

Updates for August 30<sup>th</sup>

## **6 Aug - Leonard Peltier attorney claims solitary confinement a 'setup'**

*Imprisoned American Indian Movement (AIM) activist Leonard 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. His attorney at the time, Robert R. Bryan, thinks everything leading up to this disciplinary action was well thought out. Supporters should know that Mr. Peltier has recently decided on a legal strategy that is a departure from the strategy presented by Robert R. Bryan some months ago. Consequently, Robert Bryan no longer represents Leonard Peltier. Mr. Peltier enjoys the support of other attorneys who will continue to represent him. We've pasted an article about it below.*

### **MORE:**

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 after a June 26, 1975 shootout with AIM members on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Turtle Mountain, North Dakota native 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 penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania claim 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 quickly 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.

The respected human rights organization 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, Amnesty 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 again corrected the record saying 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.

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 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."

**10 Aug – A New Video, "Leonard Peltier in Solitary," Includes Former Guard**

A new interview about Leonard Peltier, with former Federal Bureau of Prisons guard Bruce Smith, has been released. You can watch it at: <http://youtu.be/Z-y1bTyDIMI>

## **11 Aug - New York: Surveillance Cameras in the Garment District**

*The Surveillance Camera Players have released their second map of cameras in the Garment District of Manhattan. Since the release of their first map in 2003, the increase in the number of cameras is over 200 percent! Here's their description as well as the map.*

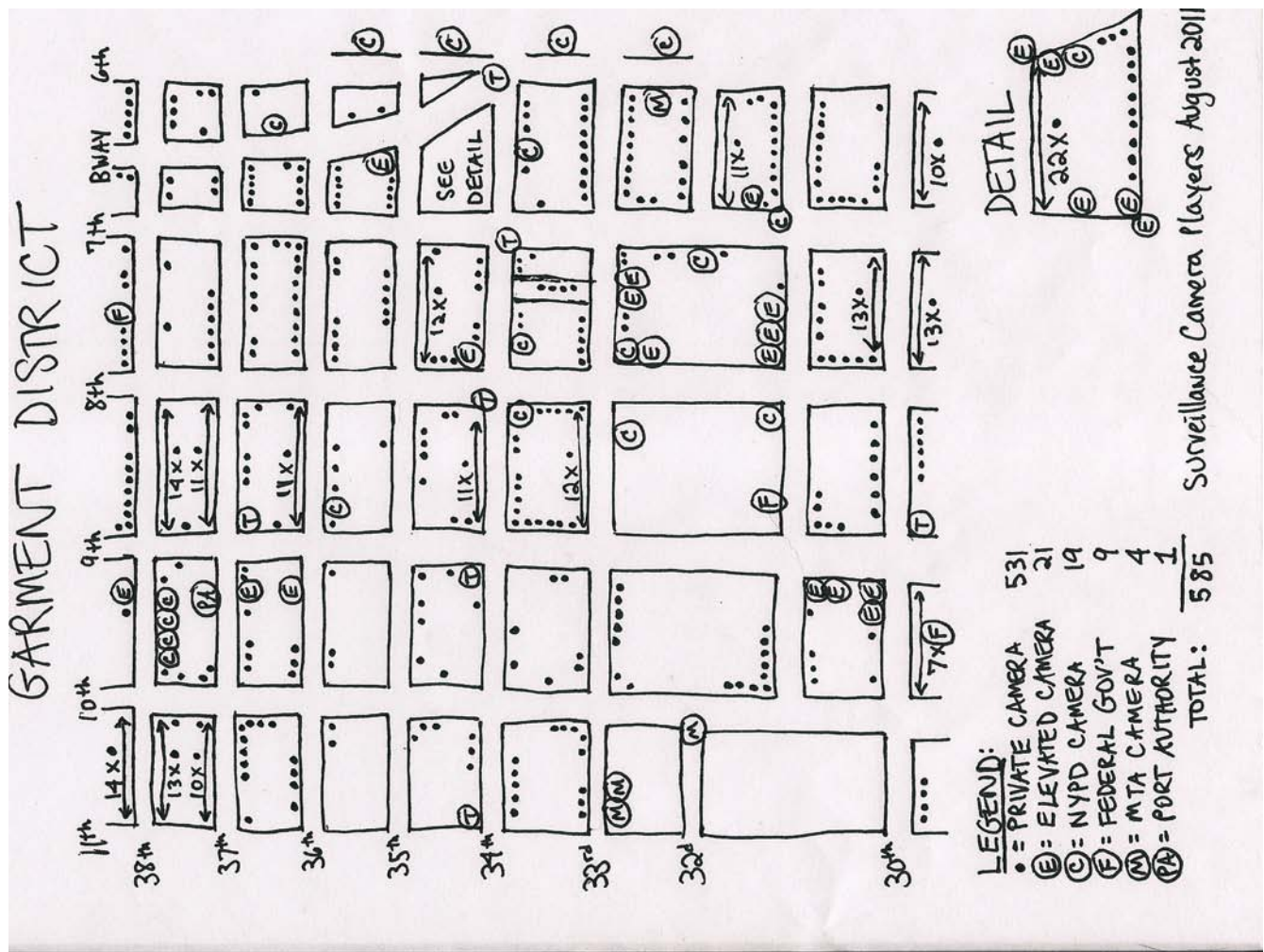
### **MORE:**

Created in April 2003, our [first map](#) of the Garment District – the area in Manhattan south of 38th Street, north of 30th Street, east of 11th Avenue and west of Sixth Avenue – was intended to set a baseline. The Republican National Convention was to be held in New York City the next year (2004). Knowing that the convention would “require” the installation of many new surveillance cameras in public places, we intended to return to the area, once the circus had left town, and count the cameras a second time. But we were unable to make a second map in 2005, as we had planned. We also never published a commentary on what the first map documents.

Created in August 2011, our long-awaited [second map](#) documents an increase of more than 200 percent in the number of cameras in the Garment District: a total of 585, up from 239. As was the case in 2003, the overwhelming majority of these cameras are installed on privately owned buildings (531 out of 585). But the Garment District has also experienced significant growth in the numbers of cameras installed on city-owned property or government buildings (35 of them, up from 20) and cameras that are “elevated,” that is, installed on the tops of buildings and perhaps operated by the NYPD or some other government agency (21, up from only 2).

So far, the Garment District is the most densely surveilled area that we have mapped. Unlike [SoHo](#) and the [Lower East Side](#), where the density is 10 cameras per square block, the ratio in this area of midtown Manhattan is almost 15 cameras per square block. In fact, there were so many cameras on one particular block that we had to create a “detail” to depict it legibly. Significantly, this one block is the location of no less than *five* elevated cameras, as well as 34 private cameras (!) and one camera operated by the NYPD. (There is a sign that says, “NYPD Security Camera In Area,” but “area” is too vague a word to offer any real assurance that *a particular spot* within that “area” is in fact being watched at any given time.)

A single, immense building occupies this super-surveilled block. What could it be? A precinct of the NYPD? The regional offices of the Department of Homeland Security? No. It's Macy's. *Forty cameras just to watch the exteriors of a single department store?! Something's obviously wrong.*



**13 Aug – Torture in the US Prison System: The Endless Punishment of Leonard Peltier**

Preston Randolph, director of the above-mentioned video, and Dan Battaglia wrote a decent op-ed piece about Leonard Peltier for truth-out.org. We're including a good bit about Leonard this go around, as more folks work to expose the more recent atrocity against this particular political prisoner.

**MORE:**

Your visit to one of America's prisons may last only a few hours, but once you pass the first steel threshold, your perception of humanity is altered. The slammed doors, metal detectors and body frisks introduce you to life on the inside, but the glaring hatred from the guards and officials make it a reality. When you creep back into your own world afterward, you wonder what is really happening to the people who permanently languish behind bars.

In June 2006, the Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons released "[Confronting Confinement](#)," a 126-page report summarizing its 12-month inquiry into the prison systems. The commission follows up the analysis based on its findings with a list of recommendations. Topping the list of needed improvements is better enforcement of inmates' right to proper health care and limitations on solitary confinement. Five years after the report's release and despite its detailed and well-researched studies, inmate abuse continues. More recently, news reports from California's Pelican Bay Prison amplified the need for change, but after the three-week inmate hunger strike ended, the torture of solitary confinement [continues nationwide](#).

More than 20,000 inmates are caged in isolation in the United States at any one time. Originally designed as a

temporary disciplinary action, solitary confinement has drifted into use as a long-term punishment. This act of inhumanity is a clear contradiction of the Eighth Amendment. During the Pelican Bay hunger strike that rippled into prisons across the country, a 66-year-old man with extreme medical needs, Leonard Peltier, was forced into "the hole" at Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary in Pennsylvania.

Nightmarish as it is, what follows is fact.

In 1977, American Indian activist Leonard Peltier was convicted of murdering two FBI agents during a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Peltier has now served more than 35 years in federal prison. His trial remains one of the most [controversial](#) in the history of the American judicial system.

Since Peltier's conviction, overwhelming information has been released confirming extreme misconduct by the FBI and the government prosecution's withholding of evidence and use of coerced testimonies. It is obvious that Peltier, despite overwhelming reasonable doubt, was considered guilty before the trial began. It is now well known that during the time of Peltier's involvement with the American Indian Movement (AIM), the FBI's Cointelpro programs were running secret, illegal tactics to eliminate political organizations of dissent, including the strategic assassination and imprisonment of activists. Cointelpro was officially abolished in 1971, but the illegal tactics it used continue. The political agenda formulated against Peltier did not end with his trial, but persists as he serves his prison sentence. In 1992, Amnesty International deemed Peltier a political prisoner and stated that, "FBI misconduct prejudiced the fairness of his trial."

Former Bureau of Prisons (BOP) official Bruce Smith served nearly 20 years at Leavenworth State Penitentiary in Kansas. Smith experienced firsthand the wrongdoings and mistreatment toward Peltier during the decades Peltier spent at Leavenworth.

"It's obvious they [the FBI and the BOP] have an agenda out against Leonard. What has happened to him is wrong. See, they have the tendency to know where they want to go in a case, and then build their evidence to that point, and that's exactly what happened to Leonard," said Smith.

