

Updates for September 30th

12 Sept - Statement From Leonard Peltier On His 70th Birthday

Leonard Peltier recently turned 70 years old and wrote a statement on this momentous birthday.

MORE:

I want to send you all this personal message on what is now my 70th Birthday. I really want to thank you all for your years and years of support and love, I would have never made it this long without your love and support. As you can imagine, it has been a VERY long path. At times, more difficult than I could have ever imagined. I don't regret any of it for one minute.

It has been my honor to stand up for my Native brothers and sisters and all good peoples of the world. I am very proud to have fought what we call "the good fight" for our future generations. For me, there is no other way. Unfortunately, we have not won the struggle for freedom and today we live in an even stronger police state.

I would like to share with you what our recent fundraiser was all about so that you hear it from me personally.

Over the years, many of my lawyer's have worked pro bono. Of course I appreciated this time they gave to me for free, and was very grateful they were trying to help me.

A harsh reality is that when someone works pro bono, they often cannot put enough of their time into a case. Much like everyone else, attorneys have to take paying clients to make a living.

I asked my team to help me raise the funds to hire the best legal team we could get. I want/need people with seasoned wisdom and who have the skills to help me with what is a very unique situation, as no one is treated like me in the system. I am singled out, and my road to freedom has been paved with potholes and roadblocks since day one to now, almost 40 years later. Anyone who has looked at my case knows it is outrageous to an absurd degree; often people simply cannot believe the sheer amount of constitutional violations and injustice. People sometimes just honestly cannot believe these things happen. They do. 39 years of my life are the living (so far) proof of that. I am physical evidence.

Speaking of 40 years, you know the last time I was out in the real world, it was the early 70's and man, from what I hear, so much has changed. I have no idea what things are like and how much things cost. For example, I had NO idea what attorneys get per hour these days. I hear a loaf of bread is sometimes 5 or 7 bucks? That's a lot of bread! That cars cost as much as some houses?

I am 70 years old today. Everything on the outside has changed; inside here, much has remained the same, including my desire to go home.

Anyhow, I suppose now that I am a 70 year old dude that I am rambling on a bit. I always knew the majority of my support comes from grass-roots, salt-of-the-earth people, my people. I have never really had huge donations- YES, some wonderful and important people have been in my corner for many years, but also, as I have been in here so long, a lot of them have died. I have lost many of my friends and family. I also know there are many causes, & celebrities get asked for money every day.

My team organized a fundraiser to try and raise fees to hire the new legal team. To be honest, I was hoping the grassroots peoples would come to my rescue again as our new website has been drawing supporters in to volunteer and help out. We knew if just a small % of them responded with small donations we would be able to raise the retainer(s) required. I knew as soon as the current fundraiser went into its second and third week that it

was not going to be as successful as we hoped. I have heard how difficult it is to live on salaries these days, and those on minimum wage are in poverty and some are even homeless. We also had to face that even if we raised the retainer (s) there would still be significant monthly costs. I was just not ready to quit, I have not served all this time just to end up staying in here because we don't have enough money. We had to put our heads together and I am very fortunate to be able to tell you that all the attorneys that I wanted to have on my team have agreed to adjust their fees and roles in order to help me go after my freedom. I cannot go into detail about the team or strategy at this time as these things, like most legal proceedings, are confidential, but everything should be final shortly and hopefully we can go forward with trying to get me out of here.

I am so thankful to those who were willing and able to help, and also thankful to those who help in other ways besides money. The time you offer educating others about my situation, and standing up for me and all Native/indigenous people, will always be held close to my heart, and I have a lot of time in here to spend in gratitude for all of you.

I will need your continued support in whatever way you can help, in what appears to be my final walk toward freedom. My team will keep you updated on what is happening and how you can help, but I want to personally assure you that I have very high standards of conduct for those who work on my team, and those standards are being upheld. I do not allow misconduct from anyone; I have spent too many years paying flesh rent to let someone use me or use our struggle. My “ cause” is also my people’s cause, it is YOUR cause, and I am not the only one who has paid a dear price attempting to uphold justice, fairness, and truth. I have a responsibility to those before and after me.

