



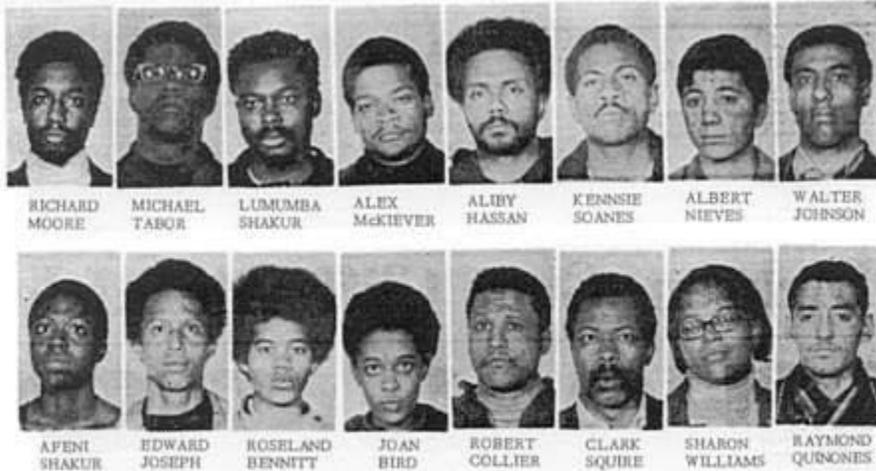
POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for January 31st

13 Jan – NY Panther 21 Defendant Ali Bey Hassan Has Died

Ali Bey Hassan, former Black Panther and a defendant in the NY Panther 21 case, has died. The Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee wrote the following eulogy.

MORE:



THE N.Y. 21

He succumbed to Cancer on January 13, 2010 @ 5pm. Bey was a true solidier. He traveled outside this country speaking on behalf of Mumia. He was always working on Political Prisoners issues. I fondly remember going to Norwalk Conn in 2003, To help him plan and participate in that City's first African American Day Parade which continues to this day.

He was the engine that organized that black community. I am remembering our talks *oh those talks, Bey could talk*. I remember being in a room with Ali Bey and George Edwards I couldn't get a word in edge wise, those of you who really know these two committed Brothers know what I am talking about. I spoke with Bey before and after the election of the first Black President. Before the 2008 election, Bey would say that if Obama was elected we would paint the White House Black. Months after the election I asked Bey did we paint the White House black? He replied no not black a little Grey maybe.

Just like our Comrade Smitty {*Long Live his Revolutionary Spirit*} Bey was a true historian and if you sat down and listen to him you would learn a lot. From Plymouth Rock, to the stealing of this land from the Indians to all the wars America waged. He also was a handyman, knew plumbing, building, painting, construction, etc. When he came to NYC for the Black Panther Party Film Festival he stayed with me. I had a faulty shower, a leaking faucet and the water in the tub took a long time to drain. I came home from work one day, during the two weeks he stayed with me, and all that was fixed. If he stayed any longer he was going to paint the crib. He said 'Get some paint and I'll hook you up.' Bey was a proud Black man and he will truly be missed.

In 2008 when I came to Atlanta to attend the [Arts & Culture Conference of the Black Panther Party](#)...I stayed with Bey and his wife Beverly. They have a beautiful home and they welcomed me with open arms. He affectionately called her Brown Sugar. I remember one night they were having a disagreement Bey said BJ, "I should have married someone else Beverly replied "Yea if you did you would be lost." Then Bey said "I sure would be." They were a great couple, happy and funny. They were married for seven years. Comrades we are

asking you to reach out to his widow.

We in the Black Panther Party Commemoration Committee will be sending \$100 to Bey's widow. We hope that other organizations, in memory of Ali Bey, will match us.

Comrades, family and friends we call on you to send what you can. People can send their cards and funds, at this time of need.

Here is the information for Ali Bey's Wife;

Mrs. Beverly Burnett

1491 Muirfield Drive

Stone Mountain, Georgia 30088

16 Jan - Current situations of captive anarchists Andrew Mickel and Casey Brezik

While updating the listing of anarchists imprisoned in North America on their site, WoS discovered that Andrew Mickel, convicted in a claimed assassination of a police officer, is facing imminent execution at the hands of the state, and that Casey Brezik, accused in the attempted assassination of the governor of Missouri (and an attack on the college dean who tried to thwart him) has been condemned to indefinite captivity in a mental institution—one of the loopholes the state utilizes in its own laws to deny prisoners their supposed “rights” of trial and “due process.”

MORE:

We discovered this while also translating a text from comrades in Chile titled “In the social war, nothing and no one is forgotten.” All this, on a day in which the masses of Americans are encouraged to “remember” Martin Luther King Jr. because the State finds it safe to portray his actions of social change in a sanitized way that they can use to maintain their existing and continuing order (even while encouraging us to forget many aspects of his life, not to mention the thousands and millions who have fought against Power in a way that it will never sanction, because they fought not for its reform but for revolution, and/or for the insurrection of the individual)—this awakens powerful feelings which urge us to write in defense of Andy and Casey, who we (the whole anarchist space) have been all but completely fooled into forgetting because of the ploys of power, and to declare, although we have not met these individuals, we stand with each of them against power's cowardly attacks on their lives, freedom, memory, affinities, and reputations.

Andrew “Andy” Mickel is an anarchist from Ohio and later Olympia, Washinton (where he attended college in the years before his arrest) who was convicted in 2005 for the political assassination of a Red Bluff, California police officer that happened in 2002. The case was unsolved until Andy's lengthy online communiqué claiming the assassination and calling for revolution led to his arrest.

In the communiqué, Andy claimed the action “to bring attention to, and halt, the police-state tactics that have come to be used throughout our country.” He also critiques corporations, government, war, the apathy of citizens, “whining to politicians” to change things, the justice system, police, media, etc, and encourages everyone to wake up, take action as they see fit (not as pressured by others or to pressure others into something they're not comfortable with) to take back their lives and destroy the current system. He reminds us, especially who are young, that the “impulse for freedom that you feel within yourselves, which everyone else seems to be trying to silence... is Life, tugging at you, asking you to actually be Alive! The systems of control that surround you, which you hate, do not get better as you age. The control gets more invasive, more complete. Smash it while your youth still helps you to see it!”

He has been sentenced to death and is currently held on death row while his appeal is reviewed. We do not know the current status of the appeal but we do know that the State's plan is to execute him quietly and soon, after completing their “due process” and without awakening the spirit of rebellion that was and is alive in his actions-words-life for all to see, and which he was dedicated to awakening in others.

And we know well the strategy that order seeks to follow in murdering Andy, an anarchist, a rebel, an individual whose words and actions are profoundly moving and inspiring. We remember that the State has the blood of many millions on its hands, but that they fear to openly execute one who is remembered for having fought against their system of control. They remember, for example, that from their execution of 4 anarchists in 1887 there arose thousands of acts of revolt, over a century of combative remembrance that their memory has yet to fade away from rebel hearts, from the fires that burn the symbols of their power, and the bombs that thousands detonate against their order. Today the State knows to strike first at the weapon of memory and the bonds of affinity and solidarity, that only in this way can they take the life of one who has declared himself or herself an enemy of its order.

Casey Brezik is the accused anarchist assassin from Kansas City area who is charged with slashing the throat of the Dean of Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley in an alleged plot to attack the Governor of Missouri, Jay Nixon during a talk at the college. He is currently being held by the state of Missouri pending trial for two counts of first-degree assault and two counts of armed criminal action. Some time ago, there had been a brief notice from anarchist comrades who know Casey to inform others about his situation and ensure that he would not go forgotten.

In February 2011, the State of Missouri declared him to be incapable of standing trial which means he is forced to stay locked up in a mental institution indefinitely without possibility of bond or trial until the state declares him to be sane. Although it has been almost a year since he was condemned to that situation of perpetual imprisonment, not having any timeline for release or even for trial, there has been no word about his situation in the public anarchist space. As the press reported, Casey demanded to know of the court if this was their way to prolong his incarceration indefinitely without allowing him any chance of release. It is also, notably, a way to brand him as insane and his actions as therefore not being understandable.

The State's "mental institutions" are an especially horrible form of prison, one of the most concrete and extreme ways for the State to try to isolate individuals who act and live against the social order. They want us to forget our comrades while they are locked away, or at least to be silent regarding them, and to even begin to believe that we really have nothing in common with them because of the diagnosis that the sick doctors of the State decide to place on them.

This is not true. We remember, for example, the frenzy with which the State and their media tried to mark Ted Kaczynski as insane, even while many of the State's own doctors admitted that he was perfectly clear-headed, even while all his words clearly came from a reasonable person with concrete reasons for all of his actions and far more consistency, insight and critique than the vast majority of the population—but for the State that was exactly the threat. The forces of order would not allow his writings to be considered anything of interest or value because in his case his words were not dead words, but lived in action. When such a scathing critique of civilization is made that divorces itself from action (such as the writings of Derrick Jensen, however frantically he may try to pressure others into actions he is unwilling to carry out), the State does not perceive this as such a threat or so necessary to discredit. But when one carries their ideas to their logical conclusions, the State does everything in its power to brand her or him as insane and terrorize the population into ignoring and forgetting the person's life-ideas-actions-self (we join these words because for them and for us they are not separate).

As Andy put it in his communiqué: *"Everyone!- Remember that the authorities will lie to you. They will try to make you distrust one another. Trust each other in spite of the disinformation they feed you. Don't believe any rumors you hear until they are confirmed. Different views and different tactics are okay, but communicate with one another! Especially when you are two autonomous groups collaborating. Communicate and don't believe rumors."*

For our part, we understand the State's tactics to keep people from seeing the reality. And we understand perfectly the desire to make an attempt—as Andy and Casey are accused of doing—against the forces of order, whether on the politicians, cops, or other roles, and we stand always on the side of those rebel individuals who face the repression

of the State. For us this is neither a question of guilt and innocence, nor of sanity and insanity—those are not our way of seeing things. For us there is only the question of how one responds to the situation at hand, and this will correspond with one's affinities and one's position.

When many comrades will speak favorably of the actions of propaganda by the deed committed a century ago, while their lips never speak the names of anarchists who today are accused of assassination or attempts and are condemned to death and indefinite incarceration, this silence is unbearable and inexcusable! We go forward with memory as another weapon in our arsenal against society in its attempts to isolate the comrades who also fight against it, its attempts to make them forgotten.

It should be clear by now what motivates us to write these words. We cannot in good conscience declare our position and allow texts such as *In the social war, nothing and no one is forgotten* to be disseminated by us among the anarchist and nihilist individuals in this country (may its flags and borders burn) while leaving unasked the question of how have these comrades come to be all but forgotten in anarchist spaces, discussions, publications, web sites, communiqués, and actions of solidarity even among the comrades who have known them personally?

We do not translate and disseminate texts from Chile or anywhere with the intention for them to become words that die in the mouths and minds of passive consumers. It is in life and action that our understandings of affinity are alive, it is thus that one recognizes the rebel who is accused, imprisoned, who awaits the executioner's rope (or chair, or syringe) as related to oneself, and seeks concretely to fight for their freedom—or if this is not possible then to make their captors and executioners pay, by carrying on the fight they carried and carry, in whatever forms of action we are drawn to, in the destruction of the existent, never fooled by its ploys to impose silencing, forgetting, or allowing ourselves to be divided by the State's walls or by the preferences for different forms of activity turned into static categories and supposed barriers.

We echo Andy's words of invitation and encouragement:

***“Manifest the World you want to live in!
Do this for yourselves.
If this be treason, make the most of it.”***

In memory of Louis Lingg, August Spies, Albert Parsons, George Engel, and Adolph Fischer! In memory of Ferdinando Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti! In memory of Carlo Giuliani, Mauricio Morales, and Lambros Fountas! In memory of Anthony DiGeronimo! In memory of all the fallen iconoclasts, comrades and combatants, named and unnamed!

Freedom to Andrew Mickel! Freedom to Casey Brezik!

17 Jan - Revealed: The FBI's Secretive Practice of "Blackballing" Files

Have you ever filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request with the FBI and received a written response from the agency stating that it could not locate records responsive to your request? If so, there's a chance the FBI may have found some documents, but for unknown reasons, the agency's FOIA analysts determined it was not responsive and "blackballed" the file, crucial information the FBI withholds from a requester when it issues a "no records" response. This article explains the practice of blackballing.

MORE:

The FBI's practice of "blackballing" files has never been publicly disclosed before. With the exception of one open government expert, a half-dozen others contacted by Truthout said they were unfamiliar with the process of "blackballing" and had never heard of the term.

[Trevor Griffey](#) learned about "blackballing" last year when he filed a FOIA/Privacy Act request with the FBI to

determine whether [Manning Marable](#), a Columbia University professor who founded the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, sought the FBI's files on Malcolm X under FOIA. At the time of his death last April, Marable had just finished writing an [exhaustive biography](#) on the late civil rights activist. Griffey filed the FOIA hoping he would receive records to assist him with research related to a long-term [civil rights project](#) he has been working on.

In a letter the agency sent in response to his FOIA, the FBI told Griffey that it could not locate "main file records" on Marable responsive to his request. Last November, in [response](#) to a FOIA request Truthout filed with the FBI for a wide-range of documents on the Occupy Wall Street, the agency also said it was unable to "identify main file records responsive to [our] FOIA," despite the fact that [internal FBI documents related to the protest movement](#) had already been posted on the Internet. The FBI has been [criticized](#) in the past for responding to more than half of the FOIA requests the agency had received by claiming it could not locate responsive files.

Griffey, who also teaches US history at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, and is co-editor of the book, "[Black Power at Work: Community Control, Affirmative Action and the Construction Industry](#)," was baffled. He found it difficult to believe that Marable would not have filed a FOIA for Malcolm X's FBI file. So, he sent an email to an FBI FOIA analyst asking for clarification.

