



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for September 25<sup>th</sup>

### **12 Sept – Update on Grand Jury Resisters**

*On September 13<sup>th</sup>, Matt Duran was arrested for refusing to testify before a grand jury. We're sending him a card tonight and are including his address below. We're also including a statement he wrote as well as other statements of support and updates surrounding these comrades.*

#### **MORE:**

**Matthew Duran #42565-086**

**FDC SeaTac**

**Post Office Box 13900**

**Seattle, Washington 98198**

#### **Statement in opposition to state, grand juries, and in support of its resisters by Matt Duran**

*September 12<sup>th</sup>*

Friends and comrades,

My name is Matt Duran and I will do everything I can to resist this Grand Jury. I'm releasing this as it's come to my attention that the strategy my lawyer and I have been working under will more than likely not work; the prosecution wants to grant me immunity before I even have a chance to testify. I want to make it clear that I am in no way ever cooperating with the state now or ever. Anyone who knows me well enough to be a close friend knows that I will fight with my political allies and for them with every fiber of my being. If I ever did cooperate, it would bring an immeasurable amount of shame upon myself, my community, and my family as they have risked more in resistance than I have in my life so far.

This is not the first time that the State has attempted to kidnap me, extort money from me, and take me away from my family, loved ones, and comrades. The last time, the State even went so far as to create lies in order to put me away. Bearing this in mind as well as the institutional racism I face every day, I have long ago accepted that I am going to go to prison at some point in my lifetime. This compounded with the fact that I have such an amazing amount of support, to the degree that I don't even know what to do with it, allows me to know that I am going to make it no matter what is thrown at me.

People should know that this is more than likely not the end of this, the State will continue this Grand Jury well after my comrades and I locked up. Whatever happens, I want you to know that you are not alone and are more than capable of handling whatever is thrown at you. They would not be doing this if we were not successful in any respect; if we kept to our ivory towers debating what is more revolutionary and not actively creating conflict, we would not be facing this repression. Do not stop the struggle, keep organizing and fighting or they will have won. When the Haymarket massacre took place all those years ago and the martyrs were hung for their desire for a better life, the State attempted to crush all radicals. Clearly, this did not work then and it won't work now. If this was their desire, they have failed in every aspect of it as I have not seen anything other than flagrant disregard for them across the globe. Keep the struggle in your hearts and minds and do not bend to their will. They will never be able to destroy us no matter how hard they try.

#### **Leah-Lynn Plante's Statement**

*September 13<sup>th</sup>*

My name is Leah-Lynn Plante, and I am one of the people who has been subpoenaed to a secret grand jury, meeting in Seattle on September 13th, 2012.

This will be the second time I have appeared before the grand jury, and the second time I have refused to testify. The first time was on August 2nd. I appeared as ordered and identified myself. I was asked if I would be willing to answer any questions. I said, "No," and was dismissed after being served a second subpoena.

Over a month later, my answer is still the same. No, I will not answer their questions. I believe that these hearings are politically motivated. The government wants to use them to collect information that it can use in a campaign of repression. I refuse to have any part of it, I will never answer their questions, I will never speak.

It is likely that the government will put me in jail for that refusal.

While I hate the very idea of prison, I am ready to face it in order to stay true to my personal beliefs. I know that they want to kidnap me and isolate me from my friends and my loved ones in an effort to coerce me to speak. It will not work. I know that if I am taken away, I will not be alone. We have friends and comrades all around the world standing behind us, and even though this has been one of the most traumatizing experiences of my life, I have never felt so supported or loved. I can only speak for myself, but I have every faith that the others subpoenaed to these hearings will likewise refuse. And I know that hundreds of people have called the US Attorney demanding that they end this tribunal. Hundreds of organizations, representing thousands of people, signed onto a statement expressing solidarity with those of us under attack and demanding an end to this sort of repression.

I know that those people will continue to support me, the others subpoenaed, and the targets of the investigation. That spirit of solidarity is exactly what the state fears. It is the source of our strength, yours and mine. And that strength shows itself in every act of resistance.

#### **Updates as of 4:40pm, September 13<sup>th</sup>**

Around 3:00 PM today, Matt was taken to a contempt of court hearing. The judge decided to make the hearing private instead of public. It is our understanding that this action is unprecedented since the McCarthy Era of political witch hunts. The entire 2nd floor of the Federal Court House in Seattle where the grand jury itself was taking place was closed off to the public as well as the 13th floor where the contempt hearings were taking place.

As of this writing, Leah has not been taken to her contempt hearing yet.

As of 4:00 PM, Matt is now in federal custody. He has another hearing scheduled on Wednesday, September 26th. We do not know where he is being taken yet, but supporters are still at the court house to support him. Matt is being held in the Secure Housing Unit (isolation) at SeaTac. His lawyer guesses this is because he's never been to prison before. He says he's doing fine; reading trashy romance novels because that's all he has access to. He may be moved to general population soon, where he'll be able to play chess and have greater access to a phone.

As of 4:30 PM, Leah was released and re-subpoenaed. Her next date is Wednesday October 10th with a court hearing set for 9:00 am and appearance before the grand jury at 1:00 pm.

We are asking for supporters to call Judge Richard Jones in his chambers at **206.370.8870** and demand that Matt not be charged with contempt and be released.

#### **Courageous Stands by Trevor Griffey**

Matthew Duran and Leah-Lynne Plant deserve your support for taking courageous stands against a political fishing expedition. We need to express our solidarity with their principled refusal to cooperate with an open-ended Grand Jury investigation into their personal friendships, political networks, and belief systems. By supporting them, we are also resisting the use of the War on Terror to repress social movements that use direct action and civil disobedience to achieve social change.

#### **12 Sept – Cleveland 4 Updates and article**

*The Cleveland 4 are still in dire need of funds for their legal defense. We've included how to help below. We're also including a so-called alternative media story about them. Nowhere does it mention the fact that Tony*

*Hayne's plea includes turning informant and agreeing to testify against his co-defendants and how that likely lead the others to take plea deals (though theirs are non-cooperating).*

**MORE:**

We are still raising legal funds for the Cleveland four! Their pre-sentencing hearings are scheduled for November 5th and 6th. During these hearings the four will be presenting evidence for entrapment and arguing against the Terrorism Enhancement Charge. Every penny that is raised from now until November will go towards preparing for these hearings. The money we are raising is not going towards a greedy lawyer's salary. Arguing a case of this magnitude requires hiring specialists and investigators who do not do pro-bono work. There are also fees associated and equipment costs. Originally (when we were going to trial) we were trying to raise \$50,000, now we are trying to raise \$10,000 in the next 6 days. We have already raised \$2,000 please help us reach our goal by spreading the word to your friends and family!

<http://www.indiegogo.com/cleveland4justice>

**A Bridge Too Far**

Were the five men arrested for trying to blow up a bridge in the Cuyahoga Valley a Cleveland-grown terrorist group, dimwit outsiders lured by an FBI informant or both?

Rain soaked the clothes of the six figures walking through the pitch-black Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Across the river from the scenic railroad's Brecksville station, where the Towpath Trail forks around a last remnant of the Ohio & Erie Canal, two of the men stopped to act as lookouts. The other four approached one of the giant concrete pillars holding up the 145-foot-tall Route 82 bridge. Its seven arches curved above them, holding up a roadway a fifth of a mile long.

A night vision camera stood guard, waiting.

The camera's live feed kept pausing, interrupted by the storm. But the agents watching a video screen at the FBI's Cleveland headquarters, 14 miles away, could see the dim profiles of three men. One, in a light-colored shirt and dark pants, set a small black toolbox next to the pillar. He reached into the box, and a bright light flicked on.

The other two men were puzzling over a second box. One stood over it, while the other, kneeling, fiddled with what was inside.

A fourth figure, much larger than the rest, stepped into the camera's view. "How much longer?" he asked.

"One is good to go — we just got to do this one," 20-year-old Connor Stevens replied, not knowing the big guy was wired for sound.

**A little after** 9:30 that night, April 30, the six men — five anarchists and a guy one of them had met at a protest rally — rolled up to the Applebee's in Garfield Heights, ready to drink some beer, get a quick bite to eat and remotely detonate two bombs.

The Garfield Heights Applebee's may have the best view of any Applebee's anywhere. It stands on a bluff, overlooking the Cuyahoga River valley. The parking lot gazes down at the bright lights of the massive Cinemark at Valley View movie theater. On clear nights, downtown's Cleveland skyline sparkles on the horizon. I-480, alive with headlights, flows directly past the restaurant and across the Valley View Bridge. The building lies at the end of Vista Way, a dead-end street off another dead-end street, in a half-empty shopping center near another, larger, emptier shopping center. It's a perfect spot for an ambush.

The skinny guys told the waiter they were a band playing clubs around Lakewood. The 290-pound, 39-year-old guy sitting with them must not have looked as punk rock as the rest, because they passed him off as their security guard. Two of the guys weren't old enough to drink, so the big guy ordered one of them a Yuengling tallboy. It was a good cover story.

Surrounded by the restaurant's corporate version of neighborhood-hangout memorabilia — a framed jersey for the hometown Garfield Heights Bulldogs; Cleveland State Vikings and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* T-shirts; a Cleveland Metroparks poster — Doug Wright, 26, and Joshua Stafford, 23, took out cellphones and started dialing.

