



aptive Minds"

Free To Prisoners \$1



Who We Are

Chain Reaction (defined): A sequence of events, each of which, results in, or has an effect on the following event.

* "Unshackling Captive Minds" is our slogan. We believe that as the truth is revealed and minds are liberated, a "chain reaction" of revolutionary change will transform our present capitalist society of haves and have-nots into a truly democratic and egalitarian society built upon meeting human need instead of capitalist greed.

* **Chain Reaction** is a revolutionary anarchist collective. We are anti-fascist, anti-authoritarian; dedicated to the abolition of prisons, racism, classism, sexism, and the accomplice capitalist system that supports and perpetuates these in-

* Though our coverage is international in scope, our primary focus is on the social, economic, and political issues confronting Texas prisoners and workers. We believe, however, that these issues and their resolution are relevant to all prisoners and workers worldwide.

* We encourage you to submit articles, art, clippings and other information concerning prisoner and worker issues. All submissions become permanent contributions to **Chain Reaction** collective and cannot be returned. We don't make any money off this and don't imply that any payment of any kind is offered for submissions. We reserve the right to reject any material contrary to the goals and purposes of **Chain Reaction** collective. Send all submissions to:

South Chicago ARA
P.O. Box 721
Homewood, IL 60430

Chain Reaction

Reaction in the form of political articles, art, satire and humor, news from prison units, case law and successfully litigated cases, and your letters and comments. We will not print anything of a racist nature or anything which purposely promotes division of the working class within and without prison walls.

We recommend prisoners engaging in study groups to discuss articles appearing in **Chain Reaction** and how you can contribute to **Chain Reaction** to make it a voice heard for revolutionary social change.

We also recommend studying the philosophy of anarchism and libertarian socialism and learning how to apply them to everyday life. We will also be featuring articles in **Chain Reaction** on basic concepts and principles of anarchist society.

The capitalist state

By Gulf Coast Red

The boss class would like us to view social problems such as poverty, crime, and prison expansion as separate, unrelated phenomena to be dealt with individually. These social problems are interrelated, stem directly from the capitalist system, and are exploited often to our rulers advantage. In particular, I want to talk about the historical advent of prison expansion in our era, and its' relation to new trends in economics, as well as the changing historical role of the state.

A little history. In the latter part of the 19th and early part of the 20th century (into the 1930's), the political state government in America was a total

era by some. Which mean large factories, lots of union jobs, and government reform aid to workers who become unemployed.

During the 50's and 60's the civil rights movement, anti-war movement, feminist movement, as well as the hippy movement were inspiring people to have high expectations about the future- an optimistic view of life. Unions were strong, and all of this was not only eating into the boss class' profits, but was causing our rulers great anxiety. Our masters decided we were exercising too much democracy, and began initiating a plan of systematic roll backs, i.e. class war tactics, to put the working class in check and maximize their power and methods of profit extraction from our toil.



STAMP OUT
FASCISM!

that used to merit a night in jail. Clinton has stepped up police powers and enacted legislation which makes it hard for prisoners to fight their cases. These measures keep prisons filled and serve to mop up excess labor, while instilling fear in workers.

The War on Drugs has been a great weapon in the 'boss class' arsenal. Used to lock up loads of workers and erode Constitutional rights. Drugs are treated as a criminal problem in this country, while some other countries place more emphasis on treating it as a health problem. The criminalization of drugs create all manner of crime and violence. Decriminalization, free supply, and treatment, would go a lot further. But the government has no intention of doing away with crime or prisons, as these problems serve to maintain their hegemony through police state measures.

There is a great deal of evidence that,

blackmail. They have been responsible for mass killings in Guatemala, 150,000, and 50,000 disappearances. They have been part of many Latin American dictatorships responsible for untold atrocities all to further American interests in the region. The S.O.A. has been used in this manner under the guise of prosecuting the War on Drugs!