I will again encourage you to work with my team through the official websites etc, as I hear there are others out there misrepresenting themselves in my name and even saying they are part of my family, collecting money or otherwise going against my wishes, etc.

I can only say, sitting here in this place, that I hope my years in here have not been in vain. I want my time to stand as an example to you all, that you might find a way to serve in some way, that you might find a way to do some time of your own, for a brother, sister, our children, or our very Earth. Find something to stand up for, do something, help someone. Do not accept injustice. Do not accept intolerance. Do not accept the damage being done to our planet in the name of greed and more material goods. It is up to us to hold ourselves and others to a high standard. My true wish for my birthday is that you take something.... from me.

Take the years I have given in here and be inspired to make the changes that you know need to be made, before it is too late. Take the time I have sacrificed in here and use it to shape the future for our children.

I truly hope to see you soon, to taste some cake or even just take a walk in the woods. I have so many hugs to give, so many people to thank.

I miss you.

15 Sept - Joel is Free, Support Kevin!

We are pleased to announce that Joel Bitar has been granted parole and is now free!

MORE:

Joel—along with with Richard Morano, Dane Rossman, Kevin Chianella, and one other, who has not chosen public support—was arrested in the wee hours of February 13, 2013, on charges relating to property damage at the 2010 Toronto G20 protests. After numerous extradition hearings and a period of time on house arrest, Joel eventually flew to Canada, was granted bail, and spent the intervening time preparing his case. Exactly one year to the date, on February 13th, 2014, Joel plead guilty to 12 counts of mischief over \$5000 (after originally facing 26 counts), and was sentenced to 20 months in a provincial jail. He was granted parole in mid-August, and was released on September 11th, 2014. Because of Joel’s financial situation, he was not ordered to pay any restitution. Once again, we are glad that Joel is back home, with friends and family, in far less time than was anticipated. Joel has released a statement on his release, which can be found on his blog, Locked Up Yet Liberated.

However, we would like to remind everyone that Kevin Chianella is still locked away from his loved ones, and we urge you to support this comrade while he does his time. Free Kevin! Free all political prisoners!

Kevin Chianella

February 13th – Kevin plead guilty to 16 charges (originally facing 53 counts) and will do 24 months in a penitentiary, the only G20 prisoner to be sentenced to such a place. Kevin did not receive any restitution because of his financial circumstances.

16 Sept - Mutulu Shakur legal update

As Dr. Shakur writes, "My comrades, family and extended family- please distribute to all those who have given support and resources to this process may (Allah) God bless them. In the spirit of our ancestors, I deeply thank you."

MORE:

On September 15, 2014, I received a notice of action from the national appeals board rejecting the parole examiner's recommendation to advance my release to April 2015. This denial or rejection of the examiner's onsite opinion and recommendation is not the first time that we have had this experience dealing with the national parole commission. We obviously, as per required historical practice, will appeal this rejection as it indicates we have rejected the basis of their decision and conclusion. The attorneys and I and our administrative support group are already on task.

We are very, very excited and in awe of how our mobilization carried out this parole hearing. There has been a ground swell of various people living up to their commitments and words by responding to our request for specific support, contacts, resources and finances that gave this hearing character, integrity and principles that history will charge the parole decision was not justified or warranted.

Let's look at where we are; the advance April 2015 date in actuality would advance my release date by 6 months, according to their faulty calculations* (I was supposed to be released in 2011). Six months is very important, and we do not take the denial of this relief lightly, but I am political prisoner. Our expectation for justice is not the paradigm, we seek relief and we wait for justice. Do to their undo process in their calculations, 2016 will be my presumptive release date if I continue as I have for these last 30 years. Evade the traps, set-ups, and tolerate the political targeting there should be no legal or policy rationale to deny that release date which is February 2016. Using this date as a process start, I should be seen by the parole commission 9 months from said date, which will be May 2015. As I told all of you before I am an old alligator, I will survive in mud and water, with your duwabs and prayers.

