

Updates for August 16th

1 Aug – Black August Begins

We are squarely in the middle of Black August and in order to make sure you are not only aware of the month and its legacy, but also its historical roots, we're pasting a piece from the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. There are still a few events in NYC over the next couple of weeks and we've added those below as well.

MORE:

Black August originated in the concentration camps of California to honor fallen Freedom Fighters Jonathan Jackson, George Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain, and Khatari Gaulden. Jonathan Jackson was gunned down outside the Marin County courthouse on August 7, 1970 as he attempted to liberate three imprisoned Black Liberation Fighters: James McClain, William Christmas and Ruchell Magee.

Ruchell Magee is the sole survivor of that armed rebellion. He is the former co-defendant of Angela Davis and has been locked down for 40 years, most of it in solitary confinement. George Jackson was assassinated by prison guards during a Black prison rebellion at San Quentin on August 21, 1971. Three prison guards were also killed during that rebellion and prison officials charged six Black and Latino prisoners with the death of those guards.

These six brothers became known as the San Quentin Six. To honor these fallen soldiers the brothers who participated in the collective founding of Black August wore **black armbands** on their left arm and studied revolutionary works, focusing on the works of George Jackson.

In the month of August the brothers did not listen to the radio or watch television. Additionally, they didn't eat or drink anything from sun-up to sundown; and loud and boastful behavior was not allowed. The brothers did not support the prison's canteen. The use of drugs and alcoholic beverages was prohibited and the brothers held daily exercises because during Black August emphasis is placed on sacrifice, fortitude and discipline. Black August is a time to embrace the principles of unity, self-sacrifice, political education, physical training, and resistance.

The tradition of fasting during Black August teaches self-discipline. A conscious fast is in effect **FROM SUNRISE TO SUNSET** (or suggested from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm), this includes refraining from drinking water or liquids and eating food of any kind during that period. Some other personal sacrifice can be made as well. The sundown meal is traditionally shared whenever possible among comrades. On August 31, a People's Feast is held and the fast is broken. Black August fasting should serve as a constant reminder of the conditions our people have faced and still confront. Fasting is uncomfortable at times, but it is helpful to remember all those who have come and gone before us, **Ni Nkan Mase, if we stand tall, it is because we stand on the shoulders of many ancestors.**

The Spread and Growth of Black August

Black August is a time to **STUDY AND PRACTICE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH ABOUT OUR HISTORY AND THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF OUR PEOPLE.** In the late 1970s Black August was moved from the yards of California's concentration camps to New Afrikan communities throughout California and the united states empire. As the Black August practice and tradition spread, it grew to observe not only the sacrifices of the brothers in California's concentration camps, but the sacrifices and struggles of our ancestors against white supremacy, colonialism, and imperialism.

In the late 1970's the observance and practice of Black August left the prisons of California and began being practiced by Black/New Afrikan revolutionaries throughout the country. Members of the New Afrikan Independence Movement (NAIM) began practicing and spreading Black August during this period. The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement (MXGM) inherited knowledge and practice of Black August from its parent organization, the New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO). MXGM, through the Black August Hip Hop Project, began introducing the Hip Hop community to Black August in the late 1990's after being inspired by New Afrikan political exile Nehanda Abiodun.

Brief Historical Outline of “Black August”

A sampling of this month of “righteous rebellion” and “racist repression” includes:

- The first Afrikans were brought to Jamestown as slaves in August of 1619.
- Gabriel Prosser’s slave rebellion occurred on August 30th, 1800.
- The “Prophet” Nat Turner planned and executed a slave rebellion that commenced on August 21st, 1831.
- In 1843, Henry Highland Garnett called a general slave strike on August 22.
- The Underground Railroad was started on August 2nd, 1850.
- The March on Washington occurred in August of 1963
- The Watts rebellions were in August of 1965.
- On August 18th, 1971 the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (RNA) was raided by Mississippi police and FBI agents.
- On August 8th, 1978 Philadelphia police initiated a shootout against MOVE members

Further, August is a time of birth. Dr. Mutulu Shakur (New Afrikan prisoner of war), Pan-Africanist Leader Marcus Garvey, Maroon Russell Shoatz (political prisoner) and Chicago Black Panther Party Chairman Fred Hampton were born in August. August is also a time of transition and rebirth. The great scholar and educator W.E.B. Dubois died in Ghana on August 27, 1963. So, August is a month during which New Afrikans can reflect on our current situation and our struggle for self-determination and freedom.

1 Aug – Amnesty International Letter for Leonard Peltier

On August 1st, Amnesty International wrote a letter to the warden of the prison in which Leonard Peltier is currently being held in solitary confinement. While we understand the problematic nature of NGOs and deferring to them as authorities or more legitimate than we are, it's still valuable to recognize when they do the right thing. We've pasted their public statement below.

MORE:

US authorities urged to improve prison conditions for Leonard Peltier

Amnesty International has written to Warden Bledsoe at the United States Penitentiary in Lewisburg to express concern at reports that Leonard Peltier has been placed in isolation as a disciplinary measure which could continue for six months.

According to reports, Peltier was moved at the end of June following two minor infractions, one of which included tampering with the wires to the lighting in his cell, which he vehemently denies. He is reportedly locked in his cell for most of the day.

Amnesty International is concerned that Peltier may have been unfairly punished for an offense he did not commit, and that confinement to a cell for a prolonged period with inadequate exercise and other deprivations could be detrimental to his health, particularly in view of the poor state of his physical health and existing medical conditions.

Amnesty International has urged Warden Bledsoe to review Peltier’s confinement to isolation, and to ensure that he has an opportunity to fairly contest any charges against him. It has also urged him not to confine Peltier in conditions which may be detrimental to his health, and to give him access to appropriate medical treatment he may need.

In addition, Amnesty International has urged Warden Bledsoe to review conditions for all prisoners held in isolation following reports that they receive no alleviation from the heat and sleep on the floor at night in order to get some respite from the very high temperatures, which have reportedly recently reached 100 degrees fahrenheit in the locality.