The FBI FOIA analyst responded to Griffey in an email, asking him to supply additional "keywords" to assist in a search of the agency's main file records for documents on Marable responsive to his FOIA request. The analyst then disclosed to Griffey, perhaps mistakenly, that a search for previous requests for records on Marable turned up a single file that was "blackballed" per the agency's "standard operating procedure."

So last May, Griffey again turned to FOIA, this time to try and gain insight into the blackballing process. He filed a FOIA request with the FBI seeking a copy of the agency's standard operating procedure for "blackballing" files.

Two months later, he received [five pages](#) from an untitled and undated PowerPoint presentation that outlined procedures for blackballing files from FOIA requests. The FBI cited [three exemptions](#) under the [law](#) to justify withholding a complete and unredacted copy of the PowerPoint:

(b)(6) Personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

(b)(7) Records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, but only to the extent that the production of such law enforcement records or information:

C. Could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

E. Would disclose techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions or would disclose guidelines for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions if such disclosure could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law ...

Griffey appealed the FBI's decision to withhold information contained in the PowerPoint under the (b)(7)(E) exemption, but it was denied.

Still, the PowerPoint pages the FBI did turn over to Griffey provide insight into the "blackballing" process. On a page titled, "Blackball Files," it says files identified as 190 and 197 "main files," which are [FBI classifications](#) pertaining to FOIA/Privacy Act requests for files on people and civil litigation, are blackballed unless "specifically ask[ed] for" by the requester when an initial FOIA request is made.

Moreover, the agency deems certain "control files," "separate files which relate to a specific matter and is used as an administrative means of managing, or 'controlling' a certain program or [investigative matter](#)," that pop up and are unresponsive to a FOIA to be ripe for blackballing. However, a FOIA analyst must first get permission from a

supervisor before a "control file" can be blackballed.

Finally, according to the PowerPoint, some files are automatically blackballed by an FBI FOIA analyst, but the public is not permitted to know the classification of files that fall into that category because the FBI redacted that part of the PowerPoint, claiming disclosure would reveal "techniques and procedures for law enforcement investigations and procedures."

"Not only are we not told when the FBI withholds material from FOIA requests, but we are not even allowed to know all of the kinds of material it withholds," Griffey told Truthout. "The law itself and not just its enforcement, is now effectively secret."

But Bill Carter, an FBI spokesman, told Truthout in an interview that "blackballing" is not about secrecy nor is the process used in any way to conceal responsive records, which the [Justice Department revealed](#) it has been doing for more than two decades in certain cases.

"Blackball is a term of art used by the [FBI's] FOIA section people in the records management division," he said. "It's an unfortunate term. It applies to people and events. It means that we pulled a file that initially looked responsive but after a review it turned out it wasn't because the file didn't match the requesters' specific request" for records.

Carter sent Truthout an email that contained an explanation of the blackballing process as provided to him by Dennis Argall, the assistant section chief of the Record/Information Dissemination Section, FBI's Records Management Division:

"[B]lackball" is a term we typically use to describe a file (not a request) that initially looked responsive but upon review we find it's for a different guy or event. It can also be used to describe a file that we won't process because, i.e., a guy makes a request for his "FBI file" in 2005 and [we] process it for him. When he makes another request for his "FBI file" in 2011, we will only process his "records" but will not process the file that was created to respond to the 2005 FOIA request, which is 190 file series [the classification the FBI uses for files requested on people].

That's exactly how the FBI described the blackballing process to attorney Kel McClanahan, executive director of Arlington, Virginia-based [National Security Counselors](#), a public interest law firm.

McClanahan told Truthout in an email interview that he first learned about blackballing when the term was used in a set of FBI "processing notes" he requested from the agency to determine how FBI FOIA analysts had handled one of his FOIA requests.

Although McClanahan believes there is "definitely a place for blackballing in the FOIA process" he said the way the FBI "does blackballing leaves a lot to be desired."

"First of all, even though [the FBI] may blackball 50 records and release 3, they never tell the requester about the 50," McClanahan said, hitting on Griffey's main complaint about blackballing. "They never mention word one about 'and we found other records that we deemed non-responsive.' The requester is left to wonder why the FBI only found 3 records about the subject in question and he will never know that they found 50 others that they ultimately deemed non-responsive unless he has the foresight to FOIA the FBI's processing notes for his request. Knowledge like that is very important when a requester is trying to decide whether or not to tie up [the FBI's Office of Information Policy] with an administrative appeal, let alone litigation."

McClanahan said his concerns would largely be addressed if the FBI "only blackballed records for good reasons."

"If I could trust the FBI only to blackball things that were clearly non-responsive, I don't need to know that they found completely unrelated records," he added. "However, that's not what the FBI does. I have seen it blackball

records because they 'weren't FBI records,' even though they were in FBI files (they were FBI copies of other agencies' records, which any FOIA person worth his salt knows are still responsive to a FOIA request made to FBI). I've seen it blackball records because the request asked for 'internal FBI records' and the records in question were sent outside of the FBI, based on a strained interpretation of the word 'internal.'"

The FBI will be forced to make a choice "if it wants to apply FOIA correctly," McClanahan said.

"The agency can either limit its blackballing to records that nobody would think are responsive (e.g. different people with the same name, records outside a set time frame); or it can tell requesters in the administrative stage that it determined that certain records were non-responsive and why," he said. "Failing to do either, however, is bad FOIA."

17 Jan - Activist Begins Prison Sentence for Refusing to Name Names and For Quoting Dave Chappelle

One of the folks we focused on last time was grand jury resister Jordan Halliday. Apparently the feds were particularly pissed about the prestige awarded him by his community for refusing to cooperate. This article reveals some of that which the FBI claims to have been so concerned. We've also posted other updates and messages regarding Jordan in this section.

MORE:

Utah animal rights activist Jordan Halliday has begun a [10-month prison sentence](#) for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury about his political beliefs and political associations. It is believed to be the first time in two decades, and only the third time in U.S. history, that someone has been imprisoned for criminal contempt of court after already serving prison time for civil contempt—all because of his principled stand against what activists call a political witch hunt.

The Utah grand jury was convened in 2009 to investigate the release of mink from Utah fur farms by the Animal Liberation Front. Halliday refused to cooperate because grand juries have historically been used against social movements (as they are now being used against [antiwar activists in the Midwest](#)) in fishing expeditions.

When you walk into a grand jury, you check your rights at the door. You have to answer questions about your politics and your friends. You don't have the right to remain silent. If you refuse to cooperate and "name names," you can be sent to jail. That's what happened to Halliday.

But the story of how and why he was targeted gets even more surprising.

Corporate Leads

According to a government memo, "there is evidence that the defendant [Halliday] notified news sources of the McMullin mink farm attack on the day of the attack, and even before police officers knew of the significance of the crime." This would seem like a good reason to question him.

However, it's a lie.

On August 20, 2009, someone submitted an anonymous message to KUTV.com about the fur farm raid. The only details provided on the contact form were a first name of "Jordan" and an email "jo~dan@aol.com." The message said the Animal Liberation Front released 300 mink from McMullin mink farm and that they "look a lot happier."

KUTV forwarded the message to Lindsey McMullin, the farm owner. McMullin forwarded the email to Teresa Platt of Fur Commission USA, an industry group. Platt forwarded the email to the FBI. [Here is a section of the [FBI file with the emails.](#)]

This is the basis for the FBI's obsession with Halliday: an anonymous email attributed to "Jordan" that they received from a corporate front group, and the fact that Jordan Halliday is the only animal rights "Jordan" they could find (the other Jordans they spoke with were not activists, prosecutors said).

Refusal to Cooperate

Halliday maintains he has no knowledge of these crimes, and points out that anyone claiming responsibility for a

crime would not use their real name (plus jo~dan@aol.com is not even a valid address). Instead, he argues that he has been targeted because of his protesting and writing, and that this is a broader attack on the animal rights and environmental movements.

Halliday's attorney said in a memorandum:

... Jordan has resisted questioning involving his membership status and/or **leadership position** in various organizations of political and social nature involved in advocating for animal protections. He has been questioned about whether he **organized a rally** in front of the federal courthouse, and if he knows **who did organize such rally**, or if it were an organization to which he belongs that planned the rally. He has been **asked about his family members**, and whether one is married to an animal rights activist...[emphasis added]

1-2-3-4-FIFTH

Halliday answered either "no comment" or invoked the Fifth Amendment to all questions asked of him during his grand jury appearances. He answered no questions. His refusal to cooperate with the grand jury resulted in him [spending 104 days in jail](#) for civil contempt of court. Before being released, he was informed that the government had indicted him again on the same case, this time on criminal contempt charges.

Upon learning that prosecutors sought a 2 year prison sentence, Halliday pleaded guilty to refusing to answer questions at a federal grand jury. He was sentenced to 10 months in prison. To put this in perspective, [William James Viehl and Alex Jason Hall](#) were convicted of two counts of "animal enterprise terrorism" under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act for the Matthews mink farm raid, and sentenced to 21 and 24 months.

Why was Halliday treated so harshly?

One reason is that his "refusal to testify over a long period and his statements about 'resisting' the grand jury make his conduct more serious than simply failing to appear as a material witness."

An example of this "disdainful view of grand juries" is a March 4, 2009 text message sent by Halliday after appearing before the grand jury. According to the [government's sentencing memo](#), he wrote:

Well, after my dave chapelle ... I plead the 5th routine today. I was making some fo [sic] the gj laugh. I was sayin' like "1-2- 3-4-5th!". And they asked to see and they asked to see and they asked her to grant me more time as well, because they needed more time. The prosecutor was pissed as fuck.

Prosecutors note that "Dave Chappelle is a popular comedian who performs a comic routine that Halliday claims in the text message to have been mimicking before the grand jury. (Submission Exhibit No. 6.) In context, [the video clip](#) illustrates Halliday's intention to mock the grand jury process..."

Prosecutors also say there were protestors outside the courthouse, and that Halliday said on websites and in the press that he had no intention of cooperating with a grand jury witch hunt. His refusal to cower in fear, his refusal to acquiesce to the government's bullying, and his willingness to mock those the government were spun by the government as evidence of the need for a higher sentence.

"Stardom"

It's telling that prosecutors bluntly describe this lack of fear as a threat to the entire grand jury system. "In some sense, the defendant's contempt has brought a certain stardom within the counterculture animal rights extremist movement," the sentencing memo says. He has tweeted, blogged, and interviewed about his experiences. He has supporters who have opened [Facebook](#) and [Tumblr](#) accounts, and [protested outside the courthouse](#).

It is imperative, prosecutors said, that the "sentence defendant receives must not only deter his future criminal conduct, but also send the appropriate message to ensure that, as an unintended consequence of a lenient sentence, *the defendant's supporters are not emboldened to follow the defendant's contemptuous ways.*"

The FBI, the fur industry, and prosecutors are openly trying to send a message. But what message are you hearing?

18 Jan – An Interview With Russell Maroon Shoats on Democracy, Matriarchy, OWS, & Food Security

We've been lucky to receive several interviews with political prisoners and prisoners of war over the last couple of weeks. This one, with Maroon Shoats, covers several topics and is a great basis for starting or continuing a correspondence with him.

MORE:

Interviewer: How would you define democracy?

Maroon: In its broadest sense – to me – democracy is the ability of the individual to exercise self-determination in the core areas of economics, education, entertainment, labor, law, politics, religion, sex, war and peace; taking under consideration the need to both support and guide children until they can responsibly exercise those things on their own.

If one falls victim to believing what Marimba Ani calls “rhetorical ethics,” (the practice that has held sway surrounding the word democracy) then you would dismiss my definition as superfluous. Nowadays, however, more of the masses, globally, are accepting the fact that except for a small minority, democracy is something they do not exercise in any of those core areas.

So the question we must ask ourselves is “How do we construct societies where the individual is able to broadly exercise self-determination?”

Interviewer: Do you find the concept of democracy to be useful to popular movements?

Maroon: For the already mentioned reasons, the exercise of democracy/self-determination is paramount at every stage of a popular movement, and for such an effort to remain true to the word “popular.” After all, individuals usually feel a need to look out for their own interest, and to promote and support democracy/self-determination goes hand in hand with that need. If a popular movement deviates from that, then it too will fall into the practice of utilizing rhetorical ethics if it continues to call itself popular.

Interviewer: What was the relationship between democracy and the Black Panther Party?

Maroon: Here I'll have to step on a lot of toes.

The Black Panther Party (BPP) – of which the Philadelphia Black Unity Council (my parent group) merged with in 1969 – was never a democratically run organization. It too used rhetorical ethics to justify its methods, both internally and to the public at large. It championed the Leninist vanguard party concept that had been used during the Russian struggle against the czar. Subsequent to that, close copies of those practices have spread throughout the world before the BPP adopted it. And I've been researching and studying those instances for about 40 years, and have yet to find a single vanguard party that really exercised what I have defined as democracy/self-determination.

Such groups have and continue to champion the establishing of popular movements – as I've defined them – but their motives are to try to control such movements and use them as a battering ram to weaken or defeat the state in order to give the vanguard party a chance to try to “seize state power,” and then set themselves up as a new ruling elite. The histories of vanguard parties leaves no doubt about that.

The BPP, however, was a youthful formation that served a historical service of giving youth of color – and later youth in general – an introduction to a form of radical politics that was little known to them. Little did they know that the methods they chose to use were contradictory to the ends they sought. Thus early on they began to experience the friction developed from members believing the rhetorical ethics the leadership relied on, and the leadership's failure to act towards the rank-and-file democratically, within the traditional vanguard party “democratic centralist” organizational rules.

That forced the BPP leaders to resort to using naked terror and violence – both internally and within the communities (see what the womyn BPP head wrote in her book: “A Taste of Power,” by Elaine Brown). Eventually that and the struggle to keep the state from destroying them (see the FBI's COINTELPRO program of

unlawful actions against the BPP), along with their youthful inexperience caused the original BPP to disintegrate, leaving members in prison, exiled, disillusioned and with shattered lives. Only a fraction of those former BPP members remain active in ways that justify their earlier sacrifices and efforts.

