



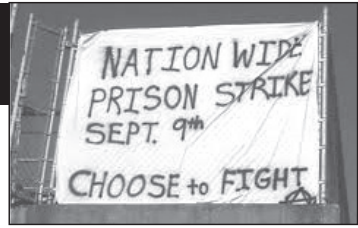
# plantation rising

*"They try to bury us,  
but they forget we are seeds."*

a publication on  
resistance and liberation  
in Florida prisons and  
beyond

# Welcome to Plantation Rising

a publication of the Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons



This first edition is focused on news and testimony from the aftermath of the September 2016 events in Florida. While the Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons (FTP) began specifically to focus on the intersection of prisons, health and the environment, the occurrence of nationally coordinated actions against prisoner labor and prison conditions inspired us to add our voice to that effort (after all, our social experiences are also part of our environment).

In doing so we found that the massive response from FL DOC prisoners—thousands of whom participated in at least 10 facilities—warranted a deeper look at what happened in our home state, where the FTP national office is based. It's important to start by noting that the Sept. protest was the largest coordinated prisoner-led protest to take place in United States history, and Florida kicked things off with the protests that began on September 7 at Holmes C.I. Other facilities who participated, that we know of thus far from media reports and letters include: Mayo, Gulf, Liberty, Jackson, Franklin, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Columbia and Taylor.

It's been widely reported by this point that Florida is among the leading states for prisoner abuse. Violence, overcrowding and under-staffing have plagued state prisons for decades, along with a steady flow of reports on extreme heat, bad food, tainted water, censorship of mail and poor medical treatment (not to mention being stomped to death or boiled alive by brutal guards).

With over 100,000 prisoners, Florida has the nation's third-largest prison population. The Florida Department of Corrections is the largest agency administered by the State of Florida, with a budget of \$2.4 billion. It has 143 facilities statewide, and also has one of the highest rates of solitary confinement in the nation, at one-eighth of the total state prison population.

In addition, federal prisons in Florida are home to the largest prison industry operations in the country, producing three times the output of any other state, in sweatshop-like conditions, exempt of labor law protections by the 13 Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which left slavery intact for the millions of prisoners in this country.

In addition, many of these prisons in Florida are built on or near toxic sites, including phosphate mines, rock mines and military bases.

Courageous demonstrations by prisoners and non-prisoners happened all across the country last September. This short publication gives a glimpse into some of what went down in Florida.

You can show your support by writing the prisoners who have excerpts from their letters and their addresses included in this publication.

**Contact us:**

FTP  
433 S. Main St  
Gainesville, Fl 32601  
Email: [FIGHTTOXICPRISONS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:FIGHTTOXICPRISONS@GMAIL.COM)  
Website: [FIGHTTOXICPRISONS.ORG](http://FIGHTTOXICPRISONS.ORG)

*The quote on the cover, was popularized by the 1990s Zapatistas' fight for indigenous people in Mexico. The Zapatistas got it from the 1970s writings of Greek poet, Dinos Christianopoulos.*

# News from the front lines...

*“I saw blacks, whites, Spanish—all kinds—but we all had one thing in common: we were all a part of September 9th.”*

—MICHAEL SKINNER

## **Written 12/27/16 by Michael C. Skinner, prisoner @ Franklin C.I.**

I'm currently being held at Franklin C.I. because of the September 9th sit down. I was at Taylor Main Unit and have been there since 2009. We got wind of all of it pretty late but were able to pull together at least half of the compound.

Peacefully we conducted ourselves and everyone who participated did not attend any services, callouts, canteens, chow, or recreation—if it had something to do with the state, we didn't go. So, the assistant warden surles and colonel mitchell walked to every dorm and told us that as long as we were peaceful they had no problem with what we were doing! Good, or so we thought, a couple hiccups but nothing major or violent. So, the cops that night in the dorm started mistreating everyone with verbal abuse and it progressed through the weekend, with myself included on my way to a visit.

Tuesday night, following Sept. 9th, the colonel had 30 extra officers stay and work late to do a round-up of everyone involved. Seven officers came to my house and took me to the laundry room, cuffed me, and put 26 of us in confinement under investigation for illegal gang activity. I'm not nor have I ever been in a gang! I saw blacks, whites, Spanish—all kinds—but we all had one thing in common: we were all a part of September 9th. We were viewed as the orchestrators of it on the compound. On the 16th day in confinement they walked us all up front in shackles and cuffs, split us up in 6 different groups, put us each on different vans and took us directly to our new camps. And now I'm at Franklin. And that's my September 9th story.