Background Information

Leonard Peltier is a prominent member of the American Indian Movement (AIM), who was convicted of the murders of two Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents during a confrontation involving AIM members on

the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota in 1975. Peltier, who has always denied shooting the agents, was sentenced to two sentences of life imprisonment in 1977. Amnesty International has ongoing concerns about the fairness of the process leading to his conviction.

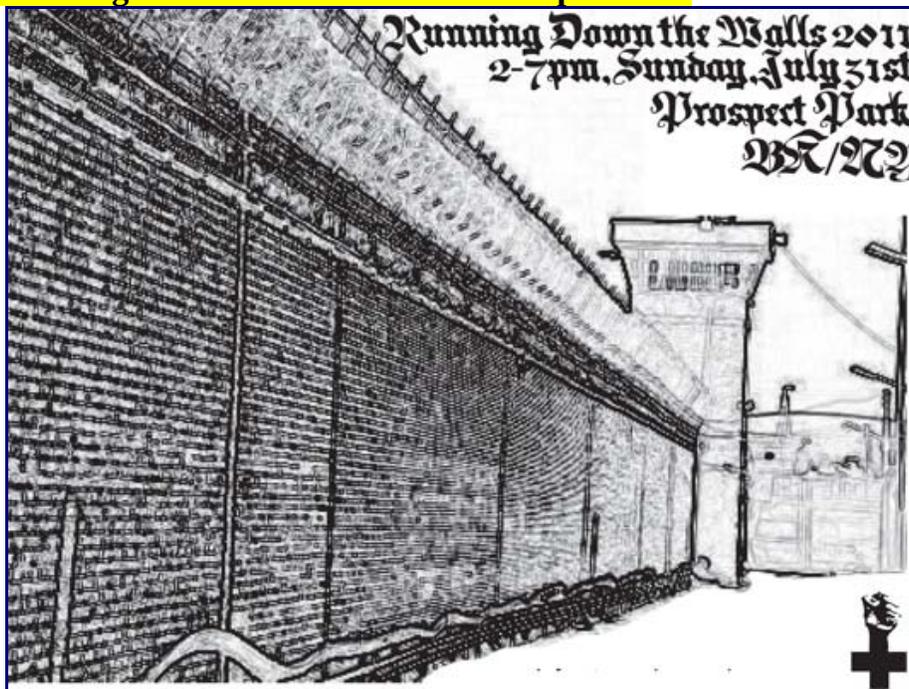
3 Aug - SHAC 7 Political Prisoner Kevin Kjonaas has Been Released to a Halfway House

The last of the imprisoned SHAC 7, Kevin Kjonaas, has been released from prison to a halfway house, having served nearly five years in a federal prison.

MORE:

The SHAC 7 are 6 activists and a corporation, Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty USA Inc., that were found guilty of multiple federal felonies for their alleged role in campaigning to close down the notorious animal testing lab, Huntingdon Life Sciences. They were never accused of actually smashing windows, liberating animals or even attending demonstrations, but rather reporting on and encouraging others to engage in legal demonstrations and supporting the ideology of direct action.

3 Aug - NYC Running Down the Walls 2011 – A Reportback



[Running Down the Walls 2011 in NYC](#) went amazingly well. The bird of good omen flew overhead as we arrived at Prospect Park and found parking in the slot closest to the entrance. Those who have tried to park in any of the five boroughs know what that means. We took to transferring everything from the car to the start/finish/picnic spot, while one of us walked and marked the run's route. The route is commonly known as "The Inner Loop" by local runners and two laps around equals almost exactly 3.1 miles, or 5 kilometers.

Given that this was also a picnic-- outdoors, breezy, and mildly unpredictable, we set up a scaled down version of our literature table. This meant selling only buttons and water-bottles and copies of "[Fire to the Prisons](#)" magazine, which were donated to us as a fundraiser. Free literature included tri-folds about the New York State political prisoners and prisoners of war; a palm card that addresses the existence of political prisoners and prisoners of war in the United States on one side and information about NYC ABC as well as a list of our Political Prisoner Letter-Writing Dinner dates for the remainder of the year on the other side; and sign-up/sponsor sheets for the event.

We also had printed number plates for the participants. The flipside of the plates had information about NYC ABC and guidelines for writing to prisoners, making it both a memento and a useful reminder to write to folks.



RDTW 2011 was an inside job. Not really, you fucking wingnuts!

Participants started arriving about 1:50 and it was clear that they were excited about Running Down the Walls and serious about their sponsorships and running.

We planned on having registration from 2:00-2:30, with a race start at 2:30. However, after a few comrades called to let us know they were on their way, we decided to wait. And while some showed up as much as an hour later and ran or walked the course, folks were stretched, warmed up, and ready to run down some damned walls! That those who showed up really late didn't just kick down money, but also wanted to do the damned thing is a testament to the power of the event.

One NYC ABC collective member had been talking all this shit about winning last year and to expect the same for 2011. Unfortunately for that comrade, some folks brought serious running to the table. One of the participants actually got their college paid for on a track scholarship! So as a note to those looking to run down the walls in New York City-- you better start training, because you WILL have real competition. A lot of folks had specialized road running shoes and a few had running shorts. And that gear was worn in and not for show.

By about 2:40, late-comers showed up and the run was on. Having the run consist of two laps gave folks an idea of the course, so they could strategize their second lap after finishing the first. The person who first crossed the finish line did so in under twenty minutes. It was the person who went to college on a track scholarship and hadn't trained in years. The next person, maybe a minute or less off the lead, was from NYC ABC. For someone who hasn't trained for a run since last year's Running Down the Walls, that's pretty impressive. Second place is FIRST runner-up, right? We're all winners, it's just for fun, this wasn't a competition, et cetera-- whatever it takes to make a comrade feel better, right?

