



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for May 22nd

8 May - Prosecutors file charges against Occupy Oakland protesters and revoke probation on two

The Alameda County District Attorney's office filed charges against three people arrested at Occupy Oakland's demonstration and said it is seeking to revoke probation on two others who were arrested on May 8th.

MORE:

Jordan Bard, 22, was charged with felony vandalism as well as a misdemeanor for wearing a mask during the commission of a crime; Stephanie Demos, 54, was charged with resisting arrest and failure to disperse after a declaration of an unlawful assembly; and Isaac Castro, 24, was charged with felony assault on a peace officer.

Prosecutors said they are seeking to revoke probation for Siasoi Aleamotua, 19, who had previous a robbery conviction and was subject to a stay-away order from Frank Ogawa Plaza when police officers said they saw him there.

They are also seeking to revoke probation for Eric Benard, 37, who had a previous conviction for battery on a police officer. Prosecutors said he was arrested on May Day for resisting arrest.

The charges announced by prosecutors represent only a fraction of the 39 people police said they arrested Tuesday. But prosecutors say more charges may be coming.

"We are going to be reviewing additional cases next week," said Deputy District Attorney Teresa Drenick.

8 May - Sadie and Exile have been transferred to a re-entry facility

Earth Liberation Front prisoners Sadie and Exile have been transferred to the custody of the Seattle Community Corrections Office after spending more than 6 years in full confinement.

MORE:

Facilities like SCCO are half-prisons where the prisoners are allowed to go out for work and not much else.

We just received word that they cannot receive mail at the facility. There is no way to send them mail that we know of at this time.

10 May - New Grand Jury Subpoena Served in UC-Santa Cruz Investigation

On May 10th, FBI agents served an activist with a subpoena to appear at a grand jury investigating a 2008 arson in Santa Cruz. They have since served at least three others.

MORE:

A heads-up that Jose Palafox in California has been subpoenaed to a grand jury by FBI agents. From the subpoena, it appears the grand jury is investigating a fire set at the home of a UC-Santa Cruz animal researcher in 2008. There was no claim of responsibility for the fire, and there is no evidence activists were responsible. Nonetheless, the incident became the impetus for the "AETA 4" case, which saw the indictment of four Bay Area activists before charges were dismissed in 2010.

If there are more subpoenas served, I will be posting here.

The full statement from the person subpoenaed reads:

"I HAVE BEEN SUBPOENAED BEFORE A GRAND JURY

On Friday May 4th, I was approached by two FBI agents at the BART Station at 19th and Broadway in Oakland. They asked my name, identified themselves as Carrie and Matt from the FBI, and served me a subpoena to testify before a federal Grand Jury. They informed me that I had been served and left without asking me any other questions.

From the face of the Grand Jury Subpoena, it appears related to an animal rights action that took place in Santa Cruz in August of 2008. I know nothing about the Santa Cruz action but believe this is a political prosecution and part of a government attempt to gather information on activists, specifically involved in the animal rights movement.

I will be getting a lawyer and plan to exercise my rights to the fullest extent. If anyone else receives a similar subpoena or a visit from the FBI, you can contact the National Lawyers Guild for advice on you rights.

This is the second time I have come into contact with the FBI. A couple of years ago, I had to deal with the Oakland Police Department regarding a private criminal matter, unrelated to activism, and without my knowledge was interviewed by an FBI agent. He began to ask me questions about my activism and political affiliations. I asked what agency he was from and I immediately stopped answering any questions. Probably unrelated but you never know.

I feel that it is important to let folks know about this political repression and to let people know that I will be needing support. However, the lawyer I did briefly speak with advised me not to answer any questions about the facts the case. I can talk about what the government's allegations are and what is happening with court appearances but I can't answer questions about the facts so please don't ask.

in solidarity, Jose Palafox, 5/9/12"

UPDATE:

Just a quick update on the Grand Jury Subpoena situation.

We have learned that two other close comrades have recently been contacted by the FBI as part of the FBI's investigation into animal rights actions that took place in Santa Cruz in August of 2008. One of the people contacted was also subpoenaed to appear before a Grand Jury (same date/time as mine). They are both in contact with the NLG and are seeking counsel.

We are holding a series of teach-ins to help demystify grand juries—the history, purpose, process, and resistance—as well as inform folks of your rights and what to do if an agent approaches you. San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and folks here in Oakland, get in touch with us.

We are very grateful for the legal defense on the part of our lawyers, however, its also important to remember the political realm of this struggle. If you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch with us.

10 May - Victor VanOrden Released From Prison

Victor VanOrden was successful in his parole hearing and was released on May 10th. He will serve the remainder of his five year sentence on parole. We've pasted a thank you note from his supporters below.

MORE:

He and his wife Kellie (who was living in Iowa waiting for him to be released) have found their way back to Maryland where they will reside with Victor's family. Thank you everyone for all of your wonderful support, loving letters, and financial generosity. Victor and Kellie are extremely grateful to everyone who thought about them which they were inside, and showed their support in one way or another.

12 May – the abc's of unit two by Mandy Hiscocks

2010 Toronto G20 prisoner Mandy Hiscocks has a popular blog and has written a new entry for it that we've pasted below.

MORE:

unit two is a maximum security section of Vanier Centre for Women, where everyone starts out but many don't stay for long. it's the only section of which i have any experience. there are six different wings, or ranges, on the unit: 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F. A, B, F wings are General population. inmates can be bounced from one to the other because for all intents and purposes they are interchangeable, aside from the fact that 2B is bigger and has single cells which means that one person has to sleep on a mattress on the floor. because of the overcrowding 2B tends to be on lockdown more often than A or F wing. I also hear that each Gen Pop range has a distinct culture – for example Leah (2A) is generally considered to be rowdier than mine (2F) and 2B is said to be dirtier.

i am slowly learning about the other three wings by piecing together information from inmates who have spent time in them. unit 2C is segregation – the hole. 2E is Intensive Management And Treatment (IMAT) and Protective Custody (PC). i don't know what 2D is called, but it's where inmates are taken for psychiatric analysis and it's much more restrictive than 2E.

Claire McKenzie was a 2F inmate when she was released recently, but during her time here she also experienced life on 2D and 2E. I asked her if she would like to write about it, and the rest of this post is hers. here and there, with her consent, i have added in some information that i thought might be useful.

[Mandy's comments are italicized in Claire's story]

thanks very much to Claire for sharing her story.

CLAIRE MCKENZIE'S JAIL STORY

It was around 7 am on my third day in jail, when I found out that insulting a regular 'crackhead' inmate was not to be done. She came over to me and decided to head-butt me and then punch me in the face. All because i said to a toothless 'crackhead' that she was too ugly for dentures. Now, my lip was spilt open to the point I needed medical attention.

I was taken out of the cell and put into one by myself and received no medical care. I went to court as normal but my lip was split into two. While I was at court one nice court officer was kind enough to give me an ice pack. It was around 9pm when i returned to Vanier and a nurse saw me and insisted to a guard that I was in need of a hospital for stitches. I was taken by two guards to the Milton Hospital in wrists and ankle shackles. One guard stayed close by while they stitched up my lip, viewing the gruesome sight of blood everywhere. I was taken back to the jail and put into a cell in the General Population, back on Unit 2 but on a different range this time.

The next morning right after breakfast I was out on the IMAT range. A white shirt told me it was because I'd pissed somebody off. IMAT is for people with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, schizophrenia and so on. It is also where people go who are of a quieter nature, who have trouble living on the regular ranges. I immediately became emotional and started to cry. However I felt safer so I decided to clean down my room and get settled in.

IMAT inmates share until 2e with protective custody inmates – their cells are on the main floor while PC cells are on the upper. because IMAT and PC cannot be out on the range at the same time, they alternate lockdowns. one day one group is allowed out from 9-11am and the other from 2-4:30pm and 6-7:30pm, and the next day they switch. everyone eats in their cells and all cells are singles.

A few months after I arrived on IMAT I was using the phone when the guard said it was time for lockdown. I was discussing a situation where I was raped and had reported it to the police, and now they were trying to contact me. I said this to the guard and his response was “who cares about what happened to you.” Feeling hurt i threw my pencil crayons at him. He tried to grab me and I turned away and donkey-kicked him. Then he gained control and took me off the unit and out into the hallway rotunda. Suddenly, he yanked my arm and twisted it until the muscle was pulled and I was in extreme pain. They carried me as I blacked out upside down into segregation.

segregation, aka “the hole” is unit 2C. it's on the far side of the unit from F wing where i live, directly behind the panopticon bubble that sits in the middle. so i've never seen it. i've heard about it though: lockdown all the time, no paper or pencils, sometimes not even a book or sometimes only the bible, no mattress to sit on during

the day, no phone access, nobody to talk to. i hope i never go there! but i am going to try to collect some information and stories about it for a future post.

The next morning I was back on IMAT with a badly bruised arm, and my possessions had been thrown out into the garbage. A couple of days later feeling very depressed, I tried to stab my chest with a pencil. I called on the emergency button for help. Three guards came and I was taken by force to the psychiatric analysis section of the jail, unit 2D.

i can see into this wing when i get taken to a visit or we go to yard. it looks grim. there is a row of cells on either side of the range, which has no tables because the people are never out on it. i have never seen any inmates, just closed doors. it looks oppressive to me, like a jail on TV or an old-fashioned mental institution – not like a high school cafeteria which is what the Gen Pop wing looks like most of the time. there is one benefit: D-wingers have their own yard, which i hear is much nicer than the concrete box the rest of us have to use. they go out to yard one at a time.

On this unit the inmates are on lockdown all day and night. We eat in our cells. I was allowed out of my room for a shower everyday and was granted yard time also. Sometimes we could watch tv for 20 minutes alone in the tv room. I stayed on this range for approximately two months. To keep sane, I drew many pictures, using National Geographic magazines for ideas, and I got quite good at it. I slept a lot, and wrote letters to my family. I also wrote sermons and read them aloud to the other inmates who could hear me through the walls. I cleaned, using underwear and the sharp tinfoil edges of jam lids to get between the tiles. I also did yoga while outside at yard and fed a nest of baby birds. I could see out my window where part of the frosting had been scratched off, so i made lists of the trucks I saw going by on the highway. I also made a list of companies who sold stuff to the jail (jam, coffee, condiments, etc.) and their addresses. After cleaning three cells that were in desperate need of it, I received extra food and some kindness from some of the guards. The guards are different on D-wing – some would hang out and chat for twenty minutes at a time.

I spoke with the jail psychiatrist and asked if I could return to the IMAT range. The nurses took some convincing on my part but in the summer of 2011 I was placed back there. I now had friends and was quite famous with the upstairs PC inmates for my 'donkey-kick' to the guard.

Sharing a range means that you alternate leisure time out of your cell, so there was regular lockdown for us totaling about three days a week. After my total lockdown on D- range being on IMAT was a piece of cake. One perk that the IMATs exclusively get to enjoy is the Elizabeth Fry Saturday visits once a month. With this visit we got pop, cookies, and fresh fruit, as well as the use of markers and stickers to decorate pictures to send to our family and friends. Also once a week we were invited to get out of our cells and meet as a group for approximately an hour and a half to colour pictures, play Pictionary or to discuss problems with addictions.

