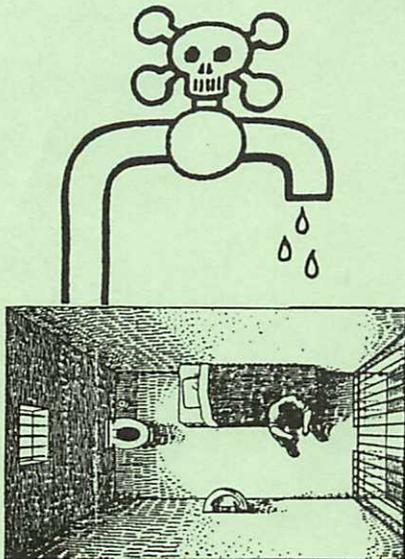


NO MORE POISON WATER AT MARION PRISON!

DEMONSTRATE



The purpose of the Marion Control Unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in the society at large.

- Ralph Arons, former Marion warden

Rally and
Informational
Picket

FRIDAY
MAY 4

11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

Congressman Kastenmeier's Office, 121 S. Pinckney St.
(King St. corner of Capitol Square)

STOP THE BRUTALITY AT MARION PRISON!
NO MORE CONTAMINATED WATER!
END THE LOCKDOWN!
Join us on your lunch hour!

A TOXIC WATER DIET!

Prisoners at Marion Federal Penitentiary get their entire water supply from a toxic waste dump site. This is but another of the atrocious conditions to which the prisoners are subjected.

Marion Prison, located in Southern Illinois, was opened in 1963 to replace Alcatraz, which was closed that same year. Marion is the highest maximum security prison in the country, the only one with a "level 6" security rating. Marion also is the only prison that has ever been condemned by **Amnesty International** for "violating the UN Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners." Despite this international condemnation, Marion has become the experimental laboratory and trendsetter for the entire federal prison system.

Toxic Drinking Water

Crab Orchard Lake, the reservoir from which the prison gets all its water, contains a significant amount of PCB, lead, and arsenic contamination. In addition, the EPA has placed the entire refuge containing Crab Orchard Lake on its Superfund Priority Clean-Up List. But still the prisoners are forced to shower, drink and eat food prepared with this water. And they are becoming sick because of this water. They have a high incidence of rashes, dizziness and other problems consistent with symptoms of PCB exposure.

Local outcry over the toxic pollution was so intense that the city of Marion stopped using water from Crab Orchard Lake in 1982. The prisoners have filed a class action suit to enjoin the use of the water but the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has refused to have the water tested by an independent expert. Switching water sources would cost the equivalent of keeping three prisoners at Marion for a year. This measure clearly won't be taken by the BOP, however, except as a response to perceived public pressure.

The Lockdown Environment

Since 1983, Marion Prison has been in a state of permanent "lockdown." Prisoners are locked in their cells for 22.5 hours a day, and all normal vocational, educational and recreational activities are virtually nonexistent. The cells are 8' x 10' and contain a tv, bed, toilet and sink. Prisoners are forced to sleep, eat and defecate in their cells. They are also forbidden to socialize with each other or to participate in group religious services. Those who throw food or otherwise misbehave in their cells (an arbitrary determination made by the guard on duty) are tied spread-eagled and naked, on their concrete slab beds. A typical lockdown may last several days to a week. However, at Marion the lockdown has been made permanent, and the entire prison has been transformed into a "Control Unit." The objective is to maintain absolute physical and psychological control over the prisoners.

Despite BOP claims, the purpose of Marion is not to contain violent prisoners; it is to control dissidents. Many are sent to Marion because they have written "too many" law suits, participated in work stoppages, or pursued their religious beliefs. Notably, many at Marion are political prisoners. In fact, even though Marion is one of the smallest prisons, it holds more political prisoners than any other prison in the U.S.! Among them are leaders of national liberation struggles like POWs Oscar López Rivera and Sekou Odinga.

Marion is an outrage. It should offend the sensibilities of those whose minds have not been poisoned with the foolish propaganda about "the war on drugs" which claims that prisons are the answer to society's ills. It is clear that the BOP wants Marion as its terror mechanism. People of good will, people who want a society based on true human values, must assure that the government cannot maintain this brutal institution.

Join Us!