In the toolboxes they'd left at the Route 82 bridge were phones that they believed were connected to blocks of C-4, a high-impact, military-grade plastic explosive.

Instead, they got voicemail.

They tried again, calling and texting. They even called the guy who had sold them the fake bombs, asked him to confirm the codes, and tried sending them again. Nothing worked. No off-in-the-distance rumble. No sirens. Nothing.

Stevens laughed. "What kind of group did I get involved in?" he asked.

**It's a good question.** Who were these guys?

Were the five men arrested near the Applebee's that night a Cleveland-grown domestic terrorist group, willing to risk killing innocent people for a nearly incoherent political motive? Or are they just a bunch of dimwit loners, angry at The Man and lured by an FBI informant and con man into acting out their revolutionary fantasies?

Or both?

The young, semi-homeless radicals, who came together during the Occupy movement, spent months trying to decide how to "send a message" to big business and the U.S. government. "[We] just wanted to stop the flow of money to some of these large corporations, slow it down a little bit," Brandon Baxter, 20, told an FBI agent after his arrest.

In the end, Baxter and his buddies decided the best possible way to do that was to shatter a pillar of a bridge crossed by 13,000 drivers a day.

For that, they're heading to federal prison. Stevens, Baxter, Wright and Anthony Hayne have all pleaded guilty to weapons of mass destruction charges. (Stafford is being examined to see if he's mentally competent to stand trial.)

The audacity of their plot may make them the most significant left-wing domestic terrorists caught in the United States in years — only one of the many reasons their arrest became national news.

The FBI's investigation began at an Occupy Cleveland rally in Public Square, spurring Tea Party groups to seize the case, trying to link the Occupy movement to terrorism. Some on the left, meanwhile, say the case reminds them of the FBI's abuses of power under J. Edgar Hoover, when agents infiltrated political organizations and tried to undermine and discredit activists from Martin Luther King Jr. to John Lennon.

The story of the bridge-bomb plotters is also a case study in how the FBI runs counter-terrorism stings — and new fuel for a growing controversy about them. Critics argue that since 9/11, overzealous FBI agents and informants have at times overreacted to minor threats and ensnared hapless losers in their stings by encouraging, escalating or even creating the very plots they bust.

Until the five men met the FBI informant — the sixth man at the bridge that night — they appear to have had little means to carry out any of the attacks they dreamed up. They lacked explosives, cars and, arguably, brains.

"They couldn't blow their noses, let alone blow up a bridge," John Pyle, Baxter's attorney, argued in May, "were it not for what this provocateur did."

The informant, a longtime crook with 13 felony convictions, talked two of the defendants into buying the fake C-4, drove them around, nudged the plan along, hired three of them and — according to several sources close to the men — gave some of them illegal drugs. Meanwhile, he continued to commit crimes of his own.

The Cleveland bridge-bomb plot brings up thorny questions about counter-terrorism strategy, questions the public rarely gets to examine: When should the FBI set a trap for a would-be bomber? Who can be trusted to set the trap? And what should happen when a target says he wants to back out?

**Connor Stevens grew** up in Oberlin as a sensitive kid who liked playing in gardens, digging up dirt and exploring the woods. He loved the wild, organic abundance of nature, but not the darker realities of the struggle for survival. Once, he found a snake, and his aunt tried to kill it with a BB gun. She shot it, but it didn't die. A year or two later, when he was 7 or 8, his family's cat brought a bird back to their house, wounded but still alive. He broke into tears.

Early in life, he developed a sense that the Earth had been damaged before he arrived. "I can remember being no more than 8 or 9 years old and looking around," he wrote recently, "thinking something's wrong with what we've done with the place."

His outlook turned darker still when he saw police take his father away.

In 2001, when Connor was 9, his father, James Stevens, was charged with inappropriately touching two 10-year-old girls. (He pleaded guilty to two counts of gross sexual imposition and was sentenced to 80 days in jail.)

"I developed a keen hatred for authority, 'order,' and especially 'law,'" Stevens wrote recently in an autobiography for a website raising money for his legal defense. One reason was "watching the cops arrest people, including my dad," he wrote. "The simple fact they can put you in handcuffs and haul you off was enough for me to hate them at that adorable age."

The family moved in with Stevens' grandfather, who lived next to the Metroparks' Mill Stream Run Reservation. Lonely for his friends in Oberlin, Stevens sought solace in the woods, where he played cowboys and Indians with a younger brother.

Stevens was home-schooled for eighth grade, and he tore across Wikipedia, tutoring himself in the ideas of Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche, Hinduism and Buddhism. By high school, he was reading Marx, Lenin and Italian anarchist Luigi Galleani while living in that most unlikely of revolutionary hotbeds: Berea.

He carried the *Communist Manifesto* around Berea High School in a mostly failed effort to provoke interesting conversation. Teachers found his Marxism cute and quaint, but his peers generally ignored him. He started a radical group, the United Student Front, but at most of the meetings, only one other person showed up.

"He was very independent, teaching himself," recalls his mother, Gail Stevens, "not getting much of an education in school." Mostly bored, he lit up during class presentations — impressing his brother's girlfriend, at least, with so much knowledge that it seemed as if he could teach the class.

Late in his freshman year, in April 2007, Stevens finally got some attention by confronting military recruiters at a school job fair. "He said they would zero in on the kids that weren't dressed well, that you could tell were poor," recalls his mother.

His anger grew out of control. A month later, the recruiters reported him to the Berea police. One said Stevens called him a "fascist pig" in an email. Another student had contacted the recruiter to complain that Stevens' MySpace page was violent and threatening; it reportedly included the Unabomber's manifesto. The recruiters gave the police printouts of a MySpace forum page where Stevens had vented his hatred of authority.

"Kill cops!" Stevens, then 15, had written, signing his full name. "The pigs in blue are the fascists we have to fight!" He advocated throwing acid on them. (Berea police resolved the complaint by speaking to Stevens' mother, according to the report; she says they never talked to her.)

Stevens dropped out in 10th grade, but he remained troubled. Tempted by thoughts of suicide, he found solace in the "good red road," a Native American spiritual path involving a balanced life in harmony with nature.

For the next three years, he didn't go to school and didn't work. "He'd read, hang out with his friends, basically kind of just being a kid," Gail Stevens says. "He didn't know what he wanted to do."

He spent hours at a time writing poems that expressed alienation from a corrupted world or his longing to return to nature. "Lets try and tidy up on the way out," reads one, "Maybe dismantle a few reactors, / Put some rubble to use and / Return what we can of / the old-growth forests. / And struggle for / a new way of / Living."

Stevens began volunteering with Food Not Bombs, a collective that serves dinner on Saturdays in Ohio City's Market Square. Regulars there remember him talking passionately about freedom from hunger and citing literary references, from Ernest Hemingway to Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Pablo Neruda.

In spring 2011, Stevens went to see a concert at the Agape House off Lorain Avenue in Cleveland. The rented home was devoted to Christian anarchy, an anti-authoritarian movement dedicated to living a radically Christlike life. Its residents, all young men, met for morning and evening prayer and threw rowdy punk rock shows in the house on weekends. One housemate, Zachy Schrauf, invited Stevens to join them.

Stevens and his crates of books moved in soon after.

"He read Gandhi, he read Marx, he read everything between that," recalls Schrauf. "He used to feel there was no way to have a revolution unless it was a violent revolution," Schrauf recalls Stevens saying — but he'd started to see it wouldn't work in the long run.

Stevens began attending St. Luke's Episcopal Church in the Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood with Schrauf. He even talked about getting baptized. The two started "guerrilla gardening" projects in vacant lots, planted squash in their backyard and stayed up late smoking grandfather pipes and talking about philosophy.

Schrauf grew close to Stevens, but noticed one thing about his new friend that gave him a little pause. "Connor was the kind of kid that drank in the morning," he recalls. "I was the kid who drank the most in the house, and then he moved in."

**At Food Not Bombs** last year, Stevens met another young anarchist, Brandon Baxter, as intense and passionate as Stevens was cerebral.

The 19-year-old Lakewood High graduate's influences weren't long-dead, bearded writers, but websites ranging from the far right (the conspiracy-minded InfoWars) to the far left (the Anonymous "hacktivist" movement). He embraced Food Not Bombs with gusto, screaming "Free food!" across Market Square when dinner was ready. He'd shaved his blond hair on one side, but the rest cascaded down the other side of his face, almost to his shoulder. He carried a vintage backpack and collected pipes and knives.

"I like to refer to him as a post-apocalyptic Boy Scout," says Schrauf. "He was really into survivalism."

Knives are a recurring theme in Baxter's life. He road-tripped to powwows with his father, selling pocket knives with patterned Damascus blades while his dad sold tepees.

At 17, after a fight between his mother and stepfather, Wayne Raymond, Baxter cut Raymond across the chest and arm with a kitchen knife. Baxter admitted to attempted felonious assault in juvenile court and received six months probation.

Mental illness tormented Baxter. He tried to kill himself in February 2010 by taking 30 pills of Seroquel, a medication for bipolar disorder. Three months later, when Baxter was 18, Raymond obtained a restraining order against him. Baxter's mother had found a disturbing note he'd written.

