



feedback 8

'It is simply impossible to justify'

11-23-14

Greetings "free" society and my fellow captives.

Anthony McInnis here, sounding an alarm loud enough to reach all tax paying citizens of Durham and remaining counties. In 2013, I was booked into Durham County Detention Center on a case that should have been a misdemeanor. Due to my consistent stance to refuse plea offers for active time and an inability to post bond, I remained in jail for eleven months. In N. Carolina, the accumulation of a criminal background basically guarantees you a prison term, partly because you're sick of having to endure such a dehumanizing experience, but mainly because we usually can't afford a paid lawyer.

The whole community needs to know that: Durham County inmates spend almost eighteen hours a day in cells that remain cold year round. Two inmates often share a cell designed for only one man. Meals by Aramark are almost inhumane with no fruit and processed meat patties. Dinner consists of two sandwiches (thin) and an excuse for dessert. It is served at four pm and breakfast does not arrive until six am (13 hours!). Meals are served on

trays and lids that are completely outdated and contain dishwater from weeks earlier. Inmates load these trays each day assembly-line style and carry out all the duties of the food service process. They do not earn money nor does any other man on jail work detail.

Now let us consider the following points:

- N. Carolina acquires over 85% of its court convictions from those who accept plea offers.
- Today, significant numbers of young Black males are populating the jail, particularly 16, 17, and 18 year olds.
- No other group has been affected by American criminal justice like the Black community.
- At least 80% of the incarcerated in the state are Black males.

It is simply impossible to justify the mass incarceration of over 2.1 million people in America, the vast majority of them Blacks who represent only 12% of the total population.

– Chapel Hill Resident,
Anthony McInnis
#0270116

'We may as well be sleeping outside'

Dear I.O.A.,

What's up, glad you finally received my letter sooner than later. It always brighten my day up when I receive a letter from you right along with the monthly feedbacks. I just wanted to say I did receive more books to read, which was wonderful.

I saw the recent protest outside of the jail-house. While I was watching in my cell I saw the police start forcing the crowd back and I noticed that some of the protestors got backed up against vehicles and when they could be pushed no farther because of the obstructions they were brutally thrown on the ground and unnecessarily forcefully detained when they were showing compliance.

'They still find a way to take our money'

Hey, —,

I'm glad to hear from someone like you and what you stand for is a real good thing, man. I was sitting in my cell reading the letter you sent me and I seen in one part of the letter you ask me if we could hear or see you all. Yea, we could see y'all outside the jail and on the news, too. I guess whoever has the power over the jail did not like that at all, so they put the whole jail on lockdown meaning that they put us in our cells when we still had time to be out. No showers, no looking at T.V., no phones, and you eat in your cell. The c.o.'s came in and said if we did not lock back they were going to beat and taze us, so we said "Don't shoot, our hands is up" and we all locked back into our cell. For

As far as the cold I asked for a second blanket several times, but I have been ignored and turned down a lot. Meanwhile I was told a second blanket cost \$10, it's so cold we may as well be sleeping outside. SMH.

The food that they feed us is so bad it makes me sick so I don't usually eat more than once a day so I won't starve. How they think soy is an ok substitute for meat and protein and canteen they overcharging us on. 85 cents for 1 Ramen soup, REALLY?

If you're able to send stamps, help me out. I really do enjoy talking with you and keeping you up to date on this hard journey in D.C.J. Hope to hear back from you soon.

— S. Z.

almost two weeks they were putting the jail on lockdown, and no one knows why, as the c.o.'s say. They taking the V.I. (visitation) from us, saying our fam have to go online to see us. But they still find a way to take our money. Man, it's crazy, we need help in here!

Thanks 4 lookin out we need you!!!

— K. C.

*Got a story to share? Write to
Inside-Outside Alliance at
PO Box 1353, Durham, NC 27701.*

Amplify your voice!

What is feedback?