On the day of eleven, eleven, two thousand eleven I turned 35 and had now been in jail for 8 months on four counts of assault on a police officer, one count of aggravated assault and one count of assault with a weapon. Unfortunately on my birthday I was stood up by my mother. A couple of days later I was pulled from the unit and was informed that my mother was sick with pneumonia. The guard asked me whether or not my sister and I were close as she then told me that she had called the jail to tell me of my mother's condition. I was permitted to call the hospital. I got no response, so I held on to my hopes for another day. Two days later the social worker came to see me, and gratefully I spoke to my mom and found out she was very sick and needed more tests. Later that week my sister came to visit me, to see me for my birthday and tell me my mother's situation. My mother was being moved to Mount Sinai for more tests and my sister would be back to visit to keep me posted. On her next visit my sister informed me that my mother was sick with cancer and that chemotherapy was needed to fight off a rare disease called Auto-Immune Disease. I met with a Catholic Deacon that same week. I cried out all my fears, worries, and anger during his visit. I was comforted by his kind words and patient listening. The visit was weirdly timed and i wonder about who had arranged the visit because I had not put in a request.

Christmas was on it's way and so was my big trial. I tried to stay strong and walked every day to help ease my mind. After a very humiliating and stressful trial I was found guilty of both the aggravated assault and the assault with a weapon. Feeling very disappointed I sought the care and concern of an anxiety struck ex-crackhead to help sort out my troubles. Feeling fearful and anxious over possible pen time I attended my sentencing in january 2012. Lucky for me the judge counted my pre-trial custody of nine months and gave me an addition five

months in Vanier. So the total sentence was 14 months but with the two thirds a jail term of one year and two weeks.

It was still January when I found myself feeling isolated from normal interaction, and stressed from IMAT prisoners with more serious mental health issues. My close friend would soon be released after ten months for a charge of robbery. I spoke with her and my social worker about my desire to be reconnected with the general population. The next day, a meeting was held with the IMAT nurses, guards and social worker and my case was presented. My request was approved and I was on my way to the general population. I had to say goodbye to having my own room and also to my good friend. I said hello to my new roommate and no more regular lockdowns. I blended in well with the inmates on 2F and even sang a lead part during a competition between 2A, 2B and 2F for a Sunday movie.

I met with the deacon once again to privately discuss my mother's condition and chemotherapy progress. I also asked him questions on subjects such as reincarnation and life after death. I briefly met with my new social worker and was continuing to adapt to the "normal" atmosphere but I started to want more so I applied for a job as a laundry worker. I was not hired until a couple of workers had received a misconduct and been relieved from their job. I felt an increased sense of self-confidence and also more mental stimulation from my actions on the job. I got in contact with Elizabeth Fry's halfway house representative from Brampton and Toronto. Unfortunately Brampton's location is too far from my family so I wanted to put me on Toronto's wait list. Sadly, I was spoken to very rudely and treated poorly by the Toronto Rep and decided that a shelter would hopefully be less stressful.

14 May – Alleged “Anonymous” Hacker Jeremy Hammond Appears in Court

Jeremy Hammond is a 27-year-old political activist from Chicago, Illinois. He is currently incarcerated at the federal jail in New York City, charged with hacking conspiracies carried out by the LulzSec/AntiSec wing of Anonymous. He appeared in court and plead not guilty on May 14th. We will be writing to him at an upcoming letter-writing dinner.

MORE:

His four co-defendants, Ryan Ackroyd, Jake Davis, Darren Martyn and Donncha O’Cearrbhail, are awaiting extradition from Britain and Ireland. The charges include the hacking of Stratfor and HBGary Federal, two private security firms contracted to spy and collect intelligence by governments and corporations. They are also charged with focusing on law enforcement by hacking the Arizona Department of Public Safety, infamous for its racist immigration policies.

Stratfor’s clients include not only giant corporations like Bank of America, Boeing and Lockheed Martin, but U.S. government agencies, including all four branches of the military, the FBI, Homeland Security and local police forces. As a private spy agency, Stratfor avoids constitutional constraints. Internal emails published by WikiLeaks offer disturbing revelations about the hidden workings of the military industrial complex. The hack revealed that Stratfor employs a network of paid informants that include government employees and journalists. The hack also revealed that Stratfor client Dow Chemical paid for spying on activists working to seek redress for the Bhopal environmental disaster. Stratfor was also hired by the Texas Department of Public Safety to infiltrate Occupy Austin.

HBGary is a technology security company that sells information and other services to the Federal Government. The Anonymous hack revealed HBGary's potentially illegal proposal to take down WikiLeaks by fueling a feud between different groups, disseminating disinformation, tracking and threatening its financial donors, and submitting fake documents to WikiLeaks and then calling out the error. Other emails appear to show the U.S. Chamber of Commerce contracted the firm to spy on and discredit unions and liberal groups.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety was hacked in response to the "Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act" (Arizona State Bill 1070), which requires immigrants to register and carry registration documents, and encourages racial profiling and improper stop and frisks. The hack resulted in the release of

documents describing law enforcement techniques and operational plans. The emails included racist comments by police officers and showed police countenance of vigilante and white supremacist groups. Opposition to the law was expressed in mass protests and boycotts with participants that included sports leagues, musicians, and municipalities, and effectively caused \$141 billion in revenues to be lost.

Jeremy Hammond is part of a growing world-wide movement of political activists who utilize advanced technologies to accomplish their political goals of disseminating information, holding governments, law enforcement, individuals and corporations accountable for their misdeeds, and mobilizing real-world global protest.

Hammond came to the attention of the Federal Government after the FBI secretly arrested Hector Monsegur (AKA Sabu), a leading Lulzsec member turned informant. If convicted, Hammond potentially faces decades in prison.

Hammond is one of five charged with conspiracy to commit computer hacking and other charges. Hammond specifically is charged with hacking into the computer system of intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting Inc., stealing the information of 860,000 Stratfor clients, including a former vice president and a former CIA director, whose names were [redacted from the original complaint](#), and publishing the information of 60,000 credit card holders and using stolen credit card information to charge up to \$700,000. Hammond has a rap sheet that includes a conviction for burning a 2016 Olympics banner in Daley Plaza; a 2005 conviction for stealing credit card data from a conservative website; an arrest at the Republican National Convention in 2004; marijuana arrests in 2004 and 2010, and a 2009 arrest for violently disrupting a talk by a Holocaust denier.

Hammond's hacking of the conservative website [Protest Warrior](#), was the subject of 2007 articles by both [Chicago magazine](#) and the [Chicago Reader](#). He pleaded guilty to hacking into Protest Warrior, and stealing 5,000 credit card numbers and other information. He was sentenced to two years in a medium-security prison in Greenville, Ill. and ordered to pay \$5,358 to Protest Warrior.

Prosecutors accuse Hammond of being a member of Anonymous, LulzSec, and an Anonymous offshoot called AntiSec. His code names include "Anarchaos," "yohoho" and "crediblethreat." If convicted, Hammond faces up to 10 years in prison.

Meanwhile, Fink and the other lawyers say they have kept their client stocked with reading material, including Spanish language study guides, the civil rights tome "Carry Me Home," and the sci-fi novel Crypto-Nomicon.

Fink said that prison officials would not let her pass on "A Time to Die," an account of the Attica revolt penned by late New York Times writer Tom Wicker.

The parties will meet again on July 23 in a location to be announced.

15 May – Outside a Women's Prison in New York for Mother's Day

We're including an article about the noise demonstration we organized on the eve of Mother's Day.

MORE:

The West Side Highway in New York, which traces Manhattan's westerly edge, is dotted with luxury condo buildings and office blocks with views onto the Hudson River. Around 20th Street, an eleven-story modernist mural of geometric shapes, "Venus," decorates the south face of a vast concrete block, but the famous painting by Knox Martin is now almost entirely obscured by a recently completed condo complex.

Just as "Venus" now goes largely unnoticed by the cars whizzing up and down the highway, so, too, does the building it decorates: Bayview Correctional Facility, a medium-security women's prison and rare example of a state penitentiary in the middle of a major metropolis. I had never noticed Bayview myself, having passed that stretch of Manhattan hundreds of times. On Saturday evening, however, to mark the eve of Mother's Day, [I stood outside the prison with around 50 people](#) making as much noise as possible.

[Prison noise demonstrations](#) - during which crowds stand outside correctional facilities chanting, whistling, banging drums and generally ruckus rousing - are intended to connect with inmates; a small gesture to remind prisoners that they are not forgotten. The demonstrations are pitched by anarchist solidarity networks across the world as actions in support of political prisoners, underpinned by the view that anyone imprisoned is, in a sense, a political prisoner (as the function of prisons and who gets deemed "criminal" are deeply political issues). Anarchist Black Cross - a network of collectives which have organized prisoner solidarity actions since the early twentieth century - regularly set up letter writing to individuals seemingly imprisoned because of their political positions and organize noise demonstrations worldwide.

The call out for Saturday's demonstration from [NYC Anarchist Black Cross](#) spoke specifically to the issue of imprisoned mothers: "[O]n the eve of Mother's Day [NYC Anarchist Black Cross](#) calls for a world without cages for all. We call for it during this time, because 2/3 of all women in prison are mothers and we recognize the forced separation of a child from their caregiver by the state as an act of violence," it read. A recent [Reuter's article](#) noted that women who give birth in prison have to hand their children over to a relative or put them up for adoption within 48 hours of giving birth. Most state penitentiaries are also remotely positioned, making visitation between incarcerated mothers and their children a challenge, especially for poor families without access to a car.

Noise demonstrations are often organized on calendar days set aside for celebration - celebration for the non-incarcerated, that is. Notably on New Year's Eve, crowds gather yearly outside prisons in almost every state in the country. Indeed, a noise demonstration in New York last December 31, which garnered support from Occupy Wall Street participants, drew a crowd of 200 outside the federal Metropolitan Correctional Center in downtown Manhattan and sparked a rowdy scene later that night in Zuccotti Park. On Saturday evening, the chants directed toward the women inside Bayview made clear the point of the demonstration:

"Happy Mother's Day! Happy Mother's Day! We will abolish the prisons one day!" the crowd shouted and more vociferously still, "You are not alone."

I had never previously attended a noise demonstration and beforehand could not imagine what response a small group with noise-makers could possibly elicit from within the concrete edifice - whether inmates would hear or care. But as soon as the noise began, the small square windows of light began to flicker on and off - some at strobe-like speed - along the prison's North side. Inmates, as regularly happens during noise demonstrations, were turning their cell lights on and off in recognition as we stared and shouted up at their windows. Gradually, too, indistinguishable figures came forward, visible in their cell windows only as waving silhouettes; they made heart signals with their arms and danced in-time to the inconsistent drum beats from the demonstration below.

Anarchist Black Cross want to see an end to all prisons. Many who do not share their fervor, however, still understand the controversial nature of the US prison system, which incarcerates more people than any other country in the world (well over two million). It has long been criticized as an industrial complex, in which increasing the numbers of prisons (and so prisoners) is seen as a means to create jobs and cheap labor from inmates. Noise demonstrations in and of themselves do not manifest fleshed-out critiques or attacks on the carceral system - rather, they are a small way to reach out to, and assert solidarity with, those trapped within in it.

For over two hours on Saturday, scores of women inside Bayview stayed glued to their windows, waving; lights continued to flicker on and off and the crowd below continued to chant and bang any noise-making object available, including plastic street barricades caked in New York grime. All the while, prison guards and a handful of New York Police Department officers walked in front of the demonstrators, one officer constantly filming. When the demonstration finally came to a slow, drawn-out close, shouts of "thank you" and "we love you" could be heard from the cells above. Some prisoners held up sheets of paper to their windows, but to the crowd standing far below, their messages were illegible.

