

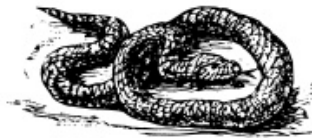


TIP IT OVER & BURN IT

*dialogue between prisoner's tactics of
struggle on the inside*

Letters first published in **Wildfire 1, 2, 3, 4**. Wildfire was "a newsletter focusing on solidarity with U.S. anarchist prisoners, support for prison rebellion, and anti-authoritarian struggle against prison". The platform they provided to people on the inside allowed really interesting texts to come out and be spread amongst prisoners. If you get the chance, we actually recommend to read all of the numbers here: wildfire.noblogs.org

This is specifically a compilation of the letters which has been exchanged on the subject of hunger strikes, work stoppage and direct action in prison.



BreakDown edition

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DIRECT ACTION

by Sean Swain

Wildfire 1

So long as oppression exists, there will be resistance – the natural response to oppression. And prison is the one place where oppressors may impose directly and intimately on every aspect of a captive’s life, so we can easily conclude that prisoner resistance will go on until some (not so distant?) future day when prisons cease to exist. The question that confronts resisting prisoners is the nature and form that resistance should take.

I have opposed what I perceive to be “reformist” prisoner actions, to include efforts like hunger strikes, work stoppages, and mobilizations for legislative reform – which are, by and large, most of the menu options you find resisting prisoners selecting. Having already written about my reasons for opposing these forms of resistance in favor of what I’ve described as “direct action,” I won’t repeat myself. What I would like to do instead is to present a practical definition for what separates useless and futile “reformist” action and useful, productive “direct” action.

“Reformist” and “direct” actions differ in the way they relate to the oppressor’s projection of power. The distinction that separates reformism and direct action lies in whether the action reinforces the sense of the oppressor’s power or whether the action undermines that sense of the oppressor’s power.

Some examples to illustrate what I mean:

A hunger striker, by refusing food, articulates some set of demands or terms to be met by the oppressor, on the promise that when those demands or terms are met, the hunger striker will resume eating food. In pursuing this course, the hunger striker is essentially appealing to the oppressor – applying coercive leverage in the course of the appeal – to modify the oppressor’s program and to accommodate the hunger striker’s demands or terms.

The hunger striker, in issuing demands or terms, is recognizing the “right” of the oppressor to exercise power. The hunger striker says, “I know that you are in charge, so I am appealing to you – in a radical method for getting your attention – so that I can persuade you to exercise your power differently.”

The hunger striker says, “If you only meet those terms, I will resume eating and will resume my assigned role in your program.”

What the hunger striker does NOT say is, “The oppressor has no right to exercise any power.”

What the hunger striker does NOT say is, “The oppressor and his program must go because the oppressor’s power is not legitimate.”

The hunger striker seeks only a change in the operation of the program, not its elimination. In practical application, prisoner hunger strikers may demand an end to special housing, or solutions to overcrowding, or better conditions like food and recreation and programs. Hunger strikers do not seek an end to the existence of the prison system, demanding that everyone from the prisons director down to the rookie prison guard collect their final paychecks and open the gates and the cell doors, never to return to work.

The same can be said for prisoners on a work stoppage. They employ a tactic for gaining concessions from the oppressor, not for ending oppression. Therefore, just like the hunger striker, the work stoppage prisoner's actions recognize the legitimacy of the oppressor and the oppressor's right to rule.

Both forms of resistance reinforce the power relationship of oppressor and subject.

Let's contrast that to the only instance of prolonged direct action undertaken by prisoners that I'm aware of – the campaign waged by the Army of the 12 Monkeys at Mansfield Correctional in Mansfield, Ohio, in 2012. In that direct action campaign, prisoners across racial and gang divides participated in a mass action of sabotage and disruption that was maintained for weeks. Flyers and training manuals flooded the compound, instructing prisoners how to jam locks, cut phone cords, clog drains, and essentially cripple the operation of the prison.