The turnout was strong, with between twenty-five and thirty folks participating throughout the day and plenty of others who came to show their support. A fair number of park guests stopped at the table to get information about the prisoners, Running Down the Walls, and NYC ABC. A few runners garnered over \$100 each in sponsors, and several others raised almost as much. All told, between the event and what was sold through our table, we raised a respectable amount of loot. Half of the funds will go to the [ABC F Warchest Program](#), the remainder to the [Safe OUTside the System Collective](#) (SOS is an anti-violence program led by and for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two Spirit, Trans, and Gender Non Conforming people of color. They are devoted to challenging hate and police violence by using community based strategies rather than relying on the police.)

After folks cooled down and had group photos taken by Dequi (recently married to [Sekou Odinga](#)), we ate. It's a good thing Rolling Down the Walls 2011 wasn't a competition in regards to either the run (though the first five or eight runners certainly treated it as such) or the food. Hurt feelings are certain if anyone tried to compete with one collective member's vegan pulled pork sandwiches. With thinly-sliced white onion and tomato on a bun...holy shit. We had sweet tea, lemonade, root beer, and ice cold water to keep us hydrated.

Folks sitting around, talking, having just shared the run, felt good. The group consisted of folks from diverse backgrounds, many of whom were new faces to our collective. [Facebook](#) friends brought IRL friends and comrades & allies turned up as well. [South Brooklyn ABCF](#), [Family and Friends of Daniel McGowan](#), [NYC Jericho Movement](#), [Leonard Peltier Defense/Offense Committee](#), [Malcolm X Grassroots Movement](#), and the [Sekou Odinga Defense Committee](#) were among the represented organizations that explicitly work on political prisoner support.

Most folks had left by 6:30 and those who stayed did so to help clean up and transfer everything to the car. So the event went as scheduled, almost to the minute.

Knowing the history of the run and the imprisoned comrades with whom we ran in solidarity elevated Running Down the Walls 2011 to an even more inspiring level.

And that's how we get down (the walls).

NYC ABC

3 Aug – Update from Pelican Bay & Actions: Prisoners Plan to Return to Strike

*We received an important update from the hunger strike leaders at Pelican Bay. Hunger Strike leader Todd Ashker says the strikers are giving the CDCR of 2-3 weeks from July 20th to come up with some substantive changes in response to their five core demands. **If the CDCR does not follow through, prisoners at Pelican Bay plan to go back on hunger strike.** Todd writes:*

"It's very important that our supporters know where we stand, and that CDCR knows that we're not going to go for any B.S. We remain as serious about our stand now as we were at the start, and mean what we said regarding an indefinite hunger strike peaceful protest until our demands are met. I repeat-we're simply giving CDCR a brief grace period in response to their request for the opportunity to get [it] right in a timely fashion! We'll see where things stand soon enough!"

Supporters are urged to keep up pressure on the CDCR and California state legislators to meet the Hunger Striker's demands.

MORE:

Please join us and support a statewide mobilization to Sacramento on August 23rd for an informational legislative hearing held by the California State Assembly's Public Safety Committee!

Support Statewide Mobilization to Sacramento August 23rd

If you're in California or on the West Coast:

- 1. Join the Statewide Mobilization to Sacramento!** Come to Sacramento on August 23rd for a day of action to support the hunger strike! If you need a ride, contact prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity@gmail.com as soon as possible.
- 2. Pressure your Legislators!** Call and/or visit your legislators and urge them to attend the hearing on August 23rd, as well as visit the hunger strikers at Pelican Bay and other prisons
- 3. Make Some Noise!** Organize demonstrations, events, rallies in a city near you targeting your legislators' local offices leading up to the hearing or during (if you're legislators are not attending)!
- 4. Support Transportation for supporters across the state!**
- 5. Contact prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity@gmail.com** if you can drive a car from where ever you are in California to Sacramento and have room for more passengers.
- 6. You can also donate funds to Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity** so that families and community members across California can get to Sacramento on August 23rd. Donate by going to [California Prison Focus'](#) website, on the left-hand side there's a donate button that will link you to CPF's paypal account. Or, write a check and mail it to California Prison Focus/ 1904 Franklin, Suite 507/ Oakland, California 94612. Make sure to put a note on your check or paypal transaction "hunger strike" or "coalition."

If you're outside of California:

1. Support transportation for supporters across the state!

Donate funds to Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity so that families and communities members across California can get to Sacramento on August 23rd. Donate by going to [California Prison Focus](#) website, on the left-hand side there's a donate button that will link you to CPF's paypal account. Or, write a check and mail it to California Prison Focus/ 1904 Franklin, Suite 507/ Oakland, California 94612. Make sure to put a note on your check or paypal transaction "hunger strike" or "coalition"

7. **Pressure your Legislators!** Contact your state legislators and urge them to get every California state legislator they know to attend the Legislative Hearing on the 23rd, as well as visit hunger strikers at Pelican Bay and other prisons.
8. **Make some Noise!** Organize local rallies, demonstrations and events in solidarity with the hunger strike near or on August 23rd to help spread awareness about the strike, the hearing, and local struggles against imprisonment.

****For Supporters Everywhere:** We encourage all supporters to continue spreading the word about the strike and the upcoming hearing, through emails, facebook, text-messages, twitter--all tools of social media and communication. We also encourage supports to continue writing prisoners and sharing words of support, encouragement, and updates on the strike and statewide mobilization to Sacramento for the hearing. [Go to https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/write-to-the-strike-leaders](https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/write-to-the-strike-leaders) for more info to write to the hunger strike leaders.

For regular updates on the hunger strike and efforts to support it, visit prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com.