Feedback is a publication of Inside-Outside Alliance (IOA), a group of people trying to support the struggles of those inside (or formerly inside) the Durham jail, and their families and friends. We recognize that any of us can be outside one day, inside the next -- the revolving door of incarceration. We also participate in struggles against police harassment and brutality. IOA maintains a website called Amplify Voices Inside (amplifyvoices.com) that publishes the words of Durham jail inmates and former inmates talking about conditions inside and outside and how they see the world. The name Amplify Voices Inside comes from something a brave and rebellious inmate wrote in the fall of 2012. This publication, Feedback, is a sampling of recent contents of the website. When something amplified is redirected at the source of the sound, the effect is called feedback. That is what this is: the voices that have been amplified to the outside world being re-broadcast inside the walls of the jail. Writer's initials have been changed to protect identities and minimize repressive attacks and harassment.

Write to us or send us art: IOA, PO Box 1353, Durham, NC 27701.

Or, if you are not in jail and are able to, send an email: insideoutsidealliance@gmail.com

*** Se habla español. ***

'The room I'm in is just like a freezer'

To my readers:

I'm writing you from my freezer. That's right! I said, freezer. The room I'm in is just like a freezer. There's no heat in the Durham Co. Jail. They keep you locked down 17 hours a day. In this freezer they call a room, I have to put on everything I own. Just to sleep at night. I'm 51 years old. And they will not give me two blankets just to stay warm. One day, someone will die in one of these rooms. By freezing to death. It's part of the plea system from the courthouse. As well as how they feed you. You know they feed us syrup and dry bread for breakfast. Ev-

ery Monday morning.

We need help in this jail. Or some of us are going to die here. Durham has the highest conviction rate. Because no one wants to die in jail. And it will happen. If no one tries to help us. The ADA, and public defenders office are working together. To keep you here. Look how long you have to wait to get to court. I'm 7 months in myself. I only have one charge. And it's not so bad. The system – send help.

Thanks,
— N.F.

'Just some of the things that go on in this place'

Hello,

I hope that upon receiving this letter you are doing well and your loved ones as well. My name is F. W. I have been in Durham County Jail going on six months now. Since I have been here I have been through a lot as well as having seen a lot. For starters, the food mostly always sucks, we get a very small portion for breakfast at about 6:00 a.m. then we get a close-to-decent meal some of the time for lunch between 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and for supper we get sandwiches on a daily basis at around 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. leaving a (more than) 12 hour gap in between dinner and breakfast so that way we are almost forced to buy food from canteen in which the prices are through the roof. The guards care only about what they want and they are the ones that break most of the rules here. They lock you back for any reason, they are rac-

ist and push you to see if you fall in their trap so they can lock you back. The medical department sucks because for the most part almost no one knows anything that needs to be done and for even the worst of emergencies or sickness you have to put in a sick call to be seen at the time they feel the need to see you and you get charged 10.00 dollars for even the simplest of medical needs when sometimes they don't even do anything for you but man do they make sure to get the 10.00 dollar medical fee. We get locked back for any reason, if it's raining, if there is a protest, if some one else does something wrong the whole pod gets locked back. These are just some of the things that go on in this place. I will stay in touch and thank you for your help and support.

Thank you.

— F. W.



'Everyday our rights are stepped on'

How's it goin? Appreciate you...tryin to make things better out there and in here. I'm good, makin do with my fellas in -. What concerning me tonight especially is how some c.o.s just do shit to stir shit up it seems. They cross the line. To quote Charlie Murphy, "They habitual line steppers!" Things are goin good and they feel the need to say or do something to piss us off. Tonight for example we watchin the news and c.o. cuts it off for lockbacks and we all comply. Then when it comes on about the protests people had downtown we ask to turn it up and she says "people protest this one day, people protest that the next. It don't matter, it ain't gonna change shit." That type of shit crossing the line! Just do your job and turn it up. Don't make yourself feel more important than you are, you're basically a glorified servant. No need to throw gas on the fire. Even while I write this she out there bitching. Again, appreciate what you doin. Keep it up. Got to go before she take my pencil.

Much respect, S.H.

This S. again. The IOA is a great idea and organization! Everyday our rights are stepped on and their ain't no need for all that. Being locked up in jail is our punishment, some being innocent, awaiting trial. They need to treat us with respect and in turn they get it. Some just can't comprehend that and try to throw their weight around. I'm trying to think of something more that I, us, we can do but strugglin with it right now. I'll be in touch and hope to hear from y'all soon.