The gesture of the demonstration, although seemingly greatly appreciated by women inside Bayview, felt very small indeed as the inmates retreated from their windows and the prison building once again was silent and dark.

We turned back onto the roaring West Side Highway, passed the gleaming new build which obscures the "Venus" mural which would never have been visible from any of the prison's cells anyway.

15 May - How FBI Entrapment Is Inventing 'Terrorists' - and Letting Bad Guys Off the Hook

Just after this article by Rolling Stone came out, more folks were rounded up as alleged terrorists. This time, it was part of the lead up to the NATO summit in Chicago. We're lumping all relevant articles below, but stay aware that informants, provocateurs, and undercover agents abound.

MORE:

This past October, at an Occupy encampment in Cleveland, Ohio, "suspicious males with walkie-talkies around their necks" and "scarves or towels around their heads" were heard grumbling at the protesters' unwillingness to act violently. At meetings a few months later, one of them, a 26-year-old with a black Mohawk known as "Cyco," explained to his anarchist colleagues how "you can make plastic explosives with bleach," and the group of five men fantasized about what they might blow up. Cyco suggested a small bridge. One of the others thought they'd have a better chance of not hurting people if they blew up a cargo ship. A third, however, argued for a *big* bridge – "Gotta slow the traffic that's going to make them money" – and won. He then led them to a connection who sold them C-4 explosives for \$450. Then, the night before the May Day Occupy protests, they allegedly put the plan into motion – and just as the would-be terrorists fiddled with the detonator they hoped would blow to smithereens a scenic bridge in Ohio's Cuyahoga Valley National Park traversed by [13,610 vehicles every day](#), the [FBI swooped in to arrest them](#).

Right in the nick of time, just like in the movies. The authorities couldn't have more effectively made the Occupy movement look like a danger to the republic if they had scripted it. Maybe that's because, more or less, they did.

The guy who convinced the plotters to blow up a big bridge, led them to the arms merchant, and drove the team to the bomb site [was an FBI informant](#). The merchant was an FBI agent. The bomb, of course, was a dud. And the arrest was part of a [pattern of entrapment by federal law enforcement since September 11, 2001](#), not of terrorist suspects, but of young men federal agents have had to talk into embracing violence in the first place. One of the Cleveland arrestees, Connor Stevens, complained to his sister of feeling "very pressured" by the guy who turned out to be an informant and was recorded in 2011 rejecting property destruction: "We're in it for the long haul and those kind of tactics just don't cut it," he said. "And it's actually harder to be non-violent than it is to do stuff like that." Though when Cleveland's NEWS Channel 5 [broadcast that footage](#), they headlined it "Accused Bomb Plot Suspect Caught on Camera Talking Violence."

In all these law enforcement schemes the alleged terrorists masterminds end up seeming, when the full story comes out, unable to terrorize their way out of a paper bag without law enforcement tutelage. ("They teach you how to make all this stuff out of simple household items," one of the kids says on a recording [quoted in the FBI affidavit](#) about a book he has just discovered, *The Anarchist Cookbook*. Someone asks him how much it says explosives cost. "I'm not sure," he responds, "I just downloaded it last night.") It's a perfect example of how post-9/11 fear made law enforcement tactics seem acceptable that were previously beyond the pale. Previously, however, the targets have been Muslims; now they're white kids from Ohio. And maybe you could argue that this is acceptable, if the feds were actually acting out of a good-faith assessment of what threats are imminent and which are not. But that's not what they're doing at all. Instead, they are arrogating to themselves a downright Orwellian power – the power to deploy the might of the State to shape a fundamental narrative about which *ideas* Americans must be most scared of, and which ones they should not fear much at all, *independent of the relative objective dangerousness of the people who hold those ideas*.

To see how, travel with me to rural Florida, and [another arrest that occurred at almost exactly the same time](#). On April 28, members of American Front, a white-supremacist group labeled "a known terrorist organization" in the affidavit justifying the arrest, took a break from training with machine guns for a race war in order to fashion weapons out of fake "Occupy" signs which they planned to use to assault May Day protesters in Melbourne, Florida. No script, no choreography for maximal impact on sensation-hungry news broadcasts, no melodramatic press conference with a U.S. attorney and FBI Special Agent in Charge; this arrest only went down after an

informant working with *state* law enforcement fled in fear for his or her life after being threatened by the group's leader Marcus Faella with a 9mm pistol. And though the [media reported](#) the involvement of a "joint terrorism task force of FBI and local law enforcement" the arresting affidavit does not even mention federal law enforcement; the charges filed were state, not federal. A circuit court judge scrawled a bail amount of \$51,250; that was [accidentally knocked down to \\$500](#). The Cleveland anarchists were held without bond.

The contrasts are extraordinarily instructive. When federal law enforcement agencies take an affirmative role in staging the crimes, the U.S. Justice Department then prosecutes, leaving more clear-and-present dangers relatively unbothered, the State is singling out ideological enemies. Violent white supremacists are not one of these enemies, apparently – because, as David Neiwert, probably the nation's top journalist on the subject, told me, the federal government has much less often sought to entrap them, even though they are actually the biggest home-grown terrorism threat. That is unconstitutional, because law enforcement's criterion for attention has been revealed as the *ideas* the alleged plotters hold – not their observed violent potential.

Who else are we supposed to be afraid of? Certainly animal-rights and environmental radicals. In 2006, when FBI Director Robert Mueller announced the indictments of Animal Liberal Front activists who burned down a horse-rendering plant in 1997, harming no humans, he called such property destruction one of the agency's "highest domestic terrorism priorities." We're supposed to be afraid of Muslims, of course – though not even necessarily Muslim militants. In a sting stunningly anatomized on a Pulitzer-worthy [This American Life episode from 2005](#) the target, British citizen Hemant Lakhani, known as "Habib," was an Indian-born Willy Loman, so dumb he referred to night-vision goggles, which he'd never heard of, as "sunglasses" and so broken down and desperate for attention he told the federal informant he had full-sized submarines to sell. He was egged by the informant into selling him Stinger missiles (Lakhani had approached him hoping to sell him mangoes). Upon Lakhani's terrorism conviction then-U.S. Attorney Chris Christie stepped up to the press conference microphones to announce, "Today is a triumph for the Justice Department in the war against terror. I don't know that anyone can say that the state of New Jersey, and this country, is not a safer place without Hemant Lakhani trotting around the globe attempting to broker arms deals."

But don't worry your pretty little heads over the [epidemic of far-right insurrectionism](#) that [followed the election of Barack Obama](#): all told, according to a forthcoming data analysis by Neiwert, there have been 55 cases of right-wing extremists being arrested for plotting or committing alleged terrorists acts compared to 26 by Islamic militants during the same period. The right-wing plots include the bombing of a 2011 Martin Luther King Day parade in Spokane and the assassination of abortion doctor George Tiller in 2009. Neither of their perpetrators, it goes without saying, had been arrested before they attempted their vile acts; neither required law enforcement entrapment to conceive and carry them out. It's just too bad for their victims they did not fit the story federal law enforcement seeks to tell.

I use the word "story" advisedly. Entrapment is the most literary of abuses of power: Investigators and prosecutors become as unto little Stephen Kings, feeding into, and feeding, the fear centers of our lizard brains in order to manipulate their audience. Unsurprisingly, the tactic crops up whenever the powers that be are themselves most frightened for their power, such as [during the 1960s](#), when instigation of criminal acts by *agents provocateurs* infiltrating the anti-war movement became extremely prevalent. When one of the accused Chicago 7 left the courtroom just as a witness for the prosecution left the stand, the other six became horrified when it became clear that the guy who had just got up (actually to go to the bathroom) was a plant about to testify against them.

The antiwar movement soon learned whom to be afraid of: people who don't quite fit in, who always seemed ready to volunteer for anything (if you're on the FBI payroll, you don't need a job), people pressing violence when everyone else in the room preferred peace. In the 1972 "Camden 28" trial of Catholic left conspirators who tried to steal and destroy registration records from a local draft board, the star witness got his breaking-and-entering training from the FBI and swore in court that the accused never would have raided the building absent his leadership. Although the people the FBI preferred to recruit were the sort who had trouble keeping jobs anyway. They were frequently mentally unstable: the *agent provocateur* whose recordings got twenty-three members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War indicted for supposedly conspiring to attack the 1972

Republican National Convention with "lead weights, 'fried' marbles, ball bearings, cherry bombs ... wrist rockets, slingshots, and cross bows" had received a psychological discharge from the Army. And they were usually criminals. In the Harrisburg 7 trial of in 1972 (in which the feds fantastically claimed that a pacifist priest, some nuns, and their confreres intended to blow up the steam tunnels beneath Washington, D.C.) the prosecution's star witness had offered himself to the FBI as an undercover New Lefty from the jail cell where he was serving time for so many crimes the U.S. Attorney had classified him as a "menace to society."

The entrapment game still works the same. In the case documented on *This American Life*, informant "Habib" was such a notorious liar, thief, and con man that the feds deactivated him – until after September 11, when suddenly "different FBI bureaus were fighting" for his services. The key informant in the Animal Liberation Front arrests was a truck thief and heroin addict. The dude in the Cleveland anarchist case, identified by thesmokinggun.com as a Donald Trump fan named Shaqil Azir, had convictions for cocaine possession, robbery, and passing bad checks – and was also under a *current* check-fraud indictment the FBI covered up in its affidavit. They also neglected to mention his frequent appearances in bankruptcy court.

Such choices are a feature, not a bug: Criminals with cases pending are able to act more convincingly as, well, criminals, and will do anything the government asks to reduce their sentences; sociopaths are better able to manipulate the emotions of macho young men. The play's the thing. Although sometimes the play becomes *too* convincing: In the Watergate hearings in 1973, some of the witnesses testified that hearing about VVAW's violent plans to disrupt the Republican convention were what convinced them it was OK to break laws on behalf of their president.

Not everything is the same since the 1970s, of course. The media has changed: *Newsday* editorialized in 1972 of the Camden case, "We have come to expect such tactics from totalitarian nations that have no respect for individual rights permitting dissent. They have no place in American and those who advocate them have no place in this government." You don't see that sort of language much any more. Indeed, *Newsday* appears not to have covered the arrest and trial of Hemant Lakhmi at all. "Such tactics" are just not a very big deal any more.

You know what else has changed? You and I – to our shame. Entrapment is illegal – but the question of whether law enforcement set up a legal sting or illegal entrapment is for a jury to decide. Entrapment was why juries acquitted the defendants in the Camden, VVAW, and Harrisburg cases. "How stupid did those people in Washington think we were?" a Harrisburg juror told a reporter. The feds don't have to worry about folks like that any more. Not a single "terrorism" indictment has been thrown out for entrapment since 9/11 – not the Liberty City goofballs supposedly planning to blow up the Sears Tower who had no weapons and refused them with offered; not the Newburgh, New York outfit whose numbers included a schizophrenic who saved his own urine in bottles. (Even the judge who sentenced them said "the government made them terrorists.")

