



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for February 5th

16 Jan - Post Prison Essay by a former political prisoner

A comrade and former political prisoner wrote the following. It has some triggers in it, so be forewarned.

MORE:

One of the hardest things I have ever had to write.

I once read that Guatemalan revolutionaries had a method of both spreading their insurgency and embracing the humanity of its participants. A group of them would enter a village and request that people meet in the town commons. Once there, the revolutionaries would discuss their lives before joining the people's movement. They would speak of their fears of reprisal, the trauma they had suffered under the current government, and the feelings of powerlessness they had before rising up. Then they would ask the villagers to discuss their everyday lives in Guatemala. One by one the villagers would talk, and by the end they found that they all had similar concerns, trepidation, and weakness. By acknowledging that these emotions were common, they removed the sense of isolation felt by those who wanted to fight the state. They also deepened their sense of comradeship, as well as the numbers of people willing to resist.

The thing about resistance though is that it does not come without a price. Our opponents are powerful. They control the police, the military, the courts, and the legislature. It is easily within their power to kidnap us from our homes, hold us in their prisons, torture our bodies, and even attack our mental and emotional well being. Many of my friends over the last 17 years of my activism have been beaten, jailed, abused, spied on, befriended by agents or informants, and in one case an attempt was made on someone's life. (In the late 90's the break cables were cut to one of Craig Rosebraugh's cars.) The results of enduring and witnessing this repression are predictable but not without complexity.

I was released from prison about three and a half years ago. Soon after I started noticing the symptoms of Post Incarceration Syndrome, a disorder with a working definition available here. I behave in ways that are sometimes inexplicable to me and can't always seem to control those behaviors. I am depressed, have feelings of isolation, and suicidal thoughts that I regularly attempt to control or dampen with drugs and alcohol. At times my anger and frustration in regard to my time at FCI Sheridan manifests in anti-social behaviors or self-isolation. I regularly hurt the people I love, and then the feelings of shame and remorse that result from those actions keep me from seeking help or taking accountability. And then there are the social-sensory deprivation syndrome symptoms. I wake up screaming from nightmares, I can't seem to plan for even the simplest things, I have repressed rage that I can not always adequately control and that occasionally results in minor self harm, and worst of all, I can't always predict the easily foreseeable consequences to my behavior. All of this has led to severe self loathing.

As terrible as all of the above things are, I have an additional issue to deal with. Prison culture is all about victim blaming. If you can't take the pressure of incarceration, it's your fault. If someone hurts you, you shouldn't have been so weak. This attitude can be summarized in a common phrase frequently used by both inmates and B.O.P. administrators: "If you can't handle it you shouldn't have come to prison." All applicable trigger warnings apply to the following paragraph...

While I was behind bars I was repeatedly sexually assaulted by a guard. This was the most trapped I have ever felt, because I knew what would happen if I reported it: He would keep his job, and I would be transferred to another facility where I would have the reputation of either a security "check in" or someone who had "broke weak" when attacked. If I told any of my support team I risked being heard by the staff (who monitored all of my

communications since I was designated as a terrorist,) or having them attempt to intervene. So, I just had to endure months of humiliating “pat downs” that in reality involved a guard grabbing my genitals in an effort to humiliate and dehumanize me.

Attempting to talk to people about this since my release has been awful. Beyond getting past the shame, I have had to deal with the macho response coming from other men in my life, the most common of which is, “Well, I would have killed the guy.” Sure, I’m certain you would have done something that would have guaranteed the continuation of your imprisonment for the rest of your life. This is more victim blaming. The implication is that since I didn’t want to spend the rest of my life behind bars for committing an act of violence against my oppressor I am too weak to be respected. The other response I get from the men I know is silence, or a polite “I’m sorry that happened to you.” They then completely shut down, and usually I stop hearing from them afterwards.

I don’t have a solution to any of what I am experiencing, but I can’t keep it all inside any longer. I suspect that many of us who have done time are suffering through the same things alone in total isolation from other victims. My hope is that by sharing what has happened to me, those of us who are most harmed by the prison industrial complex can begin to organize towards prison abolition while also assisting other survivors.

The last several years have been very hard on me, and the last several days have been among the worst of it. I am not likely to use this account for a little while after posting this because I feel a desperate sense of vulnerability talking about these issues in a public forum. That said, if you have endured incarceration and are feeling any of these same things, please get in touch. I will check my messages again at some point. I want to hear from you, and I am hoping that we can assist each other in overcoming this terrible burden that we carry as former prisoners of this ruthless government. This is our town square, we are the revolutionaries, let us embrace each other and spread our resistance- a resistance that will certainly have a price, but also precious rewards. For revolution, for beauty, for victory, and for healing,

18 Jan - Leonard Peltier's statement on "Idle No More"

Idle No More is an ongoing protest movement originating among the Aboriginal peoples in Canada comprising the First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples and their non-Aboriginal supporters in Canada, and has now grown internationally. Leonard Peltier recently wrote about the movement.

MORE:

Greetings, my Relatives and Friends!

It has come to my attention in the last week or so that a lot of our young people and women especially are standing up in support of our Indigenous Brothers and Sisters in Canada. It really does my heart good to see the activism and concern of the different generations of People coming together. There is great potential for educating those who don’t know about the perils that face our environment.

With personal knowledge I totally understand the difficulties of getting people to take action to bring about change. The direction that the world corporations have taken historically and today have largely been at the expense of the Indigenous People around the world. I encourage anyone who reads these words to become involved as much as possible to stem this tide of environmental destruction taking place.

The health of our environment transcends across all walks of life. If we don’t have healthy water, healthy air, healthy food, and healthy children we will not have a healthy future. That is the law. I can’t say enough how important it is that we communicate and join hands with our Indigenous Brothers and Sisters all over the world. We need to join together to bring about the change of these corporations who trample on our environmental rights.

I encourage you again to seek out the organizations that are already involved in this endeavor, and remain united

with one another. I will encourage all the People that I work with and have worked with to do their part in this struggle. I'll close for now, but in the Spirit of Chief Teresa Spence keep on keeping on, and idle no more!

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse
Leonard Peltier

22 Jan - Life in the Body Dump by Kelly Pflug-Back

Here's the latest writing by Toronto G20 protest prisoner Kelly Pflug-Back. It originally appeared in Fifth Estate magazine.

MORE:

At 47 years of age, Edith Marie Price is a woman who shows more than a few signs of wear. While her mannerisms generally convey a buoyant and carefree geniality, her face's gauntness betrays the ravages of decades of intravenous drug use, poverty, and the inevitable progression of HIV. Even when she laughs, her dark eyes seem to sparkle with the disarming intensity of all that they have seen.

For Edith—or Eedie, as she is known to most of the other residents of the maximum security cell block that she currently calls home—2012 is a very special year. It marks the 30th anniversary of her ride through the revolving doors of Canada's prison system. Since her first conflict with the law at age 17, Eedie has been arrested over 100 times and convicted of 52 offences, all of them drug-related. A long-term opiate user, Eedie once worked in the sex trade to support her addiction. "I had to quit working the streets because I'm gay" she explains. "That, and I realized I could sell drugs instead."

"It's not like I'm out to hurt people," she says of her line of work. "A lot of people come to me—if they're hungry I feed them, if they're sick I take care of them." Much of the reason police target drug dealers, Eedie believes, is that they view those who sell drugs as being responsible not only for the unsightly presence of addiction on the streets, but also for the thefts, robberies and break-and-enters which people who lack other means may commit order to pay for drugs.

Drug dealers, however, are hardly the root cause of crime and addiction in poor communities. In fact, cracking down on trafficking generally escalates levels of street crime, as dealers become more aggressive and reckless in order to make the increased risks worth it for themselves financially—often engaging in violent turf wars and cutting their product with toxic substances to increase weight, resulting in epidemic deaths within the user population.

Drug abuse, Eedie believes, often stems from the emotional and psychological pain of trauma—one of the few commodities that the poor and disenfranchised are allowed to possess in sheer surplus. Like a grotesquely high proportion of women who end up on the streets and in conflict with the law, Eedie's life has been shaped by abuse and neglect. From the age of six, Eedie was prayed upon sexually by her step-father. The abuse was an open secret in their home, known to all but never acknowledged until Eedie became pregnant at 16 and her mother demanded that she get an abortion.

While the high percentage of abuse survivors in the female prison population is clear (a 1999 study carried out at the New York Bedford Hills Correctional Facility put the figure at more than 90%) the institution that houses Eedie and a few hundred other women does nothing to address this in the allegedly rehabilitative structure of its policies and regimen. "The guards here" Eedie tells me, "have no training for dealing with mental health issues. And having been raped is a mental health issue. But how do you go up to a guard and say 'Look, I was abused, I was raped'?"

It was abuse that pushed Eedie to drop out of school in grade eight, confused and alienated by the grim reality of her home life. Unable to bear her father's violence and her mother's denial any longer, she ran away at 17 to live on the streets of Toronto. Her older brother, already a heroin user, was the only person she knew to seek companionship from. "My brother was the first one to put a needle in my arm," she tells me, her eyes welling with tears. "And every time I tell him that, he cries."

While Eedie's drug use itself has not significantly interfered with her ability to work and lead a relatively stable

life, the criminalization of her addiction has. When she moved to Edmonton after earning a forklift operator's license a few years ago, it was not long before local authorities learned of her extensive drug history and began routinely searching her whenever she was spotted downtown. These searches were often coupled with violence—as a deep scar running down her left shin attests—and it was not uncommon for male officers to illegally strip-search her. Now back in Ontario, the searches of Eedie's home and person are no less routine and systematic. A raid of the St. Catherines house where she lives with her wife of 15 years, resulting in the discovery of two prescription opiate pills, is the reason for her current incarceration.

If drug use were not treated as a criminal offence, Eedie feels that she could have had a very different lot in life. With access to safe injection sites and a greater availability of harm reduction services in general, she would not have resorted to using the contaminated needle that infected her with HIV. Without the disruption of frequent periods of incarceration she could have pursued her career interests and become a factory foreman, rather than working in the sex trade against her wishes.

Like many people who grapple with addiction in a society that regards drug dependence as a crime and a moral defect rather than a complex and layered social issue, Eedie's life has been characterized by bitter "if only's"; if only she hadn't developed an addiction, she would not have spent the last 30 years in and out of jail. And if only she'd had love and stability in her childhood instead of violence and isolation, she would not have spent her life carrying the pain that pushed her down the road of drug abuse to begin with.

"When you really get down to the bottom of it," Eedie tells me, "it's because I was raped that I am in this position today. It is because I was raped that the system fucks with me."

It is here that the majority of public criticism relating to the carceral system shows its limitations as gender-biased analysis. Prisons in general may be a way of warehousing the surplus population whose presence on the streets challenges the fundamental myths of capitalism—but the institutions that imprison women in particular are in many ways a different entity. Within a patriarchal society, imprisoning impoverished and marginalized women functions as a sort of return policy, through which broken or defective objects may discretely be disposed of once they have been used to the point where they can no longer serve their allotted purpose. Sex trade workers who rob pimps or attack abusive clients, rape survivors who turn to drugs to escape the pain of post traumatic stress, and underpaid workers who skim off of lecherous bosses may easily be discarded—the inequalities inherent to patriarchal society will continue to produce a seemingly endless selection of newer, more vulnerable, more easily dominated models for the benefit of the consumer class. And when they too become drab, worn out, or scarred to the point of complete disfigurement from over-use, they can join their predecessors in one of the prison system's numerous dumpsites for damaged and rejected goods.

While Eedie's body remains physically confined, she has in many ways attained a level of freedom that many survivors, incarcerated or otherwise, go their entire lives without realizing.

"I didn't go through this for nothing." She tells me, her face hardening with a stony conviction. "Do you know how many people I advise in here? I know this system. I know it like the back of my hand."

Eedie is a woman who has stared back into the faceless gaze of the overseer, studying the drives and motives of the state's judicial apparatus in painstaking detail. She has come to understand and accept that her life's circumstances are the product of complex systems of power and oppression, rather than the simple outcome of her actions as an individual. It is this understanding which has allowed her to free herself from the internalized shame and self-hate that torment so many survivors of abuse, both structural and direct—and that is a freedom no one can take away from her.

23 Jan - DA Withdraws Appeal in Nate Buckley's Case

After nearly two years, Nate Buckley recently had all charges against him dismissed by the presiding judge. Now the District Attorney has decided not to appeal the judge's decision. This is great news for our comrade in Buffalo, New York.

25 Jan - The NATO 5: Manufactured crimes used to paint political dissidents as terrorists

The following article from the Huffington Post does a good job of explaining the state's strategy of entrapping

political dissidents. We've also included an article about the constitutionality of the Illinois terrorism laws being used against the NATO 5 and how it is being challenged by the National Lawyers Guild.