Much respect, S.H.

'Why do they keep stealing and not giving proper medical treatment?'

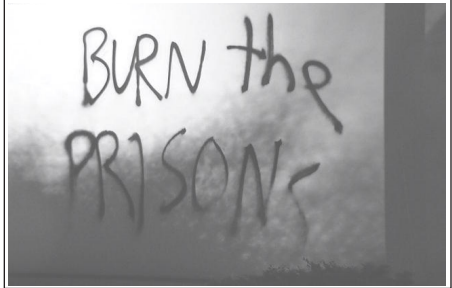
Dear friends,

My name is S.T. # -prisoners, I have a story and can prove it's true. I'd like to talk about how I am being treated by county officials et.al. They claim I rob somebody, I have no idea. I was out of my mind on Jack Black and pills suboxin, a pill that supposed to help heroin addiction. Well let me go on. I was released from NC prisons for parole violation cause I had no address, I am homeless with no where to go. The Durham mission's main street told me I could not stay there no more cause of my disabilities, such as liver cancer, a gap in my back which was injured while in prison...Because the Rescue Mission put me out in the cold with no where to go I ended up depressed and had no place, it was raining hard that day I drank, done hard drugs all day with so-called friend, I went into black out but I did not hurt no one and I did not do all that the cops released to the newspapers. What all they told was a lie, now I'm about to lose my woman of my life cause they put me down so bad....Then when I was in jail they stole my eyeglasses, the cops. \$300 glasses I had I need them so bad to see I was put on bed rest cause high blood pressure and seizures. While I was on bed rest this a-hole wrote me up cause I was so sick I could not get up and get a damn plastic wrist band that I am supposed to wear, medical said they was not supposed to write me up but yet they did not help me with the write up. I was locked back for 20 days. they did not feed me right and I was moved to -, cell — when they passed out supplies for the week I never got any. I had to use writing paper to wipe my a- cause they too lazy

to have brought me my supplies. About a week later I filed a complaint, no one's ever answered it yet. God does not like ugly. When I get out for my hour walk I was to get a call well my female friend had pre-cancer testing, they denied me my call home I was to get on the 1-19-15. Plus you know they stole also money from me in the past for 2 hot plates and 2 pieces of cake off the hot plates canteen. I made bond they refused to give me my money back. I need someone to help me make a complaint the order date and all is on the computer. I mean all this wrong. Please can some one come see me and let me know how yall can be support to back my rights up and help me get my money. Why I won't allowed s paper and why do they keep stealing and not giving us proper medical treatment. Please let me know something ASAP.

—S.T.

The Durham County Detention Facility featured this message on the night of 11/25/14, during a march after the announcement that Ferguson cop Darren Wilson, who killed 18-year-old Michael Brown, would not face charges.



Ripping Our Black Families Apart

Well, I am currently incarcerated for drug charges and weapon charges. Yo, I am writing this letter to let you guys know how I feel. First, I would like to say that this 'stop the police violence' protest is very well needed. I myself have been assaulted by the so-called law enforcers. I mean, this is just scratching the surface.

First, let's talk about this unjust court of law. We are guilty until proven innocent. You are in front of a judge and the DA. One is there to make you look like a monster, the other is there to judge you. How can one talk about you and judge you when they are just as dirty? They hide what they do behind closed doors.

Second thing is corrupt police. To me, they are the biggest gang in the world. Let me take you back to 2004: the murder of Antonio Rochell (Smurf) who was gunned down by a police officer. He was suspended with pay. WTF kind of punishment is that for taking a young black life in Durham, NC? Let's fast forward to 2013 when a hispanic man was murdered in the back of a police car in Durham. Let's talk about multiple reports on Durham police assaulting,

harassing, and beating our young black males or our black males period. Also, putting fake and stacking additional charges on our people. And this is not just us blacks but our hispanics as well.

