

Updates for December 18th

8 Nov – The Rise and Fall of Jeremy Hammond: Enemy of the State

This article came out a while ago, but has just recently been made available in a digital format that we can copy and paste. If you haven't already seen it, we've added it, and other relevant Hammond information, below. It's from Rolling Stone, for what that's worth.

MORE:

On a cold day in mid-December 2011, a hacker known as "sup_g" sat alone at his computer – invisible, or so he believed. He'd been working on the target for hours, long after the rest of his crew had logged off: an epic hack, the "digital equivalent of a nuclear bomb," as it later would be described, on the servers of a Texas-based intelligence contractor called Strategic Forecasting Inc. Stratfor served as a sort of private CIA, monitoring developments in political hot spots around the world and supplying analysis to the U.S. security establishment.

A member of the online activist movement Anonymous, sup_g was part of a small team of politically motivated hackers who had breached Stratfor's main defenses earlier that month – ultimately "rooting," or gaining total access to, its main web servers. In them, they had found a cornucopia of treasure: passwords, unencrypted credit-card data and private client lists revealing Stratfor's deep ties to both big business and the U.S. intelligence and defense communities. But perhaps the most lucrative find of all was Stratfor's e-mail database: some 3 million private messages that exposed a wide array of nefarious and clandestine activities – from the U.S. government's monitoring of the Occupy movement to Stratfor's own role in compiling data on a variety of activist movements, including PETA, Wikileaks and even Anonymous itself.

And now, finally, it was done. Logging on to a secure Web chat, sup_g sent a message to a fellow activist. "We in business, baby," he said. "It's over with."

One of the most radical and committed hackers in the shadowy world of Anonymous – a leaderless, nonhierarchical federation of activists with varying agendas – sup_g kept a low profile within the group, carefully concealing his real name and maintaining a number of aliases. That June, he had joined a new faction within Anonymous known as Operation Antisec, or #Antisec, which described itself as a "popular front" against the "corrupt governments, corporations, militaries and law enforcement of the world." Though hundreds of activists may have frequented its internal communication channels, known as Internet relay chats, Antisec had less than a dozen core members: hackers, anarchists, free-speech activists and privacy crusaders, as well as "social engineers" – skilled manipulators whose talents lay in tricking even the most security-conscious into giving up their passwords or other data. The founder and most prominent member of Antisec was a bloviating, heavysset 29-year-old hacker, self-proclaimed revolutionary and social engineer known as "Sabu," who had a special loathing, it seemed, for the intelligence industry. "Let us show them we can spy on them too," he'd tweeted to his more than 35,000 followers in early December.

For three weeks, sup_g and his crew had worked steadily to ruin Stratfor, one of their biggest and richest targets yet. In addition to supplying geopolitical analysis to everyone from the Pentagon to the United Nations, the firm provided customized security services for leading companies like Raytheon and Dow Chemical, often compiling dossiers on activists and others viewed as threats to corporate profits. By Christmas – which Antisec dubbed "LulzXmas" for the "lulz," or mocking enjoyment, they intended to have at Stratfor's expense – the group had made off with more than 200 gigabytes of data. They then destroyed the company's databases and defaced Stratfor's website with a triumphant message promising a "week of mayhem" that would include posting the firm's secrets online – some 860,000 names, e-mails and passwords, including several dozen belonging to top-secret operators whose identities were now leaked for the very first time. Antisec also planned to use the hacked credit cards to make donations to groups like CARE and the American Red Cross. As an added flourish, the group ended its communiqué with the full text of the influential French anarchist tract *The Coming Insurrection*. "It's useless to wait . . . for the revolution," the treatise reads. "The catastrophe is not coming, it is here."

Three months later, on the evening of March 5th, 2012, more than a dozen federal law-enforcement officers broke down the door of a small brick house on the southwest side of Chicago and arrested Jeremy Hammond, a 27-year-old anarchist and computer hacker they believed to be sup_g. Six feet tall and lanky, dressed in a purple T-shirt and ratty trousers – a signature style one of his female friends noted was less Salvation Army than "the free box outside the Salvation Army" – Hammond looked more like a crusty punk than a computer nerd. In fact, he was both, as well as many other things: an inveterate "black hat" hacker, an irrepressible agitator and enemy of the "rich, ruling class" who identified with the ideas of the Weather Underground and considered the Occupy movement too tame.

Even before the arrest broadcast his name worldwide, Hammond was well-known in extreme-left circles. An early champion of "cyber-liberation," he had been described by *Chicago* magazine at the age of 22 as an "electronic Robin Hood" after he was sentenced to two years in federal prison for hacking a conservative website and making off with 5,000 credit-card numbers, intending to charge donations to progressive causes. But unique within the hacking subculture, Hammond was also a real-life revolutionary: a "modern-day Abbie Hoffman," in the words of his friend Matt Muchowski. He possessed a shrewd intelligence as well as a certain impulsivity – a fellow hacker referred to it as "urgency" – that had led to a long string of civil-disobedience arrests dating back 10 years, for offenses ranging from defacing a wall with anti-war slogans to banging a drum during a "noise demo" at the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York. (He later called his brief stint in the Tombs his "best prison experience.") Hammond was even busted once, in 2005, for trying to *join* a protest, against a group of white supremacists in Toledo, Ohio. "They hadn't even gotten out of the car when they were arrested," says Muchowski, a Chicago union organizer who bailed Hammond out.

His arrest, the most prominent bust to date of a U.S. hacktivist, was also a major coup for the FBI. Before Hammond was locked up, Anonymous had engaged in a year-and-a-half-long hacking spree, waging a full-scale war against the "rich and powerful oppressors." The group shut down the websites of the CIA, major banks and credit-card companies. They took up the cause of the Arab Spring by attacking the government websites of Libya, Tunisia and Egypt; they broke into computers belonging to NATO and the GEO Group, one of the world's largest private prison corporations. They hacked defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton – an attack, dubbed "Military Meltdown Monday," that yielded 90,000 military and civilian e-mail accounts and passwords. They even attacked the FBI itself.

But none of these attacks had the political resonance of Stratfor. The computer breach not only cost the company millions, but focused worldwide attention on the murky world of private intelligence after Anonymous provided the firm's e-mails to WikiLeaks, which has been posting them ever since. It was, by any estimate, an audacious hack – and one for which Hammond may face decades in prison.

Hammond, who has never admitted to any of the nine nicknames the government claims he operated under, has pleaded innocent to the Stratfor hack. But he has not disavowed his involvement with Anonymous, nor his desire to "push the struggle in a more direct action, explicitly anti-capitalist and anti-state direction," as he wrote to me from Manhattan's Metropolitan Correctional Center, where he has been held for the past eight months awaiting a bail hearing. Indeed, his hallmark as an activist has always been his revolutionary, militant rhetoric, for which he is unapologetic. "I have always made it clear that I am an anarchist-communist – as in I believe we need to abolish capitalism and the state in its entirety to realize a free, egalitarian society," he wrote. "I'm not into watering down or selling out the message or making it more marketable for the masses."

This unwavering commitment, one of Hammond's greatest strengths, would also be what led to his undoing. He was always aware that betrayal was only a click away. "We know we'll finish in prison," says a hacker who worked with him. "Jeremy knew he was going to be raided, which is why he worked so quickly. He wanted people to remember him." What Hammond never suspected was that his downfall would come at the hands of one of his closest and most trusted allies.

It's an early-june morning at the Metropolitan Correctional Center, and Hammond walks into the small room usually reserved for lawyer-client conferences wearing a baggy brown prison jumpsuit meant for someone twice his size. In person, Hammond comes off as far less strident than he does on the page. He's friendly, but cautious. After 10 years of activism, he is a seasoned veteran of jails and rough treatment at the hands of the police.

"Hey," Hammond says calmly, "I'm Jeremy." He's a pale kid, nearly 28, with huge blue-green eyes, a wispy beard, and tattoos on each forearm – one, a tic-tac-toe-like symbol known as the "glider," is an emblem of the open-source movement; the other, the *shi* hexagram from the I Ching, "can be interpreted as the leader of a people's army," he explains. He looks tired. "I'm on a terrorist watch list," he tells me. "Hard to say what for, or how they monitor these terrorists." He flashes me a wan smile that says "prison sucks."

Since arriving here in March, Hammond has tried to keep busy teaching math to inmates who are studying for their GEDs, playing chess and reading anything he can get his hands on – most recently *Love and Struggle*, ex-Weatherman David Gilbert's prison memoir. But being locked up is both a "dehumanizing" and also excruciatingly boring experience, he says. Aside from his lawyers, I am the only visitor he's been permitted in three months.

Hammond was raised with his twin brother, Jason, in Glendale Heights, Illinois, a working-class town in the western suburbs of Chicago. His parents, Rose and Jack, never married, and when the twins were three, their mother moved out and later fell in love with a next-door neighbor, leaving the boys in the care of their father. According to Rose, who remained close to her sons, Jack Hammond was "a borderline genius" who had dropped out of high school to pursue a music career and had never wanted children "until the moment he laid eyes on the twins. Then his whole life was about them."

Jack was part of the Chicago alternative scene of the 1980s that spawned iconic punk auteur Steve Albini. He raised his boys, who were nicknamed "Hanson" because of their long hair, to pursue whatever path appealed to them. Jason, a sensitive jokester, was a musician like his father. Jeremy, the quieter, more thoughtful of the two, was the schemer – the little boy who, at two, climbed to the top of the kitchen pantry to retrieve money he'd seen his mother hiding there. Jack, who earned about \$35,000 a year as a guitar teacher and received child support from Rose, would later say he and the boys were "the world champs of living cheaply and well" in a do-it-yourself kind of way.

This didn't always go over well in Glendale Heights – an area Hammond's friend Matt Muchowski describes as "part Rust Belt, part Disney World. There are a ton of Walmarts and Niketowns, so what you get growing up is a pod-person mentality: The only job that's there for you is at the mall."

A math and science whiz with an IQ of 168, Hammond "talked so fast it was like his mouth couldn't keep up with his brain," says one friend. At home, with no women around, the two brothers spent endless hours building cities with their immense Lego kits, or devouring the books in their dad's extensive library, which ran the gamut from *Fight Club* and *The Catcher in the Rye* to Abbie Hoffman's *Steal This Book* and *Revolution for the Hell of It*.

From an early age, Jeremy was consumed by projects in which he could lose himself. In Little League, he created a virtually unhittable pitch, and by the time he was nine, he was finding innovative ways to make computers do what they weren't supposed to do – the essence of hacking. At 16, he hacked the computers at a local Apple store, projecting their financial data on every screen, after which he proceeded to explain to the experts at the Genius Bar how to better protect their information. "The look on their faces was priceless," his father recalls.

At Glenbard East High School in nearby Lombard, Illinois, the Hammond twins were part of a crowd of "very smart kids looking for something more than they'd find in high school," as one friend, Matt Zito, recalls. Politicized, like many, by the attacks of 9/11, Jeremy was an outspoken critic of the Bush administration and the

"blind patriotism" he saw as leading the U.S. to war. In his senior year he founded an underground newspaper to encourage students to question the conventional political narrative "and most of all think," as he wrote in his first editor's letter. "WAKE UP... Your mind is programmable – if you're not programming your mind, someone else will program it for you."

Hammond's mind was a hive of counter-cultural ideology, notably the modern-day insurrectionary ideas of CrimethInc, the anarchist collective and publisher of radical how-to guides, including its own take on *The Anarchist Cookbook*, titled *Recipes for Disaster*. Hammond romanticized the Sixties, says Zito, who worked with him on the newspaper. In the spring of 2003, on the first day of the Iraq invasion, Hammond led a walkout of more than 100 kids to an anti-war rally in downtown Chicago. That fall, he enrolled at the University of Illinois-Chicago and quickly became a powerful activist voice on campus – so much so, recalls his friend José Martín, that the administration once abruptly cut the mic while he attempted to give a speech. But Hammond lasted only a year at UIC. "Jeremy was fearless – or foolish, depending on how you look at it," says Pong Kay, who dated Hammond for two years. A pretty freshman, she'd met him at a campus bus stop where Hammond was writing graffiti advertising a protest he was organizing against university tuition hikes. Before long, he was taking her on expeditions to an abandoned drawbridge, which they'd scale, getting stoned at the top before laughingly making their way down.

The artsy daughter of Thai immigrants, Pong was smitten. "There was something incredibly charismatic about him," she says. "He was this young, hot-headed, hyperintelligent guy with a very low tolerance for authority, and this big heart – he had this core belief that human beings are inherently good."

Hammond was also, she adds, "trusting" – sometimes to his detriment. During the spring of his freshman year, he hacked into the computer-science department's website, identifying a vulnerability that, just as he had at the Apple store, he offered to fix. Instead, the hack earned him a disciplinary hearing and a letter from school administrators saying that he would not be welcomed back at UIC for his sophomore year.

What he learned, notes one friend, is that "if you try to work with the system, they fuck you over." And so, from then on, Hammond would dedicate himself to working outside it. Over the next few years, he threw himself into the day-to-day life of the radical community in Chicago, renting houses that quickly became crash pads for any homeless kid or traveler who happened through. Always the first to offer a toke or some food, he became famous for taking friends on epic dumpster-diving expeditions to hidden outposts like a local Odwalla plant, where, after plundering the refuse, he'd return with enough fresh juice to last a month. At night he'd settle in with "riot porn" – Internet clips of black-clad anarchists facing off with the police.

He became a fixture at virtually every major demonstration, as well as many minor ones. Clad in ratty jeans and a T-shirt "for some punk band whose biggest show was for 20 people at a basement benefit for an animal-rights group," as Muchowski puts it, Jeremy and Jason, now his comrade in anarchy, would arrive with a marching band – drums, horns, a tambourine or two – dancing and singing and generally annoying the more earnest demonstrators. "Boredom," he would later write, "is counterrevolutionary. Your movement needs to be fun... or no one will want to participate."

Hammond also "brought the ruckus," as he put it, in a more serious way: joining the militant and masked black bloc anarchists, getting into scuffles with cops and amassing an impressive rap sheet. Between the ages of 18 and 21, he was arrested 10 times in three different states.