Orderly operations ground to a halt. The prison's sweatshop factory lost several days of production. The damages to prison infrastructure – including smashed windows, hundreds of replaced locks, and a collapsed plumbing system, all caused in the span of just weeks – cost the prison six figures. The sabotage campaign was likely carried out with mass participation, but with serious participation with a small number of prisoners.

To contrast this direct action approach with the reformist tactics, consider: The Army of the 12 Monkeys made no “demands” of “authority” on a promise of normalizing the situation. In this way, with this direct action approach, A12M did not recognize the authorities or their assumed right to rule.

The A12M did not say, “Meet these terms and we will resume our roles in your program.”

The A12M did not say, “We know you are in charge, so we are appealing to you to exercise your authority differently.

The A12M said, “We do not recognize your authority or your right to exist.”

The A12M said, “We will destroy you.”

Those prisoners did not seek concessions from those who claimed to exercise power, but set out instead to exercise power of their own. Revolutionary power. So, given this example, the question arises: what if prisoners, even in small numbers, at every prison in the United States – or even in the world – began a concerted and deliberate campaign of sabotage and harassment... one that, over time, would attract more prisoners who recognize the fun in sticking it to the authorities? If such a direct action campaign at Mansfield Correctional cost the prison six figures in just a few weeks, what if such a campaign occurred at all thirty-some Ohio prisons? What if it occurred at hundreds of prisons across the country, and maintained for months instead of weeks?

Rather than begging for changes through tactics that cause self-harm, a very small fraction of the prison population could bring the various departments of corrections to the brink of bankruptcy and systems failure, forcing drastic and desperate changes to be undertaken so as not to lose control of the corrections complex all together. From this point of view, direct action and only direct action produces “change you can believe in...”



A LETTER

by Michael Kimble
Wildfire 2

Wildfire,

I'll briefly reiterate the gist of my submission to Wildfire No. 1 which obviously got lost in the shuffle. But first I'd like to make a few comments towards the piece by Sean Swain in the previous issue. I find it difficult to argue with Sean's analysis, but I'll attempt to do so, especially in respect to workstrikes.

I think Sean is looking through a narrow lens when it comes to workstrikes. Workstrikes are usually organized to end torturous control units, for higher wages, better food, etc. and these are reformist goals without doubt. It in no way brings about the collapse of prisons or challenges the existence of prisons. But it doesn't have to be this way. Workstrikes can be used to disrupt the smooth, orderly functioning of prison, cost untold amounts in production to be lost and "bring the various departments of corrections to the brink of bankruptcy and systems failure, forcing drastic and desperate changes to be undertaken so as not to lose control of the corrections complex all together." From January 1-15, 2014, prisoners in Alabama staged a workstrike and it was estimated that the state lost \$800,000 in production, and it brought a halt to the normal flow of prison.

Of course, the task of seducing prisoners to join in such an effort nationwide is a daunting task, but not impossible. Simply having a few guys jamming locks, cutting

cords, clogging drains are temporary harassments, and may cost the state the loss of dollars in production, but in no way bring it to the brink of collapse.

If prisoners didn't cooperate with prison officials in maintaining and keeping this muthafucka up and running, the days of prison will be over with. Prisoners do everything : cooking, cleaning, maintenance, cutting grass, painting, clerical work, loading and unloading trucks, manufacturing, instructing classes, farm work, etc., besides issue out punishment, and in some cases they have been known to do just that on behalf of the pigs. Prisoners are the ones who will be repairing the damage you speak of causing, as maintenance workers.

My point is that an indefinite/permanent workstrike by itself or better yet, in conjunction with the sabotage (direct action) mentioned, and with the added direct action by comrades on the outside, will bring about "change you can believe in."

A workstrike says: Fuck your authority, we have the power.

A workstrike says: No longer will we cooperate and be complicit.

A workstrike says: Game over!