The FBI's "blood for blood" agenda to railroad Peltier has merged its way into the prison system, where, it is noted, he has received inadequate and abusive treatment. Since his incarceration, Peltier has endured several hardships at the hands of the BOP, some of which have been labeled [inhumane and immoral](#).

Currently Peltier is facing serious health issues, including diabetes, hypertension and, recently, symptoms of cancer. Many of these issues have been directly caused by lack of medical treatment and poor nutrition during his imprisonment. But this does not appear to have prevented the BOP from mistreating - or, more specifically, torturing - Peltier.

Since 2009, we have been producing a documentary [film](#) exposing the Peltier case.

As filmmakers, we are personally committed to exposing the truth and having an impact in serving real justice. We have accessed archives across the country pertaining to this case and have been in communication with key players on both sides of the story. Our intention is to tell the truth, much of which will be shocking to audiences. The more information we uncover, the more obvious it is that Peltier is an innocent activist, placed in hell because of extreme and illegal FBI actions. What is really shocking is how the mistreatment of Peltier behind prison walls continues even into his old age and as his health declines.

On June 27, the day after the 36th anniversary of the FBI agents' deaths on Pine Ridge, Peltier was abruptly moved from a cell among the general prison population into solitary confinement. The reasoning for the move was hidden from his legal team and supporters for days, and concern for his well-being grew. Nearly a week after, the entire fiasco as to why the prison guards at Lewisburg decided that a 66-year-old man was a major risk to the security of the supermax prison [was revealed](#).

The BOP incident reports linked immediately above do not tell the whole story.

The first charge indicated Peltier received a letter the previous day from a supporter in Scotland that contained a 20-pound note. Peltier had asked the mailroom to send back the enclosed money, but this request was not followed up. He then addressed a letter, including the 20-pound note, to a friend, with the intent to send it out of

the prison, knowing that possession of unauthorized money was a violation of prison rules. This violation can only bring up the question: why did the BOP allow the 20-pound note into the prison in the first place, and why did the mailroom not take action when Peltier brought it to their attention?

The second charge relates to dangling wires found within Peltier's cell. The incident report claims that an officer was inspecting the cell when he observed two exposed wires above the top bunk. The guard then pulled on the wires and was shocked with a jolt of electricity. (Who in his right mind would pull on exposed electrical wires?) Even though Peltier was not in the cell at the time, the BOP classified the incident as an "assault." The report concludes by saying that Peltier was the only occupant in the cell. The BOP did not explain that a cellmate was recently transferred out of Peltier's cell. This inmate was occupying the top bunk, which Peltier cannot access. Nonetheless, he was the one punished.

These miniscule infractions are excuses to punish Peltier, who is now set to serve six months of solitary confinement in a small cement hellhole for 23 to 24 hours a day. The conditions to which he is subjected are horrific. Lewisburg Prison is a notoriously old penitentiary, and the solitary confinement cells are not properly ventilated or air-conditioned. This raises further concerns about Peltier's health as a major heat wave passes through the Eastern United States. Recently, another inmate was moved into the small, isolated cell that Peltier inhabits. The inmates who are forced into solitary confinement are not allowed personal visits or personal items of any kind. In the scorching heat, Peltier has sweated profusely, has been unable to sleep and has lost his appetite. It [has been acknowledged](#) that solitary confinement creates new health problems in inmates and can exacerbate pre-existing conditions.

This is torture, especially when used as punishment for such minor and questionable infractions.

According to Smith: "What's happening is wrong. Their goal is to make Leonard miserable. They are out for blood because of the deaths of the agents, and they will not be satisfied until they get it."

It seems that, since Smith's retirement in the 2000's, this agenda has not changed. Peltier continues to be harassed, mistreated and denied proper health care and living conditions. Once the facts are presented, it's quite obvious that from the government's perspective, Peltier is meant to die in prison.

In the United States, where our Constitution opposes "cruel and unusual punishment," we must ask ourselves what has happened. The imprisonment and harassment of an activist whose guilt is still in question is an outrage to our justice system. Everything pointing to Peltier's guilt has been debunked, to the point that the prosecutors themselves have admitted that they couldn't prove who killed the agents. Now, after 35 years of a wrongful imprisonment, Peltier, an ailing, 66-year-old man, continues to be harassed and tortured in prison. A six month-sentence to solitary confinement could very well be a death sentence. Immediate action is needed before it is too late. This case is contrary to everything America claims to stand for, and until Peltier is freed, this atrocity stains the hands of all of us who stand by and watch it happen.

### **13 Aug – Latest Statement by Roger Clement**

*Canadian political prisoner Roger Clement, who some may know from our focus on him two letter-writing dinners back, has released a short statement that we'd like to share with you.*

#### **MORE:**

*Conditions here at Pittsburgh are vastly better than those in Ottawa and Millhaven and I'm doing well. After spending six months in OCDC [Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre], I'm surprised body and mind are still on good terms. What sustained me through this trying time was the court and jail support appearances. If I wasn't very overt in acknowledging your presence, it's because I didn't want to fall apart - your demonstration of solidarity was an experience that I'll never forget. Likewise, to all those who wrote to me offering support - thank you so much for your solidarity and all the reading material you sent. Your letters made the months bearable, and brought the few rays of sunshine that shone in a dark place.*

The struggle continues  
In solidarity

## **16 Aug – Wild Horse Round Ups, Prison Labor and the Border**

*Though not directly related to political prisoners or prisoners of war, a recent piece tying together issues surrounding the United States-Mexico border, wild horse round-ups, and prison labor seems relevant. We've pasted it below.*

### **MORE:**

In a new trend that connects the taming of the wild, the prison complex and the militarization of the borderlands between the US and Mexico, wild mustangs brutally rounded up throughout the Southwest are being sold to prisons in Nevada and Colorado.

Once there, prison inmates are put to work taming the mustangs that will in turn become tools of Border Patrol to track down and arrest migrants crossing the border.

According to Rafael V. Garza, horse patrol commander for the Border Patrol in the Laredo, Texas, sector, tamed mustang-mounted Border Patrol agents arrested over 500 migrants in the first year of the program. "Its the intimidation factor," Garza said.

So, wild animals are tamed by confined prisoners in order to make it easier for Border Patrol to confine more migrants, a perfect system of racist and speciesist domination.

### **And in other Wild Horse News**

Advocates can't stop the controversial round-up of more than 2,000 wild horses and 200 wild burros along the California-Nevada border because it has already happened, the 9th Circuit ruled.

The federal appeals court in San Francisco on Monday rejected a year-old motion for a restraining order and injunction to halt the round-up in the Twin Peaks Herd Management Area as moot.

The nonprofits In Defense of Animals and Dreamcatcher Wild Horse and Burro Sanctuary have been battling the Bureau of Land Management since 2009 to halt the round-up, which they claim violates the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. The agency has maintained that the round-up is necessary to keep the herds sustainable.

A lower court denied the groups' motion in August 2010, with the round-up set to begin within days. A motions panel of the 9th Circuit rejected an emergency move for injunctive relief a few days later, and the round-up went forward, according to the ruling.

While finding that the plaintiffs' motion "raises serious legal questions concerning whether the large-scale removal of horses conflicts with the Wild Horses Act and whether an Environmental Impact Statement is required before any action can be implemented," the panel dismissed it as moot. The motion sought to enjoin only the "effects of implementing the initial phase" of the round-up and to "preserve the status quo." Neither is possible now, the panel ruled.

"The horses are currently offsite and the remainder of the plan is apparently going forward," the panel found, promising that "any further appeals in the underlying action shall be expedited and calendared before this panel."

Writing in dissent, Judge Johnnie Rawlinson argued that the issue was not moot because the court can still offer relief by ordering that the horses be returned to the range.

"It is undisputed that the BLM rounded up all the horses on the range and then decided which horses should be released back into the Twin Peaks area and which should be transported to holding areas," he wrote. "This would be a different case if the horses who were rounded up had all been dispersed. But that is not what happened. The horses that were rounded up are currently being kept in various holding areas throughout the southwestern United States. As easily as the horses were transported out of their natural habitat, they can be returned.

In this circumstance, relief is available and the request for injunctive relief is not moot."

## **17 Aug – Reverend Joy Powell's Trial Statement**

*On August 1<sup>st</sup>, Reverend Joy Powell was sentenced to 25 years to life. She is going to appeal, with a different lawyer (her last court appointed attorney only visited her twice in 2 years). Below is her statement to the court.*

Compiled by NYC ABC

**MORE:**

"Your honor, with all due respect, I know the court is going to expect me to express remorse for the crime which I have been convicted of. However, I have been wrongly convicted and what has happened to me is a gross miscarriage of Justice. Although I am very sorry for the Rutelege families loss, I cannot show remorse for a murder I didn't commit. I am actually and factually innocent!

The people's key witness sat on the stand and admitted he wrote me a letter dated 12/09/04, asking me to say I was with them when they killed Mr. Rutelege. If I was with James Hampton murdering Mr. Rutelege, why would he need to ask me in writing to implicate myself in the homicide?

Moreover, while James Hampton testified he also admitted he wrote the letter my attorney presented to him dated 1/22/05, saying he lied in his statement and he played the police to get free phone calls and Chinese food.

In addition, the people's witness Ms. Crimes testimony conflicted with the statement she gave to the police 19 years earlier. On 6/07/92 Ms. Crimes gave a statement to the police a day after the homicide stating the victim came into a bar called Henri's in the town of Albion with 3 black men who she did not recognize. At no time did Ms. Crimes say she saw the victim with a woman. Ms. Crimes entire testimony was proved to be a lie under cross examination.

**Prosecutorial Misconduct**

The prosecutor acted like a witness during the trial when he told the jury that it was my voice rapping on the tape when the expert witness testified that he did not do a voice analysis to establish that it was indeed my voice rapping on the tape. The [prosecutor told the jury that the tape was a confession I made after the homicide June 6th, 1992, when he had no evidence to support the finding. in addition, the expert witness testified that he had no proof when the tape was made.

Most rap songs are full of drugs, violence and sex which is a black cultural artistic expression. In the African American community, which is often referred to as the ghetto, is surrounded by poverty. My people sometimes live in dilapidated conditions and are often exposed to sex, violence and drugs. It is therefore common for an African American from the inner city who rap, to rap about their environment. This does not make the rapper a killer.

