILITATION, IS RELATIVE TO THE ANCIENT STUPIDITY OF POURING WATER  
ON A DROWNING MAN, INASMUCH AS WE ARE TREATED FOR OUR HOSTILITIES  
BY OUR PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS WITH THEIR HOSTILITY AS A MEDICATION.

IN OUR EFFORTS TO COMPREHEND ON A FEELING LEVEL AN EXISTENCE  
CONTRARY TO VIOLENCE, WE ARE CONFRONTED BY OUR CAPTORS WITH AS TO

WHAT IS FAIR AND JUST, WE ARE VICTIMIZED BY THE EXPLOITATION AND THE DENIAL OF THE CELEBRATED DUE PROCESS OF LAW.

IN OUR PEACEFUL EFFORTS TO ASSEMBLE IN DISSENT AS PROVIDED UNDER THIS NATION'S UNITED STATES 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 OFFENDED TO ISOLATION STATUS WHEN WE INSIST ON OUR HUMAN RIGHTS TO THE WISDOM OF AWARENESS.

#### Manifesto of Demands

- 1) WE DEMAND THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION AT THE TIME OF ALL PAROLE BOARD HEARINGS; AND THE PROTECTION FROM THE PROCEDURES OF THE PAROLE AUTHORITIES WHEREBY THEY PERMIT NO PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS SUCH AS AN ATTORNEY FOR CROSS-EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES, WITNESSES IN BEHALF OF THE PAROLEE, AT THE PAROLE REVOCATION HEARINGS.
- 2) WE DEMAND A CHANGE IN MEDICAL STAFF AND MEDICAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE. THE ATTICA PRISON HOSPITAL IS TOTALLY INADEQUATE, UNDERSTAFFED, PREJUDICED IN THE TREATMENT OF INMATES. THERE ARE NUMEROUS "MISTAKES" MADE. MANY TIMES, IMPROPER AND ERRONEOUS MEDICATION IS GIVEN BY UNTRAINED PERSONNEL. WE ALSO *DEMAND* PERIODICAL CHECK-UPS ON *ALL* PRISONERS AND SUFFICIENT LICENSED PRACTITIONERS 24 HOURS A DAY INSTEAD OF INMATE HELP THAT IS USED NOW.
- 3) WE DEMAND ADEQUATE VISITING CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES FOR THE INMATES AND FAMILIES OF ATTICA PRISONERS. THE VISITING FACILITIES AT THIS PRISON ARE SUCH AS TO PRECLUDE ADEQUATE VISITING FOR THE INMATES AND THEIR FAMILIES.
- 4) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE SEGREGATION OF PRISONERS FROM THE MAINLINE POPULATION BECAUSE OF THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS. SOME OF THE MEN IN SEGREGATION UNITS ARE CONFINED THERE SOLELY FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND THEIR SEGREGATION FROM OTHER INMATES IS INDEFINITE.
- 5) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE PERSECUTION AND PUNISHMENT OF PRISONERS WHO PRACTICE THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF PEACEFUL DISSENT. PRISONERS AT ATTICA AND OTHER N.Y.S. PRISONS CANNOT BE COMPELLED TO WORK, AS THESE PRISONS WERE BUILT FOR THE PURPOSE OF HOUSING PRISONERS AND THERE IS NO MENTION AS TO THE PRISONERS BEING REQUIRED TO WORK ON PRISON JOBS IN ORDER TO

REMAIN IN THE MAINLINE POPULATION AND/OR BE CONSIDERED FOR RELEASE. MANY PRISONERS BELIEVE THEIR LABOR POWER IS BEING EXPLOITED IN ORDER FOR THE STATE TO INCREASE ITS ECONOMIC POWER AND TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND ITS CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRIES (WHICH ARE MILLION-DOLLAR COMPLEXES), YET DO NOT DEVELOP WORKING SKILLS ACCEPTABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE OUTSIDE SOCIETY, AND WHICH DO NOT PAY THE PRISONER MORE THAN AN AVERAGE OF FORTY CENTS A DAY. MOST PRISONERS NEVER MAKE MORE THAN FIFTY CENTS A DAY. PRISONERS WHO REFUSE TO WORK FOR THE OUTRAGEOUS SCALE, OR WHO STRIKE, ARE PUNISHED AND SEGREGATED WITHOUT THE ACCESS TO THE PRIVILEGES SHARED BY THOSE WHO WORK; THIS IS CLASS LEGISLATION, CLASS DIVISION, AND CREATES HOSTILITIES WITHIN THE PRISON.