Unfortunately, newer BPP formations have not been provided with enough insight into this subject to help them fully weigh both the strengths and weaknesses of the original BPP. Indeed, some of the newer formations are hostile to any real critiques of the original BPP, a practice held in common with most Leninist vanguard parties historically.

To the rescue has come the multiple popular movements that the Arab Spring has thrown up: the Wisconsin state workers, Georgia and California prisoners' actions, and Occupy Wall Street. Here we're witnessing a promising trend that contains the seeds that can develop into a much-needed popular movement that can be democratic and self-determining, and capable of challenging the minority for control in the already mentioned core areas.

Interviewer: Would you say you are a latecomer to the feminist movement?

Maroon: Yes! In fact, although I've been a committed activist since before the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968, it has only been in the last 6 years that I've been awakened to the best of what feminism is, and the history of that movement. Moreover, I'm ashamed to admit that in that area I too have long practiced a rhetorical ethic in paying lip service to the idea that since before 1968 I was struggling for the uplift and freedom of all, while never fully grasping that my entire worldview was steeped in, and rested on patriarchal/male supremacist ideas, notions and practices, feminism's opposite and mortal enemy.

My New York based comrade Fred Ho is the first person to put it all together for me. In the transcript of a speech I read, he had made an excellent case of how the ancient practice of matriarchy was once a widespread and egalitarian phenomenon, and why today we must again study how we can utilize some of those principles in order to address the ills that humankind faces today.

Nonetheless, I was so stuck-on-stupid until I continued in my male supremacist ways, incorporating Fred Ho's ideas in a rhetorical ethic to hide my psychological conditioning, which I'll explain.

It took the writings of Stan Goff, a former career military man (Special Forces, Rangers, Delta Team; Vietnam, Grenada, Somalia and other operations veteran) who had rejected the oppressive policies that he had spent his life defending, and adopted a form of radical politics and activism to get my full attention: such machismo is venerated within the patriarchal/male supremacist worldview. He was "my kind of guy."

In Goff's third book, *Sex and War*, he really got my interest by offering long and insightful quotes to bolster the points he was making, quotes by radical and feminist writers and activists. Passages so full of meaning until they stimulated me to begin to research the full works of the women mentioned. Powerful feminists like Maria Mies, Vandana Shiva and Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen; activists, scholars and grassroots organizers, with groundbreaking books like *Ecofeminism* (Mies and Shiva), *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women and the International Division of Labor* (Mies), and *The Subsistence Perspective: Beyond the Globalised Economy* (Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen and Maria Mies). Critiques that I've learned more from than most of what I thought the previous 25 years of study and activism had taught me. More importantly, those works and further study, reflection and discussions caused me to radically alter my worldview and political views.

Thus, when comrade Fred Ho and I recently got together, I was finally ready to join his efforts, which you too can examine by e-mailing prefiguration@gmail.com.

Interviewer: What were the primary obstacles – psychological, social, or otherwise – to your being receptive to the feminist movement?

Maroon: Psychologically and socially – like most males – from birth I was conditioned and socialized to accept and even seek violent solutions to most problems: the pirates, cowboys and Indians, war movies, James Bond, gangsters, boxing, football, martial arts, hunting, and on and on. . . . Little boys get toy guns, toy soldiers, football

gear and then “graduate” to get (or want) real guns and to go to war – with “somebody!”

Fred Ho and Maria Mies point out that for thousands of years men first bamboozled women out of acquiring and maintaining the knowledge and tools (weapons) of the martial arts, before going on to subsequently use that knowledge and those weapons to totally subjugate women and nature – the foundations upon which patriarchy rest.

Unknowingly, I became a member of that patriarchal cabal almost from birth, and remained a loyal member even after I thought I was struggling in the Black Panthers and Black Liberation Army for egalitarian ends. An effort that was destined to leave patriarchy/male supremacy in place, even if we were otherwise successful.

It is depressing to know that it took me over 60 years to stumble upon a feminist who had the kind of “credentials” I could trust, in order to pay proper attention to: “macho” Stan Goff. Therefore, I believe that men – the more respected the better – were the best advocates to win other men over to feminist ideas and practices (Fred Ho and his comrades more correctly use the word matriarchy/matriarchal, but for this piece I’ll continue using feminist).

Finally, it’s my opinion that the leading feminist/matriarchy thinkers and activists are heads and shoulders above all others in offering up a worldview that we can utilize to help rescue ourselves and the environment from this worsening crisis we’ve allowed ourselves to be manipulated into. You too need to look into their ideas and programs.

Interviewer: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Occupy Wall Street Movement?

Maroon: Occupy Wall Street (OWS) has brilliantly changed the narrative and relationships of opposing forces – not by the “occupations,” which by themselves could be equaled or even eclipsed by a number of other street demonstrations from the right and left (let’s not forget that Tea Party activists “occupied” venues for a while too). That’s not to belittle the beautiful and inspiring people of the OWS inspired occupations and related on-going actions.

OWS’s strategic strength and paradigm shifting breakthrough is encompassed in the awesome “We are the 99%” slogan. That alone instantly won to our side 99% of the inhabitants of the globe! A master stroke that forced the ruling minority into a defensive position that it will be extremely hard for them to get out of. Indeed, the ruling elites only responses have been to use police force, which leaves the OWS movement in control of the narrative, and those inspired by them are themselves thinking of ways that they too make their grievances known.

It’s like the rebellions (so-called “riots”) during “The long hot summers” of the 1960s: each rebellion fueled later rebellions, because the underlying conditions were so widespread until there was simply not enough police/national guards to fully repress them. The genie was only coaxed back into the bottle after billions of dollars were spent on social programs, with President Johnson’s “Great Society” being the best known.

Today, however, the ruling minority will be both unwilling and (finally) unable to fully co-opt the 99% financially, unless they commit “class suicide”; meaning, they would have to agree to reorder the system so radically, and give back so much of the wealth they’ve stolen until in the end they would have “killed the goose that laid the golden egg.”

The ruling minority won’t even accept the pleas of their more farsighted like Warren Buffet and Bill Gates, who see the handwriting on the wall, and are begging them to at least act like they care by paying their taxes . . . which is roundly ignored and ridiculed, the U.S.’s ruling elites equivalent to when Queen Marie Antoinette was told that the Paris masses ad no bread, responded “Then let them eat cake.” Or – nowadays – “Go to the mall and buy a flat-screen TV.”

Control of the narrative will continue to be the main strength of the OWS movement for the foreseeable future. But in order to effectively be more proactive OWS must address a glaring weakness. Namely the present physical

disconnect between its activists and the exploited and super-exploited people of color – numbering in the tens of millions in the U.S. alone. A segment of this country that have always suffered more (per capita) than the rest of its 99%. I'll not address how the global 99% breaks down in that regard, except to say that the global South has historically been at the bottom of the barrel in most respects. But I know the U.S. better, so I'll address things here, and leave it to others to breakdown the situation elsewhere.

In the U.S. the people of color – except for a minority of rich and “middle class” individuals – are worse off than the rest of the 99% (per capita) in every category: homelessness, jobless, home foreclosures, lack of health insurance, newly diagnoses with HIV, deportations, immigrants homes broken up and separated, children in foster care, drug and crime ridden communities, imprisonment, probation or parolees, loss of voting rights and access to local, state and federal social welfare programs, horrible schools, forced to live in toxic communities, and the list goes on.

What's important is OWS's moral strength really rests on its avowed pledge to rescue this country's vast “middle class” from further sliding backwards – into the poverty that the majority of the people of color find themselves in already. Yet, the middle class itself is not yet ready to take the steps that are necessary to pursue a protracted struggle to reach those ends. And the people of color have yet to see that it's in their interests to hit the streets in mass in order to alter the class composition and goals of this movement. Most people of color view OWS as a “white thing,” or so I've been told, not recognizing that their mass participation is needed to help OWS mature into a true mass movement.

To complicate this lack of participation by the people of color is the failure of their traditional “leaders” to mobilize them behind OWS. A failure – I believe – is a product of these leaders' egos: they feel a deep sense of jealousy and envy towards this young upstart movement, who have accomplished more in weeks than they have in the last three decades. And the hostility of OWS to the old charismatic leadership style – the “leaders” believe – threatens to make them useless; an extremely shortsighted calculation! In fact, their accumulated knowledge and experience could be invaluable if they would control their egos and begin to see themselves more as organic intellectuals than as the old style leaders that there was “some” justification for prior to the spread of modern communications, that the Arab Spring demonstrates makes that style superfluous, reactionary, and a drag on forward progress.

That said, it's my belief that OWS and those traditional influential personalities within the people of color communities still desperately need each other!

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon tells us that during the Algerian independence struggle the forward elements of that effort initially believed they could bypass the traditional leaders amongst the oppressed and go directly to the masses with their compelling logic and arguments against the French colonial system. They failed, however, and were isolated, killed, exiled and imprisoned.

After studying things while in prison, they decided to seek the help of those leaders as a necessary compromise on their release; a position that later bore fruit, although both elements – the forward thinking fighters and the traditional leaders – continued to struggle to control the dynamics of the independence movement.

OWS – I believe – must pursue a similar strategy in order to acquire help in mobilizing the masses amongst the people of color in the United States. Simply because an influx (beyond the relatively small numbers we see) of people of color into the OWS movement will provide a bridge between the forward elements in OWS and that vast middle class that's needed to be successful, but who have to be given time to realize they too must hit the streets. And the people of color will benefit by being in a position to educate OWS to the necessity of putting their needs and concerns “on the front burner” because they are the proverbial “canary in the coal mine”; meaning, whatever kills the canary will later kill the coal miners – if not attended to.

OWS must seek out not only the known influential individuals in the people of color communities, but also the smaller groups who are working for change. OWS can also launch their own initiatives in those communities –

wherever that's deemed possible and useful.

Interviewer: What are economic alternatives to the current domination of big banks, war profiteers, and the profit-drive system?

Maroon: On November 25th 2011, on Democracy Now! "Occupy Everywhere: Michael Moore, Naomi Klein on the Next Steps for the Movement Against Corporate Power," a similar question was raised: "How does the OWS movement move from the 'outrage phase' to 'the hope phase,' and imagine a new economic model?" Both Michael Moore and Naomi Klein addressed that, but I just want to comment on a few things Naomi Klein said. Namely, that after the Seattle protests and the later hysteria, war and repression following 9/11, many radical activists had to "put their heads down and started building the economic alternatives to that model we were protesting in Seattle, Washington, in Genoa and around the world. . . . Now we have 10 years of those experiences." She goes on to tick off many of them that I would encourage you to read about at: http://www.democracynow.org/2011/11/25/occupy_everywhere_michael_moore_naomi_klein

One aspect of the prefigurative work that strikes me as the bedrock is working towards food security. There's no need to detail how fragile most people's food acquisition is, as that relates to healthy food and terrible eating habits and subsequent poor health in this country. Suffice it to state that the majority of the 99% are on shaky ground there. Primarily because we are prisoners of the large corporations that dominate everything we eat. And they actually mass produce, process and sell foods that have been proven – over and over – to be like slowly drinking poison – profitable (for them) poison.

Thus, food security is designed to lessen our dependency on those corporations, making us healthier and saving money and bringing us back to a respect for nature in the process. After all, we can't struggle as much as is needed if we are as sick as most of us find ourselves to be. Such an effort is already being carried out by the parent group of the prefigurative initiative that Fred Ho is a part of: Scientific Soul Sessions (SSS); at www.scientificsoulsessions.com. On of their guides to food security rests on the practice of Mel Bartholomew's "square foot gardening." (www.squarefootgardening.com)

SSS writes, "According to Bartholomew, for urban settings, four square feet is all that is needed to grow vegetable gardens to feed two adults year-round. Rooftops, sidewalks, parks, front and backyards; common areas of buildings could all become food growing sources with minimal alteration and costs. Indeed, children and the elderly could be organized to tend to such gardens, and thus enhance the curriculum of math, science and other fields in the tasks of farming."

It is imperative, however, that one does not start to believe that such prefigurative efforts, or others not mentioned here, are "the answer" to what all will be needed to bring about the deep and broad-based changes needed in the 21st century. Such mistakes were made after the high tide of the 1960s/1970s era. And those who made that mistake allowed the exploiting minority a chance to study how better to hold on to their ill-gotten power and wealth, and now we all face a much more ruthless and sophisticated foe.

Thus, prefiguration must work hand-in-hand with broad-based movements to bring about the changes needed, and OWS is on the cutting edge of that side of the equation.

18 Jan - Richmond Anarchist Jeremy Hawthorne, Felony Trial Feb. 1st

Jeremy Hawthorne, arrested September 5th, 2011 while on a Copwatch patrol, is going on trial before a jury for allegedly slashing 7 tires on Virginia Commonwealth University vehicles, including two police cars.

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The charge is Destruction of State Property > \$1,000, a Class 6 Felony. The case is clearly politically motivated; as a part of Richmond Copwatch, Jeremy is one of several who have been targeted by Richmond police in past months for their work against police brutality and poor jail conditions in the city. The notoriously heavy-handed RPD and its officers, ever the subject of much controversy, have bristled and taken a particularly antagonistic

attitude with activists, protestors, and copwatchers, reacting in a consistently aggressive, violent, and reckless manner. Accountability, on the other hand, has been elusive.

The “evidence” used to indict Jeremy is insubstantial, and many details surrounding testimonies evidence gathering, and the circumstances leading to Jeremy’s arrest, are questionable at best.

Commonwealth Attorney Christopher Toepp is handling the case per his personal request, intent on a full conviction. Toepp has had a long year of high-profile cases, having been on the prosecution for the Monroe Park Occupation, and the African burial ground demonstration. If Chris Toepp has his way, Jeremy would face 5 years in prison.

