



INSIDE-OUT

Same Struggle - Same Fight!

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Ruchell Magee Sentenced to Life in Prison

On January 23rd, Ruchell Magee was sentenced to life in prison. This sentence came on the heels of a U. S. Supreme Court decision not to hear Ruchell's motion for plea reversal. In June of 1974, Ruchell pled guilty to the charge of kidnapping which resulted from the "Courthouse Slave Rebellion" in August, 1970. At the time of this rebellion, Magee was serving a one year to life sentence on charges of allegedly kidnapping a pimp, following an argument over \$10. Based on the coerced confession of this "victim," (a confession which was illegally admitted in court) Ruchell was convicted of a charge he was innocent of. Magee was sentenced and sent to San Quentin where he fought for and won the right to a new trial in 1965. At this second trial, Ruchell's court-appointed attorney entered a plea of "innocent by reason of insanity." When Magee objected to this plea, he was gagged, dragged from the courtroom and beaten by guards. The judge in this second trial (who just happened to also preside over the first trial) ordered the jury to either find Ruchell insane or guilty of the kidnapping. He was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison.

Following years of fruitless struggle for a fair hearing, following years of brutality and an overwhelming desire for justice and freedom, Ruchell appeared in the Marin County courthouse on Aug. 7, 1970, to testify on behalf of fellow prisoners. On this day, Ruchell rebelled against his oppression in what has come to be called the "Courthouse Slave Rebellion." On this day in court, Jonathan Jackson rose from his seat and said: "All right gentlemen, this is it." The prisoners then made their bid for freedom and attempted to escape in a van, taking with them the court's presiding judge. Police opened fire on the van and indiscriminately murdered Jonathan Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain and Judge Harold Haley. Following this murder, Ruchell (the only surviving prisoner) was charged with murder, conspiracy to free the Soledad Brothers, and kidnapping. These charges came to trial in 1972 and during the trial, it was discovered that the bullet which killed Judge Haley was traced to a weapon of one of the guards. With Ruchell's involvement in the murder having been disproved, the jury deliberated and returned hopelessly hung. The murder charges against Magee were then dropped and Ruchell began the long wait for his second trial on charges of kidnapping.

In June of last year, Ruchell pled guilty to these kidnapping charges. This was done after extreme harassment, including pressure from his so-called attor-

neys. Almost immediately after the plea was entered, Ruchell began the process for getting the plea reversed. The judge who heard the plea wouldn't allow it and was preparing to sentence Ruchell to life in prison on the spot. After a determined struggle, Ruchell appealed this guilty plea and asked that it be removed so he could go through a trial and prove his innocence and the right to rebel.

With the Supreme Court's refusal to hear the appeal for reversal of the plea, Ruchell's struggle to obtain a jury trial was rejected. He was then sentenced to life in prison on the kidnapping charges. Following the sentencing, Ruchell rose in court and denounced his former co-defendant, Angela Davis, calling her a "pig, snitch, dirty snitching rat."

With these recent developments, it is crystal clear that Ruchell Magee is a Black man who has been thoroughly screwed -- both by those people who should have been his comrades and by the state. Ruchell's struggle for freedom began nearly 20 years ago when he first entered prison in Louisiana for "attempted aggravated rape" of a white woman (who failed to identify him in a police line-up) as a result of an all-white jury's racism and the repression existing under imperialism. Ruchell Magee has been a symbol of resistance in this country -- both for thousands of prisoners and for the masses of people as a whole. It is right to rebel and the struggle for freedom and against injustice which Ruchell has been waging continues today. We must support that struggle and continue to demand freedom for Ruchell Magee.



During the sentencing of Ruchell on Jan. 23rd at the Santa Clara County Courthouse in San Jose, 50-60 people were demonstrating outside the courthouse with chants of "Free Ruchell -- It's Right to Rebel!" Police came in to break up the demonstration and 29 people were arrested and charged with picketing within 1/2 mile of a courthouse. Three of those arrested are VVAW/WSO members. Other organizations participating in this demonstration were Revolutionary Union, Sedition (an underground newspaper), Revolutionary Student Brigade, and Wei Min She. These brothers and sisters who were arrested supporting the right to rebel of Ruchell Magee and of all people will be arraigned in early February.