In regards to hungerstrikes I'm not so sure that this tactic just as workstrikes have to be reformist. Hungerstrikes are meant to appeal to the humanity of those out in so-called free-world and spur them into action against the institution of prison and thereby achieve the outcome demanded. Hungerstrikes have not been utilized to destroy prisoners, but to meet specific demands which are considered urgent by those utilizing it.

Hungerstrikes can be utilized as a tactic in a larger strategy to bring others into struggle against a system of domination and exploitation and demonstrate the futility of reformist tactics.

I personally know of a number of comrades who have been disabused of reformist approaches for change and have moved towards more radical efforts and practice in challenging the state after working to close down control units.

So, workstrikes and hungerstrikes do not have to be reformist tactics.

“Prison is the most direct, brutal expression of power, and like power it must be destroyed, it cannot be abolished progressively. Anyone who thinks they can improve it now in order to destroy it in the future will forever be a captive of it.” Half-measures just will not do.

Now, I'd like to state that I'm excited about the new publication (Wildfire) and the scope of it. I don't think there's a publication that comes close to its stated goals. Hopefully, this will heighten awareness of anarchist comrades out there (so called free-world) that there are comrades in u.s. prisons that's bringing the pain. At the time of the original piece for Wildfire No. 1: Sean Swain was on hungerstrike in protest to the imposition on his ability to communicate; prisoners in Alabama was on workstrike in protest to the slave system; I was on hungerstrike in solidarity with the strikers; prisoners in the segregation unit at Holman was fighting against a policy of substituting meals with sack lunches because their tray slots are open so they can communicate with each other, through direct action of throwing piss and shit on the pigs, and setting fires; and in Greece anarchist prisoners were waging a protracted struggle against the C-type specialized prisons for anarchist

and other liberation fighters.

Wildfire gives us an avenue to network and share ideas, strategies, tactics, not just on the inside and in the u.s. but outside as well and internationally.

Speaking of Greece, I receive a lot of inspiration from these comrades and I would like to, at this time, make a proposal of forming the “Network of Anarchist Prisoners” throughout the u.s. and internationally. This network would “promote the coordination and cooperation between prisoners in different prisons, anarchist or not, who recognize the importance and necessity of organized and aggressive action against the prisons.”

In Solidarity,
Michael Kimble

RESPONSE TO SEAN SWAIN

by Christopher Reynolds
Wildfire 3

At first when I read Sean's article about hunger striking and work stoppage it kind of infuriated me, due to the fact that I have been on a few hunger strikes myself in order to receive what we should have regardless anyhow. Then I sat and contemplated on his concept of us basically admitting the oppressor's rule over us by trying to bargain with them through the form of hunger strike or work stoppage.

It made me think long and hard for a more effective way to put both hunger striking and work stoppage to use, in which it will totally devastate the whole prison industrial complex system. The first concept I came upon was that of the "Industrial Workers of the World," of having all prisoners throughout the U\$ go on hunger strike and work stoppage all at the same time. Then demand minimum wage be paid to every inmate within the prison system. Regardless if they meet this demand, after a month's time of work stoppage they would have lost so much profit they would never recover. Also even on hunger strike it's still each institution's responsibility to make and prepare food, although they know we are going to refuse it. They would have to bring in outside workers to come in and prepare food, which they will have to pay at normal wages.

I know this sounds nearly impossible to accomplish, but I believe it can be done by effectively networking with other organizations to further spread our literature throughout all prisons.

The so-called powers that be would have no further option but to shut down all prison industrial complexes. I mean let's face the reality, they only exist as legalization of slavery in order to make high profits.

So when it comes to direct action, Sean Swain stands correct.