What do we do as a people? How do we protect ourselves from the police? Who protects us from the police - 'the law'? Last time I checked they uphold the law. It's already crazy in those streets. You have gangbang shootings every night, in turf wars. I mean, I am confused. I feel safer and take my chances with the gangbangers than the police. And that's only the half.

The way I see, we are all out for our self. We as a people, the government, has and have ripped my family and our black families apart and continue ripping our family apart—by letting the police get away with murder, by giving us long lengths of time in prison, and jail cells leave a black woman and baby to raise a black man by herself. I am just saying, we need to fix this. It's been real.

Sincerely, C.B.

Aramark worker threatens inmate in kitchen, gets away with it

Name is D.I. pod —, room — in the Durham Co. Jail. Been in jail since —. I have a problem illegal. I am an inmate, I used to work in the kitchen. It is this man who works in the kitchen, he is Aramark—some company—he work for the jail. My job is to wash pots, pans, cups, everything. So while I was doing that this man came to me and ask me to stop washing pots and come over here to help him fix some food. I told him no, my hands are wet with soap on them. About 5 men they wasn't doing anything, I am the only one in the kitchen working. The Aramark man name is — got in my face called me a mother-fucker dumb-ass black nigga, that's why I am in jail. I told — why you talking to me like that. (He) told me this is my motherfucking kitchen, you do what I tell you to do. I am walking away from — (and he) spit in my face, push me back and told me 'Fuck you and your mother,' then he told the officers at the desk to take me upstairs. In the kitchen I keep my distance from him the next day. I went down to the kitchen, time was 3:00 in the morning. Every day I go to work (and this guy) get in my face always harassing me and told me 'get the fuck out my kitchen black nigga before I kill you.' I wrote the lieutenant letters and the sgt. in jail, I told the officers who work

at the Durham County jail and one sgt. they told me that why didn't I hit the Chef. Sgt. and the officers told me you will just get your ass beat by the officers at the Durham jail, get wrote up, put in the hole locked back. This is illegal to do things like this. The Durham jail wrote the chef up, a write up the sgt., Lt. and other officers covered up. Because I am writing all letters to the Lt. he is mad at his officers because of what happened. I have a lawsuit, I am writing a lot of attorneys and see will they take my case. Officers at the Durham Co. jail have some problems illegal. This needs to stop now, please help me. It was two Aramark workers in the kitchen, of them is — and the other was —. The chef he making food with his hands not washing them at all, he broke the rules at the Durham Co. Jail making food with his hands no washing them. I will go without eating for 4 days in the jail. Willfully he assault me, strike me, hit me, spit in my face. I'll write every day till somebody do something about it. I wrote WTVD TV ABC 411 Liberty ST and 224 S. Dawson Raleigh NC 27601 Legal Aid.

If you have a heart can you please get me an attorney to take my case, this is my last stamp. Don't know what going to happen to me.

'The Government oversteps its bounds with anyone that isn't rich or one of them'

It's been a while since I've written but I have charges in other counties and have been back and forth between them in the last month.

I did, however, get to see the "lay-down" demonstration in front of the jail. I must say that I am impressed. I really didn't think that people would go to those extremes without negotiating their cause. Let me explain: Too many times people will have a demonstration against racism against Blacks only to end up damaging and looting black-owned businesses.

Someone might say, "You're an Irish, blue-eyed white guy! What does it matter to you?" Well, it trips me out when my fellow "white" people tell Blacks, "Why don't you just go back to your own country!" Last time I checked, except for the "Indian"-Americans, we all came from other countries! But I am a firm believer and avid supporter of everything our forefathers stood for. And when they stated that "Every man is created equal," by God—that's exactly what it means! We're all in this together—Black, White, Brown, Yellow, Red—It doesn't matter, the government oversteps its bounds with anyone that isn't rich or one of them.