In the interim, we have been in the parallel mode building for a pardon application that is not based upon procedure but on tact, strategy, political capital and timing. This is not the place to divulge every nuance, but I am requesting all those who have supported me for the many parole request to now support me for the pardon unless you have formed a political objection!! This pardon is based upon a Truth and Reconciliation Commission narrative, and as far as I can tell this will be the first opportunity for the movement of our era to apply and request such. Most of our support has been based on this narrative; we stand on principled ground. Many of the present events are suggesting such relief, and we surely can support other political prisoners of our movement by advancing the strategy.

I hope during this extended time period all those that can help me to get published the various books in our struggle, that I have the information in history to present, also to allow me to build on the cultural genres that will help uplift our future generations. I am committed to this task; I want to thank my family for their sacrifices in my struggle.

In closing, do not feel discouraged, we have done a great job; it has the making and capability to advance a new paradigm. Let's stay busy. Let's stay encouraged, let's be creative and have the audacity to put into the ether a just cause, deserving just results. I thank every single one of you; everyone's contribution was exactly what we needed. When we said that we did the best we could, we meant every word. Plan on hearing from me in the very

near future.

Aim high and go all out.

Stiff resistance

Dr. Mutulu Shakur

(Thank you all!!!)

16 Sept - How to make Isis fall on its own sword by Chelsea Manning

Degrade and destroy? The west should try to disrupt the canny militants into self-destruction, because bombs will only backfire.

MORE:

by Chelsea Manning (*The Guardian*)

The Islamic State (Isis) is without question a very brutal extremist group with origins in the insurgency of the United States occupation of Iraq. It has rapidly ascended to global attention by taking control of swaths of territory in western and northern Iraq, including Mosul and other major cities.

Based on my experience as an all-source analyst in Iraq during the organization's relative infancy, Isis cannot be defeated by bombs and bullets – even as the fight is taken to Syria, even if it is conducted by non-Western forces with air support.

I believe that Isis is fueled precisely by the operational and tactical successes of European and American military force that would be – and have been – used to defeat them. I believe that Isis strategically feeds off the mistakes and vulnerabilities of the very democratic western states they decry. The Islamic State's center of gravity is, in many ways, the United States, the United Kingdom and those aligned with them in the region.

When it comes to regional insurgency with global implications, Isis leaders are canny strategists. It's clear to me that they have a solid and complete understanding of the strengths and, more importantly, the weaknesses of the west. They know how we tick in America and Europe – and they know what pushes us toward intervention and overreach. This understanding is particularly clear considering the Islamic State's astonishing success in recruiting numbers of Americans, Britons, Belgians, Danes and other Europeans in their call to arms.

Attacking Isis directly, by air strikes or special operations forces, is a very tempting option available to policymakers, with immediate (but not always good) results. Unfortunately, when the west fights fire with fire, we feed into a cycle of outrage, recruitment, organizing and even more fighting that goes back decades. This is exactly what happened in Iraq during the height of a civil war in 2006 and 2007, and it can only be expected to occur again.

And avoiding direct action with Isis can be successful. For instance, in 2009 and 2010, forerunners to the Isis group attacked civilians in suicide and car bombings in downtown Baghdad to try and provoke American intervention and sectarian unrest. But they were often not effective in their recruiting efforts when American and Iraqi forces refused (or were unable) to respond, because the barbarity and brutality of their attacks worked against them. When we did respond, however, the attacks were sold to the Sunni minority in Iraq as a justified response to an occupying government favoring the Shia government led by former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Based on my intelligence work in Iraq during that period, I believe that only a very focused and consistent strategy of containment can be effective in reducing the growth and effectiveness of Isis as a threat. And so far, Western states seem to have adopted that strategy. With very public humanitarian

disasters, however, like the ones on Mount Sinjar and Irbil in northern Iraq, and the beheadings of journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, this discipline gets tested and can begin to fray.

As a strategy to disrupt the growth of Isis, I suggest focusing on four arenas:

Counter the narrative in online Isis recruitment videos – including professionally made videos and amateur battle selfies – to avoid, as best as possible, the deliberate propaganda targeting of desperate and disaffected youth. This would rapidly prevent the recruitment of regional and western members. Set clear, temporary borders in the region, publicly. This would discourage Isis from taking certain territory where humanitarian crises might be created, or humanitarian efforts impeded.