"In my deepest darkest fantas[ies] I see myself as evil, as possibly tearing down our society, lacking all reason and empathy," the note began, "spilling the blood of the innocent, driving [the] force of militants down the throats of all my enemies, who just happen to be anyone that I can see." The note's end focuses on a single victim: "I let one rip from my clip as my target screams in fright." A magistrate ordered Baxter to stay 500 feet away from Raymond.

He moved in with his father, Andy Baxter, who says his son found a purpose a year later by volunteering at Food Not Bombs and Occupy Cleveland. "He walked a foot taller. He was proud of what he did."

Despite their differing styles, Baxter and Stevens were excited by Occupy's leaderless decision-making and its message that the government served corporate wealth and screwed over the rest of society. They gravitated from Market Square to Public Square.

That's where a documentary filmmaker interviewed Stevens one night in October. In the video, Stevens stands next to a line of tall white tents, smoking a cigarette. Streetlamp light catches the reds and browns in his short-trimmed beard. In a steady, clear voice that made him sound older than 19, Stevens explained why he was spending his days and nights at the Occupy encampment.

"My favorite part about it is meeting people walking down the street — normal, average people," Stevens says, "talking to them, hearing about how they're affected by the economy, by the justice system."

The cameraman tells Stevens about a friend who protested the first Gulf War in Public Square and confided in him, "If I was down here two years earlier, I'd be kicking windows in at the BP Building."

"I could definitely identify with your friend," Stevens says. "Back in, like, 2008, I was at that state of mind. And now I'm understanding that we're in it for the long haul. Those tactics, they just don't do, they just don't cut it. It's actually harder to be nonviolent than it is to do stuff like that."

**A kaleidoscope of** activists spun themselves together to create Occupy Cleveland — students and organizers, anti-fracking environmentalists and universal health care supporters, musicians, hippies and anarchists.

They met first at Willard Park by the Free Stamp on Oct. 6, then relocated to the Tom Johnson statue in the free-speech quadrant in Public Square. Like the protesters in Manhattan's Zuccotti Park, they began a day-and-night protest, camping on the wide sidewalk of West Roadway on the square's edge. Big white canopies sprang up — an information tent, a donations tent, a kitchen tent. Little blue tents gathered next to them, like a giant scouting expedition gathered around an urban bonfire.

For many of Occupy's young members — and a lot of them were young — those two weeks were the first time they'd found a community of like-minded people, belonged to a nationwide movement and felt, for a fleeting moment, that the whole society was shifting their way.

Stevens thrived at the Occupy camp. He volunteered for the kitchen tent and became known for starting deep discussions. "Connor was a really amazing guy," says Erin McCardle, a 23-year-old community organizer and Occupier. "He was really interested in stepping up and helping to do some of the harder work."

Brandon Baxter struck some protesters as big-hearted and passionate, others as immature and impulsive. He joined a training session for peacekeepers, but the teacher, veteran anti-war activist Tim Smith, says he acted like a high school kid. "He didn't pay attention, was distracted, kinda ADD," Smith recalls. "He didn't know why he was there."

Still, Baxter impressed law student Jacob Wagner while working the camp's night watch. "He was one of the most peaceful people there," Wagner recalls. "He was very loving and caring, and always tried to defuse any situation. If someone tried to get him riled up, he'd just walk away, rather than get violent with words even. He didn't want to say something he'd regret."

In a camp colored with every shade of progressive politics, from Democratic blue to socialist red to earthy green, Stevens and Baxter gravitated to others of their hue, anarchist black. Baxter worked night watch with a guy he'd met at a Lakewood cafe, Joshua Stafford, whom the Occupy campers knew as Skelly. He was thin and gangly, like a skeleton hanging from a string, with frizzy, tangled blond hair.

Stafford, 23, told his friends he'd struggled with schizophrenia. "Half his childhood he spent in the psych ward, and the other half he spent on the streets, learning different kinds of martial arts," says Schraufel. Stafford had a long misdemeanor and juvenile record — attacking teachers and threatening to kill one of them as a kid, serving jail time for assault as an adult. But Occupiers remember him as a calming presence. He often defended a transgendered camper from street harassment. When drunken bar-goers and the troubled homeless stumbled through Public Square and razzed the protesters, Stafford defused the situation.

"Whenever someone was getting intense," Schraufel recalls, "he'd get in their eyes and be like, 'You need to *calm down*.' "

Another night watchman, 35-year-old Tony Hayne, made a lot of friends in the first few weeks of camp with his charming, upbeat attitude. But when police or reporters came by, Hayne pulled a bandana across his face. He'd served time in prison twice for theft and attempted domestic violence — a fact the protesters learned months later, when money went missing from the donation box and Hayne fell under suspicion.

While the other Occupiers frequently talked among themselves about their movement's dedication to nonviolence, Hayne kept his thoughts secret from most. "Tony would often admit to me, 'I'm not nonviolent,' " recalls Schraufel, "but he adhered to the role of peacekeeper around Occupy."

Stevens, Baxter, Stafford and Hayne all befriended the most intense personality among the camp's anarchists, Doug Wright, a 26-year-old drifter and train-hopper. Tall, with hollow cheeks and missing teeth, Wright sported a Mohawk and wore the same black T-shirt with the anarchy symbol on it for several days straight. He said he'd hitchhiked around the country and come to Cleveland with someone he met at a concert about a week before Occupy's first event.

Schraufel hit it off with Wright, impressed with his tales of traveling to every state by boxcar and his knowledge of obscure punk bands. "He was the most hardcore train punk I ever met," he says. Wright and Schraufel would leave the square and go down to the river to drink and complain about campmates they thought were poseurs. Wright "can only speak in grunts," Schraufel says.

Wright did a lot to organize and set up the camp's donation, info and food tents, impressing McCardle with his dedication. "He was unemployed, and I definitely got that sense from Doug that he felt betrayed by all the systemic values of America, the mentality of 'Pull yourself up by your bootstraps,' and that monetary worth is the only worth," she says.

Wright grew frustrated that other Occupiers proved unwilling to work as hard as he did. He often turned angry and aggressive, sometimes screaming at people, McCardle says. "I saw a very damaged person in him, but then I also saw an earnest, hardworking guy underneath that."

Smith was less impressed. "You know people in the world who get really excited about things and ideas and jump on the bandwagon?" he says. "They start preaching and haven't even read the holy writings? Doug was like that with anarchy. I don't think he read anything of substance. I think he just hated cops, hated rules, hated The Man.

"He bragged about fighting with cops in the past," Smith says. "He was an asshole."

Occupy's curbside utopia lasted two weeks. Mayor Frank Jackson's administration told the activists that they could no longer camp out overnight. In defiance, they planned a protest rally for the night of Oct. 21, when their permits expired. Some resolved to stage a sit-in to court arrest.

Around that time, the FBI received a report from an unidentified source about "potential criminal activity and threats involving anarchists" at the rally, according to an affidavit. That evening, the FBI's Cleveland office sent an informant to the square.

**By afternoon on Oct. 21, Public Square was abuzz.**

In front of the Terminal Tower, speeches squawked from bullhorns and a guitarist played for a crowd of about 50. Across Superior Avenue, in the camp, protesters took down tents and the kitchen served one more meal.

Around 6:30 p.m., the informant arrived at the rally, looking for anarchists. They weren't hard to find. He spotted seven men he found suspicious. All but one had covered their faces. Four were carrying black backpacks and anarchist flags and wearing dark clothes with walkie-talkies around their necks.

One of the seven men was Doug Wright.

"The whole group appeared to be together and was constantly moving throughout the crowd expressing displeasure at the crowd's unwillingness to act violently," according to the FBI affidavit filed in the case.

At one point, the informant was likely standing close enough to the anarchists to overhear them. When an organizer explained the night's plan for peaceful civil disobedience — 11 people would be arrested while linking arms around one last, symbolic tent — one of the anarchists turned away and said, "F--k that."

Occupy protesters who attended the rally say parts of the informant's account ring true, but others do not. Occupy bought the walkie-talkies for the night watchmen, who moved equipment and provided security for the rally. The masks? Some protesters didn't want to be seen by cameras, fearing reprisal from police, the government, or employers, they say.

The "act violently" line isn't true, say McCardle and Wagner. But Cleveland city councilman Brian Cummins, who helped organize Occupy Cleveland, says some anarchists at the rally thought the civil disobedience plan was pointless and said so.

"Some clearly wanted to cause trouble," Cummins recalls. "There was definitely talk from the anarchists in the group — I can't point out or separate them by name — a buzz, •This is bullshit.' "

No violence broke out. The crowd grew to 100, then 350 by 10 p.m., when police arrested the 11 volunteers.

Sometime that night, the informant struck up a conversation with Wright, who was in an angry mood from having to take down the tents he'd helped erect.

Wright started talking about riots. He showed the informant his missing teeth and his crooked, once-broken nose, the results of street battles. "He also explained that if he goes to jail this time, he probably won't get out for a while," the affidavit said. Wright wasn't kidding. In 2006 in New Orleans, Wright pleaded guilty to two charges of aggravated assault, one against a peace officer with a firearm.