The phenomena of crime, prison
expansion, War on Drugs, and Capitalist Restructuring, are not unrelated events. These are all measures which are connected and exploited to the benefit of our masters. We prisoners are as affected as our working class brothers and sisters fighting in Chaippas against tyranny, and our cause is linked with workers exploited by capitalists everywhere. Prisoners of the world, wake up!

We have nothing to lose, but our Wardens.

ng Better

Prisoners must begin to better communicate with each other in a positive way, working to achieve a feeling of friendship and equality. It is of great importance that we prisoners recognize that there are only two group distinctions that matter—THE KEEPERS and THE KEPT.

Some of the questions I'm often asked by fellow prisoners is, "Do you think that things will get better?" Or, "Why do you think the politicians keep passing these fucked-up laws?" To find the answer to these and other questions, prisoners need to begin with some honest self-evaluation and mirror gazing. Though not all our troubles are of our own making, prisoners are often times their own worst enemy. If prisoners want positive changes, then they are going to have to start by changing their negative or indifferent attitudes towards prisoners' rights issues. It just

ter." Often times they pin their hopes on what the feds will do to help. Well my friends, those days of large-scale system-wide class-action lawsuits are all but gone. The remnants of previous consent decrees are still clinging to life in a few state prison systems. However, it won't be long before the politicians completely close that avenue of relief.

Historian and political philosopher Howard Zinn once wrote:

History does show us how hard it is to challenge those in authority.... But we also learn that at certain times in history, surprising, unpredicted victories became possible when ordinary people organized, risked, sacrificed and persisted.

It's time for prisoners to begin once again making some history of their own. Court rulings favorable to the plight of prisoners came about because there was a massive social change both inside and out-

Most importantly, talk to fellow prisoners about problems and the alternatives available for dealing with them. Just establishing a regular dialog with each other is an important first step. In future issue of Chain Reaction we will provide info and ideas about methods available that prisoners can use to affect change.

Prisoners won't always achieve the improvements they want regardless of what methods they use to present their grievances. However, we can work toward a future day when prisons are a thing of the past. The idea isn't as farfetched as it may sound. One thing is for sure: We will never get anything just sitting on our collective asses. In a speech given in 1857, the ex-slave and abolitionist Frederick Douglass said:

If there is no struggle there is no progress.... Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.

142 years later they still

nary Mail

The government of the United States is exploiting its citizens by using people, primarily the poor and working class, to keep a machine of economic tragedy turning. Texas is at the forefront of this government vs. the people campaign. They've found a commodity, and it's human lives.

Since OPEC decreased the price of oil, domestic exploration has decreased. In Texas, oil exploration was our number one economic stabilizer. In desperation the politicians looked for an economic boost, without recognizing the destruction of so many lives, for that matter, without caring. They discovered human warehousing is very profitable.

The FBI has created the DNA index system. Some critics believe it will eventually contain the DNA makeup of every citizen in the country. They are also putting to-

Police State USA

In a recent article in The Nation adapted from his forthcoming book, "Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis," Christian Parenti gives us a view of the American police state. Parenti starts off by saying this is "a sneak preview of a future American police state...." However, from the examples of paramilitary police operations that are currently taking place nationwide, it's obvious that the police state is already in full bloom.

Fresno, California has "America's most aggressive SWAT team." This special paramilitary force is the Fresno police department's Violent Crime Suppression Unit. Massive paramilitary police sweeps are a common occurrence in the sprawling poor neighborhoods of the city's southwest side.

One evening, "three squads of ten police



or SWAT team mobilizations—quadrupled between 1980 and 1995, according to Kraska's study. And a CBS News survey of SWAT en-

the entire world. As more and more people bristle under the heavy boot of capitalist exploitation, the accomplice government (local, state, and federal) knows that the only way to prevent a major uprising against the master-class is by using increasingly brutal and militaristic tactics against the civilian population.

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has used the term "permanent war" in describing America's current stance in the world. And so it is, even here in the good ol' USA. It's class war and the working class must prevail as the victors.