The description of the person depicted in the so-far unreleased surveillance footage is incredibly mundane: a beard, a hat (maybe camo, brown, or black?), tattoos, a black sleeveless or rolled-up shirt, a bag, and a step-thru frame bike. In Richmond, this could easily be thousands of people. The alleged acts occurred on August 23rd, the Monday proceeding Best Friends Day, meaning hundreds more out-of-town hipster look-alikes were wild in the streets.

18 Jan – Mumia Abu-Jamal Update

As of Friday, January 27th, Mumia is in general population. This transfer came only after 5,500 signed petitions were delivered to the prison and pressure was exerted by folks on the outside. In the last couple of weeks a lot has been written about the ongoing mistreatment Mumia is receiving and we’ve compiled a lot of it below.

MORE:

Sadism In the Cell

Those intent on tormenting now ex-death-row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal have done it again, this time perhaps even exceeding their past efforts to painfully harass this man widely perceived as a political prisoner.

The latest punitive slap involves Pennsylvania prison authorities throwing Abu-Jamal into “Administrative Custody,” more commonly known as ‘The Hole.’

The draconian constraints of AC placement surpass the harsh restrictions of the death row isolation Abu-Jamal has endured for over a quarter century.

A jury sentenced Abu-Jamal to death following a controversial July 1982 conviction for killing a Philadelphia policeman.

No surprise that this latest punitive assault against Abu-Jamal has his worldwide support movement in an uproar. Supporters see AC placement as retaliation by those incensed that Abu-Jamal is no longer facing execution.

Energizing supporters is the opposite of what Philadelphia’s District Attorney Seth Williams said he desired when he announced last month that his office would not seek reinstatement of Abu-Jamal’s death sentence. At the time, DA Williams said he hoped avoiding a rehearing on the death sentence would consign Abu-Jamal to obscurity.

Pennsylvania’s governor and the president of Philadelphia’s police union also used the word obscurity when voicing their hopes that the life sentence for Abu-Jamal would decimate his cause célèbre status among death penalty abolitionists worldwide.

Prison authorities removed Abu-Jamal from death row mere hours after the Philadelphia DA’s December announcement, transferring him to an Administrative Custody cell block inside the same super-max Greene prison located more than 300-miles from Philadelphia in southwest Pennsylvania.

Prison officials rejected the standard procedure of placing Abu-Jamal in general population, the status for all

inmates not sentenced to death.

Significantly, inmates in general population have full privileges to visitation (contact, not conjugal contact), telephone and commissary, along with access to all prison programs and services.

Administrative Custody restrictions, on the other hand, are punitive in nature, including a limited number of visits, no telephone calls (except legal or emergency) and limitations on access to legal materials needed for appeals.

Sue Bensinger, a spokesperson for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, declined comment on Abu-Jamal's case citing the Department's "security and privacy" regulations.

Bensinger did confirm that authorities now hold Abu-Jamal in Mahanoy, a medium security prison about 100 miles from Philadelphia in central Pennsylvania. Mahanoy, by Department regulation, cannot hold death row prisoners.

DOC personnel moved Abu-Jamal to Mahanoy from Greene prison during an unannounced pre-dawn transfer on December 14, 2011.

Abu-Jamal's December removal from death row was in belated compliance with federal court rulings voiding Abu-Jamal's death sentence. That sentence launched Abu-Jamal's decade's long grind on Pennsylvania's death row – an ordeal that a string of federal court rulings since 2001 have declared to have been reached illegally and unconstitutionally.

When a federal District Court judge voided Abu-Jamal's death sentence in December 2001, converting it to a life sentence, Pennsylvania prison authorities refused to remove him from death row. Authorities justified their refusal to transfer Abu-Jamal into general population from death row in 2001 as extending a "courtesy" to Philadelphia's District Attorney's Office, to that city's police union (the Fraternal Order of Police) and to the widow of the slain officer.

The FOP, the widow and the DA's Office, including Williams and his predecessor Lynne Abraham, actively lobbied year after year for Abu-Jamal's continuance on death row during their unsuccessful appeals of that 2001 ruling ending his capital sentence.

Those malicious demands for Abu-Jamal's continued death row confinement sought to inflict increased suffering through keeping Abu-Jamal mired in the deprivations of death row isolation.

That "courtesy" also cost taxpayers at least \$100,000, because it costs Pennsylvania's prison system an extra ten thousand dollars per year to handle each death row inmate, according to prison system spokespersons.

That "courtesy" cost adds to the enormous expenditures Philadelphia prosecutors have made fighting in courts to block Abu-Jamal's efforts to win a retrial where a jury could hear what that 1982 jury did not: evidence of innocence withheld by police and prosecutors.

As an example of the additional restrictions administrative custody imposes on Abu-Jamal, the acclaimed prison author/journalist now has no access to books, a radio and a typewriter – all items he utilized on death row for his writings.

A federal appeals court in 1998 stated Abu-Jamal had a First Amendment right to write while imprisoned. That ruling derailed efforts by detractors to bar Abu-Jamal's writing.

Legal experts familiar with Abu-Jamal's plight say some of those current Administrative Custody restrictions – particularly those blocking his ability to write – arguably violate that 1998 appeals court ruling.

Under current AC status, authorities force Abu-Jamal to wear shackles during the limited visits he's permitted. Under administrative custody restrictions, his visits are actually less frequent and of shorter duration than were his highly restrictive death row visitations.

Prison authorities had stopped shackling Abu-Jamal during death row visits a few years ago, following complaints from Noble Peace Prize winner Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. Tutu, during a visit to the famous inmate, refused to see him until the shackles, which Tutu declared were a gratuitous torture, were removed.

In an interesting twist, Maureen Faulkner, the slain officer's widow, expressed her desire in December for having Abu-Jamal placed in general population where, she said, he would live among the "criminals that infest" Pennsylvania's prisons. Faulkner has been at the forefront of past punitive efforts against Abu-Jamal, including the legal rights-robbing onslaught that led to the 1998 federal appeals court ruling.

That 1995 onslaught was retaliation for the publication of Abu-Jamal's book *Live From Death Row*, and it substantially sabotaged his pivotal hearing that year appealing his conviction. The book features essays on prison life Abu-Jamal had prepared for an NPR program that detractors successfully intimidated NPR into cancelling before it could air.

This perverse Administrative Custody confinement, the latest link in the chain of injustices lashing Abu-Jamal since his 1981 arrest, is just the latest violation by the Department of Corrections of the Pennsylvania prison system's own written regulations for placing inmates into that harsh disciplinary status.

Abu-Jamal does not meet any of the 11 specific circumstances listed in Pennsylvania Department of Corrections regulations for justifying administrative custody placement.

A model prisoner, Abu-Jamal does not constitute "a threat" to life, property, himself, staff, other inmates, the public or orderly prison operations as the policy declaration for AC placement states.

Indeed, prison staff evaluations of Abu-Jamal since his December death row removal list him as "polite [and] respectful." Those positive evaluations hardly offer evidence of incorrigibility or other serious misbehavior which usually triggers AC placement.

Among the ever-changing rationales prison authorities advance for keeping Abu-Jamal in AC is their curious and Kafkaesque claim that they are awaiting legal clarification that the courts have formally replaced Abu-Jamal's death sentence with life in prison.

That claim contradicts the Department of Corrections' own documents specifically acknowledging that federal courts have vacated the death sentence (requiring a life sentence) and that the Philadelphia's DA has dropped appeals to reinstate the death sentence and is accepting the life imprisonment.

Since DOC documents clearly reference a vacated death sentence, how can prison officials also claim they need clarification for what is objectively obvious, unless they are using that need-for-clarification explanation to cover-up continued punitive harassment?

The mammoth legal battles raging around Abu-Jamal's conviction obscure the smaller little-known skirmishes Abu-Jamal constantly has to fight over mundane matters like the types of food he can eat, what newspapers he can read and the permissible length of his dreadlock hair style.

In 2003 Abu-Jamal and other inmates at Greene prison asked authorities for healthier diets, prompting hundreds of activists from Germany and other countries to send letters to prison authorities supporting that dietary request which arrived containing garlic cloves in the envelopes. Activists used garlic because it is widely recognized for its medicinal properties and it makes a pungent statement.

Abu-Jamal's current AC status once again limits his ability to obtain food from the prison commissary which he needs for his vegetarian diet.

In the late 1980s Abu-Jamal mounted an unsuccessful lawsuit against prison authorities for barring his death row receipt of a newspaper published by a socialist organization.

Prison authorities barred that newspaper by speciously deeming it a "danger" to prison security, despite their allowing non-isolation-cell inmates to receive white racist hate literature and pornography.

Those racist and pornographic publications approved for general population inmates clearly threatened security by spurring interracial tensions and homosexual rapes – unlike a leftist newspaper sent to one inmate in death row isolation.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, prison authorities disciplined Abu-Jamal for refusing to cut his dreadlocks (citing religious reasons). Authorities ultimately relented, allowing him to leave his locks uncut.

Authorities now cite Abu-Jamal's hair length as a reason for keeping him in punitive isolation, though suspiciously, they only first offered that excuse five long weeks after his December AC placement.

While Abu-Jamal's detractors indignantly dismiss all claims of his being a political prisoner, his post-arrest ordeals provide a compelling case of a person specifically targeted by authorities for being who he is politically more than for the crime he is supposedly serving time for.

Linn Washington, Jr. is a founder of This Can't Be Happening and a contributor to *Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion*, forthcoming from AK Press. He lives in Philadelphia.

Mumia Update from the MOVE Organization and ICFMAJ

As most of you already know, Mumia was transferred to SCI-Mahanoy in upstate PA. more than a month ago, directly after Phila. prosecutor Seth Williams announced that he wasn't pursuing the death penalty in Mumia's case. This meant that Mumia's sentence went from death to life in prison without parole.

Since arriving at SCI-Mahanoy, Mumia has been in the hole, on AC (administrative custody) status, solitary confinement, even though there is no valid reason for him to be in the hole. The conditions are torturous and much worse than the conditions on death row. These conditions have been condemned by the United Nations as torturous.

Since arriving at Mahanoy, Superintendent John Kerestes and his staff have gone from one thing to the next to vent their fury and racism on Mumia. First they claimed to be waiting on paperwork that Mumia's sentence is a life sentence and not death, but Mahanoy has no death chamber, so Mumia would never be sent there if he still had a death sentence.

When people saw right through that, Kerestes said that Mumia has to cut his hair before going into general population, now he's saying that Mumia has to let them take his blood (something Mumia really doesn't want to do) before he can be in general population. Mumia has been in prison for 30 years, so why this sudden demand for his blood now.

It is crystal clear that Kerestes and his staff are doing everything they can to keep Mumia in the hole under these torturous conditions, and it's all rooted in racism and their fury at all the world-wide attention that stays focused on Mumia, after all these years. They're furious that their plan to legally kill Mumia ain't working.

They're torturing Mumia for the same reason the Romans tortured Jesus Christ, because he won't go along with

the lies of the system and racism. Prison policy has nothing to do with what they're doing to Mumia and everybody should be clear on this. We must be vigilant over Mumia, including organizations that can visit him on an official basis.

We must continue to flood Supt. Kerestes with calls and emails. Mumia is up in serious racist KKK territory and we must have his back. We've brought Mumia too far to get lax now.

Remember, the power of the people is a force to be reckoned with when the power of the people stays consistent and united.

International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu Jamal and
The Move Organization

Correction: Rare Admission of Mistake in Mumia Case

I made a mistake.

An article I wrote recently for TCBH about the Pennsylvania prison system's latest punitive assault on now ex-death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal (unnecessarily continuing his solitary confinement) contained a factual misstatement.

Most journalists consider any inaccuracy an error, regardless of how small.

The Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists calls for admitting "mistakes" and correcting them promptly.

This journalist's inaccuracy-as-error standard contrasts with court systems, where appellate courts too often dismiss mistakes made during trials by prosecutors and judges without correction by using the court-invented legalistic term: harmless error.

The Abu-Jamal case is fraught with such misconduct and mistakes that appellate courts have not only not corrected, but have allowed to fester and get worse. But you won't see the courts or the prosecutors ever admitting those things.

In my article, I inaccurately listed Pennsylvania state prison officials as being the prime movers in keeping Abu-Jamal on death row instead of transferring him into general prison population after a federal judge had voided his death sentence in a December 2001 ruling converting that sentence to a life in prison.

In that article I stated prison authorities kept Abu-Jamal on death row in 2001 "as a courtesy to Philadelphia's District Attorney's Office..."

Yes, keeping Abu-Jamal on death row arose from a courtesy...a courtesy that kept him on death row ten years after that 2001 ruling.

And yes, Philly's DA (and others) did want Abu-Jamal to rot on death row.

But, no, Pennsylvania prison authorities did not extend that "courtesy."

That "courtesy" came from William Yohn, the federal District Court judge who voided Abu-Jamal's death sentence after finding errors in the 1982 jury deliberations resulting in Abu-Jamal receiving the death penalty.

Yohn granted a request from Philadelphia's then District Attorney Lynne Abraham, who wanted to keep the outspoken author/activist in solitary death row confinement during her appeal of Yohn's ruling.

Author J. Patrick O'Connor, in his probative book *"The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal"*, wrote that Abraham, "in a particularly spiteful maneuver," requested that Yohn stay his order lifting Abu-Jamal's death sentence and, "incredibly," Yohn agreed.

With that "courtesy" Yohn allowed Abu-Jamal to suffer death row deprivations despite his judicial determination that Abu-Jamal had unjustly spent nearly twenty-years in solitary confinement due to that legally flawed sentence.

Abraham, in the wake of Yohn's ruling, had blasted him.

An angry Abraham, in December 2001, said she was "completely dismayed" that Yohn had granted "any relief whatsoever."

Abraham's reaction ignored the fact that federal district and appellate courts in Philadelphia had cited penalty phase errors (the same failing Yohn found in Abu-Jamal's case) in two of the four death sentences those courts voided between May and November 2001.