**Michael Skinner #H16211**  
**Franklin Correctional Institution**  
**1760 Highway 67 North**  
**Carrabelle, FL 32322**

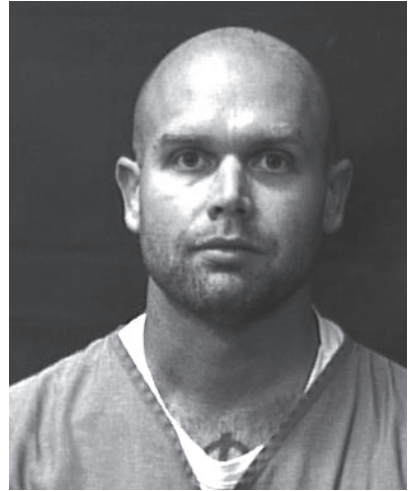


*Holmes C.I., pictured here, kicked off protest 2 days early, on September 7, 2016, where a significant disturbance began. This picture was leaked out to the Miami Herald.*

**Written 2/21/2017 by Christopher Reber, a prisoner @ Franklin C.I.**

I was at Franklin during the September protests and it wasn't a complete stoppage but many did participate – much more than I had predicted – and the prison's administration responded with a partial lock-down of the prison and disciplinary action against those participating. The average disciplinary action taken was a loss of 30 days (or more) gain time and a loss of canteen access for at least 30 days. While it was good to see prisoners come together on an important issue, it was amazing to see people outside of prison standing up for us. Thank you for your letter and your support. Having support and a voice through people on the other side of the wire is a prisoner's most valuable asset.

**Christopher Reber #K80543  
Franklin Correctional Institution  
1760 Highway 67 North  
Carrabelle, FL 32322**



*September 10, 2016 demonstration by FTP and IWW in front of FCC Coleman in Central Florida, home to the largest prison factory in the country.*

## Written by Julius T. Smith, a prisoner @ Franklin C.I.

A good friend of mine handed me the print out he received from you because he knew I had the drive and influence to unify and inform inmates in my section of the prison.

I read it to my dormitory, letting them know that we have people on the streets who care and are fighting for our cause. Also, that our efforts are not for nothing. The death of our movement is inmates who think, "It won't make a difference anyway."

I explained how we had the power to make a change in mass incarceration, ridiculous gain time percentages, and slave labor.

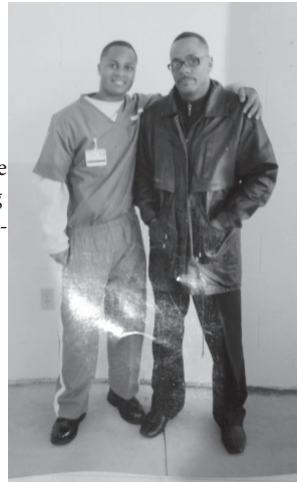
During the Sept. 9 protest, most of the young guys wanted to riot and destroy the dormitories. I passionately protested. Things like that only result in us getting hurt, shot with riot guns, pepper sprayed, beat on and possibly facing more criminal charges... This compound has already had 3 riots in 2016. Still the same corrupt guards are employed. Still nothing has changed.

Those are the kinds of actions we need to steer clear of. It sends a bad message that we are all savage animals that deserve to be locked behind bars and segregated from our communities—a stereotype that the media will advertise to voters and taxpayers. This makes it almost impossible to get voters to petition on a bill to kill mass incarceration. We need to make the public believe that incarceration is a lot more negative than positive in this generation.

The institution had caught wind that something was brewing and their first reaction was fear. The warden and his administration walked through our dorms giving us constant lectures and speeches acknowledging that he was aware of the protest. As long as we kept it peaceful he wouldn't retaliate but if it got violent he had a team ready for action. He stated that he felt like our protest would not affect change, that our people on the streets had to be active for change. He believes that gain time should be lower and he doesn't believe we should be paid for our labor because we get free food and housing.

I believe you should get religious groups and gangs involved... Muslims, Christians, Jewish, Bloods, Crips, Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, Aryans, Hell's Angels, etc. They are the forces of discipline and unity. They have the power to make large groups of men unite. Despite their different views and backgrounds, there's one thing they agree on: It's us against them.

**Julius T. Smith #C02536,  
Franklin C.I.,  
1760 Highway 67 North,  
Carrabelle, FL 32322**



*Julius Smith with his father  
Michael Smith*

## Written 1/5/17 by Justin M. Curtis, prisoner @ Suwannee C.I.

Hello and thank you for your letter. The first letter I received from FTP [Fight Toxic Prisons] caught up with me on September 8, 2016 and I am proud to say I did what I could with the short notice I had.

My name is Justin M. Curtis. I am 35 years old and have been incarcerated in Florida for almost 14 years straight (minus a brief 2 month taste of freedom in late 2004) and the atmosphere within the FL DOC has been extremely oppressive to say the least. I've talked to other people who have done time in other states and heard of the unity on the part of inmates, but here in Florida that is not the case.