However, a jury of 11 whites and 1 black from the suburbs would not understand that. I was not tried by a jury of my peers, I was tried by a jury of the prosecutors peers. That's why Mr. Cardone was able to give his peers his own interpretation of what the song in which he had no proof I made meant, and he convinced the jury of his peers to convict me of a crime I did not commit.

This conviction was not supported by the evidence presented. As the evidence was witnesses who were not credible and proved to be liars, a highly prejudicial rap song that had nothing to do with any homicide, a gun James Hampton admitted he put in my car two weeks after the homicide.

The prejudicial rap song was never authenticated, and had a fraudulent transcription. The person who transcribed the tape was never brought in Court to be confronted. The language in the tape which the prosecutor took out of context was used to vilify me as the perpetrator of this horrific crime.

**Ineffective assistance of counsel**

There are many poor Black people in prison rotting in cages with lengthy sentences for crimes they did not commit, because they could not afford to pay for adequate assistance. In my case I had four strikes against me.



1. I am Black
2. I am poor.
3. I am incarcerated, and
4. I am a woman

This Court assigned Mr. Dolgoff to me two years ago and in that two years I wrote Mr. Dolgoff numerous letters begging him to come visit me so that we could adequately prepare for trial. Mr. Dolgoff ignored my pleas and never came to Bedford Hills Correctional Facility to see me.

He finally came to see me one time in Albion, Sept. 2010, to tell me about my co-defendants trial and subsequent acquittal. This visit only lasted for about 30 to 40 minutes. I wrote Mr. Dolgoff several times asking him to assist me in proving that I was some place else when this crime happened. Had he listened to me and spoke to the witnesses, I could have proved to this court that I did not commit this crime.

In this Country we supposedly revere the concepts of freedom, Justice and equality. Perhaps it is time that we add a new word to the list of concepts we revere. That word is hypocrisy!

From Mr. Dolgoffs performance during my trial I could tell he really wanted to win. But, due to the fact he only visited me one time for 30 to 40 minutes and did not adequately prepare for trial, I was doomed.

I was raped, railroaded and bamboozled. I will not stand here and say that someone should go unpunished for the crime which was committed. What I am saying is that I am innocent and should not be held accountable for a murder I did not commit.

I hope that the real perpetrators will be arrested and brought to justice for the murder of Mr. Rutelege. Again, I am sorry for the Rutelege family's loss."

### **18 Aug - Final Victory for Francisco Torres and the San Francisco 8**

*Judge Philip Moscone signed and filed an order dismissing charges against Francisco Torres late Thursday, August 18th. Cisco was the last former Black Panther member facing charges in this 1971 case about the killing of a SF Police Sergeant.*

#### **MORE:**

"It took over 4 1/2 years to win this case!" said Cisco Torres.

In 1973 several of the men were brutally tortured by police in Louisiana to elicit false confessions. The case was dismissed in the 1970s, but charges were filed again in January of 2007 against eight former Black Panthers. They all resisted this renewed repression. Charges against Ray Boudreaux, Richard Brown, Hank Jones, Richard O'Neal and Harold Taylor were previously dismissed for insufficient evidence. Herman Bell and Jalil Muntaqim plead to greatly reduced charges receiving time served and probation.

Cisco Torres, speaking for himself and on behalf of the San Francisco 8, was elated, giving "Our thanks to all of our supporters for battling with us for so long - our victory is shared!"

A more detailed statement and story will follow!

### **18 Aug – Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook Now Available Online**

*The Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) and the National Lawyers' Guild (NLG) launched [www.jailhouselaw.org](http://www.jailhouselaw.org), a website that provides an electronic and downloadable version of the Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook.*

**MORE:**

The handbook is a legal tool for prisoners to exercise their constitutional rights; learn about relevant law and procedures; and protect themselves from physical abuse, poor conditions and other prison mistreatment. CCR and NLG publish and provide free copies of the handbook to thousands of prisoners each year. The fifth edition of the handbook was fully revised and updated in 2010, and includes new sections on the rights of transgender and intersex prisoners (written in collaboration with the Sylvia Rivera Law Project), the rights of immigration detainees, prison visitation, and much more.

Please access and download copies of the handbook at: [www.jailhouselaw.org](http://www.jailhouselaw.org).

**20 Aug - Sixty-five arrested outside White House in oil pipeline protest**

*Police arrested 65 environmentalists outside the White House Saturday as they staged a demonstration urging President Obama to block a proposed pipeline that would bring oil from Canada's oil sands projects to Gulf Coast refineries. The civil disobedience launched two-weeks of White House demonstrations – with more arrests to come – as activists seek to increase political pressure on Obama over the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. We don't know whether or not all of these folks have been released.*

**MORE:**

The Obama administration is weighing TransCanada Corp.'s proposed \$7 billion, 1,700-mile line to bring crude from Alberta's massive oil sands projects to the Texas Gulf Coast.

The pipeline needs State Department approval to proceed, and the Obama administration plans to make a decision by the end of the year.

People arrested include Bill McKibben, the prominent climate activist and founder of 350.org; Jane Hamsher, who founded the popular liberal blog Firedoglake; and Gus Speth, whose career includes co-founding the Natural Resources Defense Council and chairing the White House Council on Environmental Quality in the Carter Administration.

While police said 65 people were arrested, the protest organizers put the number at 70 in an account on their website Saturday.

On Saturday activists gathered in Lafayette Square across from the White House and walked over to the sidewalk in front of the White House fence at about 11:10 a.m., where some sat down and others stood behind them holding banners against the Keystone project.

The demonstrations and U.S. Park Police arrests were a peaceful, choreographed affair planned in advance – at one point, for instance, some activists waited to take a spot in front of the fence while a few tourists finished snapping pictures in front of the White House.

About 10 minutes after the activists assembled, police cleared a wide stretch of the sidewalk, sending tourists and others away as they set up waist-high metal grates around the area.

The protesters chanted slogans like “hey, ho, tar sands no!” and “hey hey, ho ho, Keystone XL's got to go.”

Many in the demonstrating group favored khakis, blazers, ties and other garb that eschewed the overtly countercultural look of some environmental protests.

At 11:30 a.m. a member of the Park Police warned the assembled demonstrators that under regulations and laws governing the area, their permit to demonstrate on the White House sidewalk had been revoked.

People demonstrating on the sidewalk must continue moving, police said, and the stationary activists were informed that due to the violations, the sidewalk was closed and they had to leave or be arrested.

Two identical warnings followed over the next several minutes, and at roughly 11:38 a.m. the arrests started, beginning with a young woman who organizers said was from Wasilla, Alaska. Police cuffed her as her fellow activists cheered and some yelled “hero, you’re a hero!”

Sgt. David Schlosser, a spokesman for the Park Police, said the 65 arrested demonstrators were taken to their Anacostia Station for processing. They are charged with “failure to obey a lawful order,” he said.

While 65 were arrested Saturday, other activists hung back as they prepare for two weeks of demonstrations and civil disobedience.

Organizers of the anti-Keystone event say they expect 2,000 people to take part over two weeks.

Advocates of the pipeline – including oil industry groups lobbying hard for the project – say it’s a jobs-heavy way to increase energy security by boosting supplies from a friendly U.S. neighbor.

But environmentalists oppose the greenhouse gas-intensive oil sands projects due to concerns about global warming and the destruction of Canadian forests, and also say the pipeline could suffer from spills that pollute U.S. water supplies.

McKibben, a key organizer of the protests, calls the Obama administration decision a referendum on the president's climate change record, noting the decision rests solely with the executive branch.

“He doesn’t have to go through the crazy climate deniers in Congress to be able to do the right thing,” McKibben said in Lafayette Square Saturday morning.

“If Barack Obama mans up, says no to this thing, it will send a surge of electricity through all of the people that voted for him three years ago. It will be the reminder of why we were so enamored of this guy in 2008,” McKibben said.

Speth said that more broadly he wants Obama to focus more heavily on climate change.

“If he doesn’t do anything about it in the 2012 campaign, what mandate is he going to have in 2013 to act on it,” said Speth, who is now on the faculty of Vermont Law School and was administrator of the United Nations Development Programme in the 1990s.

## **20 Aug - New York: Saturation of surveillance cameras in Chinatown**

*So the Surveillance Camera Players have been super-busy lately. They’ve also released their updated map of surveillance cameras in Chinatown, first mapped in 2004. Since then, the growth hasn’t been significant, but that’s only because the area is nearly completely saturated with cameras. We’ve pasted the statistics and maps below.*