The informant hadn't witnessed violence, but he'd found a violent anarchist. He exchanged phone numbers with Wright.

**The informant, a 39-year-old con man, began working for the FBI last July when he was facing an indictment that would result in his 13th felony conviction.**

His record at the Justice Center dates back to soon after he turned 18. Police arrested him twice on cocaine charges, in late 1990 and early 1991, and once for receiving a stolen credit card. At 19, he robbed a bank in Maple Heights. He pleaded guilty in all four cases and was sentenced to 5 to 16 years in prison.

Paroled in 1995, he embarked on a new career in 2001: check fraud. He cashed two bad checks, one stolen from a neighbor. He also filed two forged deeds to a real estate parcel and later sold the land for \$50,000. The checks got him probation, the land scam a year in prison. Once he got free again, the paper really started flying. He was indicted in seven bad-check cases between 2006 and 2009, pleaded guilty in each, and got three years probation and six months in prison.

In late 2010, he passed a \$52,000 bad check and got caught. His lawyer began negotiating a plea. On July 20, 2011, according to the FBI, he began working as a federal informant. The bureau has paid him about \$5,750 since then. It's unknown what other cases he's worked on, but the FBI affidavit says information he's provided has opened up several investigations.

He continued committing check fraud while working for the FBI, passing one bad check, for \$1,471 to a home decor company, on July 25, 2011, five days after signing up as an informant. This August, he pleaded guilty in three new cases. He was ordered to pay restitution and sentenced to probation.

**After the rally**, the Occupiers scattered.

The camp moved to a deconsecrated church Tim Smith owns in Hough. But Wright, Baxter, Stevens, Stafford and Hayne didn't stick around for long. They left and formed a splinter group they dubbed the Revolutionary People's Army.

The group met to talk about how to break free of the liberals in Occupy, upset that they wouldn't do anything even mildly disruptive, such as taking marches into the street without permits. They went on a graffiti binge, tagging the anarchy symbol and the phrase "Rise Up" throughout the city.

Stevens split his time between his mother's house in Berea and his friends in the city. Baxter went back to his dad's house in Lakewood. Wright moved in with a girlfriend on the near West Side. And Wright and the informant started playing phone tag, then emailing.

In mid-November, they met up, and Wright began talking about a grandiose plan of his. Wright said he'd been talking with fellow anarchists about how to "send a message" to corporations and the government. He wanted to set off smoke grenades on the Detroit-Superior Bridge as a distraction and then knock the bank signs off the tops of large downtown buildings. But he didn't know how he'd do it yet.

It sounds like a ridiculous fantasy. How could a bunch of young punks hope to knock the green Huntington Bank logo off the 658-foot former BP Building, or the big red key off the 888-foot Key Tower? But the government later claimed the idea was the beginning of the bridge-bomb plot.

Winter came and many of the Occupiers went home. Experienced activists left, sensing the younger protesters' resentment of their unofficial leadership. Stevens, Stafford and Hayne returned and spent time freezing inside Occupy's lonely informational tent at Public Square.

"It was him and another guy that were always asked to do the night shift," Stevens' mother recalls. "He hated the night shift."

The dedicated members most willing to staff the tent in the cold also tended to be those without a regular home. So in mid-February, the group rented a warehouse just north of Clark Avenue on Cleveland's near West Side. Hayne co-signed the lease. It wasn't much, but it had a small kitchen, a loft for sleeping bags, and room on the floor for a bunch of tents. Hayne, Stevens and Stafford were among those who moved in.

On Feb. 15, the informant took Wright to breakfast and got him talking again. Wright lamented that there weren't enough anarchists in Cleveland to start a good riot. He wanted to look up some recipes for smoke bombs and make them with the informant. He also wanted to plan something for the spring with an anarchist from Lakewood named Brandon.

Brandon Baxter was not in the best shape at the time.

On Feb. 12, he'd tried to commit suicide on Rocky River's Hilliard Boulevard Bridge, leaping in front of a woman's car and yelling, "Kill me!" The driver called police, who talked Baxter off the railing and the bridge and then tackled him. They found a 3½-inch knife in the left pocket of Baxter's camouflage pants and a 10½-inch knife in his inside coat pocket. He was booked on a charge of carrying concealed weapons.

Still, on Feb. 20, Baxter joined Wright and the informant for lunch in Lakewood to plan some crime. They talked about using stink bombs, paint guns or explosives at a bank or a hospital.

Wright said he wanted C-4 explosives, but they might be too expensive. Wright and Baxter said they thought the May opening of the Horseshoe Casino Cleveland would be a good time for an attack.

The FBI decided the talk had gotten serious enough to outfit the informant with a body recorder.

A week later, Wright introduced the informant to Stevens and Hayne and told him he'd like them to get involved with the plans.

**When the FBI** quotes Doug Wright, he sounds like an enthusiastic dumbass who'd love to blow something up but hasn't figured out how.

On March 22, Wright told the informant he'd downloaded some bomb recipes. "We can make smoke bombs, we can make plastic explosives," Wright enthused. "It teaches you how to pick locks. It does everything."

"How much money do we need to make the plastic explosives?" the informant asked.

"I'm not sure," Wright replied. "I just downloaded it last night."

"Tell me what all we need to make the bombs," the informant nudged him, "so that we can start gathering—"

"Mostly bleach," Wright replied.

"Bleach?"

"You can make plastic explosives with bleach. That's actually what they used to use during, like, World War II, World War I for, like, land mines and hand grenades and stuff."

The next day, the informant set the trap for the FBI's sting. He asked Wright if he'd rather buy explosives from someone the informant knew.

On March 28, the informant was driving Wright and Baxter over I-480's Valley View Bridge when Baxter had his dark eureka moment.

"How much do you think we need to take out a bridge?" Baxter asked.

"It depends," the informant replied. "If you're talking about a bridge like the size of this • you would need quite a bit."

"This would be a good one," Wright said.

"It would be!" agreed Baxter.

"We could get off right here," the informant said as they neared I-480's Transportation Boulevard exit, "and I could show you where the base is."

Baxter had a different idea. "Taking out a bridge in the business district would cost the corporate bigwigs a lot of money," he said, "not just because of structural damage to the bridge, but because it's going to stop a lot of people going to work."

The informant brought up a thought Wright had mentioned at lunch five weeks earlier. "What are you talking about?" he asked. "C-4 blocks?"

Wright said he wanted to compare C-4 to the recipes in his cookbook before buying it. But he was going to Chicago in May to fight cops outside the NATO summit, so he definitely wanted some riot gear.

The informant and the FBI leaped at the chance to give Baxter and Wright everything they wanted. Before the day was out, the informant took them to a vacant house and introduced them to two undercover agents posing as weapons dealers.

On the floor, one agent laid out all the riot gear on Baxter and Wright's wish list: tear gas canisters, Israeli gas masks, smoke grenades and retractable batons, plus some ballistic vests and helmets. Next to the gear, the agent laid photographs of explosives.

Buying for a riot party of five, Wright and Baxter ordered five vests, batons and gas masks, plus 10 cans of tear gas, for \$1,150, plus a price to be named later for the masks. The agent pointed at the bomb pictures and asked if they needed the "heavy stuff."

"Yeah, we are going to wait on that," Wright answered. "We definitely might be interested later, but not right this minute."

C-4, a high-velocity plastic explosive used in military demolition, looks like white dough, often comes in the shape of small bricks and is very good at shattering things, including concrete. It's popular with international terrorists; al-Qaida operatives used it in 2000 to attack the *USS Cole*. In the United States, it is tightly regulated, though a black market in it exists. Legitimate purchasers need a federal permit, which includes fingerprinting and a background check. Few U.S. manufacturers make C-4, and those that do are required to include a tracing agent.

But in the world of the terror sting, the FBI and its informant convinced Wright they could get him C-4 for \$75 a brick.

The informant mentioned C-4 to Wright again on March 30 and 31. On April 1, Wright took the bait. He met with the undercover agent and bargained him down to \$900 for eight bricks of C-4, plus the vests, tear gas and gas masks. Wright said he'd pay \$450 on delivery, the other half a month later.

Driving away, Wright told the informant he'd get the schematics for the Detroit-Superior Bridge.

**On a Saturday** in April, about three weeks before his arrest, Stevens served dinner in Market Square with Food Not Bombs. He got talking with fellow volunteer Aidan Kelly about Ernest Hemingway's novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in which an American joins the Spanish Civil War to fight a fascist uprising and is assigned to dynamite a bridge.

"I remember distinctly talking about his ideas about pacifism," Kelly says. They mentioned the theatrical street clashes with police that often greet international economic summits. Kelly says he and Stevens agreed that movements such as Food Not Bombs offered a better alternative for creating social change.

But very soon, Stevens' friends and the informant would test his philosophizing with a very real and urgent choice.

On Saturday, April 7 — probably the same day Stevens talked with Kelly — Stevens discussed the bridge plot with the informant for the first time.

The informant struck up the conversation by mentioning how he and Stevens had worked together a few days earlier. Then he asked Stevens if he agreed with the plan to attack a bridge. If not, he said, he didn't want Stevens around.

Stevens said he agreed.