MORE:

A high-stakes game is being played in the United States today called, "To Catch a Terrorist." The public need not worry, though, as the risks are surprisingly low. In this game, the police claim to prevent nefarious terrorist plots, while in reality they're taking credit for foiling the same victimless crimes they themselves manufacture. This deceitful strategy is used primarily on Muslims and Arab-Americans, but a string of recent cases shows how political dissidents are also being entrapped, both figuratively and literally.

Last year, Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez dusted off a rarely used 11-year-old Illinois State terrorism statute and, with great fanfare, charged several dissidents with crimes of terrorism on the eve of a national political protest. The NATO 5, as they became known, have since garnered widespread support in Chicago, across the country, and around the world.

This week marks a dramatic shift in their lengthy prosecution. Attorneys for three of the defendants, most of whom are members of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), will be filing briefs today, January 25th in order to challenge the constitutionality of the state terrorism statute under which four of the activists were originally charged. If the court finds the law to be unconstitutional, the three highest profile cases could go to trial in September with no terrorism charges, fewer felonies to defend against, and facing a far less ominous sentence than the current 40 years in prison.

* * *

Wednesday, May 16th wasn't particularly memorable, except that it fell three days prior to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit, a National Special Security Event (NSSE) held in Chicago from May 19th-21st. It was the first time in 13 years that NATO member states had met on U.S. soil, well before the 9/11 attacks, and the Obama administration funneled millions of federal taxpayer dollars into a massive "security" apparatus to ensure a seamless summit.

Ever since the NSSE designation was established by President Clinton in 1998, it has been synonymous with heavy surveillance and infiltration of political groups, police brutality, preemptive raids and mass arrests. The NATO summit in Chicago last spring would be no exception.

In the dark of night with guns drawn, the police used "no-knock" search warrants to break down the doors of an apartment building in the Bridgeport district of Chicago at approximately 11:30 pm that Wednesday. Unbeknownst to the thousands of anti-NATO activists in the city at the time, and members of the local NLG chapter which was providing legal support for the demonstrations, the police arrested nine activists, seizing computers, cell phones, political literature and other personal belongings from the building. Police also searched neighboring apartments and questioned residents, allegedly repeatedly calling one of the tenants a "Commie faggot."

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) refused to acknowledge they had arrested anyone in Bridgeport that night, let alone divulge where they were being held. It wasn't until the following afternoon that NLG attorneys determined nine activists had been taken to the Organized Crime Division of the CPD. Within 72 hours, six of the nine were released without charges.

On Saturday, the first day of the NATO summit, the three remaining activists were brought before Cook County Judge Edward Harmening on charges of possessing an incendiary device, material support for terrorism, and conspiracy to commit terrorism. The prosecutor wasted no time in labeling the defendants as "self-proclaimed anarchists," as if to inherently equate thought crime and political ideology with criminal activity or terrorism, though Assistant State's Attorney Matthew Thrun provided no evidence to substantiate his hyperbole. Thrun accused the three defendants -- Brian Jacob Church, who was 20 at the time, and Jared Chase and Brent Betterly,

who were both 24 -- with preparing to commit "terrorist acts of violence and destruction directed against different targets in protest to the NATO summit":

Specifically, plans were made to destroy police cars and attack four CPD stations with destructive devices, in an effort to undermine the police response to the conspirators' other planned action for the NATO summit. Some of the proposed targets included the Campaign Headquarters of U.S. President Barack Obama, the personal residence of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emmanuel (sic), and certain downtown financial institutions.

Although no evidence of the allegations was provided, Assistant State's Attorney Thrun asked the court to impose a bond of \$5 million for each defendant. Judge Harmening rejected his request, but was apparently convinced enough by the State's proffer to impose an equally unreasonable amount of \$1.5 million bond each. The prosecutor and judge likely reasoned that such a prohibitively high bond would keep the three defendants imprisoned until trial. They were right. Church, Chase, and Betterly have been held in Cook County Jail for more than eight months now, with their trial currently scheduled to begin on September 16, 2013, more than a year after they were arrested.

Shortly after tracking down Church, Chase, and Betterly, the Guild's legal team discovered two more activists -- Sebastian Senakiewicz and Mark Neiweem -- who were also surreptitiously arrested on terrorism-related charges. Senakiewicz, 24, was arrested at his Chicago home the day after the Bridgeport raid and charged with falsely making a terrorist threat, another felony under the State's 2001 terrorism statute. Neiweem, a 28-year-old local activist, was arrested the same day, but in a far more sensationalized way. In broad daylight, he was snatched by numerous undercover police officers from Michigan Avenue, one of the busiest streets in the city, undoubtedly aimed at inducing fear in those witnessing the aggressive apprehension. Neiweem was slapped with felony solicitation and attempted possession of an incendiary device, but was not charged under the State's terrorism statute as the others were.

NLG attorneys representing Senakiewicz and Neiweem argued at their bond hearing that they were denied their Constitutional due process rights by being refused a hearing within 48 hours. Senakiewicz was allegedly held for 68 hours without seeing a judge or being able to access a phone or his attorney, who finally got to visit Senakiewicz only minutes before his bond hearing. Neiweem was allegedly held for 66 hours before getting a hearing, and was denied medical treatment in detention. According to the NLG, on several occasions Neiweem was forced to choose between seeing his attorney and going to the hospital.

Once before a judge, the State's Attorney painted Senakiewicz and Neiweem as violent criminals and convinced the court to impose similarly high bonds of \$750,000 and \$500,000 respectively. Unable to raise sufficient funds, Senakiewicz and Neiweem also remain incarcerated at Cook County Jail.

But the terrorism-related charges weren't the only threads connecting the NATO 5 cases together. At least two undercover Chicago police officers are also believed to have been integral to each defendant's arrest and prosecution. Shortly after the Bridgeport raid, Occupy Chicago activists began piecing together a CPD spying operation that had lasted for months before the NATO summit. As early as March, two assumed activists who went by the names "Mo" and "Gloves" began working with the Occupy Chicago movement. On April 13th, at least one of them was arrested with a small group of Occupy Chicago activists, who had held a demonstration with STOP (Southside Together Organizing for Power) in order to keep open the Woodlawn Mental Health Clinic, which had been scheduled for closure by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

By the time Church, Chase and Betterly arrived in Chicago around May Day, Mo and Gloves had fully ingratiated themselves in the ranks of the Occupy movement and were supposedly involved in helping plan the NATO demonstrations. By contrast, the three activists from Florida were unfamiliar with the political terrain in Chicago and, more than most, were vulnerable to manipulation by two unsuspected undercover cops.

While little is publicly known about the interactions between Church, Chase, and Betterly and the infiltrators, we do know that Mo and Gloves were arrested with the nine activists the night of the Bridgeport raid. For the past

six months, defense attorneys have been poring over trillions of bytes of recorded and written information, an overwhelming amount of data that was dumped on them by the prosecution, thereby significantly complicating and hampering the discovery process.

Of course, that's part of the game... hiding the ball in plain sight, especially if the ingredients of entrapment are present. The defense wants to know how instructive Mo and Gloves might have been in getting the three to engage in the alleged criminal behavior. Did the undercover cops or their federal counterparts instigate the idea to use Molotov cocktails? How dependent were the three activists on Mo and Gloves to execute the plan? Answers to these questions would better enable the attorneys for Church, Chase, and Betterly to mount an entrapment defense, but by contrast the lack of answers will make that effort much more difficult.

To successfully assert an entrapment defense, the accused must show by a preponderance of the evidence that they were induced or coerced to commit the crime. By no means is this easy to do in a court of law. In fact, no terrorism charges since 9/11 have been beaten based on an entrapment defense, though there have been numerous cases involving undercover police and paid informants.

Three activists were charged with federal terrorism-related crimes during the 2008 Republican convention protests in St. Paul for possession of unused Molotov cocktails. And, in advance of May Day protests last year, five Occupy Cleveland activists were arrested and charged with attempting to blow up a bridge with fake explosives, supplied by the FBI. In each of these cases, paid FBI informants cultivated relationships with activists in order to carry out plans that would never have been hatched or developed without law enforcement participation.

The entrapment defense, however, opens the door for prosecutors to argue that Church, Chase, and Betterly had the propensity to commit the crime. And, while the State's Attorney must show beyond a reasonable doubt that the three were predisposed, that open door is still a serious concern for the defense.

With the discovery process scheduled to wrap up by February 25th, the defense is continuing to push for more information, especially related to the federal government. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is mentioned in the State's Attorney's proffer and the defense wants to know the extent of the agency's involvement. The FBI is commonly integral to these types of criminal investigations, as the lead counter-intelligence agency for NSSEs. However, the FBI chose not to bring federal charges and has tried to downplay its involvement in the case.

Right now, though, the focus for the defense is challenging the IL State terrorism statute, 720 ILCS 5/29D. Indicating early on that it intended to question the basis of the charges being brought by the State's Attorney, the defense is now preparing to file its initial brief today, January 25th. Attorneys will argue that the terrorism statute is so vague as to be unconstitutional on its face and as applied against their clients. The goal of the legal challenge is not only to dismiss terrorism charges against the NATO defendants, but also to prevent the State's Attorney from using a flawed criminal statute against others in the future.

"The State's Attorney is using sensational terrorism charges to justify the extensive investigation against Occupy Chicago, including months of infiltration as well as this expensive and ongoing prosecution," said Sarah Gelsomino, who is representing Church as an attorney with the People's Law Office. "We intend to show that the State's terrorism statute is bad law that should be stricken."

The State's Attorney will have until February 15th to reply to the defendants' challenge. Cook County Judge Thaddeus L. Wilson, who is presiding over the case, is expected to rule some time after February 25th, when the defense files its final brief in the pre-trial challenge. If the IL State terrorism statute is found to be unconstitutional, either facially or as applied, the defendants' highest-level felonies could be thrown out. However, that would not necessarily mean their cases would be dismissed entirely. When Church, Chase, and Betterly were finally indicted by grand jury on June 12th, the State's Attorney had tacked on eight more felonies, including additional counts of possession of an incendiary device, attempted arson, solicitation to commit arson,

conspiracy to commit arson and two counts of unlawful use of a weapon, for a total of eleven charges each. Prosecutors have been known to overcharge in criminal cases as a means of getting at least some of the charges to stick. It's difficult to deny that such a strategy is being used in this case.

Though their cases and situations are different than the three most seriously charged, Senakiewicz and Neiweem are getting the same level of support from activists in Chicago and elsewhere around the country. Neiweem is a local activist who has been targeted before by police for his lawful political activity. On at least one occasion since his incarceration, Neiweem allegedly has been badly beaten and hospitalized by Cook County Sheriff jail guards, and allegedly has been repeatedly held in isolation. Senakiewicz, an activist and Polish immigrant living in Chicago who was facing up to 15 years in prison, accepted a plea bargain in November, in which he agreed to a single terrorism-related felony, and a 4-year prison sentence. Although the prosecution led Senakiewicz to believe he would only have to serve a 120-day sentence in an out-of-county "boot camp" for non-violent offenders, he was ultimately ineligible for the program and will be forced to serve the entire sentence. Supporters also fear his immediate deportation upon release.

"Honestly, how serious was this case?" asked Guild attorney Jeff Frank, who represented Senakiewicz (also known as "Sabi") with fellow NLG attorney Melinda Power. "Sabi is guilty of imprudent language," said Frank. "That's hardly grounds to extract a guilty plea for a serious felony, but that's how Ms. Alvarez has chosen to spend the taxpayers' resources."

So, why were the NATO 5 arrested in such a spectacular way, just days before a controversial summit in Chicago? And, why are they being used as pawns in a high-stakes game of "To Catch a Terrorist?" Maybe the answers partly lie in the questions.

The motivations are actually just beneath the surface. The State's Attorney's aforementioned need to justify the investigation, infiltration and prosecution of the NATO 5 is likely a primary impulse. The tactic of preemptive police raids, a common trademark of NSSE law enforcement operations used to chill imminent protest activity, cannot be discounted. But, there is also a coordinated effort by local and federal officials to perpetuate a billion-dollar "protection racket," in which law enforcement uses an aggressive counter-terrorism approach to both instill fear in the public and then, after solving the "crime," induce the perception of safety. It's also reasonable to assume that the NATO terrorism cases are an extension of the ongoing efforts to monitor and undermine the Occupy Wall Street movement. Perhaps there are elements of each in the effort to prosecute the NATO 5.