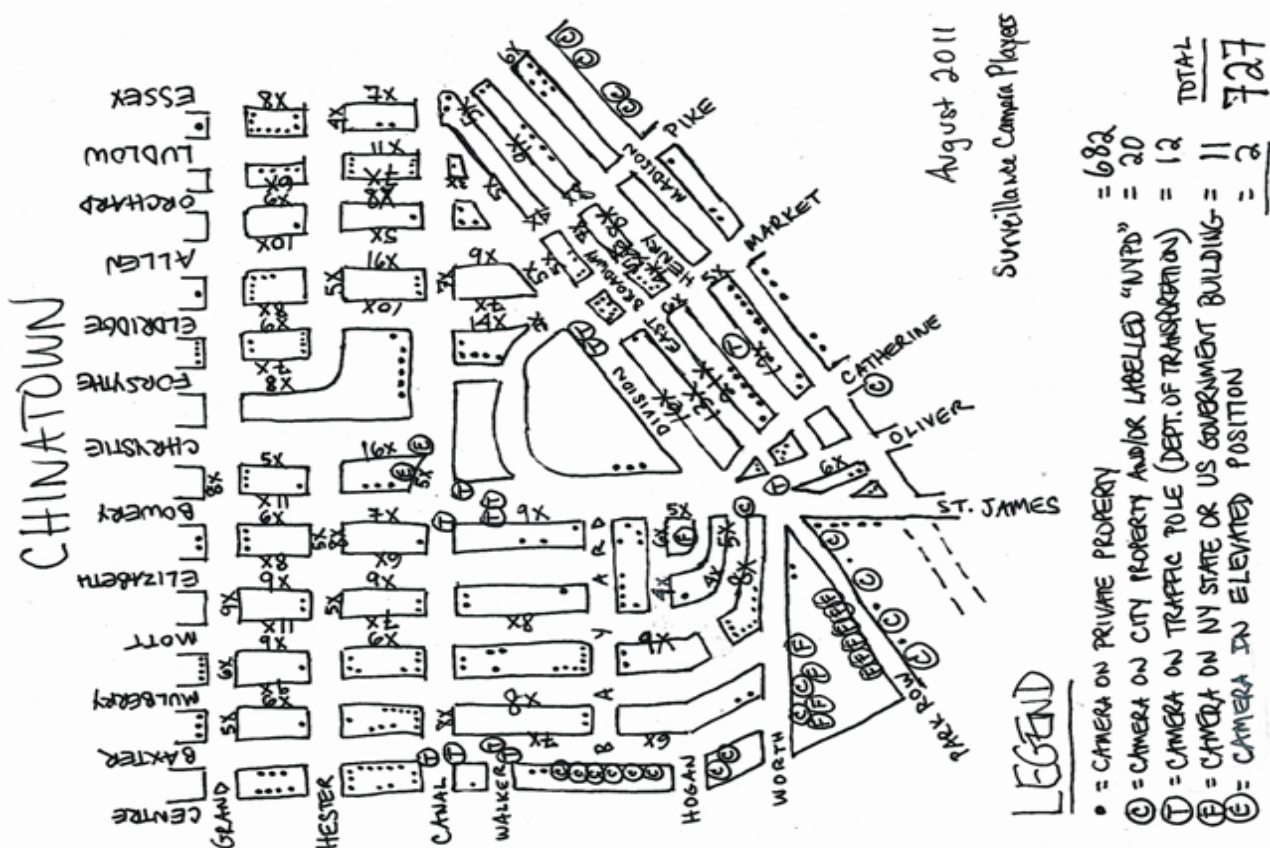
### **MORE:**

In August 2011, we returned to Chinatown and mapped it for [the second time](#). Though seven years had elapsed since our first map of the area, we did not find a huge growth in the number of cameras installed there (as one might have expected). Their numbers had grown, but modestly so: 682 private cameras, up from 565; 32 cameras on official buildings (down from 38); and 12 Department of Transportation cameras, up from two.

What accounts for the slowing down in the rate of increase in the installation of cameras in Chinatown? Is the place reaching a saturation point? The answer would seem to be that the “economic downturn” that began in 2008 has really hit Chinatown hard. A fair number of stores have closed down; some storefronts have been boarded up; a few buildings have been demolished but new ones have not been built in their places; etc. If you’re not in business, you don’t need insurance; and, if you don’t need insurance, you certainly don’t need surveillance cameras to keep your rates low.

But even “in a bad economy,” Chinatown has a lot of cameras. Indeed, this is the first map we have made that documents more than 700 cameras in a single neighborhood. Given the irregularity of Chinatown’s streets, it’s impossible to come up with an accurate average of cameras-per-block. (Elsewhere in Manhattan the average is between 10 and 15 cameras per block.) But suffice to say that when there’s a single block with 31 cameras on it, and there are almost a dozen of these super-surveilled blocks in a single neighborhood, then the density is certainly reaching its saturation point.

Other details that merit outrage: James Madison Plaza remains a paved-over ruin, completely closed off from the public; Park Row remains a militarized checkpoint run by the NYPD, which has also sealed off the western end of Madison Street.



## 22 Aug – Leonard Peltier Transfer Alert

In addition to the isolation he has suffered since June 27, Leonard now faces a disciplinary transfer. Peltier has less than 30 years on his sentence, is over 66 years of age, and is in failing health. Therefore, his supporters are calling on us to protest his mistreatment at the hands of the Bureau of Prisons. For now, they are asking that we send e-mails, write letters and call BOP every single day.

### MORE:

Tell the BOP that the world is watching and we’re horrified by its unjust and inhumane treatment of Leonard Peltier. Tell the Federal Bureau of Prisons that the only acceptable transfer is one to a medium security facility in close proximity to his family and Nation.

Make reference to Leonard Peltier #89637-132 and contact:

Dr. Thomas Kane, Acting Director  
Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP)  
E-Mail: [info@bop.gov](mailto:info@bop.gov)

Phone: [\(202\) 307-3250](tel:(202)307-3250); [\(202\) 307-3198](tel:(202)307-3198) (Switchboard)  
Fax: [\(202\) 514-6620](tel:(202)514-6620)

Address:  
320 1st Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20534

### **22 Aug - PP/POW Abdullah Majid's Mother Needs Our Help**

*On Thursday, August 18, 2011, Mrs. Rosa LaBorde, the 88-year old mother of PP/POW Abdullah Majid, was a guest on WBAI's "Where We Live," co-hosted by Sally O'Brien, dequi kioni-sadiki & Pam Hanna seeking community support to have her son moved downstate so she can visit him more regularly.*

#### **MORE:**

Her son is currently held at Elmira Correctional Facility, more than six hours away from her Jamaica Queens home. To visit her son, she must leave her home to meet the 1:00am van service at a Jamaica Avenue street location. The driver stops twice for bathroom breaks during the six hour drive. The prison visit ends at 3:00pm, yet Mrs. LaBorde doesn't get home to close to midnight. That is an almost 24 hour trip for this elder.

Mrs. LaBorde needs our help! We are asking everyone to call or write to request Abdullah Majid-#83A0483 be moved closer downstate so it won't be such a physical hardship for his elderly mother to visit him.

Ms. Theresa Knapp-David, Director  
NYS DOCS Office of Classification & Movement  
The Harriman State Campus – Bldg #2  
1220 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12226-20509  
Phone: 518.457.6022

### **24 Aug – With CIA help, NYPD built secret effort to monitor mosques, daily life of Muslim neighborhoods**

*Since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the New York Police Department has become one of the nation's most aggressive domestic intelligence agencies, targeting ethnic communities in ways that would run afoul of civil liberties rules if practiced by the federal government, an Associated Press investigation has found. We've pasted the article below.*

#### **MORE:**

These operations have benefited from unprecedented help from the CIA, a partnership that has blurred the line between foreign and domestic spying.

The department has dispatched undercover officers, known as "rakers," into minority neighborhoods as part of a human mapping program, according to officials directly involved in the program. They've monitored daily life in bookstores, bars, cafes and nightclubs. Police have also used informants, known as "mosque crawlers," to monitor sermons, even when there's no evidence of wrongdoing.

Neither the city council, which finances the department, nor the federal government, which has given NYPD more than \$1.6 billion since 9/11, is told exactly what's going on.

Many of these operations were built with help from the CIA, which is prohibited from spying on Americans but was instrumental in transforming the NYPD's intelligence unit.

A veteran CIA officer, while still on the agency's payroll, was the architect of the NYPD's intelligence programs. The CIA trained a police detective at the Farm, the agency's spy school in Virginia, then returned him to New York, where he put his new espionage skills to work inside the United States.

And just last month, the CIA sent a senior officer to work as a clandestine operative inside police headquarters.

In response to the story, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, a leading Muslim civil rights organization, called on the Justice Department to investigate. The Justice Department said Wednesday night it would review the request.

"This is potentially illegal what they're doing," said Gadeir Abbas, a staff attorney with the organization.

The NYPD denied that it trolls ethnic neighborhoods and said it only follows leads. Police operations have disrupted terrorist plots and put several would-be killers in prison.

"The New York Police Department is doing everything it can to make sure there's not another 9/11 here and that more innocent New Yorkers are not killed by terrorists," NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said. "And we have nothing to apologize for in that regard."

AP's investigation is based on documents and interviews with more than 40 current and former New York Police Department and federal officials. Many were directly involved in planning and carrying out these secret operations for the department. Though most said the tactics were appropriate and made the city safer, many insisted on anonymity, because they were not authorized to speak with reporters about security matters.

In just two episodes showing how widely the NYPD cast its net, the department sought a rundown from the taxi commission of every Pakistani cab driver in the city, and produced an analytical report on every mosque within 100 miles, officials said.

One of the enduring questions of the past decade is whether being safe requires giving up some liberty and privacy. The focus of that debate has primarily been federal programs like wiretapping and indefinite detention. The question has received less attention in New York, where residents do not know for sure what, if anything, they have given up.

The story of how the NYPD Intelligence Division developed such aggressive programs begins with one man.

---

David Cohen arrived at the New York Police Department in January 2002, just weeks after the last fires had been extinguished at the debris field that had been the twin towers. A retired 35-year veteran of the CIA, Cohen became the police department's first civilian intelligence chief.

Cohen had an exceptional career at the CIA, rising to lead both the agency's analytical and operational divisions. He also was an extraordinarily divisive figure, a man whose sharp tongue and supreme confidence in his own abilities gave him a reputation as arrogant. Cohen's tenure as head of CIA operations, the nation's top spy, was so contentious that in 1997, The New York Times editorial page took the unusual step of calling for his ouster.

He had no police experience. He had never defended a city from an attack. But New York wasn't looking for a cop.

"Post-9/11, we needed someone in there who knew how to really gather intelligence," said John Cutter, a retired NYPD official who served as one of Cohen's top uniformed officers.

At the time, the intelligence division was best known for driving dignitaries around the city. Cohen envisioned a unit that would analyze intelligence, run undercover operations and cultivate a network of informants. In short, he wanted New York to have its own version of the CIA.

Cohen shared Commissioner Ray Kelly's belief that 9/11 had proved that the police department could not simply rely on the federal government to prevent terrorism in New York.

"If anything goes on in New York," one former officer recalls Cohen telling his staff in the early days, "it's your fault."

Among Cohen's earliest moves at the NYPD was making a request of his old colleagues at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. He needed someone to help build this new operation, someone with experience and clout and, most important, someone who had access to the latest intelligence so the NYPD wouldn't have to rely on the FBI to dole out information.

CIA Director George Tenet responded by tapping Larry Sanchez, a respected veteran who had served as a CIA official inside the United Nations. Often, when the CIA places someone on temporary assignment, the other agency picks up the tab. In this case, three former intelligence officials said, Tenet kept Sanchez on the CIA payroll.

When he arrived in New York in March 2002, Sanchez had offices at both the NYPD and the CIA's station in New York, one former official said. Sanchez interviewed police officers for newly defined intelligence jobs. He guided and mentored officers, schooling them in the art of gathering information. He also directed their efforts, another said.

There had never been an arrangement like it, and some senior CIA officials soon began questioning whether Tenet was allowing Sanchez to operate on both sides of the wall that's supposed to keep the CIA out of the domestic intelligence business.