But Baxter was having second thoughts. Attacking a bridge would just piss off the people who rode over it every day, he said.

"What are we going to do with the stuff we got?" the informant asked. "We're on the hook for it." The informant said he'd bow out of the plan if they couldn't decide what to do.

The four men talked about attacking a Ku Klux Klan headquarters. Stevens suggested blowing up mines or oil wells. Wright suggested car-bombing the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. Baxter wanted to attack a law enforcement office within the downtown Justice Center.

The four met again April 10, and more or less agreed they'd try to blow a hole in a cargo ship on the Cuyahoga River on May 1, when Occupy Cleveland's May Day festival would draw police downtown.

The informant was getting antsy. "Did you follow up on anything?" he asked one of the men on April 13. "What are we doing? Because as usual, you got me on a stupid-ass holding pattern."

That same week, he passed one more round of bad checks at Huntington Bank, overdrawing his account by \$6,786.

Meanwhile, he was drawing the defendants closer to him.

Wright stopped by the Occupy Cleveland warehouse and announced he had a job, remembers Jonnie Peskar. Another day, "He came in and said, 'It's going to be a good day, because my boss has some joints waiting for me at work,'" Peskar recalls.

In mid-April, Stevens' sister, Brelan, picked him up and drove him to a family get-together. He told her that for almost the first time in his life, he had a job, rehabbing houses for a strangely generous boss.

"He mentioned to me that he did buy them alcohol a lot, and supply them with marijuana a lot," Brelan recalls. "He would buy their cigarettes. He basically bought them anything they wanted. He bought them food."

Her brother seemed grateful but skeptical. "He said, 'I can't believe I found a boss like this!'" she recalls.

That day, Stevens also told his older brother, Colin, about the job.

"It was long, brutal hours," Colin recalls, "upwards of 12 hours a day, for maybe \$5 an hour — undocumented employment." Colin says Stevens told him the boss had given him beer and Adderall, a prescription stimulant. "That's one of the perks of his job," Colin recalls hearing.

In Colin's recounting, Stevens was more negative about the boss. "He told me that he was connected to criminal organizations," Colin says, "that he was basically what you'd call a thug. He didn't trust him. He didn't like him at all, either."

Schraufel says Stevens told him much the same story: "He would show up on the job, and [the boss] would have a case of beer and a bowl of weed waiting for them."

The boss was the FBI informant. Before long, Baxter, too, was working for him. He was 19 at the time. Stevens was 20.

Alcohol was Stevens' weakness. "Connor's a bit of a drunk," says Schraufel, "and whenever he'd get really drunk, he'd always get kind of douchey, kind of angry. He'd always be like, 'I'll fight you' — kind of joking around."

Another warehouse resident, Michael Maples, was more alarmed at Stevens' drinking. "Connor, when he was drunk, he'd be willing for damn near anything," Maples says.

On April 19, Stevens and Wright met up with the informant, and Wright said the ship-bombing was off. Instead, he wanted to use the C-4 to try to destroy or disable a bridge. He'd picked one out: the Route 82 bridge over the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, connecting Brecksville and Sagamore Hills.

The next day, the informant drove Wright and Stevens to the Route 82 bridge to scout it out. Wright confidently asserted that 8 pounds of C-4 would take out "a good chunk" of it. Stevens wanted to know how far away they could get and still detonate the bombs.

**In late April**, Baxter and Stevens' friends saw the pair's moods shift.

"Connor wouldn't look me in the eyes at all," Schraufel recalls. Baxter "was off his gourd, acting crazy" — sleepless, his eyes wide open, giddy, always bobbing. Peskar says Baxter and Stevens both told him they'd gotten Adderall from their boss. (Baxter confirmed that this summer in court, saying he'd obtained an Adderall pill from the informant and another from a friend.)

At the Occupy the Heart Festival in Willard Park on April 28, Baxter, Stevens and their friends formed a circle and took turns saying something affirming about each other. Baxter said he was happy that Peskar and his girlfriend were having a baby. Stevens praised him for recording policemen with his video camera to ensure they did not abuse their power. Activists in the '60s "used to do what you do with shotguns," Stevens said. "It says a lot that [you] can do it with video cameras today." Baxter and Stevens started crying.

At the time, Peskar was puzzled at their sensitivity. Now he sees it as a sign of the stress they felt. "It was a cry for help," Peskar thinks.

The next day, Wright, Baxter, Hayne and the informant went to a Warrensville Heights hotel and bought the fake C-4 and the riot gear from the undercover agent for \$450. Hayne was a late addition to the plot. One person was missing: Stevens.

Wright told the informant Stevens didn't want to be part of the plan — but he still wanted to work on the informant's houses.

The informant told Wright to have Stevens call him.

Instead, Stevens and the informant talked the next night, April 30, just before everyone left for the bridge.

The informant picked up Baxter and Stafford, probably at the warehouse, then drove to a house in Slavic Village to pick up the others. Stevens took the informant to the side of the house to talk, says his lawyer, Terry Gilbert. Stevens had been drinking and smoking marijuana, Gilbert says — but he was lucid enough to balk at getting into the SUV.

Stevens asked whether he'd lose his job on the informant's construction site if he didn't go to the bridge. No, the informant said, according to an FBI agent's testimony — work and the bomb plot were separate issues, and the decision to come along was up to him. But Gilbert says the informant was still pressuring Stevens. "The message was kinda, 'We're all in this together, we got this thing ready to go, we're in it together — but no, you won't lose your job.' "

Wright rolled down his window, told Stevens it was his last chance to join, and told him there was still space in the SUV. His friends began making fun of him, Gilbert says.

"[The informant] is even making fun of him: 'Poor Connor,'" Gilbert says. "And he actually said something like, 'Don't be a wuss.'"

At the last minute, Stevens got in.

**An hour later**, the six men rode away from the bridge. Stevens' mood had changed. He'd just watched Wright and Stafford flip the switches to arm the bombs. He was excited.

"We just committed the biggest act of terrorism that I know of in Cleveland history since the '60s," he said.

"I'm glad you came, Connor," Wright told him. Stevens said he was glad too.

**In Stevens' jail** mug shot, his once-neat brown hair is thick and matted, his beard so severely untrimmed it's almost bulbous.

But when he walked into federal court on Sept. 5 in chains and prison orange, he was shorn, his hair closely buzzed, his cheeks bare. He looked tiny and thin. In his clear voice, he answered Judge David Dowd's questions, pausing at only one.

"The terminology of 'weapons of mass destruction' kind of gets me, I suppose," Stevens said. He and Gilbert whispered for four minutes, and he told Dowd he had no questions. He pleaded guilty to all three charges against him, including attempted use of weapons of mass destruction.

Wright and Baxter pleaded guilty the same day, but their November sentencings will be contentious. Prosecutors will seek a "terrorism enhancement," which could lead to 30 years to life in prison. The defense will argue for much less, around five years.

"You have a plot that's basically orchestrated by the FBI," Gilbert says. "This will all come out at sentencing: how the provocateur kept pushing and manipulating them." Still, Stevens is "willing to own up to his responsibility," Gilbert adds. "He's putting his hope with the judge."

Since May, some Occupy supporters have speculated that the FBI sent the informant to disrupt their political effort.

"They come into a peaceful movement, find people who are disgruntled, or fringe, or unstable, have problems mentally, and try to initiate the idea of doing something violent," Gilbert says. "They suck them into a plan that they couldn't even possibly conceive, and then make a big splash, as if they are protecting society."

Steve Dettelbach, the U.S. Attorney for Northern Ohio, says it's not so. "This case does not involve any investigation of a movement or a group," he says. "We investigate specific individuals for specific acts."

Even so, the FBI has shown an interest in anarchist extremism. A 2010 story on the FBI website voices concern that violent anarchists "may be willing to use improvised explosive devices or improvised incendiary devices." A declassified 2011 briefing by the FBI's Domestic Terrorism Operations Unit calls anarchist extremists — the violent wing of the anarchist movement — "criminals seeking an ideology to justify their activities." The briefing's depiction of violent anarchists' preoccupations — confrontations with riot police at international summits, Internet instructions for homemade explosives — fits Doug Wright so well, his picture may already be in the next edition.

"Our techniques were lawful, suitable, and necessary in the prosecution of this case," says George Crouch, assistant special agent in charge of the FBI's Cleveland office. "The real danger you have to look at here is in a case where the [FBI] receives credible information of a terrorist plot and does not use all means and all techniques lawfully available to it to make sure that plot does not occur."

Crouch declined to comment on whether the informant provided marijuana and Adderall to the defendants. He said agents followed constitutional rules and FBI guidelines. (The guidelines let agents authorize informants to conduct "otherwise illegal activity," including providing controlled substances, but only for limited reasons such as maintaining credibility or obtaining essential evidence not reasonably available otherwise.)

Mike German, a former FBI agent who works on national security and privacy issues for the American Civil Liberties Union, says he's seen a troubling trend in counter-terrorism stings since 9/11. "The subject will suggest a particular plot, then the informant or government agent will come in and suggest a grander plot," German says. "They provide all the materials to accomplish it. Those materials are far beyond the capacity of the subjects to have acquired on their own."