Establish an international moratorium on the payment of ransom for hostages, and work in the region to prevent Isis from stealing and taxing historical artifacts and valuable treasures as sources of income, and especially from taking over the oil reserves and refineries in Bayji, Iraq. This would disrupt and prevent Isis from maintaining stable and reliable sources of income.

Let Isis succeed in setting up a failed “state” – in a contained area and over a long enough period of time to prove itself unpopular and unable to govern. This might begin to discredit the leadership and ideology of Isis for good.

Eventually, if they are properly contained, I believe that Isis will not be able to sustain itself on rapid growth alone, and will begin to fracture internally. The organization will begin to disintegrate into several smaller, uncoordinated entities – ultimately failing in their objective of creating a strong state.

But the world just needs to be disciplined enough to let the Isis fire die out on its own, intervening carefully and avoiding the cyclic trap of “mission creep”. This is certainly a lot to ask for. But Isis is wielding a sharp, heavy and very deadly double-edged sword. Now just wait for them to fall on it.

16 Sept - Forty Years in Solitary: Two of the Angola Three Sue Louisiana Prison Officials

The Prison Complex caught up with George Kendall Director of the Public Defender Initiative, at Squire Patton Boggs, who is working on the case.

MORE:

by George Lavender (*In These Times*)

Albert Woodfox has been in solitary confinement for much of the past 40 years. Along with Herman Wallace and Robert King, Woodfox is one of the “Angola Three,” three members of the Black Panther Party who spent much of their lives in solitary confinement inside the walls of Louisiana State Prison, Angola. King was released in 2001, after 29 years in solitary confinement. Wallace, who was recently featured in the documentary film “Herman's House,” died in 2013, three days after his release from prison. The last member of the Angola Three still incarcerated, Woodfox launched a lawsuit to challenge his continued solitary confinement, and along with Robert King, is seeking damages from prison officials. The family of Herman Wallace, settled with the state.

In These Times: How did you get connected to the “Angola Three?”

George Kendall: They were in need of counsel for the civil solitary confinement case and I was surprised to hear that someone had been in solitary more than 30 years. That led us to meet Mr Wallace, Mr Woodfox, and Mr King and we agreed to take their case. We've had that civil case ever since.

ITT: You've mentioned that these three people have spent a considerable amount of time in solitary, tell us more about their case?

GK: Mr Woodfox and Mr Wallace were placed in solitary in April of 1972 in the wake of a stabbing death of a correctional officer at Louisiana State Prison, Angola which at the time was a really horrific prison by all accounts, everyone agrees with that. Robert King was transferred from New Orleans to Louisiana State Prison a

couple of weeks later. He was thrown directly into solitary confinement. He was there until his liberation in February 2001. He was wrongly convicted of a murder in 1973, that conviction was overturned when all of the witnesses recanted their testimony. He was released from solitary confinement right out to the streets and has done remarkably well despite the fact he spent 29 years in solitary. However Mr Wallace, who unfortunately passed away last October, he stayed in solitary confinement from April 1972 up until October 1st of last year, 2013, except for when he spent 9 months in a dormitory in 2008. So he spent more than 40 years in solitary confinement. Mr Woodfox has been in solitary since 1972 except for a period when he was awaiting retrial in his case in 1997 through 1999 and again there was a 10 month period in 2008 when he and Mr Wallace and other inmates lived very peacefully in their dormitory in Louisiana State Prison.

ITT: Have you seen the cells they are held in?

GK: We have visited them often. We have toured with expert witnesses the cell blocks in which they live. First in Louisiana State Prison in Angola and then Mr Wallace spent the last few years in solitary cells in Hunt Prison also in Louisiana. Mr Woodfox has also been in solitary cells in Wade Prison and we've seen those as well.

ITT: How would you describe the cells?