But Hammond was more than just a street-level agitator. He was equally active online, part of a new, and to U.S. law enforcement, threatening generation of political activists. "These are guys who can travel seamlessly between cyberspace and meat space, without even recognizing much of a difference," says Steve Rambam, a New York cybersecurity investigator. Hammond's primary weapon, which few if any of his anarchist friends knew about, was a hacker boot camp of sorts, a website he'd developed called Hack This Site, which within two years had become a full-fledged online community with more than 100,000 members. It was here that Hammond began to meet so-called black-hat hackers who worked below the radar to take down websites for fun or profit, or sometimes both. "These people had large amounts of power – where one hacker could outsmart a whole company," he recalls. Street activists had very little power – but they had the politics to power the revolution. What if these two worlds could merge? "I thought hacking could be a tool – a weapon to disrupt abusive

corporations."

Selling this idea wasn't easy. In the mid-2000s, there was little crossover between hackers and activists. Hammond wanted this to change. "Considering today's political climate, it is becoming imperative that we tune into the world around us, take a stance and give a fuck," he wrote in the first issue of a new "electronic civil-disobedience journal" called *Hack This Zine*, which he launched in the summer of 2004. He began to lay out an argument for international movement – "an army so powerful we won't need weapons," as Hammond put it. "If corporations and governments are out of line today, it's up to cowboys of the electronic age to turn over the system and put the people on top."

In July 2004, Hammond took his message to the annual DefCon hacker convention in Las Vegas, the largest convergence of hackers in the United States. There he made an impassioned speech praising the virtues of electronic civil disobedience as an effective tool to disrupt the upcoming Republican National Convention. "We'd like to see every method of disruption possible, whether it be shutting down the power to Madison Square Garden, or defacing 10,000 different Republican websites. . . . We'd like to see RNC delegates get harassed on the streets," he said. "Fuck 'em up! Shut 'em down!" Some people in the audience jeered, and one person asked if what Hammond was proposing amounted to terrorism. "One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist," he scoffed. "Let them call us terrorists; I'll still bomb their buildings."

Soon after he returned to Chicago, FBI agents who had seen a tape of the DefCon speech paid Hammond a visit to ask him if he really intended to bomb the Republican convention. Hammond said he had been engaging in a bit of radical hyperbole – though he had begun to envision a digital insurgency of sorts: an "Internet Liberation Front," which, much like the radical environmental and animal-rights groups ELF and ALF, would organize as underground cells and use nonviolent "hit and run"-type tactics to attack the "rich and powerful."

An early target was a group called Protest Warrior, a Texas-based pro-war organization that had a habit of showing up to rallies to heckle left-wing activists. In February 2005, Hammond and some fellow hacktivists breached the organization's website, gaining access to thousands of credit-card numbers they wanted to charge in order to redistribute the wealth to left-wing causes. Protest Warrior notified the FBI, which raided Hammond's apartment that March. The Bureau spent the better part of the next year building a case against him, though as Hammond would repeatedly note, he never actually charged anything to the cards.

Hammond ultimately confessed to the hack and was sentenced to two years at the Federal Correctional Institute at Greenville, Illinois, about 250 miles from Chicago. He doesn't speak very much about Greenville, but his mother suggests it was a far cry from the Cook County jail, where he had been held on numerous occasions. "The first time I went to visit him, he'd been there less than a month and he was trembling," she says. "He told me, 'Mom, when I get out, I'm going to be a better person.' He was scared. I thought, 'This is not my Jeremy.'"

By the second time she visited, Hammond was no longer trembling. He'd begun his "training," as he would refer to his time in prison, conditioning himself "mentally and physically" to become a more effective freedom fighter. He immersed himself in radical literature like Alexander Berkman's *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* and the autobiographies of Black Panthers George Jackson and Elaine Brown, and read countless anarchist newsletters that were passed along through prison channels. Among his influences was the former Weather Underground leader Bill Ayers, who had taught at UIC when Hammond was a student. "Live your life in a way that doesn't make a mockery of your values," Ayers wrote in his memoir, *Fugitive Days*. "Wherever injustice raises its head, resist; the revolution is your permanent vocation."

He emerged from Greenville 18 months later a changed man. "He seemed angry and really militant," says his former housemate Scott Scurvy, who points out that before going to prison, Hammond had an almost Merry Prankster-like take on activism. Now, "he was talking about 'cracking skulls' on people he perceived as racist or homophobic. He kind of tripped me out."

The consensus among many of their friends, Scurvy says, was that "prison sort of messed him up." But others realized it as a form of clarity. "There are two paths you take after you come out of prison," says Jason Hammond. "Some people go straight and try to achieve the American dream, and others go, 'Fuck it, the whole idea is bullshit, as is the system that created it,' and they go in a more radical direction. And Jeremy took that path."

In the summer of 2008, Hammond returned to Chicago and what was supposed to be a new life. With Jason and some friends, he moved into the fourth-floor apartment of a ramshackle house in Pilsen – "sandwiched between the two finest dumpsters in Chicago" – that they dubbed "Mount Happy," and went to work as a web designer. He was barred, by the terms of his release, from associating with anarchists or his old colleagues at Hack This Site for the next three years. And yet he was unable to walk away from his politics altogether. So he turned to mainstream activism, joining the Chicago branch of the Rainforest Action Network, where he helped organize a campaign to shut down two local coal plants. "He'd ride this rickety bike all the way across town," says Lyn Michaud, who founded the city's chapter of RAN, "probably an hour each way, to attend meetings that would last four or even six hours."

Hammond, she adds, "wasn't just anti-capitalist in words; he walked the talk. We would have a meeting at a restaurant, and Jeremy wouldn't buy food – he'd eat other people's leftovers. I'd be sitting there, like, horrified, but he'd just casually walk over to an empty table, grab like half a plate of leftover food and bring it over. He literally lived off the waste of others."

Michaud, 10 years older than Hammond, took Jeremy under her wing, inviting some of the world's most well-respected activist trainers to meet with her group in Chicago. Once she even invited Hammond's hero, Bill Ayers, to a potluck dinner. Jeremy was star-struck. "He called him 'sir,'" she recalls, laughing. "That was funny: This big anarchist who was so anti-hierarchy called Bill Ayers 'sir.'"

Ayers recalls Hammond as one of a group of "terrific and supersmart young people" who engaged in "a lively discussion about activism." But Hammond's politics were far more radical than the activists with whom he now associated, and he could be scathing with those that he felt lacked the sufficient revolutionary cred. The idea of willingly getting arrested as an act of civil disobedience puzzled him – "The revolution to me is about not getting in their jails," he says – as did the seemingly endless process of petitioning local officials and holding sit-ins that got no attention.

Hammond's adventure with "polite activism" lasted just more than a year. Frustrated, he was drawn back to militancy and, in turn, to trouble with the law. At a rally in September 2009 to protest the city's plans to host the 2016 Olympics, Hammond and his brother were arrested after engaging in a tug of war with an Olympic banner, "in which various parts were burned, right in front of the media cameras," he says. "In retrospect, it was an impulsive, poorly planned-out action with no exit strategy." Worse, it was also a clear violation of his probation. A week later, Hammond, out on bail, joined some comrades in breaking up a talk given by British Holocaust denier David Irving, where, dressed all in black, they heckled Irving and doused his books in fake blood before making their escape. But they were quickly apprehended.

Hammond narrowly avoided being sent back to prison. He accepted 130 hours of community service and 18 months of "enhanced probation," which meant he could be visited – he and his friends would say "raided" – by his probation officer and the Chicago police at any time, and his home and possessions thoroughly searched. He was unable to leave the state of Illinois, and he was put on a 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. curfew. About the only place he could still travel freely was online.

In January 2008, during Hammond's last six months at Greenville, the famously controlling Church of Scientology "angered the Internet," as it was said, by trying to remove a controversial Tom Cruise video from the Web. In response, the Internet – or more specifically a loose coalition of Internet denizens calling itself Anonymous – released its own video, where, in a computerized voice, it declared war on the Church. *You have nowhere to hide because we are everywhere*, the message said in part, ending with the lines that would become the collective's slogan:

We are Anonymous. We are legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us.

At first, Anonymous seemed like little more than a group of malicious pranksters, enraged over Internet censorship. They began targeting groups like the Recording Industry Association of America, which was waging a campaign against online piracy, and the Australian government, which had proposed a filter for online pornography featuring underage girls. (Anonymous dubbed the attack Operation Titstorm.)

In Chicago, Hammond was aware of Anonymous but had dismissed it. "I didn't take them seriously. These weren't, like, super-voodoo hackers," he says. But he began to realize the political potential of Anonymous once they launched Operation Avenge Assange in December 2010, shortly after PayPal, Visa, MasterCard and several other financial institutions abruptly stopped processing donations to Wikileaks, which had come under fire for publishing the diplomatic cables leaked by Bradley Manning. Organizing online, Anonymous held what

electronic-freedom activists call a "digital sit-in," encouraging thousands of people to download an online tool called the Low Orbit Ion Cannon, or LOIC, to bombard the companies' websites and knock them offline.

"This spontaneous gathering was one of the first large-scale demonstrations conducted on the Internet," says Gabriella Coleman, a professor at McGill University considered the foremost expert on Anonymous. It also marked the beginning of a new chapter for the group, "providing a paradigm for general online protest that would soon allow individuals to unite and organize to express their deep disenchantment over any and every issue."

Hammond was impressed. "They were taking on credit-card companies and banks," he says. "I thought maybe there were people there who recognized who the bigger enemy was and how to fight them."

One of those people who seemed drawn to the larger struggle was a hacker named Sabu. Born Hector Xavier Monsegur in 1983, he'd grown up in a family of drug dealers – both his father and his aunt went to prison for heroin trafficking in 1997 – and was raised by his grandmother Irma in the Jacob Riis projects of New York's Lower East Side. A husky, bookish kid, he'd never really fit in among the gangsters and street hustlers of his mostly Puerto Rican neighborhood, but he had a natural gift for computers, as well as a rebellious streak. At 14, around the age that Hammond was wowing the Apple "geniuses," Monsegur, whose family couldn't afford an Internet connection, had figured out a way to get on EarthLink for free and proceeded to teach himself Linux, Unix and open-source networking. When he was 16, he defaced several Puerto Rican government websites after a U.S. Navy live-fire exercise on the island of Vieques accidentally killed a local civilian. But he was also an opportunist.

Where Hammond saw hacking as a tool in the larger struggle, Monsegur saw hacking, and its legitimate counterpart, white-hat Internet security consulting, as a way out of the struggle he lived day to day. He craved "respect," as he frequently noted online, and as a kid had landed coveted spots in several New York City-run IT programs for underprivileged teens. In his early 20s, he'd freelanced for a Swedish Internet security firm and later worked for the peer-to-peer file-sharing company LimeWire. But by 2010, Monsegur, now 26 and the sole guardian of two small cousins he called his "daughters," was drifting, living on public assistance in the same projects in which he'd grown up. He sold marijuana on the street, and fenced stolen goods. He also began hacking for profit: stealing credit-card numbers to pay his bills, and hacking into an automotive-parts company, where he ordered four engines worth close to \$3,500 for his cars, including a vintage Toyota AE86, which he named "Revolution."

Before long, Anonymous gave Monsegur a mission – he'd later say it was a movement he had been waiting for his entire life. Calling himself Sabu, he began working his way through the various Internet relay chats (IRCs) in Anonops, the IRC network where hacktivists gathered, into the smaller, private chat rooms where illegal actions were planned. When the Middle East exploded in January 2011, he eagerly took part in what Anonymous called the "Freedom Ops": waging war, from his computer, on the websites of the oppressive governments of Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Libya and Bahrain. Yet, unlike Hammond, whose revolutionary ideology infused every aspect of his life, Sabu's nobility of purpose was limited. His main cause, now as always, was himself. "Sabu," one hacker later noted, "believes in Sabu."

FBI surveillance of Anonymous began, by most accounts, around 2010. "In the beginning, nobody in law enforcement even knew who Anonymous was," says one former member. "To the FBI, they'd just been this Scientology nuisance. So when Anonymous started coming out in support of Assange and Bradley Manning, they were really behind. They didn't understand the culture at all."

To help the government – and, he hoped, to win contracts for his firm, HBGary Federal – a digital-security analyst named Aaron Barr decided that he would figure out the secret "leadership" of Anonymous. In early 2011, after studying the group for weeks and lurking in Anonymous chat rooms, Barr drew up a 20-page document with the names and contact information of a number of people he believed formed Anonymous' central core. He then went public, telling a reporter from *The Financial Times* that he'd unlocked the mystery of Anonymous, which he intended to broadcast widely.

Though Barr's document turned out to be riddled with mistakes, Anonymous took his threat seriously. On Super Bowl Sunday, February 6th, 2011, Sabu and his crew, which called themselves the "Internet Feds," hacked into

HBGary's website, Barr's Twitter account and also the company's e-mail database, extracting 68,000 e-mails, which they posted to popular file-sharing site the Pirate Bay. Within a day, news of the hack was everywhere – Steven Colbert famously devoted a segment of *The Colbert Report* to the hack: "To put that in hacker terms," he said, "Anonymous is a hornet's nest, and Barr said, 'I'm going to stick my penis in that thing.'"

The HBGary hack wound up being more than a bit of payback: Barr, it turned out, had been gearing up a "dirty tricks" campaign against pro-WikiLeaks journalists like *Salon's* Glenn Greenwald. He'd also pitched the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on how to discredit labor unions and liberal groups. The leak of Barr's e-mails resulted in his resignation and also caused 17 members of Congress to push for an investigation into HBGary's activities.

Watching this go down, Hammond was amazed. "It was an epic hack," he says. Sabu, who took credit – a bit too much credit, many thought – intrigued Hammond. Unlike other Anons, Sabu talked a tough game, using ghetto slang like "my nigga," and shared Hammond's loathing for the police. He even hinted at a criminal past. "I've been to jail before – I don't fear it," he wrote in one online post. "I've been in the game for over a decade."