The civil liberties of the Florida white supremacist Marcus Faella, at least, have been honored. He was out on bail the day he was arrested. There's no police informant to monitor his activities any more, but not to fear. His experiments in attempting to produce the deadly toxin ricin, according to the Florida affidavit, have not so far been successful. And Connor Stevens, heard on the menacing video shown on Cleveland news saying that his favorite part of Occupy protests "is meeting people walking down the street, average people, talking to them, hearing about how they're affected by the economy, by the justice system, things like that"? He is safely behind bars. So, for the rest of his life, is Hemant Lakhmi, the hapless Stinger missile salesman. The man who put him there, Chris Christie, is now the celebrated governor of New Jersey, and was all but begged by his fellow to run for president. Republicans think he tells a good story.

3 NATO Protesters Charged With "Terrorism" in Chicago — Identical to Other FBI Plots by Will Potter

Three activists who traveled to Chicago for mass protests against NATO have been arrested and charged with "terrorism" in a case that is representative of a pattern of government misconduct.

This most recent case is nearly identical to the arrests preceding May Day demonstrations just weeks ago, and many others in which the FBI played a critical role in manufacturing "terrorist" plots in order to disrupt and discredit progressive social movements.

Details of the case are sparse, but Brian Church (22), Jared Chase (27), and Brent Betterly (24) were arrested on Wednesday and charged with conspiracy to commit terrorism, providing material support for terrorism and possession of an explosive incendiary device. Two other protesters, [Sebastian Senakiewicz and Mark Neiweem](#), have been arrested on unrelated explosives charges.

The arrests came in the leadup to [NATO protests in Chicago](#). Chicago cops and the FBI warned the public that “self-proclaimed anarchists” were about to attack Barack Obama’s re-election headquarters and the home of Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel with molotov cocktails. As tens of thousands of people took the streets in protest, the terrorism arrests stole headlines and sent a message, both to the movement and to the public.

[According to court documents](#), the FBI and local police began a “covert investigation” in early May. The government says the defendants are “self-proclaimed anarchists, and members of the ‘Black Bloc’ group, who traveled from Florida to the Chicago area in preparation for committing terrorist acts of violence.”

This allegedly includes preparing molotov cocktails along with obtaining a mortar gun, swords, hunting bow, throwing stars, shields, gas masks and brass knuckles. At one point in the investigation, Church allegedly said that if a cop was going to point a gun at him, he would be “pointing one back.”

According to the police, danger to the public was imminent.

However, undercover cops and FBI agents were there, by their own admission, every step of the way. [According to defense attorney Michael Deutsch](#), three undercover cops nicknamed “Nadia,” “Mo” and “Glove” befriended the defendants on May Day. And 2 of 9 people arrested were themselves undercover agents.

“From our information, the so-called incendiary devices and the plans to attack police stations — that’s all coming from the minds of the police informants and not coming from our clients, who are non-violent protesters,” Deutsch said.

PATTERN OF REPRESSION

This case is nearly identical to other high-profile “terrorism” arrests that occurred just prior to mass non-violent protests. For example:

- **Cleveland 5** — just a few weeks ago, and days before national May Day protests coordinated by the Occupy movement, the FBI announced the arrest of activists on terrorism charges for plotting to destroy a bridge. FBI informants and undercover agents [had a heavy hand in creating the alleged plot](#).
- **RNC 8** — leading up to the 2008 Republican National Convention, 8 local organizers were arrested and charged with “conspiracy to riot in furtherance of terrorism.” Charges were all later reduced to a misdemeanor carrying no jail time.
- **Bradley Crowder and David McKay** — arrested and accused of “terrorism” days before RNC protests. Activist-turned-informant Brandon Darby coaxed the two into plans for molotov cocktails (for more on this plot, see the excellent documentary [Better This World](#)).

All of these cases share key elements:

1. FBI infiltration, and reliance on government informants to manufacture the “plot”
2. Terrorism charges
3. Labeling the defendants “self-proclaimed anarchists” (not only in the press, but in court documents). [Here is a bit more on the [demonization of anarchism](#).]
4. Unveiling the “domestic terrorism” arrests days before key protests

A SHIFT IN INTIMIDATION TACTICS

It's nothing new to see widespread police misconduct and abuse in the days leading up to high-profile demonstrations. Anyone who has been to a few — whether it's WTO, World Bank, IMF, or the Democratic and Republican national conventions — can see the pattern. In the late 90s, this often meant police raids of Indymedia centers, or evictions of community spaces on specious “fire code violations.” Cops take equipment, make a few arrests of “leaders,” and try to remind the rest of the protesters who is in charge.

In the last several years, though, that decades-old model has been transforming. All the old tactics are still there. But now the message is being sent not just through arrests or police violence, but through the FBI working with local cops to infiltrate and disrupt protest groups, provoke and coordinate illegal activity, and then charge some activists with “terrorism.”

The activists arrested in Chicago and Cleveland are going to have a very long, difficult time ahead. It's important to support them and remind them that they are not alone. But it's also critical that we recognize that they are not the only targets of these tactics.

These arrests, and many others like them, are not about thwarting a “terrorist plot.” They are preemptive attacks on radical social movements in order to instill fear in protesters (that they too could be targeted) and instill fear in the general public (that the “99 percent” are really “self-proclaimed anarchists” and “terrorists”).

Entrapment of Cleveland 5 and NATO 3 is nothing new by Jake Olzen

The old trope of the bomb-throwing anarchist is back in the news, with a round-up in Ohio on May 1 and the [three would-be NATO protesters](#) arrested on Wednesday who are now charged with conspiracy to commit terrorism. While the impression that appears in the media is one of remnants of the Occupy movement verging toward violence, the driving forces behind these plots are the very agencies claiming to have foiled them.

The five activists arrested in Cleveland, Ohio, are facing multiple charges for conspiring and attempting to destroy the Brecksville-Northfield High Level Bridge on May Day to protest corporate rule. According to the [FBI press statement](#) released shortly after the May 1 arrests, FBI Special Agent in Charge Stephen D. Anthony said “the individuals charged in this plot were intent on using violence to express their ideological views.” But that is only one side of the story.

The mainstream media and blog reports, both nationally and in Cleveland, have emphasized that the young activists were part of Occupy Cleveland and self-identified anarchists ([here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)). The men — Douglas L. Wright, 26, of Indianapolis; Brandon L. Baxter, 20, of nearby Lakewood; Connor C. Stevens, 20, of suburban Berea; and Joshua S. Stafford, 23, and Anthony Hayne, 35, both of Cleveland — were arrested and remain in jail after they attempted to detonate a false bomb that they had set, in conjunction with the FBI.

It's an old script: Violence-prone anarchists devise a nefarious plan and, just before they can carry it out, law enforcement swoops in to save the day, catching them red-handed. But there's another script being acted out here too, one much more sinister, complex, and morally and legally dubious: Agents of the state infiltrate an activist group and, through techniques of psychological manipulation, lead its most vulnerable members into a violent plan — for which explosives, detonators, contacts and case mysteriously become available — until SWAT teams and prosecutors suddenly arrive and haul the accomplices off to jail for the rest of their lives. In both cases, at the end of the story, officials congratulate each other for their bravery and bravado and the public breathes a sigh of relief as more of their civil liberties are stripped away.

I recently spoke with Richard Schulte, a veteran activist who has known the Five from groups like Food Not Bombs and is helping to organize their legal and jail support. Schulte explained that under the influence of undercover federal agents and informants, the activists — particularly the youngest, Baxter and Stevens — found themselves increasingly vulnerable and reliant on their informant. Baxter's lawyer, a public defender named John Pyle, recently identified [the informant](#) working with the group as Shaquille Azir, a 39-year old ex-con.

“[Azir] became something of a role model, stepping in as a father figure, offering guidance on emotional and social stuff,” said Schulte. “Connor and Brandon thought he was a rad dude but getting more and more pushy.”

Collectively, according to accounts from friends and associates, statements from lawyers, and the [FBI affidavit](#), members of the Cleveland Five have backgrounds that include mental illness, substance abuse, homelessness and social marginalization.

Brandon and Connor had been part of the full-time occupation over the winter in Cleveland’s Public Square. After having grown frustrated with what they perceived as the Occupiers’ timidity — Schulte called it “passive gradualism” — the Five were encouraged by Azir to break off from Occupy Cleveland and form their own, much smaller group, the “Revolutionary People’s Army.” At first it was mostly just a graffiti crew — tagging the phrase “rise up” around the city and putting up stickers, said Schulte.

Azir would give them a case of beer in the morning, according to Schulte, have them work outside on houses all day, and then give them a case of beer at night. He gave them marijuana and would wear them down by keeping them up late into the night with drinking and conversation — all the while urging them to break away from other groups, keep their arrangement secret and not to trust other activists.

Looking back, Schulte said Azir and the FBI used “security culture against activists” and “developed patterns of trust to seem legit.” The Cleveland Five, he explains, “were coached by the federal government.”

In a letter Stevens wrote from jail, Schulte told me, he described the feeling of helplessness he experienced right before the bust: “We saw this coming,” Stevens wrote.

“Brought to the edge of the swimming pool”

Andy Stepanian knows a thing or two about state repression of activists. As one of the animal-rights activists known as the [SHAC 7](#), [Stepanian](#) has served three and a half years in federal prison after having been prosecuted under the [Animal Enterprise Protection Act](#) for costing animal testing laboratories more than \$380 million in lost profits simply by operating a website. While the SHAC 7 case did not involve FBI entrapment or property destruction, the specific targeting of activists because of their anti-capitalist activism was reflective of a new era of post-9/11 state surveillance and repression.

When I talked to him on the phone about the Cleveland Five, Stepanian surmised, “These folks would not have gone out and done this if not brought to the edge of the swimming pool by federal agents and urged to jump in.”

The FBI affidavit — [analyzed here by RT](#) — confirms, again, what many have warned about regarding the growing surveillance and security agencies in the United States: To keep themselves employed and justify their budgets, people in agencies like the FBI are orchestrating plots to catch “terrorists” who, otherwise, seem to be quite unable to do anything on their own. Last fall, [Mother Jones reported](#) on FBI efforts against Muslim extremists and concluded that many of those were instances of entrapment as well.

In activist circles, there are a series of notorious cases of entrapment by federal authorities. In 2006, for instance, environmental activist [Eric McDavid](#), encouraged by an informant known as “Anna,” was convicted on conspiracy charges. Another more notorious case is that of Brandon Darby — a well-known anarchist and activist-turned-informant — and his entrapment of David McKay and Bradley Cowder. The award winning film, [Better This World](#), tells the story of how McKay and Cowder were convicted on charges of conspiracy to commit terrorism.

“In most cases,” said Stepanian, “this is not one coordinated crackdown with a puppet-master. It’s a bottom-up [phenomenon] where special investigators are creating things for themselves to do. They go to potential targets to justify their position and create work for themselves.”

Perhaps even more troubling than the manipulation of vulnerable individuals — whether they be political activists or members of mosques — is the way in which law enforcement meanwhile manipulates public discourse about terrorism, Islam or, in this case, a growing social movement.

According to Schulte, the operation in Cleveland appears to have been part of a pre-planned narrative meant to paint Occupiers as a group with terrorist thugs in their midst, discouraging others from joining the movement. The FBI had a media statement prepared for immediate release on May Day after the arrests, and it hosted an unusually high-profile press conference the following day. There have been more than 300 pleas involving FBI informants in six years and such kind of overt media blitz from the feds is rare. *Rolling Stone* reporter Rick Perlstein observes, comparing two different anti-terrorism operations at the end of April, “that the State is singling out ideological enemies.” He reports that authorities are much less likely, for instance, to use tactics of entrapment against violent white supremacist groups.