But those defendants still get convicted. An entrapment defense has never worked in a post-9/11 terror case. It's not enough, German explains, to show that the government tricked someone, or that a crime wouldn't have occurred without its intervention if the defendant was predisposed to commit the crime.

A trial was too risky, Gilbert says. So Connor Stevens will soon learn when he'll leave prison — at age 25, or 50, or never.

"[He'll] continue to help people," predicts his brother, Colin — doing "what he has been doing: social outreach, social awareness. If anything, his time in prison is going to educate him more to the social problems in this country and the injustices of the legal system."

Yet had Stevens taken his own advice about nonviolence from that night at the Occupy camp, he could still be doing that work as a free man. Instead, he got in the informant's SUV. "It was a decision he'll regret for the rest of his life," Gilbert says.

## **12 Sept - Did the BOP Acknowledge the Existence of Political Prisoners in the United States?**

*More of the meta world of NYC ABC reporting on the very updates from which we're reading...*

### **MORE:**

Not long ago, [we reported](#) on the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) rejecting packets of [updates and announcements](#) that we send to prisoners every other week. One prisoner in particular, [Daniel McGowan](#), has consistently been denied these packets. As a result, [NYC Anarchist Black Cross](#) receives rejection forms from the BOP. These are typically boilerplate forms, with some note about the correspondence being "detrimental to the security, good order, and discipline of the institution." However, in June, the form was slightly different and so was the reasoning for the material being returned.

The form had a list of unauthorized materials with boxes next to each to be checked. According to the BOP, we sent in "Other (specify below)." In the notes section read the following:

"CORRESPONDENCE INCLUDES MATERIAL WHICH CONTAINED UPDATES FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS."

Of course this struck us as odd, considering that the BOP, and the entire United States government for that matter, consistently denies the existence of political prisoners in this country. You can download the entire document [here](#).

So which is it, BOP? Are you imprisoning our comrades based on their politics and political actions? Or does the Bureau regularly hire incompetents like Correctional Systems Officer **REDACTED**, who signed off on this rejection? We're guessing it's a little from column A and a little from column B.

## **13 Sept - John Tucker of the Tinley Park Five Thanks Supporters**

*John Tucker, one of the defendants in the Tinley Park Five case, asked that we post this letter of gratitude to his supporters. John, like the other four defendants, is being held in Cook County Jail awaiting trial. His bail is*

*\$175,000, out of the reach of his friends and family. Defense motions to suppress the arrest are to be ruled on soon, but most likely the five antifascist activists will be held in Cook County Jail until the conclusion of what appears will be a lengthy trial.*

**MORE:**

To our Supporters -

First off, I would like to thank all of our past, present and future supporters for any and all letters, donations, and internet support for our cause. Incarceration is difficult indeed, but your kindness helps ease our troubles in these trying times.

Secondly, I would like to thank our supporters and sympathizers for any and all kindness given to our friends and family, of which the media has often vilified. Those closest to us are oftentimes more affected by our tragedies than we ourselves are at the time.

Lastly, to all those who are reading this with an open mind, I would like to thank you for at least showing an interest in our struggle. Just know, we are by no means the dark figures much as the media has made us out to be. We are sons and brothers, workers and students, salt of the earth, flesh-and-blood people like everyone else. Though not as sensational as many new programs and papers make us out to be we are just people (thankful people at that) for everything much of the populace has and continues to help us with. Without caring people in the world I'm not sure we could make it through this.

Thank you all,  
John Tucker

**13 Sept - Book drive for the NATO 5**

*While a book drive in Chicago isn't something most of us can help with, the fact that it got listed and written about in Time Out Chicago, an international, apolitical, "what to do this week" magazine is interesting. We've pasted the write up below.*

**MORE:**

On the eve of the NATO summit in May, Brian Church, a 21-year-old from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and four other activists were arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit terrorist acts. Surveillance officers had infiltrated the group of "self-proclaimed anarchists"—according to a court document relating to Church, Brent Betterly, 24, of Oakland Park, Florida, and Jared Chase, 27, of Keene, New Hampshire—and allegedly had observed the men making Molotov cocktails. Cook County prosecutors also allege that as the incendiary devices were assembled, Church "asked if others had ever seen a 'cop on fire.'" The accused men, now known as the NATO 5, pled not guilty.

"I'm trying to look at this as a learning experience," Church says one Monday afternoon in August, speaking through a metal slot in the glass partition of a visitation room at Cook County Jail. His hands are cuffed in front of him, his skinny frame swallowed up by a yellow jumpsuit. "In here, I have lots of time to think and reflect," he says. "I'll read almost anything." The redheaded former paramedic student says he has pored over everything from a tome about the women's suffrage movement, which saw many of its supporters imprisoned, to Thoreau's 1849 essay "Civil Disobedience" in which the abolitionist writes, "Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison."

Most of those reading materials have come courtesy of a drive started by Occupy Chicago's librarian Rachel Unterman. In July, as part of an ongoing NATO 5 "jail solidarity" effort—visiting the men on the inside, attending their court dates—Unterman put out a call for books on the website of the People's Library of Occupy Chicago ("serving the literary needs of the 99%"). The 29-year-old bookworm has been shipping the donations, one padded envelope at a time.

"The books we send can only be paperback," Unterman says. "I guess in prison hardcovers are considered a

weapon.” She asks that people refrain from donating overtly political texts. “I’m avoiding things about anarchy,” she says, “anything that’s like, ‘Smash the state!’ ” However, during my visit with Church, he spoke of interestedly perusing literature sent to him by Chicago’s sect of the Anarchist Black Cross, which prides itself on its prisoner-correspondence program.

So far, Unterman has mailed almost 30 books. Three works by Neil Gaiman and two by Philip K. Dick make the NATO 5’s reading list. There’s a pair of writing instructionals: *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg and *How to Write Science Fiction and Fantasy* by Orson Scott Card. By request, she also sent issues of *National Geographic* and *Rolling Stone*.

“I’ve visited and written to them more, and they’re starting to come back with specific titles,” Unterman says. “Brent likes science fiction, so I’ve been sending him classics—Heinlein, Asimov. I’ve had some requests for James Patterson, one for Ken Follett’s *The Man from St. Petersburg*. One of the guys wants a book about Spain during the 1800s. Whatever it is, I go after it.”

Unterman attributes her dutifulness, she says, to a stinging awareness that she could’ve been jailed along with Church and the others. “My involvement in the movement isn’t significantly different from theirs: I go to actions, distribute literature—that’s all they were doing.” The NATO 5’s legal team—comprising attorneys from the People’s Law Office—argues that police entrapped their clients, who will await trial until at least next summer. Unterman says they’ll be receiving books in the mail from her for just as long.

“Reading is one of the only connections they have to the outside world, because with every book I send them a letter,” she says. “They don’t get to ask for anything in jail, but they always know they can ask me for a book.”

To donate to Unterman’s drive and for instructions on sending books to the NATO 5, visit [ochilibrary.wordpress.com](http://ochilibrary.wordpress.com).

### **14 Sept - Anonymous Hactivist Arrested**

*#FreeAnons, a group organized to support arrested and imprisoned revolutionary hackers, reports that Barrett Brown was recently arrested in Dallas, Texas.*

#### **MORE:**

Barrett Brown appears to have been arrested on 9/12/12. Our thoughts go out to him and his family. Barrett was video conferencing on tynchat, as he often does, at the time of the raid and a recording of his arrest has been circulating the Internet. The Prison Reform Movement, a solidarity network, claimed on their Twitter this morning to have contacted the Dallas County Jail and were informed that Barrett had been released to another agency. AnonyOps, shortly thereafter, confirmed this as well. Although we ourselves have not contacted the jail we consider these sources reliable.

Barrett was scheduled to be in US District Court in Dallas today, 9/13/12, at 2pm CST for arraignment. He was taken into custody, according to criminal law specialist Leiderman Devine, as a direct result of threats made to FBI officer Robert Smith in a series of videos he published on YouTube. According to Barrett’s girlfriend whom was present at the time of the raid, no charges have been filed against Barrett and he has not been allowed bail. Another hearing has been scheduled for the 24th of this month; September. Barrett Brown currently remains in FBI custody.