Regardless of the motivations, the NATO 5 case is indicative of a growing trend in law enforcement strategies used during political demonstrations: entrapping dissidents in manufactured terrorism crimes. As Glenn Greenwald recently wrote in the Guardian:

The most significant civil liberties trend of the last decade, in my view, is the importation of War on Terror tactics onto U.S. soil, applied to U.S. citizens... It should be anything but surprising that the FBI -- drowning in counter-terrorism money, power and other resources -- will apply the term 'terrorism' to any group it dislikes and wants to control and suppress.

January 25th - Illinois State Terrorism Law's Constitutionality Challenged by Lawyers for NATO 3

Three Occupy activists known as the "NATO 3," who came to Chicago to protest at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit last May and were arrested and later indicted on terrorism charges, are challenging the constitutionality of an untested Illinois anti-terrorism statute under which they were charged.

Lawyers submitted a motion in court today asserting the definitions of "terrorism" in the state terrorism law are "unconstitutionally vague" and the state of Illinois had "improperly exploited these unconstitutionally vague terms to bring these highly inflammatory "terrorism" charges in order to prejudice the defendants, discredit the anti-NATO demonstrators and justify the enormous costs of the security tactics of the Chicago police during the NATO summit."

Brian Church, 22, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Jared Chase, 27, of Keene, New Hampshire, and Brent Betterly,

24, who lived in Massachusetts, were each arrested along with six other people in a preemptive raid by Chicago police on an apartment unit in Bridgeport, Chicago, on May 16. As Firedoglake reported, they were disappeared and held without charge (along with others who were arrested) until Thursday, May 17. Then, those arrested began to be released. By late Friday, May 18, the three were the only activists in jail and early on Saturday, May 19, it was announced they would be charged with material support for terrorism, conspiracy to commit terrorism and possession of explosives or explosive or incendiary device.

On June 13, they were indicted on those charges and also charged with “possession of an incendiary device, attempted arson, solicitation to commit arson, conspiracy to commit arson and two counts of unlawful use of a weapon.” That brings the total number of charges the men face to eleven. (The prosecutors made defendants wait until a week after to see an actual copy of the indictment.)

The motion filed by the lawyers for the NATO 3 alleges “lack of standards” in the law have made it possible to “arbitrarily demonize the defendants as ‘terrorists’ based on their political views and the political motivations and predilections of the police and prosecutors.” It suggests that under the “statutory definition of terrorism” First Amendment-protected acts like “labor strikes, peaceful occupations and sit-ins, political protests and boycotts” could be implicated or possibly impacted.

The Illinois anti-terrorism law incorporates in its definition of terrorism “intent to intimidate or coerce a significant portion of a civilian population.” As the filing argues, “The use of the terms intent to ‘intimidate or coerce’ without requiring the element of force or violence, and without excluding First Amendment activities or civil disobedience, impermissibly allows for the criminalization of constitutionally protected conduct. The vague nature of the terms ‘coerce,’ ‘intimidate’ and a ‘significant portion of the civilian population’ also allows for the arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement of the law.” And “terrorist act” does not require that such an act violate state or federal law, which makes it possible to “encompass lawful conduct.”

The motion further suggests:

...Seeking to maximize the sensationalism of the announcement of charges the day before a massive non-violent anti-NATO protest in Chicago in order to discourage and frighten people from attending the protest, and to justify the massive expenditure of public and private dollars to host and provide security for the NATO conference, the prosecution filed a press release under the guise of a bail proffer, calling the defendants terrorists and anarchists, and alleging a series of violent acts, none of which ever occurred. Because of the vague parameters of the statute, the State was able to proclaim the defendants to be “terrorists” without any evidence that they “intended to intimidate or coerce a significant portion of the civilian population.”...

Indeed, Illinois State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez put her name to this statement released on May 19, the day before the NATO summit was scheduled to begin:

...These individuals are domestic terrorists who came to Chicago with an anarchist agenda to harm police officers, intimidate citizens and to attack their politically motivated targets...The information and evidence recovered in this investigation clearly demonstrates that these defendants were equipped and prepared to carry out violent acts to disrupt the NATO summit...

Especially since the state of Illinois already made such inflammatory statements, the lawyers argue the terrorism charges are “not constitutionally permissible and their inclusion in this indictment are highly prejudicial and irreparably prejudices the defendants’ right to a fair trial on the other charges in the indictment.”

Previously, I reported infiltrators who went by the names “Mo” and “Gloves” were believed to have helped law enforcement target and arrest these men. Michael Deutsch of the People’s Law Office said he believed the infiltrators met up with Betterly, Chase, and Church at a May Day demonstration in Chicago. The infiltrators then went about trying to convince the three men to engage in a terror plot against the NATO summit. When they failed, the infiltrators planted materials for the authorities to find when they raided the apartment making this case “worse than entrapment.”

Since the state terrorism law was passed after the September 11th attacks, no case has been brought under the statute. The state prosecutors have likely been told they have a responsibility to not blow the case and risk an outcome that could make it difficult to use the law to prosecute persons. However, there has been no evidence presented yet that the ever constructed any of the explosives or incendiary devices and planned to engage in any violent acts. The weekend of the NATO summit the state of Illinois could have called a press conference and showed the press the terrorist materials they had seized to further convince the public dangerous anarchists had descended upon Chicago to create chaos. They did not.

Defense lawyers and those charged and arrested in the raid were subjected to possible legal misconduct and civil liberties violations, such as the disappearing of arrestees after the raid, the refusal to show arrestees' attorneys a search warrant; the detention of arrestees without charge for one to two days before six were released without charges; interrogations intended to intimidate and force individuals to falsely confess or snitch on others in the movement, etc. The Chicago Police Department used infiltrators to provide information and possibly even push the NATO 3 to the brink of committing acts of terrorism. (Note: In multiple pictures "Gloves" can be seen dressed in a police department uniform. She also can be seen in photos dressed up as an anarchist.)

More importantly, the problem of unconstitutional vagueness is not dissimilar to the unconstitutional vagueness of the indefinite detention provision of the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). When a federal judge issued a permanent injunction against the law, which allows the government to use the military to indefinitely detain individuals who have "substantially supported" or "directly supported" al Qaeda or "associated forces," she pointed out that the terms were vague and lacked specificity. She further stated the terms did not appear in any prior case law and "the respective meanings of the terms at issue" are unknown but "the penalty of running afoul of it is severe."

Though the permanent injunction was stayed and the government is now appealing the decision, the critical point was still made: terrorism laws are drawn up in this country in such a way to give prosecutors and the government incredible latitude to go after people even if they only have a minor suspicion that those people could engage in terrorism. Coupled with the fact that law enforcement is using infiltrators or informants to push mentally unstable people, impoverished individuals or activists militant in their political beliefs to commit terrorist acts, it is easy for government to concoct terror cases that can be prosecuted.

With no real definition of terrorism and with the vagueness intentionally or unintentionally including the regular conduct of activists, labor organizers or even journalists accused of aiding these people, it is reasonable for the lawyers to make this case about trying to overturn the state's anti-terrorism law.

25 Jan – Lynne Stewart Update

The following update about Lynne Stewart comes from the WBAI radio show Where We Live.

MORE:

Renowned and beloved human rights attorney Lynne Stewart – currently serving a ten-year sentence in Carswell, Texas – faces yet a new challenge that threatens her very life... a cancer – successfully treated prior to her jailing – has now returned ... doctors have confirmed cancerous spots in both lungs and her upper back.

Her husband Ralph Poynter says that Lynne's condition is still "very treatable" and that a cure cannot be ruled out - particularly if prison officials allowed her the expert treatment afforded her previously in a prominent new york city hospital.

As expected - Lynne's request to be moved to that facility has been denied and she is to be treated in a prison hospital.

As many in our audience may know, Lynne Stewart spent her entire life defending the most vulnerable ... among them, prominent revolutionists, dissidents, victims of police violence and others.

On the morning of April 9, 2002, FBI agents arrived with arrest warrants in the front yard of her Brooklyn home.

Simultaneously, as they handcuffed her, the FBI invaded her Manhattan office and searched for almost 12 hours. Then- U.S. Attorney John Ashcroft himself flew to New York to personally announce Lynne's at a Federal Court news conference.

The indictment against Lynne charged her with providing material support for terrorism, and violating special administrative measures (SAMS) imposed by the U.S. bureau of prisons, which included a gag order on so-called "blind sheik" Omar Abdel-Rahman – an Egyptian cleric who Lynne represented in 1995.

The indictment came a full two years after the alleged act she was charged with - and was based on her public issuance of a press release and overheard, privileged attorney-client interviews and wiretapped conversations with the interpreter and paralegal on the case who were also arrested on terrorism-related charges.

In 2005 Lynne was convicted on five counts of conspiracy-to-aid-and-abet-terrorism and sentenced to 28 months in prison by a trial judge who – in his sentencing remarks – said that Lynne Stewart had spent her life serving the poor and disenfranchised - even to her own detriment.

The government appealed saying the sentence was too light - and on July 15, 2010 -Lynne Stewart was re-sentenced to 10 years in prison. She is now 72.

Ironically, Rachman's freedom is today being demanded by Egypt's new President Mohamed Morsi.

26 Jan - Open Request from Maliki Latine

Maliki Shakur Latine is looking for an attorney who could represent him, pro bono, in filing an Article 78 Petition to appeal an unfair parole denial.

MORE:

This is somewhat pressing because of the statute of limitations regarding the parole hearing.

If you can help or know someone who can, please contact Through the Walls via email--
throughwalls@riseup.net

26 Jan - Back in the Hole: Anarchist Material Removed by Alex Hundert

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

MORE:

On the evening of January 21st, I was brought back to the hole. Not on misconduct this time, but to what is known as Administrative Segregation because the Security Manager has decided that having me on range, where I can associate with other imprisoned people, constitutes a threat to security. That is only after having spent a week in the hole for "inciting a disturbance likely to endanger the security of the institution." I was returned to Unit 5 on the order of the provincial adjudicator. I was placed on one end of the Unit where only [some] did not participate in the protest action here that occurred on Jan 12th. I have not been provided with any basis for being removed from general population aside from the vague notion of security measures, nor have I been given any justification for being stripped of any of my so-called privileges. All I know for certain is that it was the personal prerogative of Security Manager Martin Krawczyk. On the way to the segregation unit, the Sergeant said if I didn't write so well, I wouldn't be in this mess – or something to that effect. Perhaps Krawczyk and the CNCC administration have adopted the Harper-esque notion that bad public relations are synonymous with a threat to security. Regardless, it would appear that I am to be held in solitary confinement potentially indefinitely. Regardless of any particular reasons, it seems that being an anarchist organizer is now being understood as an inherent threat warranting segregation and the loss of most privileges. Given that the primary basis for this may very well be the writing I have been posting to this blog since—and prior to—my imprisonment, it feels appropriate to now post a piece I have been waiting for the right time to release. It is titled "Anarchist Material Removed."

“Anarchist Material Removed”

Prison mail and the Ontario Human Rights Code

I receive lots of mail in here. But occasionally letters or photocopied material sent in are screened out by Security. On November 13, the words “anarchist material removed” were scrawled across a letter I received that day.

Material being removed by Security and mail being interrupted in general is a problem here at the CNCC. Worse than the fact that correspondence and community connection are disrupted is how rarely people are informed that it has happened or why. In my case it seems to be because Security has decided that their labelling of something as “anarchist material” is enough to warrant its removal.

On November 22 I saw my friend’s picture in the Toronto Star. “Jailhouse rights complaint launched by G20 activist,” read the headline. It was an article about my co-accused, Mandy Hiscocks, who was freed from the Vanier Centre for Women on December 3 after serving ten months in prison.

Mandy’s application to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal is based on the harsh fact that the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Service’s system of assigning the maximum security designation to prisoners is discriminating against people of colour, disabled people, people with non-conforming mental health needs, as well as people with anarchist and anti-capitalist political beliefs.

Mandy’s lawyer, Niiti Simonds, was quoted as saying, “The Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario’s case law is unresolved as to whether political beliefs are included in ‘creed’ as a prohibited ground of discrimination.”

The Canadian Oxford Dictionary’s relevant definition of creed is, “a set of principles or opinions, especially a philosophy of life.” To me, it seems that anarchism definitely qualifies. Section 1 of the Ontario Human Rights Code says, “every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods and facilities, without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability or the receipt of public assistance.”

It is my contention that the CNCC and (by extension) the Ministry of Correctional Services have violated my Ontario Human Rights Code right to be free from discrimination based on creed in several ways. They have violated lots of people’s rights, lots of ways. This post is about the mail.

I have been trying to talk to someone here about the “screening of mail” and “letters and material not received” almost since I arrived here. I sent three requests to the Security Manager between July 27 and September 17 (“request” forms are the only way to communicate with management if you are a prisoner in the system), followed by another three to the Superintendent between September 18 and October 8. None of these received any response from the institution.