4 Aug – New Writing by and Book Request List for Eric McDavid

We wanted to let you know that Eric's support crew has posted a new piece from Eric on his website. We've pasted it below and you can find it here:

<http://www.supporteric.org/writings.htm#choice>

They have also updated Eric's booklist, which you can find here:

<http://www.supporteric.org/howtohelp.htm#Books>

If you are going to order Eric books, please make sure you tell his supporters which books you are sending so they can update Eric's list (to prevent folks from sending the same books!). They can be reached at sacprisonersupport@riseup.net

N The Dark Night A New Moon
 my Being is strained by the Constant Sounds of
 Sirens - Wheels - Walks - Lights -
 - Body Bags 4 the reprieve i'm unable 2 Provide
 They say "The Darkest Hour is That Just B4 Dawn"
 Amongst the Flickering, Glaring, Burdensome
 Luminescence of Municipality -
 That Hour is only Felt N my Heart
 it is there where the Final Refuge of
 Nature Resides
 my Last Remaining Terrae Incognitae
 (Quick)
 Moving w/the flow of my Pattern
 Avoiding the Hoops & Snares of this Cult(ure)s Ways
 Seeking that which is not Known
 (whisper)
 The Scent of the Feeling is the Only Trace
 eyes closed, Heart Wide
 The Hidden Path of That which i Seek -
 Stumbling - Crawling - Wading - Submerging - Emerging
 Listen... ..
 Feel
 Don't Stop...
 ...The Dawn is Coming...

 -D
 day after the 6th New Moon
 year of the trial
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5 Aug – Why is Leonard Peltier In Solitary?

As we mentioned earlier, Amnesty International has called on prison authorities at the Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary to reconsider draconian sanctions against imprisoned American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier and to improve conditions for Peltier and other inmates held in isolation at the facility. Jeff Armstrong wrote a decent analytical piece about Peltier's banishment to solitary confinement for counterpunch and we've pasted it below.

MORE:

In an August 3 statement, Amnesty International said it "urged Warden Bledsoe to review Peltier's confinement to isolation, and to ensure that he has an opportunity to fairly contest any charges against him. It has also urged him not to confine Peltier in conditions which may be detrimental to his health, and to give him access to appropriate medical treatment he may need."

Peltier has been held in solitary confinement under oppressively hot conditions since June 27 for minor prison disciplinary violations his attorney maintains he did not commit.

Peltier, age 66 and in declining health, now faces at least another month in what he describes as "a steel and concrete box with no ventilation." Federal prison officials initially indicated that Peltier would serve six months in "the hole," but reduced his penalty to 60 days (from the July 11 hearing date) after an outcry from his legal counsel and international supporters.

"These are very, very minor offenses that even if he did commit them are not significant," said lead Peltier attorney Robert R. Bryan.

Serving consecutive life sentences for his alleged role in the slaying of two FBI agents engaged in a June 26, 1975 shootout with AIM members on the Pine Ridge Reservation, Peltier is viewed across the globe as a political prisoner. The shootout occurred in the context of a political struggle by grassroots Lakota traditionalists supported by AIM against a violently corrupt tribal dictatorship backed by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs and the FBI.

While the U.S. government itself has conceded it cannot prove who fired the fatal shots, it has denied Peltier parole in a classic Catch-22 scenario for refusing to admit personal responsibility for the killings.

Incident reports from the federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania show Peltier was punished for possessing Scottish currency and for having exposed wires in his cell, according to the prison report, "in the wall of the ceiling." Bryan said Peltier could not have received the 20-pound note in the mail without the complicity of prison employees who carefully open and screen all outgoing and incoming letters and envelopes.

"They had to knowingly let the currency be delivered to my client. They open everything that comes through the mail room except my correspondence," said Bryan. "Whoever it was that opened the letter set it up."

Peltier attempted immediately to send the bill back out through the mail, but this time the bill was detected. His cell was searched and the exposed wires found. "He sent it out thinking he was doing the right thing," said Bryan. During the search, Peltier's "religious items were thrown around" by prison authorities, the attorney alleged.

Bryan said Peltier had confronted a previous cellmate over the electrical wires, which the cellmate had apparently used to improve his radio reception, and thought the issue resolved. The attorney added that the timing of the incident itself is rather suspect.

"It was the day after the anniversary of [the June 26, 1975 shootout at] Oglala and two days after the defeat of Custer [on June 25, 1876]. It seems a little coincidental."

After 35 years in prison, Peltier scrupulously adheres to institutional rules and is noted for his role as an elder counselor to younger inmates. The only reason Peltier remains in Lewisburg, which began to transition into something of a supermax facility for problematic prisoners in 2008, is that he was assaulted by fellow Natives upon his transfer to Canaan federal penitentiary, also in Pennsylvania, on Jan. 13, 2009.

Peltier did not fight back and was placed in isolation for refusing to name his attackers. Prison authorities have refused to release videotapes or reports on the assault, or even admit that it occurred, despite requests from the North Dakota Associated Press, as well as Peltier's defense. The indigenous activist suspected that the incident was staged in order to incite a disciplinary violation in advance of his parole hearing later that year, and it is difficult to otherwise explain why a respected, if not revered, Native warrior and freedom fighter would be brutally beaten by his own comrades in the absence of external instigation.

Peltier supporters were encouraged by the election of Barack Obama in 2008, but the president's failure to replace Drew Wrigley as U.S. Attorney for North Dakota helped deny Peltier a fair parole hearing. Wrigley hoped to ride the issue into the governor's office but had to settle for lieutenant governor instead, by painting Peltier as a violent criminal whose release "would promote disrespect for the law." This disingenuous argument helped persuade the U.S. Parole Commission to override its presumptive 30-year maximum sentence requirement, one by which no less a reformed prisoner than past and present Charles Manson adherent Squeaky Fromme was released shortly before Peltier was denied.

Amnesty International, however, has monitored the case for more than three decades and argues to the contrary that Peltier's continued incarceration could have the same effect of diminishing respect for U.S. legal institutions. Amnesty International has recognized Peltier as a political prisoner and called for his "immediate and unconditional release," while supporting his efforts toward executive clemency or parole.