Says one of Hammond's Chicago friends, "I can totally imagine Jeremy digging the fact that he befriended a hacker from the hood."

Few people in the movement expressed themselves with such passion, and all Hammond could see was a fellow hacktivist down for the cause. "He put the work in; that's why I respected him," Hammond says. "And I trusted him too." It wasn't initially clear why. Most longtime hackers prefer to work in the shadows, never letting anyone know who they are. Sabu bragged about his talents, awing younger Anons, many of them teenagers, with tales of his "Puerto Rican hacking crew" from the late 1990s and his subsequent years "underground." "He made it seem like you were in this supersecret revolutionary group and portrayed himself as this silent underground hero who was risking everything to make a difference," says one former acolyte.

Hammond, too, was drawn in by Sabu's rhetoric. "He seemed to understand, more than most Anons, what the root of the problem really was," Hammond says. "I'd sit in IRC watching these arguments go down – just stupid shit people would say. But there were some people who got to the baseline element and said things like, 'We must destroy capitalism. We must destroy their systems.' That interested me."

But the random malice that Anonymous, and Sabu's crew in particular, unleashed turned off many, including a 40-year-old Michigan mom and longtime Internet denizen named Jennifer Emick, who had come to believe that some of the more ideologically driven Anons might be dangerous. Shortly after HBGary, Emick decided to do what Aaron Barr had failed to do: She outed, or "doxed," a number of key Anons, including Sabu, publicly listing his name and the neighborhood he lived in. This was perhaps the worst thing that could happen to a hacker, striking a blow to his pride, as well as to his much cherished invisibility – removing the protection that's made Anonymous so powerful to begin with, and leaving him vulnerable to government tracking and, ultimately, arrest.

Sabu denied she'd gotten him, taking to Twitter and issuing a passionate *cri de coeur*, in which he reminded all Anons that they were "part of something powerful," urging them not to "succumb to fear tactics" and to "stay free."

In many ways, Anonymous, with its nonhierarchical structure, was the realization of what Hammond had always wanted to create – indeed, his 2004 DefCon speech provided the blueprint for what the hacktivist collective became. But Anonymous activism was different than real-world activism, where flesh-and-blood true believers like Hammond could develop passionate followings. In the faceless, nameless online world where no one knew who anyone was, it was the trolls and the liars, the social engineers like Sabu, with a remarkable capacity for duplicity, who spoke the loudest. "It's extremely easy to manipulate people online if you just know how," says one former Anon. "The whole point of IRC is that you can be anyone you want: a revolutionary, a troll, an FBI agent."

Over the coming months, as Hammond's interest grew, Internet Feds morphed into a splinter group called Lulz Security, or Lulzsec. It was led by Sabu with support from a talented propagandist named Topiary. Between May 7th and June 25th, 2011 – dubbed the "50 Days of Lulz" – Lulzsec attacked multinational corporations, gaming sites and several porn sites. Each action was announced with splashy, theatrical bits of PR: a fancifully

worded press release and hyped-up Tweets, all designed to garner maximum attention. The media rushed to declare Lulzsec "cyber-vigilantes." New York magazine would later describe them as the Internet's "SEAL Team Six."

The hacks were so spectacular, and came so fast, that few Anons noticed that Sabu went missing for a full 24 hours in June, something he'd never done before. When he returned to IRC, telling his crew that his grandmother had died, Lulzsec accepted it, though in retrospect something was different about him. "We immediately saw a change in his attitude," recalls one former colleague. "He started really pushing the revolutionary rhetoric, trying to band everyone together by calling us 'brothers' and saying we were 'all in this together' and we were 'family.'"

On June 19th, 2011, Sabu announced the launch of Operation AntiseC, "the biggest, unified operation amongst hackers in history." The declaration got Hammond's attention, as did AntiseC's tantalizing lists of targets, including "banks and other high-ranking establishments." Stuck in his Chicago house on a curfew, barred from real-life activism, Hammond couldn't help himself. "It was like call-and-response," he says.

By the late spring of 2011, rumors were rampant within the hacktivist underground that the FBI, replicating the notorious CoIntel program of the 1960s, had heavily infiltrated Anonymous chat rooms. Within Sabu's tight circle, paranoia was particularly strong, and it intensified exponentially as the 50 days of Lulz drew to an end.

In late June, Lulzsec released hundreds of pages of sensitive information belonging to Arizona law enforcement accompanied by a lengthy announcement posted online titled "Chinga la Migra" – Fuck the Police. If the FBI's assumptions are correct, this was Hammond's first official criminal act as a member of Anonymous – and it was a radical departure from what had come before.

The statement led off with an illustration of an AK-47 and the slogan "Off the pigs." The data dump – hundreds of private intelligence bulletins, training manuals, personal e-mails, names, phone numbers, addresses and passwords belonging to Arizona law enforcement, including documents pertaining to the border patrol and counterterrorism efforts, and the use of confidential informants – was made in protest of the "racial profiling anti-immigrant police state that is Arizona."

After Chinga la Migra #1, there was Chinga la Migra #2, #3 and #4 – all directed at Arizona, and later Texas, law enforcement; each one more radical sounding than the last. "Yes we're aware that [releasing the personal information of police officers] risks their safety, those poor defenseless police officers who lock people up for decades, who get away with brutality and torture... who make and break their own laws as they see fit," one missive read. "We are making sure they experience... the same kind of violence and terror they dish out on an every day basis." It concluded: "We're not stopping until every prisoner is freed and every prison is burned to the ground."

Some AntiseC members complained about the radical message. In her book on the rise and fall of Lulzsec, *We Are Anonymous*, author Parmy Olson recounts how some members squirmed under this new ideological rhetoric. Topiary, Lulzsec's longtime scribe, who had written every press release but these, was particularly shocked. "We don't want to get police officers killed," he told another Lulzsec member. "That's not my kind of style."

But Sabu was fine with the new rhetoric. "This is anarchy," he told a colleague who worried the statements might turn people off from getting involved just at the time Anonymous was hoping to draw more people in. "The fact that we attack governments and corporations means that we don't give a fuck about what others think."

Sabu proudly declared AntiseC to be a revolutionary movement and urged his tens of thousands of Twitter followers to join the cause. "Rise Up. Resist," he posted, one of many virtual calls to war. No one doubted his authority or sincerity. "He was Sabu," says one close associate. Even after some of his Lulzsec colleagues were arrested – including Topiary, who turned out to be an 18-year-old British citizen named Jake Davis – his supporters stayed true, as he did to them. "Thank those fallen Anons for taking the hits that will give the rest of you another day to fight," he tweeted in July.

Sabu began working closely with a new, far quieter player in AntiseC: a behind-the-scenes operator known to the larger crew as "anarchaos," though the elite hackers with whom he worked called him "sup_g." Highly dedicated, he was "basically the perfect storm of know-how, drive and ideology," says one former activist. "He was by far the most knowledgeable hacker in AntiseC, and he wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty." Together, he

and Sabu were a formidable duo, though Sabu wasn't taken very seriously by many black hats. "People in the scene treated him like he was just a talking head," says one Anon. "I never felt that he was good for much other than networking."

Most experienced hackers knew that Sabu wasn't as talented as he purported to be. He had not, for example, hacked HBGary, as he claimed, but had only "social engineered" a password out of the company's IT security manager. More troubling were persistent rumors of his having been compromised, even possibly arrested, after he was "doxed" by Jennifer Emick. But the newest member of Sabu's inner circle didn't seem to care. "Sup_g wasn't very interested in all the drama. He just wanted action," says one Antisec hacker. "But the thing is, you need to keep track of the drama in Anonymous. Many times, following the drama can save your life."

The hackers of Antisec followed a strict code, often working in pairs and asking few questions of one another. Sup_g in particular seemed obsessed with his security, says one Anon who worked with him. "He gave very little personal information, was very adamant, even in private chats, about keeping stuff locked down until it was meant to be public – if it was ever meant to be public."

Like everyone else, he changed his nicknames frequently – "To make it more confusing to outside eyes," says one hacker – and could be brutal to those who got careless and called him by a previous name. But sup_g was far more cavalier in public channels. Though no one had claimed personal authorship of the Chinga la Migra statements, one longtime activist who read the postings connected them to a number of nicknames – notably "burn," a "straight-up anarchist-communist militant" – who had expressed many of the same sentiments, often in nearly identical language, on public IRC channels. Before long, "burn," along with "anarchaos" and two other nicknames, "o" and "credible threat," were the loudest and most passionate voices in the virtual world of IRC. Whomever was using these handles knew the finer points of finding food in dumpsters, had been in and out of jail, and was versed in anarchist theory as well as militant black-bloc tactics, having spent "upwards of a decade propagandizing for the people." And he wasn't afraid of being caught. "Prison's not bad," he said. "You do your time like a warrior, and emerge more trained and disciplined than before."

Other hackers grew concerned. "There was a point there where he started to just feel really proud about what he was doing," says one of sup_g's closest colleagues in Antisec, a hacker who would like to be known as "CC3." "Many times I said to him, 'Stay hidden. Don't show up too much on public channels.'" Sup_g assured him his security protocols were tight. "I said to him once, 'Please tell me you left the U.S.' and he said yes, he'd moved out. He said he was changing houses every week."

Hammond, of course, hadn't left Chicago. "I was in jail again," a persona named "tylerknowsthis" wrote in an August 2011 chat. "A dozen pigs raided my house and arrested me for a bag of sage – yes, sage." And, he added, he'd also "beaten a weed case" just seven months earlier.

Though Hammond refuses to admit that he ever used any of the nicknames attributed to him, events in his own life track these chat room posts. He had been arrested seven months earlier for pot possession and held for three weeks in the Cook County jail while awaiting the result of the drug test. Then in July 2011, Hammond's house was raided again: This time it wasn't just the police but also the FBI. "They questioned me and my roommates, none of us talked, so I don't know what they were investigating," he says. He spent another three weeks in jail for a bag of sage, which the feds had mistaken for marijuana.

When he got out, Hammond began to spend time with Occupy Chicago, and "burn" became active in OpBART, an Anonymous attack on the Bay Area Rapid Transit System. "Burn" also involved himself in Anonymous' dedicated Occupy Wall Street channel, which tried to strategize protests around the country. One day, Hammond's real and online lives collided when he met a digital-rights activist named Peter Fein, who met up with some protesters at Occupy Chicago. "I went down to Occupy one day, and I got to talking to people and mentioned that I did stuff with Anonymous. And this guy blurted out, 'Oh, yeah, I'm in Lulzsec,'" he says. "I thought, OK, either you're lying or an idiot. And that turned out to be Jeremy."

Hammond, who never told Fein his name, handed him some anarchist literature and two old issues of *Hack This Zine*, and began to talk about hacktivism. "I thought he was just another crazy from Anon. My sense was that he wanted recognition and credit, and you can't do that and be 'Anonymous,'" Fein says.

After Hammond was arrested and Fein saw his picture, he wasn't surprised. "From the moment I met Jeremy, I got the sense that he expected to go back to jail."

As the Occupy movement became a national phenomenon last fall, Antisec hackers stepped up their activity: exposing sensitive documents belonging to more than 70 law-enforcement agencies, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police, in retaliation for the police crackdown against Occupy protesters. They even hacked the gmail accounts of a California cybercrime investigator, some of whose e-mails detailed the methods that cybercrime units use to catch hackers.

By this time, sup_g had become the dominant voice of the 10 or so core members of Antisec, and the most indefatigable member of the team. Most of the work of the group now went through him, including the writing of nearly all the press releases, as Sabu became increasingly unreliable. That summer, Sabu had disappeared from the Internet entirely after a rival hacker released his own dossier on Monsegur. In September, he returned, blazing with an even greater urgency. "Every room I was in that he was in, he was very pressure-oriented to get shit done," says one former Antisec member. "And it needed to be done within the day or he would start yelling at people."

Yet Sabu rarely got involved in actual hacks. By November, even Hammond had grown suspicious, says CC3, and he and several other Antisec members began to distance themselves. "We got tired of seeing Sabu never get his hands dirty," says CC3. "And at some point a few of us sat together in an IRC chat room and asked, 'Who has ever seen Sabu hack anything?'" No one had.

But Sabu's core talent had always been as a fixer: bringing information provided to him by other hackers to people like sup_g, who could exploit it to the fullest. According to CC3, last November a hacker nobody knew told Sabu about a security hole in the website of a company called Strategic Forecasting Inc. Sabu handed that information to his team. Over the next few weeks, as his crew worked away, sup_g checked in with Sabu, giving him status updates. Needing a place to store the pilfered data, sup_g also accepted Sabu's offer to provide an external server, in New York. When the transfer was complete and Stratfor's website defaced, Sabu took to Twitter to announce the hack, and by Christmas the attack was all over the news.

The following day, Sabu logged on to IRC, entered a special chat room dubbed "#lulzmas" and sent a message to sup_g.

"Yo yo," he said.

"Hey, homboii," sup_g replied. "I been going hard all night."

"I heard we're all over the newspapers," said Sabu. "You motherfuckers are going to get me raided. HAHAAHAHA."

"Dude, it's big," sup_g said.

"If I get raided anarcha," Sabu said, "your job is to cause havok [sic] in my honor." He added a heart – perhaps to deflect from the fact that he'd just casually linked one nickname with another. It was something he'd done a number of times: call sup_g by another name, which always prompted his partner to leave the chat. But this time, for unknown reasons – lapse of judgment, even the possibility that for just a moment he forgot who he was – sup_g didn't even flinch.

"It shall be so," he said.

On the warm summer night of June 7th, 2011, two weeks before Sabu began recruiting for Antisec, Hector Xavier Monsegur, was at home in his Avenue D apartment when he heard a knock at the door. Outside were two FBI agents claiming they had enough incriminating evidence pertaining to Monsegur's Anonymous hacking, as well as to a variety of real-life petty crimes, to put him away for 122 years.

Within hours Sabu had cut a deal and agreed to work for the FBI, rolling over on his Lulzsec comrades. Over the following nine months, he helped the government gather information, often working "literally around the clock" to build the case, according to official documents. He was, in the words of the federal prosecutor, a model informant.