GK: They are very small, there's no window in the cell. There's a window the other side of the hallway. For five or six months of the year it's extraordinarily hot. The only thing that's done about that is there are fans that blow and when those fans blow it's nearly impossible to speak with anybody without yelling very loudly, so there's very little communication between anyone on the tier. Mr Woodfox was transferred from Louisiana State Prison to Wade in 2010 and has been in a 6 x 8 cell. He gets out one hour a day, five days a week, and fifteen minutes for a shower. And two or three of those days he can go outside into a small cage basically where he gets light and he can exercise and occasionally he will get visits, even more occasionally go to some other part of the jail to see a doctor or whatever. But on weekends he gets 15 minutes out of his cell and that's it. So he's spent an enormous amount of his life in that tiny cell. And Mr Wallace, it was virtually the same for him at Angola and Hunt prison and it was virtually the same for Mr King when he did 28 years in Angola.

ITT: What effects does Albert Woodfox say this has had on him?

GK: We're all social animals. Imagine spending the weekend in your bathroom and if you think you would have a hard time spending the weekend in your bathroom just imagine what it must be like and what the consequences might be of spending days, weeks, months, years, decades in that same setting. All these guys have sleep issues, Mr Woodfox particularly has had claustrophobic attacks. And there's a social awkwardness that comes when you're around other people. So they worked very hard to make sure they did not succumb to taking medicines, psychotropic medicines. A lot of people have become mentally ill or their mental illness is greatly exacerbated by these conditions. It's taken enormous discipline to not be in far worse shape than they are.

ITT: Why do you think they have been kept in solitary so long?

GK: There's no warden who wanted to be the one to release them to less confining circumstances given the fact that two of them have been convicted of being involved in the killing of a prison guard. This is one of those times that a federal judge is going to have to tell them that they are going to have to release Mr Woodfox.

ITT: Could you tell us more about the lawsuit you're currently working on for Albert Woodfox?

GK: This lawsuit is filed on behalf of Mr Woodfox and Mr King. Mr Woodfox is still held in solitary so one very major goal of the lawsuit is to order the Department of Corrections to release him from solitary confinement and place him in general population. Every time he's been in general population he's been just fine and he'll be just fine again but it's going to take a judge order to see that happens. We're quite confident that when we go to trial we'll be able to win that order. He along with Mr King are seeking monetary damages. This goes well beyond the pail of what is supposed to happen or what's meant to happen in prisons. There's been no penalogical justification to hold these guys for anywhere near this kind of time and so the wardens and others violated clearly the constitution and they ought to pay for it.

ITT: The lawsuit is alleging that this is a violation of the Eighth Amendment?

GK: There are a number of claims. One is that simply to hold somebody in these very restrictive circumstances without justification is a textbook example of a violation of the Eighth Amendment (prohibition on) cruel and

unusual punishment. It's a cardinal rule in American corrections that prisons function best when prisoners are held in the least restrictive environment, that it is necessary to ensure that they get along well and they are no threat to staff or prisoners.. That cardinal rule has been run rough shod over for decades. These guys have been kept in far more restrictive circumstances than any of the facts justified and that's why this lawsuit was filed and that's why we're going to prevail. The second claim... every 90 days that they're put in solitary confinement they're meant to review that... Every ninety days there's a recommendation: do we keep this person here in these highly restrictive circumstances or do we place them in less restrictive environments. Well, these kinds of 90 day reviews have gone on for 40 years with Mr Woodfox and they're clearly just a sham. He did not have a violation for years and years and the ones he's had in the last 20 years have been extremely minor.

ITT: Tell us what happened last week?

GK: There was an issue within this large civil case. When he (Albert Woodfox) was moved in 2010 we had to also sue the warden and some other staff at this new prison. And those new defendants objected to being sued... Under American law before they have to go to trial they can seek an appeal in the court of appeals of whether or not the suit can be maintained against them. Judge Brady our trial judge had denied that motion and said you have to stay in the case, they appealed that and we were hopeful that after the argument the three judge panel was going to agree with Judge Brady.

ITT: And what are the next steps?

GK: If the Three judge panel affirms and says these defendants are going to stay int he case then the case will go back to the district court, there will be a trial date set we'll do some more discovery and we'll try that case without further delay in 2015.

ITT: There's been a lot more attention in recent years to the issue of solitary confinement, do you think there are wider implication of this case?