"It should not be a surprise to anyone that, after 9/11, the Central Intelligence Agency stepped up its cooperation with law enforcement on counterterrorism issues or that some of that increased cooperation was in New York, the site of ground zero," CIA spokeswoman Jennifer Youngblood said.

Just as at the CIA, Cohen and Sanchez knew that informants would have to become the backbone of their operation. But with threats coming in from around the globe, they couldn't wait months for the perfect plan.

They came up with a makeshift solution. They dispatched more officers to Pakistani neighborhoods and, according to one former police official directly involved in the effort, instructed them to look for reasons to stop cars: speeding, broken tail lights, running stop signs, whatever. The traffic stop gave police an opportunity to search for outstanding warrants or look for suspicious behavior. An arrest could be the leverage the police needed to persuade someone to become an informant.

For Cohen, the transition from spying to policing didn't come naturally, former colleagues said. When faced with a decision, especially early in his tenure, he'd fall back on his CIA background. Cutter said he and other uniformed officers had to tell Cohen, no, we can't just slip into someone's apartment without a warrant. No, we can't just conduct a search. The rules for policing are different.

While Cohen was being shaped by the police department, his CIA background was remaking the department. But one significant barrier stood in the way of Cohen's vision.

Since 1985, the NYPD had operated under a federal court order limiting the tactics it could use to gather intelligence. During the 1960s and 1970s, the department had used informants and undercover officers to infiltrate anti-war protest groups and other activists without any reason to suspect criminal behavior.

To settle a lawsuit, the department agreed to follow guidelines that required "specific information" of criminal activity before police could monitor political activity.

In September 2002, Cohen told a federal judge that those guidelines made it “virtually impossible” to detect terrorist plots. The FBI was changing its rules to respond to 9/11, and Cohen argued that the NYPD must do so, too.

“In the case of terrorism, to wait for an indication of crime before investigating is to wait far too long,” Cohen wrote.

U.S. District Judge Charles S. Haight Jr. agreed, saying the old guidelines “addressed different perils in a different time.” He scrapped the old rules and replaced them with more lenient ones.

It was a turning point for the NYPD.

---

With his newfound authority, Cohen created a secret squad that would soon infiltrate Muslim neighborhoods, according to several current and former officials directly involved in the program.

The NYPD carved up the city into more than a dozen zones and assigned undercover officers to monitor them, looking for potential trouble.

At the CIA, one of the biggest obstacles has always been that U.S. intelligence officials are overwhelmingly white, their mannerisms clearly American. The NYPD didn’t have that problem, thanks to its diverse pool of officers.

Using census data, the department matched undercover officers to ethnic communities and instructed them to blend in, the officials said. Pakistani-American officers infiltrated Pakistani neighborhoods, Palestinians focused on Palestinian neighborhoods. They hung out in hookah bars and cafes, quietly observing the community around them.

The unit, which has been undisclosed until now, became known inside the department as the Demographic Unit, former police officials said.

“It’s not a question of profiling. It’s a question of going where the problem could arise,” said Mordecai Dzikansky, a retired NYPD intelligence officer who said he was aware of the Demographic Unit. “And thank God we have the capability. We have the language capability and the ethnic officers. That’s our hidden weapon.”

The officers did not work out of headquarters, officials said. Instead, they passed their intelligence to police handlers who knew their identities.

Cohen said he wanted the squad to “rake the coals, looking for hot spots,” former officials recalled. The undercover officers soon became known inside the department as rakers.

A hot spot might be a beauty supply store selling chemicals used for making bombs. Or it might be a hawala, a broker that transfers money around the world with little documentation. Undercover officers might visit an Internet cafe and look at the browsing history on a computer, a former police official involved in the program said. If it revealed visits to radical websites, the cafe might be deemed a hot spot.

Ethnic bookstores, too, were on the list. If a raker noticed a customer looking at radical literature, he might chat up the store owner and see what he could learn. The bookstore, or even the customer, might get further scrutiny. If a restaurant patron applauds a news report about the death of U.S. troops, the patron or the restaurant could be labeled a hot spot.

The goal was to “map the city’s human terrain,” one law enforcement official said. The program was modeled in part on how Israeli authorities operate in the West Bank, a former police official said.



Mapping crimes has been a successful police strategy nationwide. But mapping robberies and shootings is one thing. Mapping ethnic neighborhoods is different, something that at least brushes against what the federal government considers racial profiling.

Browne, the NYPD spokesman, said the Demographic Unit does not exist. He said the department has a Zone Assessment Unit that looks for locations that could attract terrorists. But he said undercover officers only followed leads, disputing the account of several current and former police and federal officials. They do not just hang out in neighborhoods, he said.

“We will go into a location, whether it’s a mosque or a bookstore, if the lead warrants it, and at least establish whether there’s something that requires more attention,” Browne said.

That conflicts with testimony from an undercover officer in the 2006 trial of Shahawar Matin Siraj, who was convicted of planning an attack on New York’s subway system. The officer said he was instructed to live in Brooklyn and act as a “walking camera” for police.

“I was told to act like a civilian — hang out in the neighborhood, gather information,” the Bangladeshi officer testified, under a false name, in what offered the first narrow glimpse at the NYPD’s infiltration of ethnic neighborhoods.

Officials said such operations just made sense. Islamic terrorists had attacked the city on 9/11, so police needed people inside the city’s Muslim neighborhoods. Officials say it does not conflict with a 2004 city law prohibiting the NYPD from using religion or ethnicity “as the determinative factor for initiating law enforcement action.”

“It’s not profiling,” Cutter said. “It’s like, after a shooting, do you go 20 blocks away and interview guys or do you go to the neighborhood where it happened?”

In 2007, the Los Angeles Police Department was criticized for even considering a similar program. The police announced plans to map Islamic neighborhoods to look for pockets of radicalization among the region’s roughly 500,000 Muslims. Criticism was swift, and chief William Bratton scrapped the plan.

“A lot of these people came from countries where the police were the terrorists,” Bratton said at a news conference, according to the Los Angeles Daily News. “We don’t do that here. We do not want to spread fear.”

In New York, current and former officials said, the lesson of that controversy was that such programs should be kept secret.

Some in the department, including lawyers, have privately expressed concerns about the raking program and how police use the information, current and former officials said. Part of the concern was that it might appear that police were building dossiers on innocent people, officials said. Another concern was that, if a case went to court, the department could be forced to reveal details about the program, putting the entire operation in jeopardy.

That’s why, former officials said, police regularly shredded documents discussing rakers.

When Cohen made his case in court that he needed broader authority to investigate terrorism, he had promised to abide by the FBI’s investigative guidelines. But the FBI is prohibited from using undercover agents unless there’s specific evidence of criminal activity, meaning a federal raking program like the one officials described to the AP would violate FBI guidelines.

The NYPD declined to make Cohen available for comment. In an earlier interview with the AP on a variety of topics, Police Commissioner Kelly said the intelligence unit does not infringe on civil rights.

“We’re doing what we believe we have to do to protect the city,” he said. “We have many, many lawyers in our employ. We see ourselves as very conscious and aware of civil liberties. And we know there’s always going to be some tension between the police department and so-called civil liberties groups because of the nature of what we do.”

The department clashed with civil rights groups most publicly after Cohen’s undercover officers infiltrated anti-war groups before the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York. A lawsuit over that program continues today.

During the convention, when protesters were arrested, police asked a list of questions which, according to court documents, included: “What are your political affiliations?” “Do you do any kind of political work?” and “Do you hate George W. Bush?”

“At the end of the day, it’s pure and simple a rogue domestic surveillance operation,” said Christopher Dunn, a New York Civil Liberties Union lawyer involved in the convention lawsuit.

---

Undercover agents like the rakers were valuable, but what Cohen and Sanchez wanted most were informants.

The NYPD dedicated an entire squad, the Terrorist Interdiction Unit, to developing and handling informants. Current and former officials said Sanchez was instrumental in teaching them how to develop sources.

For years, detectives used informants known as mosque crawlers to monitor weekly sermons and report what was said, several current and former officials directly involved in the informant program said. If FBI agents were to do that, they would be in violation of the Privacy Act, which prohibits the federal government from collecting intelligence on purely First Amendment activities.

The FBI has generated its own share of controversy for putting informants inside mosques, but unlike the program described to the AP, the FBI requires evidence of a crime before an informant can be used inside a mosque.

Valerie Caproni, the FBI’s general counsel, would not discuss the NYPD’s programs but said FBI informants can’t troll mosques looking for leads. Such operations are reviewed for civil liberties concerns, she said.

“If you’re sending an informant into a mosque when there is no evidence of wrongdoing, that’s a very high-risk thing to do,” Caproni said. “You’re running right up against core constitutional rights. You’re talking about freedom of religion.”

That’s why senior FBI officials in New York ordered their own agents not to accept any reports from the NYPD’s mosque crawlers, two retired agents said.

It’s unclear whether the police department still uses mosque crawlers. Officials said that, as Muslims figured out what was going on, the mosque crawlers became cafe crawlers, fanning out into the city’s ethnic hangouts.

“Someone has a great imagination,” Browne, the NYPD spokesman, said. “There is no such thing as mosque crawlers.”

Following the foiled subway plot, however, the key informant in the case, Osama Eldawoody, said he attended hundreds of prayer services and collected information even on people who showed no signs of radicalization.

NYPD detectives have recruited shopkeepers and nosy neighbors to become “seeded” informants who keep police up to date on the latest happenings in ethnic neighborhoods, one official directly involved in the informant program said.

The department also has a roster of “directed” informants it can tap for assignments. For instance, if a raker identifies a bookstore as a hot spot, police might assign an informant to gather information, long before there’s concrete evidence of anything criminal.

To identify possible informants, the department created what became known as the “debriefing program.” When someone is arrested who might be useful to the intelligence unit — whether because he said something suspicious or because he is simply a young Middle Eastern man — he is singled out for extra questioning. Intelligence officials don’t care about the underlying charges; they want to know more about his community and, ideally, they want to put him to work.

Police are in prisons, too, promising better living conditions and help or money on the outside for Muslim prisoners who will work with them.

Early in the intelligence division’s transformation, police asked the taxi commission to run a report on all the city’s Pakistani cab drivers, looking for those who got licenses fraudulently and might be susceptible to pressure to cooperate, according to former officials who were involved in or briefed on the effort.