Throughout my time here, I have found out from friends and family that I have not received many of the letters that have been sent to me. Occasionally I have received envelopes that have no postal markings, but have my name and a security stamp on the outside and a letter to me within. In those cases it has been clear (from the letters) that there had been photocopied materials included in the original envelopes, and the conclusion being that, despite no indication from the institution, Security had removed something but did not inform me. Only once did a guard ever discuss something she had removed—guards do the preliminary screening, though my problem seems to be with the secondary screening done by security (more on that below). And only once did I ever receive formal notification—a “Halted Mail Notice”—which does however prove that such a thing exists (and is obviously the proper way to deal with legitimate instances of security screening).

The Inmate Information Guide for Adult Prisoners put out by the Ministry of Community Safety and

Correctional Services says, “Institution staff can check letters you write and receive. The Superintendent can refuse to send a letter that affects the security of the institution, threatens someone or might upset the person it is being sent to. If this happens, the staff will tell you why your letter was not sent. The letter will be returned to you. You may rewrite it or have it stored with your property.”

I am aware of at least two occasions that letters of mine had items removed or were not sent out, though I was not notified by staff, and I definitely did not have the letters returned to me.

The Inmate Information Guide goes on to say, “If someone sends you a letter that is threatening or unsuitable, the letter will be returned to the person who mailed it. The Superintendent will write and tell the person why the letter is being returned. You will be told if a letter is not given to you.” Well, the one time I was told about something not given to me, the person who sent it did not receive a letter or have the item returned to them. A few times people have had things returned to them—books, zines, magazines, photocopied articles (all things that have got in at other times)—with vague explanations (“excessive”) or outright lies (“we do not accept books”) scribbled on to sticky notes. But on these occasions, I was definitely not informed.

The solitary “Halted Mail Notice” that I did receive (dated September 24)—clearly a formal document with Ministry header and a Province of Ontario logo in the upper right corner—said, “On this date an envelope, addressed to you was received at the facility from... A review of the envelope’s contents revealed material(s) deemed to be unacceptable, for security reasons. Due to...” and then in pen, in the two lines of blank space provided for an explanation, was the single word, “magazine.”

The typed form continued, “this letter has been interrupted. The unacceptable material has been returned to sender or placed in your property, which you will receive upon your release from our facility. It is your responsibility to make efforts to prevent this type of unacceptable material to be transmitted through correspondence at CNCC. Further infractions may result in all fo your correspondence being subject to more rigorous screening; this will likely result in additional delays in sending and receipt of your mail.” OK, no magazines or they will screen my mail, which they’ve been doing since I arrived here anyway.

(How “Due to magazine” constitutes “unacceptable for security reasons” warrants its own questions, but whatever...) Scrawled in pen on the page were the letters “FYi” (sic).

On November 13 I received three letters that each had material removed from them. They all had the standard “CNCC Inmate mail opened by:” stamped on them, accompanied by a message written in pen indicating that they had been forwarded to Security, and a second stamp, this one reading, “Cleared by Security.” Postage marks on the envelopes indicated that all three had been sent in the closing days of October. One of the envelopes had the message written on it, in red pen, in all capital letters, “ANARCHIST MATERIAL REMOVED.”

All three of the letters indicated that they had originally included photocopied material—of which I receive much—though the envelopes arrived containing only the handwritten letters. From one was removed an article from Mother Jones magazine and the transcript of an interview from Democracy Now!, both featuring Shane Bauer, one of the American hikers who had been imprisoned in Iran, comparing his experiences there with what he learned about prisons in the United States. Another was missing a zine composed of a chapter from the book, “The Secret Life of Plants.” The last envelope, the one with the message about “anarchist material” being “removed,” was missing a couple of articles forwarded to me by one of the editors of Iconoclast magazine—probably articles about anarchism.

Shortly after receiving these letters sans articles, I went to speak with one of the guards. I told him that content (rightly or wrongly) being deemed as “anarchist material” did not seem like a legitimate reason to prevent me from receiving it, and that I was pretty sure that this could be construed as discrimination based on creed. He told me that he does not care what I read, and that he would have a Security Manager come talk to me. A little while later he brought me a printout of an e-mail he’d received from Security. Here is the entirety of the text:

“Please see excerpt of the ADI’s and pass along information to Mr. Hundert... In order to maintain the security, safety and good order of Institutions, restrictions will apply to material which: portrays excessive violence and/or aggression which is likely to incite violence or other criminal acts; contains information on the fabrication of weapons or the commission of criminal acts, or could endanger the security of the institution or the safety of any person; depicts or describes procedures for brewing alcoholic beverages or manufacturing illegal drugs; glamorizes or condones substance abuse; glamorizes self-injury or suicide; or endangers the security or safety of an institution or the community (e.g., by describing escape methods or containing blueprints or technical information relating to security devices, etc.)”

Now, I’m quite certain that to suggest content violates any of these conditions simply by virtue of its having been deemed to be “anarchist material,” and for that reason disrupting my mail and preventing it from reaching me, is a pretty flagrant example of discrimination against creed.

The printed e-mail had an electronic signature: “Martin Krawczyk, Manager, Security and Investigations, CNCC, 705 549 9470 ext. 2863.” Since November 13 I have sent him another three requests in an attempt to discuss the matter. As per usual, Security has been unresponsive. I encourage people to call him to express their reaction to all this. For my part, I am in the process of filing an application to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal.

My “human rights” aside, this situation reveals a much deeper and more structural problem. Imprisoned people are not being told when their mail is “interrupted.” And this is not a problem because of the Orwellian nature of screening people’s mail (this is after all a maximum security prison and some Big Brotherish behaviour is to be expected, I suppose). It is a serious problem because not telling imprisoned people that their correspondence has been disrupted is a real sabotaging of their connections to family and community.

If that wasn’t bad enough in principle, in practice, the broken bridges that are resulted from this type of disruption are major contributors to the patterns of recidivism that are so endemic amongst imprisoned people. It is all but impossible for people getting out of prison to rebuild their lives when the foundations of community support and family connections have been damaged by the institution’s refusal to do something as simple as letting people know when and why their mail has been intercepted and disrupted.

Further still, when people who are imprisoned think that their loved ones (or others that they are depending on, or who depend on them) are not responding to their letters, their personal frustrations and stress levels obviously become elevated. Elevated personal stress in here leads to heightened interpersonal tension, which inevitably leads to increased conflict and violence. Given that many of the degradations of our quality of life in here—for example, being locked out of our own cells all day—are ostensibly premised on allegedly reducing violence, and given that one of the primary goals of “corrections” is purportedly to prepare people for “reintegration into the community,” the disregard for these concerns in this matter merely points back to the arbitrary abuse of authority that is so characteristic of these institutions.

The guards are not the problem in this case; they do not care what I read. But my name is on a list that relegates me to enhanced security protocols, including more rigorous screening of my mail, which sometimes gets forwarded to the Security and Investigations office. It would seem that it is in this department, or perhaps even higher up the hierarchy, that being an “anarchist” marks me for targeted discrimination. This is especially unacceptable in a system that denies that it has political prisoners.

Now, all imprisonment is inherently political. The criminalization of poverty and mental health disability, the racist over-policing of targeted neighbourhoods and communities, binary gender categorization in prisons, the persistence and widening of economic disparity, and the inclusion of imprisonment as part of a so-called justice system—these are all inherently political decisions. The criminalization of political ideology is also, obviously, a political decision.

But, since I have not had conferred upon any designation as a political prisoner, therefore the categorization of

my mail as “anarchist material” and for that reason alone deeming my receiving it as a threat to security, that is an explicitly political decision and also a clear form of discrimination, and therefore a violation of the promise in the Ontario Human Rights Code that all people be free from discrimination based on, amongst other things, creed.

The screening of mail, assignment of maximum security designations, denial of parole—these are not the only ways that anarchists have been discriminated against by Ontario prisons and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, nor by any means are anarchists the only ones discriminated against in this system. I hope that last point is obvious.

Endemic to these places (and to the broader system) is day-to-day racism and deeply entrenched systemic discrimination against poor people, against migrants, against trans people, against disabled people, and others. And therefore the recrimination that I will be seeking in my application to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal will most likely be a system-wide audit of all provincial prisons with respect to the Ontario Human Rights Code. We’ll see what happens.

Post-script: This has been a post about mail. I want to extend my most sincere and humble gratitude to everyone who has sent me mail while I’ve been in here. To family and friends, to allies and supporters, and especially to other imprisoned people, thank you all so much for your continued relationships and solidarity; it makes it easy to be here in what could otherwise be a quite horrible place.

27 Jan - Ok, seriously: Send a letter for Oso Blanco

In November, we organized a letter-writing night for Leonard Peltier and Oso Blanco. The latter is currently trying to have clemency granted and is in need of letters written on his behalf. We're including everything you need to know about writing such a letter below.

MORE:

Now is the time.

From Oso:

“Tell them my clemency papers are There in Wash DC. We must send letters to Obama Fast”

In a previous post I recommended that people send letters to the TTW PO Box and that I would go through and send. I think it’s too late for that now and I haven’t received them. Will check again soon but — scratch that.

Email me or message me letters (throughwalls [at] rise up [dot] net) or send yourself. If you are outside of u.s.-occupied north america definitely email or message me.

UPDATE: Letters should be sent to two addresses: Office of the Pardon Attorney and Office of the President.

1) Correspondence to the Department of Justice, Office of the Pardon Attorney, may be sent to:

Office of the Pardon Attorney
1425 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 11000
Washington, D.C. 20530

And/or Email the Office of the Pardon Attorney

“Please note: An attachment to an e-mail will be considered only if it has been requested by the Office of the Pardon Attorney. Attachments should be in PDF format and not exceed file size limits. Unsolicited e-mail attachments will not be opened.”

2) Obama . . .

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Got it?

See my previous post on this subject for a sample executive clemency letter on behalf of Oso Blanco.

Send electronically to me or send physically and/or electronically to Pardon Attorney AND Obama.

I'm sending mine off tomorrow so get at me soon!

Oso Blanco will appreciate your vigilance!

27 Jan - Freeing Political Prisoners: A Moral Imperative of Our Time!

The following is a reportback on the 17th annual dinner tribute to political prisoners, recently hosted by the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee.

MORE:

Where do we begin to capture the raw human gravity pervading the air at the '17th Annual Dinner Tribute to Black Political Prisoners' hosted by the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee last week at the MLK 1199 Labor Center in New York City?

Do we begin with the obvious room full of emotion for men and women who are now virtually unknown to the communities they sacrificed their lives for?

Or the haunting litany of the time-served for most of the longest held political prisoners captured on the evening's program, a list approaching 900 years!... 900 years!

Let's give this some specifics.

If we look at the time served for the political prisoners who were represented by their families at this dinner alone, Sundiata Acoli in his 40th year, Russell 'Maroon' Shoatz in his 37th year, Robert 'Seth' Hayes in his 40th year, Sekou Odinga, in his 32nd year, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, the beloved stepdad of the late hiphop icon Tupac Shakur, in 32nd year, Abdul Majied in his 32 year, Mumia Abu-Jamal in his 32 year, and the surviving 8 of the Move 9 victims, each having served 35 years or 280 years between them!...If we just looked at these, and this is a short list, we are talking more than 500 years of served prison time!...More than 500 years!....

Perhaps Dequi Sadiki, the evening's moderator, the organization's leader and wife of political prisoner Sekou Odinga, said it best when she said emotionally,

"For these families, with the loss of fathers, mothers, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, sons and daughters, who were guilty of nothing more than standing up for our people, all this time we are talking about here, for them, this is all too real and all real personal."

Make no mistake about it...The Malcolm X Commemoration Committee does a heartwrenching monumental job of bringing together much deserved love and appreciation for America's political prisoners, primarily Black men and women who have been targeted by the FBI Cointelpro Operations and by local and state police forces obsessed with crippling the black liberation movement.

For all of the emotional gravity in the room, the night was incredibly uplifting and the energy amazingly uptempo.

Pittsburgh based progressive emcee Jasiri X may have had a lot to do with that. His performance of ‘his’ antiracist and anti-police brutality classics...Trayvon, Do We Have To Start A Riot? I Am Troy Davis,...got the intergenerational audience on its feet.

Scholar-activist Johanna Fernandez’ presentation brought the motion of the evening together with her presentation. Explaining the factors that linked the repression facing the political prisoners to what is now being called mass incarceration, Fernandez looked at some of the legal tools put in place sometime ago to create this current condition.