Down here the majority of inmates are out for self, don't care if their fellow inmates have or have not, and the violence, manipulation, and general disregard that occurs from inmate [to] inmate is sad and frustrating. The guards and administration are taught psychological warfare/divide-and-conquer tactics that they implement in plain view for us inmates to see, but due to the majority outlook and selfishness there is never any type of united effort on any front. Several of us talk about standing up, but that's it... until September 9, 2016.

Like I said, the letter detailing the purpose of 9/9/16 came to me on 9/8/16. It was forwarded from another institution I had been transferred from. I immediately took action, by passing the letter around, going around and speaking to other inmates who had influence and we agreed that on 9/9/16 we would all participate in a "peaceful sit-down protest." At the time I was assigned to work in food service. I was on the 2 a.m. wake up crew, and we were the ones who would have to start the action. When the COs came to get us up for work (we had already been up all night anxious and excited), we refused to go.

The administration was already well aware of what was going to happen and already had plans implemented to bring inmates from the work camp to run the kitchen. So we were placed on lockdown status. We watched out of our windows as they called each dorm for chow. Not many people went, except for one dorm where all the inmates went. That is when things got a bit more tense.

As I said, we had no time to plan or prepare, so a lot of people weren't on the same page. Some dudes were arguing "What are we standing up for?" and there were times of tension within our dorm between us. But there was also a sense of unity that I'd never seen. At a certain point the administration felt it necessary to step down on us.

They came in, surrounded the compound with armed police officers, came to our dorm and had us all face down on our bunks, screaming at us through a bullhorn to "Get down!," they had guns over us and totally took the whole thing out of hand. Overreaction puts it very lightly...

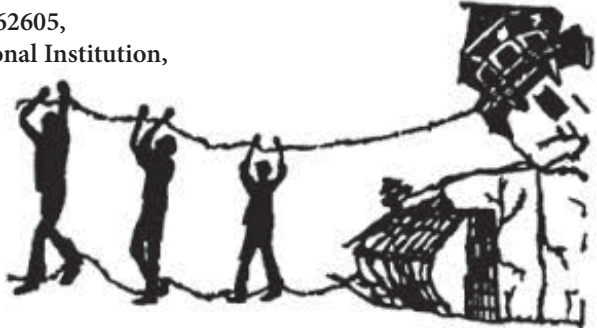
After leaving our dorm, the Rapid Response Team (RRT) in full riot gear headed to the two-man-cell dorms, where they rushed in without warning, firing tear gas grenades and rubber bullets at unsuspecting inmates.

There were several people punished with bogus Disciplinary Reports (DRs) which all said the same exact thing, and several inmates were transferred to other facilities.

I received a DR for “Inciting a Riot” and have been on lockdown since 9/10/16. I am now on Close Management (CM II) status, where I will be on lockdown for at least 7-8 more months at Suwannee C.I.

I have no regrets at all besides that there wasn't any time to prepare and have things work out different and perhaps even affect a positive change within this corrupt, oppressive system. But it was a learning experience and I am glad I participated and took action regardless of the consequences...

Justin M. Curtis #K62605,  
Suwannee Correctional Institution,  
5964 U.S. Hwy 90,  
Live Oak, FL 32060



**In a more recent letter, Justin had this to say about his involvement in 9/9 and subsequent confinement:**

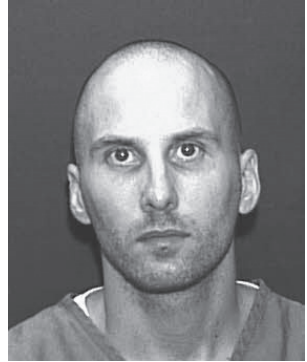
“Things are going really well: a publisher wants to use my story, *Thrasher Magazine* published an article that I wrote (May 2017 issue #442), and Alternative Tentacles Records sent me books and a letter of support.

Things are falling together and what is crazy is that what led me to being locked down (I'm 6 months in now), which was the 9/9 sit down, is turning out to be the best thing to happen to me. I've totally changed my whole mindset, attitude and perspective, and it wouldn't have happened if I didn't have this time out to sit, think, and really figure things out.”

*Keep in mind that prisoners are moved around frequently, and mail may be returned for this reason. Please don't give up if you get mail back. Address updates for FL DOC prisoners can be found online at: [DC.STATE.FL.US](http://DC.STATE.FL.US)*

## Written 12/27/16 by Christopher Anderson, prisoner @Franklin C.I.

Greetings to you all, and happy holidays. We send our appreciation with sincerity for all of the hard fought progress you have acquired on behalf of the forgotten sector of American society. I am writing also to report on participation in the Sept. 9, 2016 work stoppage: Our facility, like most in FL, have a kitchen dorm. Any prisoner assigned to food service are also assigned to that dorm. These prisoners are mostly low custody prisoners serving comparably lighter sentences. This practice is conducted, I assume, in anticipation of something like Sept. 9th, with officials believing the lower custody prisoners are less likely to be involved... Their thinking was off since almost the entire kitchen dorm did in fact refuse to work and received disciplinary reports as a result.