### **14 Sept - perks and privileges by Mandy Hiscocks**

*G20 main conspiracy prisoner Mandy Hiscocks continues to write from prison and we’ve included her latest below.*

#### **MORE:**

today i’m continuing my observations of the social interactions and dynamics of Canada Geese. they hang out

outside my window every day, in various combinations, small groups and pairs merging and breaking apart in a never-ending series of aggressive, defensive and protective manoeuvres. i'm starting to understand the meanings of their calls and behaviours, and to recognize individuals. there are the bullied, the injured, the ones who are allowed at the outskirts of the group - so close and no closer. it's fascinating and heartbreaking . . . i want to go out there and scold the jerks, take care of the weak, and replace this whole survival of the fittest thing with a community based on mutual aid and solidarity. hey, wait a minute, isn't that pretty much why i'm in jail? and since i'm locked up, there's absolutely nothing i can do about the shunned bird who can barely walk, who's constantly being driven off and who seems to have been abandoned by the partner who was with her until yesterday. and there it is again, the feeling of being powerless to do anything about the suffering all around me. ugh. jail.

i've been imprisoned for eight months now, and on Unit 4 for three weeks. aside from the terrible goose drama playing out right beside me, i'm still loving medium security. some of the inmates were here back in april when the noise demo showed up ("holy shit. . .you're THAT Mandy!?! that was awesome! your friends rock") and people generally can't believe that i spent so long on Unit 2. i have random conversations with more people on this range - partly because i'm more comfortable up here and partly because the open doors and flexible seating arrangements are more conducive to meeting everyone. people are interested in the blog, the G20, The Peak. . .we get along quite well.

the atmosphere is very different here. i knew it would be the minute i saw the poster advertising Sports Day, the day i arrived. it was a hand-made, colourful, cartoon-style picture of a group of girls holding sports equipment, drawn on that brown paper that comes on huge rolls. "SPORTS DAY - September 3rd - submit your teams of six to rec by August 31st". it was the first indication that this was not the same kind of place as Unit 2 - i felt like i'd entered a high school, or some kind of camp. within a few days i was on a team, thanks to a woman i moved from 2F with who knew a lot of people already and had no shyness issues. we didn't take it all that seriously, but i actually saw teams strategizing and assessing their strengths and weaknesses - some people got really into it. the trick was to figure out who would sign up for each event (speed, coordination, flexibility, strength, balance and endurance) before knowing what each one was going to entail. we chose our events on the day, and i ended up with speed sort of by default. argh. it was a race, of course, and i came fourth out of six. six teams had signed up for a total of 36 competitors, probably close to half the unit. the rest watched or just enjoyed the extended yard while we moved through the other five events:

-flexibility: sitting down, legs straight and slightly apart, reach forward and stick a popsicle stick as far ahead of you as possible into the volleyball court sand;

-strength: hold a 5lb weight in each hand and hold your arms out straight for as long as you can;

-endurance: hold a plank position for as long as you can;

-balance: hold an egg (unboiled, painted with a cute face) on a spoon through an obstacle course involving going through hula hoops and sitting down ("butt cheeks all the way on the ground, ladies!") and standing back up, as fast as possible without dropping the egg;

-co-ordination: with a blindfold and a toque over your eyes, wander around and find a chair to sit on before everyone else does or you're out. by far the most hilarious event.

and that was Sports Day. we all got freezies at the end, even the losing team (us). the winners also got some sort of product - body wash, hair gel etc. conveniently, september 3 was my "three months left to go" celebration so i had a whack of candy to share, so my team also got jellybeans :)

i'm left wondering about a few things. i actually enjoyed Sports Day and it didn't feel weird at all. why? why didn't i have issues with it like i did with Vanier Idol back in February? is it just that things like singing and dancing make me want to crawl into a hole and die, whereas i can get behind going outside and playing games? or because i was not as comfortable, socially speaking, on 2F as i am on 4? or because Unit 4 feels less like jail, we have more (and more pleasant) interactions with guards, so it seems less strange for staff to be doing nice

things for us? or have i, sadly, normalized and become more accepting of my incarceration over the past six and a half months? whatever the reason, it seems a bit wrong for me to be enjoying all these medium security perks and privileges when the people i left behind on maximum get nothing. why shouldn't they get Sports Day? or other programs organized by rec staff - fitness classes, games, weekend movie screenings, exercise circuits during yard? there are also more life skills programs, more Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and you can take correspondence courses or study for your General Education Degree (GED) with a group and a teacher. not to mention the unplanned joys - a few weeks ago i laid on the grass and watched the clouds for the first time all summer; later that night i saw the moon and i think i actually gasped. i hadn't seen the moon in 233 days and i couldn't stop staring at it. i was so excited i had to stop myself from running out of my room like a fool to tell everyone to look. last weekend The Hunger Games was screened in the basement. now, i know some of you have been holding out so we can watch it together for the first time. . .don't worry, i didn't cave! but i did have the opportunity to watch it - that would have been unthinkable a month ago. here are some other things i've done here that i wouldn't have been able to do on Unit 2:

- seen a Monarch butterfly and a cricket
- my own laundry
- run around a track
- seen a groundhog, and masses of starlings
- visited the library
- cleaned sinks, showers and toilets
- eaten saved food, in my room, WITH A SPOON
- checked my Body Mass Index (healthy :)
- attended Yoga & Meditation class
- sat at a desk beside an open window and felt the breeze and the mist
- swept, mopped common space; garbage
- seen some badass thunder clouds
- spent part of every day alone

I should say that i have tons of respect for Leah, who got moved to medium security halfway through her sentence and gave it all up on a matter of principle when she refused to do free labour knowing she'd be bounced back down to Unit 2. i didn't find it so terrible while i was there but i'd hate to have to go back there now. . .of course, the jail counts on people feeling this way. the fear of being sent back keeps us well-behaved. we police ourselves, and there is an unfortunate tendency for inmates to police each other. we don't want someone talking to us at quiet time, for example, because we might both get in shit - and the consequences of getting in shit here are more severe. the threat of maximum security looms, and we're meant to acknowledge the privileged position we're in and be grateful for it. it's a classic way of controlling a population, and it works. i catch myself overlooking all kinds of little annoyances that would have pissed me off to no end on Unit 2, because i'm so much better off overall. maybe this will wear off - i hope so! after all when it comes down to it we're all here against our will, the guards can treat us however they like, and our rights and recourses are so limited as to be basically non-existent. as one guard said to us as she walked us from Unit 2 to Unit 4: "same shit, different pile, right?"

## **16 Sept - Two new columns by Mumia Abu-Jamal**

*We're including two new, short pieces written by Mumia Abu-Jamal.*

**MORE:**

**ARAB SUMMER?**

9/12/12

Several years ago, a new American president charmed the crowds in Cairo with his eloquence, his seeming earnestness, and most importantly, his person.

This president was the first such U.S. chief executive with caramel brown skin, and his name, Barack Hussein Obama, reflected, at least in part, an Islamic and African ancestry that sent ripples of delight throughout the North African audience.

Several years later, American embassies in several Arab countries are attacked, and most potently, a consular office in Benghazi, Libya, where a young U.S. ambassador is credentialed to the new, post-Qaddafi government, is struck by RPG fire – and burned to the ground, killing at least 4 Americans, including the country’s U.S. ambassador.

Reporters assign blame to an insulting and inflammatory anti-Islamic film that maligned the Prophet Muhammad.

But, that said, friends don’t burn or bomb friends.

Despite all the promise of Obama’s Cairo speech, his drone wars against alleged Islamic extremists, not to mention his continuing acquiescence to Israeli extremism and anti-Palestinian attacks has burned bridges in the Arab and Muslim consciousness that finally explodes in real burning – and real bombs.

Nor should it be overlooked that these attacks occurred on 9/11.

In Cairo, that vast, cosmopolitan and ancient city, where once the Obama name stirred hums of hope, now the embassy is raided, and U.S. flag shredded.

And, as ever in life, there is irony, for the American embassy in Libya was undoubtedly the source of the arming of the anti-Qaddafi resistance – and perhaps the source of the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, burning it to the ground.

In other words, the chickens have come home to roost.

It seems, the Arab Spring is over.

### **Teachers as “Thugs”?**

*9/16/12*

Since when have you seen teachers treated like (in the words of S. Carolina congressman, James DeMint (R) “thugs”?

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) decided to fight back, after the state legislature tacked on more school days, added two hours to the school day, and stripped the union of its power to bargain over such issues.

This Chicago public school struggle is more than a local one, for Chicago’s Mayor, Rahm Emanuel, was President Obama’s top dog several years ago, and an advocate of the Obama version of George Bush’s failed “No Child Left Behind” program, under a new name, but many of its same features: “Race to the Top.”

The Chicago education struggle is bigger than ‘the Windy City’.

It’s about the battle between public education and privatization, and which side do you think the Obama administration is on?

It ain’t the teachers – or the students.

Yet, it’s a safe bet that at least 80% of American teachers will vote to re-elect Obama, for they shudder at the Republican alternative.

But no matter whom they vote for, they are voting for corporatists, who differ more in degree than substance.

For the moment, however, Chicago's teachers are fighting; and that's a good thing.

More power to them!

### **17 Sept - A Brief Word From Abdul Haqq**

*Several months ago we received word that Abdul Haqq was going to stop writing public statements in order to spend more time studying his then newly found religion. While the latter hasn't changed, he has recently taken to writing for the public. We've pasted his latest below.*

#### **MORE:**

Sectarianism is a curse, in all its various forms. For much of my life I have embraced a hardline stance and either/or ideologies. However, the farther I travel down the path of Sufi mysticism, the further it takes me away from religionists, be they Christians, Hindus, Muslims or Jews. Because instead of seeking to cultivate connections with all innocent Life they often prefer breeding division, bloodlust and war.

Holding that mirror up to myself I see how glaringly I have been guilty of proliferating that same ideology of sectarianism within the Animal Rights community. The truth is more elusive than 'I'm right, your wrong' or 'we're right, they're wrong'. The truth is that not even the very wise can understand all the outcomes, techniques and nuisances that it takes to change the ethics, values and hence outward behaviors of a humanity hell-bent on the destruction of the Earth, Animals and each other. The truth is that not one person, tactic, politic, religion or way of life has the absolute and unadulterated truth.

