

Message to Critical Resistance

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What does this conference mean to us inside – the political prisoners and Prisoners of War? Simply spoken, your activism and commitment give us hope. Over 1000 people coming together marks a real advance in the development of the prison movement: a chance to consolidate and unify, build ways to communicate between different communities, to strategize and act together to win desperately-needed changes for all prisoners. It's appropriate and significant that your discussions come in the midst of action: last weekend's massive student walkout demanded "money for Schools, not Jails" and October's state-wide caravan will demand prison medical care and an end to police murder and brutality against California's prisoners.

Our own dedication to the struggle to win change continues in you. While you participate in these workshops, remember that the political prisoners and POWs should be sitting next to you – and we would be, if only we were free. In fact, many of our comrades – former POWs and political prisoners, stand in your midst today. Like you, most of us were and are prison activists: volunteer teachers, active with prison religious communities, leaders of prison strikes and walkouts, jailhouse lawyers, founders of AIDS education groups and other programs that benefit our fellow prisoners.

The US government has tried to disappear us, denying that we are in prison because of our political beliefs and motivations. When you embrace us as an integral part of building critical resistance, you give us strength, and you expose one more of this government's lies. Most of us have been in prison well over a decade now – many of us, locked away from our families and our communities for 20 or even 30 years. We are in prison precisely because we acted to make REAL our collective vision of a better society – to win liberation for Puerto Rico and other colonized nations, to fight white supremacy and stop US imperialism's dominion over the world, to end militarism and nuclear catastrophe.

We respect and welcome this conference because you are showing your determination to resist this government's program of repression and imprisonment. We urge you to act also as part of the campaigns to free the POWs and political prisoners, so we can once again join our efforts with yours in building resistance. The determination and knowledge you take with you from this conference will multiply *only* if you take action, to make justice a reality now.

Free All Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners! Abolish the Death Penalty and Stop the Execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal! Shut the Prisons Down!

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