News of Monsegur's role as a snitch broke on the same day as the news of Hammond's arrest. At first Anons denied that such a betrayal could be true. But after Sabu's indictment and guilty plea were leaked to the press,

shock quickly turned to anger, and sadness. "I just can't bring myself to hate him," says one Antisec hacker. "We will never know the extent that the FBI went to turn him into a traitor."

Some members of Anonymous would say they knew it all along. "I always sensed he was a fraud," Christopher Doyon, an Anon who goes by the name "Commander X," told me last spring. "All of that was put on to please the feds, and all I can say is that they goddamn better put the fucker in witness protection," he adds. "What really makes me want to kill him is that he did all of it so he could send these poor kids to prison."

Not everyone was trapped, however. According to several Anons, Sabu protected those he knew wouldn't be useful to the FBI. One Antisec member recalls that Sabu encouraged him and a number of others to leave the Antisec channel "because, to use his words, 'you *will* be charged with conspiracy.' He said that to all of us who weren't involved in hacking."

Since the revelations, a few Anons have put together an Antisec timeline, convincingly arguing that given the date of Monsegur's arrest and conversion, June 7th-8th, 2011, and his subsequent announcement of his new hacker movement on June 19th, Antisec must have been created under the FBI's watch, intended as a honey pot to lure in a myriad of political hackers, most prominently Jeremy Hammond. "I think when his name popped up in this investigation, the FBI rubbed their hands together in glee," says cyberinvestigator Steve Rambam. "They were endlessly delighted when he fell into the net."

The government's case against Hammond revolves around the nicknames he is said to have used at various times over the past year. (Neither the Justice Department nor the FBI, citing the ongoing nature of the investigation, will comment beyond their initial press release announcing the arrests.) Hammond's attorneys tell me they are in possession of nearly a terabyte of discovery material – some 20,000 bankers boxes, the equivalent of half a research library of reading material – with potentially more to come. But Hammond has been effectively locked out of his own defense. He can only view the material in the presence of his lawyers and he cannot use prison computers to do legal research, even though they are not connected to the Internet ("It's like they think he's some kind of wizard who can magically get online no matter what," says one person associated with the case). It could take years for him to review all of the discovery material.

So far, all of the alleged Lulzsec hackers, who have been arrested have pleaded guilty or are soon expected to. Hammond has not, but even if he were to accept a plea, it is likely he will spend many years in prison. Two days after Hammond's arrest, on March 7th, 2012, FBI Director Robert Mueller, who has frequently said that cyberthreat will soon overtake terrorism as the bureau's top priority, warned Congress that terrorists might recruit politically motivated hackers like Hammond into launching cyberattacks against the U.S. "You want to identify the individuals who are responsible for these crimes, investigate them, prosecute them and put them in jail for a substantial period of time," Mueller said. In early October, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, arguing for stricter laws against hacking, warned that the country is in a "pre-9/11 moment."

But some worry about what that crackdown will cost. "In this country there is an impenetrable cloud of secrecy over what the government and corporations do," says Michael Ratner, president emeritus of the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the attorney for Julian Assange, whose name was mentioned more than 2,000 times in the Stratfor e-mails. "Whatever technical crimes the government claims have been committed must be weighed against the good that comes from lifting the veil on corporate and government spying and corruption. We should not punish the courageous people that exposed it."

As the information contained within the Stratfor e-mails continues to leak out – the most recent suggests that the U.S. worked with the Mexican Sinaloa cartel to limit the violence in Mexico, while also allowing drugs to flow over the border – Antisec went quiet with the exception of two hacks, most recently in September, when Antisec re-emerged to announce the leak of over a million Apple user IDs they claimed were stolen from an FBI laptop. In their statement, written without the panache of those Hammond is believed to have penned, the group paid tribute to its jailed comrade as an "ideological [sic] motivated political dissident" in the same camp as Bradley Manning. Then the group went quiet again – and may remain so for a while. "We're focusing less on defacement and more on quietly taking over infrastructure," says the hacktivist who calls himself CC3. "And right now, the FBI doesn't have a clue about what we're doing – which is good."

Although Hammond's contribution was huge, some within Anonymous were happy to see him go. ("I wonder if

Sabu did us a favor by cleansing Anonymous of the more radical elements," one member told me.) But even those who disagreed with Jeremy Hammond appreciate his value; those who sided with him feel his loss even more poignantly. "He pissed a lot of people off with his anarchist talk, but he was the real thing," says CC3. "He fought for what he believed his whole life. He was an idealist who even after being jailed, kept fighting at every occasion, and he never betrayed himself. Not many people can say they have never betrayed themselves."

This story is from the November 8th, 2012 issue of Rolling Stone.

Postscript:

On November 20th, 2012, Jeremy Hammond, who had been held in a Manhattan jail for more than eight months since his arrest in March, was denied bail in a federal court. The hearing before Judge Loretta Preska was dominated by an impassioned plea by Hammond's defense counsel. "There is no way I can prepare for this trial while this man is in prison," his lawyer, Elizabeth Fink, a well-known civil rights attorney, stated, noting the hundreds of thousands of pages of discovery – much of it highly technical forensic material – that she found almost completely incomprehensible.

Preska, however, was unmoved – even with defense assurances that Hammond, who doesn't hold a passport, was not a flight risk and would remain under house arrest at the home of Manhattan lawyer Michael Steven Smith, an "officer of the court" who was willing to guarantee that Hammond wouldn't have access to a computer. But the chance that Hammond might get access "poses a very substantial danger to the community," Preska said, as did his "lack of regard for legal authority." For now, he remains at the Metropolitan Correctional Center, where he will likely stay until his trial, slated for late 2013, though some believe it may happen much later.

But Hammond may yet have another chance, thanks to Anonymous, which responded to the verdict by "doxing" Preska, releasing personal information on her as well as her husband, Thomas J. Kavalier, a partner at the Manhattan law firm Cahill Gordon & Reindel. According to the leaked material, Kavalier, through his firm, was a client of the intelligence firm Stratfor and a victim of the Anonymous attack, all of which raises significant questions about Preska's objectivity. On December 6th, Hammond's attorney filed a motion demanding that Preska, who also worked at Cahill Gordon prior to her confirmation as a judge, recuse herself. "This personal connection to the damage allegedly inflicted by Mr. Hammond," the motion said, "is more than enough to raise the possibility in the mind of an objective observer that this Court could not be impartial in this case."

December 11th - 'A Prisoners Experience at MCC During Hurricane Sandy ' by Jeremy Hammond

While NYC urged residents to evacuate the city in anticipation of Hurricane Sandy, those of us imprisoned at the Metropolitan Correctional Center were going nowhere. Without announcing any plans or preparations, they locked every floor down and we were left to weather the storm not knowing what was going to go down.

Like most of the lower east side, MCC lost power, heat and water. Naturally, some folks grew panicked and restless and used this opportunity to vent built-up frustrations: people screamed and shouted, banged on doors, and threw junk out into the dayroom, but it did not get too rowdy. Understaffed, the backup guards stayed in their offices and did not make any announcements. Eventually, the emergency generators came on to provide minimal lighting, cold water returned so we would not die of thirst, and the night died down uneventfully.

The next morning the "goon squad" rushed in armed, with a variety of weapons including beanbag guns, pepper spray bullet guns, and teargas. They stormed each tier, angrily cursing us out while taking away the TVs, microwaves and boardgames. No one complained or raised any objection, even as we were told we would be locked down for a week, but the guards picked out three random prisoners – including me – cuffed us, threatened to use the pepper spray on us "for fun," and took us to the box.

A sign sits above the entrance to 9 South - "MCC Special Housing Unit – No guns just guts. Est. 1975."

As any of the untold hundreds of thousands of prisoners who have experienced solitary confinement knows, the box is a dehumanizing, sadistic form of abuse, wisely and correctly recognized as torture by a growing number of countries, except the United States. Imagine living in a bathroom, only for a whole week. Our toilets wouldn't

flush. Eventually a guard gave me two books out of my property – a Spanish-English dictionary and, in an ironic coincidence, Zeitoun, which is about a Syrian man in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina who ends up being wrongfully arrested and abused by police.

The three of us were only in the box for a week and not given any disciplinary tickets. We were kicked back to our unit to find them still locked down and not doing much better than we were. Cold meals, toilets not flushing, no hot water, no showers, no heat, no microwaves, no roof recreation, no law library, no TVs, no boardgames, no mail, no visits, no phone calls or any way to contact friends and family to see how they were affected by the storm and let them know how we were doing. Everyone's court dates were postponed, including several people who were being sentenced and expecting “time served.” Eventually the phones starting working, but predictably fights broke out over the long lines, so we were locked down again. Days later, they let us back out, but for only limited periods of time, still no TVs or boardgames. We were told “you have to learn to crawl before you can walk.”

We then learned the next week MCC was being visited by inspectors, including the director of the BOP. Every so often prison officials must scramble to look presentable and pick up to code to assure inspectors we are living humanely. Of course they use unpaid prison labor to clean this place up – and now they use the missing TVs and boardgames as leverage to assure our obedience. Obviously there is an inherent “fuck the police” mentality amongst most convicts, but there is also no shortage of suck-ups and snitches, who would gladly help the guards convince inspectors we are being treated fairly, in exchange for slightly longer leashes and larger cages. They have volunteers work all night until 3AM for days, but no amount of buffing floors and repainting walls can cover up the ugly, dehumanizing reality of mass incarceration.

The day the inspectors arrive, the officials and counselors are all dressed up and, although they remain bossy and inconsiderate as ever reminding us to clean up, you could tell they are slightly worried, as even they have masters higher up in the food chain they must serve. They whisper amongst themselves, “When they come try to steer them away from tier 11.” And just like the inspections six months ago, they tell us to have people pretend to use each of the six showers so the inspectors will be unable to examine them. And since both the prison officials and the inspectors do not live here, they will not experience the rat and cockroach infestations that only come out at night. Obviously, we are never given an opportunity to address our grievances with the inspectors, and there is an expectation of retaliation if one attempts to do so.

As it turns out, the inspectors never visit our unit – all our work for nothing. Days later, still no TVs or boardgames. The one washing machine, broken weeks before the storm hit, has still not been fixed, but at least hot water has returned so we can do our laundry by hand. Life here has more or less returned to “normal” - as normal as locking up millions of people can be.

In the end MCC was not the hit by Hurricane Sandy any worse than other folks on the east coast. The BOP had just one more opportunity to demonstrate their disrespect and lack of concern for our well-being. As the climate continues to change due to capitalism's rampant destruction of the environment, we can expect more frequent and devastating natural disasters on the way. Like New Orleans, New Yorkers are experiencing that often the most effective relief does not come from the City, police, or FEMA, but from grassroots community groups (such as Occupy Sandy,) working together in solidarity with those most affected (especially those who cannot afford expensive professional cleanup services). Very frightening to consider what would happen to us prisoners – already disenfranchised, silenced, marginalized, and forgotten – in the event of a more devastating natural disaster.

There's a universal consensus here - “they'd probably leave us to die.”

4 Dec - Climate Activist DeChristopher Barred From "Social Justice" Work

Yes, that's right—DeChristopher is barred from doing anything that might be construed as acting against injustice, because that's the whole reason they put him in jail in the first place.

MORE:

Blue Marble readers will recall the [story of Tim DeChristopher](#), a Utah climate activist who posed as a bidder at a December 2008 Bureau of Land Management auction. DeChristopher was the highest bidder on thousands of acres of public land, much of which bordered national parks and monuments. The 27-year-old bid \$1.79 million on more than 22,000 acres that he had no intention of actually buying. The government [took a hard line](#) on his act of protest, bringing him up on felony charges for mucking up the auction. DeChristopher ended up with a [two-year prison sentence](#) and a \$10,000 fine.

After serving 15 months in [federal prison](#), DeChristopher is now living in a halfway house. (He's eligible for parole in April.) He's also allowed to work and intended to take a job with the social justice program at the local First Unitarian Church. But the feds intervened, [the Deseret News reports](#):

DeChristopher had been offered a job with the church's social justice ministry, which would include working with cases of race discrimination, sex discrimination or other injustices that fall contrary to Unitarian beliefs.

"The Bureau of Prisons official who interviewed Tim indicated he would not be allowed to work at the Unitarian church because it involved social justice and that was what part of what his crime was," [DeChristopher's attorney Patrick] Shea said.

The newspaper reports that he's taken a job as a clerk at bookstore instead.

4 Dec - 3 Arrested at Keystone XL Blockade

On December 3rd, three folks climbed inside a mile-long section of the Keystone XL pipeline under construction in east Texas. Although they had barricaded themselves between two huge barrels of concrete, the police forcibly removed them earlier the next afternoon.

MORE:

Glen (and friends, Matt and Isabelle) are still being held (day 10) in Smith County Jail on an illegal bail of \$65,000 each.

Glen is doing alright in jail. We are keeping him supplied with books to read to fill the time. He is on his 4th book – he's currently re-reading Game of Thrones. He has also been receiving "lots of letters," thanks to everyone for the support.

Today is haircut day – so he'll have a nice new do when he gets out. He is hoping that will be soon.

Great news!!! All three now have lawyers! A local Texas lawyer wrote to the three of them in jail and offered to represent them, along with two other local lawyers. Glen has met with his lawyer and is hoping to move the process along quickly.

Thanks to everyone who has supported Glen, Matt and Isabelle!

And to remember why Glen took this action...

"I'm barricading this pipe with Tar Sands Blockade today to say loud and clear to the extraction industry that our communities and the resources we depend on for survival are not collateral damage. This fight in East Texas against tar sands exploitation is one and the same as our fight in the hollers of West Virginia. Dirty energy extraction doesn't just threaten my home; it threatens the collective future of the planet."

UPDATE: Our 3 brave friends that barricaded themselves into a section of KXL pipe are being held in the Smith County Jail on an outrageous and illegal \$65,000 bail each. The charges are criminal trespass, resisting arrest, and illegal dumping, all of which are misdemeanors. Lawyers are working to fight this illegal bail amount.