Reports that I've heard are that most received probation and I don't believe any were placed in confinement but instead given "walking disciplinary reports", which means being charged with breaking a rule but remaining in open population. The rest of the population, except a few like myself, went to all the meals which were made to be more appealing by serving chicken and cake. What caught my attention the most is how the staff went directly into diffuse mode- coming into each dormitory with speeches of appeasement and requests for no violence.

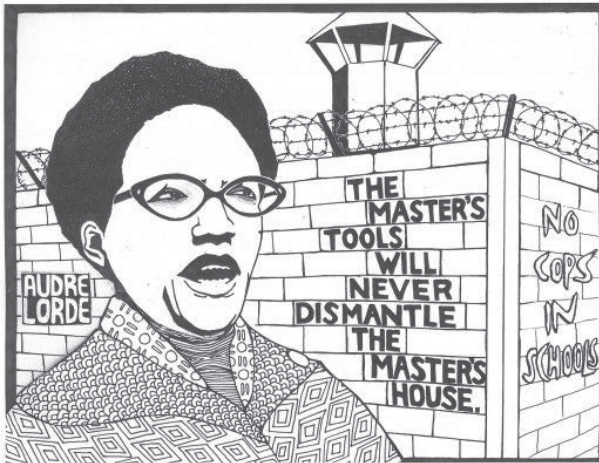
Florida has long since been disorganized and we seldom unify for a non-violent solution. I have been in this system since 1999 and am grateful to report that I am almost ready to go home, but since I've been imprisoned, it has been a battle to organize any peaceful solutions due to informants, retaliation, and mass transfers. With most prisoners not knowing what other means are available to achieve significant change, many lose the will to fight. Others know with outside support, things like mass incarceration can be stopped. The atmosphere is ripe to push for change...

**Christopher M. Anderson #197633**  
**Franklin C.I.**  
**1760 Highway 67 North**  
**Carrabelle, FL 32322**

**The DOC to prisoners leading up to Sept 9 2016:**  
**"LET THEM EAT CAKE!"**

**Haven't we heard that somewhere before?**

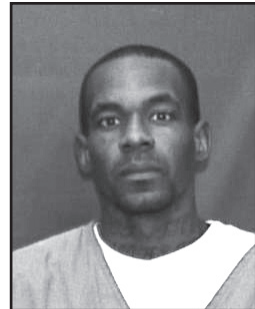




**Written 12/27/16 by Robert Powell, prisoner @ Franklin C.I.**

This letter is basically to inform you of those of us who are active when it comes to the movement advocating for the abolishment of the exception clause of the 13th Amendment—amongst other things.

Let me point out that it is nearly impossible to fight from the inside of a close knit, family oriented industrial complex such as prison - whether it be non-violent or violent. There is no way for our cause to be viewed positively because the staff holds all the power and uses the media and their job titles to make us convicted criminals look as if it is we who are the problem. Violence will only help substantiate these views and the non-violent movement does have not enough support behind it in order for it to make any headlines, let alone change—or does it?



I shall see one way or another if you at this particular organization are really serious about what you claim to be about because I know firsthand this is a billion-dollar industry ran by big businessmen and racist, biased, and prejudiced individuals. Therefore, those who dare try to get in the way of this money scheme—Plantation Business—had best own some of the biggest, solid set of balls. I surely hope you have it in you and it is not just some habit to talk about it or write glorifying stories for the moment. Much more inside force can be utilized once we know that we actually have reliable people in society to count on.

Ironically, it is the “criminals” only who seek rehabilitation, education, paying jobs, second chances, and so on. This is not a movement of criminals wishing to perpetuate a criminal mentality, these are men who mostly came into this system as boys, adolescents, and now seek better.

**Robert Powell #X66128  
Franklin Correctional Institution  
1760 Highway 67 North  
Carrabelle, FL 32322**

## **Written 2/15/2017 by William C. King, prisoner @ Wakulla C.I.**

My name is William C. King, I live in a crowded open bay dorm [at Wakulla C.I.]. We haven't had a dishwasher in over a year. The trays we eat off of are filthy with cracks for bacteria to grow on and food servings are full of water counting as nourishment. Serving sizes are ignored; there are constant shortages of food.

After serving almost 20 years, I am back [in prison] on a technical violation of my conditional release for driving without insurance to do my "gain-time" which is 10 years. I got out of prison at 57, got a good job, went to church, was happy for the first time in my life ... to be returned to FL DOC for a ticket! And the taxpayer is footing the bill.