In a 2000 press release calling for presidential clemency from Bill Clinton, AI said it "believes that the evidence that Peltier shot the two FBI agents is far from conclusive. One of the organization's pivotal concerns was that his extradition from Canada was on the basis of a testimony by an alleged eye-witness who was coerced by the FBI into making false statements. In a recent public hearing in Toronto, Canada, Myrtle Poor Bear reasserted that her original claim -- that she was Peltier's girlfriend and that she saw him shoot the agents -- was false, and was a result of months of threats and harassment from FBI agents. She had also said that she had been 80 kilometers (50 miles) away from the scene at the time of the shooting.

"Amnesty International has repeatedly voiced serious concerns over the fairness of the legal proceedings which led to Leonard Peltier's conviction and sentence, and believes that political factors may have influenced the way in which the case was conducted," the organization said of the 1977 federal trial in Fargo, North Dakota.

In response to a recent Freedom of Information Request by Peltier attorneys, the FBI claimed it had misplaced and could not locate Myrtle Poor Bear's files. Peltier attorneys say the suppressed FBI files are among more than

140,000 that have been denied release on privacy or national security grounds. The most recent suppression of documents came from a 2009 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling upholding a government decision to withhold, among 11,000 pages of files, "twenty-one volumes of what the FBI described as 'informant information.'" Remarkably, the federal courts found no compelling public or historical interest in the documents sufficient to override the privacy interests of federal informants and their handlers, though U.S. v. Peltier will undoubtedly go down in history as one of the most controversial court cases of the 20th century and one of a long and growing list of legal injustices against Native peoples in the U.S.

Bryan says the defense will appeal the 2009 parole denial but that his legal efforts will ultimately go to the root of the problem. An internationally renowned human rights attorney who has helped save the lives of as many as 200 death row inmates, Bryan says Peltier's current legal status amounts to a death sentence. Yet he firmly believes that the truth will set Peltier free.

"The elephant in the room is that Leonard is innocent," says Bryan. "It's very clear he did not kill the agents; he's a political prisoner. All he wants now is to live out the rest of his days at Turtle Mountain, where he will be welcomed as a respected elder."

6 Aug – Update on Jalil Muntaqim

One of the prisoners we are focusing on tonight, Jalil Muntaqim, was not only recently transferred, but even more recently he was charged with gang-related materials and was facing being banished to a special handling unit, also called a SHU, and better know as the hole or solitary confinement. The so-called gang-related material is an article Jalil wrote in 1991 after the Rodney King verdict, in which he call for an organized community response and encourages including street formations such as the crips and bloods. Here's what we heard from his supporters:

MORE:

I am writing with an update on Jalil's current situation at Attica. He was charged with possession of gang related materials. Last Thursday, guards did a search of his cell and found a short piece he had written in 1991 in response to the Rodney King riots, and calling for an organized community response including the bloods and crips.

He was anticipating at least 6 months in SHU, but found out yesterday that he will be keeplocked for 90 days with an extra 75 if he gets any other disciplinaries in that period of time--no SHU. I am hoping to go out there early this coming week--more to come.

8 Aug – Issue 19 of 4Struggle Mag is Now Available

Toronto Anarchist Black Cross and political prisoner Jaan Laaman publish the excellent 4Struggle Mag. Issue 19 is now available through us or online at <http://4strugglemag.org>

Here's this issue's introduction by Jaan:

Greetings, readers, friends, fellow activists and revolutionaries. Welcome to 4sm number 19 (mid-summer 2011). This issue begins our seventh year of publishing the news, views, insights and analyses of political prisoners and allies.

Tens of thousands of readers check out each issue (primarily the online edition). Yet 4sm's production team is very modest and the work gets done because of the extraordinary voluntary effort and commitment of a small number of dedicated and righteous comrades in Canada. And of course it is the words of political prisoners and other insightful writers (inside and out), who create the material that makes this unique mag what it is. So thanks to everyone who has contributed to 4sm, in words, work or material support. Let's keep it up and keep advancing. We welcome and need your words and your political and financial support.

After our letters section, we begin this issue with our celebration of Black August 2011. 4sm dedicates Black August and this entire issue as a tribute to geronimo ji-jaga, who passed of a heart attack on June 2, in Tanzania.

geronimo, who was 63 (and chose to write his name without capitalization) was a major leader of the Black Panther Party and a founder of the Black Liberation Army. He was railroaded to prison on a bogus charge and did 27 years before he was exonerated and freed in 1997. We include several tributes to geronimo, as well as basic information on Black August in the first section.

Then we have a section on updates and actions. Everyone should check out the material on Pelican Bay, as well as this year's "Running Down The Walls" (RDTW), which will take place on July 31. Next is our primary analytical and dialogue section, on the war in Libya. Following this is our section on struggle and analysis which includes essays on "Being Anti-Racist," information on the government's recent attacks on Carlos Montes, an original founder of the Brown Berets, and more. Remember, we welcome feedback and revolutionary dialogue on all our articles. We will look forward to your words for issue 20, including updates on Pelican Bay, and report backs on RDTW.

As you go through this issue, keep geronimo in your thoughts, as well as our warrior sisters who passed last August: Senora Lolita Lebron and Ms. Marilyn Buck. They all did so much, and now it is our turn. See you all in issue 20, out in November.

Jaan Laaman, editor/anti-imperialist political prisoner

8 Aug - Author Alan Moore stands up for Bradley Manning

Alan Moore, the world-renowned British author, of "V for Vendetta" and "Watchmen" issued the following statement today in support of accused WikiLeaks whistleblower, PFC Bradley Manning:

MORE:

"With any legitimate trial of whistleblower Bradley Manning still being at an unspecified date in the future, it would seem that what is presently on trial here is Western culture itself. When the persecution of an individual who has exposed an evil is pursued so ruthlessly and yet the evil itself is studiously ignored, all of us know that there is something very wrong with the way that our society is conducting itself. And if we do not protest in the strongest terms about what is being done in our name, then we become complicit.