Respectfully,

your fellow comrade,

Christopher Reynolds

A RESPONSE TO ISSUE #1

by anarcho-faheem

(extract) wildfire 3

[...] First I will focus on comrade Sean Swain's "Direct Action" article. Though strategically worded, I couldn't disagree more. This wording in that article only put water on a spark before it can turn into a full blaze. In other words, destroys potential unity before a more conscious prisoner can establish groundwork. As an anarchist or anti-authoritarian, obviously our principles are against reform, but: 1) we don't make a blueprint for every person in the world to be obligated to follow; 2) I'm not quite sure that any form of struggle in which demands are given should be classified as reformist in a prison setting. In society, maybe so, but in prison? Absolutely not, because if we're being realist, then despite the beautiful wordplay you exhibited, the dismantling of the prison industrial complex will only take place with the destruction of the entire ruling class/state. Obviously, the biggest contribution to that will have to come from consistent, long-term, complete anarchy from the outside. Be not mistaken, I salute A12M to the fullest and if there, I would've been side by side with those comrades. But no resistance that's only coming from the inside will ultimately deal a death blow to slave camps. What you're suggesting isn't practical. Moreso, militant revolts rarely happen in prison. It's hard to organize resistance in most prisons in Amerika, period. Throughout history, east to west, society to prison, militants have always been the minority. The peaceful are always the majority. The point I'm making is, if the majority in prison has found a

common ground to struggle on, with a common tactic that the majority is willing to participate in, why speak against it? Those of more consciousness, who are more dedicated, and understand the value of sacrifice, can engage in different tactics you are referring to, but which will be in co-existence with the masses' demands. What you call "reformist" is a foundation for unity, cooperation, and political consciousness building, which can spring into a culture of resistance, which will build dedication for action upon release to help achieve our ultimate goal.

Next issue: you state demands is "recognizing the right of the oppressor to exercise power." Demands isn't recognizing the right of the state to exercise power, but a tactical approach as is also practiced by the oppressor. When they say you have freedom of speech, or freedom of protest, do you think they acknowledge us as having power just because they're allowing us to oppose them within the lines of their law? Study what deception is. We're not recognizing the "right" of their power; quite the contrary, we're taking steps in building a force necessary to diminish their power. As one who myself has militant views, I understand your perspective and feel you're valuable to the movement and dedicated. But what you must understand is, if you want the endgame to be victory, in order to get the majority on our side, tactics must be diverse, and, aside from what puts the movement in danger, all resistance is welcome – with the pen or the sword, with a sign or a gun. This leave room for everybody to be against the oppressor in some way, violently or non-violently, everyone can contribute. We must be careful with our words, with our practices, and not become tools helping the oppressors divide the oppressed.

Moreso, a concept that need to be grasped: “there’s no one blueprint for struggle.” In and out of prison, every oppressed person isn’t an anarchist, so we can’t expect every form of resistance to be in line with anarchism. By practicing such behaviorisms, we become like our oppressors – our way or no way. The only ones we can hold accountable for practices that goes against anarchism are anarchists. As a New Afrikan, I spoke out against MLK principles and those who followed them, as I identify with Malcolm. I want revolution and not reform. I don’t want master to take his foot off my neck a little, I want master entire body in the dirt. But what I had to realize is, Brother Martin was struggling the best way he knew how and though his tactics and goals were different from Brother Malcolm, he was doing what he was doing to deliver our people from suffering. Think about that. Criticize the self-proclaimed revolutionary for not being revolutionary, but not the typical oppressed person for acting against their oppression the best way they know how. Revolution is what destroys systems. Like it or not, prisoners alone won’t destroy a system. All we can do is deliver war and demand to be treated like humans, even if you do call it “reformist.” [...]

Until we win, we fight on! Love and solidarity.
Stiff resistance,

Anarcho-Faheem

REPLY TO MICHAEL KIMBLE

by Sean Swain

wildfire 3

It was great to get Issue #2 of Wildfire, and I was even happier to read Michael Kimble's letter which was, in part, a response to something I wrote in Issue #1. How cool that we have this forum to get this dialogue started— on whether or not hungerstrikes and work stoppages are reformist.

I wrote previously that hungerstrikes and work stoppages are categorically reformist, that by employing them, we seek concessions from those in state power but we do not attempt to eliminate state power entirely.