When I see someone being mistreated whether they are Black or not, I know that they will do the same to me. How do I know? Re-

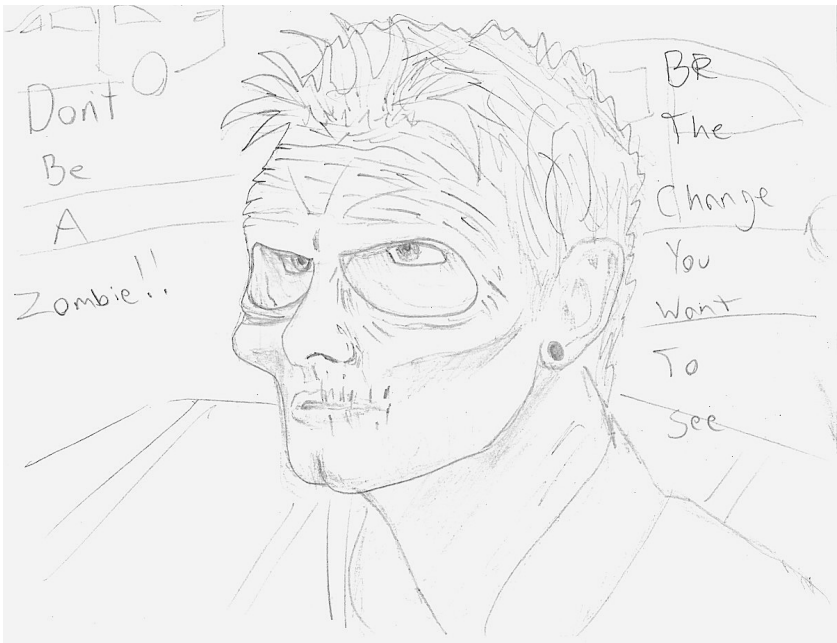
member if you will I am currently in U.S. district court suing Durham Police for assault, but unlike these highly televised other cases, I don't have Rev. Al Sharpton helping me, it's just me, myself, and a West Law book.

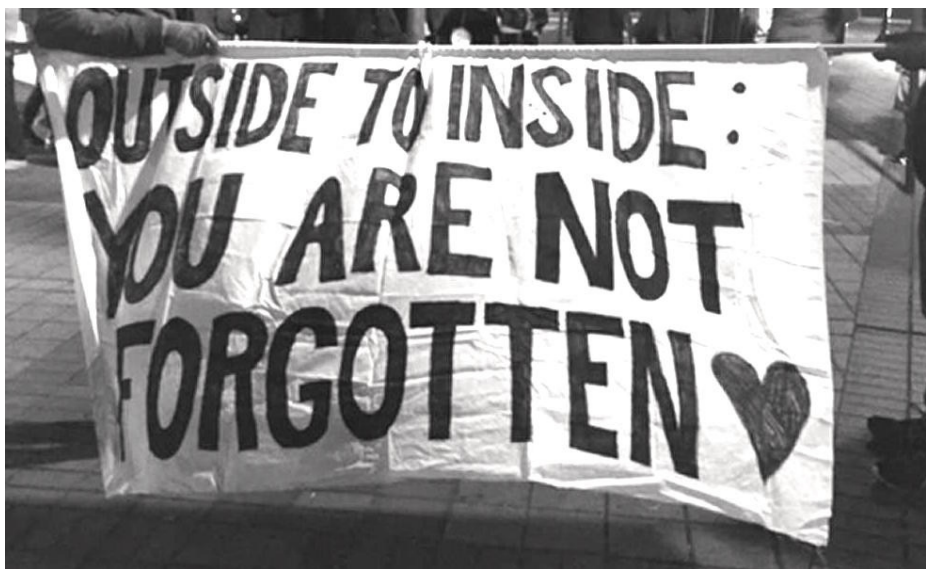
So when an assault or injustice occurs against an African-American, and concerned citizens of all races come together and stand against it, and looting and vandalism happens in the process against the Average Joe—not only is the cause negated, not only are the supporters labeled as vandals, but the police come out as justified.

Anyway, an officer told me that about 4 people got arrested, mostly white women from Duke (Go Duke! and that most everyone received a \$2,000 bond, but all were bonded out. If this is true, then this impresses me even more. A great way to show the government what "no one gets left behind" truly means. But next time, while people are lying in the street and have the pigs' attention—send a team through the court house, down the tunnel and take over the jail. LOL! I kid, I kid!... Or do I?