I've built prisons, maintained them [while incarcerated]. Working as a plumber mostly - exposed myself to disease and whatever else is in the drains. Let's see: earn gain-time instead of money, released at your 65% date, back to parole, get to pay for the privilege of doing the time you've already earned with gain-time, returned to prison and told to work again for the time already done and then paid for. Slave labor! (Don't they put people in prison for that?)

**William C. King #844368  
Wakulla Correctional Institution  
110 Melaleuca Dr.  
Crawfordville, FL 32327**

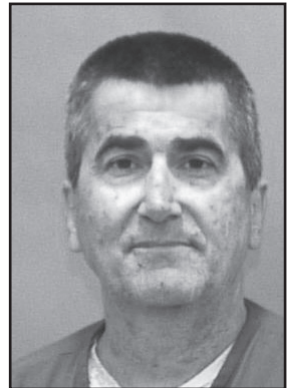
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## **Written 12/29/2016 by Cory Perry, a prisoner @ Florida State Prison**

Yes, I was at Columbia during the September sit-down. I stood in the area known as "Center Gate" while two sergeants bragged to a group of c.o.'s about beating an inmate. The white sergeant Wilson had a large bandage on his hand that he injured in the beat down.

He had put a set of handcuffs on his fists as an improvised set of brass knuckles, and as a result of not "double locking" the cuffs every time he struck an inmate, the cuffs locked down tighter and tighter and they cut into his hand.

Today I stood and looked at Death Row here at F.S.P, they transferred me here for the "incident," no D.R.



**Cory Perry #750737  
F.S.P.  
P.O. Box 800  
Raiford, FL 32083**

**Written 12/24/2016 by Kat, a prisoner @ Franklin C.I.**

Hello, I am “Kat”—committed name Steven Thomas #026260—a transgender currently housed at Franklin Correctional Institution, otherwise known as Facility 113. I am in the process of advocating for the rights of transgender prisoners imprisoned within Florida Department of Corrections - they currently have none, other than to say they are transgender. I hope to change that and get established policy delineating the rights that transgenders possess.

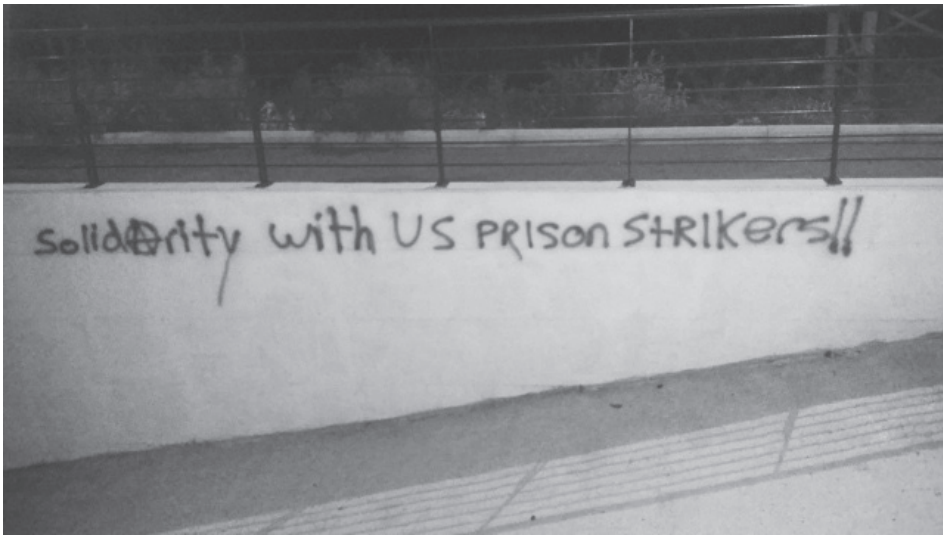
On the events of September 9th, you will note most of the disturbances occurred in prisons in North Florida—where the fist of oppression and abuse of prisoners strikes the hardest. A prison-system-culture of terror that spreads throughout the prisons because of the hierarchy and promotions in rank that are based on the good ol boy network and rewarded for having the proper attitude towards handling prisoners—through brutality and degradation, humiliation and dehumanization and not as fellow human beings.

Incidentally, I hear, through the grapevine that those prisoners who were involved in September 9 are currently being housed on closed management status at Wakulla Facility. If so, that would be in violation of the Osterbach Settlement agreement that limits close management to three prisons—FS.P., Suwannee, and Santa Rosa. They already evade the strictures by designating Union C.I. as an annex of F.S.P.

One of the fallacies of the system’s claims of caring for those they imprison is in the reality of their actions with regard to the care of these prisoners.