There is no third option. Bradley Manning and others like him everywhere are vital to our continued moral health and well-being as a people, and unless we offer them our full support in their often dire and isolated circumstances, it is we, as a people, who will end up the losers."

Alan Moore is a prolific novelist and comic book writer, who has received widespread critical acclaim for creating series such as V for Vendetta, Watchmen, and From Hell. For several years, he worked with the American-based DC Comics franchise on popular characters such as Batman, Superman, and Swamp Thing. Several of his works have since been adapted into Hollywood films.

"Fans of Alan Moore love his work, not only for creating bold characters and gripping story-lines, but also for demonstrating the power of ideas," said Jeff Paterson, a co-founder of the Bradley Manning Support Network. "We welcome his support and the support of so many others around the world who are demanding justice for Bradley Manning."

PFC Bradley Manning is a US Army intelligence analyst who is accused of revealing illegal and unjust foreign policies that have been concealed by the US government. He has been held for over a year in confinement by the Obama Administration without trial.

10 Aug - NYPD forms new social media unit to mine Facebook and Twitter for mayhem

We're pasting a corporate media article, in all its grossness, to alert and remind folks of the potential hazards that come from online communications. Of course many of these hazards exist in real life and all care should be taken when it comes to keeping yourself and your community safe in what you say and to whom you say it. With

that...

MORE:

The [NYPD](#) has formed a new unit to track troublemakers who announce plans or brag about their crimes on [Twitter](#), [MySpace](#) and [Facebook](#).

Newly named [Assistant Commissioner Kevin O'Connor](#), one of the department's online and gang gurus, has been put in charge of the new juvenile justice unit. He and his staff will mine social media, looking for info about troublesome house parties, gang showdowns and other potential mayhem, sources said.

The power of social media to empower both criminals and cops has been on full display in [London](#) this week, where riots and looting have been spreading dramatically.

The rioters have been using Twitter and [BlackBerry](#) messages to choose targets for looting or burning - and to alert one another about police positions.

The very same social media have been a source for those trying to help cops by posting photos of rioters.

O'Connor's new unit will operate under the [Community Affairs Bureau](#); it will also handle outreach programs, with its mandate going beyond the Net.

Still, the 23-year veteran is known for his success in online policing, including stings to catch predator perverts looking for sex with underage victims.

And he was credited in his former assignment with a [Manhattan](#) North gang unit for providing critical information in a number of shooting cases gleaned from online boasting. O'Connor, who could not be reached for comment, was promoted to his new position from lieutenant - a highly unusual stepup in rank.

Under [Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly](#), the NYPD has made wide use of technology, and it's helped in a number of cases, including:

- * In March, [Anthony Collao](#), 18, was fatally beaten in an anti-gay attack at a [Woodhaven, Queens](#), house party advertised on Facebook. Calvin Pietri, one of six arrested, bragged about the murder on Facebook, authorities said.
- * Also in March, a feud over a \$20 loan for diapers played out on Facebook and ended with Kayla Henriques, 18, accused of stabbing to death her friend [Kamisha Richards](#), 22, in [East New York, Brooklyn](#).

In May, a man was shot dead at a Queens junior high reunion that drew hundreds of unexpected revelers when word of the bash went viral on Twitter.

That incident prompted Kelly to instruct all police commanders to keep track of house parties, especially those advertising online.

10 Aug – North Carolina Prisoner's Hunger Strike Ends in Success

On July 15th, North Carolina prisoner and anarchist James Graham began a hunger strike at Lanesboro CI in solidarity with the thousands of striking prisoners across California. For over a year Graham has been isolated in solitary conditions similar to those being protested by the prisoners of Pelican Bay, where California's hunger strike began.

In addition to acting in solidarity with California's prison rebels, Graham also used his strike to address a number of immediate issues surrounding living conditions on lock-up at Lanesboro. Less than a week after submitting his demands along with an announcement of his strike, most of his requests were addressed. We recently received word of this by mail. Below is a list of the demands accompanied by the results of the strike.

MORE:

“This notice brings to light a hunger strike that will start on July 15th, 2011 and includes the following demands:

-Provide toilet brushes, so that prisoners can adequately clean their toilets on lock-up during weekly clean-up.

Results: On 7/19, the Unit Manager and Assistant Unit Manager came personally to show me we now have toilet brushes to clean our toilets.

-Provide shower mats outside the shower, to prevent injury by slipping.

Results: On 7/22, the Asst. Unit Manager passed out shower mats to go outside the showers on every block.

-Provide Adequate Food/Medical Soft Diet. We want wholesome nutritional food served in sanitary conditions. Also, I requested personally to be put on a soft vegan diet due to a medical condition.

Results: On 7/20, I was finally placed on a soft vegan diet after being denied and lied to by saying, “There is no such thing...” Also, prisoners have been saying that portions have increased.

-Fix Prisoner’s Nightlights.

Results: On 7/18, maintenance men came to every block and replaced every prisoner’s bulbs that were out.

-Provide Adequate Medical Care. We want nurses to execute prompt response to sick-calls and medical emergencies and to perform daily seg checks.

Results: On 7/21, they finally called prisoners for sick-calls that had been waiting for over a month. They still haven’t been performing daily seg checks to check on the well-being of lock-up prisoners.”

We’ll do our best to keep folks updated about struggles going on at Lanesboro, particularly if there is a need or call for outside solidarity actions of any kind. We hope that small victories like this one can encourage greater unity and resistance behind the walls.

10 Aug - Memo Shows Prison Mail Screened by a “Counter-Terrorism Unit”

Mistakenly released by the Bureau of Prisons, an internal memo reveals prison mail screening by an “intelligence analyst.” It’s no secret all prison mail in and out is read by prison employees, regardless of the prisoner’s crime. But a memo mistakenly included in a rejected letter to an ELF prisoner reveals an interesting layer: her mail is screened by an “intelligence analyst” in a BOP “counter-terrorism unit.” We’ve included a printout of the memo below. The memo means absolutely nothing new to those who continue to support prisoners by writing them letters, and should in no way dissuade anyone from continuing to write. Incoming mail has always been read in federal prisons.