Investigative journalist Will Potter is an expert on state-sponsored targeting of radical activist groups who has testified before Congress on FBI entrapment and is the author of a book (and an accompanying blog) titled [Green is the New Red](#). Potter [calls](#) the Cleveland Five conspiracy “part of the ongoing focus on demonizing anarchists.” Just a cursory look at the headlines in Chicago and Cleveland confirms a growing association of anarchism with violence and terrorism while alienating radical movements from potential supporters.

Occupy Cleveland responds

Each of the Cleveland Five entered pleas of not guilty in federal court last week. As the trial of these young men plays out, their fates rest in which story is more compelling — their own victimhood, or the cunning of the federal agents. Although they were not taking action in the name of Occupy Cleveland, the future of Occupy and related movements in the United States is at stake in which story the public chooses to believe.

Occupy Cleveland, one of the movement’s longest-lasting encampments, had the remnants of its occupation removed by police in the middle of the night on May 3. There was little public outcry, when the city [revoked](#) its permit after the May 1 arrests.

Occupy Cleveland spokesperson Katie Steinmuller stressed that it was only a matter of time before the camp was evicted, and that it wasn’t entirely a result of the bomb scare. “There was a casino planned to be opened in view of the tents,” said Steinmuller referring to Occupy Cleveland’s camp when I spoke with her by phone about the eviction. “This [conspiracy] was just a good excuse to get us out.”

In a [media statement](#) following the arrests of the Cleveland Five, Occupy Cleveland affirmed its commitment to “active non-violence.” Individual occupiers have chosen to join the support team for the Five, but Occupy Cleveland as a whole is steering clear of commenting on it further.

“The FBI was successful in ... what they set out to do,” said Schulte about the [initial negative reaction](#) the Occupy movement and other activists experienced in Cleveland. “People were exploited and trapped.”

“When you take away a space of legitimate protest,” adds Stepanian, “less legitimate forms of protest become more prevalent.” Events like the arrests of the Cleveland Five can create schisms within movements, which the state exploits to create a climate of fear within and about activist groups. The NATO 3 arrests and bond hearing, for instance, just before this weekend’s mass No NATO demonstration, will serve to deter people from participating and [obscure the reality](#) of the protest’s message.

In Chicago, the NATO 3 are each being held on \$1.5 million bail. More details will emerge in the coming weeks, but Michael E. Deutsch, legal counsel for the NATO 3, has said that two of the 11 arrested during a house raid in Bridgeport were Chicago Police Department informants and have since disappeared. The truth of what really happened in Cleveland and Chicago may or may not emerge in the courtroom. But it is clear regardless that Occupy is now being exposed to a new level of state repression, and that it is taking a toll on what has still remained a nonviolent protest movement.

More Details On Alleged Terror Plot, Two More Suspects In Custody by Samantha Abernethy

The three protesters [accused of conspiring to commit terrorism](#) appeared in court yesterday, and prosecutors say the three [had created Molotov cocktails](#) and planned attacks on President Barack Obama's campaign headquarters, Mayor Rahm Emanuel's home and police stations.

Two other protesters have been arrested on unrelated explosives charges. Sebastian Senakiewicz and Mark Neiweem face charges separate from the other three. Senakiewicz, 24, has been charged with falsely making a terrorist threat, conspiracy and unlawful use of a weapon found during the search of the apartment. "Senakiewicz made statements during the course of the ongoing NATO investigation that he was in possession of explosives," [a law enforcement source told ABC7](#) but added that no explosives were ever recovered.

Neiweem, 28, has been charged with attempted possession of explosives or incendiary devices. He is known as "Migs" to his fellow members of the Anarchist Black Cross. "Neiweem made statements during the course of the NATO investigation indicating that he knew how to make a pipe bomb and requesting the materials to make a pipe bomb. No pipe bomb ever made he is being charged based on the statements that he made," said a law enforcement source familiar with the case.

"The NATO 3" — Brian Church, 20, of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; Jared Chase, 24, of Keene, NH; and Brent Vincent Betterly, 24, of Oakland Park, Fla.; — appeared in court Saturday on the conspiracy charges against them. The arrests were the result of a weeks-long police investigation, [authorities said](#), hinting that they had audio recordings of the defendants making threats. From the court documents:

During the investigation, topics of conversation by the conspirators included committing acts of violence in other jurisdictions, planning escape routes, discussing and conducting late-night training sessions for engaging in combat with the police, and avoiding detection by law enforcement's use of electronic surveillance, FBI informants, and forensic evidence. In one conversation, a defendant state that "the city doesn't know what it's in for" and that "after NATO, the city will never be the same" as before.

Court documents portray Church as the ringleader, who wanted to recruit 16 people to conduct raids, split into groups of four. [The Tribune writes](#):

According to court documents, the men planned to first attack four Chicago police stations and destroy several squad cars with "destructive devices" in order to divert the department's attention and resources.

While authorities were distracted by those strikes, the group intended to hit Obama's national campaign headquarters in the Prudential Building, Emanuel's home in Ravenswood and other downtown financial institutions, prosecutors said. The group had already done reconnaissance work on the Chicago Police Department headquarters in Bronzeville in preparation for the attack, law-enforcement officials said.

The defendants were among those arrested Wednesday [in a raid of a Bridgeport apartment by police](#) that defense attorneys say was illegal. They were also in a car that was stopped by Chicago police last week. [Video of that incident](#) alleges police tried to intimidate and harass the men.

Court documents also refer to the three as being "[members of the 'Black Bloc' group](#)." There is no such thing as a group, but rather "black bloc" is a tactic of wearing black clothes, bandanas and masks to conceal protesters' identities from the police.

2 more anarchists charged in separate explosives cases via corporate media

Two Chicago men are in custody Sunday evening, charged in separate bomb-making schemes. [Press](#) investigators have been digging into their backgrounds. Prosecutors said the two men charged Sunday are involved in separate cases, not connected to each other, and not connected to the three men charged Saturday with building Molotov cocktails. They also said both men talked big about creating chaos, but in the end never actually built a bomb.

The press discovered one of the men was involved in a local chapter of an anarchist group, and has a past defending anarchists, communists and Black Bloc tactics.

Prosecutors said 24-year-old Sebastian Senakiewicz – who goes by the name “Sabi” – bragged he had a vehicle filled with explosives and was hiding other explosives in holed-out books, including a Harry Potter volume.

Police said none of the bombs actually exist.

“Sabi has stated that he’s an anarchist who is upset with the lack of chaos in Chicago,” prosecutor Jack Blakey said.

David Griffiths owns the home where Sabi was staying on the northwest side.

“Would I believe that he was walking around telling people that?” Griffiths asked. “That kid would tell you anything.”

Griffiths said he was just doing a favor for a friend – taking in their homeless, jobless son. On Thursday, Chicago police – armed with a warrant – literally knocked in the door of Griffiths’ northwest side home and hauled Sabi off to jail.

Among the personal effects Sabi left behind were buttons mocking Mayor Rahm Emanuel. Griffiths said Sabi wasn’t a big reader, and isn’t too bright.

“If he had two brain cells that were working good that day,” Griffiths said, “one of them was probably drunk.”

Mark Neiweem, 28, goes by “Migs.” He’s charged with soliciting explosives.

Prosecutors said he tried to get someone to buy him the parts to make a pipe bomb.

At Neiweem’s southwest side apartment building, ~~the press~~ found a circled “A” on his mailbox – the sign for anarchist.

“Migs also stated he needed PVC pipe, two PVC caps, PVC glue and several rocket engines in order to construct a pipe bomb,” Blakey said.

While the two cases are not related, defense attorneys from the National Lawyers Guild said both seem like setups by police.

“These two men were targeted without a doubt for their political beliefs,” National Lawyers Guild’s Sarah Gelsomino said.

“These are really serious problems that we all need to be addressing,” Steve Saltzman said, also with the guild. “Chicago shouldn’t be functioning like this.”

The press found websites indicating Neiweem was formerly involved in a group called Anarchist Black Cross.

The website shows he was scheduled to deliver a speech called “Why This Isn’t Scary – Anarchy, Communism, Socialism and the Black Bloc” during a protest on April 7.

“It’s not illegal in this country to hold any political belief, even anarchy,” Gelsomino said.

While prosecutors said these cases are unrelated, defense attorneys say they believe they are linked by the police informants used to – in their words – set the men up.

Lawyers said the three charged with making Molotov cocktails after the Bridgeport raid, along with the two men charged Sunday, all had encounters with a man and woman.

They call themselves “Moe” and “Gloves,” self-described anarchist cousins who suddenly popped up in Chicago in early May.

Then made fast friends with all of the people charged over the past couple days.

“Moe and Gloves disappeared. And have not yet been seen,” Gelsomino said. “Through our own investigation talking to other people about what they remembered happening, we believe that those are the two who have been working for the police.”

Sabi was charged with falsely making a terrorist threat and is being held on a \$750,000 bond.

Neiweem’s bond is \$500,000. He was already on probation for punching a Chicago police officer in 2010.

18 May – New support website for the Cleveland Five

Justice for the Cleveland 5 is a support network, an educational resource, a compilation of media coverage, and a blog that stands in solidarity with the accused and strives for real justice to be executed on their behalf. They recently launched the website <http://cleveland5justice.org>.

19 May – Angola Three Update

Albert Woodfox has a court date on May 29th and the governor of Louisiana recently refused to meet with a delegation from Amnesty International regarding the Angola 3 case. We’ve pasted more information below.

MORE:

On Tuesday, May 29th, Albert Woodfox will begin a 3 day hearing that may result in his conviction being overturned for a third time. Proceedings will begin at 9am in Courtroom 1 at [the US District Court in Baton Rouge](#) and continue through Thursday, May 31st.

Albert will be present for the proceedings, and the hearing is open to the public. Please remember if attending that the Federal Court strictly enforces a more formal, conservative dress code (no short skirts or shorts of any kind, even with tights, no bare upper arms, sleeveless, or low cut shirts) and requires that observers don't react, either visibly or audibly, to anything they might see or hear in the courtroom. Also security is tight, so bring only your ID, car keys, and a pen and paper into the courthouse.

There is limited seating in the courtroom so if you arrive and are turned away, consider your show of support a success and try coming back the next day!

Unlike the first and second time that [Albert's conviction was overturned](#) based on judges who cited racial discrimination, prosecutorial misconduct, inadequate defense, and suppression of exculpatory evidence during his first trials for the 1972 murder of Brent Miller, this proceeding will seek to overturn based on apparent discrimination in the selection of a grand jury foreperson during his 1998 retrial.

The well known facts of the A3 case will not be debated; all that will be examined is whether or not people of color were discriminated against during the grand jury selection process. This means instead of murder mystery theatre, witnesses will mostly discuss compositions of the pool of grand jury forepersons in the Parish where Albert was indicted. Expert witnesses will discuss statistical analysis and methodology, the demographics of the community, and the sociological mechanics of how discrimination can play out in the criminal justice system. If successful, this claim could serve to overturn Albert's conviction for a third time.

Judge James A. Brady, the same judge who overturned Albert's conviction the second time in 2008, will preside. That ruling was [ultimately reinstated on appeal](#) by the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals who cited AEDPA-gutted habeas protections that limit federal power that allowed them to defer judgment to Louisiana.