She pointed to an underappreciated federal law, The Omnibus Crime Bill of 1968, which essentially exempted the police, as a national institution, from the due process accountability that came with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. With this exemption, police agencies across the country began a steady push of excessive force and criminalizing the black community.

“She hit the nail on the head,” said Zayid Muhammad, the Committee’s longtime press officer. “Combine that with their angrily embarrassing loss of the Panther 21 case here in New York from which sprang Operation NewKill, a wider wage of covert actions aimed just against the Black Panther Party in this area, and you will understand plainly why we here today,” he finished emphatically.

Although professorial in tone, Fernandez was definitely telling the audience to seize the time when she said that “we need to look at these next four years,” referring to President Obama’s second term, the way the Puerto Rican Independence Movement looked at the last four years of the Clinton Administration. They pulled out all stops and were able to secure the release of the majority of their freedom fighters through clemency, but only after a long, steady, lobbying and protest strategy. The same thing needs to be done now for these freedom fighters.

She finished daring to say that “creating a movement to free political prisoners is the moral imperative of this time.

27 Jan - PPs, Mass Incarceration & What's Possible for Social Movements by Sundiata Acoli
The following article by PP/POW Sundiata Acoli was written to accompany anarchist author Dan Berger's 2013 book tour thru Germany.

MORE:

America has millions of prisoners locked away in its dungeons, many for 20, 30 and 40 years or more – yet astonishingly, it claims there are no Political Prisoners or Political Prisoners of War (PP/POWs) in its prisons – and that it has no PPs.

That makes the u.s. the only country in the world that has MASS INCARCERATION, has more prisoners period than any other country – and has prisoners locked in secret CIA prisons around the world, but no PPs.

Since it has no PPs it obviously has no masses of poor, hungry, homeless or unemployed people, nor does it have hordes of oppressed nationalities and lower classes herded into reservations, barrios, ghettos, ‘hoods, trailer parks and housing projects who are daily subjected to various forms of discrimination, racial profiling and police brutality, murder and mass imprisonment.

If the u.s. has no PPs, then apparently there’s no MASS INJUSTICE in america because that’s where MASS INCARCERATION and PPs come from. MASS INCARCERATION is the barometer, the main indicator of MASS INJUSTICE in society.

PPs are those in every land and thru out every era, who are imprisoned for fighting INJUSTICE in their societies and the same holds true today for the relationship between MASS INJUSTICE, MASS INCARCERATION and PPs in u.s. society – and who must be freed! Not only PPs – but ALL those imprisoned by unjust policies.

The latest 30-year prison-building/mass-incarceration spree has left the land dotted with thousands of new

prisons overfilled with millions of prisoners – all of which has convinced state legislators that they cannot incarcerate their way out of the defects in this political system and that the current budget-busting levels of incarceration are too costly to sustain any longer.

So at this moment it seems very possible for social movements to succeed in reducing prison populations. But any reductions under the present policy would only postpone the next INCARCERATION binge to some more cost-efficient time in the future altho MASS INCARCERATION itself is the problem! Not crime, not drugs nor violent offenders per se, but MASS INCARCERATION itself is the problem. Crime rates, for serious crime, were as low in 2011 as they were in 1964. Rates for violent and nonviolent crimes have been declining for at least five years but the national prison population is functionally the same size. So it's clear that incarceration rates are "policy" driven, not "crime" driven. And history shows that america's incarceration is driven primarily by "unjust racial/class" policies.

The 1st instance of america's unjust racial policy occurred at inception with its incipient genocide against Indigenous american, theft of their land and Chattel Slavery – unjust on its face – became racially so when it switched to enslaving Blacks ONLY. Confinement of Indigenous americans on reservations, their captured Chiefs and Braves in military prisons and the enslaved Afrikans on plantations for 300 years was the first MASS INCARCERATION committed by the colonial nation. Every slave confined on a plantation or runaway detained in jail was a POW. So was every Indigenous american forced onto reservations or detained in military prisons – as was any other person detained for resisting american genocide, enslavement, rape and robbery of their lands and nations.

The 2nd instance, which began at the end of the Civil War and continued until the 1970s, was the use of Black Codes and Jim Crow segregation laws to re-enslave the newly freed Blacks and people of color in general thru mass imprisonment in the penal system. At the time Whites were the overwhelming majority of the nation's prison population when the percentage of Blacks in the southern prisons jumped from near zero to 33% within 5 years. Others imprisoned during the ensuing 100 year struggle against Jim Crow segregation and other racial/class oppressions were the increasing number of poor immigrants and other such agricultural and industrial workers, union organizers, war resisters, ghetto heroin addicts and the rising number of Civil Rights workers and revolutionaries of all stripes: Black Panther Party, Puerto Rican Young Lords, Anti-imperialist Weather Underground Organization, Chicano Brown Berets, American Indian Movement, the Asian I WOR KUEN and numerous others which resulted in the defeat of Jim Crow (de jure) segregation during the mid-'60s. By 1975, Black and other people of color made up nearly half of the 250,000 prison population. The between 1865 and 1975 produced a great number of PP/POWs, including Big Bill Haywood, Sacco and Vanzetti, Sitting Bull, Marcus Garvey, and Pedro Albizo Campus; George Jackson, Angela Davis, Marilyn Buck, Huey P. Newton, Assata Shakur and many others.

And the 3rd instance of unjust racial/class policies began around 1975, a decade after the defeat of Jim Crow (legal, not actual) segregation. In that intervening period and beyond, numerous revolutionary organizations who were fighting injustice—the Black Liberation Army, FALN of Puerto Rico, American Indian Movement, Weather Underground Organization, the United Freedom Front, MOVE and others— were attacked by the police who killed or imprisoned several of their members. Those imprisoned joined the ranks of other unrecognized PP/POWs already in prison. Ronald Reagan set widespread injustice in motion by flooding South Central L.A. with "crack" cocaine to secretly finance the Nicaraguan Contra War in the early 1980s, and incarceration rates skyrocketed. "Crack" spread quickly, devastated ghettos nationwide and escalated the racist hypocritical War on Drugs and racial profiling schemes that mainly targeted people of color, White hippies and the poor as crime suspects and targeted communities of color for saturation with Street Crime Units to terrorize, mass imprison and paint its inhabitants with felony convictions later used to deny their right to vote, deny their right to work jobs/trades requiring certain licenses and certificates, deny the right to live in public housing, deny food stamps, deny student loans for college/trade course etc., all of which relegated felons to a permanent 2nd-class status, exploded the prison population from 250,000 in the mid-'70s to 2.3 million today and so aptly verified noted author Michelle Alexander's statement that: "MASS INCARCERATION is the New Jim Crow." This era produced PP/POWs Oscar Lopez Rivera, Kuwasi Balagoon, Mumia Abu Jamal, David Gilbert, Leonard Peltier, Move 9, Susan Rosenberg, Carlos Alberto Torres, Tom Manning, Jaan Laaman and numerous Muslim, Earth Liberation Front, Animal Liberation Front, Environmentalist and Occupy Wall Street PPs, plus Sekou Odinga

and the liberation of Assata Shakur followed by her political asylum in Cuba. Blacks had become the absolute majority of the prison population at about 55% but the number is even higher since approximately 5 to 10% of the Black population is hidden in under the “Hispanic” ethnic category in the census, which often omit racial designations so that the “official” percentage of Black prisoners is listed at about 45% followed by a fast growing number of Browns: Latino/as, Hispanics, Indigenous americans and Asians, with Whites declining to less than 20%.

Since america’s MASS INCARCERATION is driven by unjust racial/class policies then the real solution to MASS INCARCERATION is MASS “DECARCERATION.” In other words, drastic cuts to ALL prisoner’s TIME, since TIME is the currency, the legal tender, the great equalizer and righter of wrongs in prison.

Many prison and human rights activists are in agreement with a position forwarded by Michelle Alexander, which calls for incarceration rates to be reset to 1980 levels, or even to the post-Jim Crow level of the 1970s, which are levels before Ronald Reagan flooded South Central and set off the “Crack” epidemic in america. Decarceration opens the door to struggle over the life and scope of the system more generally; it can be shrunk well beyond its earlier levels! To “DECARCERATE,” many activist advocate some form of time-served plus prisoner-age combination that automatically put a prisoner out the door when the combination adds up to a certain number. The main proposal for this strategy, advocated by POWs like Russell Maroon Shoatz, calls for 25/50 and out: that is, if a prisoner is over 50 and has served 25 years or more, than s/he is “automatically out the door” or discharged immediately. This strategy will free those imprisoned by, or long held for, biased and unjust policies – including many PPs as well.

Thank you for your attention – and i hope we can find ways to work together in support of PPs, prison struggles and progressive movements in both our countries. Our main PP organization is The Jericho Movement at nycjericho@gmail.com. Feel free to contact them on any issue regarding solidarity work for PPs in the u.s.

i also bring you solidarity greetings from those who have been on a rolling on hunger strike in the California state prisons. They’re joined in a fierce struggle to end solitary confinement, some of whom have been held in solitary 20 years or more; 20 years in conditions described by their outside representative thusly:

“The long-term (indeed life long) indefinite isolated solitary confinement in 7’ 7” x 11’ 7” concrete boxes for 22 1/2 hours per day in California’s Pelican Bay and Corcoran Secure Housing Units (SHUS) is torture. It is cruel. Without phone calls, without human touch, degrading and humiliating routines, bad food, insufficient clothing, no fresh air and they NEVER see natural sunlight, terrible mattresses... without hope of ever escaping, all this most often for reasons that have nothing to do with behavior, or even disciplinary matters. This is unprecedented in the history of the United States. Isolated for life for alleged associations, for what books you read, what art you draw or for what you believe in.... this is commonplace in the California system – a system which takes up more than half of California’s budget.”

They’re also struggling against an insidious gang debriefing program that requires them to “give up” or “make up” info (i.e., “snitch”) on another prisoner as their only ticket out of solitary. As expected, or designed, the program creates or greatly aggravates hostility between prison gang members and ethnic groups. In return the Hunger Strike leaders have initiated a Truce Movement among the various gangs and ethnic groups that’s well worth your support and worth emulation by other states. To find out how you can support the California Prisons’ Hunger Striker contact their outside representatives at:

Anne Weills and Carole Travis
Siegel and Yee
499 14th St. Suite 300
Oakland, CA 94612

and/or contact any of the following prisoner Hunger Strike leaders:

Todd Ashker, C58191, D1-119
Arturo Castellanos, C17275, D1-121
Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa (Dewberry) C35761, D1-117
Antonio Guillen, P81948, D2-106
Paul Redd, B72683, D2-117

Pelican Bay mail to prisoners is addressed to:
P.O. Box 7500
Crescent City, CA 95532

Jan 30 - Under Surveillance

The following was written for a local alternative weekly newspaper in north Carolina and gives a good sense of where local and federal Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) are heading with their surveillance of radicals and anarchists.

MORE:

Anyone who has ever been involved in grassroots organizing, a social movement or activism has probably wondered at least once, if not frequently, about if they are being watched. Though police surveillance is no secret — uniformed officers regularly videotape legal protests, for example — what happens with the intelligence is usually a mystery to the public.

In early high school I started participating in anti-war protests and organizing, and before I graduated my mom toyed with the idea of requesting my FBI file. At Guilford College, I continued to organize, on campus and with community groups. Before pursuing journalism more seriously, I worked for two social-justice nonprofits including the Beloved Community Center, all the while aware of police surveillance of the different projects I was connected to.

Eventually the curiosity got to me, and I filed a request with the city for e-mail records with my name as the keyword. I've never been arrested, but I knew assumptions of surveillance weren't just paranoia.

The results were disappointing — there was almost no information about police surveillance — so I kept digging. The department's criminal intelligence work is shrouded in mystery, and the lack of transparency made me determined to see what else I could find.

In some cases, the documents were jarring — police infiltration of Occupy Greensboro, a council member reporting on activist meetings and a list of the surveillance successes at an anarchist conference in town.

Who they are

The criminal intelligence division has taken different forms over the years. Most recently, the two-man team of officers Steven Kory Flowers and Rob Finch has held down the job, providing surveillance on a range of groups the department considers to be “subversive” or “fringe” on the right and the left. Biographical statements on the two men are identical except for stating that Flowers has been in the unit since 2007 and Finch was assigned a year later.

“His daily responsibilities involve monitoring, documenting and prosecuting subversive criminal groups and organizations that include sovereign citizens/antigovernment extremists, outlaw motorcycle gangs, anarchists, separatists and animal/earth extremists,” the statements on both read. “He is well versed on covert and overt surveillance techniques used during intelligence operations involving these subversive groups and has worked several large regional and national events in multiple jurisdictions.”