Major demonstrations in support of Ruchell Magee are being planned for Feb. 8th. One of the demonstrations will be held at San Quentin Prison; the other will be held at the Supreme Court in Washington, DC. The DC demonstration will also center around the struggle of Gary Lawton, currently being waged in Riverside, California. Details on these two major actions will be reported on later.



THE HONOR-CELL HOUSE BELONGS TO THE MAN

The following letter comes from a brother in Oklahoma.

Quisling was a guy in Norway who sold out his countrymen by cooperating with the Nazis in the destruction of his own people. The Nazis made him an "official" and he dug it.

No Koncentration Kamp can be efficiently run unless the captors have Quislings within the ranks of the captive population who will cooperate in destroying their brothers. The first step in controlling a captive population is determining the weakest members and singling them out for favored treatment in return for cooperation. The cruel treatment administered to the non-cooperators and resisters is directly proportionate to the number of Quislings that can be developed by the captors. The degree of control exerted by the captors is also dependent upon the percentage of Quislings that can be motivated by the "officials."

The "Honor Block" is a case in point. It is a testing ground to see how far they can degrade, humiliate, and depersonalize the people who live there. For example, in return for a TV Room you will be subjected to military type inspections. Your bed must be made so that a quarter will bounce; your cell must be immaculate and your-belongings-will-be-few-and-laid-out-for INSPECTION. With three men in a cell your privacy will be ended. You will be harassed and verbally abused and if you fail to accept the treatment you will be given a demerit. If you get 5 demerits you will be cast into the cell-house, and as the reputation of the members of the "honor block" grows collectively more disgusting in the eyes of the general population the prospect of being sent there will be a grim apprehension.

The Quislings become the object of a kind of psychological warfare designed to test the degree of their helplessness and the extent of their commitment to retaining the favors proffered by the man. The Quislings are forced into accepting more and more degrading and humiliating circumstances in order to retain their position until finally the demarcation point is reached and those who remain in the control of the man ... become the man. The Honor Block is the man's factory for the production of abject slaves & sychophants to do the bidding of the illegitimate master/pretenders. There is no middle ground. One either identifies with the captors or the captives.

The sickies who run this jail do not represent legitimate authority. The place of making them legitimate is in the mind, and we all have the prerogative of conferring legitimacy or withholding it. An atmosphere of force, fear, violence, and brutality is not conducive to making many of us confer it.

I don't want a television room until ALL prisoners have one.

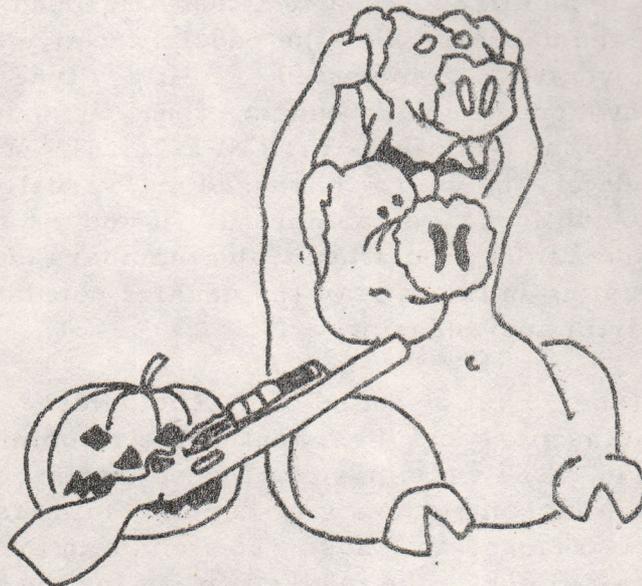
I don't want a telephone call until ALL my brothers can make one.