Although there are no time limits officially imposed by law, Brady is expected to rule before the end of 2012.

Amnesty International delivers A3 petitions but Gov. Jindal refuses to meet with the delegation

On April 17, Amnesty International was joined by a delegation of supporters, holding a press conference at the Louisiana State Capitol building in Baton Rouge, LA, and hand delivering to Governor Bobby Jindal's office the petition initiated by Amnesty International demanding the immediate release of the Herman Wallace and Albert Woodfox from solitary confinement.

Governor Jindal refused to meet with the delegation despite several attempts made by Amnesty International to contact him in the weeks leading up to the petition delivery.

In [a statement released that day](#), Everette Harvey Thompson, Southern Office Regional Director of Amnesty International USA, argued that "the 40-year isolated incarceration of these two men is scandalous. There is no legitimate penal purpose for keeping these men in solitary - Louisiana authorities must end this inhumanity." The day before, Thompson told [Between the Lines](#): "We've contacted Gov. Jindal's office many times over the past couple of weeks, requesting a meeting to discuss the case of the Angola 3, to inquire about the use of solitary confinement in this case, and there's been no response. Gov. Jindal has the opportunity to stand on the right side of justice and order removal of Albert and Herman from isolation. We really hope he will take heed and make some moves."

Herman and Albert each prepared statements for April 17. Herman reflected: "Exactly 40 years ago today, April 17, we will have been incarcerated for 40 years in solitary confinement in the USA. This is nothing new to Albert and I, nor to hundreds of thousands in US prisons." Commenting on the effects of solitary, Albert said: "To be honest I am not sure what damage has been done to me, but I do know that the feeling of pain allows me to know that I am alive. If I dwelled on the pain I have endured and stopped to think about how 40 years locked in a cage 23 hours a day has affected me, it would give insanity the victory it has sought for 40 years."

That morning Robert King was interviewed live by [Democracy Now!](#) and many others have reported on the 40 year anniversary, including [BBC](#), [The Guardian UK](#), [Mother Jones](#), and KPFA's Africa Today ([1](#), [2](#)). Following the event, King writes that "standing on the State Capitol steps on Tuesday 17 April, I felt the power of the people, of 65,000 people and more - all those who have supported the Angola 3 over the years were also with us. We could not be ignored - the media were there and wanted to report on this, organizations stood by our side in support. Amnesty's presence was felt. For me the day was bitter sweet, bitter with a deep sadness that we were marking this day but sweet seeing the years of efforts and struggle culminating in this day. The tide is changing and the time for change is now. We have the wind at our back and we need to keep on moving."

We want to thank everyone who has supported this campaign! Among the powerful lineup of A3 supporters at the petition delivery and press conference were Alfreda Bester-Tillman, Esq. from the Baton Rouge Chapter of the NAACP, Pastor Kathleen Bacon from the Slidell Chapter of the National Action Network, US Representative Cedric Richmond and State Representative Patricia Haynes-Smith, Chair of the Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus.

19 May - 5th Annual White Nationalist Economic Summit Smashed; Several Hospitalized

Around the same time that Chicago cops were rounding up anarchists allegedly related to the NATO Summit, a group of antifascist rebels were smashing up an annual white supremacist gathering in a Chicago suburb. We're pasting articles relevant to the latter below. The five have bail set at between \$175,000 and \$250,000 each as of a May 22nd hearing.

MORE:

On Saturday, May 19th a group of 30 anti-fascists descended upon Ashford House restaurant in the Chicago suburb of Tinley Park where the 5th annual White Nationalist Economic Summit and Illinois White Nationalist Meet-and-Greet was taking place. The White Nationalists were targeted inside the restaurant and physically attacked, causing several injuries and completely shutting down their meeting. The anti-fascist group was privy to anonymous inside information. This fascist event had been in secret planning for six months. The attendees have attempted to cover up the true intent of the event with mainstream media reports initially reporting the

white nationalist conference as a wedding party and then as an Irish heritage meeting. The event was advertised on www.stormfront.org, an established white nationalist fascist internet forum.

Anti-fascists oppose any organizing by racists and fascist in their communities. Fascist and white nationalist organizing has resulted in a number of horrifying incidents, from the recent [J.T. Ready shootings](#) in Arizona to the [Benjamin Nathaniel Smith](#) shooting in the West Rogers Park neighborhood in Chicago, as just two examples.

These anti-fascists are committed to shutting down and attacking any racist, nationalist, or fascist organizers or individuals that they encounter.

Five charged in mob attack at Tinley Park restaurant via corporate media

Panic shot through the small Tinley Park restaurant as quickly as the stream of determined, black-clad assailants marched in, clubs and hammers in hand.

The wide-eyed hostess frantically dialed 911. Old men leapt from their tables and grabbed chairs to fend off the surprise attack.

Several of the masked attackers targeted the bystanders, but authorities say the majority homed in on a long table — filled with who the attackers believed were about a dozen white supremacists meeting for lunch.

Instantly batons and fists were flying, launching food, plates and chaos. In less than two minutes, the attackers headed for the doors, fighting off customers and restaurant staff into the parking lot.

Ten people were injured, at least three of them needing staples to close bloody head wounds.

An unpublished restaurant security video viewed by the Tribune of the bizarre Saturday afternoon melee had no sound — but it screams with images of fear and aggression. It was an attack that spilled from Internet chat rooms to the floor of the small Ashford House restaurant, bringing to the forefront an underground and nationwide battle between violent anti-racism groups and white supremacists.

Authorities announced charges Monday against five Indiana men in the attacks and said they still sought about 13 who escaped arrest.

Those charged include three brothers, Jason W. Sutherlin, 33, Cody L. Sutherlin, 23, and Dylan J. Sutherlin, 20. Also charged were Alex R. Stuck, 22, and John S. Tucker, 26. All five live near Bloomington, Ind.

The men are connected to the Hoosier Anti-Racist Movement, which is part of the Anti-Racist Action Network that formed in Minneapolis in 1987 to address discrimination, according to a leader in the organization, Jacob Domke.

Prosecutors say authorities apprehended the men about four miles from the restaurant shortly after the melee and found dark hoodies, scarves, a knife and batons in their car. The five were being held on bail Monday and face felony counts of mob action, aggravated battery and criminal damage to property.

The Sutherlin brothers became interested in combating fascism while growing up in diverse family in Bloomington, a predominantly white city that is home to Indiana University, Domke said. Though they are white, their half sister's father is black, he said.

"When you grow up in a multiracial family in Indiana, I think that can open your eyes to the problem of racism in this country," Domke said.

Jason Sutherlin, the oldest of the three tightknit brothers, shaped his social philosophies as a teen at the Bloomington's Peoples Park, a decades-old popular spot for protests. The site has been a haven for the anti-establishment movement since 1968, when two members of the local Ku Klux Klan burned a black-owned store there.

"We knew the history, but because we were growing up in a different time, we thought we'd be shielded from that kind of hate," Domke said.

That illusion was shattered for Jason Sutherlin in July 1999, Domke said, when a white supremacist named Benjamin Smith went on a deadly shooting spree in Indiana and Illinois. Smith, a Wilmette native, targeted minorities, including an Indiana University student.

"Looking back on it, that was one the defining moments in our lives," Domke said.

The Indiana group has several initiatives in the area, including raising money for hate crime victims and providing security for gay and lesbian events, Domke said. Stuck teaches English to immigrants while Jason Sutherlin and Tucker teach self-defense classes, he said.

Tucker's father, John, said his son was planning to return to college while working as a bouncer at a Bloomington bar. He said his son could get passionate about political issues, depending "on the friends he is around."

Mark Potok, an investigator with the anti-discrimination Southern Poverty Law Center, said using violence against racist organizations is not uncommon but is bad for the cause.

"This kind of thing happens far more often than people realize," Potok said. "The difference here is it doesn't happen in family restaurants."

The Saturday melee has lit up Internet sites on both sides for days. The Anti-Racist Action movement posted a note boasting of the attack.

Prosecutors said the targeted diners claimed to be part of an Illinois European heritage association that was affiliated with White News Now and Storm Front — Web sites that tout white supremacy, according to the law center.

But one victim, Beckie Williams, told the Tribune the group isn't racist, calling the accusation "ridiculous." She said they were meeting in person from across the country for the first time, having met on the Internet discussing economic hardships.

Ashford House owner Mike Winston said he would not release the video of the attack and blamed both groups for the altercation.

20 May – Rev. Joy Powell facing harassment at Bedford Hills CF

Please send a letter to support Reverend Joy Powell from harassment at Bedford Hills. We've included a sample letter below.

MORE:

Letters should be sent Bedford Hills Correctional Facility Superintendent Ada Perez and Commissioner Brian Fischer addresses below.

Reverend Joy Powell

Superintendent: Ada Perez

Bedford Hills Correctional Facility

247 Harris Road

Bedford Hills, New York 10507-2499

(914) 241-3100

Commissioner Brian Fischer

NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

Building 2

1220 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York 12226-2050
(518) 457-8126

Re: Joy Powell #07G0632

Dear Commissioner Fischer:

I am writing today on behalf of Ms. Joy Powell, who is currently incarcerated at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. It has come to my attention that she has encountered discriminatory and degrading treatment as well as verbal attacks at the prison mailroom. This recent incident is now in the grievance process. It is important this kind of behavior not be tolerated, especially in publically funded institutions.

Under regulations promulgated by your agency, no inmate is to be subjected to degrading treatment. I was extremely disappointed when I saw that your agency took no action when Ms. Powell filed a grievance and won through the Inmate Grievance Resolution Committee ("IGRC"). I am writing today to ask your agency to follow regulations, treat all inmates in a respectful manner, abide by the IGRC's ruling, and make sure that no retaliatory action is taken against Ms. Powell.

I look for to hearing from you concerning this matter at your earliest possible convenience.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

And here is more information and note from Joy-

Dear Comrades,

Recently I have undergone some mental and emotional abuse within this prison institution by Bedford Hills Correctional Staff. However, unlike most of the women here who are broken and do not know how to advocate for themselves, I chose not to stay silent but to take the initiative to be heard on paper.

Enclosed, are copies of my grievance complaints, which I have launched to the administration. Included is a copy of the response from my first grievance hearing complaint administration. Included is a copy of the response from my first grievance hearing complaint dated 3/18/12. I just had that hearing on April 4 2012. The outcome was, I won my first grievance through IGRC. However, I will have to appeal their decision to the superintendent letting her know that I agree with grievance response and wish to appeal because she has to also agree with grievance response. In the grievance hearing there are three inmate reps a Sergeant, and a counselor who decide whether the inmates issue has merit to it or is frivolous.

Unfortunately, most of the times the superintendent does not agree with IGRC, which defeats the purpose of having a grievance committee if the Superintendent is not going to ride with their decision. If the Superintendent does not grant my grievance that I will appeal ere decision the Department Of Corrections (CORC). After I have exhausted all of my remedies with CORC being my last resort, then I can file a 1983 lawsuit or do an Article 78. I decided to send copies of my complaint to various people I am connected with just in case I am retaliated against for launching my complaint.

May God bless ever y one of you and I immensely thank you for your support and prayers.

Peace and Blessings.

Your Sister in the Struggle,

Reverend Joy Powell

21 May – Alex Hundert Self Report Date

2010 Toronto G20 "conspirator" Alex Hundert has been given a June 26th date to report to prison. We'll be sending cards and letters in the near future.