They also cover white supremacists, gun enthusiasts, abortion activists, political bloggers and any protest activity in Greensboro. They gather information in a plethora of ways — fake Facebook profiles, “trash pulls,” confidential informants, taking surveillance footage and infiltrating groups.

E-mails show the pair is respected as experts in their field. They regularly teach classes and trainings throughout the state on the groups they monitor, coordinate with other law enforcement agencies from the Joint Terrorism Task Force and the FBI to security on college campuses.

Multiple public-information requests filed with the city of Greensboro aimed at the department's surveillance of residents provide an overview of the type of work the pair has conducted and how they've gone about collecting information, but is not an exhaustive search of their activities.

Information in the requests directly pertained to the groups and categories requested — several requests, including ones on white supremacists, were not processed in time for this article. The requests only cover e-mail correspondence, several of which refer to much more expansive files on people with photographs, known associates, residences, cars and other information gathered. These files were not transmitted electronically but moved — between Greensboro police and the FBI, for example — on discs at face-to-face meetings avoiding a paper trail.

Criminal intelligence is not necessarily connected to particular crimes, but targets specific kinds of organizations and builds files that could be used at a later date if needed. Just like the activists and “subversives” that were under surveillance for legal activity, the department's intelligence gathering is not illegal either, but many could be surprised to learn the extent to which they were monitored and where the information came from.

According to e-mails from Finch and Flowers, they spend a significant amount of time monitoring websites. In a March 2011 e-mail, Flowers listed nine websites they monitor regularly, ranging from local bloggers to the Animal Liberation Front's press office (despite no activity in the area), two of which had my name on them.

Nestled on the list between a gun enthusiast forum and the Peace & Justice Network was me — a link to my old blog that allegedly had “very up-to-date anarchist and leftist news for Greensboro” and the now-defunct Greensboro Indymedia, a group I was a part of but that Flowers put my name on, calling it “Ginsburg's public page for anarchist news/photos/concerts/ etc.”

Despite having filed a public-information request on myself out of curiosity, I didn't see this e-mail until I was clicking through a much more massive request on the Almighty Latin King & Queen Nation, and I immediately wondered what else was missing.

None of the public-information requests uncovered an expansive list of individuals who the police watch, though some names came up repeatedly. The number extends beyond Flowers' 2011 list, which also included Fecund Stench blogger Jeff Martin — a June 2008 e-mail from Sgt. Mike Richey to Finch directed him to monitor five other websites including a blog by former city council candidate Ryan Shell, the Interactive Resource Center Director Liz Seymour's blog, Asheville Indymedia and the HIVE.

Flowers listed eight other websites in a Dec. 12, 2011 e-mail that he monitors daily, including international anarchist and white power websites, two white “sovereign” groups and Greensboro Indymedia, which he noted had a “lot of cop-hating.”

I focused on a few search terms, but requests filed Nov. 16, 2012 for “communist” and “communism”; “Palestine,” “Palestinian,” “candlelight vigil,” “Gaza” and “Israel”; “war” and “protest”, “Iraq” and “peace”; “socialism”; “Indymedia”; and “HIVE” were not processed in time for the article. In the interest of space, the details of the NAACP search and the department's collaboration with other law enforcement agencies are available at yesweeklyblog.blogspot.com.

What they monitored

As the protest monitoring for a typical month shows, Flowers and Finch spent their time on everything from a postal workers' protest at a congressional office to gathering and providing intelligence on groups like Equality NC protesting against “the anti-gay constitutional amendment.” The officers, and others who worked with them, sat in on city council meetings undercover, watched MoveOn and ACLU protests, attended student demonstrations like one against rape at UNCG and met with school resource officers about students who might be affiliated with anarchists at Southwest Middle School and an alleged neo-Nazi following at Northeast Guilford.

The division's work predates Flowers and Finch — Sergeant William Fox in the intelligence section of the department's metropolitan bureau sent an e-mail in October 2005 outlining upcoming events of interest. It included an anti-abortion protest, a demonstration against police brutality noting that there would be "local anarchists beating drums etc.," an anti-war protest, a visit by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and a Truth & Reconciliation dialogue at a church.

Report-backs from protests the department monitored often list "notable protesters" who were in attendance regardless of whether there were any issues.

At a protest against police videotaping public events on Feb. 9, 2006 — which the report noted "was peaceful and problem free," Beloved Community Center Director Nelson Johnson, revolutionary communist Tim Hopkins and two other attendees were listed.

Hopkins' name appeared in more detailed event reports, including a 2006 protest against then-President George W. Bush's visit to Greensboro.

"It was apparent that Tim Hopkins and Scott Trent could not control the out-of-town protesters," Detective James Robinson wrote in the report. "Scott Trent used a bull horn throughout the event and actually advised the crowd not to advance on the police or you will be arrested. None of the visiting protesters have been identified except for David Dixon with the NC Peace and Justice Coalition out of Charlotte."

A thorough report from Finch about a protest against police brutality on Aug. 24, 2009 concludes "Notables in attendance: Tim Hopkins, Nelson Johnson, Dangerous Person Stacy Forster, Jorge Cornell and several Latin Kings." Many of the reports are short, mundane and disconnected from suspected criminal activity.

Besides the more specific websites the department monitored, Finch and Flowers also created fake Facebook and MySpace profiles targeting different so-called subversive groups. Officer Beth Sheffield also received e-mail updates when a "close friend" posted articles about anarchism on Facebook.

Three appeared from the same person in a few weeks around late November 2011, and one was about Buddhism and anarchism while the other two were about anarchist authors. Sheffield also received e-mail notification from Facebook when UNCG student and Occupy Greensboro participant Juan Miranda posted about Israel and socialism.

Flowers followed Legitimate Business on Facebook, a former music venue he dubbed an "anarchist concert hall" and which the department took photos of as part of its preparation for surveillance at a Greensboro anarchist conference.

Going undercover

The police department occasionally sent officers undercover to monitor events, but not just to watch protests from a distance. When then-Chief Tim Bellamy met with the NAACP and then-City Manager Mitchell Johnson at New Light Baptist Church in February 2006, he requested an undercover detective to come along. Cpl. Norman Rankin, who was assigned to the detail, noted that the meeting was "uneventful" and that "no safety issues arose." The report doesn't indicate why Bellamy felt an undercover officer's presence was necessary.

Both Greensboro and Winston-Salem's police departments sent undercover cops to participate in "general assembly" meetings for local Occupy groups. In one e-mail, Winston-Salem police Officer Daniel Battjes forwarded a photo of an alleged sovereign citizen at an Occupy Winston-Salem meeting who was supposedly from Greensboro and asked for help identifying the man.

Finch himself went undercover in Occupy Greensboro, not just attending meetings but participating in them. At an Oct. 16, 2011 meeting, Finch realized Occupy planned to protest Bank of America near the location where President Barack Obama's motorcade would be passing on Green Valley Road, and he worked to figure out if the decision was a coincidence or intentional.

"At the meeting right now, I'm trying to push the idea that Occupy should concentrate their efforts on the park/YWCA and forget BofA," Finch wrote. "Hopefully, that will be successful. More info to follow as it comes in."

His intelligence was relayed up the chain of command to Chief Ken Miller, who was coordinating with the Secret Service to provide security for the president's visit.

Cpl. Stevenson also attended Occupy meetings in October 2011, and "received information in regards to Guilford College students drumming up support for protest."

Police tried to keep a low profile around Occupy Greensboro, with officers who weren't undercover keeping their distance. Sgt. William Graves explained their role in an Oct. 19, 2011 e-mail to police supervisors and command staff, referring to the Occupy encampment that was permitted at the YWCA downtown.

"We are there to monitor not provide security for the YMCA or the Occupiers," he wrote. "Keep in mind that this is a nationwide 'movement' and 'we' do not want to be used by these individuals as a reason to justify their 'cause.' Please have your officers notify the Watch Commander if the Occupiers begin to mobilize or expand their area of occupation to city property."

Police discussed the role of socialists and anarchists in the movement, but Finch wrote in an e-mail about socialists and Occupy that "[Flowers] and I have only been able to scratch the surface on the Zeitgeist/Socialism/Marxist movement in NC," thanking another officer for information he supplied about the "99% and Zeitgeist Movement" in October 2011.

In a Nov. 18, 2011 e-mail, Finch said the Beloved Community Center and Nelson Johnson "have officially joined the Occupy movement" and that Johnson sent a letter asking his congregation to join Occupy Greensboro. According to an intelligence report for the month, at least five other officers monitored Occupy Greensboro actions.

He reported back on everything from the size and location of the meetings to the participants, saying that by late November 2011 the group had dwindled to "'diehards' and non-job having people" numbering between 40 and 50. "They have lots of ideas for their next move but are having a difficult time getting a consensus vote to move forward with anything big," he wrote on Nov. 28.

The department also gathered information about Occupy with the help of an informant, who forwarded Finch e-mails about different projects Tim Hopkins was involved in and said in one Oct. 21, 2011 e-mail that he had invited Occupy Greensboro to attend a march against police brutality that involved Hopkins. In a Jan. 15, 2012 e-mail to Flowers, Finch forwarded a message "from the snitch" about an e-mail Hopkins sent about Michelle Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow*.

The department found out about events from other sources who forwarded them information, like a press release from the Spirit of the Sit-In Movement Initiative that *Rhinoceros Times* Editor John Hammer sent to the city to warn them about a protest outside city council.

Unnamed informants were referenced throughout different requests, but the only insight into how many exist and who may have been paid was outside of the criminal intelligence division. A police Powerpoint on confidential informants in the vice narcotics division in fiscal year 2010-2011 said the division had \$45,000 in the confidential fund, listed eight officers with a total of 50 informants, 28 of which were active.

"Some are being paid and some are working off charges," the slide said.

Most of the information obtained about Greensboro police directly infiltrating local groups and protests by going undercover is recent — though a specific request about undercover officers was not filed — but not all. The department did find creative ways to monitor protests in the past, sending Gary Hastings, who retired as an assistant chief, "on a float disguised as a jazz musician" to film the 2006 Fourth of July parade that police expected Anti-Racist Action to attend. Hastings had a "micro cam" rigged to the cone of his trumpet.

An unexpected source

Even before being elected to council, Marikay Abuzuaiter was known for her community activism. From her direct involvement in the fight against reopening the White Street landfill to her work on the human relations commission, Abuzuaiter built a name for herself around being one of the people. A month before she was elected to council, she attended the first Occupy Greensboro meeting and remained connected, and once on council continued to attend numerous community organizing meetings.

Yet for years, Abuzuaiter has been a confidential informant for the police department, forwarding information from various e-mail lists like the Peace & Justice Network and gathering intelligence at meetings.

“She was a frequent CI [confidential informant] during the Palestinian Protests,” Richey wrote on Nov. 25, 2009. “She called a few minutes ago to advise us Tim Hopkins is planning a protest for 1530 hours at Market and Elm the day after Obama announces a troop build up in Afghanistan.

His surge protest in 2006 was the time we ended up arresting 11 when they tried to takeover the street. You should have the Intell report on your computer.

“Marikay said you can call her, just keep her involvement among us. She was very reliable and hates Hopkins so there is plenty of motivation.”

Abuzuaiter characterizes her role differently, saying she was not participating in events to collect intelligence but sometimes coordinated with police, like when she was a parade marshal for Occupy Greensboro.

“The relationship started when I was in some rallies that we were being targeted for when we had beer bottles thrown at us and things,” Abuzuaiter said, referring to rallies about Israel and Palestine. At a subsequent rally, she said she called 911 when a van stopped and people got out and harassed them, and openly coordinated on behalf of groups like a cross-town car caravan against the landfill. “They needed to know.”

“I’m only in places I want to be,” she said, adding that police never sent her to meetings to send back information and that it wasn’t her goal. “To me, you need to listen to all citizens’ points of view. I’ve been very, very committed to that.”

Abuzuaiter organized a candlelight vigil for Gaza on Jan. 24, 2009, according to an intelligence report by Finch, and about 40 people attended, including Hopkins and Muslim community leader Badi Ali.

Her e-mails cover an array of topics, but a public information request about Palestinian protests was not available before this article went to print. Some information about surveillance of Palestinian protests appeared in a public-information request on Hopkins, like one covering several demonstrations in early March 2008 that said, “each protest was attended by approximately 45-60 participants most of whom were women and children.” The report also notes that people held Palestinian and “jihadist” flags.

Abuzuaiter often sent short notes to Officer Teresa Biffle on events she attended and forwarded information about upcoming events. A March 24, 2010 forwarded e-mail to Biffle included a call to support Hairston Homes residents who were in court fighting eviction and Abuzuaiter’s report from a meeting on the issue.

