

# MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

A Production of Des Moines Mutual Aid

August 2024

## The Industrial Pimp

*Prison labor is nothing more than legalized human trafficking*

Comrade Kels

In Iowa and around the world today, individuals who willingly participate in human trafficking are considered to be the scum of the earth. Often called “pimps,” they traffic other human beings for their own personal benefit, sucking the life and dignity from unwilling participants while paying them slave wages. Dignity and wages are taken without remorse or care for the well-being of the humans they exploit.

Human trafficking is illegal in Iowa, yet some of the biggest “pimps” are thriving in Iowa prisons. Iowa Prison Industries, *a.k.a.* “Iowa Pimping Industries,” is a private company which has been exploiting incarcerated workers since 1977. IPI is the main method by which private employers exploit prison labor in Iowa. It is fully backed by the “bottom bitch,” “Code of Iowa 904.809,” which empowers them to take over fifty cents of every dollar earned from prison workers. All this after workers are paid, in some cases, less than \$1 per hour to begin with! The higher wages sometimes touted by IPI’s PR team are negated by a litany of bogus deductions. The stolen wages are then used to line the pockets of IPI staff and cover legal fees without the worker’s consent.

But like all pimps, the abuse doesn’t stop there. The worthless scumbag needs more. The “pimp” isn’t satisfied until it has broken you, and that is what Iowa Prison Industries does to its workers. Its enforcers (production coordinators and techs) will take your dignity and dreams, and replace them with despair, hopelessness and self-doubt. Any complaint or grievance filed will be met with retaliation and banishment. The human trafficking “pimp” is alive and well in Iowa, and it must be stopped!



## How To Ask The Big Questions

*Truly radical analysis of our situation broadens the revolutionary horizon*

Comrade Jenots

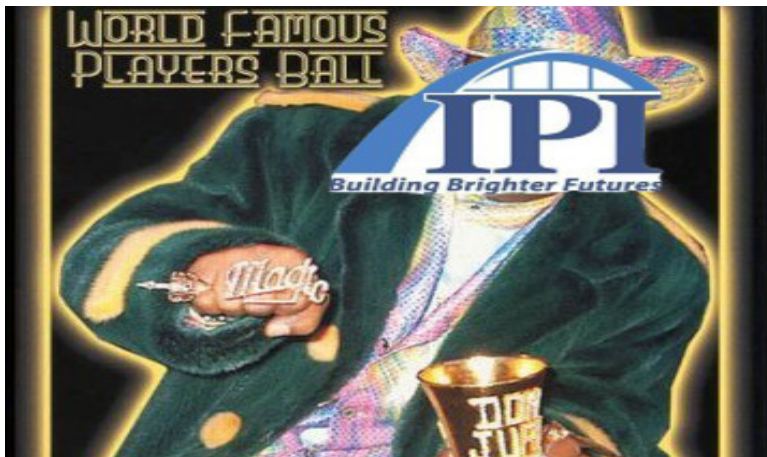
In science, good questions are in some ways as valuable as good answers, in that it’s a lot of work to find the right questions in the first place, and in the process of looking for answers we tend to reformulate the questions themselves. In science, we often get to control the context: we can conduct experiments on our own terms. This is not possible for questions as big as “what’s the future of humankind?”. Revolutionary failures do serve as “crucial experiments,” but they are costly (e.g. Russia in 1905).

It’s even harder when two or more questions run on parallel tracks. A classic example for us might be - “what is communism?” and “how do we get it?”.

If communism were just the production of commodities under the control of some group (or class, or bureaucratic clique) other than individual capitals in a free market, we might have historical examples we otherwise couldn’t use: the USSR, China, etc. This makes one problem hard (how to eliminate the commodity form) in order to make another marginally “easier” (how to get there).

None of this is really so simple, and it isn’t an attempt to insult anyone’s ideas about what a good world is like. It’s just so-called “dialectics”:

1. Questions are coupled to each other in this kind of way and good science means paying close attention to that fact. Answering one question changes the other answers and questions.
2. If the “net difficulty” of the questions all taken together becomes too easy, we should be suspicious of that. This suspicion is just called scientific - and revolutionary - honesty.



# Healthcare Under Capitalism

*Death to those who exploit the vulnerable.*

Comrade Jordan

'Healthcare' and 'Insurance' companies are life sucking, pain profiteers that should be destroyed. Death to all that profit from the suffering of others!

Capital's ravenous, infinite appetite for profit takes on a particularly malicious character when it dresses itself as a provider of critical human services. The result is like a swarming mass of lampreys stuffed into scrubs. The abomination may appear to be a source of expertise, care, even comfort. Sharp teeth latch into every inch of flesh, and the mass fattens and reproduces from your rapidly depleting body.

Companies exist to only make profit, and all the private entities involved with the farce we call healthcare are no different. Their proximity and power to make decisions over vulnerable people, life and death, and new technologies does not change this in the slightest. Shareholders and their representatives set the incentives for company leadership to drive profits only.

Any regard for health and morality by these demons is incidental and only in the service of amassing profit. These investors and company leaders can and do allow millions to suffer excessively to increase profits and their own personal fortunes.

These are monsters, and they should be exterminated from our world.



This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, the political and social outlook which binds us together.

**o. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities.** We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

**1. We believe in community autonomy.** We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people's needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

**2. We are police and prison abolitionists.** Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don't rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

**3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities.** Part of political education is connecting people's lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

**4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices.** We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a volunteer know. For more information, including how to donate, visit <https://iowamutualaid.org/>.