6) WE DEMAND AN END TO POLITICAL PERSECUTION, RACIAL PERSECUTION, AND THE DENIAL OF PRISONERS' RIGHTS TO SUBSCRIBE TO POLITICAL PAPERS, BOOKS OR ANY OTHER EDUCATIONAL AND CURRENT MEDIA CHRONICLES THAT ARE FORWARDED THROUGH THE UNITED STATES MAIL.

7) WE DEMAND THAT INDUSTRIES BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE INSTITUTIONS AND EMPLOY INMATES TO WORK EIGHT HOURS A DAY AND FIT INTO THE CATEGORY OF WORKERS FOR SCALE WAGES. THE WORKING CONDITIONS IN PRISONS DO NOT DEVELOP WORKING INCENTIVES PARALLEL TO THE MANY JOBS IN THE OUTSIDE SOCIETY, AND A PAROLED PRISONER FACES MANY CONTRADICTIONS OF THE JOB THAT ADDS TO HIS DIFFICULTY IN ADJUSTING. THOSE INDUSTRIES OUTSIDE WHO DESIRE PRISONS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO ENTER FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT.

8) WE DEMAND THAT INMATES BE GRANTED THE RIGHT TO JOIN OR FORM A LABOR UNION.

9) WE DEMAND THAT INMATES BE GRANTED THE RIGHT TO SUPPORT THEIR OWN FAMILIES; AT PRESENT THOUSANDS OF WELFARE RECIPIENTS HAVE TO DIVIDE THEIR CHECKS TO SUPPORT THEIR IMPRISONED RELATIVES WHO, WITHOUT THE OUTSIDE SUPPORT, CAN NOT EVEN BUY TOILET ARTICLES OR FOOD. MEN WORKING ON SCALE WAGES COULD SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND FAMILIES WHILE IN PRISON.

10) WE DEMAND THAT CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS BE PROSECUTED AS A MATTER OF LAW FOR ANY ACTS OF CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT WHERE IT IS NOT A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH.

11) WE DEMAND THAT ALL INSTITUTIONS USING INMATE LABOR BE MADE TO CONFORM WITH THE STATE AND FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE LAWS.

12) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE ESCALATING PRACTICE OF PHYSICAL BRUTALITY BEING PERPETRATED UPON THE INMATES OF N.Y.S. PRISONS.

13) WE DEMAND THE APPOINTMENT OF THREE LAWYERS FROM THE N.Y.S. BAR ASSOCIATION TO FULL TIME POSITIONS FOR THE PROVISION OF

LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO INMATES SEEKING POST- CONVICTION RELIEF, AND TO ACT AS A LIAISON BETWEEN THE ADMINISTRATION AND INMATES FOR BRINGING INMATE COMPLAINTS TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

14) WE DEMAND THE UPDATING OF INDUSTRY WORKING CONDITIONS TO THE STANDARDS PROVIDED FOR UNDER N.Y.S. LAW.

15) WE DEMAND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF [AN] INMATE WORKERS INSURANCE PLAN TO PROVIDE COMPENSATION FOR WORK RELATED ACCIDENTS.

16) WE DEMAND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIONIZED VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS COMPARABLE TO THAT OF THE FEDERAL PRISON SYSTEM WHICH PROVIDES FOR UNION INSTRUCTIONS, UNION PAY SCALES, AND UNION MEMBERSHIP UPON COMPLETION OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSE.

17) WE DEMAND ANNUAL ACCOUNTING OF THE INMATES RECREATION FUND AND FORMULATION OF AN INMATE COMMITTEE TO GIVE INMATES A VOICE AS TO HOW SUCH FUNDS ARE USED.

18) WE DEMAND THAT THE PRESENT PAROLE BOARD APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR BE ERADICATED AND REPLACED BY A PAROLE BOARD ELECTED BY POPULAR VOTE OF THE PEOPLE. IN A WORLD WHERE MANY CRIMES ARE PUNISHED BY INDETERMINATE SENTENCES AND WHERE AUTHORITY ACTS WITHIN SECRECY AND WITHIN VAST DISCRETION ARE GIVEN HEAVY WEIGHT TO ACCUSATIONS BY PRISONS EMPLOYEES AGAINST INMATES, INMATES FEEL TRAPPED UNLESS THEY ARE WILLING TO ABANDON THEIR [RIGHT] TO BE INDEPENDENT MEN.