GK: I think the country is reexamining the use of solitary and I think there's a growing judgement that it's been over-used and ought to be used in a much more measured way. We truly can't afford to keep people for years in this type of incarceration that's much more expensive to administer than other types of incarceration that would guarantee safety and allow the smooth running of institutions.

16 Sept - SHU, Hunger Strikes, and Shakedowns; An update from Doug.

Doug Wright of the Cleveland 4 has written an update on his imprisonment and we've included it below.

MORE:

Comrades,

By the time you read this I will have started a hunger strike. I'm starting it tomorrow Friday, Sept 12th. I am going on the strike because the C.O's did a massive shakedown in the entire SHU. They took a fair amount of my personal property. It was a shakedown that was initiated just because a new assistant warden wanted to make an impression and flex his muscles so to speak. They took a lot of people's personal property but I'm the only one not accepting it lying down. Also, they cancelled our commissary next week and we only go to commissary every two weeks, so we'll have to wait two more weeks. They took all of my batteries, toothpaste, and my palm brush. It's not a lot but almost everything I own back here. Let's see where this goes. Please call and find out how they are allowed to do this. Talk to warden Jarvis.

-Resist-

Doug

He could really use your support. He's been in SHU a few months now. Books, letters, photos, and puzzles would be a great help. His full wish list is here

UPDATE 9/18/14

Doug is off hunger strike. Commissary was returned but his items that where taken have not. He's still in SHU (Solitary).

16 Sept - Jeremy Hammond announced as second Courage beneficiary

Imprisoned hacktivist media source Jeremy Hammond becomes Courage's second beneficiary, in addition to Edward Snowden.

MORE:

Jeremy was sentenced to ten years in prison for being the alleged media source for documents from the private US intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting, Inc. (Stratfor), which included revelations that they had been spying on human rights defenders, for example Bhopal activists and members of PETA, at the behest of corporations and governments. WikiLeaks published these documents in partnership with 29 media organisations worldwide as the Global Intelligence Files, which are still being used for news stories around the world. Despite hundreds of pleas, including a letter submitted by WikiLeaks from itself and its media partners – “newspapers, TV networks, and magazines with a combined audience of 500 million” – asking for leniency for Jeremy, the maximum possible sentence was given.

Jeremy Hammond, a political dissident and former member of the hacktivist network Anonymous, was sentenced to a decade in prison after he refused to inform on others and defended his actions in service of the truth and the public's right to know. The judge in his case refused to recuse herself despite a glaring conflict of interest: her husband was a former Stratfor client and had his information revealed in the Global Intelligence Files.

Since March 2012, Jeremy has been cut off from his friends and family, and punished with extensive stays in solitary confinement. By hosting his defence fund, Courage will raise donations to enable Jeremy's defence team to continue advocating on his behalf, monitoring his condition and fighting for his rights while in prison.

Sarah Harrison, Acting Director of Courage and WikiLeaks Investigations Editor, said:

Courage supports and defends truth-tellers who take risks and need our help, wherever they are. We traditionally think of whistleblowers as insiders disclosing their employers' abuses, but those on the outside who work to make public the secret wrongdoing of the powerful are just as vital in the effort to hold them accountable. Thanks to Jeremy, we now know the inner workings of the private intelligence sector which runs much of US intelligence activities including more than 80% of the NSA's operations. Jeremy has found himself at the sharp end of the US government's crackdown on the media so it's important that he knows he has our support.

Grace North, who has been coordinating support efforts for Jeremy Hammond since June 2013, said:

This is an exciting new partnership for those of us who have worked so tirelessly to support Jeremy through this journey. Jeremy believes that one of the most important things a person can do to combat the injustices of the world is to educate themselves and others. Joining with the Courage Foundation is the next step in getting information and education to as wide an audience as possible. The more people we can reach with Jeremy's message, and with the information Jeremy so bravely sacrificed his freedom to disclose, the more people we can have fighting on the front lines for not only Jeremy's freedom, but the freedom of humanity.

In addition to hosting the defence fund, Courage will publicly advocate for Jeremy Hammond and build his network of support. A relaunched website at freejeremy.net will keep the public updated on Jeremy's case, raising awareness about the importance of his revelations and publishing Jeremy's writing from prison.