That strategy has been rejected in other cities.

Boston police once asked neighboring Cambridge for a list of Somali cab drivers, Cambridge Police Chief Robert Haas said. Haas refused, saying that without a specific reason, the search was inappropriate.

“It really has a chilling effect in terms of the relationship between the local police department and those cultural groups, if they think that’s going to take place,” Haas said.

The informant division was so important to the NYPD that Cohen persuaded his former colleagues to train a detective, Steve Pinkall, at the CIA’s training center at the Farm. Pinkall, who had an intelligence background as a Marine, was given an unusual temporary assignment at CIA headquarters, officials said. He took the field tradecraft course alongside future CIA spies then returned to New York to run investigations.

“We found that helpful, for NYPD personnel to be exposed to the tradecraft,” Browne said.

The idea troubled senior FBI officials, who saw it as the NYPD and CIA blurring the lines between police work and spying, in which undercover officers regularly break the laws of foreign governments. The arrangement even made its way to FBI Director Robert Mueller, two former senior FBI officials said, but the training was already under way and Mueller did not press the issue.

---

NYPD’s intelligence operations do not stop at the city line.

In June 2009, a New Brunswick, N.J., building superintendent opened the door to apartment No. 1076 and discovered an alarming scene: terrorist literature strewn about the table and computer and surveillance equipment set up in the next room.

The panicked superintendent dialed 911, sending police and the FBI rushing to the building near Rutgers University. What they found in that first-floor apartment, however, was not a terrorist hideout but a command center set up by a secret team of New York Police Department intelligence officers.

From that apartment, about an hour outside the department’s jurisdiction, the NYPD had been staging undercover operations and conducting surveillance throughout New Jersey. Neither the FBI nor the local police had any idea.

The NYPD has gotten some of its officers deputized as federal marshals, allowing them to work out of state. But often, there’s no specific jurisdiction at all.

Cohen's undercover squad, the Special Services Unit, operates in places such as New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, officials said. They can't make arrests and, if something goes wrong — a shooting or a car accident, for instance — the officers could be personally liable. But the NYPD has decided it's worth the risk, a former police official said.

With Police Commissioner Kelly's backing, Cohen's policy is that any potential threat to New York City is the NYPD's business, regardless of where it occurs, officials said.

That aggressiveness has sometimes put the NYPD at odds with local police departments and, more frequently, with the FBI. The FBI didn't like the rules Cohen played by and said his operations encroached on its responsibilities.

Once, undercover officers were stopped by police in Massachusetts while conducting surveillance on a house, one former New York official recalled. In another instance, the NYPD sparked concern among federal officials by expanding its intelligence-gathering efforts related to the United Nations, where the FBI is in charge, current and former federal officials said.

The AP has agreed not to disclose details of either the FBI or NYPD operations because they involve foreign counterintelligence.

Both Mueller and Kelly have said their agencies have strong working relationships and said reports of rivalry and disagreements are overblown. And the NYPD's out-of-state operations have had success.

A young Egyptian NYPD officer living undercover in New Jersey, for example, was key to building a case against Mohamed Mahmood Alessa and Carlos Eduardo Almonte. The pair was arrested last year at John F. Kennedy Airport en route to Somalia to join the terrorist group al-Shabab. Both pleaded guilty to conspiracy.

Cohen has also sent officers abroad, stationing them in 11 foreign cities. If a bomber blows himself up in Jerusalem, the NYPD rushes to the scene, said Dzikansky, who served in Israel and is the co-author of the forthcoming book "Terrorist Suicide Bombings: Attack Interdiction, Mitigation, and Response."

"I was there to ask the New York question," Dzikansky said. "Why this location? Was there something unique that the bomber had done? Was there any pre-notification. Was there a security lapse?"

All of this intelligence — from the rakers, the undercovers, the overseas liaisons and the informants — is passed to a team of analysts hired from some of the nation's most prestigious universities. Analysts have spotted emerging trends and summarized topics such as Hezbollah's activities in New York and the threat of South Asian terrorist groups.

They also have tackled more contentious topics, including drafting a report on every mosque in the area, one former police official said. The report drew on information from mosque crawlers, undercover officers and public information. It mapped hundreds of mosques and discussed the likelihood of them being infiltrated by al-Qaida, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups.

For Cohen, there was only one way to measure success: "They haven't attacked us," he said in a 2005 deposition. He said anything that was bad for terrorists was good for NYPD.

—

Though the CIA is prohibited from collecting intelligence domestically, the wall between domestic and foreign operations became more porous. Intelligence gathered by the NYPD, with CIA officer Sanchez overseeing collection, was often passed to the CIA in informal conversations and through unofficial channels, a former official involved in that process said.

By design, the NYPD was looking more and more like a domestic CIA.

“It’s like starting the CIA over in the post-9/11 world,” Cohen said in “Securing the City,” a laudatory 2009 book about the NYPD. “What would you do if you could begin it all over again? Hah. This is what you would do.”

Sanchez’s assignment in New York ended in 2004, but he received permission to take a leave of absence from the agency and become Cohen’s deputy, former officials said.

Though Sanchez’s assignments were blessed by CIA management, some in the agency’s New York station saw the presence of such a senior officer in the city as a turf encroachment. Finally, the New York station chief, Tom Higgins, called headquarters, one former senior intelligence official said. Higgins complained, the official said, that Sanchez was wearing both hats, sometimes acting as a CIA officer, sometimes as an NYPD official.

The CIA finally forced him to choose: Stay with the agency or stay with the NYPD.

Sanchez declined to comment to the AP about the arrangement, but he picked the NYPD. He retired last year and is now a consultant in the Middle East.

Last month, the CIA deepened its NYPD ties even further. It sent one of its most experienced operatives, a former station chief in two Middle Eastern countries, to work out of police headquarters as Cohen’s special assistant while on the CIA payroll. Current and former U.S. officials acknowledge it’s unusual but said it’s the kind of collaboration Americans expect after 9/11.

Officials said revealing the CIA officer’s name would jeopardize national security. The arrangement was described as a sabbatical. He is a member of the agency’s senior management, but officials said he was sent to the municipal police department to get management experience.

At the NYPD, he works undercover in the senior ranks of the intelligence division. Officials are adamant that he is not involved in actual intelligence-gathering.

---

The NYPD has faced little scrutiny over the past decade as it has taken on broad new intelligence missions, targeted ethnic neighborhoods and partnered with the CIA in extraordinary ways.

The department’s primary watchdog, the New York City Council, has not held hearings on the intelligence division’s operations and former NYPD officials said council members typically do not ask for details.

“Ray Kelly briefs me privately on certain subjects that should not be discussed in public,” said City Councilman Peter Vallone. “We’ve discussed in person how they investigate certain groups they suspect have terrorist sympathizers or have terrorist suspects.”

The city comptroller’s office has audited several NYPD components since 9/11 but not the intelligence unit, which had a \$62 million budget last year.

The federal government, too, has done little to scrutinize the nation’s largest police force, despite the massive federal aid. Homeland Security officials review NYPD grants but not its underlying programs.

A report in January by the Homeland Security inspector general, for instance, found that the NYPD violated state and federal contracting rules between 2006 and 2008 by buying more than \$4 million in equipment through a no-bid process. NYPD said public bidding would have revealed sensitive information to terrorists, but police never got approval from state or federal officials to adopt their own rules, the inspector general said.

On Capitol Hill, where FBI tactics have frequently been criticized for their effect on civil liberties, the NYPD faces no such opposition.

In 2007, Sanchez testified before the Senate Homeland Security Committee and was asked how the NYPD spots signs of radicalization. He said the key was viewing innocuous activity, including behavior that might be protected by the First Amendment, as a potential precursor to terrorism.

That triggered no questions from the committee, which Sanchez said had been “briefed in the past on how we do business.”

The Justice Department has the authority to investigate civil rights violations. It issued detailed rules in 2003 against racial profiling, including prohibiting agencies from considering race when making traffic stops or assigning patrols.

But those rules apply only to the federal government and contain a murky exemption for terrorism investigations. The Justice Department has not investigated a police department for civil rights violations during a national security investigation.

“One of the hallmarks of the intelligence division over the last 10 years is that, not only has it gotten extremely aggressive and sophisticated, but it’s operating completely on its own,” said Dunn, the civil liberties lawyer. “There are no checks. There is no oversight.”

The NYPD has been mentioned as a model for policing in the post-9/11 era. But it’s a model that seems custom-made for New York. No other city has the Big Apple’s combination of a low crime rate, a \$4.5 billion police budget and a diverse 34,000-person police force. Certainly no other police department has such deep CIA ties.

Perhaps most important, nobody else had 9/11 the way New York did. No other city lost nearly 3,000 people in a single morning. A decade later, police say New Yorkers still expect the department to do whatever it can to prevent another attack. The NYPD has embraced that expectation.

As Sanchez testified on Capitol Hill: “We’ve been given the public tolerance and the luxury to be very aggressive on this topic.”

## **24 Aug - Historic California Assembly Hearing on Solitary Confinement**

*In response to the statewide prison hunger strike in July, the Public Safety Committee of the California State Assembly, chaired by State Assemblyman Tom Ammiano, met on Tuesday to discuss the conditions in California’s Secure Housing Units. The demands of the SHU hunger strikers have still not been met and the threat of a second hunger strike looms near.*

### **MORE:**

The hearing began at approximately 1:30 PM.

Assemblyman Ammiano opened his remarks saying, “Recent events brought these units to the forefront. We want to ensure that these units are administrated in such a manner to maximize the security of the inmates in the units, general population inmates, prison staff and the public generally.”

Glenda Rojas, a family member of a Pelican Bay inmate, spoke about her cousin’s experience. “The system of validation is wildly out of control,” she said. She discussed how false accusations resulted in her cousin being placed into the SHU for ten months. She talked about the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation’s bureaucratic delays, intimidation, and generally making it difficult to challenge the validation.