Supporting those who choose to risk arrest and are given jail time is a critical component of direct action. Jail is oppressive, dehumanizing, and boring. Your messages of love and support will help lift their spirits.

Send letters to Glen Scott David Collins, Matt Almonte and Isabel Brooks!

Inmate's full name
C/O Smith County Jail
206 E. Elm
Tyler, Texas 75701

Letters must have a return address with a full name. Each letter can go to only one inmate, so mail three different ones! Letters can be no larger than 12" by 15". The only things which can be enclosed are 4 or fewer unframed photos no larger than 4" by 5". Be mindful that the authorities will likely be reading your letter.

This morning Matt Almonte and our very own Glen Collins climbed inside a mile-long section of the Keystone XL pipeline under construction in east Texas. Although they had barricaded themselves between two huge barrels of concrete, the police forcibly removed them earlier this afternoon.

Glen's arrest follows weeks of collaboration between RAMPS members and the Tar Sands Blockade. Those fighting Tar Sands Strip Mining in Canada and the infrastructure that will transport the oil from there are members of a brave and desperate global anti-extraction movement.

RAMPS stands in solidarity with movements that resist the corporations that put profit before people, that have positioned themselves to destabilize our climate and destroy our planet. We support movements around the nation directly, with our bodies; solidarity is most strongly demonstrated with actions, not only in lip service.

Please support the bold fight against the Keystone XL Pipeline. You can follow their struggle on their website and learn more about Glen's experience on ours as soon as he's out of jail: <http://tarsandsblockade.org/14th-action>

5 Dec - Camille Marino sentenced to 6 months

Animal liberation activist Camille Marino was recently sentenced to six months in jail for what the state deems harassment of a Wayne State University vivisector. We've included a corporate news piece about it below. Read with a critical eye.

MORE:

Camille Marino of Wildwood, Fla., was sentenced in Wayne County Circuit Court by visiting Judge Bryan Levy to the jail term as well as three years' probation under a plea agreement with prosecutors.

Marino pleaded guilty last month to unlawful posting of a message with aggravating circumstances and trespassing for harassing Donal O'Leary, who does cardiovascular research involving animals at WSU. A count of aggravated stalking was dismissed, court records say.

O'Leary sought a personal protection order against Marino in October 2011 after she published his home address and comments about him on a "Negotiation is Over" blog and other Internet sites. The researcher subsequently received emails from animal rights activists, including Marino, that led him to fear for his safety.

Marino argued she has a right to political speech, which is protected under the First Amendment.

Levy barred Marino from having contact with O'Leary, his relatives and the university. She must also remove any known photographs of O'Leary and postings on social networking sites containing his personal email or home address, nor can she encourage any third parties to post about the university or O'Leary online, he said.

Once Marino is released from jail, she may return to Florida. If she violates the probation terms, she'll be incarcerated in the Michigan Department of Corrections for up to five years, Levy warned.

Both Marino and O'Leary declined to speak Wednesday about the sentence.

The university, in a statement released Wednesday, said: "We're pleased that Ms. Marino is being held accountable for her irresponsible behavior. Wayne State continues to support Dr. O'Leary and remains dedicated to the protection of its faculty."

Marino's attorney, Matt Savich, told the judge that Marino "may still be involved in the animal rights

movement" and "may talk about the case."

"People follow her and want to know what happened to her in this case," he said, inquiring if such an act would violate probation.

Levy told Savich that Marino does have the right to free speech; however, she cannot direct or encourage others to contact O'Leary.

"If she does so, by suggestion, email or carrier pigeon ... that's going to be a problem," Levy said, addressing the defendant.

"Ms. Marino, do not encourage that. If there is an encouragement, it's going to come back to you."

The 48-year-old was arrested in Florida in February and later extradited to Michigan for violating the protection order and was instructed to remove statements about O'Leary from the sites.

Wayne County prosecutors levied criminal charges against Marino in May after she chained herself to the front door of the university's undergraduate library to protest being banned from campus.

She was arrested the same day she was expected in court over O'Leary's protection order.

In July, a district court judge sent Marino to jail and increased her bond after she violated the conditions of her release by continuing to post about O'Leary online.

Savich noted in court Wednesday that his client also has a criminal case pending in New Mexico.

5 Dec - SFPD subpoenas organizers' Twitter accounts

Two of the nineteen demonstrators arrested in SF at the Columbus Day protest received word last week that their Twitter accounts have been subpoenaed by the San Francisco Police Department for the State of California. The two are a part of the Anti-colonial Anti-capitalist 19 (ACAC 19), a group of protesters initially charged with felony conspiracy and felony inciting a riot on October 6, 2012, at a march in downtown San Francisco. We're including other updates on their case here as well.

MORE:

"This invasion of privacy is part of a current wave of political repression on the West Coast," stated Marion Delgado, a member of the ACAC 19's support committee. "The federal Grand Jury investigations in the Pacific Northwest and this attempt to stop us from using social media are connected. We've been attacking capitalism; they're attacking back." In April of this year, a prior attempt to gain Twitter records from an Occupy Wall Street participant, Malcolm Harris, saw Twitter fight the subpoena in court for several months. Harris was accused of using the social media tool as he was arrested on the Brooklyn Bridge on October 1, 2011 with 700 other OWS community members.

"This is not the first time the online information network has been used as a resource for state repression of political activity. This is a part of an ongoing effort to chill political movements in the Bay Area and beyond," Delgado continued.

The ACAC 19 were arrested during a march which occurred as part of a West Coast Anti-Colonial, Anti-Capitalist Convergence. Organizers of the convergence stated that they wished to draw attention to resource extraction, the poisoning of the Earth, the genocide of Indigenous peoples through the Columbian Exchange, and the proliferation of present-day colonial projects, such as the Israeli occupation of Gaza. Members of the ACAC 19 have documented injuries including a broken nose, deep facial cuts requiring stitches, and multiple hematomas which the ACAC 19 state are the result of being beaten by the SFPD during their arrests. Despite being charged with multiple felony counts and being held on a total of over \$735,000 in bail, the DA has since filed only misdemeanor charges against the defendants. Shortly after the arrests on October 6, SFPD released the mug shots and the home addresses of the ACAC 19 to media outlets, along with allegations not substantiated by the provided evidence or charges. As a result, some members of the ACAC 19 found threatening leaflets in their

neighborhood with their home addresses and photos printed on them.

At least one member of the ACAC 19 has also experienced police harassment at their workplace in the past month. Members of the ACAC 19 have filed motion to quash these Twitter subpoenas in a San Francisco misdemeanor court this Friday. Their trial is expected to begin early next year. They deny all charges and have maintained their previous political efforts.

6 Dec - Extraordinary Confinement

We're pasting a new article about PFC Manning from Counterpunch below, as well as other relevant updates and articles.

MORE:

In the summer of 2009, when the military brig at Quantico transitioned from a “Level One” facility to a 30-day pre-trial facility, few would have pegged it as the first choice of locations to house the man accused of one of the most significant leaks of classified government documents in United States history. And yet, that’s precisely where PFC Bradley Manning wound up after a late-night, unexplained transfer from his crude cell in Kuwait’s Camp Arifjan.

Throughout this week, military officers of various levels and brig staff presented exhaustive testimony about the inconsistent and poorly documented care PFC Manning was afforded given the facility’s infrastructure. While discussion of Quantico’s resources and expertise may pale in comparison to some of the treatment Manning endured during his nine-month stay, much of defense attorney David Coombs’ arguments this week concentrated on how his client’s mere placement at the Northern Virginia brig set the stage for disaster.

Manning’s imminent arrival at Quantico in late July 2010 prompted discussions between former Security Battalion Commander Robert G. Oltman and Gen. Flynn, in which Oltman articulated how inadequate the detention center was for the task. “It had been a while since we’d been inspected,” he told the court earlier this week, describing an overdue need to identify shortcomings and ensure Quantico was in regulation. Manning constituted a “drain of resources” for the brig, testified Oltman, who noted, “we don’t have the long-term resources for prisoners.”

In the course of the transition, Quantico’s inmate population dropped significantly, with prisoners being “turned away” due to capacity. Staff at the brig, meanwhile, shrunk from 79 to 44. When protests began flaring up outside the base in January of 2011, heightened security measures made for added duties and stress to brig staff—a situation some say may have translated into rough treatment for Manning.

According to Oltman, Quantico was not fully equipped for pre-trial staples, even including some amenities PFC Manning would have gladly done without, such as audio recording devices in the visitation area.

Even forgiving minor details, such as military code that varyingly discourages or outright bans, pre-trial confinement beyond one year, Quantico also suffered from scant resources where extended confinement is concerned. During a cross examination with Prosecutor Ashden Fein, the former Security Battalion Commander inventoried basics the brig had in place, such as hot meals, routine medical care, and limited exercise areas, describing a facility capable of meeting its core function but unprepared for the challenging job of long-term incarceration. One brig psychiatrist, Captain William Hoctor, had made do since 2009 without a computer, using phones that worked only by holding exposed copper wires together by hand for a dial tone and live line.

If Hctor's office conditions sound scant, his working relationship with higher brig staff and command weren't much better, according to this week's testimony. Staff Sergeant Ryan Jordan described Hctor's visits to the brig as a "whirlwind"—a sentiment echoed by Gunnery Sergeant Craig Blenis later that same day. According to brig Officers-in-Charge (OICs), Hctor's recommendation notes (which strongly pressed that Manning be removed from Prevention of Injury status) lacked what they considered sufficient elaboration. Meanwhile, both Blenis and Jordan recounted incidents where Brig Commander James Averhart shared his distrust in Hctor's job performance. Neither of the prosecution's two witnesses, however, were able to explain why Hctor—who reads as noticeably professional and compassionate on the stand—was never provided critical feedback nor relieved of his duties.

While Dr. Hctor may not have scored particular favor from Quantico bigwigs, Brig Commander Colonel Daniel Choike's sense of professionalism seems more liberal, given this week's testimony, wherein emails between him and brig OICs exchanged jokes about stripping Manning of his "panties" and rejecting his mail because "we felt like dicks."

So, it seems Quantico was a curious choice to house a high-profile detainee that military top brass was already aware would attract intense public, political, and media scrutiny. The decision is even more baffling considering some of the correspondence between Col. Choike and Lt. Gen. Flynn, who described Choike's newest guest as a "young man with a lot on his plate" whose "life has fallen apart," requiring suicide-watch status. Despite the demanding level of resources this implies, Quantico was getting by on a revolving cast of part-time, visiting mental health care providers. This proved problematic in March 2011 when a simple scheduling issue sent brig officials scrambling in a "full court press" just to secure another of Manning's regular psychiatrists, Col. Rick Malone. Roughly eight months since Manning's arrival, Quantico had yet to hire one full-time mental health professional.

Such inadequacies point to Quantico's main function as a short-term facility better equipped for out-processing inmates bound for discharge or other locations. The severity of Manning's charges, as well as the complexity of the government's developing case, quickly suggested an extended, two-year detainment. Housing a detainee beyond 30 days, however, according to Oltman's testimony, was beyond the brig's means.

Col. Choike's assessment that Manning should not be detained at Quantico for more than 90 days, meanwhile, wound up still six months shy of the ultimate duration of Manning's detainment at the Virginia brig—an amount of time at least two military psychiatrists agreed could be harmful to anyone's health, given the confinement conditions. Although Choike's timeline stretched farther than others, even he felt strongly enough about Quantico's inadequacy to raise this issue with superiors such as Gen. Flynn. Judge Denise Lind herself sought clarification in court this week, asking Oltman about the facility's capability of accommodating detainees for three months, let alone six or more.

The effect of this pairing amounted to something of a square peg forced into a round hole, leaving Manning confined to a 6×8-foot cell for up to 23 hours a day in conditions garnering international outcry from supporters, as well as human rights advocates ranging from Amnesty International, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Juan Mendez, Archbishop Emeritus and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu, director Michael Moore and "Pentagon Papers" whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg.

Throughout his roughly nine months at Quantico, the already meager dimensions of Manning's incarceration were exacerbated by the intense administrative restrictions of his Suicide and Prevention-of-Injury statuses, which brig psychiatrists consistently criticized as lacking sound clinical basis.

When Manning was finally transferred to Fort Leavenworth in April 2011, his new brig's commander Lt. Col. Dawn Hilton testified the move was ordered because her facility could better meet PFC Manning's requirements. The comparably new Fort Leavenworth brig, in stark contrast to Quantico, was designed with long-term pre-trial confinement in mind.

Manning's sudden change of circumstance represented a drastic improvement in his quality of confinement due to Leavenworth's sophisticated level of medical care, permanent, in-house mental health providers, and an extensive, segregated area for pre-trial detainees, featuring 8×10-foot cells designed for 35 square feet of unencumbered living space, as well as windows and natural light.

Coincidentally, within two months of Manning's transfer, directives from Marine headquarters restructured their classification and assignment systems at Quantico to allow for a prevention-of-injury status outside of the taxing maximum custody category.

December 8th - New York Times Finally Shows Up to Cover Bradley Manning Proceedings (And Their Story Is Sloppy)

Amidst growing criticism, including [an editorial](#) from the newspaper's public editor, the *New York Times* sent reporter Scott Shane to cover military court proceedings in the case of Pfc. Bradley Manning, the soldier currently being prosecuted by the government for allegedly providing classified information to WikiLeaks.

Shane's story, "In WikiLeaks Case, Defense Puts the Jailers on Trial," is to be momentarily lauded because finally the "newspaper of record" showed up after nearly a year of proceedings to finally cover Manning's case. However, as someone who has covered this closely, it is pretty sloppy.

Shane, who collaborated with Charlie Savage on the article, wrote:

...Mr. Coombs is hoping the court will at least give Private Manning extra credit against any ultimate sentence for the time he spent held under harsh conditions at Quantico and earlier in Kuwait, where he was kept in what he described as "an animal cage."...

