

“If we can’t live like human beings, we shall at least die like humans.”

On September 9, 1971, around 1,200 prisoners at the Attica Correctional Facility in the State of New York occupy 3 sections of the prison and take 38 guards and employees hostage. Their demands included amnesty for and the release of all political prisoners in the U.S. Immediately, the prison is surrounded by the forces of the National Guard and on the 13 of September the police intervenes. Over 1,000 police officers and national guards took place in the battle, which lasted 90 minutes. Helicopters, flying above the prison, flood the prison with tear gas as the crew calls through loudspeakers the prisoners to surrender. Amid the tear gas the police and the army start shooting indiscriminately. The final report counts 43 dead and over 250 injured. After the massacre the prison looks like a battlefield. A wave of protests breaks out across the country, especially from the black community. After all, 85% of prisoners in Attica were black. Despite the bloody ending, the uprising strengthened the feeling of unity and militancy amongst the black community in the U.S.

In the 70’s, the prison system in the U.S. was in turmoil, people were rising up, struggling and taking back ownership of their lives and bodies from the plantations-prisons

The prison-industrial complex of the U.S. incarcerates millions of men and women, a number which is constantly on the rise, just as their exploitation through unpaid labor is on the rise. Many prisons have been privatized, but private and state prisons alike run on the forced labor of their prisoners, who work on a petty or no wage at all, for multinational giant corporations, plantations, the military industry e.t.c.

This is none other than the continuation of slavery. At the same time, overseers survey every move prisoners make and impose strict disciplinary and other measures. Prisons are increasingly counting on slavery and torture in order to maintain a stable function. They may have replaced the whip with pepper spray, but many of the other torments remain: isolation, restraint positions, stripping off prisoners' clothes, and body search.

Forty five years on from the bloody revolt with 43 dead and hundreds of injured in Attica prison, prisons in the U.S. are in turmoil once again. Prisoners have made the connection of their struggle today with the Attica revolt and so they chose to commence their struggle on September 9 2016.

For the past six years a series of mobilizations have been taking place in U.S. prisons, such as work stoppages, hunger strikes, abstention from prison meals etc. The burgeoning resistance movement is diverse and interconnected and it includes migrant detention centers, women’s prisons and juvenile facilities.

On April 1st 2016, a prisoner initiative from the U.S. prisons published a call against forced labor under conditions of incarceration in which they state:

“Slavery is alive and well in the prison system, but by the end of this year, it won’t be anymore. This is a call to end slavery in America. This call goes directly to the slaves themselves. We are not making demands or requests of our captors, we are calling ourselves to action. To every prisoner in every state and federal institution across this land, we call on you to stop being a slave, to let the

crops rot in the plantation fields, to go on strike and cease reproducing the institutions of your confinement.

This is a call for a nation-wide prisoner work stoppage to end prison slavery, starting on September 9th, 2016. They cannot run these facilities without us.

To achieve this goal, we need support from people on the outside. A prison is an easy-lockdown environment, a place of control and confinement where repression is built into every stone wall and chain link, every gesture and routine. When we stand up to these authorities, they come down on us, and the only protection we have is solidarity from the outside.”

In response to this call we stand in solidarity to the “struggle against slavery”, tracing the thread of resistance that connects the past with the present, that connects the struggles against prison around the world, from the U.S. to Mexico, to Spain, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Chile whether the fight takes the form of uprisings, destruction, burning down the prison, mass hunger strikes ,and where regardless of the different demands and different means of mobilization, what unites these struggles is the fight against oppression, incarceration and authority.

BURN DOWN ALL PRISONS

SOLIDARITY TO THE “STRUGGLE AGAINST SLAVERY” OF PRISONERS IN THE PRISONS OF U.S.A.

Solidarity Assembly to political prisoners and persecuted comrades