Afterwards, Earl Fears a former Corcoran SHU inmate, spoke out against the SHU. “Things that I did going to prison caused me to one time going to the SHU program...when I was in the SHU program..I felt that ‘this right

here has got to be crazy.’ I did 18 years in and out of prison but a SHU program was the bottom of the pits...What I witnessed in this short time I feel that...when you hear a cry, a man cry, a gangster cry, a killer cry, a con and an ex-con cry, there’s got to be a reason. I feel that those who started the hunger strike—they had to be willing to get their voice out for someone to hear it for someone to be willing to lay down and die just for someone to hear the situation what goes on in the SHU program they must be serious. Just small thing in the SHU program just causes people to yell or beat against the walls...”

He also condemned the practice of withholding shower and exercise privileges as punishment against inmates already in a psychologically stressful situation. He talked about how the pain of solitary confinement and not having someone to talk to leads to emotional anguish and the damage that can cause in the long-term.

“I know you said there’s regulations...and that it’s not everyday prisoners that are sent to the SHU program but they still are human. And someone needs to look into it.”

William McGarvey, a reverend and representative of [Bay Area Religious Campaign Against Torture](#), testified on the spiritual perspective and gave a history of solitary confinement and it’s roots in Quaker efforts to reform prisoners.

“Prisoners suffer and our communities suffer when prisoners...return to our communities...psychologically broken.”

McGarvey raised the placement into solitary of Native Americans and Rastafarians for refusing to cut their hair or remove dreadlocks, respectively. He also spoke about Islamophobia and how it has contributed to a ballooning solitary population in federal prisons: “60-75% in CMU’s (Communication Management Units) are Muslim.”

“[Solitary confinement results in] the destruction of the human spirit of the human spirit,” McGarvey said.

At 2:05, Charles Carbone, a San Francisco prisoner rights lawyer with extensive experience representing gang members, stated that SHU’s undermine both prison and community safety.

Carbone blasted the bureaucracy of the CDCR and in particular those tasked with reviewing the legitimacy of gang validation: “Their record of overturning those gang validation packets is next to nil.”

Carbone criticized the validation process—including the double counting of incidents on the “three point” system to validate inmates, and the use of trivial evidence to validate someone, citing a case in possessing the book “The Art of War” served as grounds for validation.

He also cited \$56,000 per inmate in costs that SHU units incur.

At 2:15, Craig Haney, a professor of psychology and a nationally recognized expert on solitary confinement, made several points. Officials should have known since the 1980s that a prison like Pelican Bay will “expose inmates to psychologically dangerous conditions of confinement.”

Haney quoted the opinion of Judge Henderson in the *Madrid v. Gomez* case: that Pelican Bay State Prison “may press the outer borders of what most humans can psychologically tolerate.”

Haney pointed out that the only human contact of inmates in solitary is the “incidental brushing up against prison guards” as they handcuff them for transport to cages for exercise.

“There is now clear and convincing evidence,” according to Haney, that the SHU model of dealing with gangs doesn’t work and may even make things worse. He cited increases in gang violence over the past few decades as

indicating the ineffectiveness of SHU use in curbing such violence.

Laura Magnani of the American Friends and Service Committee then spoke. She began by quoting the Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons, and noted that SHU's cost at least "twice as much" as general population.

She then read a portion of the United Nations Convention Against Torture, Article 1 Section 1:

"Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person, information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person..."

In the case of women, Magnani stated that segregation can be an "extreme form of oppression and trauma" particularly for women who have a prior history of abuse at the hands of men. The lack of privacy for women in institutions guarded by largely male was also condemned by Magnani.

Magnani pointed to violent cell extractions, hogtying and contraband searches as "not only violate international treaties but our own sense of human decencies."

She went on to make various recommendations, including restoring the right of reporters to enter and interview prisoners, saying, "Free press is one of the most important safe guard against abuses."

She also called for the implementation of limits a person can be held in isolation and encouraged constant review of whether confinement necessary.

At 2:30, Dorsey Nunn of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children/All of Us or None spoke.

He recounted a meeting with an inmate at Pelican Bay who has been in PBSB since 1988, who knew about Abu Graib abuses and questioned the difference between the torture of Abu Graib and the outrage it inspired versus the conditions of solitary confinement in United States prisons.

The inmate, an African American who, in 20 years, had only legally spoken to one other African American, had been thrown into disciplinary segregation for attempting to speak to another.

Nunn questioned the deprivation of human contact and the ability of someone to do something as simple as speak to someone of the same race.

He also challenged the validation system, notably the confidential nature of debriefings and the inability of those accused of being gang members to confront their accusers.

Dr. Terry Kupers, a psychiatrist and an authority on the mental health effects of solitary, was next. "The prisoners demands are very reasonable. They're actually common sense." He said the CDCR is "absolutely not" in compliance with the report of the Commission on Safety and Abuse in America's Prisons, despite claims to the contrary. "For prisoners needs to be blatantly ignored the process has to be secret. And otherwise citizens would be upset."

He echoed calls for lifting of the media bans.

"While the Department of Corrections will say they are implementing changes...they actually haven't done a thing since 2007."

Remarking on the claims that the CDCR "need these supermax" facilities, he noted the increase in violence



within the prison system. He went on to speak about Mississippi and its dramatic reduction in segregation units and the accompanying decreases in incidents.

“There needs to be conduct based assignment” in California prisons, “what we have is not conduct that gets you in there, but the assumption that you’re a gang member.”

“In any state prison system...over half of the actual successful suicides in the entire prison system involve the 2-6% that are in segregation...Suicide and acting out have their roots in the despair of segregation,” Kupers said.

“There need to be alternatives to debriefing,” Kupers stated, pointing to the high recidivism rates that result from inmates being released straight from solitary without any time spent in the general prison population.

At 2:52, CDCR officials arrived to speak and answer questions.

Scott Kernan, Undersecretary of Operations, represented the CDCR. He immediately defended the practice of segregation on the grounds that it allows CDCR to control violent gang members and that segregation is “critical” to allow other inmates to program successfully and get out.

He noted that 3,000 out of 165,000 California inmates were in solitary.

He defended segregation by noting that various courts have upheld the practice.

“What might be a human rights violation is the violence that gangs perpetuate not segregation,” he said.

“The department agrees that we can and should make some changes to SHU policies,” he said, and stated that the CDCR and “within months not years” will make changes, primarily through the implementation of “behavior based systems.” Such a system would entail a step-down process and will encourage inmates to “earn their way out of the system.”

In response to a question by Ammiano regarding the slow speed of reform in CDCR policies, Kernan replied, “We’re going through the worst economic situation since the Great Depression”

“Are you making changes?” asked Ammiano.

“The inmates have a choice to come out of the system,” Kernan said and indicated that of those inmates who have been validated “99% of them will say you got it right. He also stated that “we will continue to have a debriefing process” and that keeping it “will not dissuade someone from getting out of the gang” as “they will be able by their own behavior work their way out of the SHU.”

In response to the confidentiality of the debriefing process, Kernan answered that “we will continue to use confidential informants.”

Regarding a question as to whether or not anonymous accusers will be given an opportunity to face their accusers, Kernan replied, “No Sir” and went on to say “we are going to make it as fair as we possibly can.”

Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner commented in response to Kernan’s remarks that “the data that we heard indicates that once a prisoner is in the SHU at Pelican Bay it is very infrequent for them to be moved out. I see a bit of a disconnect between your answer...”

Kernan repeatedly indicated that the average stay in the SHU is 6.8 years and that “what I said was that offenders in the SHU with mountains of documentation of their violations inmates involving themselves in terrible assaults on inmates and staff...”

Assemblywoman Holly Mitchell commented: “I was cautiously optimistic about hearing [what you had to say]...I have to say I am concerned, quite frankly I’m disappointed” by Kernan’s defense of the status quo.

In response, Kernan stressed the need for current standards in order to curb gang violence.

Mitchell followed up and asked if there were checks and balances when it came to the validation process. Kernan indicated that all decisions are made within the CDCR with cooperation between prison officials and CDCR administrators, to which Mitchell responded that CDCR has more say than the judiciary.

Public Comment began at 3:34. A sample of those who spoke and what was said:

Julie Tackett spoke and told the story of Bryan. You can read more of Bryan’s story [here](#).

James Harris of the Socialist Workers Party spoke out calling for the abolition of the SHU.

Gail Brown with Life Support Alliance stressed the need for stakeholders to be included in the process of reform.

“Hariett”, a sister-in-law of an inmate in solitary for 25 years, asked how her 65 year old brother-in-law could possibly be a gang member anymore after 25 years in solitary.

Manuel LaFontane a former prisoner stated that the CDCR’s comments before the hearing were “a smokescreen to get away with inhumanity.” He recounted an experience in prison in which a prison guard told him “We are the gang.” He left with the question: “Does the fact that we can label someone mean we can torture them?”

Amber, sister of PBSP inmate, asserted that inmates were willing to lose their lives for what they felt was right.

Carol Travis, of Walnut Creek, who had the opportunity to interview multiple inmates at Pelican Bay described the emotional experience as “profound and surprising.”

Dolores Canales, mother of a son in the SHU for 10 years: “They do have dignity and they want to be heard.”

Some speakers described reasons for their loved ones being placed in solitary. Among them: exercising with validated gang member, and for having a book by George Jackson. Many spoke to the ease of being placed in the gang database.

A representative of the California Network of Mental Health Clients stated that “the conditions in the SHU’s are so deleterious to mental and physical health that many more people experience mental health issues in the SHU and in the community when and if they improve” and declared support for reform.

A Ventura Youth Facility parole officer pointed to the commonality of problems in the juvenile prison system and said to the assembly-members, “If you’re not compelled by the stories here I don’t know what will.”

A representative of the Critical Resistance spoke, saying “Long term broad based action necessary. We the people and residents of California... are making it clear that we want changes to the prison system....”

From California Prison Focus, A phone call hadn’t been seen in 14, haven’t talked for 2 years, only had 10 minutes to inform the death of his grandmother

A story was told of an inmate not allowed to donate his kidney because he was in the SHU resulting in the intended recipient dying. The inmate had been sent to solitary due to possessing a book that suggested gang ties.

A member of the San Quentin Six spoke on behalf of 66-year old Hugo Pinell who has been in solitary for 40 years despite not having a disciplinary write up for over 30 years.

Public comment went on until 4:48 and the hearing thereafter adjourned.

Ammiano has said that there will be future hearings on the issue.