I don't want special favors until favored treatment is abolished and there is only one kind of treatment: to give to ALL prisoners exactly what ALL prisoners receive. There must be a negation of the existence of favored treatment. To do anything less is to exploit and benefit from the misery of my brothers. To accept special treatment is to give aid and comfort to our common enemy and to give approval to the sadistic treatment being handed out at this very moment in the other cell houses.

The Pigs Are Looking for a Fewww Good Men

UNITY**SOLIDARITY**REVOLUTION

A couple of notes to the brothers and sisters who will be hitting the streets soon--all of the people who are called Quislings in this letter are out on the streets too, only there we call them the poverty pimps or the vets pimps or any number of other names. They don't live in the "Honor Block" anymore, but you can find them in hundreds of government-sponsored offices around the country. Many times these were good brothers and sisters, strong in their work for the people. But the struggle got long and they didn't seem immediate gains--and the government came down and said here is a nice job where you can do a lot of good. So they went to work for some government program--and found the same experience as the Quislings in the letter. Either they gave in to what the government wanted, or they would lose their comfortable jobs. So there they are--they've made their choices about which side they are on.



People Fight Back

In the January issue of Midnight Special, published by the National Lawyers Guild (23 Cornelia St, New York, NY 10014) there is a letter which talks about the "reformist" nature of demonstrations. To quote one paragraph: "It's a weird circle; everytime a genocidal violence occurs, the peopl rush to the streets led by a few reformists to protest and demonstrate only to get brutalized, arrested, and killed. Then they turn right around to protest the aftermath; then the whole cycle starts again."

We would like to respond to this idea, not with rhetorical arguments but with a description of a demonstration which took place on January 25th here in Chicago; we think this demo gives a picture of what demonstrations can do to further the cause of the people.

The Antowyn Cauley Coalition was started in Chicago some months ago in response to the shooting of Antowyn Cauley by the police--he was shot in the back while leaning against a police car; later he was charged with assault on a police officer (the typical charge to cover up police brutality in the community). The Coalition is made up of people from a number of different groups in the city--the Revolutionary Union, the Revolutionary Student Brigade, Casa, Peoples' Voice (a Chicago workers' paper), and VVAW/WSO.

For the 25th the demonstration was planned for the Pilsen community, a mostly Latino community on the near-south side of Chicago. For weeks before the demo came off, people went into the community to explain the case of Antowyn Cauley, and to talk about how the people can fight against police repression. So, on the 25th, some 200 people gathered, marched chanting and yelling to the police station, formed a picket line in front of the station; this was to be followed by a rally on the other side of the community. Unlike the gentle protests of the past, there were no civilized permits to allow the demonstrators to use the streets--we just took the streets. Three times the police tried to block off the march route; each time the demonstrators marched around the blockades and back into the streets. Police say that they broadcast their final warning that people were breaking the "law," but the people were chanting loud enough so they couldn't hear it--and wouldn't have paid any attention anyhow.

Finally, at a major intersection in the community, after the demonstration had started by one more blockade, the police began to push people back onto the sidewalk. Since people are "supposed" to follow the instructions of the police, there were a few amazed police when the demonstrators pushed back; police got out their clubs, only to find their clubs being taken away and used on them. Individual policemen got isolated and were beaten by the people; the people stayed together, and when one was attacked, there were comrades there to help out. Finally, the police called in some 30-40 carloads of police and the fighting stopped--there were 17 arrests and 8 police hospitalized. All the brothers and sisters busted were out within 16 hours--there processing was speeded up because the demonstrators, after finishing their planned rally, came back and demonstrated again, this time outside the police station where our comrades were being held.

So, what does this all mean? The demonstrators were out to show that the people are strong when they are united--and we showed that. More important, we said something to a community where police repression and brutality are going on everyday--that unity is the best weapon that the people have because, even if the police can bring in reinforcements this time, there are a hell of a lot more of the people than there are of the police. People in the community watched the fight--we went back into the community the next day to explain to people why we were there and why we did what we did. They are now forming their own community workers organization--and so the struggle of the people moves forward.