In his response, related to hungerstrikes, Michael Kimble points out that, at the time Issue #2 went to press, he and I were both on hungerstrikes— which is true. But, as always, our recourse to going hungry did not topple the hierarch enemy, but only made me a hypocrite.

A hungry one, at that.

So, in that sense, hungerstrikes are vindicated as a means for achieving small victories and concessions, but not as a means for bringing anything down.

In contrast, Michael brings up a scenario of a wide spread work stoppage where, if no one goes back to work, the system does collapse. Michael is right, of course, and what he describes is the anarcho-syndicalist dream, the work stoppage to end all work stoppages. The problem is, this has been a dream for centuries because it never materialized, in the free world or in prison.

For such a strategy to succeed in bringing the whole system down, you would need a prison population composed entirely of anarchists. It wouldn't be enough for 95% of the prison population to reject whatever sweet deals the prison fascists offer in exchange for going back to work. Just 95% solidarity means 5% returned to work and the work stoppage is over. So, in a prison setting, you would need 100% of the prisoners to reject every single deal (free ice cream, a raise in state pay, conjugal visits...) in order to make the system collapse.

I am always skeptical of any plan that requires 100% success from large groups of humans. So, sure, a work stoppage could be a means for revolution, for toppling the system, but it is more readily geared to attain reformist concessions.

This being the case, I urge Michael and others to think beyond these tactics and to imagine how they can employ direct action, which requires small numbers in anonymous actions that, together, make larger systems unmanageable, particularly when inspiring others to jump onto the bandwagon. Such an approach brings a population to recognize its own power, leading to greater and greater acts of rebellion, maybe even, eventually, to the work stoppage that Michael Kimble envisions.

Let's not dare to "think outside the box." Let's tip it over and burn it.

WORK STRIKES: A RESPONSE

by Michael Kimble
Wildfire 3

Today, the people in amerika's prisons, mostly black, brown, and poor whites now comprises a free (or penny wages) labor force for a \$500 billion per-year industry that is producing a range of products and providing services so broad and extensive that it touches every area of the u.s. economy. "Prison labor manufactures complex components for McDonnell Douglas/Boeing's F-15 fighter aircraft, the General Dynamics/Lockheed Martin F-16, and Bell/Textrons Cobra helicopter. Prison labor produces night-vision goggles, body armor, camouflage, uniforms, radio and communication devices, and lighting systems and components for 30mm and 300mm battleship anti-aircraft guns, along with land mine sweepers and electro-optical equipment and overhaul military vehicles."

When determining the best strategy to smash the Prison Industrial Slave Komplex it is essential that we take a look at the entire system. We must identify the fundamentals of what makes this system work and why it exists. Prisons exist for basically two reasons: social control (domination) and economic exploitation. Just as with chattel slavery, the Prison Industrial Slave Komplex is an economic system which uses human beings as its nuts and bolts. So, in part our approach must be economic destruction and focused on the point of production – the people being forced into this slave labor.

We are fighting against a half-trillion dollar system that is being controlled by businessmen and women who are the modern day slave profiteers, and their focus is on the bottom line, just like any business. From this viewpoint, I think that organizing workstrikes at prisons with economic industries that are operated by slave labor will bring much damage. The impact of a workstrike is immediate and significant, as production is shut down and profit margins plummet around the country. And affecting the world in so many ways, even. "Leasing convicts to private businesses made a tidy fortune for both state and local governments, especially after slaves were emancipated. In 1873, 73% of Alabama's entire state revenue came from prison labor. Reconstruction-era plantation owners, though, were hardly incentivized to care about their charges! When any of their starving workers died, they simply asked the state for new ones, at no cost to their bottom line." Prisoner workstrikes is key to bringing the Prison Industrial Slave Komplex, domination and control to its death: if we are being held solely for our labor, social control, and exploitation, then why should we continue to work? And if we (anarchists) want to bring pain and damage to the state, and break the control we (prisoners) are willingly complicit in maintaining, and seeing a real chance to bring destructive damage to something that deep inside we hate, why not go on workstrike? I'm not talking about a workstrike for better wages, food, etc., but a shutdown that will do some damage, for real.