**Steven Thomas # 026260  
RMC West Unit  
P.O. Box 628  
Lake Butler, FL 32054**





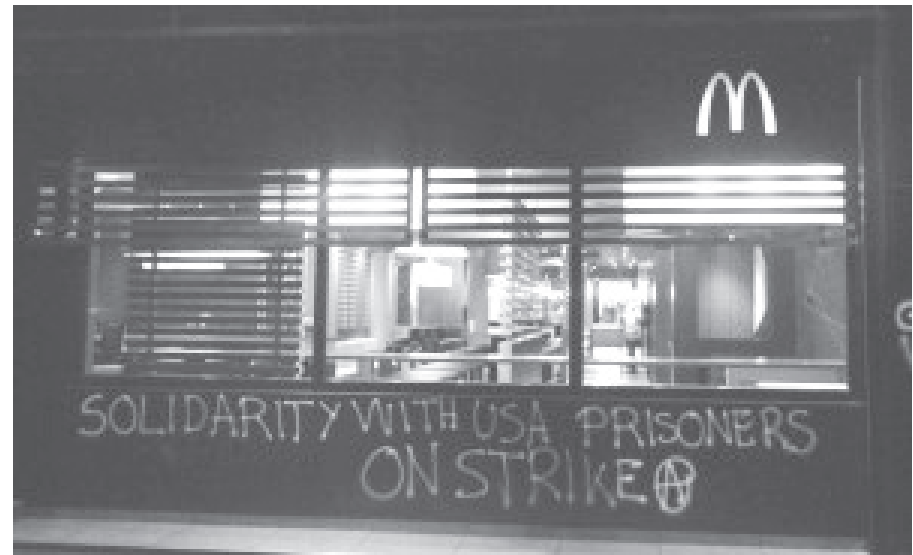
*Graffiti in Rome, Italy*



*Prison activists in Greece*



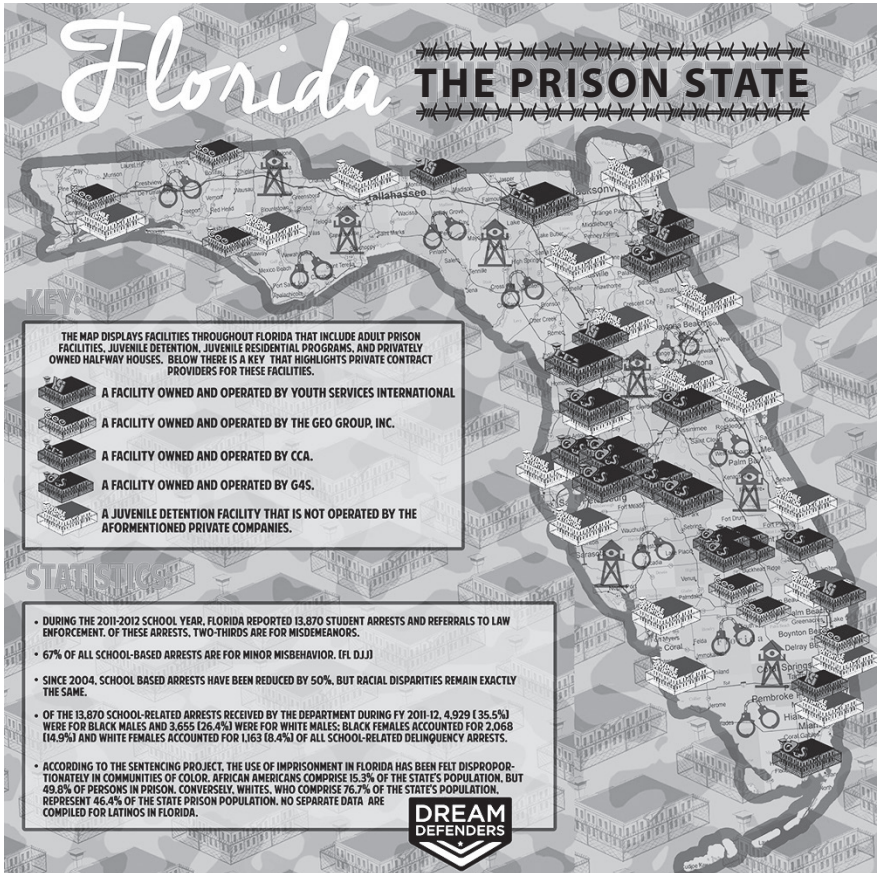
*Banner in Korydallos Prison, Greece*



*Barcelona, Spain*

*“Having support and a voice through people on the other side of the wire is a prisoner’s most valuable asset.”*

– CHRISTOPHER REBER



**Written 4/19/2017 by Heather Dison, a prisoner @ Gadsen C.I.**

I believe that we all have common goals and should work together to strengthen our movement. Mass incarceration has come about because of other groups working together to create it. We can, in the same way, work together to develop better ways for society to sustain accountability, encourage growth, respect each other, and live well.

**Heather Dison #R64751  
Gadsen Correctional Institution  
6044 Greensboro Highway  
Quincy, FL 32351**



# Beyond Florida...



*FTP action outside the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Washington D.C., June, 2016*

"WHEN WE STAND UP TO THESE AUTHORITIES,  
THEY COME DOWN ON US, AND THE ONLY PROTECTION  
WE HAVE IS SOLIDARITY FROM THE OUTSIDE."  
-FREE ALABAMA MOVEMENT STATEMENT.