The defense is *not* seeking any relief for "unlawful pretrial punishment" that may have occurred in Kuwait. Though what Manning described from the witness stand sounded harsh and inhumane, after the government tried to bring a motion to have a prosecution witness testify on the conditions of Manning's confinement in Kuwait, the defense made it clear they were not interested in challenging how the government treated Manning in Kuwait during the current hearing.

Shane and Savage incorrectly noted:

...As if to underscore the gravity of his legal predicament, Private Manning offered last month to plead guilty to lesser charges that could send him to prison for 16 years. Prosecutors have not said whether they are interested in such a deal, which would mean they would have to give up seeking a life sentence for the most serious charges: aiding the enemy and violating the Espionage Act...

That is not true, but Shane and Savage could not know it was not true because they have not been regularly attending the proceedings.

Prosecutors said on the first day of the "unlawful pretrial punishment hearing" that the United States government could not support Manning's "conditional plea." Furthermore, if they had consulted the website of Manning's defense lawyer, David Coombs, they may have described the plea accurately because Coombs [stated](#) a month ago:

...PFC Manning is not submitting a plea as part of an agreement or deal with the Government. Further, the Government does not need to agree to PFC Manning's plea; the Court simply has to determine that the plea is legally permissible...

Shane apparently talked to a few Manning supporters and may have even spoken to NSA whistleblower Thomas Drake and Jesselyn Radack of the Government Accountability Project. They both attended the proceedings on Friday when CWO2 Denise Barnes testified about the final months of Manning's confinement at Quantico. However, he only was at the proceedings for the first couple hours and missed most of Coombs' cross-examination that went over six hours and was not finished when the court finally went into recess.

What he wrote about Barnes' testimony was the following:

Chief Warrant Officer Denise Barnes, who was in charge of the brig for the last four months of Private Manning's time there, said that the soldier declined her many requests to describe his emotional state in detail. Because of some odd behavior and two previous statements he had made that flagged him as a suicide risk, she said she was unwilling to change his status — despite the advice of military psychiatrists — **until he opened up to her about how he was feeling.**

Over the months she spent with him, speaking briefly with him each day, **he grew less communicative and more monosyllabic**, Ms. Barnes said.

“He did not clearly communicate to me, ‘I don’t want to kill myself,’ ” she said. “There was never an intent to punish Pfc. Manning.”

Ms. Barnes referred in passing to online attacks on her earlier this year by activists, one of whom called her a “sexual sadist.” She said she had no ill will against Private Manning “even though I was threatened and my family’s information was put out on the Internet.” [emphasis added]

Why didn’t Manning communicate with CWO2 Barnes and other officers in the Brig? Nobody would ever know from reading this article because the entire piece fails to mention how she was the commanding officer who [made the improper decision](#) to impose “special handling instructions” on Manning that forced him to sleep without his underwear from March 2, 2011, until he was transferred from Quantico to Leavenworth on April 20. (Shane & Savage would have been able to include material on this decision in their article if Shane had stayed for the full day of proceedings or if Savage had done a cursory Google search for information on CWO2 Barnes and Manning).

Shane mentioned that CWO2 Barnes brought up “online attacks.” He noted that one of those attacks had called her a “sexual sadist.” FDL editor-in-chief Jane Hamsher [referred to her as a “sexual sadist”](#) in a headline back in March 2011 right after the Brig started to take Manning’s underwear from him every night. There is no way anyone reading would know why this was said at the time because Shane and Savage do not mention any details on why she decided to deprive Manning of his underwear each night after March 2.

*

Radack, in [a post](#) deconstructing the *Times* story, wrote, “After Barnes’ direct testimony, I heard Shane remark that ‘she seemed pretty credible.’ If he had attended the prior 8 days of the hearing, or had stuck around another 6 hours, he would have seen that ‘credibility’ shattered.”

She continued, “If Shane had bothered to stay for the next 6 hours, he would have seen a haughty low-rank Chief Warrant Officer with a chip on her shoulder (she was the most junior person to ever run a brig; if anything bad happened to Manning, it would ruin her career; etc.), who flouted prison regulations in favor of her own ‘personal opinion.’”

David Leonhardt, the Washington bureau chief of the *Times*, in an email to the *Times* public editor wrote, “We’ve covered him and will continue to do so. But as with any other legal case, we won’t cover every single proceeding.” They had not covered any of the proceedings since December 2011, when they sent a reporter to Fort Meade on the first day of his Article 32 hearing (when government made its case that the charges against him should be referred to a court martial).

Leonhardt continued, “Doing so would have involved multiple days of a reporter’s time, for a relatively straightforward story.” It is not straightforward. This is not just a simple case of whether an officer made a decision to mistreat Manning and now the defense is challenging it because that is what one would expect from counsel defending a soldier facing prosecution. Through emails, the defense uncovered correspondence from officials as high in the chain of command at the Marine Corp Headquarters who were in on minute decisions about how to handle Manning’s confinement. It was entirely extraordinary and they were involved in keeping him on prevention of injury status arbitrarily for a long period of time, which is also unheard of in military brig.

The Washington bureau chief additionally stated, “The AP article recounting the main points of Mr. Manning’s testimony about his conditions of confinement that ran on page A3 of The Times conveyed fundamentally the same material as a staff story would have.”

It is clear the *Times* reporters and the AP would not necessarily report the same *fundamental* details. The AP story did not fail to mention Barnes’ role in deciding to take Manning’s underwear from him at night.

The *Times* benefited from publishing stories on information which Manning allegedly released. His confinement

in Quantico, especially between January 2011 and April 2011, was when this case was generating the most amount of media attention. It was when the public was beginning to get to know the story of Bradley Manning. But if the *Times* does not wish to acknowledge this history and accurately and properly conduct responsible journalism, they should just keep farming out coverage to the *AP*.

At least the *AP* is there every day and has an awareness of the intricacies of the case. From the looks of this article, it is hard to tell what Shane or Savage actually know about the story they are trying to inform the American public about.

December 10th - PFC. Manning named Guardian UK's person of the year

Forget the Olympics, mummy porn, particle physics, elections galore and the bravery of a young Pakistani girl. The [Guardian's 2012 person of the year vote](#) has concluded and the winner, after some rather fishy voting patterns that belied earlier reader [comments on the poll](#), is [Bradley Manning](#), the US whistleblower on trial for leaking state secrets.

It was very much a game of two halves. The overwhelming majority of early votes in the three-day poll went to [Malala Yousafzai](#), the 14-year-old Pakistani girl shot by the Taliban for defending girls' right to education. Malala, who is still recovering from injuries sustained in October, had 70 percent of votes at the halfway stage with many readers predicting a foregone conclusion. "What that kid did really focussed the world on the evil that these men can do - and what evil all people can do when they feel inclined. But it also showed the courage to pull through and the will of others to not succumb to evil," [wrote jamieTWC1](#).

But in the latter stages, following a series of tweets from the [@Wikileaks](#) twitter handle [telling followers to vote Manning](#), thousands of voters flocked to his cause. Manning secured 70 percent of the vote, the vast majority of them coming after a series of [@Wikileaks](#) tweets. Project editor Mark Rice-Oxley said: "It was an interesting exercise that told us a lot about our readers, our heroes and the reasons that people vote."

December 13th – Manning's long quest for justice (Amy Goodman)

Pfc [Bradley Manning](#) was finally allowed to speak publicly, in his own defense, in a [preliminary hearing of his court martial](#). Manning is the alleged source of the largest intelligence leak in US history. He was an intelligence analyst in the US army, with top secret clearance, deployed in [Iraq](#). In April 2010, the whistleblower website [WikiLeaks](#) released a [US military](#) video of an Apache helicopter in Baghdad killing a dozen civilians below, including two Reuters employees, a videographer and his driver.

One month after the video was released, Manning was arrested in Iraq, charged with leaking the video and hundreds of thousands more documents. Thus began his ordeal of cruel, degrading imprisonment in solitary confinement that many claim was [torture](#), from his detention in Kuwait to months in the military brig in Quantico, Virginia. Facing global condemnation, the US military transferred Manning to less abusive detention at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

As he now faces 22 counts in a court martial that could land him in prison for the rest of his life, his lawyer argued in court that the case should be thrown out, based on his unlawful pre-trial punishment.

[Veteran constitutional attorney Michael Ratner](#) was in the courtroom at Fort Meade, Maryland, that day Manning took the stand. He described the scene:

"It was one of the most dramatic courtroom scenes I've ever been in ... When Bradley opened his mouth, he was not nervous. The testimony was incredibly moving, an emotional rollercoaster for all of us, but particularly, obviously, for Bradley and what he went through. But it was so horrible what happened to him over a two-year period. He described it in great detail in a way that was articulate, smart, self-aware."

Ratner said Manning described being kept in a cage in Kuwait:

"There were two cages. He said they were like animal cages. They were in a tent alone, just these two cages, side by side. One of them had whatever possessions he may have had; one of them, he was in, with a little bed for a rack and a toilet, dark, in this cage for almost two months."

Ratner quoted Manning from his testimony, recalling his words:

"For me, I stopped keeping track. I didn't know whether night was day or day was night. And my world became very, very small. It became these cages."

Ratner added: "It almost destroyed him."

After Kuwait, Manning was shipped to a brig in Quantico. Manning's civilian defense attorney, [David Coombs](#), [said earlier this month](#):

"Brad's treatment at Quantico will forever be etched, I believe, in our nation's history, as a disgraceful moment in time. Not only was it stupid and counterproductive. It was criminal."

The United Nations special rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez, attempted to visit Manning, but then refused when the military said it could surveil and record the visit. He reported:

"Solitary confinement is a harsh measure which may cause serious psychological and physiological adverse effects on individuals regardless of their specific conditions."

Manning's cruel treatment was described by officials as necessary, as he was a suicide risk. Yet navy Capt William Hocter, a forensic psychiatrist at Quantico, said he was no such risk, but was ignored. Hocter testified:

"I had been a senior medical officer for 24 years at the time, and I had never experienced anything like this. It was clear to me they had made up their mind on a certain cause of action, and my recommendations had no impact."

This first phase of the court martial, which Coombs calls "the unlawful pretrial punishment motion phase", considered a defense motion to throw out the entire case. While that is unlikely, observers say, the defense asked, as an alternative, that the court consider crediting Manning with 10 days' reduction from any eventual sentence for each day he spent suffering cruel and degrading punishment in Kuwait and Quantico, which could, in theory, trim six years from his prison time.

Bradley Manning is charged with releasing the WikiLeaks trove of documents, which included the Baghdad massacre video, two separate, massive tranches of documents relating to US military records from the Iraq and [Afghanistan](#) wars, and, perhaps most importantly, the huge release of more than 250,000 US State Department cables, dubbed "Cablegate". In an August 2010 assessment, then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said the document release "has not revealed any sensitive intelligence sources and methods compromised by the disclosure."

Manning has offered to plead guilty to releasing the documents, but not to the more serious charges of espionage or aiding the enemy.

Manning turns 25, in prison, 17 December, which is also the second anniversary of the day a young Tunisian set himself on fire in protest of his country's corrupt government, sparking the Arab Spring. A year ago, as Time magazine named the protester as the "Person of the Year", legendary Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg offered praise that rings true today:

"The Time magazine cover gives protester, an anonymous protester, as 'Person of the Year,' but it is possible to put a face and a name to that picture of 'Person of the Year.' And the American face I would put on that is Private Bradley Manning."

10 Dec – Insurrection=Liberation by Walter Bond

Animal Liberation Front prisoner Walter Bond has a new piece that we're pasting below.

MORE:

The Animal Rights movement has a romantic love affair with the ALF on one side, and a public image problem with the ALF on the other. The old guard version of this romanticizing is understandable and I think justified....To a certain extent. The 80's ALF was largely engaged in lab and fur farm raids and getting video

footage otherwise unseen by the public into view. The ALF of the 80's and early 90's enjoyed a level of support and shelter from the aboveground that was to change by the late 90's. Largely due to federal grand juries and corporate intimidation. A separation of the wheat from the chaff occurred and many groups that wished to save their asses from prosecution or grow their Animal welfarism into an incredibly lucrative business began to denounce those they once held so high.

Simultaneously the ALF began escalating tactics and in many instances attacking the property of those that use and abuse Animals, a most logical and tactical approach given the hell and torture that Animals endure from machines and buildings of murder, even though it's not an evening news friendly approach. Some yearn for the days of yesteryear and a return to the romantic ALF. Others have turned to insurrectionary anarchism in the name of Total Liberation. The international Total Liberation freedom fighters seems to grasp far better than the american liberation spectators that escalation of tactics is the proper response to torture, slaughter, species genocide, environmental destruction, racism, sexism, queer bashing, class discrimination or corporate domination.

Why are we so fucking hung up on this 1960's model of protestation? I remember going to the DNC back when it came to Denver. There on capital hill I watched Ward Churchill give a nice speech. I watched the band Dead Prez play and heard a nice speech from them as well. I watched several people talk a real good game and play radical dress up games with their black bandannas. Then everyone walked across town (under police escort) chanting slogans and holding up peace signs. Then as we approached 'ground zero' everyone sat down and started singing a bunch of pre-rehearsed anthems about peace and overcoming and patchouli and nag champa and whatever else hippies are into! All courtesy of a group called 'recreate 68'. Then the anarchists took to the streets. They walked around and chanted slogans as well. I went home bored of all the charade.

But this is still our basic model for what ridiculously passes as resistance whether it's Animal, Earth, human or political protest. Stand in front of a building, let the police photograph you, yell at the building (a purely symbolic gesture, as any prisoner can verify. We yell at walls every day for years and they don't go away). Kiss the medias ass or at least hope they take notice. Wonder how many of your 'comrades' are really FBI agents. and then wait and see if the systems media validates you. This standardized form of protest is an outlet. Just like when you find yourself in suburban neighborhoods. Everywhere you turn you run into a cul-de-sac. It's the same concept with resistance. The powers that be know that they cannot stop people from consternation and resistance. So they grab a hold of the contexts that surround it. So as to redirect what the corporations deem a threat into harmless avenues.