Of course, if we add the tactics of direct action mentioned in Sean's original article in Wildfire #1, and participation of comrades on the outside, then we'll get change we can believe in. It may not bring down the state immediately, but neither did the direct action carried out by the A12Monkeys, but it will knock a big chunk out of the state. Isn't that what we want to do? I agree, there are those

that want to negotiate some issues, but that's why we hash out the reasons and decide the direction and mission of the workstrike on the level of participation I'm talking about. It's possible and already taking place between prisoners all over the u.s. and with "free"-world participation. It doesn't have to be reformist.

I suggest that all prisoners, especially anarchist prisoners, link up and join these discussions by writing to Free Alabama Movement; PO Box 186; New Market, AL 35761.or at internet radio:

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/freealabamamovement>.

Let's make this clear, I don't believe that it is feasible to get the cooperation and participation of every prisoner in every prison throughout the u.s. History and experience taught me that. But I do believe that it is possible to get the participation and cooperation of some prisoners in various states, entire prisons even. We now have the means to link up and organize something of this scale. It won't be easy, but that's why it's called "struggle."

If the mission of the A12Monkeys was to cause a rupture in the normal flow, economic damage, structural damage, and just stick it to the authorities, a workstrike, I think, would only widen this rupture and loss of profits. In that sense, it's not reform.

IN DEFENSE OF FIRE & SMOKE: ANOTHER RESPONSE IN THE ONGOING DEBATE ON WHAT CONSTITUTES REFORMIST TACTIC

by sean swain
Wildfire 4

Until Issue #3 of Wildfire came out, I intended to write on a new topic, expecting the debate over reformism versus revolutionary action to have run its course. But from the lively debate in the last issue, I think would be remiss not to address the topic one more time, in light of all the responses.

As I have used the terms, “revolutionary action” seeks to topple the existing system rather than change the way it operates. “Reformist action” on the other hand does not seek to topple the system but is geared to modifying or “reforming” the way the existing power operates.

To make an analogy, a hammer is a tool that pounds nails. A screwdriver is a tool that installs screws. Hammers and screwdrivers are not interchangeable but perform different jobs. Same with revolutionary and reformist actions.

So the question regarding hungerstrikes is: Does the act of hungerstriking seek to topple power or does it seek to establish new terms as to how power operates? However I may feel about hungerstrikes, and however anyone else may feel about them, hungerstrikes seek to leverage the existing powers to exercise authority differently, to give concessions. With a hungerstrike, no matter how many of us do it, and no matter how long we do it, a hungerstrike will never bring down the power structure.

If your goal is to topple power, a hungerstrike is never the tool you can use to accomplish that job, any more than you can effectively use a hammer to insert screws. The hungerstrike is a tool from the reformist toolbox.

Now, I have had to alter my position on work stoppages a bit. Michael Kimble has presented a scenario where work stoppages could be used for a revolutionary outcome – that is, that rebels who seek no compromise with the power structure could employ a work stoppage, not with the goal of making demands or gaining concessions, but with the goal of never going back to work, with the goal of shutting down the system all together. Such a scenario is clearly revolutionary. But, having said that, every work stoppage in history has devolved into reformism. This is due to the fact that not every single rebel is dead-set to bring the system down, and will instead return to work for the promise of concessions, for a handful of rewards.

Sad, but true.

It occurs to me that particularly in a prison setting, for practical reasons, it would probably make sense not to begin any rebellion by proposing a statewide work stoppage, one designed to continue forever until the system collapses and we all go home. I don't see that working. Probably, that would be something to build up to, through other actions that develop the practice of rebellion.