# **Fight Toxic Prisons 2017**

## **National Convergence**

### **June 2-5, Denton/Ft. Worth, TX**

Last June in D.C. we gathered activists and revolutionaries from across the country to explore the intersections of the environmental movement and the struggle to end mass incarceration. We also highlighted the role of political and social prisoners in bringing this cross-movement analysis to the forefront. Then we took our voices to the streets of the Capitol, together with former prisoners and banners declaring support for those yet to win their freedom, we blocked the entrance to the Bureau of Prisons and then moved on to the major intersection between the FBI and the Department of Justice.



It was an amazing display of intersectional solidarity... And we're doing again this year in Texas.

#### **WHY TEXAS?**

Environmentalists know Texas as the financial headquarters of oil and gas empire that controls the nation's political system, where fights against pipelines like Keystone XL and Trans-Pecos have captured the attention of the nation. Prison abolitionists know Texas as home to one of the most brutal and corrupt state prison systems in the country, where extreme heat is coupled with tainted water, and vocal participants from the September prisoner strike like Keith 'Malik' Washington sit in long term solitary confinement, subjected to both. Those who focus attention on support for political prisoners may know Texas as the current residence of prominent voices from the inside, such as Marius Mason, Ana Belen Montes and Aafia Siddiqui, who are locked in Carswell federal prison's special Administrative Unit. This facility has faced years of scrutiny for its extremely restrictive policies and poor conditions.

#### **KICKING OFF THE CARSWELL CAMPAIGN**

Prisoners and their loved ones have been documenting abuses in this prison for years with little to no response from the federal Bureau of Prisons who overseas it. Technically the site is known as a Federal Medical Center (FMC) and is designed to house female prisoners who have special health-related needs. Over 1,500 women and transgender prisoners are currently housed there. The facility is surrounded by toxic military Superfund sites from the Air Force base where it is co-located. This prison also formerly held political activists including Lynne Stewart and Helen Woodson. The goal of the Close Carswell Campaign is to shut down the overly-restrictive Administrative Unit and to expose the poor general conditions of the supposed medical facility

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# Millions for Prisoners Human Rights March Washington DC, Aug. 19, 2017

*From Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, Press Release 2/4/2017*

The purpose of this press release is to notify prisoners, community organizers and all those who care of the upcoming Millions for Prisoners Human Rights March in Washington, D.C., scheduled for Aug. 19, 2017. ***This is a national effort to bring world attention to the 13th Amendment enslavement clause, its ramifications, and to solidify organizing efforts to amend it.***

Millions For Prisoners Human Rights core demands for action:

A) We DEMAND the 13th amendment ENSLAVEMENT CLAUSE of the United States Constitution be amended to abolish LEGALIZED slavery in America.

B) We DEMAND a Congressional hearing on the 13th Amendment ENSLAVEMENT CLAUSE being recognized as in violation of international law, the general principles of human rights and its direct links to:

- Private entities exploiting prison labor
- Companies overcharging prisoners for goods and services
- Private entities contracted by states/federal government to build and operate prisons. This would also include immigration detentions
- Racial disparities in America's prison population and sentencing
- Policing: the disproportionate (unaccountable) killings by police in the black and brown communities
- Felony Disenfranchisement laws
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement 34,000 detention quotas
- Producing the world's largest prison population

Confirmation is coming in that prisoners are in collective discussion around the country to be in solidarity with the Millions for Prisoners Human Rights March. For those prisoners who would like to participate, it is asked that you:

- Fast from sunrise to sunset
- Participate in intense political studies with emphasis on the 13th Amendment.
- Daily prayer or meditation
- Daily exercise regimen
- Refrain from purchasing any and all prison products to that require spending of money during this month
- Refrain from smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages
- If possible, wear a black arm band or wrist band (i.e. shoelace) around left wrist.