### **27 Aug - Dennis Banks to Join Leonard Peltier Walk for Human Rights at Alcatraz Island**

*Dennis Banks, the co-founder of the American Indian Movement and leader of several Longest Walks, will join the "Leonard Peltier Walk for Human Rights" at Alcatraz Island this December.*

#### **MORE:**

Banks made the announcement on his Facebook wall on Thursday.

The "Leonard Peltier Walk for Human Rights" will kick off on December 18, 2011 at Alcatraz Island and will end Memorial Day weekend 2012 in Washington DC.

"It's about time we walk for Leonard Peltier," said Dorothy Ninham, Oneida, national chair of the Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee. "This walk is about all of the human rights violations committed against him. It's a shame. I go to visit him all the time."

Peltier, Lakota, has been in prison for the past 35 years. He was convicted of killing two FBI agents who showed up on June 25, 1975 at a private residence in Oglala, South Dakota.

In late June, Peltier was placed in solitary confinement in the United States Penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

Many American Indians and others around the world view Peltier as a political prisoner. Through the years, Peltier's supporters have included: the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa and Bishop Desmond Tutu, among other prominent names.

Peltier's story has been documented elsewhere, such as "In the Spirit of Crazy Horse" by Peter Matthiessen and in Robert Redford's "Incident at Oglala," but "Prison Writings: My Life is My Sun Dance" provides the closest glimpse of the man himself.

Last month, Banks finished the Longest Walk 3 - Reversing Diabetes in Washington DC.

"We want to stop at reservations along the Walk's route so that we can educate a whole new generation of American Indians about who Leonard Peltier is," commented Ninham.

Banks will assist Ninham with the coordination of the Walk's route, according to Ninham.

### **28 Aug - Statement by Jalil Muntaqim on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Attica Uprising**

*With the upcoming 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic Attica prison uprising, political prisoner Jalil Muntaqim has written a piece about his reflections on Attica and what it means today.*

#### **MORE:**

On February 10, 2011, I arrived at Attica for the third time during my 40 year incarceration. As soon as I entered the reception room, I heard a Correctional Officer announce to all the other prisoners: "What you heard about Attica is true. We don't care what you do to each other, but if any of you touch one of us, we will put you in the

hospital or worse ... welcome to Attica!” Since being here, I am aware of 7 prisoners who suffered a beat down by guards, and the Superintendent here knows what is going on, yet fails to curtail the level of violence against prisoners.

In essence, Attica today is pre-September 9th-11th, 1971, where prisoners are controlled by fear and terror. The only Black Captain, apparently sent here for the purpose of overseeing the madness of Attica, is only capable of intervening when on site. As soon as he is gone, the guards return to their racist deadly antics. This is not to blanket all white guards at Attica as racist, but when there is an institutional culture of racism, fear and terror, it is difficult for a humane guard to not jeopardize his own safety; this includes the few Black officers in this prison.

Why? One of the reasons is because these Correctional Officers, beyond the innate racism, fear another insurrection that will cause “state sanctioned killing,” as when former NYS Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered State Troopers and Guards to open fire, massacring 41 prisoners and guards. Therefore, fear, terror and brutality are the measure of their false safety and security, none of which is a secret to the authorities in Albany.

In September 1971, there was a vibrant progressive and revolutionary movement in this country. The prison movement reflected the fight- back determination of young people believing they could create a better world. On the streets there was a movement, and in prison there was a movement. No such animal exists today, at least nowhere near the level of the late 60’s and early 70’s. Then there were “Free Political Prisoner” campaigns going on, from the Free Huey, Free Angela, Free the Panther 21, Free the Soledad Brothers, Free San Quentin Six campaigns that forged a national consciousness of fight back. No such broad political consciousness or campaign exists today. Hence, today’s prisoners reflect the drug and gang culture, much of which includes functional illiterates. Therefore, correctional personnel are not worried about these prisoners fighting back physically or legally. Some of the largest gains of civil rights for prisoners were in the 60’s and 70’s, when prisoners filed a multitude of lawsuits and had the assistance of progressive legal organizations. Today, the Supreme Court has severely restricted prisoners’ ability to file lawsuits and win.

The absent dynamic of a vibrant prison movement negatively impacts the capacity of prisoners to fight. Absent both community and legal support, in a confined repressive environment, prisoners can only be expected to survive, and try and make it home alive. Attica, Comstock, Clinton and other NYS maximum security prisons suffer the same reality, all of which tells All of Us of our collective failure.

It is my sincere hope, on this 40th Year commemoration of Attica, that NYC’s activists recognize what for many inside prison seems to be abandonment. That they will decide to recognize the work that needs to be done to help restore the capacity for all of us to fight back for freedom!

Respectfully,  
Jalil A. Muntaqim

### **6 Sept – Insurgent Theatre Tour of “In The Belly” at ABC No Rio**

*Insurgent Theatre is bringing their play IN THE BELLY\*\*\* to New York City on Tuesday September 6th. IN THE BELLY depicts long term solitary confinement in order to begin a critique of the entire US prison system. This collaboratively developed workshop piece draws from many prisoner accounts, audience feedback and close study of history, including ideas from Michel Foucault's Discipline and Punish. Proceeds from the performance of IN THE BELLY at ABC No Rio to support NYC Books Through Bars and Ohio Prisoners via RedBird Prison Abolition.*

**WHEN:** 8:00pm, Tuesday, September 6th  
**WHERE:** ABC No Rio, 156 Rivington Street  
**COST:** \$5-\$20, sliding scale donation

**MORE:**

In the belly is where things digest, where they are broken down so their value can be extracted. This is where things are made to rot. If our society is a beast, its belly is the prison system. This new work from Insurgent Theatre seeks to manifest imprisonment on stage, overlays it with critical analysis of the system, and follows up with in-depth discussion about abolishing prison in America.

In the Belly was collaboratively created and performed by Weslie Coleman, Kate Pleuss, and Ben Turk in the winter of 2011. The cast imagined themselves in three of the 25,000 long term solitary confinement cells in America. They're performing what they discovered in a series of scattered moments, regimented actions and critical perspectives. After their first tours, the cast continued to develop and workshop the play.

"Most Americans seem to relate to prison as an unmentionable aspect of our society, something we all fear and regret, but few of us want to even imagine. For this project we have challenged ourselves to discover and share our notions of prison life and to imagine this system acting on our bodies and minds." -Cast Members

**MORE ABOUT BOOKS THROUGH BARS:**

Started in 1996, NYC Books Through Bars sends thousands of books to prisoners from any State each year, at their request. Books, labor and the space we use are ALL donated, with postage as our only fund raising need. The US incarcerates people at a rate higher than ANY other country, and it is exceedingly difficult to get quality reading material inside these concentration camps. We believe literacy and access to reading material is a human right, and that literature (especially of the educational and political variety) helps to relieve the isolation, torture and mental atrophy that life in the prison industrial complex inflicts upon the usually Black, Brown and poor victims of the United States' 13th-amendment-sanctioned-slavery.

**MORE ABOUT REDBIRD PRISON ABOLITION:** RedBird Prison Abolition is a group of people in Columbus, OH who want to see the prison system come to an end. The all-volunteer group has no budget, substantial funding or formal mission statement. RedBird's activities are guided by correspondence with incarcerated people because prison abolition ought to begin with the needs of those most directly effected by the system. Things they've done include: writing prison pen pals, connecting prisoners with needed resources, raising funds for legal defense, hosting events, publishing materials, and creating critical discussions about the US prison system. One third of funds raised from In the Belly will go to RedBird.

**MORE ABOUT INSURGENT THEATRE:**

Insurgent Theatre strives to connect performing arts with radical struggles, to make theatre that is relevant, engaging, challenging and useful for those who confront the US police state and global capitalist empire. We've been making original theatre since 2003 and frequently touring the country since August, 2008.

**PRAISE FOR INSURGENT'S PREVIOUS WORK:**

"One of the most inspiring DIY tours I have ever encountered. Its execution is intensely captivating and provocative. What other play features an hour of harsh interrogation and pistol-whipping followed by remarkably constructive conversation with its audience?" -Robert Inhuman, Realicide

"Insurgent Theatre's exciting, insightful, postdramatic scripts, their courageous acting and staging, and their generous, even tender, care for their audiences, reflect a passionate commitment to learning, [and] a faith in the value of theatrical communion." -John Schneider, Obie award winning playwright and cofounder of Theatre X

*\*\*\*This show contains nudity, violence and other sad realities of the US prison system.*

**12 Sept – Free the Cuban Five Month Begins**

*In 2006, President Ricardo Alarcon of the Cuban parliament, called for the period of time between September*

*12th through October 6th, to be a time to call attention to the case of the Cuban 5; 5 U.S. held political prisoners incarcerated for 13 years for fighting against terrorism in the United States and Cuba. In New York City, we extend the time frame by 6 days to make it a full month, Sept. 12th-Oct. 12th.*

**MORE:**

This year, The Popular Education Project to Free the Cuban 5 is organizing a film festival and a series of forums to educate, organize and mobilize for the freedom of these innocent men! Please Support our efforts! Contact us if you want to host a film showing or a forum! Email us at: [freethecuban5@gmail.com](mailto:freethecuban5@gmail.com)

**18 Sept - 6th Annual Benefit Book Sale for Daniel McGowan**

**WHAT:** 6th Annual Benefit Book Sale for Daniel McGowan

**WHEN:** 11am to 7pm, Sunday, September 18th, 2011 [rain date: TBA]

**WHERE:** [Bedford Avenue at North 6th Street](#) in Brooklyn

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

It's that time of year again. With so many folks going back to school, books are on our minds. And what better way to get some great books than to also financially aid a political prisoner? We've had great success and good times with these book sales [in the past](#) and this year will be no different.

Why a fundraiser now? While you may not realize it, life in prison can actually be really expensive. From making overpriced phone calls and e-mail access, to having to buy basic necessities from the commissary at prices many times that of retail, Daniel's living costs have add up. For that reason, even if you can't make it to the book sale, please consider [donating to Daniel](#) today. Without donations from friends and supporters, Daniel would be unable to buy the minimal goods that provide a small amount of comfort while he is imprisoned. Not to mention the staggering amount of money he still owes for the legal representation during his trial.

On Sunday, September 18th, [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 and commissary 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!

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 3rd 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 18th 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](#)

### **13 Oct - Attend Walter Bond's October 13<sup>th</sup> 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, 1<sup>st</sup> 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%.