21 May - Behind the Black Mask and Shattered Glass: interview with G20 arrestee Kelly Pflug-Back

On May 28, Kelly Pflug-Back will stand in front of a Toronto courtroom to be sentenced. Comrade Black from Profane Existence magazine recently interviewed her.

MORE:

I first met Kelly when she was a 16 yr old traveler kid who had just arrived in Victoria. We hung out on the streets, at drop in centers, and did Food Not Bombs together which developed a lasting friendship. Over the years Kelly became quite the well known community organizer and activist. So it was a surprise when her picture went out across the internet, TV news, and newspapers last year following the G20 as police released pictures of their most wanted suspects in their sweep of 1100 activists who arrested, most of which would be released with no charges.

This interview was conducted by email.

PE: You have been active in community organizing for many years preceding this arrest? Can you tell us a bit about how you became involved in the struggle and what types of organizing or activism you have done?

KELLY: I've always been most interested in long-term, sustained efforts to build networks of social support so that people don't have to rely on the state. I've done a lot of work with Food Not Bombs in a few cities, worked with needle exchange programs and anti-stigma AIDS resource centres, and facilitated workshops for queer youth and street-involved youth on self-esteem, safer drug use and sexual health. I've also participated in a couple of land occupations opposing developments on Indigenous territories, and I've recently been doing a lot of journalism for magazines.

PE: What were the charges you are about to be sentenced for and what are they supposedly in relation to?

KELLY: I'm being convicted of six counts of mischief over \$ 5000, as well as one count of being masked with the intent of committing a crime. When the G20 economic summit was held in Toronto in 2010 I participated in corporate property damage. For folks who don't know much about the G20, it stands for "Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors." They are essentially the leaders of the world's most powerful national economies, and they meet in different cities periodically, spending billions of dollars on security and luxuries every time. They make decisions geared toward enhancing the economic power of elite nations while continuing to impoverish the global South. These meetings exclude anyone from the exploited nations which the G20 derive much of their wealth and resources from. They also exclude any input from Indigenous groups that many G20 countries, like Canada, have robbed of their traditional lands in order to establish their nationhood.

PE: You were also charged initially with a few other charges; can you speak about those and how/why they were dropped?

KELLY: I initially had charges of conspiracy to commit an indictable offence, as well as assaulting a police officer with a weapon, obstructing justice and intimidation of a justice system participant. I never assaulted a police officer, and there was no evidence to suggest I did. The guy who they were saying I assaulted testified in court that he had never seen me before, a year after the charges were laid. The conspiracy charge didn't stick because they were unable to associate me with any co-conspirators...they were trying to frame it as though I was a conspiracy of one person. This is a good example of what people mean when they say "trumped up charges." A person can be slapped with serious or violent charges as a way of intimidating them, strong-arming them into a plea agreement or justifying harsh punitive measures such as restrictive bail conditions. The assault charge was a convenient excuse for them to keep me on house arrest for a year.

PE: How did police use Hate Crimes Legislation in your case?

KELLY: They didn't. One prosecutor who was on my case for a short time was briefly posturing about applying it to me, before they dropped my charges of assault police and obstruct justice. He was saying that I had committed hate crimes against police, because police are allegedly "a recognizable group." Those laws are ideally there to protect vulnerable people who are at disproportionate risk of prejudice-based violence in our society. Police are not vulnerable, they carry firearms and have monopoly over the legitimized use of violence.

PE: The police also tried to portray you as the/a leader of the bloc?

KELLY: Unfortunately, yes. I'm definitely not the leader of anything, nor do I want to be.

PE: You are taking a non cooperation plea bargain, which involves pleading guilty? Does that mean you did everything they have accused you of? How did you get a plea offer and what does that entail?

KELLY: That means I've pled guilty to the six counts of mischief as well as the masked with intent. The deal involved me pleading guilty to those charges so that the others would be dropped. It's funny, because I feel like I wasn't actually wearing a mask with the intent of doing anything. It was pretty incidental that I ended up being part of the property damage, and I didn't make much of an effort to hide who I was. I'd never thought of wearing a mask during a protest as something that you necessarily do in order to break the law, but covering your face in Canada is becoming increasingly criminalized, not only for protesters but also for Muslim women who want to wear the niqab. Muslim people and protesters are both increasingly profiled as being a threat to the security of the Canadian state, so I think there's some important parallels to be drawn there.

As far as the counts of mischief over \$5000 are concerned, I definitely didn't single-handedly cause over \$5000 worth of damage to six things. I don't have super-human strength, and I was using a wooden stick somebody gave me, not a pickaxe or a sledgehammer. All those charges relate to events where pretty large groups of people were damaging property together. I am being scapegoated for the actions of an entire protest which over a hundred people participated in, and I'm fine with that. I realize that if they didn't single me out, they might have just done it to some other poor sucker. The entire legal process surrounding G20 charges has been about scapegoating individuals, and I think that this serves the purpose of distracting the public from having to think about the reasons why people are pushed to the point of rioting in the first place. If you blame the G20 protests on a few deviant "ringleaders," or make ludicrous claims that the vandals were all actually undercover police, you don't have to think about the reasons why a pretty substantial number of people chose of their own volition to participate in a very impassioned form of opposition to symbols of global economic apartheid and corporate consumer culture. Whether or not you agree with property damage as a form of protest, I think it's undeniable that the mass-scale environmental devastation and human rights abuses being perpetrated by multinational corporations and the governments of G8 countries are brutal and unconscionable. An event like the G20 protests in Toronto is in many ways an inevitable by-product of these injustices. The ugliness of sweatshop production, child labour, factory farming, and civil war in nations that have been impoverished by colonialism and neo-liberal economic policies slips into the public psyche, and the disgust and sorrow that comes with acknowledging those realities is bound to come out somewhere.

PE: You were under house arrest for quite a while, and then had rather strict conditions. What were those restrictions?

KELLY: Being on house arrest meant that I lost my job and my apartment and was also forced to drop out of school. Before my arrest I was doing free meal servings in downtown Guelph every week, helping run a needle exchange program, doing shifts at a queer and trans library/social centre and hosting a radio show at the university every week. It was awesome. Me being removed from that community meant that the free meal servings fell apart and the understaffed library had one less volunteer and was able to stay open less often. Not

being able to give my love and support to people who really need it was the most painful part of being on house arrest.

Confinement and stress are also pretty bad for anyone's health, and while I was on house arrest I was diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, which is a muscle condition that causes chronic pain, as well as some other auto-immune conditions. I'm still very ill a lot of the time, and I had to register with my school as being a student with a disability. Losing the privilege that comes with being able-bodied has opened my eyes to a lot of issues surrounding health care, illness, ageing and disability. Too many social justice movements disregard these issues, and it is definitely time to change that. If you want to build a free and co-operative society, providing long term care for ill and elderly people is a huge part of that.

PE: At the time of your arrest you were in a long term romantic relationship, how did the arrest affect that relationship?

KELLY: I had been with this guy for a couple of years when I was arrested, and were living together at the time. One of the conditions of my release from jail was that I didn't communicate with him unless we were in the presence of one of my parents. This was a strictly punitive measure. We were never co-accused, and his charges relating to the G20 were dropped very early on. It was very stressful for both of us. His mother ended up dying of cancer while I was on house arrest, and I wasn't able to be with the family much during that whole process, or give my full support to him. He was absolutely devastated, and so was I. She was a really amazing woman, and it was awful to not be able to visit her when she was in the hospital. It's for the best that me and him aren't together anymore, but I would have preferred to split up with him under different circumstances.

PE: We are told that people are innocent until proven guilty, but the house arrest, conditions, and depiction of you and the other G20 arrestees seems to contradict that?

KELLY: Most of the constitutional rights we supposedly possess can be trumped very easily. I feel that violating people's rights is most frequently justified in two ways: assigning them sub-human status, or saying that they pose a threat to national security. It's fine to arbitrarily arrest, detain and brutalize homeless people, sex trade workers, drug users and racialized people because our society generally views them, either consciously or unconsciously, as being less than human. And it's perfectly excusable to bomb Pakistani civilians, blatantly profile Arab people in airports, and torture detainees in Guantanamo because their rights (as well as the standards of international law) are trumped by America's security interests. If the law were an impartial thing that granted all people equal access to the same rights and freedoms, Stephen Harper, Obama and George W. Bush would be sitting in holding cells underneath the International Criminal Court.

PE: When charges were laid the police released a list of suspects on the large to the media. Why were you included in that list? Were you on the run?

KELLY: I was never on the run. There is not a grain of truth to that. I turned myself in the second I found out I had warrants. You can't trust anything the Toronto Sun says...for god's sake, they run feature articles on the Lingerie Football League. I like to think of the Sun as a less entertaining version of the National Enquirer.

PE: Why did you decide to be involved in the resistance to the G20?

KELLY: Even as a really little kid I had a vague kind of concept of what global capitalism is doing to the world. Way before I even understood what the G20 is, I knew that I loved the earth, I loved animals and I loved people, regardless of how screwed up most of us are. I knew that bulldozers and guns and bombs and money hurt all of those things, even if I didn't understand the specifics.

PE: How involved were you in the organizing?

KELLY: I actually wasn't involved at all. I felt like a bit of a loser during the lead-up to the G20, people would always be asking me to come to this or that meeting and I would always be staying home to sleep and study or busy running stuff for the free meal servings we were doing. The only thing I really organized was an anti-G20

show with a bunch of Ontario punk and metal bands at this loft space in Guelph. It was one of the best shows I've ever set up, and I can't wait till my conditions are over so I can do concerts again.

PE: Why did you decide to mask up as part of the Bloc?

KELLY: I think covering your face during a protest can be a way of conveying a sense of uniformity and anonymity during protests: my individual identity does not matter, it's the broader cause that matters. Like I said, I've never thought of it as something you necessarily do with the goal of breaking any laws.

PE: Can you explain your politics and how they come into practice in your lived experience?

KELLY: I definitely don't see myself as someone who subscribes to any kind of ideology. I just believe that humans don't need authoritarian governance, social hierarchy or capital-based economic systems to live peacefully with one another. That's how we lived for the majority of our time on the planet, and we caused a lot less damage to each other and our environment before we invented these types of institutionalized control and domination. The word "anarchist" is kind of arbitrary to me, since people attach all kinds of different meanings to it, many of which contradict each other. Plus, I know a lot of people who are very anti-statist and anti-authoritarian but do not see themselves as anarchists or any other political category. A lot of Indigenous folks I know don't believe in the validity of the state, but don't attach the label of anarchism to their beliefs.

As far as practising those beliefs goes, I think it's about trying to relate to the rest of the world in ways that aren't based on control, domination, competitiveness or superiority. And it means helping each other let go of the self hate that we all carry around as a result of a lifetime of internalizing the dominant society's sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and other harmful prejudices. Everyday things like that are still political acts, and they're really important.

PE: Can you talk about the importance of Indigenous Solidarity as a settler person organizing on stolen lands?

KELLY: This country was built on the largest genocide known to human history, and genocidal acts are still being carried out against Indigenous people today. Trying to deny or downplay that reality is such a fucked up thing to do. On every continent, colonialism has meant mass-scale murder, torture, rape and the systematic destruction of people's cultural customs and languages. I think it was Beaudelaire who said that in the crime of genocide, "half the crime is forgetting." The Canadian state has granted a few superficial concessions to Indigenous groups, but on the whole our government is very afraid of being held accountable under the Genocide Convention and wants to keep erasing that history and trying to silence people who speak out about it. So I think all people on this planet have got to acknowledge the central role of Indigenous issues in social and environmental causes.