Maureen Faulkner, the widow of slain Officer Daniel Faulkner, had also blasted Yohn, calling him a "sick and twisted person," despite Yohn dismissing 28 of the 29 appeal claims raised by Abu-Jamal, including all claims regarding his conviction, which if accepted could have led to a new trial for Abu-Jamal, possibly leading to his release.

While my article inaccurately assigned that "courtesy" off keeping Abu-Jamal on death row to prison authorities instead of Yohn, the article did accurately account for the wasted costs of that "courtesy."

Keeping Abu-Jamal on death row for an additional decade cost Pennsylvania taxpayers at least \$100,000 because the state's prison system spends at last an extra ten thousand dollars per year over the cost of incarcerating ordinary prisoners to handle each death row inmate.

In early December 2011, prison authorities finally shifted Abu-Jamal from death row into more harshly restrictive Administrative Custody (a/k/a The Hole) hours after Philadelphia's DA announced he would not seek reinstatement of a death sentence.

Yohn's 2001 ruling required the DA to either hold a mini-trial in an effort to obtain a new death sentence from a new jury, or to accept a sentence of life imprisonment. The federal Third Circuit Appeals Court twice upheld Yohn's ruling and the U.S. Supreme Court finally ended appeals of Yohn's ruling last fall.

One of the many problems with the Abu-Jamal case is the refusal of police, prosecutors, prison authorities and judges to acknowledge mistakes or worse, misconduct -- both things that are not harmless.

Yohn, for example, made "several" mistakes in that 2001 ruling "on questions of constitutional rights central to commonly held concepts of justice," as my TCBH colleague Dave Lindorff put it in his seminal book *Killing Time: An Investigation Into the Death Row Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal*.

Lindorff presented a disturbing, thorough analysis of Yohn's flawed dismissal of Abu-Jamal's jury selection discrimination appeal claims in his 2003 book.

The Third Circuit rejected Abu-Jamal's jury discrimination appeal in 2008 despite the Third Circuit's having granted relief to other death row inmates he had raised identical jury discrimination claims.

In another mistake by Yohn that escaped scrutiny and correction by federal appellate judges, the respected jurist brushed-off Abu-Jamal's claims that his attorney during the 1982 trial was legally ineffective because that lawyer was inexperienced in death penalty law, undercapitalized and lacked adequate support staff during that 1982 trial.

Yohn seized upon erroneous state court findings that attorney Anthony Jackson "had tried approximately twenty" first-degree murder cases. Pennsylvania state courts had twisted the exact testimony Jackson gave during a 1995 Post-Conviction Relief Act hearing about his capital case experience.

During three days of testimony in July 1995, Jackson had repeatedly told Abu-Jamal's appellate attorney Leonard Weinglass that he had tried "one or two" capital murder cases, serving as lead counsel only once.

According to transcripts from 1995, Jackson first told Abu-Jamal's appeal attorney that he had tried one or two first-degree murder cases. On cross-examination by the prosecutor, Jackson did say he tried twenty murder cases but stressed that only "one or two" of those cases were death penalty cases...testimony the prosecutor did not challenge with contrary evidence. On re-direct from Abu-Jamal's attorney, Jackson again said he had only handled one or two capital cases.

Jackson, also during that 1995 testimony, said he had received inadequate funding from the courts for his defense efforts, that he had no paralegals and investigators to assist him, that a Philadelphia judge rejected his request for another lawyer to assist him and at the time of Abu-Jamal's trial he only had a part-time secretary because he had returned to private practice only months earlier.

Yohn and lower Pennsylvania state court judges rejected Jackson's admission that he was "ineffective" during Abu-Jamal's 1982 trial, arguing that Jackson's defense effort was legally sufficient.

Yohn asserted that "even were I to assume that Jackson was inexperienced, undercapitalized and lacked adequate support, [Abu-Jamal did not] demonstrate that there is a reasonable probability that but for these [conditions] the result of the proceeding would have been different."

While Pennsylvania prison officials kept Abu-Jamal in solitary confinement for ten unnecessary years on Judge Yohn's orders, his current continued solitary confinement is solely the responsibility of those prison officials.

As I reported in my article, the draconian Administrative Custody confinement rammed on Abu-Jamal by prison authorities evidences violations of the prison system's own written regulations, because that placement does not meet any of the 11 specific circumstances listed in Pennsylvania Department of Corrections regulations used to justify administrative custody placement.

The "current rationales offered by prison officials for [Abu-Jamal's] placement in solitary confinement do not withstand scrutiny, which lends further support to the inference that he is continuing to be targeted," said Bret Grote, spokesman for the Pennsylvania Human Rights Coalition, during a recent interview.

Typical of Abu-Jamal's selflessness, he directs his supporters to fight not just against his unjust confinement but also to assist the scores of other people the state's Department of Corrections unjustly holds in solitary confinement on a daily basis, according to data from HRC, a prison-monitoring organization.

Grote said prison authorities improperly use Administrative Custody to penalize inmates for their political activism, for complaining about conditions, for their roles as jailhouse lawyers and often simply for racist reasons.

Mumia Transferred To General Population

As of 1/27/12, Mumia Abu-Jamal has officially been transferred to General Prison Population after being held in Administrative Custody ("The Hole" or Solitary Confinement) at SCI Mahanoy, Frackville, PA for seven weeks. This is the first time Mumia has been in General Population since his arrest in 1981.

[This comes within hours of the of delivery of over 5,500 signed petitions to Department of Corrections headquarters in Camp Hill, PA and a compliant filed with United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez.](#)

PLEASE NOTE that while this is a victory in transferring Mumia out of the torturous Restricted Housing Unit (RHU), we call upon the closure of ALL RHU's! Furthermore, we call upon the IMMEDIATE RELEASE of Mumia Abu-Jamal and are not disillusioned by this transfer. FREE MUMIA NOW!

A Message From General Population, To Supporters

My dear friends, brothers and sisters -- I want to thank you for your real hard work and support. I am no longer on

death row, no longer in the hole, I'm in population. This is only part one and I thank you all for the work you've done. But the struggle is for freedom! From Mumia and Wadiya, Ona Move. Long Live John Africa!

20 Jan - Kellie and Victor to Plead Guilty

Victor and Kellie's lawyers have decided its better take a plea agreement so they are not going to trial on January 24th (as originally planned). Instead, they will be entering a plea on February 9th. At this point, it appears as though their plea agreement DOES NOT involve providing information regarding other individuals, groups, or ongoing cases.

MORE:

It's good to see their legal counsel heading in this direction, but [Kellie and Victor's support crew is] definitely curious to see what the prosecution has agreed upon. If the prosecution rejects the global plea deal (which means the defendants will no longer be charged with future crimes for conduct that is related to his/her plea) then that indicates that the prosecution wishes to indict them under AETA [the federal Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act]. If the prosecution accepts the global plea and treats the case as a full disposition of multiple matters, then they are safe from future charges. So keep your fingers crossed because this is the most important time ever!

***Donations are still being accepted to cover legal fees which are still not fully paid for, and as you might have guessed, their family has been under a lot of financial pressure. Thanks everyone for your support! ***

23 Jan – Walter Bond Update

While Walter is still in the federal transfer center in Oklahoma City, heading to Marion (possibly the Communications Management Unit (CMU)), we have received updates and interviews via his support committee. We've pasted those below.

MORE:

From a letter dated January 17th

Well I've been in Oklahoma for a week now waiting to be transferred to Marion. They told me upon my arrival that Marion is where I'm heading (no surprise there). Hopefully I will be there by the time you get this letter, but if not go ahead and let all the supports know where I'm at and where I'm at and where I'm heading. That way they can start writing me again. I should be able to receive mail here, but if not, that's alright. Now that I'm in BOP custody, my mail will follow me wherever I go. Of course wait til I get where I'm going before sending any books or money. I've been in the SHU (the hole) since I got here, no cellie as of yet. This has got to be the most boring place on Earth. I can go outside for an hour a day, but this is at 6 AM. I haven't even tried to go out. January in the Midwest is no time to be outside in a T-shirt. If they issued us coats I would go out. I'm back on the "no flesh diet" and it's way better here than in Pahrump or County Jail. Black bean veggie burgers, wild rice, seitan and real Russet potatoes...

Even though I'm bored stiff, I am glad to be on the tail end of my journey. I've been reviewing the last 18 months mentally, and wow what a wild ride! ...

Please let the supporters know that I can receive as many letters as I am sent, but that I may be limited on how many I can send out, so they should not feel discouraged if it takes awhile for me to respond.

Walter Bond #37096-013

Federal Transfer Center

Post Office Box 898801

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73189-8801

Walter Bond Interview with AR Prisoner Support

Walter Bond is currently serving a federal prison sentence of 12 years and 3 months for A.L.F. arson attacks on the Sheepskin Factory in Denver, Colorado, Tandy Leather Factory in Salt Lake City, Utah and Tiburon Restaurant in Sandy, Utah, resulting in almost two million dollars in damages. This

interview was conducted about 3 months prior to Bond's final sentencing date. The following interview was facilitated by Carol Glasser.

1) According to your support page, you have been dedicated to the work of animal liberation and anti-capitalism for over 15 years. Can you please describe how and when you became involved in activism, in particular activism geared toward animal liberation?

In the winter of 1996, when I was 19 years old, I got a job with a company named Dakota Mechanical. Their home office was in Jefferson, South Dakota; however, most of their work crews were scattered around the Midwest and Iowa in particular. I was hired as a forklift operator and apprentice plumber. I worked building two separate slaughterhouses. One in Logansport, Indiana – which was a brand new facility – and one in Perry, Iowa, where we built an extension to an already running “kill floor.” Both slaughterhouses were IBP (Iowa Beef Producers), which have over twenty death camps in the state of Iowa for pigs alone. During the six months that I was employed at the Perry, Iowa facility, I saw every single area of production and confinement. I witnessed daily the profound cruelty that is simply industry standards in “pork production,” culminating in viewing a 500-pound pig being beat to death with blunt force by IBP workers. This particular individual animal had escaped his leg hold shackle and went running off the kill floor bleeding from the throat. As he was beaten to death I also witnessed my work crew cheering and high-fiving each other, as if it were a sporting event. This event had a very profound effect on me, a very internal effect.

Before that day I had always viewed the carnage as a necessary evil, but after that day I began to question all of it. Within 24 hours of that nameless hog's death I went vegetarian, within two weeks I quit my job, and within 10 months I was vegan and studying any book or information I could find about animal rights. Ironically, at this exact time in my life I came across a CD at a local record store. The band was called Earth Crisis and the CD was titled Destroy the Machines. On the back was a dedication to the vegan straight edge. After listening to the music and reading the lyrics I decided that the movement for total liberation would be my life's work. From then through the last 15 years I have been an activist.

My main focus for most of those years was vegan outreach and education of the public and also working directly with animals at sanctuaries and rescues. As time went on I began to feel disempowered always picking up the pieces of human cruelty. It seems I was constantly viewing or helping animals that had suffered so terribly at the hands of speciesist human oppressors. I finally got sick of it. Talking with people was simply not direct enough, in the context of how animals suffer and die. I believed then, as I do now, that the enormity of this oppression and murder deserved a severe response. To that end, I became an illegal direct activist, employing arson as a tactic to not only shut down businesses that make money from animals' dead bodies, but also to bring these issues to light in the media.

I became an operative under the banner of, and according to, the guidelines of the Animal Liberation Front. I authored two communiqués under the name ALF Lone Wolf and passed them anonymously to the media, giving a brief explanation of why the arsons were committed. Today, as a prisoner for those actions, my activism consists of writing. I mainly try to explain the philosophy, tactics, and ideology of abolition animal liberation activism. I do this through provocative articles written primarily in the manifesto “this is how it is” style.

2) For what reasons were you targeted by law enforcement?

I was targeted by law enforcement because my brother called the FBI Crime Tips Hotline after he learned there was a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons involved in the arson at the Sheepskin Factory in Denver. After reviewing the discovery documents in my case, it's clear that no government agency had any clue that it was me until my brother called them out of the blue. It's also clear that his motivation was reward money, which incidentally, he never got paid. In order to collect he would have to testify at my trial and since I plead guilty and waived my right to trial, he got nothing. In any event, after the arson at the Tiburon Restaurant, the stress of being homeless, and my ALF campaigns had caught up with me. I was worn out both mentally and physically. I had recently contacted my brother and he was curious as to why I was seemingly homeless, unemployed and wandering around the United States. In a moment of weakness and against my better

judgment I told him to Google the Sheepskin Factory in Denver and that's what I'd been up to. The first website that came up on the search engine was an animal rights website. After he saw that he then began reading about the Sheepskin Factory arson in the mainstream media online where he found out about the reward. Within 48 hours of our phone conversation he was working with the ATF and FBI.

For the next four weeks our phone conversations and my wanderings around Salt Lake City were monitored. He lured me back to Colorado with promises of money and a place to stay and rest – even going so far as to send me pictures of my nieces and nephews I have never met. I went to Denver to meet with my brother who had traveled to Colorado from Iowa under the false pretense of helping our half-brother move. He got a hotel room, which I found out later was being audio and video monitored by the Feds. Tired from my travels and happy to see my brother after many years we began to talk. He began telling me about crimes he had committed and soon we were talking away. It was then that I gave him a rather detailed account about my arsons, after which he drove me up to the northern suburbs to talk to an old employer about some construction work. I was under the illusion that I would see my brother later that evening. Instead I was arrested by the FBI in the front yard of the house my brother had dropped me off at. Once under arrest I was interrogated and told by the cops that if I did not speak with them they would charge my brother with my crimes. They told me that anything I would say could only help me. I refused to say anything, not one word. My interrogation lasted maybe 10 minutes, after which time no recognizable federal agent has ever asked me about anything again.