[Source: Christian Parenti, "SWAT Nation," The Nation, 31 May 1999]



They Fill Graves With Our Bones

By Scott A. Mollette

A Monday morning, just after Mid-May 1999, and I had again awakened to another day in the belly of the Texas gulag system. My eyes were barely opened slits peeking out from six hours of blissful peace and quiet, when a jackbooted grayshirt occasioned by my cell on the main run, peering ever so suspiciously into my cramped, steel cage. I busied myself washing the remainder of Mr. Sandman's labor from my blinkers and then spun and reached and turned my radio on, a modicum of displeasure awash in my yet foggy brain. Anon, akin to those clear paper weights with the pretty scenery inside, and the magical snow falling when turned asunder, I too saw

they knew only what they had been told or had been gleaned from various media outlets and HPD spokespersons. In effect, they had become victims of the propaganda machine, and mayhaps willingly.

My ire was raised forthwith as I stumbled on a recent memory regarding Pedro Oregon, himself a murder victim. Indeed, he was a victim of over-zealous, trigger happy HPD officers who kicked the door in at his residence and promptly shot the gentleman dead with a multitude of bullets, most of which struck the innocent man in the back! Big heroes these guys, huh? The story is ever worthy of the retelling as subsequent to the gestapo action, all of

ty of apathy as are most? Did you go and pray for the Blando's and neglect the Oregon's? Ultimately, all are guilty who would forget these state-sanctioned murders, those who would do nothing. The voices of the people must speak plainly and boldly! We, the working class, must say no to this oppression with our votes, our wallets and by direct action. We cannot, must not, sit idly by, knowing that there are more Pedro Oregon's unknowingly nearing their demise at the hands of over-zealous, trigger happy police, who themselves are above the law we must abide by. Hear again the reason of Charlot: "They fill graves with our bones." Don't you or your loved ones become the next victim. Act. Today!

Commodifying Life

By Gulf Coast Red

Genetically modified foods are fast growing cash crops for greedy transnational corporations. These corporations care nothing about screwing with nature. As long as short term profits are available, to hell with the long term picture.

The Monsanto corporation, one of the most notorious in this field, has produced "Roundup Ready" seeds which are genetically engineered to withstand mega-doses of the extremely potent herbicide, ... yeah, you guessed it, Roundup. These genetically altered plants run the risk of cross-pollinating with pest weeds which could result in superweeds impervious to herbicides. Monsanto just happens to produce Roundup

ically altered foods by pulling-up and trashing genetically altered test crops. People in India have revolted by burning crops being tested by Monsanto and have been organizing against attempts of this and other greed-head corporations to monopolize and commodify life.

Monsanto has been developing wheat, rice and other food staples that contain a terminator gene which causes crops to produce sterile seeds. This forces impoverished farmers to have to buy new seeds each year. Of course, pollination to other crops could result in unintended seedless crops. An international call has gone out to oppose this greedy profit-driven tinkering with nature, with direct actions against these crops.

"So what," many of you may wonder. "does

a weapon used to destroy an otherwise good parent/child relationship.

Courts have simply refused to aid prisoners trying to enforce their parental rights despite the fact that the fundamental rights as a parent are one of the few that prisoners do not lose when the prison door shuts.

Look how quick the state and its many agencies join the bandwagon of a custodial parent and have the non-custodial parent prosecuted for failing to pay child support. Meanwhile, non-custodial parents have to fend for themselves to pursue claims of being denied access to the children.

Then think about this: While the non-custodial parent is imprisoned for failure

Corporate Junkies

As everyone who has not been in a coma the past ten years is aware of, the United States won the Cold War against the former Soviet Union. This was a very joyous occasion for the socially conscious individuals who for years have spoken out against massive expenditures devoted to military expansionism. Suddenly the arms race was over and the so-called "peace dividend" could be directed toward more socially ennobling programs, such as education. Or could it?

