



**Unknown numbers
of migrants are being
detained indefinitely
and invisibly in central
Louisiana.**

What does migrant detention look like in Louisiana?

There are two “official” ICE detention centers in Louisiana—Pine Prairie and LaSalle Processing Facilities, in Pine Prairie and Jena, LA, respectively. However, detainee advocates have recently been alerted that there is more to the picture...

River Correctional Facility, a parish prison in Ferriday, LA, has been locking up migrants since at least January of this year. The number is currently around 900, in a facility with only 600 beds. In April, **two additional sites** were located—Jackson Correctional in Jonesboro, and Richland Correctional in Monroe. All three are owned and operated by **LaSalle Correctional Corporation**, a for-profit entity. The migrants’ changed locations have not been updated in the ICE A-number system*; they are essentially unsearchable and unfindable.

Since detainees of this system are (usually) not US citizens, they are denied the meager rights afforded to citizen prisoners, such as the right to free counsel. There are no free lawyers for non-citizens who can't afford one, so their only guides through the system are family members, sponsors, or advocates on the outside--If they exist. But when those on the outside can't even locate those on the inside, what can be done?

Conditions in "normal" ICE detention centers are already bad enough:

- Guards don't speak Spanish, so most detainees can't navigate the system
- The bureaucracy frequently "loses" detainees' legal paperwork needed for their cases
- Detainees are often without consistent access to water, food, or blankets
- Access to medical or psychological care is usually denied
- Trans people are forced into holding with those of the sex they were assigned at birth
- Sexual assaults are rampant

But inside River Correctional, the atrocities expand:

- Asylum seekers who would normally be granted conditional release are categorically denied bail by a racist parish judge unfamiliar with the immigration legal system
- Detainees get little or no access to the outdoors
- Shower water is made so hot you can't touch it to your skin
- Food is served in inadequate amounts and so extremely peppered it is almost inedible
- Communication with the outside world is almost nonexistent
- Suicide attempts occur regularly, and are widely ignored
- Detainees who organize against these horrific conditions are punished brutally, predominantly through indefinite solitary confinement

*When a non-citizen enters the US and applies for asylum or residency they are given an "Alien Number". When someone enters into the immigration detention system, the only practicable way to locate that person is with this A-number.

Hunger Strike!

A hunger strike began inside River Correctional Facility on March 22nd, 2019, with 150 people participating. The demands of the hunger strike included:

- 1.** That detainees of this facility get a chance to get out on parole or bail.
- 2.** That they be given appearances before a different judge than the racist **Judge Landis** of Concordia parish, who has been consistently denying release of all kinds to all migrants.
- 3.** For an immediate end to the psychological torture and human rights abuses inflicted on the migrant population of this prison by correctional officers and ICE agents.

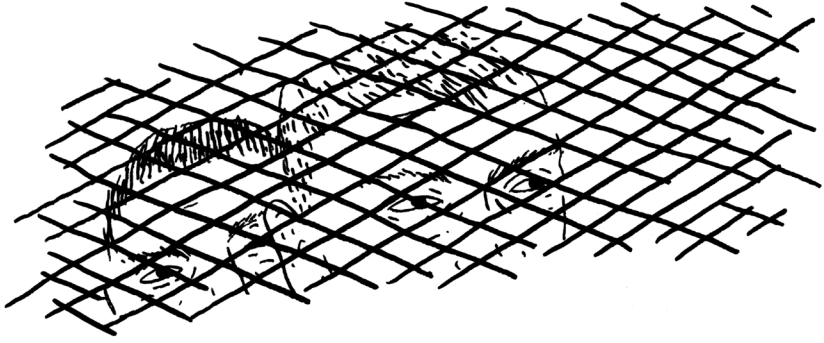
There have been at least 6 hunger strikes in US detention centers in the first 3 months of 2019 alone. While the strike at River Correctional has since ended, organizers remain in solitary confinement as the detainees' struggle for visibility, justice, dignity, and freedom continues.

Why is there so much migration from Central America and Mexico?

Let's be clear that US policy is at the heart of this. Mass migration from Mexico and Central America to the States didn't start or drastically increase out of the blue. We can place the blame generally on the past 500 years of capitalist and colonial exploitation, but we can also look at specific ways these countries have been destabilized more recently, largely by the US government:

- NAFTA, signed in 1994, ravaged the Mexican agricultural sector, leaving many farmers with little or no economic opportunities but to migrate north.
- The Drug War--led by the US--has made international drug trade far more violent and kept prices artificially high, incentivizing cartels.
- The US government backed a 2009 coup in Honduras that ousted then-president Manuel Zelaya, destabilizing the already rickety country.
- The US facilitated the Salvadoran Civil War and death squads in the 80s by sending over \$600 million in military aid. Young, excluded Salvadorans who fled to Los Angeles ganged up to protect each other. When this morphed into MS-13, many were deported back to El Salvador, spreading the gang, and now a new generation of Salvadorans is fleeing their violence.
- The US backed the genocide of indigenous Guatemalans in the 1980s through military aid, intelligence, and training

The US has intervened in almost every single country in Latin America since 1950--by backing coups, sending military aid to right-wing governments and paramilitaries, and training death squads... not to mention all the economic restructuring forced through with the help of international trade organizations.



What are black sites?

When Latin American migrants call these secret detention centers “black sites,” this is because they are reminded of the black sites set up by the authoritarian regimes of their home countries, often with the support and participation of the CIA. They are reminded of the hidden sites where prisoners and dissenters are held indefinitely, tortured, and disappeared.

The “black sites” in Louisiana are detention facilities whose legal status is not clearly defined, operating outside of the law, where detainees cannot be located on publicly accessible registries, in which detainees have no rights other than those given to them by their captors.

And Louisiana isn't the only place we're seeing things like this.

From secret military bases holding migrants in Texas, to “temporary emergency” tent camps set up along the border, less visible and less regulated immigrant detention facilities are popping up all over the

country. Similar sites have been exposed and successfully shut down through protest in New Jersey and California. We need to remain vigilant against this frightening trend and fight it tooth and nail.

But how?

There are many ways, from visitation in solidarity, to protest, to organizing against ICE raids, to blocking the logistical flows that enable the incarceration system, to organizing a new underground railroad, to doing away with the whole system of capitalist plunder and state

control once and for all. The anti-migrant machine is made up of many interlocking pieces, and if any of these pieces ceased to work as they're supposed to, **the whole machine would start to fail.**

We're in a strategically important moment; with the detention system overstretched almost to the point of bursting, small waves can have far-reaching effects.

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Those who find ourselves reading this pamphlet come from many walks of life. Maybe you're an immigrant yourself, or have family or close friends who are. Maybe you know people who are caught in the criminal incarceration system that is so fundamentally linked to racism and migrant detention. Maybe you don't, but you are a New Orleanian concerned about the uncertain future we are all facing because of climate change: let's not delude ourselves, there is a good chance that many of us could be refugees of a natural disaster in the near future. Here in New Orleans, many of us have already faced that grim reality. How would we want others to receive us should we find ourselves in dire straits? **With solidarity, or with shackles and cages?**

This is not just an issue of selflessly helping others. It's just as much about seeing our own reasons to confront this system, because it attacks all of us, and **we must confront it together.**

