

Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression: Statement on the Milwaukee County Jail conditions

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[MILWAUKEE, WI] – Yesterday, the Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression was made aware about charges against 27 individuals housed inside the Milwaukee County Jail. These charges pertain to an incident of civil disobedience that occurred on August 12th. During this incident, the 27 inmates occupied the library inside the County Jail. As with other incidents inside the County Jail, the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) has not been transparent with the public.

The conditions inside the Milwaukee County Jail and the MCSO are fully responsible for both the incident on August 12th and the 6 in-custody deaths that have occurred in the last 14 months. When the people who are supposed to be in the care of the MCSO witness several deaths, are restrained to 23-hour lockdowns, are forced to pay high rates for phone and video calls, are crammed into small quarters amidst COVID outbreaks, and are denied visitations, they will resort to these kinds of actions.

We already know the MCSO and Sheriff Denita Ball will use this incident as an opportunity to seek greater funding for their already bloated budget. The disastrous conditions inside the County Jail are not the result of staffing issues or a budgetary shortage. These conditions are due to years of neglect, mismanagement, and ineptitude from the MCSO and the various sheriffs who have refused to hold themselves accountable.

Instead of Sheriff Ball's pleas for more funding, the people of Milwaukee County

deserve greater transparency and accountability. Since the MCSO has proven that they cannot hold themselves accountable, we must search for alternative methods of governance that could ensure transparency and accountability. The Milwaukee Alliance demands the creation of a Civilian Accountability Council with the power to hold the MCSO accountable, manage the MCSO budget, review policies and procedures, and enact reforms that will improve the conditions of the Milwaukee County Jail.

Without proper accountability, there will be more incidents and deaths inside the County Jail. The deplorable conditions in the County Jail must end, and they must end now!

The Milwaukee Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (MAARPR) campaigns against police crimes committed primarily against the poor and Black, Indigenous, and people of color. We demand the creation of a civilian police accountability council, or CPAC, to ensure that our community is in direct control of our police force.