And we fall for it, over and over again. We surf the net, play with our ipads and phones until the god damed phone knows us far better than our loved ones do! We spring into action only to have our modus operendi taken, packaged and sold back to us. Instead of risking our life or freedom to tear down the walls, we risk it all to spray paint our name on the wall. Instead of destroying the rapists, the racists, the capitalist or the artifices that entomb all life. we go to workshops, we dance hard in the pit, or fall by the way side ruined and riddled by a worthless fucking needle filled with poisonous drugs!

Liberation, Anarchism and freedom isn't the freedom to buy a bunch of shit you don't need, it's the freedom from having to purchase it in the first place. It's not the freedom to kill yourself slowly with drugs, it's the freedom from the system that induces the depression that makes a toxic death look fun. It's not protesting the system to change it's evil ways it's tearing down the systems evil so that the Earth can grow! It's Smashing a cage, instead of yelling at the walls that contain it! It's living, loving, bleeding and dying! It's fighting against others oppression as if it were our own, because it is, or soon will be if we don't!

The new breed of ALF is more than just a compassionate thief in the night. The New breed of ALF is a subset within a larger worldwide resistance against all authority and repression. We're coming for the Animals, We're coming for the Earth And no wall, fence, building or specieist human oppressor is going to hold us back! We are done with pacifist, theoretical, tutorial, self-serving double talk spun by cowards in ivory towers. With a clear resolve, calculating in our approach and ferocious whether alone or in a pack. Our wolves are coming to protect our kin, and there is no turning back!

11 Dec - George Horton Released on 'Bail Pending Appeal'

George Horton, who was imprisoned on the 28th of September 2012 for 3 counts of attempted mischief, 1 count disguised with intent of crime, 1 count of assault police, 1 count of intimidation of a justice participant by use of violence, (all charges resulting from the Toronto 2010 G20 riots) has been released from the Central North Correction Complex in Penetanguishene, ON on Bail Pending Appeal.

MORE:

Horton who was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment was released yesterday – December 10th – after serving just over 2 months of his sentence. He is appealing the sentencing and convictions of the intimidation of a justice participant, and assault police charges, therefore he was eligible for Bail Pending Appeal. After a brief legal battle (the Crown’s office put in much effort to block Horton from being granted bail) Horton’s appeal lawyer Peter Copeland was able to procure a bail agreement with the courts. Horton has returned to his home town of Peterborough Ontario, and has to follow such bail conditions as: a curfew from midnight to 6:00am, remain in a place of residence during that time (does not have to necessarily be Horton’s residence just a place of residence), cannot go outside of the provinces of Ontario or Quebec, has to report and sign in with Peterborough Police every second Wednesday, and cannot attend any kind of protest or demonstration while wearing a mask or ‘wielding’ what could be considered a weapon. He also has to turn himself back in to the custody of the C.N.C.C (jail) by 6pm the day before his appeal hearing (there is no date yet set for the hearing, but most likely will take place around a year from now). Horton is very happy to be back with his friends and family and his dog Kasey. He releases the following statement:

“Thank you all from the bottom of my heart to all those who have shown me support in my legal battles with the courts. Thank you to all those who sent mail, and reading material while I was incarcerated (someone sent me the book ‘Les Miserables’ by Victor Hugo and I have no idea who sent this, but the book is a perfect jail book due to its themes and subject matter. Also the fact it is a massive book therefore providing lots of reading material. I enjoyed it a huge amount so whoever sent it, thank you). This G20 matter is far from over for me and though I now have to live under what I feel to be pointlessly imposed bail restrictions for a period of time in excess of 10 months, I look forward to the day I over turn these wrongful and excessive convictions. Jail is nothing to fear, though it is a fucked up placed with fucked up politics, at least the jail where I was, was nothing that bad; in the sense one will never go hungry there. A person can sit around all day stuffing ones face with chips and pop gotten off canteen while watching Much Music (which seems to be the only thing ever on the T.V). When I think about what other prisoners throughout history have had to deal with or have to currently deal with in other parts of the world it makes Canada’s incarceration system seem gluttonous and easy (not to say it is still not hard time, one just has to wrap their mind around being there and ‘do their own time’ as the saying goes). I often feel that life is harder for those that live in the streets of say Montreal than those incarcerated within the C.N.C.C. Nonetheless still, fuck jails. Thank you once again for all the support and continued support with my appeals battle which lies ahead. It all means a lot.”

If you would like to send mail to Horton or financial support to his ongoing G20 legal battles, forward it all to the Anarchist Black Cross of Peterborough at:

George Horton
c/o The Anarchist Black Cross of Peterborough
Post Office Box 342
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 6Z3
Canada

11 Dec - Daniel McGowan released from prison!

Earth Liberation Front political prisoner and Rockaway native [Daniel McGowan](#) was released from the Communication Management Unit (CMU) in Terre Haute, Indiana on the morning of December 11th. We're excited to have him home and eagerly await the day that he's fully free of the state (meaning no halfway house or supervised release). We're also including an article written about his release below.

MORE:

He was driven by federal authorities to Indianapolis International Airport, where he met up with his wife.

Though the two have been able to visit during Daniel's imprisonment, today marked the first time in years that they could hug, hold hands, or make any physical contact (save for a few month stint when Daniel was in general population in Marion, Illinois— between the CMU there and the one in Terre Haute). The two flew back to New York City together, where they were met by a small group of close friends at the airport.

From the airport, Daniel had one hour to make it to the halfway house, where he will be living for as long as the next six months. Though he has secured employment, it is unclear when he can start work (at the discretion of the halfway house, not his new employer). Until he has had time to settle in, there are more questions than answers.

After being released from the halfway house, Daniel will be under supervised release for three years.

Regardless, this is great news and we're excited to see our comrade on the other side of the wall.

Please remember that prisoner support doesn't end when a comrade is released. Through halfway houses, supervised release, parole, or probation, there is usually state supervision beyond the initial sentence. Also, prison is traumatic. And of course there is the stigma of being a former prisoner that effects nearly every aspect of one's life. All of this adds up to the less obvious, but equally necessary, support needed when our loved ones come home.

Welcome back, Daniel! We love you!

December 12th - ELF Activist Daniel McGowan Free After 7 Years in "Little Guantanamo"

Earth Liberation Front activist Daniel McGowan, who was the subject of last year's Oscar-nominated documentary ["If A Tree Falls."](#) has been released from federal prison after seven years.

McGowan was one of a dozen underground environmental and animal rights activists with the ELF and its sister movement, the Animal Liberation Front, who were swept up in a two year, multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional investigation called 'Operation Backfire,' which culminated in a series of high-profile arrests and prosecutions at the end of 2005 and beginning of 2006. (Two weeks ago, Rebecca Rubin, one of the three remaining fugitives in the investigation, [turned herself in](#) at the U.S.-Canada border.) The activists were charged with committing a series of arsons and other property crimes against numerous targets that they deemed to be agents of environmental destruction and animal exploitation, including U.S. Forest Service ranger stations, a horse slaughterhouse, a dairy farm, lumber company facilities, SUV dealerships, wild horse corrals, a university horticultural research center, a meat company, and, most famously, the Vail Ski Resort.

Though none of the crimes targeted people nor resulted in human death or injury, the Justice Department wasted little time in publicly declaring the arrestees "terrorists." At a 2006 press conference announcing the defendants' indictments, FBI Director Robert Mueller referred to perpetrators of environmental and animal rights-related crimes as one of the agency's ["highest domestic terrorism priorities."](#) Congress passed [legislation](#) that year specifically singling out animal rights activists for enhanced criminal penalties, classifying property crimes against industries that exploit animals and even, in some contexts, [First Amendment activities](#) directed at agents of those industries, as "terrorism." No such special legislation has ever been passed to selectively brand white supremacists, anti-abortion extremists, anti-immigrant vigilantes and right-wing militias — [all of which](#) have targeted, injured and killed humans — as terrorists.

McGowan was detained in two different prisons, both of them belonging to a category of new experimental facilities called "Communications Management Units," or CMUs (he also spent a brief period of his incarceration in general population). CMUs were built to contain low-level terrorists rounded up in the War on Terror; most of their prisoners are alleged to be connected to Islamic networks. They are designed to severely restrict and control the amount and nature of inmates' communications with the outside world, earning them the nickname among inmates and prison staff of ["Little Guantanamo,"](#) according to journalist Will Potter. For several years, their existence was kept secret. There are only two CMUs in the United States, in Illinois and Indiana; McGowan served time in both.

For the next six months, McGowan will be living in a halfway house in New York City, and then be under

supervised release for three years.

ELF and ALF activists have been demonized by prosecutors, politicians, law enforcement officers and the media as terrorists, sociopaths, ordinary criminals hiding behind an ideology or, at best, naïve kids with overly romantic notions of what it means to fight for a cause. However, a more disinterested, less agenda-driven observer might recognize the near inevitability of their movement's dialectical emergence out of a prevailing political culture that has stubbornly refused to even begin to address some of the most dire and vexing problems facing every living thing on the planet. When mainstream political institutions fail to rise to the scale and urgency of epochal crises like global warming, deforestation or massive species extinction —in some cases, even failing to acknowledge their reality — among those who understand what's at stake, there will be some who are driven to desperate acts.

The ELF and ALF could never be the solution to the problems they point to, but neither are they merely incidental to them: radical movements tend to be harbingers of the struggles to come when ossified political systems bury their heads in the sand rather than measure up to the profound challenges they face and to their own internal contradictions. Rather than vilify McGowan as a terrorist or mythologize him as a martyr for the earth, we should consider his story for what it tells us about a civilization so blind to its circumstances that it provokes individuals to engage in extreme political acts and risk serving years in Little Guantanos in order to do *something* to stem an unfolding catastrophe.

11 Dec - Anonymous's Barrett Brown indicted for sharing a link

Last week a federal grand jury indicted Barrett Brown, the former self-styled spokesman of Anonymous, on 12 charges relating to the Stratfor hack spearheaded by Jeremy Hammond.

MORE:

One of the charges pertains to Brown sharing a link related to the Stratfor hack. It seems that when Anonymous hacked the “global intelligence” firm, they posted it to an Internet Relay Chat (IRC). From there, Brown copied and pasted the archive of compromised Stratfor data (credit card information) from that IRC channel to another. WikiLeaks has steadily published Stratfor documents in the months since as “Global Intelligence Files.”

The [indictment reads](#):

Brown transferred the hyperlink ‘http://wikisend.com/download/597646/Stratfor_full_b.txt.gz’ from the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channel called ‘#AnonOps’ to an IRC channel under Brown’s control called ‘#ProjectPM’...

[B]y transferring and posting the hyperlink, Brown caused the data to be made available to other persons online without the knowledge and authorization of Stratfor Global Intelligence and the card holders.

It's important to note that Brown did not steal, collect or categorize any of the compromised credit card information. He did what many journalists have done in the last few years of Anonymous and WikiLeaks activity: copy and paste a link.

In essence, the government is arguing that the mere linking of hacked information for journalistic purposes should be criminalized. A great trend in democracy and the First Amendment battle, to be sure.

14 Dec - Hancock 15 Drone Resisters Found Guilty

On December 14th, a DeWitt Town Court Judge found eleven of the original fifteen protesters of Reaper drones, guilty of trespass. We're including their press release below.

MORE:

Hancock Air National Guard Base is home of the MQ-9 Reaper drone maintenance and training center, adjacent to Syracuse Airport where soldiers pilot drones used in the extra judicial killings in Afghanistan.

The eleven pro se* defendants argued that their action of civil resistance, of blocking the front gate of the base, on June 28th, was two fold.

First, to present grievances to the government by delivering a War Crimes Indictment, co-authored by former Attorney General of the U.S., Ramsey Clark, indicting Hancock base personnel, up their chain of command to President Obama, of war crimes. Second, to prevent war crimes of: extra judicial killings, killing of innocent civilians, wars of aggressions, and the violation of national sovereignty.

Defendants argued that civil resistance is upholding law, as opposed to civil disobedience which is about changing laws as was done during the civil rights era, through protest.

This action was done in accordance with customary law, which prohibits acts of aggression by all nations.

In his closing argument John Hamilton said, "There is no exception anywhere, for you, for me, for anyone from this overarching legal certainty: acts of aggression are always and everywhere illegal, and must not be ignored by the courts. Extra-judicial murder must be called out and stopped." Using the analogy of extra judicial killings by lynching of African Americans throughout US history, Hamilton stated, "We ask that you take a bold step tonight to end lynching, not in some backwood Alabama town in 1912, but here in Dewitt in 2012. We ask you to find us not guilty of the (trespass) charges.

In Daniel Burgevin's closing, he stated, "I am innocent of trespass. The unlawfulness of trespass is when a hellfire missile enters through the roof of a family's home, exploding and spreading fire and shards of metal through the bodies of the family living inside...That is the unlawfulness and the criminality of trespass."

Judge Jokl did not allow the war crimes indictment into evidence, thus limiting his scope of interpretation to NY State law. Within ten minutes of deliberation the judge found the eleven guilty.

The judge sentenced Ed Kinane and Rae Kramer, of Syracuse, Clare and Ellen Grady, and James Ricks of Ithaca, to 15 days in jail.

Dan Burgevin, Dave McClallen and Nate Lewis of Trumansburg, George and Judy Homanich of Binghamton, and John Hamilton of Ithaca, were all given fines and community service and one year conditional discharge.

Last night Ed Kinane and James Ricks started their 15 day sentence in Onondaga County Jail. The other three report to jail at 5 pm on January 11th, 2012.

On January 10th, 2013, two groups of drone protesters will be in De Witt Town Court to argue motions with their trial dates to be announced possibly that night. On Oct. 25th, 2012, the protesters closed all three gates of the base, blockading it, for two hours and forty minutes.

An order of protection was signed by Judge Jokl on behalf of Col. Earl A. Evans, preventing protesters from going near his "place of employment", or face the penalty of seven years in prison.