MORE:

The memo appears to have been inserted accidentally into an envelope for a rejected letter to Earth Liberation Front prisoner Sadie (state name: Joyanna Zacher) when it was returned to the sender. The letter was rejected for containing “unauthorized material,” according to the official form that was also included. The second document, specifically shows who rejected the letter, and why: it contained a review of the film "[If a Tree Falls](#)," a review which the “intelligence analyst” felt advocated violence.

The memo “analyzes” two other pieces of mail. One is cleared, while the other is rejected because a database search showed a former federal prisoner lives at the return address on the envelope.

The trend in federal prisons seems to be towards more restrictions on a given prisoner’s ability to communicate with the world outside, as this memo indicates.

What is significant:

- 1) The Bureau of Prisons has a central “counter-terrorism unit” selectively screening the mail of Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front prisoners, and -
- 2) They are rejecting mail for those prisoners based on content – content which is presumably allowable for prisoners not deemed “eco-terrorists.”

12 Aug – Denial of Habeus Corpus Petition For Imam Jamil Abdullan Al-Amin

After six years the Habeas Corpus Petition of Imam Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap Brown, was denied last week. More information will be forthcoming, including ways people can provide assistance, in the near future.

12 Aug - Statement from the ICFC5 on Gerardo Hernandez

The coming weeks will be critical in the upcoming closure of the Habeas Corpus process for Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, condemned unjustly to two life sentences. The US government continues to deny Gerardo his basic right to be heard by the justice system. As a result, the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5 have begun a new campaign, the details of which are pasted below.

MORE:

On April 25, U.S. prosecutor Caroline Heck Miller asked the federal court of Miami to reject his extraordinary Habeas Corpus appeal. On that occasion we asked: "What does the prosecution fear by letting Gerardo exercise his right to present his arguments to the court and request alleged evidence against him?"

New evidence has emerged that the Miami journalists who demonized the five in their coverage leading up to and during the trial, thus creating bias and influencing the jury, received a quarter of a million dollars from the U.S. government. This obstruction of justice by the government is one of the arguments Gerardo plans to present at the hearing.

For the past 12 days the Cuban Parliament has denounced the U.S. government's denial of access to legal documents related to his case as arbitrary actions against Gerardo.

Together with 10 Nobel Prize winners, thousands of artists and intellectuals, parliaments and governments (paraphrasing recent statements by Obama) we say: It is time that Gerardo Hernández and his four compañeros are freed. Even if just for humanitarian reasons, after 15 years of unjust imprisonment, it is time that the Five be freed. We do not expect something different from U.S. courts, but we believe that the U.S. government should make the right decision to allow the return of the Five to their families.

Obama can use his executive powers outlined in the U.S. Constitution to liberate the Five. It's time for him to listen to international demands and end this injustice.

Please send telegrams, faxes and e-mail to the White House and all U.S. embassies based in your country demanding an end to the illegal and arbitrary treatment against Gerardo Hernández Nordelo.

To send an e-mail message visit: [HTTP://WWW.WHITEHOUSE.GOV/CONTACT](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact)

Phone: 1 + [202. 456-1111](tel:2024561111)

Fax: 1 +202. 456-2461

Address:

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500
EE.UU.

International solidarity will continue until the Five return to their homeland and their families.

15 Aug - A CALL FOR PP/POW & POLITICAL EXILE STATEMENTS FOR THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY 45th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE JOURNAL!

In Recognition of the 1966 founding of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense and its still captured

or exiled freedom fighters; we are seeking to have all U.S. Held political prisoners, POWs, and exiled comrades to submit a short statement for this historic document being published in direct support of our longest U.S. Government held Black Panther or Black Liberation Army political prisoners and prisoners of war. The deadline is Monday, September 12th, 2011.

MORE:

PLEASE **SPREAD THE WORD ASAP** ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALLS DURING YOUR VISITS, PHONE CALLS & WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS !

ALL RECEIVED PP/POW STATEMENTS SHOULD BE FORWARDED TO:

bj710nyc@gmail.com or Panthershepcat@aol.com

PP/POW'S CAN ALSO MAIL THEIR STATEMENTS DIRECTLY TO:

Shepard McDaniel
1301 Hicks Street
Bronx, New York 10469

20 Aug - 2nd Annual Black August Art Show

WHAT: Black August Art Show

WHEN: 20-22 Aug, 2011 (Opening, 3:00-11:00pm, August 20th)

WHERE: The Brecht Forum - 451 West Street (between Bank and Bethune Streets), New York, New York 10014

COST: \$7, Suggested Donation

MORE:

August 20th, 2011 will be the date for our second annual Black August Art Auction August hosted by the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, Groundfloor Collective, and the Brecht Forum. Last years Black August Art Auction was very successful. We had incredible turnout and were able to raise over \$ 2,000 for political prisoners.

The theme for this year's Black August Art Auction will of course be centered around freeing political prisoners, but we will pay particular attention to this year marking 40 years after George Jackson's murder and the uprising at Attica. We would also like to lift up the memory of Gil Scott Heron, and former Black Panther Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt who both recently passed away. In addition, we would like to lift up the lives and contributions of Assata Shakur, Safiya Bukhari, Fannie Lou Hamer, James Baldwin, Ella Baker, Nehanda Abiodun, Kuwasi Balagoon, Mutulu Shakur, Sundiata Acoli, and many other freedom fighters in the Civil Rights and Black Power Movement. All of these folks are strongly connected to battling injustices, but some had a particular focus on combating the unjust prison system in fighting for liberation. Some have gone to the ancestors, others remain in exile, and some remain behind walls of U.S. prison even to this day. All that being said, we would like to emphasize unity in struggle along with the importance of knowing our history of resistance which we hope will be able to manifest through the showing of art, a street theater piece by J. "G" J., a dance piece by JoiLynn, and musical performances by Ras Moshe, THEESatisfaction, and the Jack Fuller Band. We hope that will be able to join us at this years Black August Art Auction and take part in this transformative experience with us.