Of course now, in my prison cell, as I reflect back on that meeting with my brother, it is the biggest regret of my life. However, by working alone in my illegal animal liberation campaign, I was able to keep that mistake limited to only me having to deal with the repercussions. And already I've begun making peace with my regret. While it is true that I will always hate my brother absolutely and vociferously, I also know that it was an honest mistake on my part. I had taken on more stresses in my life than ever before and was in a vulnerable and compromised position and the FBI and my brother had perfect timing in exploiting that.

3) Can you please describe the legal charges against you? Do any of them include charges under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA)?

In Colorado I was charged with one count of federal arson. It's considered federal because the business itself is involved in interstate commerce; meaning they ship and receive items across state lines just as nearly every business does. And one count of “threats acts and violence against an animal enterprise” under the AETA. I received a five-year sentence for the arson and also five years concurrent for the AETA charge; meaning I did not get any additional time for my AETA charge. But I do now have the label of domestic terrorist, which may affect my security rating within the prison system and definitely does whenever I am moved from one facility to another.

Currently, at the time of this interview, I am in Utah and have just plead guilty to my two remaining arson charges which are also federal cases. In exchange for my pleading guilty the government agreed to drop my two AETA enhancements. Since I already have one on my record from Colorado and the enhancements do not affect my time regardless it is literally no help to me. Which is of course why they allowed it.

The ridiculous thing about AETA in my cases is that it's an enhancement that alleges my arsons are made worse because of them being animal rights related. What is the logic here? Had I been burning things down at random because of compulsion or pyromania, that would be better? Surely I would not have faced domestic terrorism enhancements even if those fires would have resulted in death! But since I had an animal liberation message it's worse... only to the government. I might add at this point also that it's not an accident that no one was harmed. I took many security precautions to ensure that all I was engaging in was property damage.

It's a strange type of terrorism that harms no life. I try not to let buzz words bother me, but equating me or the Animal Liberation Front with organizations that behead people on live video streams is ludicrous! The true terrorists are those industries that perpetuate the animal and earth holocaust that is raging around the world. Wherever mechanized society exists there you will find billions of victims of true terrorism. Mainly our Mother Earth, her animal nations and many people deemed “expendable humanity” by the power elite.

4) The media reported on some of the actions for which you were charged before they were tied to you. How did the media initially portray these actions? Is it any different from how they portray you or these actions now?

It's true that the "Lone Wolf" arsons caught the eye of local media in Denver and Salt Lake City. But I feel that outside of the animal lib community the mainstream media did not want to pay too much attention. The tone of much of the television coverage was very matter-of-fact but they did read the communiqués in their entirety and gave a fair amount of attention to what the Animal Liberation Front is and some brief history of past actions.

During the time I was first arrested I was an easy target for criticism being as I am somewhat of a spectacle with half my face tattooed and "vegan" tattooed across my throat. The media at once set out to vilify me and make me look like a hypocrite or lunatic. That did not at all shock me. What did, however, was the initial response from the animal rights community. The first letter I ever received in jail was from some anonymous person accusing me of eating burgers at a BBQ and being nothing but a joke to most "real animal rights advocates." The first interview I ever granted was with some animal welfarist creep that scolded me about someone burning down his mother's house and then generally poking fun at me and my tattoos. It was only after I debated him into a corner three of four questions in a row that his tone began to change and he admitted I actually may have some brains after all. It was shortly thereafter that I decided to start writing statements and articles. I figured the only way to combat the negative media about me and the militant struggle for animal liberation was to show everyone that I have thought deeply about the issues and spent years verifiably fighting for this cause. Later on I kept writing because I love to and it's very important for me to stay as active as I can. In this way I am able to reach more people now than I ever was able to with arson. Still, I will never forget how so many reactive, so-called animal rights activists and anarchists were incredibly quick to try and assassinate my character without ever knowing me.

My first major hurdle was not the mainstream media, their response was predictable. My first hardships were immediate and internal. I also will never forget a finite few people that I had never before met in my life that gave me, and have given me, support that put my mind at ease. The good Doctor Jerry Vlasak, Nicoal Sheen and Greg Kelly come to mind here.

After those first few months it became obvious that the tide had turned and that many of those who thought I was a crackpot now think everything I have to say is very valid. The mainstream media seems to take me and my message of animal liberation, whatever it may take, more seriously as well. Of course their vilification of me never stops. But I'm fine with that so long as there is talk about the animals' plight. At any rate, I made a conscious decision from the outset of my arrest not to be reactive. When I speak out I say what I mean, and what I feel, regardless of what the media thinks or my supporters or even courts of law. I'm constantly re-evaluating my writings and statements to make sure I am not being provocative simply for shock values sake or holding back to appeal to more people. I think the countless billions of animals we cannot save at least deserve to have a few people keep it real and speak clear truths and also an underground army to secure their lives and freedom.

5) The experience of activism and of incarceration can be extremely traumatic. What were the hardest emotional, mental, and physical experiences you have had?

Within activism the hardest part for me is never feeling like I'm doing enough. The burden of compassion is such that the more you care, the more you act, the more of yourself you give away. You give until there is nothing left and then you realize you cannot singlehandedly change institutionalized cruelty. That's the point when many activists burn out and stop trying. They fail to recognize that perpetual struggle against these atrocities and oppressions is the victory! And that the relentless feeling of not doing enough is par for the course. But still, it is difficult and at times depressing.

As far as incarceration is concerned, I'm still wrapping my mind around the fact that I will most likely spend several years of my life in a cage. My parents are old and I wonder if I will see them again as a free man. I worry about what kind of hell hole the prison system will find for me since they seem to hate my defiance and outspokenness so much. All of these things I am still digesting. There is no way for me to accurately portray the life I now lead. If it were just jail, that's not such a big deal, several million people have gone to prison for long

periods of time. Being able to cope with that is not at all insurmountable. But add to that dealing with your own brother snitching you off, the media, my own activism which never stops, courts, plea agreements, struggling with an inadequate vegan diet and continually trying to motivate a movement of lazy, whiny Americans to liberate animals and get passionately active, mentally and emotionally. It's too much for my brain. It's like if you were to try to eat everything all at once, too much to digest! So I just focus on whatever is on my plate for the day.

And ultimately, nothing that I'm going through will ever compare to what animals suffer at the hands of speciesist human oppressors. For entertainment, food, vivisection, clothing and hundreds of other novel and unnecessary reasons animals live and die in conditions of filth and squalor, sadism and pain that we cannot even truly comprehend. Actually empathizing with their plight never ceases to lessen my own.

6) I know that activism has its rewards, and incarceration my even have some positive aspects. What have your most rewarding experiences been?

In activism my rewarding experiences have been profound. I have had my face licked by baby llamas; which, by the way, are some of the cutest little critters I have ever seen! I have learned how to gobble at just the right octave to get turkeys to gobble back in unison. I have felt a liberated rooster purr in my lap and then three weeks later try to peck my ankles off! I've gotten a neck massage by a python. I made friends with a goat named Jeffrey who was just as cantankerous as myself. One time a goose protected me from a pig that was bullying me and that same pig, Lucas, used to demand that I give him a good ear scratch. I have educated people about animal liberation and veganism and am proud to say that more than a few people in Colorado and the Midwest went vegan because of me. I've argued with animal abusers that were quite confused about how to intimidate a 6'2" 200-pound vegan straightedger covered in tattoos! In the underground I experienced the true freedom and effectiveness that can only be known with a bandana and cover of darkness. I've gone to sleep still smelling like gasoline and with a big smile on my face. These are just a few of my amazing experiences as an animal liberationist and direct activist.

It seems that the more I have given of myself the more I have gained in return. Interconnectedness is like that. Despite the hardships I am absolutely honored to speak, act and defend all innocent life and I will never forget that it is a privilege and my duty to do so. And prison, just like all things, has its good and bad. On the positive side, it's a far simpler life. I prefer real experiences and interactions. There is a certain honesty to prison and a lot less pretense. Modern civilization has become a fear-based culture of subjectivity and fakery. In prison you know who is friend or foe. You know who the oppressor is. They come here every day and we call them correctional officers. They even know they're here to oppress us. At least everyone is not busy trying to look like a good person but not actually being a good person.

I'm able to read and write as much as I want, undisturbed. I am able to have the time to focus on exercise and sport. And I plan on learning Spanish fluently, writing a couple books and earning a degree while incarcerated. Time in prison is only a detriment if you don't use it.

7) What advice do you have for other activists regarding political repression and challenging the AETA?

As far as challenging the AETA, I don't have much practical advice since that falls very much into a realm of activism that I have no experience in – mainly, the political. I definitely will say that in a court of law, in my experience, AETA is more about attaching a label to you. If I were facing the AETA charge alone I would fight it until the end. Legally, the only way to challenge any statute and put it on trial is to not plead guilty and make the government define it. That's one of the main problems with AETA – it's too fluid and elusive. But as I said, in my case it was just a splinter in the two-by-four.

Regarding the political repression of the earth and animal liberation movements my advice is never give into it. One must understand that when a government seeks to dismantle a social justice cause they do so through intimidation and often violence. They also seek to scare many, by punishing one. We must think in terms bigger than just ourselves. Ours is and must always remain a selfless movement. This is the price of admission for any revolutionary cause. And this is a revolutionary cause because we seek a change in human society diametrically opposed to the status quo.

Everything has been built thus far from the standpoint that our Mother Earth and her animal nations are ours to use in any way we wish. Historically, these types of drastic changes have and do occur, but not without a multifaceted fight on all fronts. These changes don't occur without sacrifices, passion, single-pointed focus, correct tactics in action and defiance in the face of adversity!

Our movement has come nowhere close to paying its dues; we are nowhere near earning our right to change the institutionalized brutality. Will we? No one can honestly answer that, not right now. But the true beginning of that process starts with you and with me. It begins with a resolve to never lose hope, to never lose heart! The path of action that that resolve leads each individual to is tailor-made for each person's individual nature, talents and abilities. The answer to repression is revolutionary progression! In other words, the way is through it. Inevitably, we answer to those voiceless animals that have no viable representation in the human world; and what they would want us to do is the same thing you would want another to do if you were in their predicament. You would want freedom from fear, torture, murder, rape and objectification by any means necessary and whatever it may take!

Interview by Paula Ricciulli for the Columbian magazine Cartel Urbano

Do you think there will be a time when mankind stops relying on Animals?

I think there will come a time when humanity either stops using Animals' dead bodies for food, research, clothing and all other reasons or humanity will reap the consequences of environmental destruction due in large part to Animal agriculture and industrialized civilization. In either event, it's a certainty that Animals and the Earth will once again live free from human tyranny and exploitation. So the only real question is will our species ever wise up and become part of the ecosystem instead of a cancer to it? Currently it does not look like we will. We are nowhere near treating ourselves with respect, let alone Animals.

You have said a lot of times that you don't regret the arson you caused. Why don't you regret it?

I don't regret my arsons first and foremost because they were justified. Animals lives are snuffed out by the billions every year because of human greed, gluttony, bloodlust and psychopathology. All I did was destroy some property. My arsons were in fact a meek and passive action in retaliation for all the innocent Animals that have died cruelly at the hands of human oppressors. It's unfortunate that people are so easily focused on my response (arsons) to these atrocities, but not the Animals' plight. This is because human society purposefully sets the context for these issues to be from the perspective of a business owner's ability to profit from an Animal's slavery and death and never from the perspective of what the Animals suffer because of human injustices. I think arson was a great way for me to address these problems.

Is there something you wouldn't do for Animal rights?

Of course, there are many things I would not personally do in the name of Animal Rights. But unlike the welfarist and peace freak branches of the Animal Rights community, I am not going to denounce tactics that are extreme. Take murder for example. Let's be honest, the world would simply be a better place for Animals if people like Animal researchers, slaughterhouse workers and even non-Vegans were disposed of. It's kind of difficult to harm an Animal if you're dead. And on a basic and fundamental level I feel that people that go to work every day to harm Animals are sick freaks that must be stopped. That's not to say that I'm against legal or non-violent activism, but what I am saying is that just because we personally are not willing to commit certain actions on behalf of our Earth Mother and Animal Nations doesn't mean we should look down on people that are not so timid and lukewarm. It's an unfortunate fact that most injustices are not going to vanish because we expose them or simply raise awareness. Senseless or hedonistic violence often must be stopped with force. That is the reality of things. Of course it's always easy to debate about tactics and where we should draw the line when it's not our own neck on the chopping block. I am a Vegan Hardliner, which has many implications, but the most prevalent of our beliefs is that if you cannot respect the rights of innocent life, then you yourself become a perpetrator, and are no longer innocent. You then forfeit your rights by your own failure or inability to co-exist with your surroundings in a peaceful and compassionate way. If a person, business or corporation has been educated, then protested, then warned, the next logical step is militant intervention.

What made you become an Animal rights activist?

I became a Vegan and then Animal Rights activist after spending a year as a builder of slaughterhouses in the Midwestern United States. After viewing the carnage and gore of “pork production” firsthand, I was left with the decision to either quit my job and become a compassionate person or continue to do my demonic job of slavery and murder. I was fortunate enough to have been raised by both my parents to be respectful and compassionate towards all life and had friends in the punk rock and Straightedge subcultures that were already Vegan, so I knew deep in my heart that my job was evil. For a more in depth understanding of why I became Vegan and an Animal Liberationist, please read my articles, “Why I Am Vegan” and “Slaughterhouse Blues (Why I Am Vegan II) on www.SupportWalter.org.

Why do you think is so difficult for our society to stop animal cruelty?

It's difficult because subsisting off of Animals has been an integral part of human societies for a long, long time. To the point where modern society and especially the richer nations of the Earth were literally built on the blood and bones of Animals and various forms of slavery. Because of this, a world devoid of Animal use — in other words, a truly Vegan world — undermines not just the status quo in perception, but the entire foundation of technologically advanced civilization. It is why many people instinctively have animosity towards the concept of Animal Liberation and definitely against militant or radical Animal Liberation. Because they intuitively understand that we are not only attacking their dietary habits, but the foundation of hierarchical slavery and supremacy. Putting the Earth and Animals right to be left alone first means no new roads, construction, technology, industry, cities or transportation. Even most Vegans and activists cannot truly comprehend what a world without interspecies slavery would look like. But honestly the destruction of modern day civilization is of paramount importance if Animals are ever to live free and natural lives. This also means that we should participate in society to the least degree possible and if we are so inclined do everything within our power to disrupt, destroy or deconstruct business, industry and economy to the greatest degree possible.