Everything is attached, only in connectivity is there wholeness.

The truth is that when we spend our time attacking those closest to us in ideology or actual proximity it smacks of immaturity and a skewed perspective, not to mention insecurity. I believe that good and evil exist. I believe that they are both far more elusive and curious than we can often perceive. I believe that Animals deserve to live free from the harm, use and abuse of humans. I believe that people are capable of treating each other with far more concern and compassion than we currently do. And I believe that true love of Life doesn't only need to manifest itself in passivity and personal safety.

But I no longer believe that making a spectacle of myself or tearing down others views or activism is productive. And I no longer believe that hardline, sectarian and artificial divisions in religion, politics, ideology or activism is anything but divisive.

Animal Liberation, Whatever It May Take!

### **23 Sept - Update on Chris Lagergren**

*Chris Lagergren was arrested about a year ago, in Florida, for alleged trespass and criminal mischief at the Marine Mammal Conservancy. We hadn't heard much about his case until very recently and we're including an update below.*

#### **MORE:**

He is now charged with 4 misdemeanor counts of trespass/criminal mischief/vandalism and an AETA-like Felony under the Florida Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEP). Chris was released on a staggering \$32,000 bond and is now facing trial and a potential 8-year prison sentence. Chris' trial date is now scheduled for October 22, 2012.

At his latest court date, lead counsel for Chris' legal team appeared in court to request a continuance on several

grounds, one of which was the need to deposition (interview) the remaining witnesses in this matter. The continuance was granted. This is good news for the defense, as it gives our side more time to query key 'witnesses', file motions, etc. Most importantly, it allows us more time to focus on local initiatives that will raise greater awareness of the case, and help expose the absolute mala fide charges against Chris.

The PRE-TRIAL STATUS HEARING is now scheduled for OCTOBER 1ST at 9:00 a.m. in Key Largo, FL. Jury selection and trial are scheduled for OCTOBER 22ND at 8:30 a.m.

In the days and weeks ahead, we will be posting news of various events and will be asking for your participation. Several of these promise to be fun. :) As always, a BIG thank you to everyone for your unwavering support! IN SOLIDARITY!!!

### **23 Sept - Sebastian "Sabi" Senakiewicz Court Hearing**

*One of the NATO 5, Sabi, appeared in court yesterday. We haven't heard the results of this hearing, but will include it in the next batch of updates.*

#### **MORE:**

Pack the courtroom in support of Sebastian Senakiewicz from Chicago, age 24, who is charged with falsely making a terrorist threat.

Chicago police claim he said he had explosives hidden in a hollowed-out Harry Potter book. When the police raided his house, they found the Harry Potter book, but no explosives or any other incendiary devices. At least two police infiltrators were used to arrest the NATO5 defendants.

"The fact that the indictment charges the defendants with 11 serious felonies, including 'terrorism' and two separate 'conspiracy' charges for the alleged possession of 4 makeshift incendiary devices shows that the State is intent on continuing its strategy to sensationalize this case," said Michael Deutsch, NATO5 counsel and Chicago National Lawyers Guild (NLG) attorney.

"The NATO5's case is not a singular occurrence. People from all over the world face police intimidation, brutality and entrapment every day. The media narrative of 'dangerous terrorists' is used to justify arming police against peaceful protesters, scaring concerned citizens away from demonstrations and silencing our First Amendment-protected voices. We've seen this situation replay itself with the Cleveland 5, RNC 8, and the G20 activists in Canada," said Matt McLoughlin of Occupy Chicago.

Occupy Chicago and Committee to Stop FBI Repression encourage the public to sign and disseminate a petition demanding Brent, Jacob, Jared, Sebastian and Mark's charges all be dismissed. It can be found online here: <http://nato5.occupychi.org/content/sign-here-free-nato5>

### **27 Sept – Protest NYPD Police Commissioner Ray Kelly**

*Stop Stop and Frisk, along with other groups, are organizing a protest of Ray Kelly in a couple of days. We encourage you to attend, if possible.*

#### **MORE:**

The Women's City Club is kicking off their speaker's series, "The Most Powerful People in New York" with NYPD Police Commissioner Ray Kelly. We must make sure everywhere Ray Kelly goes, he is reminded of the names and stories of the innocent Black and Latino men and women gunned down by the NYPD. He should be reminded of the injustice of close to 700,000 being stopped and frisked just this year, 80% of whom are Black and Latino. He should be reminded that the most "powerful people in New York" should be the PEOPLE, not the 1% and their police force.

Join us outside in protest. Everyone who attends this speaker series should know about the crimes Ray Kelly oversees and justifies.

**WHEN:** Thursday, September 27 at 5:30PM

**WHERE:** Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (7 West 55th Street on corner of 5th Avenue)

To find out more information about the event go to:

<https://www.z2systems.com/np/clients/wccny/event.jsp?event=731>

**DIRECTIONS** to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church at West 55<sup>th</sup> Street & 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Transit: E train or weekday M to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (east exit, nearest Queens, to 53<sup>rd</sup> Street & 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue); N, R or weekday Q to 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue (east exit, nearest Queens, to 60<sup>th</sup> Street & 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue); F to 57<sup>th</sup> Street (at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue); D or weekday B to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (at 53<sup>rd</sup> Street); weekend Q terminates at 57<sup>th</sup> Street-7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; #4, 5, 6 to 59<sup>th</sup> Street (at Lexington Avenue); #6 to 51<sup>st</sup> Street (at Lexington Avenue); A, C to 59<sup>th</sup> Street-Columbus Circle; M57 cross town bus via 57<sup>th</sup> Street & West End; M31 cross town via 57<sup>th</sup> Street & York; buses via 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue or 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue or Madison Avenue.

MAP: <http://ow.ly/dRsFW>; bus map: <http://ow.ly/6SK4u>

### **29 Sept - THE OMFG DANIEL MCGOWAN IS COMING HOME BOOKSALE!**

*So local friend, comrade, and all around good guy Daniel McGowan gets released to a halfway house in December. To raise funds for his release, Book Thug Nation and Family & Friends of Daniel McGowan are organizing a book sale. The details are below.*

#### **MORE:**

**WHAT:** 7<sup>th</sup> (and LAST!!!) Annual Benefit Book Sale for Daniel McGowan

**WHEN:** 11am to 7pm, Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 [rain date: Sunday, September 30<sup>th</sup>]

**WHERE:** Bedford Avenue & North 6<sup>th</sup> Street (NE corner), Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York 11211

**COST:** There will be books priced for any budget

We are writing to announce our **FINAL** Benefit Book Sale for Daniel McGowan!!!

Daniel is going to halfway house in December which is wonderful news. However, he is not out of the woods yet. This book sale is your chance to help with prison expenses such as overpriced phone calls and prison necessities as well as the expenses of transitioning back to life on the outside— the car ride back to New York, rent, clothes that might fit him now, and all the other little things that he'll need to live halfway in, halfway out of the criminal injustice system. Prisoner support does not end with release but this will most likely be the last book sale to happen in support of Daniel while he's in prison. We've had great success and good times with these book sales in the past and with your help, this last one will be EPIC.

On Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, [Book Thug Nation](#) and [Family & Friends of Daniel McGowan](#) will be having an all-day book sale to raise money for Daniel's legal defense, commissary, and coming home fund. The sale will be held at the Book Thug Nation book tables on [Bedford Avenue and North 6th Street](#) in Williamsburg Brooklyn. Along with great books at inexpensive prices, there will be music, a table with Daniel t-shirts, merchandise and literature and maybe even some free food! If you can't make it to the book sale, please consider [donating](#) to Daniel today (<http://tiny.cc/danieldonation>).

To make the sale happen we NEED your book donations— preferably ahead of time. Please see the list of guidelines below for what to donate. The best way to donate is to bring your books to the [Book Thug Nation storefront](#) at 100 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (between Berry and Wythe Streets) from 12-9pm any day before the sale. Please be sure to tell whoever is working that the books are specifically for the Daniel McGowan Benefit Sale. You can also bring books to North 6th Street and Bedford Avenue the morning of September 29<sup>th</sup> or contact [krazdale@gmail.com](mailto:krazdale@gmail.com) to make specific arrangements for donating.

#### DONATION GUIDELINES

BOOKS WE WANT:

Contemporary and Classic Literary Fiction (e.g. Murakami, Nabokov, Plath, Safran Foer, Hemingway, Didion, Poe, Bolano, et cetera)

Non Fiction on topics such as:

History

Sociology

Women's Studies

African American

Latino/a

Art

Eastern Religion

Alternative Health/Nutrition

Dictionaries and Thesauruses (these books will be donated directly to NYC Books Through Bars)

Books we DON'T want:

Pulp fiction (a.k.a drug store paperbacks, best-sellers, e.g. Danielle Steele, Michael Crichton, Anne Rice, Tom Clancy, et cetera)

Cook Books

Self Help

Books that aren't sold on the day of the sale will be held for future benefits or donated to [NYC Books Through Bars](#).

Brought to you by Book Thug Nation, [bookthugnation.com](http://bookthugnation.com)

**THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE to donate books before Daniel come home, so DO IT!**

Thanks for your continued support of Daniel!