19) WE DEMAND THAT THE STATE LEGISLATURE CREATE [A] FULL- TIME SALARIED BOARD OF OVERSEER[S] FOR THE STATE PRISONS. THE BOARD WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR EVALUATING ALLEGATIONS MADE BY INMATES, INMATES FAMILIES, THEIR FRIENDS AND LAWYERS AGAINST EMPLOYEES CHARGED WITH ACTING INHUMANELY, ILLEGALLY OR UNREASONABLY. THE BOARD SHOULD INCLUDED PEOPLE NOMINATED BY A PSYCHOLOGICAL OR PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, BY THE STATE BAR ASSOCIATION OR BY THE CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, AND BY GROUPS OF CONCERNED, INVOLVED LAYMEN.

20) WE DEMAND AN IMMEDIATE END TO THE AGITATION OF RACE RELATIONS BY THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION OF THIS STATE.

21) WE DEMAND THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FURNISH ALL PRISONERS WITH THE SERVICES OF ETHNIC COUNSELORS FOR THE NEEDED SPECIAL SERVICES OF THE BROWN AND BLACK POPULATION OF THIS PRISON.

22) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE DISCRIMINATION IN THE JUDGMENT AND QUOTA OF PAROLE FOR BLACK AND BROWN PEOPLE.

23) WE DEMAND THAT ALL PRISONERS BE PRESENT AT THE TIME THEIR CELLS AND PROPERTY ARE BEING SEARCHED BY THE CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS OF STATE PRISONS.

24) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PRISONERS WHEN THEY APPEAR BEFORE THE PAROLE BOARD. MOST PRISONERS ARE DENIED PAROLE SOLELY BECAUSE OF THEIR PREVIOUS RECORDS. LIFE SENTENCES SHOULD NOT CONFINE A MAN LONGER THAN TEN YEARS AS A SEVEN YEAR DURATION IS THE CONSIDERED STATUTE FOR A LIFETIME OUT OF CIRCULATION, AND IF A MAN CANNOT BE REHABILITATED AFTER A MAXIMUM OF TEN YEARS OF CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMS, ETC., THEN HE BELONGS IN A MENTAL HYGIENE CENTER, NOT A PRISON.

25) WE DEMAND AN END TO THE UNSANITARY CONDITIONS THAT EXIST IN THE MESS HALL: I.E., DIRTY TRAYS, DIRTY UTENSILS, STAINED DRINKING CUPS AND AN END TO THE PRACTICE OF PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLES HOURS BEFORE EATING TIME WITHOUT ANY PROTECTIVE COVERING PUT OVER IT.

26) WE DEMAND THAT BETTER FOOD BE SERVED TO THE INMATES. THE FOOD IS A GASTRONOMICAL DISASTER. WE ALSO DEMAND THAT DRINKING WATER BE PUT ON EACH TABLE AND THAT EACH INMATE BE ALLOWED TO TAKE AS MUCH FOOD AS HE WANTS AND AS MUCH BREAD AS HE WANTS, INSTEAD OF THE SEVERELY LIMITED PORTIONS AND LIMITED (4) SLICES OF BREAD. INMATES WISHING A PORK-FREE DIET SHOULD HAVE ONE, SINCE 85% OF OUR DIET IS PORK MEAT OR PORK SATURATED FOOD.

27) WE DEMAND THAT THERE BE ONE SET OF RULES GOVERNING ALL PRISONS IN THIS STATE INSTEAD OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM WHERE EACH WARDEN MAKES THE RULES FOR HIS INSTITUTION AS HE SEES FIT.

#### IN CONCLUSION

WE ARE FIRM IN OUR RESOLVE AND WE DEMAND, AS HUMAN BEINGS, THE DIGNITY AND JUSTICE THAT IS DUE TO US BY RIGHT OF OUR BIRTH. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF BRUTALITY AND DEHUMANIZATION AND INJUSTICES HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO BE PERPETRATED IN THIS DAY OF ENLIGHTENMENT, BUT WE ARE THE LIVING PROOF OF ITS EXISTENCE AND WE CANNOT ALLOW IT TO CONTINUE.

THE TAXPAYERS WHO JUST HAPPEN TO BE OUR MOTHERS, FATHERS, SISTERS, BROTHERS, DAUGHTERS AND SONS SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF HOW THEIR TAX DOLLARS ARE BEING SPENT TO DENY THEIR SONS, BROTHERS, FATHERS AND UNCLES OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND DIGNITY.

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