The megacorporations, devoted to supplying America with its implements of death and destruction, soon woke-up to the reality that the trillion dollar government teat upon which they suckled for all these many years was on the verge of drying-up. Like

U.S. MILITARY PREPARES FOR URBAN ASSAULT

It was a scary sight to some South Texas residents: Black helicopters swooped in and dropped helmeted soldiers into the downtown area, even causing a fire in Kingsville.

Those weren't foreign invaders in Kingsville and Port Aransas, however. The soldiers were part of the Army's Delta Force, a counterterrorism unit from Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Maj. Jeff Fanto, spokesman for Army Special Operations Command headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida, said the training was "routine."

"They're practicing skills of getting in and out of urban areas and special operations for the missions they're responsible

Kofi Taharka, of the National Black United Front, said it appears that Lavergne was murdered. "We are demanding a full investigation," he said.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice media flack Glen Castlebury said he could not comment on the body's reported suspicious marks, saying TDCJ internal affairs investigators are still investigating.

[Source: Houston Chronicle]

PRISON LIFE

Everyone knows the influence of decent clothing. Even an animal is ashamed to appear before his fellow creatures if something makes him look ridiculous. A cat whom

TEXAS SLAVE LABOR FEEDS & HOUSES POOR

Texas prison slave labor is being used to feed and house the poor. Though volunteering one's labor to help the needy is a noble gesture in the free world, it takes on an ominous and somewhat disturbing aspect when performed by people enslaved by the state.

The prison slaves at the TDCJ-ID Stevenson Unit in Cuero, Texas harvested 31,847 pounds of vegetables that benefitted the Community Food Bank in Victoria, Texas. It provides food to the needy in Victoria and surrounding areas.

Texas Second Chance, initiated in the Rio Grande Valley, uses prisoners from the Lopez State Jail at Edinburg, Texas to provide a consistent slave work force for the

Then there is the matter of Habitat for Humanity, a quasi-religious organization that builds new houses for the poor. One of the most notable participants in Habitat for Humanity is former president Jimmy Carter. Once again, there's nothing wrong with volunteering your time and energy to build affordable housing for the poor. But such volunteerism is highly dubious when performed in the coercive atmosphere of a prison.

Take for example the Ferguson Unit at Midway, Texas and the Rudd Unit at Brownfield, Texas. Both have Habitat for Humanity house-building programs. The homes are prefabricated inside the prison perimeter and then moved to their final location upon completion.

cts

claustrophobia

P.O. Box 1721

Baltimore, MD 21203

Prisoner support group. Also puts out a
good anarchist paper and literature)

Books Through Bars

722 Baltimore Ave.

Philadelphia, PA 19143

They have excellent free books to prison-
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.S.A. I.W.A.

39 Lafayette St. #202

New York, NY 10012

Anarchist syndicalist union. We strongly
recommend requesting info on their aims and
principles)

When requesting literature, newspapers

A DANCE WITH LIFE AND DEATH

In no beginning, all is death -
heralds soon remissed
by anxious breaths -
from veil to silent veil.

Under mirrors' orbit we venture,
young and old in a ring.
Feel or feed a dual string,
a cyclic, carnal ruse.

Marked or not, mere bones do
habit seek . . . so devise a five-eyed
vessel. Decay of an Angel come close,
I wish to pray on you.

What is to be . . .
for hundreds dying in chains?
Into a southern scarecrows' camp,
cast another lamp.

In spring, the last words life did
hear were, "Just die you S.O.B." . . .
after telling the victim's mother,
"I didn't kill your daughter."

Bored and fearful minds tend
hate filled cages of the timid and mad.
Who will the pack bend
as time turns blindness to sight?

Delusion be gagged on until you're truth;
belief can foreshadow no deed.
Doubt what's near or cling to rules -
victim and felon but tools.

Changeless be crossed,
shame be damned!
Till the summoned virus is lost,
life and it relics' thirst.

