Zines Are Our Real Weapons

From the cold confines of this pitiful place called prison, I bring this message to you. They may have us sitting between these walls, but please believe me when I tell you that these walls ain't nothing but slabs of stone that we will use to sharpen ourselves on, as our minds become like steel. Take it from me comrades, I'm a veteran at surviving and defying this daily stagnation, and as unfortunate as it is, I can sadly say that I truly understand what it's like to be bogged down in these sordid conditions, living in a box for years on end, going through all of the motions, spitting into the face of madness as it stares its strange, lifeless eyes at me, knowing in my heart that I have to be strong no matter what, and not allow my mind to slip into that lingering darkness that calls my name late at night. No, none of this can break me or take me under, and if you're strong like I've had to be, comrades, then you will find ways to take all of that shit you've been served and turn it into sugar, while always keeping fortitude and resistance in your hearts.

Imprisoned comrades, I encourage you to pick up a zine or to write the address stamped on the back of this zine, send some stamps and request some zines yourself. I encourage you to learn about history, struggle, anarchism, revolution and about the struggles taking place all over the world. Use your time wisely, and find ways to be more productive. You can build up your vocabulary, you can work on developing your writing skills, you can practice your hand at making revolutionary art (art that makes a statement about what's going on in your life, environment and the social conditions you live under), you can do all kinds of things that will enable you to build your mind into an explosive weapon.

Get yourself some zines, raise awareness, organize your fellow prisoners around real causes. Pass out literature, write your own and pass that around too, hold speeches, study sessions, try to build up a solid support network with activists and advocates on the outs (let them know that we can't get anything going in here on a serious level without their support from the outside.) Start up your own prison chapter, organize book drives, stamp drives, organize other prisoners around solid causes (you don't need everybody to join, just enough people to make things happen), reach out to other prisoners, teach them, train them and be there for them to the fullest.

You can recruit, organize, start up collectives and even build up a revolutionary, anarchist army. You can do anything you put your mind to. Yes, you'll be up against great odds, but your dedication and your persistence will cut through those odds like a samurai sword cuts through the body of an opponent.

Comrades behind enemy lines, now is the time for your underground education to begin. Now is the time for you to become aware and to develop a social consciousness. It all starts here, it all starts now. If you're anything like me, then you've probably been fighting and struggling all of your life, now is the time for you to take that struggle to another level, and to start struggling for a better cause, for real change and for a better tomorrow.

Zines are our real weapons, this is how we get powerful, dangerous, this is how we cut through the bars, tear down the walls, and defend ourselves from our enemies, with the knowledge we obtain from these zines.

Zines are like grenades, or bombs, because when you real them your mind explodes, something goes off in your brain, and once that fire has been lit, there's no extinguishing it. It is through these zines that we get our real underground revolutionary education. We see what's going on with other imprisoned people and we find strength and example from what they've got going on. With these zines we can write and record our own history, build a movement, teach, learn, organize, agitate and educate. Zines have become a major part of radical and revolutionary culture for all comrades under lock and key.

For the young gangsta who looks to make the transition from gangsta to guerrilla, these zines are for you:

1) *Deliberately I Defy* - Victor Trayway
2. *Thrown To The Wolves* - Coyote
3) *Disposable Outcasts* - Hybachi Lemar
4) *Write or Die* - Papyrus Collective
5) *Aztlan Realism: Revolutionary Art of Jose Heladio Villareal*
6) *Defeating the Criminal Mentality* - Lacinto Hamilton
7) *An Updated History of the New Afrikan Prison Struggle* - Sundiata Acoli
8) *Interviews With Russell Maroon Shoatz* - Conducted by Anthony Rayson
9) *The Last Act of the Circus Animals 1, 2 & 3* - Sean Swain & Travis Washington
10) *Remembering the Real Dragon: Interview With George Jackson* - Karen Wald

There are many more zines, but these are just a few good ones that will really help set you on your way in making the transition from gangsta to guerrilla (or from criminal to radical). These zines are serious zines, written by serious comrades who have been very active in the struggle, and bring the strong-minded, deep thinking warriors that they are, they have really taken the time to pack some explosives into these writings, so please send some stamps to the address on the back of this zine and check them out for yourself.