Who is your hero and why?

Barry Horne is my hero. Barry was an Animal Liberation Front operative that also had ties to the Animal Rights Militia and a group called the Justice Department that used threats and intimidation to stop vivisection. Barry was arrested in England and sentenced to over ten years in prison. He continued to fight against Animal testing after his imprisonment with a series of hunger strikes that eventually killed him. Barry Horne is my hero because he never gave up, never equivocated and never failed to inspire others to take direct action!

Why did you choose the name Lone Wolf and how would you describe this warrior alter ego?

I chose the name “Lone Wolf” to convey to people that I was one person acting alone. I wanted to show that one empowered person can accomplish a lot, or wreak plenty of havoc as the case may be. I think the Lone Wolf nickname became more of an alter ego after my arrest than before it. Especially as pertains to my writings. When people that only know me from my articles or ALF actions first meet me or talk to me over the phone they are usually surprised at how social, jovial and easygoing I am. I guess the “Lone Wolf alter ego” as you say, takes over whenever Animal Liberation, Straightedge or Veganism enters the picture. I am extremely serious when it comes to matters of life and death, but as anyone that actually knows me can attest to, I'm perry much a goofball and comic about everything else.

How effective you think ALF is to create awareness for Animals?

The ALF has been incredibly effective at creating awareness about what Animals suffer. Many ALF raids in the 80s uncovered behind the scenes footage of the reality and futility of Animal experimentation. As a legal activist it can be impossible to see what's actually happening behind laboratory walls and also impossible to stop it and save the Animals lives. The Animal Liberation Front, since its inception, has always been about taking the most direct path to effectively save actual Animals and stop their exploiters while also passing along communiqués to the media to shed light on these issues and raise public awareness.

Animal tested medications have been very successful in a lot of diseases. What do you think about this?

I disagree. There is a wealth of information that proves Animal experimentation to be futile and a detriment to public health. Extrapolating results between species in Animal experimentation seldom works. But all this to me is secondary to the real issue – that being, it is wrong to test on Animals no matter what results may be had. Animals have every right to autonomy and freedom from pain, suffering, confinement and torture that you or I have. The medical or scientific results are of zero concern. We would not entertain the idea of testing oven cleaner on handicapped or mentally challenged people. We would not allow lethal dosage tests to be run on large groups of humans, even if they freely consented! It's just another twisted sickness of human supremacy to even entertain the validation of Animal experimentation!

Don't you think that with arsons and other destructive actions, ALF is creating a negative stereotype for Animal rights activists?

I honestly don't care about stereotypes or public images and I actually think it's very important for Animal abusers and users to know that there is a certain percentage of us that will not tolerate what they are doing. Part of the effectiveness that legal protests have is that there is an underlying fear on the part of Animal exploiters that the legal protest and media attention will catch the eye of the Animal Liberation Front. Without that fear, Animal Rights activism becomes a paper tiger, since all the laws are on the side of industries that profit from the demise of the Earth, Animals and humans. For my entire activist career, I have heard the public image argument. It really is quite naïve to think that the system's media, which has vested interests in the continuation of societal norms, is going to shower us with favorable media so we can convince people to boycott industries that keep the rich on top and masses downtrodden. Plus “negative stereotypes” are all a matter of personal opinion. My idea of a negative image in Animal Rights is that of a frail hippie that's an oversensitive pothead and supplicant to the powers that be. Or some welfarist negotiator that's more concerned with everyone getting along with non-Vegans and Animal abusers than confronting those bastards and saving the Animals.

What is your advice for young people interested in fighting for Animal rights?

My advice would be to go Vegan and Straightedge. Do not fall into the misdirection of drugs and alcohol. To help Animals directly and consistently in a world where many humans will stand against you, you must remain focused, ferocious, positive and resilient. Always try to find the most direct path to Animal Liberation, such as working with or rescuing actual Animals. Far too many activists these days (especially those in cities) get wrapped up in The Human Movement for Animal Liberation. And above all, believe in yourself and your abilities. You and your friends can help Animals and stand against their exploiters without the help of large organizations. Self-sufficiency will serve you and the Animals well. Of course help is good, but learn how to increase your own skill set. Remember the Animals are relying on you, so you must become reliable. And lastly, don't ever back down when it comes to fighting for the cause. Educate yourself and others about Animal issues, warn abusers to change their ways. Then if that doesn't work, force them to stop harming Animals by any means necessary.

Being in jail has changed in any way your convictions about Animal liberation?

No not at all. I've been in jail since July 2010. Since that time I have written a book, given addresses to fundraisers and Animal Lib forums, I have told two federal courts of law that I have no remorse for my “crimes.” I'm now a prisoner of war until the year 2021 and I still feel the same about Animal Liberation, Veganism and illegal direct action. That won't change. Other beliefs and worldviews may – that's the nature of things – but some things are personal, some things are forever.

How difficult has it been for you to continue your vegan lifestyle being in jail?

It depends on the individual facility. When I was going to court and dealing with my Colorado case, that jail served me a specifically Vegan diet. In Salt Lake City, it was very difficult. The food there was terrible, but I was able to supplement by buying Vegan items like instant soups, peanut butter and chick-o-sticks for my sweet tooth. Currently I'm in a federal detention center in transit to a federal penitentiary and it's easy to be Vegan here as well. Usually within a couple days of arrival at a new facility the other convicts will help me out with extra portions of veggies, potatoes, etc. There is community amongst prisoners, so I never go hungry.

What are your plans after you leave jail?

Well, after my release from prison I will have about 3 years of probation to complete. After that I want to travel around the world and truly spread my wings after a decade in a cage. As far as employment and Animal Liberation, I plan on writing books and working with Animals on sanctuaries as long as I am able, which I hope will be a very long time. I may do a speaking engagement from time to time, but I'm sure it will be infrequently. After several years in prison in such close quarters with so many people, I will relish my time with Animals and open spaces over city life and the daily grind. I also see myself remaining a bit eccentric. I have always lived simply and am not technologically adept, and I plan on continuing that trend.

Thank you Paula for the great interview and Cartel Urbano for publishing it ... Take care and I'll do the same... Animal Liberation, whatever it may take!

24 Jan - If a Tree Falls, Maybe it Can Win an Oscar

The documentary, "If A Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front" has been nominated for an academy award. The film's primary focus is NYC activist, now political prisoner, Daniel McGowan. We've pasted a New York Times article about the film and nomination below.

MORE:

It's great to see "[If a Tree Falls](#)," a thrillingly fair film about a heated environmental issue, gain [an Oscar nomination](#) ([full list here](#)). As [I wrote](#) when the film was "[short listed](#)," a nomination would be "a vote for fearless exploration of complexity in a world drawn to oversimplified depictions of events and problems, heroes and villains."

It would have been much simpler to make a film that was either deeply sympathetic or scathing considering the subject: a series of arson fires set by [Earth Liberation Front](#) activists. Congratulations — and good luck! — to Marshall Curry and the rest of the team.

If you get a chance to see it, I urge you to do so. It's currently watchable in "[instant play](#)" [mode on Netflix](#).

Here's an excerpt from an interview I did in December with the director, [Marshall Curry](#), in which we explore how some issues at the core of the film relate powerfully to recent clashes between police and "[Occupy](#)" demonstrators:

Q. I could see a similar film now about the Occupy Wall Street movement. Talk about a higher state of confusion at the edges of law and disorder!...

A. It's been amazing to me how much overlap there is between the unfolding story of the OWS movement and the story of the environmental movement in the 90s. This summer, when the film was first released, it was a historical film— but suddenly the issues it deals with are urgent and on the front pages of newspapers every day. We've had lots of activist groups and universities do screenings because people are asking, "what kinds of activism are effective? What kinds are ethical? And what are the legal ramifications?" We hear arguments within the movement about whether property destruction — not arson at this point, but the window breaking of the Black Bloc in cities like Portland— is ever appropriate. And there are also really important questions about how police should respond to non-violent civil disobedience. In the 90s the police use of tear gas and pepper-spray and nightsticks at protests radicalized a lot of activists and convinced them that the democratic system was broken. A portion of those people decided to take up arson in response. I think the film is suddenly a really important cautionary tale to activists to think carefully about tactics, and also a cautionary tale to law enforcement to think about their response to activism, because some responses bring people into the democratic argument and some responses radicalize people.

24 Jan - NYPD Reportedly Experimenting With Drones To Monitor NYC

The NYPD could be exploring plans to use drones as a law enforcement tool in New York City to keep an eye on city parks and streets. Here's a very brief corporate news piece about it.

MORE:

Drones are unmanned aircraft that can be used for surveillance or to shoot live missiles.

In a recent email obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, an NYPD Detective in the Counterterrorism Unit asks the [Federal Aviation Administration](#) about the use of drones as a way to protect the city.

Drones have been used in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they're already being used by law enforcement in some European cities.

They have also flown in the United States, but only in restricted airspace along the borders with Mexico and Canada.

There is some concern about the invasion of privacy.

Last month, the [American Civil Liberties Union](#) issued a report about the lack of laws protecting average people from drone surveillance.

So far, no local police departments have been authorized to use them, but police departments in Houston and Miami have conducted field tests -- and New York could be next.

26 Jan - Lynne Stewart About Her Appeal

Lynne Stewart has written an update and appeal for support as she nears her appeal date next month.

MORE:

After the disaster in July 2010, when Judge Koeltl, following the directives of the Second Circuit increased my sentence from 28 months to 10 years, our righteous indignation fueled this appeal. The government's argument will center on my testimony at trial and the alleged perjury. All of those facts were before the Court at the time of the 28 month sentence and were not the basis then of a double digit sentence.

Our Brief attacks the increased sentence on two different fronts --one on a doctrine of "substantive unreasonableness" meaning it's just too much of an increase, fivefold -- given the circumstances. Secondly, we argued that the only "new" information before the Judge were my statements after my first sentence in October of 2008 and remarks I made on the Courthouse steps before I surrendered to prison. We contend strongly that this is protected speech under the First Amendment of the Constitution, and cannot be used to increase or as a basis for sentencing. (even if they hate it !!!)

The same group of 3 Judges that heard and decided the original appeal will also hear the arguments on the 29th. The government is not asking for more time; they are satisfied with their pound of flesh but it is not likely that this Court will take any action that will help me. The times are askew for prisoners and their lawsuits. (The Brief is available at my web site lynnestewart.org)

The lawyers that argued in July of 2010 will be on board with the addition of Herald Price Fahringer, an eminent attorney in the First Amendment field (the win in the Larry Flynt Hustler case in the US Supreme Court was his. He was also in the line of fire (no injuries) when the shooting took place.) He will enthusiastically present our case. I will not be present --not unusual once imprisoned. But my spirit will be there to inspire!!!

Of course, my case has always been government firing warning shots to Lawyers, that a vigorous defense, of certain clients, if not conforming to government specifications, will be punished severely. This chill effect in these days that we are confronted with Grand Jury investigations and dismantling of Occupations is not something we should contemplate with anything less than alarm. I have just finished David Gilbert's book (Love Struggle) and the intercession of lawyers when there are arrests of designated enemies of the "state" are the only meaningful protection available.

A Large Outpouring of Support in Foley Square and Tom Paine Park and in the Courtroom will signal to these arbiters of "Justice" that attention must be paid; the 99% are watching them with suspicion and tallying up the roads not taken.

26 Jan – Erik Lankin Released From Prison

Canadian G20 conspiracy political prisoner Erik Lankin was released after serving 2/3 of his sentence. This is great news and will hopefully set a precedent for his codefendants to be released after serving similar percentages of their sentences.

26 Jan – A Message From Grand Jury Resistance Prisoner Jordan Halliday

Jordan wrote this a few days after he was inexplicably picked up and forced to begin serving a ten month sentence for criminal contempt of a grand jury.

MORE:

Dearest Friends,

As most of you know by now, I am officially behind bars serving out my additional 10 month sentence for my refusal to testify before a grand jury that was set up to harass and intimidate the local animal rights movement of Salt Lake City, Utah. I'll go into more detail about grand juries in a second. It was a huge surprise when the dozen or so United States Marshals showed up to storm my parent's house to arrest me. An hour before visiting my house, they showed up at my work, harassing my friend to the point of tears. I was expecting a visit from my girlfriend just days away on the 14th of January. I feel this was a blatant move by the government to shatter my spirits. But as David Barbarash once wrote while behind bars, "They have my physical body for this relatively short period of time. They will never have my spirit, or my mind, or my will. And that's where the real power lies." Unfortunately, the same doesn't hold true for the billions of animals who are imprisoned, sitting on death row, living in horrible conditions, waiting to die for their skins, meat or simply because they are of no use anymore. So, while I sit here reading and writing letters, I'll have the real prisoners on my mind, the ones who are awaiting their death sentence, just because they were born a certain species. Let none of us forget the "true prisoners" in the war.

Now back to grand juries, I won't go into much detail about my case, as I have already written about it in the past and you can view it on my support page. But, basically I was called to testify in front of a grand jury because I helped re-start the Salt Lake City chapter of the Animal Defense League. We had been looking into ways to legally get local fur farms to close their doors for good. We looked into possible stricter legislation for fur farms in regards to what the state considered "livestock." As of current, mink and other fur bearing species used for clothing are NOT considered "livestock" and therefore are NOT required to be tended to at least once every 24 hours, as is the case with "livestock." We were working to pass legislation to reclassify fur bearing species as "livestock" and also looking into stricter pollution and contamination laws for fur farms.