Of course the pigs are not the enemy--just the enemy's tools, used to repress the people, just like the US military was used in Indochina. But we have learned from our brothers and sisters in Indochina and around the world--that the answer is to fight back in unity, for in unity there is strength, and no system of government which exists for the good of the wealthy few can stand against the power of the united people.



Share Your Information

In a couple of the early issues of "Inside/Out" we printed a bibliography of books, newspapers, magazines, stores, publishers, etc who had special programs for getting out information to people in prison. Since a number of people have started receiving "Inside/Out" since that time, we want to reprint that list in the next issue. If you have places where you can get free material (or material at reduced prices) and are willing to share that information, let us know and we'll print it in the next newsletter.

Veterans in Prison Not Told of Rights

The following article was printed in the Jan. 27th edition of the New York Times:

"A Government Accounting Office report has charged that the Veterans Administration has failed to inform 44,000 imprisoned veterans of their rights to benefits.

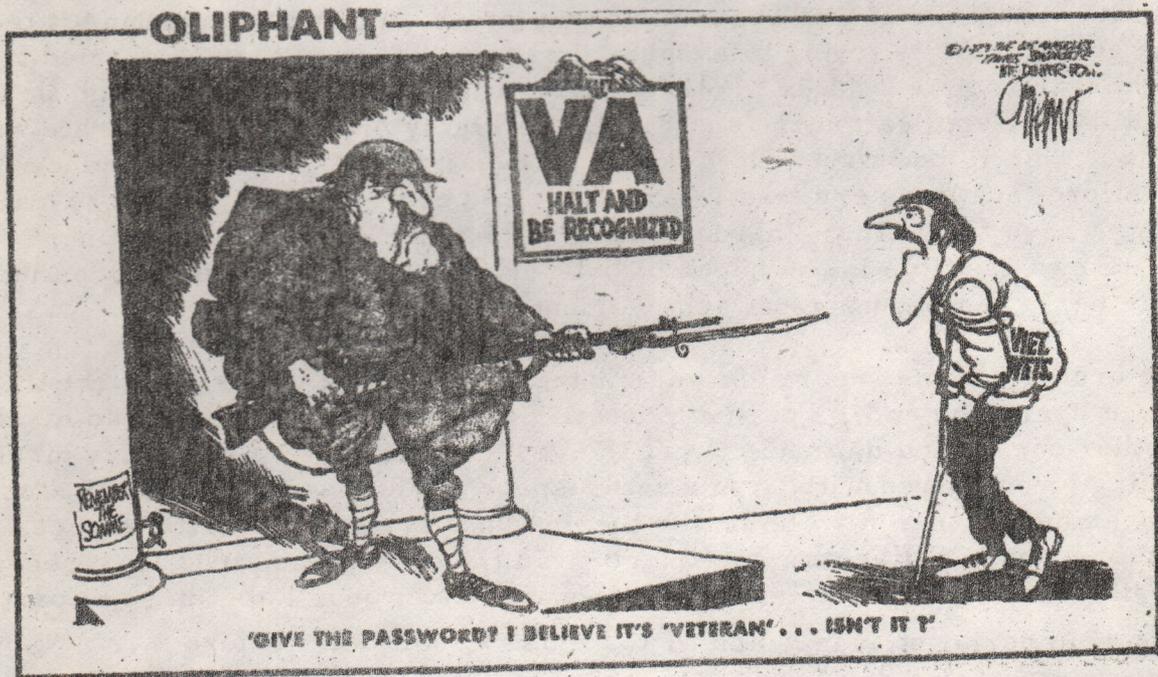
"The report, commissioned and released by Representative Charles B. Rangel, Democrat of New York City, said that fewer than 20 per cent of jailed veterans interviewed had been advised of their rights to veterans' benefits. This situation exists, Mr. Rangel said, even though the V.A. is charged with aggressively seeking out all eligible veterans to inform them of these rights.

"The report said that half of the prisoners and parolees interviewed 'erroneously believed' they had lost their rights to benefits because of imprisonment.

"The V.A. is walking away from its own people,' said Mr. Rangel, who is chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. 'These men and women served their country in the armed forces. Now they are being neglected at a time when they badly need the help and attention they earned.