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Contacts

Break The Chains

P.O. Box 25706

Eugene, OR 97402

(They provide great prisoner literature
and also put out a good zine called revolt)

South Chicago ARA-ABC

P.O. Box 721

Homewood, IL 60430

(Provide great revolutionary literature
for prisoners)

Active Transformation

P.O. Box 11508

Detroit, MI 48211

(An excellently produced Direct Action
Anarchist newspaper. Free to prisoners)

News & Letters

59 East Van Buren St., Room 707

Claustrophobia

P.O. Box 1721

Baltimore, MD 21203

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For more on Habitat for Humanity officials

TEXAS PRISONER MAY HAVE BEEN MURDERED

The family of a Houston teenager who died in prison April 17, 1999 said his body was emaciated and had numerous wounds causing them to believe he died under suspicious circumstances.

Reginald Lavergne, 18, was serving a five-year sentence in the Michaels Unit near Palestine, Texas for aggravated robbery. He became a Texas prisoner at age 15 in October 1996.

An autopsy was performed within a day or so at the University of Texas Medical Branch hospital in Galveston, but Lavergne's aunt, Janet Talton, said the results had not been released.

"We are here today because we need some answers. We are trying to find out what happened to this young man," Talton told a

Kofi Taharka, of the National Black United Front, said it appears that Lavergne was murdered. "We are demanding a full investigation," he said.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice media flack Glen Castlebury said he could not comment on the body's reported suspicious marks, saying TDCJ internal affairs investigators are still investigating.

[Source: Houston Chronicle]

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"They're practicing skills of getting in and out of urban areas and special operations for the missions they're responsible

PARENTS VS. PRISONS

[The following article is adapted from a letter by D. Knod]

Custodial parents in this country are exploiting the civil and criminal justice systems by filing criminal charges on non-custodial parents in attempts to keep them from accessing and knowing about their children.

The problem is that one-sided laws are being enacted and enforced. Too often domestic violence and child support laws are used to lock-up the non-custodial parent. Laws designed to counsel or mediate solutions to domestic problems are seldom, if ever, used before criminal charges are filed.

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Look how quick the state and its many agencies join the bandwagon of a custodial parent and have the non-custodial parent prosecuted for failing to pay child support. Meanwhile, non-custodial parents have to fend for themselves to pursue claims of being denied access to the children.

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"So what," many of you may wonder. "does

ton and Texas as well as throughout our nation.

Bear Claw, aka Charlot, was a principal chief of the Kalipsel band of the Flathead Indians. Long lied to oppressed, cheated and killed, he spoke for his people boldly concerning the reign of terror at the hands of the U.S. government. When speaking of the shame of those in power, who were relentless in their thirst for wiping the Indian out, Charlot wrote these fitting words that parallel the oppression of the working class blacks, whites and hispanics of today. Won't you her them?

"Did he (the U.S. capitalist) not feast us with our own cattle, on our own land, yes on our plain by the spring? Did he not invite our hands to his papers (treaties); did he not promise before the sun, and before the eye that put fire in it (a possible

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Revolutionary Mail

Welcome to the great lust and feast of human flesh and blood. The Texas Prison system along with the greedy bloodthirsty prisoncrats are among the first at the table. It is written that man will lust for, and gain great pleasure from other men's sorrows. ~~So the belly of the beast is being~~ gorged. Our society society of submissiveness has opened the door to a great many cleaver thinkers, who are taking advantage of a society that allows lawmakers to manipulate the constitution of the United States all to benefit a very lucrative federal and state incarceration campaign against the common citizen. Not to mention the carnal pleasure they gain by the destruction of multitudes of families and relationships.

The enhancement of the federal conspiracy law and the federal and state pro-

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Something Better

By West Texas Slim

Why is there so much division and strife among prisoners? After all, aren't we all being held in the same oppressive state of bondage? What brings out disharmony among us when things could be so much better in an atmosphere of mutual aid and cooperation?