While doing this Utah was hit with a series of fur farm liberations. Days after the first mink farm raid, my father was visited by the FBI. They asked him questions pertaining to breeding cards and my activity. He unfortunately informed them I no longer lived there and the next day I was visited at my work. I told them to leave, they threatened me with a grand jury subpoena and 6 months later followed through with that threat, subpoenaing me and another person. Being well read on the use of grand juries to intimidate local above ground grass roots activists, I was shocked to see a lack of understanding and the urge to have me comply from the local community, so that support for any suspects if caught wouldn't be affected. This was severely disheartening and one of my many reasons I chose to disassociate myself from many people in the community.

So here is my message to you: It doesn't matter that I didn't know anything about ANY underground animal rights activities, or any illegal activities for that matter. Modern day grand juries are used to harass, terrorize and to intimidate. That's it, plain and simple, don't buy into the government's lies that they are investigating crimes. The truth is, if they had any information, they wouldn't be coming after above ground activists like myself. It's a witchhunt, all political and social movements should maintain a strong stance of non-cooperation when faced with

a grand jury subpoena. The more we resist, the less likely they will subpoena future activists. In my case, my testimony wasn't even needed (not that I had anything to offer anyway) they were still able to indict 2 activists for their roles in the 2008 mink farm raid. They were also able to successfully cripple the local, and let me remind you, LEGAL organization ADLSLC.

As Eli Rosenblatt once wrote, "With the grand jury the state built into its laws a mechanism to cover up it's true motivations of quashing dissent and threats to oppressive institutions by claiming some great threat to public safety or national security from terrorist activity, the state can imprison anyone who refuses to talk, anyone who doesn't provide information to the government about themselves or others. The justice department and intelligence agencies have thus targeted, disrupted and caged numerous people in recent decades, simply for their opposition to US government policies." Although written nearly 2 decades ago it still holds true.

While I will always remain a legal activist, it's no wonder we are seeing a huge jump in underground animal rights actions. When current activists see a case like mine, where I'm serving over 14 months for nothing, it's obvious why they would slip into the underground where they are effective and the chances of getting caught are less likely, because they aren't publicly showing their faces at protests.

To summarize, we need to educate and publicize the repressive and illegal use of grand juries and we need to know our rights in general and inform others. I urge, urge, urge you to PLEASE read up on grand juries and inform others so when, not if, a grand jury subpoena presents itself to you or your community, you'll be prepared... and you'll RESIST! RESIST! RESIST!

Though they did get one thing right, I do have contempt for the grand jury system.

With Love,

Jordan

P.S. Please write, I would love to hear from you. Letters are like oxygen to prisoners, they help us know people are out there and they care. Please check the support page often as I will be heading to a new location shortly. Thanks again for all the support. I can't wait to build many more friendships. Even if you don't know what to say a postcard that says "SUP?" is enough to let me know someone is out there.

27 Jan – Colton Harris-Moore Sentenced To 6 ½ Years

Colton Harris-Moore, nicknamed the "barefoot bandit" by the corporate media, was sentenced to six and a half years for a variety of crimes. While not explicitly political, we support this rebel and have included a corporate news article about his sentencing.

MORE:

A serial thief nicknamed the "Barefoot Bandit" was sentenced on Friday in Seattle to 6-1/2 years in prison for his guilty plea to federal charges stemming from a sensational, two-year crime spree as a sometimes-shoeless teenage runaway.

The federal judge also ordered that Colton Harris-Moore, 20, who read a statement in court apologizing for his crimes with "acceptance, humility and remorse," serve his federal sentence concurrently with a state term he received in December of more than seven years.

Under terms of the plea deal accepted by the judge, that means Harris-Moore could be released from prison by his 26th birthday.

The proceedings marked the end of an extraordinary two-year saga for Harris-Moore, a high school dropout and self-taught pilot who stayed one step ahead of the law as he broke into homes and stole cars, boats and planes across nine states and British Columbia.

His exploits, which prosecutors said included at least 67 crimes, came to an end when he was captured in the Bahamas in July 2010 after crash-landing a stolen aircraft he had flown to the islands from Indiana.

The 78-month federal prison term he was given on Friday was the maximum he faced for seven federal charges he pleaded guilty to in June, including interstate transportation of two stolen airplanes and a yacht, two bank burglaries, possessing a firearm as a fugitive and piloting an aircraft without a valid license.

Last month in state court in Coupeville, Washington, Harris-Moore was sentenced to 87 months for 33 crimes ranging from residential burglary to attempting to elude police.

LUCKY TO BE ALIVE

In a 5-minute statement read before U.S. District Judge Richard Jones pronounced sentence, Harris Moore said, "The lessons learned on the back of my victims are no way an excuse for my crimes."

Asked by the judge what message he would wish to send to young people, Harris-Moore said, "What I did could be called daring, but I'm lucky to be alive."

As part of his plea deal, Harris-Moore agreed to forfeit any profits from the rights to his life story. He has signed a movie deal with 20th Century Fox, setting aside about \$1.3 million in proceeds as restitution to his victims.

During his December 16 state sentencing, Island County Superior Court Judge Vickie Churchill called Harris-Moore's case a tragedy but also a "triumph in the human spirit" because of his severely-troubled childhood.

Defense documents filed on Thursday argued Harris-Moore "is at a low risk for re-offending and has the will and interest to make a life for himself as a member of the community."

A small commuter airline has communicated with Harris-Moore "about his future after incarceration," the documents stated. They also cited e-mails from him expressing his ambition to become a pilot.

A 39-page sentencing memorandum filed by prosecutors, however, questioned whether Harris-Moore was truly remorseful.

Prosecutors referred to e-mails and calls by Harris-Moore while in federal detention in which he referred to police as "swine" and "asses," the media as "vermin," and a Washington county prosecutor as a "complete fool."

The defense responded that "quoting and parsing his e-mails is, frankly, nothing more than an inflammatory attempt to use a cognitively impaired adolescent's thoughts against him."

At his state sentencing hearing, Harris-Moore described his childhood, growing up with an alcoholic mother, as one "that I would not wish on my darkest enemies."

27 Jan – Jesse Waters Sentenced For Knowledge of Earth Liberation Front Action

Jesse Waters was sentenced to six months in prison for allegedly "knowing about an ELF action" that took place in 2000. It's unclear what Waters did or did not know. What is clear is that he chose prison over cooperating with cops and courts. We've pasted a corporate news piece below.

MORE:

A Detroit-area man has been sentenced to six months in prison for concealing what he knew about a major arson by environmental activists at Michigan State University.

Jesse Waters was seeking probation Friday, but the sentence still is far short of the maximum penalty of three years in prison. He also was fined \$5,000.

In September, Waters of St. Clair Shores pleaded guilty to knowing about the 2000 arson at MSU's Agriculture Hall and concealing it. At the time, he was friends with Frank Ambrose and Marie Mason, who are now in prison for the arson and other protests.

Mason and Ambrose were fighting plant research at MSU. In 2009, Mason was sentenced to nearly 22 years in prison. Ambrose, her ex-husband, exposed her and got a shorter punishment.

29 Jan – Jalil Muntaqim Sentenced To Six Months In “Special Handling Unit”

We’ve written before about Jalil Muntaqim’s recent punishment for allegedly having a photo that demonstrated unlawful organization, even though that photo was sent through the regular mail and was reviewed by the prison’s correspondence department. On January 23rd, Jalil faced trial on possessing the photograph and was subsequently sentenced to six months in the SHU, better known as “the hole.”

MORE:

Jalil is currently in SHU at Attica, having been hit with 6 months after his trial on Monday. He put a full report about what happened in the mail, which I will type up and send out as soon as i receive it, but here is the basic gist of what happened:

On Monday, he was taken down to trial regarding the photograph that was "recovered" in his cell (the photo was from Cetewayo's memorial held at Hunter College this past March, in which a BPP banner was hanging in the background. Guards confiscated the photo on grounds that it demonstrated "unlawful organization.") This photograph had been sent in through the mail, and therefore presumably been processed through Attica's correspondence department. Jalil had lined up 3 witnesses for this bogus trial: 1. The head of Attica's correspondence dept, to argue that mail sent in through correspondence could not be considered contraband after the fact; 2. The head of Attica's gangs unit to show that Black Panther Party is not a designated gang (originally, the charges included gang affiliation as well); 3. Jalil's counselor, to demonstrate good behavior and non-involvement in unlawful organizations. When he arrived to the trial, he was told all 3 of these witnesses were denied on the basis of "irrelevancy." He was therefore unrepresented and with no witnesses. A lieutenant was then brought in, confirmed that the photo was of unlawful organization, and Jalil was hit with 6 months SHU right then and there.

He has been in SHU since Monday, with only the clothes on his back. He has not been given any personal property, and was told he probably won't receive any of it for weeks. He has no phone privileges, no commissary, no packages, and will eventually be allowed 5 books and limited legal materials. He will have only one visit weekly for the duration, and these are no-contact visits which take place in Attica's SHU.

He is asking that people contact NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, as well as Commissioner Brian Fischer to demand that the charges be dropped, Jalil be released from SHU immediately, and that this campaign of harassment come to AN IMMEDIATE END! These charges are entirely fabricated and show premeditation on behalf of the prison administration to lock Jalil away until his next parole hearing in June.

NY Attourney General Eric Schneiderman:
Office of the Attorney General
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224-0341

Commissioner Brian Fischer
NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision
Building 2
1220 Washington Ave
Albany, New York 12226-2050

4 Feb 2012 - International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

WHAT: International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier!

WHEN: 2:00-6:00pm, Saturday, February 4th

WHERE: Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Drive (120th and Claremont, Manhattan)

COST: \$5 to \$10 Donation (Nobody turned away due to empty pockets!), delicious homemade food for only \$5

For more information: nyclpdoc@gmail.com • nycjericho@gmail.com • 718-325-4407

MORE:

Leonard Peltier is a Native American activist wrongfully accused in 1975 in connection with the shooting deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Government documents show that, without any evidence at all, the FBI decided from the beginning of its investigation to 'lock Peltier into the case'.

U.S. prosecutors knowingly presented false statements to a Canadian court to extradite Mr. Peltier to the U.S. The statements were signed by a woman who was forced by FBI agents to say she was an eyewitness. The government has long since admitted that the woman was not present during the shootings.

Meanwhile, in a separate trial in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Mr. Peltier's co-defendants were acquitted by reason of self defense. Had Leonard been tried with his co-defendants, he also would have been acquitted.

Unhappy with the outcome of the Cedar Rapids trial, prosecutors set the stage for Mr. Peltier's conviction. His trial was moved to an area known for its anti-Indian sentiment—Fargo, North Dakota. The trial judge had a reputation for ruling against Indians, and a juror is known to have made racist comments during Mr. Peltier's trial.

FBI documents prove that the U.S. government went so far as to manufacture the so-called murder weapon, the most critical evidence in the prosecution's case. A ballistics test proved, however, that the gun and shell casings entered into evidence didn't match. The FBI hid this fact from the jury. Mr. Peltier was convicted and sentenced to two consecutive life terms. According to court records, the United States Attorney who prosecuted the case has twice admitted that no one even knows who fired the fatal shots.

Leonard Peltier is 67 years old and in poor health. An accomplished author and artist, Mr. Peltier is renowned for his humanitarian achievements. In 2009, Leonard was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the sixth consecutive year.

Although the courts have acknowledged evidence of government misconduct—including forcing witnesses to lie and hiding ballistics evidence reflecting his innocence—Mr. Peltier has been denied a new trial on a legal technicality. Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, 55 Members of Congress and others—including a judge who sat as a member of the court in two of Mr. Peltier's appeals—have all called for his immediate release.

The Courts may not be able to act but Barack Obama, as President, can. Please join with us to free an innocent man. On February 4, 2012, tell Obama to grant clemency to Leonard Peltier.

Scheduled events will be announced and details provided at whoisleonardpeltier.info

15 Feb – Press Conference and Court House Rally For Bro. Shaka Shakur

WHAT: "Occupy the Bronx Courthouse"

WHEN: 9:00am, Wednesday, February 15th

WHERE: Bronx County Criminal Court, Part B (215 East 161st Street)

MORE:

Bro. Shaka, a coordinator of the Peoples Survival Program in Harlem was arrested at work after a taskforce of police agents raided his apartment in the Bronx with a baseless warrant. In the course of the raid the police also took the opportunity to violate the home of veteran Black Panther Cyril "Bullwhip" Innis under the guise of an alleged search for illegal weapons.

Save The Date and come out on Wednesday, February 15, 2012 as we collectively "Occupy The Bronx Courthouse" in support of those who actively fight against Police Terror by the NYPD.

Additionally, Thanks to the very successful fundraising event organized by CEMOTAP; We now only need a balance of \$2,500.00 to cover the legal expenses for Bro. Shaka Shakur.

For those who were unable to attend this community fundraiser and still wish to contribute to the legal expenses needed to win this case; We ask that you please make out your check or money order payable to our attorney Michael W. Warren with a notation for the Shaka Shakur Defense Fund and to then Mail Your Support Contribution To:

Michael W. Warren, P.C.
580 Washington Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11238

17 Mar - Love & Struggle Book Release Party

WHAT: NYC Release Party for David Gilbert's *Love and Struggle*

WHEN: 7:00-10:00pm, Saturday, March 17th

WHERE: Bluestocking – 172 Allen Street New York, New York 10002

COST: FREE, copies of the book will be for sale at the event

MORE:

Join David Gilbert's long time comrades, Terry Bisson and Dan Berger as they read from [*Love and Struggle: My Life in SDS, the Weather Underground, and Beyond*](#) and discusses David's life, politics, and what David's experience and activism can teach today's Left.

This is the NYC book release party- and an event not to be missed.

One of America's most celebrated political prisoners since his appearance in the Academy Award nominated film, *The Weather Underground*, David Gilbert is also the author of *No Surrender*, a book of essays on politics and history. He can be reached at NY's Clinton Prison as 83-A-6158.