“I have no idea how many might show up for this,” she wrote. “There were about 60 last night at Nelson Johnson’s church – including 2 or 3 Latin Kings. I’m going to try to be in court.”

As the DNC drew closer, Abuzuaiter sent Greensboro police two photos of a planning map from the Coalition to Protest the DNC that was discussed at a meeting.

The anarchists

Greensboro police surveillance of anarchists is nothing new, but there has been a dramatic increase in the number of e-mail exchanges about them in the last two years, especially connected to an anarchist book fair in Chapel Hill, the third NC Rising conference that was held in Greensboro in May 2011 and anticipated actions against the Democratic National Convention, or DNC.

In October 2005, intelligence officer Scott Sanders forwarded two photos of alleged anarchists to officers including Cuthbertson to identify. One photo showed Cakalak Thunder playing drums while marching while the other was of a man in a penis suit, which one officer forwarded and wrote “Look at what we have to deal

with..." Sanders' actions around the same time landed him in criminal court, having led a controversial internal investigation on officers of color. He was found not guilty of a felony charge stemming from the incident.

Years later, a report stated that on Oct. 25, 2009 "individuals reasonably believed by law enforcement to be anarchist extremists used a Molotov cocktail-type device in an attempt to burn down a High Point, North Carolina business... associated with an identified white supremacist group."

The other information in the public requests does not mention the property destruction in High Point nor any follow up investigation or arrest. Most of the chatter about anarchists isn't tied to suspicion of illegal activity except for crimes police feared might be committed, with a few exceptions for graffiti and some property damage in other cities.

As Finch explains in his Powerpoint presentation on anarchists in the state, "it is *NOT* illegal to be an anarchist" and most anarchists are peaceful and will use "passive resistance and civil disobedience" but there are a "decent number of 'hardcore' anarchist extremists" in the state.

The presentation traces the history of anarchism and claims that today it is connected to May Day, or International Workers' Day, a holiday Finch claimed is just "a day set every year to meet as a group and destroy property." The Powerpoint includes several surveillance photos of alleged anarchists attending the NC Rising conference in Greensboro.

Some of the presentation was pulled directly from Wikipedia while other slides were designed to make fun of anarchists, like one slide ridiculing skinny jeans. Another, depicting a riot scene, reads "anarchist protest tip #47: Even though you want to stick it to the man, Ladies, it's still advisable to shave your armpits."

Finch's presentation continues with an outline of groups that should be monitored for anarchists, from labor to environmental to anti-police violence and offers advice for dealing with anarchists. The list begins by declaring "YOU WILL BE RECORDED!" which is proclaimed at the end for emphasis. "They will be very vocal/confrontational," it continues. "They are often very articulate. They will know the law, especially search and seizure. They will try and bait you."

Flowers offered a more simplistic explanation of anarchists in a June 2011 e-mail to another officer who asked what an anarchist was. "Believe in no government, no rules, no police," he wrote.

In a May 30, 2012 e-mail about a state GOP convention in town, Finch said that anarchists "shouldn't be any threat to this event," but that he'd ask Charlotte's "anarchist snitches to keep their ears open as well."

Despite Finch's proclaimed expertise on the subject, a list of anarchists throughout the state he provided in a Nov. 7, 2011 e-mail indicates a lack of thoroughness or understanding, lumping numerous outspoken communists into his anarchist list.

Liz Seymour, the director of the Interactive Resource Center, made Finch's list but was mentioned in one other intelligence e-mail in September 2007 when Richey found a post on Ed Cone's blog with a link to her website and said, "We should probably keep an eye on it."

Seymour was surprised that she was mentioned recently, but said she heard second-hand that Greensboro police were warned about her when Occupy started.

"My sister for a while was dating a Greensboro police officer and he told her that when the Occupy encampment went up that the police were given three-ring binders with pictures and descriptions of people to watch out for and that I was on the second page," she said.

She was told the first page only had a picture of someone with a black mask being arrested. Though she never saw the binder, Seymour said she believed it exists and wears the story as a badge of honor.

"I'm trying to claim it as much as I can," she said. "I'm 63 and a half now, and you just don't get to be very dangerous at this age anymore. I believe in ideas that have nothing to do with violence but that I think are powerful and potentially dangerous to business as usual when business as usual isn't working."

Around the same time as Finch generated the list, which was supplied to the FBI, the department was

participating in “anarchist roundtable meetings” to prepare for the DNC in Charlotte. Michael Speedling, who was the assistant city manager, said in a June 2011 e-mail that he didn’t want to send additional officers to the DNC because “we have enough of our own homegrown knuckleheads that we need to focus on” in reference to an antigentrification protest in Chapel Hill that police dubbed a riot.

In his report on an anarchist book fair in Carrboro in November 2010, Finch listed two notable attendees, including “local Greensboro street artist Bev Purdue,” who appears to share a name with the former governor.

NC Rising

Police made extensive preparations for surveillance of seemingly mild anarchist events for the sake of intelligence gathering, like the book fair and the 2011 NC Rising anarchist conference in Greensboro.

Finch drew up surveillance plans for NC Rising, from a broad overview to giving Officer Stephanie Mardis directions to wear a hat and sunglasses so that anarchists who might videotape police couldn’t identify her. Finch requested undercover surveillance of three locations that were being used for the conference as well as a team doing roving traffic stops, saying the main goal was to ensure public safety and the second was to get as much intelligence as possible.

NC Rising organizers offered housing for out-of-town visitors, and Flowers recommended that Charlotte police send an undercover female officer and to sign up for housing. “Don’t mention anything about the DNC on your first e-mail to them,” he wrote. “They’ll catch it and block you. Your UC will most likely have to spend the weekend at one of the houses in order to attend seminars.”

In a separate message, Flowers forwarded Finch his confirmation e-mail to stay with “Sarah” on Walker Avenue. In a June 22, 2011 e-mail to Portland, Ore. criminal intelligence officer Aaron Sparling, Flowers stated that Charlotte sent four officers to NC Rising, but did not say in what capacity.

In an e-mail thanking officers for their help covering NC Rising, Finch said a “tremendous amount of intelligence was gathered on a large number of anarchists from around the country.” His preliminary numbers said 48 vehicles and 90 anarchists from 10 states were photographed, including previously unknown anarchists throughout the state, that several “safe houses” were identified and that they collected “invaluable intelligence” about plans to disrupt the DNC.

In at least one instance, the department flagged a house in southeast Greensboro that they “confirmed” as an anarchist location according to an April 2012 e-mail. Flowers drove by early one morning and wrote down the license plates of five vehicles parked outside and said “Looks like this house is a jackpot for the anarchist crowd.” When Lt. Renae Sigmon asked how they found the information, Flowers said he stopped “a known anarchist” driving without a tag and traced it to the house.

Cpl. Stevenson listed other addresses including the Green Bean, a house on Glen wood Avenue and the “Student Union” at Guilford College — which is not the name of any space on campus — as ongoing sites for anarchist surveillance. Flowers and Finch identified a house on Cedar Street and another on Simpson Street as anarchist houses in May 2011.

Flowers and Finch initially learned about the conference, the Carrboro anarchist book fair the year before and anarchist plans to participate in a march against the White Street landfill through posts on Greensboro Indymedia, a website designed for political announcements, events and critiques.

Conflicts with white power

Police saw the Carrboro book fair as “a good opportunity to see a majority of the anarchists,” as Biffle wrote on Oct. 22. “The anarchists are the group that is hard to break the network of,” she wrote. “They are the group that protest the NSM [neo-Nazis] and vandalized vehicles and buildings.”

Other e-mails refer to conflict or anticipated friction between white supremacists and anarchists, including the Ole Glory Skin Heads meeting on Huffman Street and the Confederate Hammerskins.

“According to Detective Robinson anarchists from one of the local universities may attempt to cause problems and confront participants at this [skinhead] meeting,” Sgt. William Graves wrote on March 30, 2011.

In Nov. 19, 2010 e-mail about criminal investigations CIS was involved in over the preceding two years, Flowers listed 2010 surveillance of a white-supremacist concert and a related vandalism case “investigated by CIS following anarchists attacking white-supremacist vehicle at event” but didn’t list any names or say that charges were filed.

Several people connected to the leftwing organizations under surveillance by the department, who requested to remain anonymous, expressed concern about the extent of police monitoring, infiltration and time spent on social justice and radically oriented groups. While public information requests are not exhaustive searches of covert and overt police surveillance, many said they intended to file requests related to the ones in this article or on themselves, calling to mind the famous question: Who watches the watchmen?

WANNA KNOW?

Want to file a public information request? Contact the city of Greensboro’s public information officers, Donnie Turlington or Jake Keys, at 336-373-3769, Donald.Turlington@greensboro-nc.gov or Jake.Keys@greensboro-nc.gov. Specify the search terms and time period desired.

About Robert C. Finch

Rob Finch has been part of the police department’s criminal intelligence division since 2008. Readers may remember him for his allegations that Latin Kings leader Jorge Cornell struck him in the face in December 2007, claims that did not stand up in court.

Finch’s e-mails take a softer tone at times, referring to FBI agent Nicholas Combs as “Big Sexy” in response to a Sept. 10, 2012 request for information on anarchists working with the Latin Kings in Greensboro. He joked about his prolific cursing and said in a March 8, 2012 e-mail that he might “even get out and do some real police work for a change!” In an Aug. 30, 2012 e-mail he said he would be glad when the Democratic National Convention was over, adding that “I’ll be down there on Saturday to get my anarchist on and riot.”

Other times Finch complained to Flowers about not receiving credit for his work and his frustration with coworkers, especially in November 2011.

“How about the other guys on the unit pull their own weight and stop relying on us for everything,” he wrote to Flowers on Nov. 22. “The command staff doesn’t care about any of this stuff until something comes up and then they expect our unit, err... I mean me and you, to handle it immediately. Great strategy...promote you out of the unit and run me off.”

On Nov. 27 he wrote that fellow officer Eric Stevenson “straight up ripped my info and pulled a Nick Klem move. Wow.” Three days later he appeared even madder about training called “A Briefing on Anarchist Trends in North Carolina” by FBI analyst Stacy Cohen.

“Dude, I just read what she’s actually talking about at this thing,” he wrote. “Where do you suppose she got the info she’ll be talking about??? Think she’ll show some pictures that SHE didn’t take... man, I’m pissed now.”

Finch also expressed frustration about an alleged threat from Occupy Greensboro against a Christmas tree — which didn’t amount to anything — saying “I don’t know what’s more pathetic... them wanting to send a message by targeting a tree or us having to guard one!?!?” Finch is not alone in expressing frustration with other officers in e-mails — Capt.

John Wolfe wrote to Deputy Chief Anita Holder about the arrest of an alleged anarchist on May Day 2012, saying, “I am of the opinion that the Officer (Gonzalez) made a poor... forget it. That isn’t my job.” Holder said she wasn’t “trying to Monday morning quarterback this thing” in a response that copied the chief, but said Gonzalez may have acted too quickly.

About Steven Kory Flowers

Often going by Kory in his e-mails, Flowers was posted in criminal intelligence in 2007. By the beginning of 2012, Flowers had been promoted and transferred out of intelligence to the Central E Squad, telling an officer in Chapel Hill that he was sorry to be missing out on some of the fun “with the Occupy/anarchist folks.”

Some of his e-mails are more lighthearted, like one to Dawn Karie with the NC Department of Justice in November 2011 where he forwarded a lesson plan on “sovereign citizens” and simply wrote, “Dawn — yo wassup here it is yo.” Two months later describing anarchist collective CrimethInc, Flowers called them “young troublemakers,” seeming to suggest the group wasn’t a serious threat. In a June 2011 exchange, Flowers talked about his renovated den and playing Xbox with a friend who he collaborated with about pagans in Reidsville.

Other messages appeared to be jokes on first blush but actually seem to be serious, like a Feb. 17, 2011 e-mail from Flowers with a link to a music video labeled “local anarchist music video” for the band Invisible, even though there is nothing particularly political about the video. The duo likely shared a laugh over an April 2011 exchange, where Finch wrote “Tim Hopkins is on my plane to Newark... you’ve got to be kidding me,” and Flowers replied, “Dude... wtf.”

He invited Porland, Ore. intelligence officer Aaron Sparling to come down and monitor an anarchist conference in May 2011, writing, “We’ll cover it and eat collard greens somewhere with a nice southern microbrew.” By mid-2012, things didn’t seem to be going as well, and though Flowers was out of the intelligence division he was assigned to lead “one of six undercover surveillance teams monitoring anarchist activities” at the DNC. In the same Aug. 27 e-mail he wrote that he was “still dealing with long-term spiritual dryness and staleness,” asking the five recipients to pray for him, his wife and two kids.