For starters, we prisoners bring with us into the prisons the same prejudices, hates, and power trips that we carried around in the free world. Just as the free world is structured with its various classes, cliques and gangs, so too, prisoners re-create and form relationships in the prison environment around those same hierarchies. We are, for the most part, a mirror-image of society. And as such, we reflect the various strifes and contentions that occur along the fault-lines of

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blackmail. They have been responsible for mass killings in Guatemala, 150,000, and 50,000 disappearances. They have been part of many Latin American dictatorships responsible for untold atrocities all to further American interests in the region. The S.O.A. has been used in this manner under the guise of prosecuting the War on Drugs!

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We have nothing to lose, but our Wardens.

In the 70's, we started seeing jobs sent overseas. In the 80's, we saw Ronald Reagans' war on the poor with his trickle down economics that didn't trickle down. During the Reagan years, the precedent was set to begin gutting social reforms, spoken of earlier, that benefit the poor. Union husting was started by Reagan as well.

The move to ship jobs overseas, in order to ruthlessly exploit fellow workers in other countries, is known as capitalist restructuring. These jobs are sent to countries which have no environmental regulations, horrible working conditions, low wages, often repressive governments, some of which are backed by the U.S., who suppress and even shoot and jail union organizers.

What it means for Americans is that most of the good jobs leave the country. Leaving a whole lot of service jobs and McJobs to remain. Lots of part-time,



**STAMP OUT
FASCISM**

alist state

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era by some. Which mean large factories, lots of union jobs, and government reform aid to workers who become unemployed.

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Starting a Chain Reaction

Welcome to the first issue of **Chain Reaction**. Our purpose for starting **Chain Reaction** is to advocate and promote the political education of prisoners and workers in order that we may learn about the machinations of capitalist society and the political state which oppresses us. In this way we can empower ourselves to fight against this crooked system while in prison, and also, once released from the gulags, we can engage solidaristically in prisoner support. Also to engage in labor and community organizing to abolish the capitalist system of wage slavery.

Prisoners inside the Texas concentration camp system are here for various reasons and lengths of time. Some of us may never get out, though we always keep a glimmer of hope alive. Others may be on parole for the rest of our lives.

Reaction in the form of political articles, art, satire and humor, news from prison units, case law and successfully litigated cases, and your letters and comments. We will not print anything of a racist nature or anything which purposely promotes division of the working class within and without prison walls.

We recommend prisoners engaging in study groups to discuss articles appearing in **Chain Reaction** and how you can contribute to **Chain Reaction** to make it a voice heard for revolutionary social change.

We also recommend studying the philosophy of anarchism and libertarian socialism and learning how to apply them to everyday life. We will also be featuring articles in **Chain Reaction** on basic concepts and principles of anarchist society.

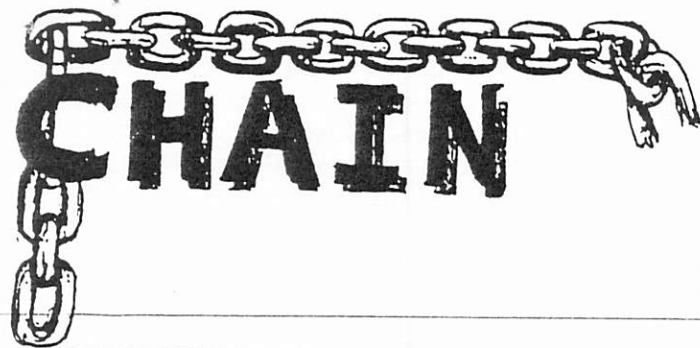
* Though our coverage is international in scope, our primary focus is on the social, economic, and political issues confronting Texas prisoners and workers. We believe, however, that these issues and their resolution are relevant to all prisoners and workers worldwide.

* We encourage you to submit articles, art, ~~clippings and other information concerning~~ prisoner and worker issues. All submissions become permanent contributions to Chain Reaction collective and cannot be returned. We don't make any money off this and don't imply that any payment of any kind is offered for submissions. We reserve the right to reject any material contrary to the goals and purposes of Chain Reaction collective. Send all submissions to:

South Chicago ARA

P.O. Box 721

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Free To Prisoners \$1

Texas Serial
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