Before I close this, I just want to say these last words. As imprisoned guerrillas, anarchists, revolutionaries and as comrades in the struggle, we have learned to create our own identity, so as not to be written off by those who try to crush us under the weight of their boot. We've had to learn to endure all kinds of pain, torture, isolation and many other hardships, while still standing strong and keeping a tight grip on our sanity. Many of us could be walking on these lower yards right now if only we chose to break, bend, conform, snitch, debrief, and suck the master's dick! But that's what we won't do, that's what we can't do. Instead we find ways to fight back while sticking to what we stand for, as men. We find ways to stay alive, to hold on, to stay healthy and strong, to keep pushing, *keep striving, keep resisting. We do not accept the legitimacy* of the prison industrial complex (PIC), and we do all we can to fight this beast from within - when we look around, all we see is destruction and death, but we do not allow ourselves to succumb to that. We choose to remain as symbols of resistance amongst all of this misery. We are not the type to sit back and do nothing as the conditions around us get worse and worse, and as we see our fellow prisoners get crushed and sometimes even die under these brutal conditions. Revolution means change, so first we have to change ourselves, change our thinking, our way of life. That's where it all begins.

I wish to welcome you into this new way of life, comrades. This isn't going to be easy, we have a huge battle in front of us, so be prepared for war, be prepared to die, be prepared to be tortured, abused, despised, hated on, slandered and more. Be prepared in your heart and in your mind. But know that we are not destined for failure! So be prepared to fight and to win! Be prepared to take power in your own hands, be prepared to start taking control over your own lives. Revolution is here, and we *are the ones to bring it. Stand strong, comrades, I love you* and I'm prepared to die with you!

Viva La Revolucion!
Coyote

ABC - Nevada Prison Chapter
ELY STATE PRISON
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For words of encouragement and support, please write to:
Coyote Sheff #55671
P.O. Box 1989
Ely, Nevada 89301-1989

For more information about Coyote, or to read more of his brilliant writings, visit any one of these sites:

www.coyote-calling.blogspot.org
www.nevadaprisonwatch.org
www.scribd.com/prisonwatch

A message to activists and comrades on the streets:

Please get involved in the prison struggle, today! Prisoners cannot do anything on a serious, effective level without solid support from comrades on the outs. We need you to help us type up our zines, help us acquire the zines and other reading materials that we so much need to elevate our thoughts and to free our minds, especially while under such stagnant conditions. These zines are what keeps us strong, active and alive. Our connection to comrades and activists on the outs is our most viable asset to our survival, you are our lifeline and we need you!

Educate to Liberate - Prison Strike!

Of all the gross injustices plaguing the U.S. today, the 'War on the Poor' (the criminalization of poverty), and the so-called 'War on Drugs' are surely among the most harmful. These 'Wars' effect every aspect of daily life, and have been the means by which the U.S. elite has terrorized and corralled the population into subservience. The agents of oppression - the police and various related "law enforcement" entities, now have a virtual carte blanche to attack anyone they choose, using conspiracy laws and other statutes validating 'anti-drug' and 'anti-terrorist'

tactics to 'legally' run amok. Mere suspicion of criminal activity is sufficient to allow government thugs to seize all your property and throw you into a dungeon indefinitely - or even to kill you on sight (if they're pissed off enough).

Unfortunately, those opposed to this system of government domination have few effective ways to combat it. This grotesque system has won the propaganda war, convincing the upper and middle classes that without *police "protection" (though in reality, it's an almost* laughable myth - the police rarely do more than pick up the pieces of tragedy) society will descend into a 'Mad Max' kind of chaos. Further, the overwhelming fire-power of police government agents, coupled with mastery of information gathering and processing; a high-tech "surveillance state" in place, and the power of the state is nearly impossible to challenge head-on.

Armed conflict simply cannot succeed without broad public support - which is utterly lacking. Similarly, popular strikes, boycotts, protests and other systemic attacks are too difficult to target and are too diffuse to be effective. Some clever efforts, like Cop Watch (videotaping police brutality) are good, but are not anywhere near enough to do more than create cosmetic change, leaving fundamental problems and structures unaltered.

So, what can be done?

Luckily, the system *does* have its Achilles Heel - the prison system. prisons are *incredibly vulnerable* to mass action of one kind - the labor strike. Without prison labor, the system cannot operate. It is therefore a relatively simple matter of education - raising the political consciousness of prisoners, and teaching them that if they refuse to support the prison system *by helping it to operate, it will collapse.* It isn't possible for the government to replace prisoners with guards and employees; indeed, it is impossible for the prison authorities to replace even a *fraction* of prisoner labor, should prisoners strike.

Add in the enormous potential assistance that ex-felons / ex-prisoners (now numbering in the tens of millions in the U.S.) offer, and - should a way to mobilize them be found, a recipe to destroy the current status quo is at hand, cheaply and easily available.