# TOOLS FOR ACTIVISTS FIGHTING TOXIC PRISON SLAVERY (*INSIDE AND OUT*)

- **LEGAL AID!** The National Lawyer’s Guild has offered to file an individual “notice of claim” on behalf of each prisoner against abusive and retaliatory prisons and guards. Filing a notice of claim tells the prison that a suit could be filed and puts them on notice that abuse has happened. It is not the actual suit, but it gives violated prisoners time to find local lawyers. Please send details to [NEWJERSEY@NLG.ORG](mailto:NEWJERSEY@NLG.ORG) and to [MASSDEF@NLG.ORG](mailto:MASSDEF@NLG.ORG). Prisoners can also reach out directly to: NLG Mass Defense, 132 Nassau Street, Rm. 922, New York, NY 10038.
- **CONSTANT PRESSURE!** Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) has set up a phone zap system to make it easy to make all the needed anti-repression and support phone calls, and to get reminders. Please commit to spending 30 minutes every couple of days to making calls. Visit [HTTPS://GOO.GL/FORMS/V3KTJTOOS6YBO2OF1](https://goo.gl/forms/v3kTjToos6yBo2Of1) to get started
- **IWOC HOTLINE!** Prisoners facing retaliation for strike activities can call the IWOC hotline collect anytime of the day or night at 816-866-3808. Send that number to your inside contacts, or call it yourself if you hear from someone needing help. You can also email IWOC at [IWOC@RISEUP.NET](mailto:IWOC@RISEUP.NET).
- **EDUCATE!** Learn more about the strike, and tell others, share it on social media through #EndPrisonSlavery, #PrisonStrike, and [PRISONSTRIKE.COM](http://PRISONSTRIKE.COM). Find tons of articles and information at [ITSGOINDOWN.ORG](http://ITSGOINDOWN.ORG) and [SUPPORTPRISONERRESISTANCE.NET](http://SUPPORTPRISONERRESISTANCE.NET) where people can also endorse the strike, join this mailing list, and find organizer contacts in your area.

## **A Note on Prisons-for-Profit in Florida**

- Corrections companies spent 2.5 million in campaign contributions in 2014
- Out of the 30 legislators who received individual contributions of \$5000 or more, 27 won their races
- In 2015, CCA and GEO Group hired 20 lobbyists in Washington, D.C., paying them a combined \$1.6 million to make sure Washington remains “tough on crime”

This info comes from [INTHEPUBLICINTEREST.ORG](http://INTHEPUBLICINTEREST.ORG)



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## Note from the Publisher on Censorship

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects free speech. Regulations that permit the government or its employees to discriminate on the basis of the content of the message cannot be tolerated under the First Amendment (i).

Further, prisoners retain free speech rights. Thought control, by means of prohibiting beliefs, would not only be undesirable but impossible (ii). The fact of confinement and needs of the penal institution impose rational limitations on prisoner free speech rights (iii), but those restrictions must have a "valid, rational connection" to "legitimate penological interests" not related to the content of ideas (iv). Regulations and practices can only be justified when the practice "furthers an important or substantial government interest unrelated to the suppression of expression" (v).

If our publication is impounded or rejected, we will consider appealing the censorship of our mail on the basis that you cannot legally suppress the expression of ideas or discriminate against content based on race. Prison walls do not serve to form a barrier separating prisoners from the protections of the constitution (vi). Core political speech is most-zealously guarded and there is a public interest "in having free and unhindered debate on matters of public importance—the core value of the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment" (vii).

Thus, exclusion of printed material on the basis of its political perspective amounts to free speech retaliation and discrimination, which is illegal (viii).

The exclusion of our printed material may either constituted an unlawful basis, or a conjured up false pretext for its exclusion, which would result in a breach of Constitutional law.

For these reasons, I ask that you conform to federal law and permit mail service of this literature that objectively meets all legitimate criteria set forth in prison regulations.

### CASE CITATIONS

i, *Reagan v. Time, Inc.*, 468 U.S. 641, 648-49, 104 S Ct 3262 (1984). "[T]he fact that society may find speech offensive is not sufficient reason for suppressing it. Indeed, if it is the speakers' opinion that gives offense, that consequence is a reason for according it constitutional protection." *Hustler Magazine, Inc v. Falwell*, 495 US 45, 46, 108 S Ct 876, 882. The government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable, *U.S. v. Eichman*, 496 US 310, 319, 110 S Ct 2404 (1990). "[A]bove all else, the First Amendment means that government has no power to restrict expression because of its message, its ideas, its subject matter, or its content." *Police Dept. of Chicago v. Mosley*, 408 US 92, 95, 92 S Ct 2286, 2290 (1972).

ii, *Jones v. North Carolina Prisoners Labor Union*, 433 US 119, 97 S Ct 2532 (1977)

iii, *Pell v. Procunier*, 417 US 817, 822, 94 Set 2800, 2804 (1974)

iv, *Turner v. Safely*, 482 US 78, 107 S Ct 2245 (1987)

v, *Turner*, supra

vi, *Turner*, supra

vii, *Pickering v. Board of Education*, 391 US 563, 573, 88 S Ct 1731 (1968).

viii, *Abu-Jamal v. Price*, 154 F3d 128 (3rd Cir., 1998); *X v. Blatter*, 175 F3d 378 (6th Cir. 1999)

"I have been loved by the  
lawless, handcuffed by the  
haters, gagged by the greedy.  
And, if I know anything at all,  
it's that a wall is just a wall and  
nothing more at all.

It can be broken down."

– ASSATA SHAKUR



*the harvest will come...*