PE: Recently liberal pundit Chris Hedges wrote a article condemning the Black Bloc and calling it "the Cancer of the Occupy Movement" I am wondering how do you think that this type of public criticism effects people like yourself who are going to trial for actions associated with The Black Bloc? Does it have any effect on your support?

KELLY: Chris Hedges' critique struck me as particularly week-kneed, because he had rather passionately supported property damage as a means of protest in the past. Then he writes this article without disclosing his previous view point or explaining what made him change his mind. It seems like he wrote this piece because public opinion currently disapproves of property damage as a protest tactic, and he was swayed by external pressures to revise his views to suit the status quo. A good journalist questions dominant opinions regardless of whether they are the only one doing it, and offers a lateral scope of social issues. I think his piece was just a polemic rather than any kind of investigative story. It's certainly possible that this could affect the outcome of some people's charges. As far as my individual situation goes, most of my friends and family are my most vital supports, and they don't know or care who Chris Hedges is.

PE: Many liberals or pacifists allege that people breaking windows or rioting discredits the message. Can you respond to this from your own experiences as a Black Bloc participant?

KELLY: I have trouble believing that a couple photos of burning police cars is the only thing dissuading consumers of mainstream media from listening to Indigenous land claims, environmental issues or labour politics. People who want to think critically will look past the sensationalized photo spreads, and people who refuse to think critically will continue to buy into whatever moral panic the news is selling them.

PE: Hedges also has characterized the Black Bloc as “infected with a deeply disturbing hypermasculinity.” As a womyn with disabilities, how do you feel about this characterization?

KELLY: Patriarchal society in general is infected with a deeply disturbing hypermasculinity! Patriarchy and prejudice against people with disabilities are deeply connected, and both pressure people to believe their worth depends on whether their body is “attractive,” “useful,” “normal” and non-threatening according to dominant standards. Many of the things that people vandalized during the G20 were symbols of patriarchy, like window adds with emaciated, underage-looking girls in hyper-sexualized poses. Being constantly bombarded with these unhealthy images is hurtful and violating to people of all genders.

Global capitalism is also inextricably linked to kinds violence and exploitation that disproportionately affect women and girls, so in that sense any form of opposition to the G20, multinational corporations or trade blocs is also an opposition to patriarchy. There are many documented cases of female workers in sweatshops being systematically raped because they protested their work conditions, and the colonial history and ongoing economic exploitation of the Congo is what has caused the civil strife and pandemic of gang rapes that Congolese women are suffering right now. If Chris Hedges wants to speak out about the prevalence of hyper-masculinized violence in the world, he should rail against governments and multinational corporations, not a scraggly bunch of protesters who opposes them.

PE: What about writers like AK Thompson who have characterized the Black Bloc as being a “white Riot” of mostly middle class youth? This seems rather contradictory considering how many of the people charged in relation to the G20 Black Bloc were People Of Color.

KELLY: It’s definitely important to address the fact that a lot of activism is white-dominated, but generalizing too much just erases the presence of racialized people in radical movements. Quite a few of the people arrested for vandalism are racialized or come from poor backgrounds, and looking at the news coverage of G20 arrests, I noticed a class division in how they described people with vandalism charges versus people who were charged with the main “conspiracy.” The conspirators were “masterminds,” and we were “violent thugs.” Most of the conspirators are in their 30’s and a lot of them have formal education. Many of the people with vandalism charges are punked-out looking kids with crappy clothes and no bail money, and it was framed a lot of the time as though the conspirators were the brains behind the operation and we were the idiot proles who did their bidding. Framing it like that certainly shows more than a little racism, classism and ageism in the media.

PE: What do you say to those who state that terms like Diversity Of Tactics is just a code word for Smashy Smashy?

KELLY: I usually stay out of the diversity of tactics debate. Don’t we have more important things to do?

PE: You seem very much to have been targeted. How was it that the police knew of your involvement, or knew you were someone to watch?

KELLY: From reading my court disclosure, they weren’t really keeping tabs on me at all before or even during the G20, except when the actual mini-riot-thing was happening and they were taking photos of people breaking stuff. When I was first arrested, it was on arbitrary charges that they had no evidence for and dropped. It was weeks later, after I’d been released, that they re-arrested me for all the mischief charges. In court they had some

undercover police officer lying on the witness stand and saying that I was at a pre-G20 organizing event that I never attended. They're trying to back-pedal, and make it look like I had some kind of organizational role that I didn't have.

PE: You told me a while ago that you were more afraid of the trial affecting your schooling than you were of going to jail. Can you explain why that is? And is that still true now that your about to be sentenced?

KELLY: I really love studying and learning, and because I didn't finish high school it took a lot of extra time and hard work for me to get into university. The thought of having to interrupt that pursuit bothers me more than the thought of jail time. I have a really positive outlook on life, and I think that I gain something and learn something in all situations, no matter how difficult they might be. Jail is just another one of those proverbial bags of lemons that you have to make into lemonade, or however that saying goes.

PE: have your views on militancy, direct action, or Black Bloc as a tactic changed since your arrest?

KELLY: I've always had a pretty neutral view of property damage, and I actually hadn't thought about the politics of it much before I ended up participating in it. It was something I just steered clear of. Since my arrest I've thought about how messed up it is that you can get a harsher sentence for breaking windows than for assaulting someone or harming a living thing. I think that really shows how much our legal system is rooted in preserving and protecting the material property of the wealthy. Breaking a window is basically an assault against money, and the idea of money. Treating that as a more severe offence than committing harm against a living thing is basically saying that you value money more than life, and that's pretty psychopathic.

PE: Did you receive much in the way of support since your arrest?

KELLY: Definitely. People I've never met have sent me books and zines and letters, and people from all walks of life have given me support and solidarity. People seem to think that folks who live in the country are all a bunch of backwards rednecks, but when I was on house arrest in my home town I had so many people saying they thought it was just awful what I was going through, and supporting me in whatever way they could. Another really cool thing was the Women's Co-ordinating Committee for a Free Wallmapu, which is an Indigenous Mapuche women's group in Toronto, set up this rally in support of all the female G20 defendants and the Mapuche women political prisoners who are being criminalized by the Chilean state.

PE: How could people have supported you better, and how can people support you now?

KELLY: Nothing means more to someone in my position than a phone call or a visit.

PE: You have been doing a lot of writing since being on strict conditions? And spamming white-power forums with gay porn from what I remember you saying?

KELLY: Oh man, that was some awesome gay porn. It was from the '80's, and all the dudes had the most epic moustaches. But yeah, I've been doing a lot of writing...I've had short stories and poems in a couple of anthologies, and I write articles for The Dominion and a couple of other magazines. I also just got a gig doing editing for Fifth Estate magazine, which is ridiculously exciting to me!

PE: Any plans for when this shits all over?

KELLY: Unfortunately, a couple of my friends have died since I've been arrested, and I haven't been able to go to their memorial services because I've been on house arrest or had a curfew, so I can't travel.

So I think as soon as that's done I'm going to go out to BC, visit my friend's grave, and pay my respects properly. Other than that I just want to keep going to school, get back into doing FNB servings, and probably go on lots of overnight camping trips. I'll probably be done my degree by the time this is all over, so I'm also excited about places I could do internships and apply to grad school!

27 May - Letters to CeCe Event in Long Island City

Please join us for Letters To CeCe, where we will be writing support letters to CeCe MacDonald as she awaits sentencing.

MORE:

WHAT: Letters to CeCe

WHEN: 1pm – 3:30pm, Sunday, May 27th

WHERE: Radiator Gallery, 10-61 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City, New York 11101

COST: FREE

We will also be learning from Riley MacLeod how having a pen pal in prison can help make a difference. Letters to CeCe is supported by Pretty Queer (prettyqueer.com), Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and Visual AIDS.

Chrishaun “CeCe” McDonald is a young African American transgender woman who is charged with two counts of “second degree murder” after an incident that began when she was violently assaulted because of her gender and race. On May 2nd CeCe accepted a plea agreement to a reduced manslaughter charge.

For more information:

<http://freececemcdonald.tumblr.com/>

<http://supportcece.wordpress.com/get-involved/write-cece/>

<http://www.prettyqueer.com/2012/05/04/how-to-write-your-first-letter-to-someone-in-prison/>

<http://www.blackandpink.org/guidelines-for-pen-pals>

29 May – Vigil for Puerto Rican Political Prisoner Oscar Lopez Rivera

WHAT: Vigil in commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the arrest of Oscar Lopez Rivera

WHEN: 6:30-8:00pm, Tuesday, May 29th

WHERE: Puerto Rican Political Prisoner Mural – East 107th Street, between Lexington and Third Avenues

COST: Free

11 Jun - Punk Rock Karaoke Benefit for Marie Mason and Eric McDavid

Along with the NYC Anarchist Black Cross, [Punk Rock Karaoke Chicago](#) will be hosting their first ever night in NYC! We'll be throwing down for [Marie Mason](#), [Eric McDavid](#), and other long-term anarchist prisoners in honor of the annual [June 11th International Day of Solidarity](#).

MORE:

WHAT: Benefit in solidarity with Marie Mason and Eric McDavid

WHEN: 8:00pm-midnight, Monday, June 11th (8pm Sharp! Not punk time)

WHERE: [Fontana's Bar](#) ([105 Eldridge Street](#), Manhattan)

COST: \$7

Every penny raised will go directly towards support efforts for Marie, Eric and others. Come out and support our prisoners by shelling out some cash and singing your heart out to one-of-a-kind Punk Rock Karaoke tracks! Seriously, it is a win/win.

Up The Punx/Prisoners!

june11.org

supportmariemason.org

supporteric.org

punkrockkaraokechicago.com

nycabc.wordpress.com

Featuring songs from:

Against Me!, Bikini Kill, Black Flag, Blatz, Buzzcocks, The Clash, Circle Jerks, Crass, Dead Kennedys, Descendents, Devo, Dickies, Fifteen, Fugazi, Gang of Four, Jawbreaker, Joy Division, Los Crudos, Maldita Vecindad, Minor Threat, The Misfits, NOFX, Operation Ivy, Pixies, Ramones, Rancid, The Rezillos, Screaming Females, Sex Pistols, Sleater-Kinney, The Skids, The Smiths, Siouxsie and the Banshees, The Specials, Sonic Youth, The Stranglers, Stiff Little Fingers, Ultrasonicas, Undertones, Weakerthans, Wire, X, X-Ray-Spex + More!!!

P.S. Be sure to like us on Facebook!

[facebook.com/punkrockkaraokechicago](https://www.facebook.com/punkrockkaraokechicago)

[facebook.com/nycabc](https://www.facebook.com/nycabc)

22 Jun – Sekou Odinga Birthday Celebration

WHAT: Birthday party and fund raiser for Sekou Odinga

WHEN: 6:00-11:00pm, Friday, June 22nd

WHERE: Maysles Cinema – 345 Malcolm X Boulevard Harlem, New York

COST: \$15 at the door

MORE:

We celebrate Sekou Odinga's commitment to Afrikan people's right to self-determination, justice, and liberation and work towards his FREEDOM by partyin' and raising money in his honor.