May God strengthen your reserve and numbers.

Your brother,
Irish





One of the banners carried at the New Year's Eve noise demonstration in solidarity with everyone caged in Durham jail and all prisoners.

“I could go on for days about living conditions...”

What's up,

Thanks for taking the time out to write me. First let me start by telling you a bit about me. My name is S. A., born on Black Thursday, the second stock market crash. I'm from NJ but I've lived in Durham since around Sept. 2000. I graduated around March 2008 from an academy. ..In April 2008 I enlisted in the US Army with a 20 thousand dollar bonus for 3 yrs 16 weeks as an infantry man. I was stationed in AK. I've been through one year of combat during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. I'm very much interested in learning and I love to read. I'm mostly a sci/fi/fantasy type. My whole purpose in joining the army was to earn money to go to college to be an automotive engineer.

I very much appreciate you writing even though you're a stranger you seem more familiar, because when you're in a place like this a lot of things are welcome. I can easily say this is the worst period in my life. I'm trapped in a system where the purpose is to destroy me. I could go on for days about living conditions, for example toilet paper. Cleaning materials. Food! I sleep in one of the coldest cells in the pod—my bad, refrigerator! For people who are innocent until proven guilty how is it that conditions here are worse than some prisons? Why

are there so many teenagers in this pod? Why are 98% of them Black? I'm pretty sure that I fractured my ankle or tore a ligament or tendon about 9 months ago. How is it that I never received an X-ray or MRI? And when I wrote medical to explain my problem the nurse was instantly cross. And eventually came back and apologized after she saw that she was wrong. So this is the question: After acknowledging that I never received proper medical attention and telling me that I would be seen, have I ever received the mandatory medical attention? I hate to say that the answer is no. Why is it that Durham has such a high conviction percentage? Why is it that jails that are populated with more whites staff and inmates tend to have better overall conditions? Why does the Durham County Jail not allow the inmates time to read and study NC State Law? Wouldn't not allowing proper representation conflict with us citizens' constitutional rights? Has torture ever been legal for Americans whether it be charged or found guilty? Torture is a bit of a harsh word, but I think it can be applied considering the circumstances. Well, I'm sorry to go on...

Thanks for writing. I hope this will be beneficial.

— S.A.

'The D.A. holds you here as long as she feels like it...'

I hope that this letter finds you doing well and in good health. My name is H. D. I am a Mexican-American of — years of age, — when you receive this letter because I will be having my — birthday on Tuesday February 10th. I do speak both Spanish and English. Fluently as well as write it. I have been incarcerated since April and have not been to court once only when my attorney resigned back in November because she did not want to do for me things that she very well could have done. I was assigned a new attorney on November 7 which came to see me briefly only to tell me that he would not come back to see me until he had been offered a plea-bargain even though they have no evidence against me. I received my motion of discovery three months into my incarceration but my attorney at the time did not go over it with me, just like my new attorney, all they pretty much do is whatever the D.A. assigned to my case tells them to do. My previous attorney told me that I would not be taken to court unless they had evidence

against me. It is now going on 10 months and I still have not been to court, nor do they want to dismiss my case. The D.A. for some reason is being allowed to hold you here as long as she feels like it in order for you to get sick of being here though all of this bad food, treatment and lock back so that you will finally just say the heck with everything and sign a guilty plea in order for them to let you go that way she can keep getting federal funds for holding you here as well as a way to justify the time you were here. I would really appreciate your help in getting the address to the attorney general's office in Raleigh as well as the address to the centro latino here in durham. I on the other hand will try to get others in here to write you guys. It may sometimes take a while to respond because money is tight in order to buy stamps but I will do my best to stay in touch always.

Thank you.
H.D.

'If I was out I would join you in the streets...'

It was good to hear from you again and thanks... And far as the marches against the police I am for that but it seems like everytime something like that goes on they lock us back and we don't get to come out, but I am A-ok with that because it is for a good thing and if I was out I would join you in the streets and in the struggle but for now all I can do is write. So I will write back if something goes wrong in here and I will keep letting people know about Inside-Outside Alliance...

— D. F.