That's why I maintain that hungerstrikes are a tool in the reformist toolbox and work stoppages, until they prove to be used for a revolutionary outcome, are also, unfortunately, a reformist tool. Now, having said all of that, others have made points that employing reformist tools like hungerstrikes serve to (1) raise consciousness, (2) broaden participation in struggle, and (3) build solidarity. All of these points are true. But, engaging in reformist tactics will only lead to raising reformist consciousness, broaden

participation in reformist struggle, and build solidarity with reformists who are only seeking to alter the way the system works, not destroy it.

Back to the analogy, teaching someone to use a screwdriver does not make them proficient with a hammer.

Practicing reformist tactics “raises consciousness” that we can struggle and get the system to change and accommodate us. Someone under that false consciousness can never be motivated to topple the system that they falsely believe to be responsive (if only enough of us sign a petition to vote or march or hungerstrike). So, building “reformist consciousness” arrests “revolutionary consciousness” and detracts from the potential for revolution.

Employing reformist tactics also broadens participation in the struggle – in the reformist struggle. It creates greater numbers of folks who believe that they can devote their energies to getting the existing system to work for them. It does not, however, pull more people into the revolutionary struggle of attempting to topple the system.

Also, let’s keep in mind that no revolution in history ever secured more than 5% of the population’s participation. In every revolution in history, 95% of the population sat on the sidelines and watched. So, that being the case, attempting to broaden participation is a reformist approach in itself. I would gladly trade a million committed reformists for just a dozen die-hard revolutionaries dedicated to bringing the system down. The numbers argument is a reformist red herring.

Lastly, reformist action increases solidarity with other reformists and gets more folks intellectually oriented into running on that same hamster wheel, increasing the number of people who are deluded into thinking that the answer is not to topple the system but to strive to fix it, to achieve a kinder, gentler slavery complex.

Let's not pretend reformism corners the market on consciousness-raising or on broadening the movement or on increasing solidarity. Direct action strategies do that too, only direct action strategies inspire others to direct action. Tactics like sabotage and rioting and insurrection do not result in concessions or improvement in conditions. Revolutionary tactics are not geared for such outcomes, just as hammers are not geared for installing screws.

In the case of the 12 Monkey rebellion, the 12 Monkeys promoted sabotage like clogging drains and jamming locks, and the rebellion began with an incredibly small number of rebels. It grew quickly and escalated to smashing windows and lighting fires – which are tactics the 12 Monkeys never promoted. That is, with mass participation in direct action rebellion, the action quickly went beyond the designs of those who had issued the initial invitation. So, direct action can promote revolutionary consciousness, broaden participation, and strengthen solidarity.

Prisoners can employ tactics that throw the prison complex into a constant state of conflict and crisis that builds and spreads. And contrary to the criticism that prison rebellion alone cannot take down the larger system of control, the fact is that no state can exist for long without the power to punish, and if the prisons are taken away from the state, the state cannot remain the state for long. But, the point is immaterial because widespread prison rebellion would spread and would consume so much of the state's energy and resources and personnel that nobody would be guarding the proverbial hen-house. Then rebels beyond the fences would have an open invitation to get just as rowdy.

The death of the hierarch program will not come about as a consequence of reformist actions or a series of reformist actions, not even a million reformist actions involving a million participants. The system will only be toppled by rebels who dedicate themselves to actions that are designed to topple the system. We are not excused from participation just because we're locked in cages. That does not absolve us, but provides us an even greater incentive, a stronger motive, a deeper resolve.

Our love and fury cannot be expressed through the lexicon of the reformist but need to be articulated in blood and smoke. Since the privileged few of the world have relegated us to butchered lives, have made it clear that in the final analysis it is us or them, I say let the smoke rise now and let the blood be theirs.

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*“Prison is the most direct, brutal expression of power, and like power it must be destroyed, it cannot be abolished progressively. Anyone who thinks they can improve it now in order to destroy it in the future will forever be a captive of it.”
Half-measures just will not do.*