30 Jan - Barrett Brown Found Competent To Stand Trial

Investigative journalist and open advocate for hackers collectively known as Anonymous, Barret Brown is currently facing several charges, including threatening a federal officer. We're including a couple of recent articles on Brown as background and update on his case.

MORE:

In a brief hearing this morning, United States District Judge Sam Lindsay found former self-proclaimed Anonymous spokesperson Barrett Brown mentally competent to stand trial. The judge will issue an order to that effect later today or early tomorrow. At the same time, Brown was arraigned and pleaded not guilty to his newest charge, concealing evidence, for which he was indicted last week.

Those charges were added onto two other indictments, for allegedly threatening an FBI agent in a YouTube video and for disseminating information from the Christmas Day hack of intelligence firm Stratfor. All told, Brown faces potential prison time of around 100 years.

The courtroom was mostly empty this morning, save for a few reporters and Brown's parents, a slim woman with a blond bob and her husband, a short guy with a dark-blue sweater and a sandy mop of brown hair. They declined to give their names or speak with reporters after the hearing. Brown shuffled into the courtroom accompanied by two U.S. marshals, his hair cut short, looking prison-sallow and unhappy under the fluorescent lights. His mother smiled at him.

"Sir, are you Barrett Lancaster Brown?" Judge Lindsay inquired.

"No, Your Honor." Brown replied.

There was a brief, loaded pause.

"You're not?" Lindsay asked. "What is your name?"

"My name is Barrett Lancaster Brown, Your Honor," Brown replied.

Lindsay paused again. "That's what I said," he answered, finally.

Other than that brief spot of weirdness, things proceeded uneventfully. In response to questions, Brown told the

judge that he understood he was there in order for the court to determine his mental competency, after a prison psychologist at the Federal Correctional Institution in Fort Worth recently issued a report recommending he be found competent.

Brown's public defender, Doug Morris, told Judge Lindsay that when Brown was first indicted, back in September, "I had some concerns initially" about Brown's mental state. He asked a magistrate judge to remand Brown to the facility in Fort Worth, where he could receive medical treatment.

Brown told the judge that in Fort Worth he was "under the sporadic care of a psychologist," after spending a week and a half under medical supervision while undergoing withdrawal from Suboxone, a drug used to treat opiate addiction. "I was addicted to Suboxone," he told the judge. He said that he now takes Zoloft, an anti-depressant, and risperidone, an anti-psychotic (although Brown characterized it as an anti-depressant and sleep aid, which it's sometimes also prescribed for).

"He appears to be in much better shape than when he was brought in," Morris told the judge, adding that Brown has "a pretty good grasp" on the charges against him, his plea options, and the consequences of pleading guilty.

In short order, Lindsay ruled that Brown "does not suffer from a mental disease or defect" that would make him unable to stand trial or participate in his own defense. The judge then read the newest charges of concealing evidence to Brown. There are two of them: obstruction by concealing evidence and corruptly concealing evidence.

"Would you like to have the indictment read aloud in open court?" Lindsay asked.

"Oh, that's all right, Your Honor," Brown replied, before pleading not guilty.

The assistant U.S. attorney prosecuting the case, C.S. Heath, then asked that the first set of charges -- on the threat to the FBI agent -- be tried separately from the other two indictments, which she asked be tried together.

"There's an individual referenced [in the newest indictment] who may ultimately be named as a defendant," she explained. "That individual does not need to be in the same trial." (An anonymous source told our own Jim Schutze that person, referred to as "KM" in the indictment, may be Brown's mother.)

Lindsay set a trial date of April 8 for the first charges and May 6 for the second two. However, Brown's lawyer may file for a continuance; he told the judge during the hearing that the evidence "takes up multiple terabytes" and may need time to review.

With that, the hearing was over, and the marshals escorted Brown away. Out in the hallway, an AP reporter asked Brown's attorney if anyone from Anonymous had been in touch with his client.

"I have no idea about any of that," Morris replied, adding that he doesn't really track whom his client writes to. "But my suggestion is for him not to talk."

February 1st - Why is Barrett Brown facing 100 years in prison?

It was announced on Wednesday morning that Barrett Brown, a man who became a very public talking head for AnonOps (the brain trust that is arguably the cortex of the hacktivist group Anonymous, even though there *technically* isn't one) is [facing up to 100 years in jail](#) for three separate indictments. The most recent two indictments—the [threatening of an FBI officer in a YouTube video](#) and the concealing of evidence—do not seem worthy of such a harsh sentence, considering [a man in Houston recieved only 42 months for threatening to blow up an FBI building](#), and a former dentist [got 18 months](#) for threatening to kill an FBI agent. The third, however, pertains to Barrett Brown's pasting of a link in an Anonymous IRC chat room to a document full of credit card numbers and their authentication codes that was stolen from the security company Stratfor, in the midst of a hack that released over five million internal emails. Those emails were published to Wikileaks. [Some](#)

[writers](#) have rightfully raised their concerns about the legalities behind sharing a link that points to stolen material (which is why I have not linked to those five million emails) and whether or not that should be an indictable offense. However, Barrett's work and research into Stratfor tells a much more complicated and disturbing story than a pile of stolen Visa cards.

It's obvious by looking at the most recent posts on [Barrett Brown's blog](#) that while he is highly interested in Stratfor, it wasn't the credit card information that motivated him. When those five million emails leaked, a product called TrapWire, which was created by a company called Abraxas, was revealed to the public at large. And it [caused a media shitstorm](#). In 2005, the founder of Abraxas and [former head of the CIA's European division](#), Richard Helms, [described TrapWire](#) as software that is installed inside of surveillance camera systems that is, "more accurate than facial recognition" with the ability to "draw patterns, and do threat assessments of areas that may be under observation from terrorists." [As Russia Today reported](#), one of the leaked emails, allegedly written by Stratfor's VP of Intelligence, Fred Burton, stated that TrapWire was at "high-value targets" in "the UK, Canada, Vegas, Los Angeles, NYC."

TrapWire has since largely been dismissed as [nothing to "freak out" over](#), and that hopefully is the case. However, far beyond what the surveillance software itself can or can't do, the revelation that TrapWire exists has caused a chain reaction of discoveries that have seemingly revealed a mob of very powerful cybersecurity firms.

Barrett Brown was doing some very serious investigating into a company called Cubic from San Diego, that was alleged to own TrapWire as a subsidiary of their firm. This is an allegation that [they officially denied](#). However, [these tax filings from 2010](#) that Barrett uncovered clearly state that Cubic had in fact merged with Abraxas Corporation. If you click through and take a look, you can see that Richard Helms's name is right there on the top of the first page.

Alongside Abraxas and Cubic on those tax filings is another company called Ntrepid. [According to Florida State's records of corporations](#), Richard Helms is the director of that company. In 2011, Barrett's work helped lead the *Guardian* to [their report that Ntrepid won a \\$2.76 million-dollar contract](#) from another U.S. defense firm called Centcom, to create "online persona management" software, also known as "sockpuppetry." To break it down in plain English, online persona management was created to populate social networks with a bunch of fake and believable social media personas to "influence internet conversations and spread pro-American propaganda."

Ntrepid also has a product they call Tartan, that's detailed in [this internal presentation](#) hosted by the *Wall Street Journal*. In Ntrepid's own parlance, they describe Tartan as a program that can "Analyze illicit organizations and less structured social networks by identifying: Ranks of influence within human networks... [and can] end the use of [online] aliases." Clearly they are looking to dismantle the smoke and mirrors that groups like Anonymous maintain, by hanging out in chatrooms where they do not need to identify themselves officially, with many private communications happening at once. This creates a difficult-to-penetrate den, where people can easily hide online. Evidently, Ntrepid is seeking to pull all of that apart with Tartan.

In another document on Ntrepid letterhead, titled "[Tartan Influence Model: Anarchist Groups](#)," Tartan is positioned as a software tool that can help combat domestic protestors who operate in "an amorphous network of anarchist and protest groups" and suggests that these groups are prone to violence. They name Occupy Wall Street and Occupy D.C. as part of the problem, and have "built Occupy networks through online communication with anarchists." By identifying the threat of anarchistic, supposedly violent protestors, Tartan sells its services by saying their software "identifies the hidden relationships among organizers of seemingly unrelated movements... To mitigate the ability of anarchists to incite violence... Law enforcement must identify the complex network of relationships among anarchist leaders." So, beyond taking apart movements that exist solely online, Tartan is looking to come out and crush real world protest movements as well.

A lot of this information and the connections between it all would not be easy to figure out were it not for Barrett Brown. For one, Barrett started [ProjectPM](#), a wiki that is completely dedicated to piecing together all of this information about surveillance companies in the United States. He even got on the phone with a representative at

Cubic to tell them that their company was full of liars and that [they do in fact own TrapWire](#). Without Barrett Brown, tons of this research would likely have gone unearthed. Besides a few journalists, not many people have been looking into this information. The one other group that does is called Telecomix, the guys who are famous for supplying dial-up internet lines to areas of the world with oppressive dictatorships, and who I interviewed about the Gaza conflict [here](#). They operate the [Bluecabinet Wiki](#), and they worked very closely with Barrett Brown to uncover more information about the network of cybersecurity firms.

I talked to one of the volunteers at Telecomix, who strongly believes in the work that Barrett did to connect all of these very confusing dots: “I haven't seen reporters really taking a hard look at what Barrett Brown, the investigative journalist, was researching and where it leads to. His discovery that TrapWire = Abraxas and that there is CIA involvement is very important. Do you know in Berlin right now a game was started to [destroy surveillance cameras in public places](#)? Barrett apparently was reading through the emails of [HBGary](#) and Stratfor, linking the data to the specific surveillance companies and contractors... It is an extremely time consuming task.”

Barrett Brown was not a hacker. He did not infiltrate any systems, nor did he appear to know how to do anything of the sort (he did try to take down the Mexican drug cartels in 2011, but [that is a whole other story](#)). Barrett was an investigative journalist who has been published in [the Guardian](#), [Vanity Fair](#), [Huffington Post](#), and [Business Week](#). He closely (perhaps too closely) aligned himself with Anonymous, and dug into some very serious, complicated, and high-level issues pertaining to the future of America's cyberwar conquests. In light of recent news that the Pentagon wants [4,000 new “hackers for cyber command.”](#) it's clear that the US' infrastructure for private cyber defense companies is only growing, and their motives are oftentimes confusing and frightening.

Clearly there is so much more to the Stratfor leak than a bunch of credit card numbers—and the truth behind it all, along with Barrett Brown's possible century-long jail sentence—is a scary prospect for journalists, privacy advocates, and internet activists alike. As [Barrett Brown himself said](#) regarding the leak of Stratfor emails and the credit card numbers within them that some hackers from Anonymous [used to donate money to charities](#): “Much of the media has focused on the fact that some participants in the attack chose to use obtained customer credit card numbers to make donations to charitable causes. Although this aspect of the operation is indeed newsworthy, and, like all things, should be scrutinized and criticized as necessary, the original purpose and ultimate consequence of the operation has been largely ignored.”

4 Feb – Call in for Imam Jamil al-Amin

Imam Jamil al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap Brown, and his supporters are trying to get him transferred closer to fiends and family in Georgia, where his case originates. Please help by calling in on three specific dates.

MORE:

Asking everyone to join in on a call in for Imam Jamil (H. Rap Brown). I ask that you call the Governors office in Georgia requesting that Nathan Deal return Imam Jamil (H. Rap Brown) to the Georgia penal system. I ask that you make three (3) calls (1) each on the following days: the 11th, 18th, and 25th of February at (404) 463-7791 Thank you all and continue to spread the word. In peace strong, In battle strongest....Imam Jamil (H. Rap Brown)

9 Feb – Benefit for Mexico City Anarchist Black Cross

WHAT: Fundraiser for anarchist prisoners in Mexico

WHEN: 9:00pm, Saturday, February 9th

WHERE: Fitness – 1196 Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn, New York

COST: \$7

MORE:

ROSA APATRIDA (NYC Darkwave)

BLACK MASK (Brooklyn Power Elektronix)

FREEDOM CLUB (Depressive Post-punk)

RECUPERATOR (Giving up all hope in step-record.)

+ Dj's from The Ice Age crew

A benefit for Mexico City Anarchist Black Cross and their efforts in supporting political prisoners in Mexico.

((SPRead the wORD)))

SOLIDARITY IS RESISTENCE!

9 Feb – International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

WHAT: Screening of "Warrior: The Life of Leonard Peltier"

WHEN: 2:00-5:00pm, Saturday, February 9th

WHERE: Riverside Church – 91 Claremont Avenue, New York, New York

COST: Donation at the door

MORE:

For more information, e-mail nyclpdoc@gmail.com