15 Dec - No Books For Prisoners, Part 4 by Alex Hundert

2010 Toronto G20 "main conspiracy" prisoner Alex Hundert regularly writes for a blog. We've included his latest below.

MORE:

I did not want to have to write this. I have another post completed that is a call-out for support for the Oshkimaadziig Camp, an Anishinabek reclamation, decolonization, and unity camp located just over twelve kilometers, by foot or vehicle, from this prison on the other side of Penetang Harbor. As a non-native settler, I was planning to implore people to support the camp with funds, supplies, and solidarity. I would much rather

have posted that piece, but it will have to wait until next week.

I did not want to have to write this post because I wanted to be done with having to fight for imprisoned people to have access to books. Though I am still trying to figure out a way to get this prison to expand access to its library, the book cart (at least on our unit) has been moving regularly for a couple months now, and imprisoned people (at least on our unit) have been able to receive books sent in from the outside – at least until this week.

Now, instead of posting a callout for support for the Oshkimaadziig camp, I am forced to write a callout for support in our struggle for access to books for imprisoned people. And that's what this post is – a call for support.

On December 11th an official (Offender) notice, complete with Central North Correctional Centre letterhead, was posted on every range by the guards. I have since discovered that it came straight from one of the managers of the security and investigations department, Martin Krawczyk. Here is what he had to say to us:

“Please be advised that effective immediately and as per Ministry policy, inmates housed at the CNCC who wish to purchase books, periodicals, and or magazines directly from the publisher, must be approved prior to making the order. Canteen provides a selection of 58 magazines and books for purchase. CNCC is equipped with a library and each unit has a library cart that is replenished on an ongoing basis. Inmates must request an inmate request form; addressed to the Superintendent requesting to be approved, and detailing which books, magazine and/or periodical they wish to receive. Inmates will be allowed a maximum of one book, one periodical, and one magazine per month over and in addition to those purchased on canteen or borrowed from the library. Any books that are not approved or exceed the monthly will be returned to sender. Any costs incurred will be at the expense of the inmate. At the discretion of the Superintendent or designate, any material may be redirected if there is reasonable cause to believe that it may offend staff or inmates, jeopardize the security, safety and good order of an institution, the welfare of individuals, or the rehabilitation of inmates.” [sic]

In response to this notice (with which I have some particular grievances that I will detail below) on cell block 5A more than a dozen of us have submitted complaint forms to the provincial ombudsman. The utter lack of accountability and arbitrary (ab)use of authority that are characteristic of this institution (and others) make well known the futility of complaining up the chain of command with the prison. On at least one other range on our unit a group of people are also filing complaints with the ombudsman.

I've since been advised by one of the operations managers (who, in her defense, seems to be a genuinely kind person who has treated me fairly) that I should consider it a victory that at least now senior management has put in writing their recognition and acknowledgement that there is in fact any policy at all that says imprisoned people are entitled to receive books, something that they have until recently attempted to deny.

I am not writing this post to complain or as an update. I am writing to ask for help from the outside in our attempt to have the “policy” as described in the December 11th notice repealed and replaced, with something appropriately less restrictive. What I'm hoping that people will be willing to do is to make a call to the prison to tell them that the “policy” is bullshit (and I will explain why below).

The phone number at the prison is 705-549-9470. Calls should be directed to the Superintendent.

There are several things wrong with security manager Mark Krawczyk's “policy.” I keep putting the word policy in quotations because nowhere in his notice does Krawczyk indicate where the alleged “policy” comes from. It does not match the policy in the Information Guide for Adult Inmates put out by the Ministry, nor does it match anything that I have ever seen in the Ministry of Correctional Services Act or any other prison legislation. If this is in fact a Ministry “policy,” as Krawczyk suggests, it needs to be drastically changed.

With respect to the notion of preapproval, let's put aside momentarily that such a process is unnecessarily restrictive, absurdly bureaucratic, and reeks of fascistic tendencies; it also doesn't work. And for those of us imprisoned here, it feels like an obvious ruse to obscure the intention of preventing prisoners from being able to receive books sent into them from family members or their community support. That said, the aforementioned Information Guide, while saying nothing about maximum limits, does specify a preapproval process. But in a place like this, where people like Krawczyk so routinely abuse their power in such arbitrary ways, while others are simply oblivious to the rules of this institution that they themselves are hired to uphold, that component of

such a policy is an obvious and utter failure.

An anecdote: when I first arrived here, having already familiarized myself with as much provincial prison policy as I could, I did in fact submit a request to get approval to receive a magazine subscription. It was denied. That magazine was not anything militant or even radical; it was *The Economist*. Denied by the Deputy Superintendent of Operations Office with the following explanation: “only approved magazines from the canteen list” [sic]. When I followed up with a request “to discuss decision to contravene policy regarding seizing inappropriate reading material,” an Operations Manager responded as follows: “CNCC provides library books to the unit... You are allowed to order books, however, they are held in your property until you are released.” At that time the library cart on our unit had not actually made rounds for several months. I gave up on the magazine subscription and arranged for people (from the outside) to start sending books (straight from the publisher or distributor) and then calling the prison to pressure them to have the books delivered. I also kept writing installments of *No Books for Prisoners* and the approach seemed to get the books in – until now.

In general, requests to the Superintendent (and other management) are ignored and, as the above anecdote displays, even when they are acknowledged they tend to be summarily and arbitrarily dismissed. I have never heard of someone getting a book “approved” here. Further, while some security streaming does make sense (this is, after all, a maximum security prison), the idea that decisions about censorship based on title and author alone is flabbergasting – it’s not even judging a book by its cover.

The maximum of one book a month is also ridiculous and, as I’ve written, it’s the first time I have ever heard this suggestion. Krawczyk’s “notice” attempts to obscure the punitive authoritarian restrictiveness of this facet of his “policy” by noting that there are “58 magazines and books” on the canteen list. There are less than a dozen book titles on that list, and those have not been rotated since August. The rest are magazines, and reading magazines does not do the same thing for one’s mind that can be achieved from reading books. And while the library is relatively impressive (given that this is, after all, a prison) only people who are enrolled in the education program here are allowed to access the actual library. The book cart does come around regularly now, at least on my unit, as the guards have “hired” me as the “unit librarian.” However, the cart only holds about 150 books, despite there being almost 200 imprisoned people on this unit, and I have only between 5 and 15 minutes to spend in front of each range for up to 32 people to reach through a 6” by 3” slot in the wall to pick books from the cart.

To my mind the one book maximum in Krawczyk’s is cruel and unnecessarily punitive. Why begrudge imprisoned people books? Most of the books sent in to people end up being donated to the library when those people are released. I would think that having books sent in should be encouraged, not restricted.

There are lots of books here. Access to them is atrocious. This is an institutional and institutionalized problem that needs to be corrected. For a few months we were able to have books sent in from the outside. Those of us who are about reading and also have access to people with money who want to send us books, and also have the wherewithal to coordinate this and stand up for ourselves to ensure the books are delivered – a very small number of us – have been getting books sent in regularly, and sharing them with others. Everyone has been reading more. Now Martin Krawczyk has attempted to put a stop to that – I think arbitrarily, and in my opinion, an abuse of his authority.

I am hoping that people will call to tell the Superintendent how absurd and inappropriate this restrictiveness is. If people are unsatisfied with the responses they get, if there is a not a repeal or substantial alteration of this counterintuitive “policy” – after all, Krawczyk’s own notice explicitly mentions the “good order of the institution” and the “rehabilitation of imprisoned people”; things I would imagine facilitated by the reading and sharing of books – or if people are willing to make more than one phone call in support of our struggle for access to books I would encourage people to also call the ombudsman (1-800-263-1830) and/or the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

I had wanted instead to encourage people to support the Oshkimaadziig Camp and the efforts of the people there who are about to enter a long, cold winter outdoors. As a settler, I believe there is no stronger imperative than decolonization and to support and be in solidarity with Indigenous sovereigntists and land defenders. I apologize for having to write this post. Thank you for reading it and for your support.

16 Dec - Open Letter to Obama for Clemency for Oso Blanco

While asking for things from Obama and the state is not at the heart of the strategies we believe in, when a captive freedom fighter chooses to pursue liberation through this avenue and asks for help from supporters, we believe it's appropriate to follow through. Below is an open letter. Use it as a reference in writing your own letter.

MORE:

*NOTE: Address letters to Barack, but *send* them to Through the Walls so they can be sent together in connection with the petition:

Through the Walls
Post Office Box 132
Brooklyn, New York 11218

[date]

[address]

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing on behalf of Mr. Byron Shane Chubbuck, Federal Bureau of Prisons #07909-051, who is petitioning you for Executive Clemency. I am aware that Mr. Chubbuck pled guilty to multiple counts of bank robbery, assault, and other charges. Through research and correspondence with Mr. Chubbuck, I am also aware that, strange as it may sound, even then, Chubbuck was motivated by a desire to financially aid hungry children.

Today, Chubbuck's need to help others manifests itself closer to home and within the law. He very much, and very truly, wants to be a father to his son and to help his sister and his mother who struggle with health issues. For a person driven by humanitarianism, the Federal Bureau of Prisons can only provide so much corrective and rehabilitative influence. After nearly thirteen years, it is time for his rehabilitation to continue to the next chapter—a return to his family and community so that he can begin to contribute to their and his health and well-being.

I am aware that granting a pardon to Chubbuck would involve risk to your own reputation and political career. However that is often the case in a matter of doing the right thing and I believe that you will make every effort to be just in your decision. Thank you for the action you will take.

Sincerely,

[name]

17 Dec - Summary of Maddy's contempt of court hearing

Maddy Pfeiffer, recently found in contempt of court for resisting a grand jury, reports to prison december 28th. We've included a summary of Maddy's contempt of court hearing below.

MORE:

The first part of the hearing was open to the public. Maddy's lawyer argued that privacy had been breached because the affidavit for one of the search warrants had been leaked, and that the grand jury is chilling free speech and freedom of association. The prosecution didn't want to talk about anything because they needed secrecy so the judge kicked out the public.

During the closed part, the prosecution said no, there's no basis for any of those claims, there's no affidavit from the defendant (Maddy) claiming either that they didn't publish the statement being attributed to them or that they are afraid of bodily harm if they were to testify. Also fear of retribution isn't a valid reason to not testify. In regards to the grand jury starting before May Day, the prosecution said the grand jury wasn't investigating anarchists before May Day. The prosecution claimed that Portland anarchists were being followed prior to May

Day for a related but separate investigation, and the July 25th raids were for something other than the grand jury. The hearing was opened up again and the judge rejected Maddy's lawyer's arguments. The judge found Maddy in contempt and told them they have the keys to their own cell – if at any point they choose to be a snitch they will be let out of prison (wouldn't it be nice if they actually had the physical keys to their own cell!). Maddy has to report to SeaTac FDC by 9am on Dec. 26th.

The hearing was closed again, and the prosecutor argued that there is very good reason to believe that Maddy will flee because of actions of others related to the case. The prosecutor said (paraphrasing): "Every day that goes on in this investigation, I am keenly aware of the fact that there are two other people in custody and that weighs heavily on my conscience, and the sooner we can bring this to indictments the sooner this will be over. This investigation is nearing its end and the longer we put things off with postponements the harder it is for us to move forward." The judge said (paraphrase) "you make it seem like convincing this one witness to talk will bring this investigation to indictments. Do you have evidence to indicate that?" Prosecutor said "no I don't." Judge said "I don't care what other people are doing, Maddy has shown up for every court date on time, I have no reason to believe Maddy is a flight risk."

21 Dec - International Remembrance for Avalon

In remembrance of Avalon, to celebrate the release of political prisoner Daniel McGowan and to educate the community on issues of Earth liberation, we ask that collectives, organizations, groups, bookstores, and student clubs organize an event on or around December 21, 2012.

MORE:

Environmental and social justice activist and political prisoner Avalon (state name William C. Rodgers) died on December 21, 2005. A casualty of the "green scare," he committed suicide in jail, writing the following:

"To my friends and supporters to help them make sense of all these events that have happened so quickly: Certain human cultures have been waging war against the Earth for millennia. I chose to fight on the side of bears, mountain lions, skunks, bats, saguaros, cliff rose and all things wild. I am just the most recent casualty in that war. But tonight I have made a jail break—I am returning home, to the Earth, to the place of my origins. Bill, 12/21/05 (the winter solstice.)"

To add your event here, please contact Kim Socha at kimberlyannsocha@gmail.com

26 Dec – "Real Talk" Umoja Event on the Impact of Political Imprisonment

WHAT: Kwanzaa Event hosted by Sekou Odinga Defense Committee

WHEN: 3pm-5pm, Wednesday, December 26th

WHERE: Boys/Girls high School – Fulton Street at Utica Avenue

COST: Free

MORE:

The Kwanzaa Collective and the Sekou Odinga Defense Committee host a "real talk" discussion on "The Impact of Political Imprisonment & Mass Imprisonment on our Families/Communities." Featuring: Safiya Bandele, Yuri Torres, Theresa Shoatz, Sharmin Sadequee and moderated by asha bandele.

For more information, email sekouodingadefensecommittee@gmail.com or call 718.512.5008

31 Dec - Noise Demo Against the Prison Industrial Complex, In Solidarity with PPs and POWs

WHAT: Noise Demo Against the PIC, for the Liberation of PPs + POWs

WHEN: 9:00pm, Monday, December 31st

WHERE: Metropolitan Correction Center (MCC, the federal prison in downtown Manhattan); Pearl Street, [between Cardinal Hayes Place and Park Row](#) (J to Chambers Street or [4/5/6/](#) to City Hall)

BRING: Noisemakers, air horns, drums, anything that is loud!

On the noisiest night of the year in New York City, come help us remind folks locked up that [they are not alone](#). [NYC Anarchist Black Cross](#), in response to an [international call](#) for noise demonstrations outside of prisons, is asking folks to join us outside of the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in Manhattan. Come, not to appeal to authority, speak truth to power, or any other contrivance, but rather to stand arm in arm with comrades and show [direct solidarity](#) to those on the [other side of the wall](#).

The state, writ large, is [targeting anarchists all across](#) the [United States](#) and [abroad](#). This will be both protest and celebration. Let's make it another night in which we show them we're [never scared](#).