Without a prison system capable of locking up millions of non-violent offenders (i.e. dissenters) oppression by the system becomes far more difficult. The apparatus of the state - courts, cops, etc. would be thrown into chaos by the mass closure of prisons, as the system itself would be forced to undergo fundamental changes.

Educating prisoners so they understand the power they hold and the desperate need for them to rise up and *demand change, should be the most important priority of* any group calling itself anarchist.

The intellectuals within the @ movement, rather than bickering over esoteric - and largely meaningless - theoretical differences of opinion *MUST* unite and devote themselves to finding simple, effective actions ex-felons can take to support and exacerbate a nation-wide prison strike (along with devising a powerful, emotionally moving media campaign to ignite such a strike and gain it support among those sympathetic within the general population - mainly 'minority' communities).

It is our best, and most effective route to change the status quo. Love & Rage, T. M. Hoy

The Pen is My Sword, The Zine is My Bomb...

Powerful messages of resistance and revolution are conveyed when an Anarchist picks up a pen and wields it the way Miyomoto Musashi taught his Bushi's to wield the Kitana (samurai sword). With one swift stroke, we slice off the ugly head of the oppressive beast, the enemy, the one we've been fighting and fighting for years. The pen is our sword.

If you listen closely, you can still hear the thunderous sound that reverberates through our hearts, and the explosions in our minds, after we've been exposed to a new way of thinking, a radical way of life, where lessons of self-sufficiency, solidarity, and mutual aid are learned, and where strategies of guerrilla warfare and survival are

taught and carried out everyday. Every time we read, an explosive zine, we, ourselves, become explosive, alive, a dangerous threat. Zines are our bombs.

Sometimes we read zines about resistance. Prisoners love to read these zines, as many of us have intimately come to learn that another day in these gulags is another day to resist, and resistance *has become a way of life, a way to stay strong, to stay sane and to* stay alive. Whenever we become thirsty for this knowledge that has become so essential to us in these situations, we can pick up a zine and drink from the fountain of resistance. Refreshing, quenching, sustaining, zines keep our minds hydrated.

Pick up a zine, my fellow prisoners, and there you will find the truth you've been seeking all along. Revolutionary writings to teach you, instruct you, inform you, and to awaken your sleeping, stifled mind. Through these zines we have become strong. through this strength, we have become explosive. With this strength and explosiveness, we have learned to be dangerous, and when you're dangerous: there's nothing you can't do!

With the simple stroke of a zinester's pen, these manifestations *have been drafted, redrafted, read, memorized and etched into the* readers' minds. These manifestations carry on, from cell to cell, unit to unit, prison to prison, uniting an oppressed class around a similar ideology. We need no Bible, no laws, no master to tell us how to live, or how not to. Our hearts carry the very truths we live by. These same hearts that pump and thump with vibrant joy as they've been aroused and warmed by the fire of revolutionary love.

Many the prisoner I've inspired and educated through my writings and words, only to have them write something, say something, or do something very deep, profound and touching enough to come back

and inspire me, even more than I inspired them. With these zines a culture is being raised, a movement being built and revolutionaries are being born.

These prisons have been built to serve as wastelands of ignorance and confusion, where the oppressor deliberately places their jailhouse rats and pet prisoners within our midst, while creating a *level / reward system designated to encourage snitching and other* cowardly behaviors that eat away at the basic characteristics of manhood and humanity. Thus, keeping us disorganized, divided and lacking the social consciousness and activism necessary for prisoners to take hold and control the destiny of our own lives. But these zines are here to educate us about these things, to bring unity, build character and to help prisoners develop a social consciousness, giving us amongst the poor, imprisoned and oppressed classes the opportunity to gain the strength we need to rise up on our feet and start organizing ourselves accordingly.

With these zines, we find our voice and we use that voice to say something real, something good. I find it necessary to be someone that has something good to say, because when you're speaking truth *and intelligence, and saying something good, there will always be* people who will come around just to listen to what you have to say. This is how we learn, and this is how we teach. By writing these zines, by talking, listening, sharing. This is how we grow, and how we evolve. This is how we empower ourselves and become strong, wise, sharp. I don't have a T.V. only because I don't want a T.V. I'd rather read books and zines and write and engage others in serious dialogue, than to sit back and watch the bosses' propaganda that's constantly being displayed on these "idiot boxes." I'd rather use this time to create revolution. The pen is my sword, the zine is my bomb.

Revolutionary Love, Coyote / ABC - Nevada Prison Chapter / ESP