Donations to Jeremy's defence fund can be made at freejeremy.net/donate.

Tax-free donations can be made throughout the EU via the Wau Holland Foundation at <http://www.wauland.de/en/projects/07.html#JH>

Courage originally began in August 2013 as The Journalistic Source Protection Defence Fund and has run Edward Snowden's official defence fund since that time. Jeremy Hammond is Courage's next beneficiary; his official support site is located at <https://www.freejeremy.net> and the related twitter account at @FreeJeremyNet

16 Sept - New writings by Mumia Abu-Jamal

We're including transcripts of Mumia's latest commentaries.

MORE:

September 16th - Labor Daze

What is Labor Day, 2014?

A day like all other days, not in honor of workers, but in cruel irony of workers' impotence and defeat.

Celebrate Labor Day? Yeah, sure.

But attack unions; denigrate union organizing, while calling for wage cuts and deregulation. They are called lazy and incompetent and even Hollywood joins the fray with a recent movie. Remember "Bad Teacher"?

You think you'll be seeing "Bad CEO" anytime soon?

I didn't think so.

Once again, Hollywood sides with the powerful, whilst being labeled 'liberal'!

Workers are working harder today, and getting considerably less in return. Wages are low, and respect for working people is even lower.

Unions are demonized.

Labor Day - a day like all others, when labor and its unions are spit on.

Yeah.

Happy Labor Day.

September 16th - War, By Another Name

With the rapid strikes and seizures of Iraqi territory by the Islamic State (commonly known as ISIS), the West, given a splendid pretext by the horrific decapitations of two journalists, is mounting a counter-attack, if only by war.

So far, no Western state has yet announced the deployment of ground troops.

Why are they there?

They claim that ISIS is a "threat" to their homelands, surely a stretch by any honest measure.

For ISIS has, according to most accounts, 20,000 troops, at best. According to some published sources, 10,000.

According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Iraq has 246-thousand active troops -- well over twenty times ISIS's troop strength.

ISIS has no air force, nor navy, nor tanks (except those left behind in Iraqi bases by their fleeing armies)

How then is ISIS an "imminent threat" to the U.S., not to mention the West?

They have an aggressive and able armed force. But, how could they roust Iraqi troops so easily, unless Iraqis had little to fight for in the first place?

The truth is it's hard to fight for a puppet.

And although former Prime Minister, Nouri Kamel al-Maliki is no longer in power, a US puppet still runs Iraq.

The real reason US troops withdrew from Iraq had nothing to do with the Iraqi people. It withdrew because al-Maliki steadfastly refused to sign a so-called Status of Force agreement; a pact granting US troops total immunity for any action committed on Iraqi land.

Any action? The idea is breath-taking. Even a puppet couldn't bear it.

And now, to protect their puppet state, the US bombs Iraqi targets described as ISIS hot spots.

But bombs are weapons of war -- not tools of peace.

Call it what you will; it's war.

September 18th - The Lure of War

For millions of people, during the election of 2008, Barack Hussein Obama emerged as the 'peace candidate' (if only in the imagination), the urbane, educated, cool alternative; indeed, the antidote to the bumbling bellicosity of George W. Bush.

A term and a half later and Bush looks surprisingly refreshing in the rear-view mirror.

For Obama, the 4th U.S. President to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (after Theodore Roosevelt in 1906; Woodrow Wilson, 1919, and Jimmy Carter, 2002), the lures of war have been almost impossible to resist.

For despite the coveted prize, peace, true peace, has been elusive during his tour of duty in the White House.

Technology, especially drone tech, has made war almost easy. Thus, U.S. drones have bombed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Yemen and Pakistan. According to an article on alnetnet.org, the U.S has launched some 94,000 drone airstrikes in the noted areas. 94,000!

How many people have been killed, in collateral damage? We don't know; and we don't care.

A good round number? About a million. A million!

Let's call them 'collateral damage', OK?

Some peace.

But presidents, once elected, are anxious to exercise their enormous imperial, martial power.

The latest is Obama's war against a relatively small organization: 'ISIS'.