"V.A. benefits are an untouched resource in our efforts to rehabilitate prisoners. By failed to inform veterans in prisons about job and education programs available while incarcerated, the V.A. further cripples their ability to contribute meaningfully to the community. '"

Though we don't agree with Mr. Rangel's politics (i. e. people didn't "serve" their country -- they were forced to fight in imperialist wars), we found this article interesting. We are looking for more information on this and would appreciate your help. If you, or anyone you know, has had dealings with the VA while in prison, please let us know the nature of that contact. Also, we would like to know if the veterans in your particular prison are receiving any sort of assistance from the V.A., or if, as this article states, the V.A. is largely ignoring the quite large group of veterans who are presently in prison. Let us hear about this as soon as possible.



Clemency Discharges Offered for AWOL's -- More Bogus Amnesty

The following message from the Presidential Clemency Board was sent to us by a brother in a federal prison. We suspect that statements like this have been posted in prisons around the country, informing prisoners of their "rights" under the President's "earned re-entry" program (read: bogus amnesty).

"Any ex-serviceman who received a bad discharge from the Armed Forces because he went AWOL once or more between 1964 and 1973 is eligible to apply for clemency under the President's program. Civilians convicted of draft offenses during the same period can also apply. This includes anyone now in prison for other offenses.

"If eligible, an ex-serviceman can have his discharge upgraded to a clemency discharge and receive a Presidential pardon for all his AWOL-related offenses. A civilian with a draft offense conviction can receive a Presidential pardon. The upgraded discharges and pardons are often conditioned on the completion of alternate service in a job serving the national interest (which can be deferred until after an inmate's release from prison).

"Although we cannot help an inmate convicted of another offense receive a pardon for that offense, the upgraded discharge and pardon we can give him for his AWOL or draft offense should improve his post-release employment prospects. If he has no other felony convictions, a pardon restores his federal civil rights, his state civil rights (usually), and his ability to hold many types of trade licenses. Even if he has other felony convictions, it improves his record in the eyes of employers.

"Inmates who think they may be eligible -- or any prison officials or social workers acting in their behalf -- are invited to call or write the Presidential Clemency Board, the White House, Washington, DC 20500. If an inmate has no legal counsel, we can help him find one.

"The deadline for applications is January 31, 1975."

We are not printing this in order to encourage brothers and sisters in prison to take advantage of this bogus clemency program. We are printing it to show that the government is trying to ensnare prisoners, just as they have tried to ensnare the war resisters in exile, those living underground, etc. Though this says the deadline for application is Jan. 31st, it is highly probably that the date will be extended. This is because Ford's "earned re-entry" program has been a magnificent failure. Only a very small percentage of people eligible for the so-called "amnesty" have applied for "pardon" and it looks as though the government will extend its own deadline in the hopes of bolstering its statistics and prove that this bogus amnesty has been a great achievement.

We urge everyone who might be tempted by the above words to reject this discharge upgrading and/or pardon. It will do no good to trade one bad discharge for another one -- and no matter what the government says, a clemency discharge isn't going to be viewed with any more "respect" than is an undesirable discharge. Ford's "amnesty" plan may be better termed "shamnesty." It fails to speak to the reasons why bad discharges were given in the first place, it fails to recognize that resistance is legitimate and the responsibility of people to refuse to participate in wars of imperialist aggression or to refuse to bow down before a racist and repressive military.

Ford's "earned re-entry" program and his ridiculous pardons should be boycotted. The war in Indochina is still raging and growing hotter by the day; the fight for a single-type discharge is still being waged; and the movement for a universal and unconditional amnesty is growing. Don't allow yourselves to be caught up in this shamnesty by exchanging one bad discharge for another. Boycott Ford's plan! We must continue to struggle against imperialist wars, and we must struggle to weaken the war-making powers of the U. S. government. This can be done by fighting for a real, universal and unconditional amnesty for all war resisters!

★ UNIVERSAL UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY

★ SINGLE TYPE DISCHARGE FOR ALL VETS