25 Aug - 14th Annual Black August Hip Hop Concert

WHEN: 7:00pm-1:00am, Thursday, August 25, 2011

WHERE: S.O.B's - 204 Varick Street New York, New York 10014 (Take the 1 Train to Houston Street)

COST: \$15 in advance, \$20 day of show

PERFORMERS: Les Nubians, Saigon, Hasan Salaam, Mike Flo, The Remidners, Kalae All Day, Supa Nova Slom, Nena Blue, Faro Z, & Surprise Special Guests!

MORE:

The Black August Hip Hop Project strives to promote human rights through supporting and influencing the global development of Hip Hop culture. By facilitating exchanges between international communities where Hip Hop is a vital part of youth culture, we promote awareness about the social and political issues that affect our global communities.

...Our vision is to bring culture and politics together and to allow them to naturally evolve into a unique Hip Hop consciousness that informs our collective struggle for a more just, equitable and human world.

Since August of 1998, Black August has held annual New York City events at Tramps, Bowery Ballroom, Synod Hall, BB Kings, New Age Cabaret, and the Brooklyn Café —selling out eight shows! The project has featured artists such as Erykah Badu, David Banner, Common, dead prez, Fat Joe, the Roots, Jean Grae, Les Nubians, Chuck D, Gil Scott-Heron, Dave Chapelle, Tony Touch, Black Thought, The Roots, Mos Def, Talib Kweli, La Bruha, Imani Uzuri, and Cody Chestnutt.

Internationally, Black August has facilitated 8 international delegations of artists and activists to Cuba (1998, 1999, 2000, and 2003), South Africa (2001), Tanzania (2005), Brazil (2004, 2006 and this year to Venezuela (2007).

In addition to the hip hop concerts, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement has held political education workshops with the participating artists and anyone interested in learning about the cultural and political issues at the core of Black August. The annual cultural events coupled with the political education workshops and international exchanges have helped reinvigorate the Black August tradition.

In addition to the Hip Hop Concert there will also be a Black August Film Festival at the National Black Theatre on 8/13/11 and a Black August Art Exhibit at the Brecht Forum on 8/20/11. Please join us for all of our Black August events. Get more information at the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement website. <http://mxgm.org>

27 Aug – COINTELPRO 101 – A Benefit for Sekou Odinga

WHAT: Benefit for Sekou Odinga

WHEN: 6:00-10:00pm, Saturday, August 27th, 2011

WHERE: Riverside Church (490 Riverside Drive, Manhattan)

COST: Donations plus \$5 for Dinner

We have palm cards for this event. Please take and distribute them.

Panelists: Anochi Odinga, Jill Soffiyah Elijah, Andrew of NYC ABC, Others to be Announced

Invited Guests: M1, Bilal Sunni-Ali, George Edward Tait

MORE:

Beginning in the 1950s with a focus on the Puerto Rican independence movement and continuing through the 1960s and into the 1970s when much of its focus had shifted to the Black Liberation, Chicano Liberation and American Indian Movements, COINTELPRO racked up a number of assassinations, false imprisonments and ruined lives. No government official was ever punished for actions taken under the program's auspices. The film by Freedom Archives details this history through the artful use of still photos and moving images of the period covered. Films of police attacks and protests; still photos of revolutionary leaders and police murders graphically remind the viewer of Washington's willingness to do whatever it takes to maintain its control. Organizers who began their political activity during the time of Cointelpro discuss the effect the program had on them and the organizations and individuals they worked with. Indeed, several of the interviewees were themselves targets and spent years in prison (some under false accusations, as in the case of Geronimo ji-Jaga Pratt) or on the run.

Former Black Panther member Kathleen Cleaver states toward the end of the film that Cointelpro represented the efforts of a political police force making the decision as to what is allowed politically and what is not. Anything outside the parameters set by this force was fair game. Nothing that was done by government officials or private

groups and individuals acting on the government's behalf was perceived as wrong or illegal. As Attorney Bob Boyle makes clear in his final statement in the film, Cointelpro is alive and well. The only difference now is that most of what was illegal for the government to do during Cointelpro's official existence is now legal. The PATRIOT Act and other laws associated with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security have insured this.

Cointelpro 101 is a well made and appealing primer on the history of the US police state. Produced, written and directed by individuals who have themselves been the target of tactics documented in the film, it has an authenticity and immediacy that pulls the viewer in. Although too short to cover the history in as full detail as some may desire, the film's intelligence and conscientious presentation of the historical narrative makes it a film that the student, the citizen and the activist can all appreciate.

13 Oct - Attend Walter Bond's October 13th sentencing in Salt Lake City!

It sounds really stupid, but popularity counts in courtrooms. It is very important that people show up in person to these hearings to show support for the safety of the accused...The lawyers who have been interviewed... said that judges do not like being watched... and if you show they are being watched, they behave differently....pack that courtroom with family and friends to make the judge know he/she will be watched every step of the way. Lawyers interviewed about this also said it was important to pack the courtroom to humanize the accused past an identity solely reliant on the accused crime. In court, they automatically label the plaintiff the "victim," etc. and it is very manipulative language use.

WHEN: Thursday, October 13, 2011 at 3:00 pm

WHERE: Room 142, 1st Floor, U.S. District Court, 350 South Main Street, Salt Lake City, Utah

MORE:

Join other supporters in the Salt Lake City courtroom where Walter Bond will be sentenced for A.L.F. actions targeting 2 businesses that profit from animal torture and death!

This is an opportunity to stand by prisoner-of-war Walter Bond, observe courtroom proceedings first-hand, and show the press that abolitionists support Walter 100%.