ISIS: a group that is a close descendant of a group founded and formed by American, British, and Pakistani intelligence: al-Qaeda.

War--air power, over a ground-based organization.

The Obama administration, trying to finesse this question by promising 'no boots on the ground', by unleashing U.S. ferocious air-power, is involved in war -- period.

There's an old saying: 'War is the sport of kings.'

September 25th - The Meaning of Ferguson

Before recent days, who among us had ever heard of Ferguson, Missouri?

Because of what happened there, the brief but intense experience of state repression, its name will be transmitted by millions of Black mouths to millions of Black ears, and it will become a watchword for resistance, like Watts, like Newark, Harlem and L.A.

But Ferguson wasn't 60 years ago - it's today.

And for young Blacks from Ferguson and beyond, it was a stark, vivid history lesson -- and also a reality lesson.

When they dared protest the state street murder of one of their own, the government responded with the tools and weapons of war. They assaulted them with gas. They attacked them as if Ferguson was Fallujah, in Iraq.

The police attacked them as if they were an occupying army from another country; for that, in fact, is what they were.

And these young folks learned viscerally, face to face, what the White Nation thought of them, their claimed constitutional rights, their so-called freedoms - and their lives. They learned the wages of Black protest. Repression, repression and more repression.

They also learned the limits of their so-called 'leaders', who called for 'peace' and 'calm', while armed troops trained submachine guns and sniper rifles on unarmed men, women and children.

Russian revolutionary leader, V.I. Lenin once said, "There are decades when nothing happens; there are weeks when decades happen."

For the youth, excluded from the American economy by inferior, substandard education; targeted by the malevolence of the fake drug war and mass incarceration; stopped and frisked for Walking While Black, were given front-row seats to the national security state at Ferguson after a friend was murdered by police in their streets.

Ferguson may prove a wake-up call. A call for youth to build social, radical, revolutionary movements for change.

17 Sept - Omaha Judge did not read appeal of Mondo we Langa in COINTELPRO case

Judge James Gleason ignored the claim of "actual innocence" made by Mondo we Langa (former David Rice) and dismissed his request for a new trial on the missed claim.

MORE:

by Michael Richardson (*The Examiner*)

Documents obtained from the Nebraska Supreme Court reveal that Douglas County District Judge James Gleason overlooked a plea of "actual innocence" in a post-conviction appeal and based his denial of a new trial, in part, on the missed paragraph. The snafu occurred in the case of Mondo we Langa (former David Rice) who is serving a life sentence for the 1970 murder of an Omaha policeman. Mondo and his co-defendant, Edward Poindexter, were convicted in a trial manipulated by J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation under the infamous COINTELPRO counterintelligence operation.

Judge Gleason cannot use the excuse he was in a hurry when he missed Mondo's claim of innocence, after having waited more than a year to hold a hearing on the appeal. Mondo filed for judicial review on Sept. 28, 2012 but Gleason waited until Oct. 1, 2013 to take the matter up before issuing a perfunctory denial on Dec. 20 citing the lack of an "actual innocence" pleading.

The claim of innocence missed by Gleason was authored by Omaha attorney Timothy Ashford who filed the appeal petition on behalf of Mondo we Langa. Ashford addressed the glaring error by Gleason in an appeal brief

and tactfully stated, “The court misread the language.”

What Ashford wrote that Gleason apparently did not read was a necessary element in the pleadings to overcome the statute of limitations. The claim of innocence was expressly stated:

“Defendant Rice [Mondo] is entitled to a new trial because he did not commit the crime charged and he is not guilty of the crime leading to the death of Officer Minard in 1970, and further, the defendant’s presumption of innocence was lost as a result of the errors alleged herein.”

Judge Gleason buttressed his opinion by citing several unpublished out-of-state cases. Unpublished decisions lack precedential value and are rarely cited in judicial opinions. Tim Ashford described the inadequate citations as both irrelevant and reversible error.

Mondo we Langa and Ed Poindexter were the leaders of the Omaha affiliate chapter of the Black Panther Party called the National Committee to Combat Fascism. The pair were targets of the Omaha police, the FBI, and agents of the Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms Division. J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI Laboratory to withhold a report on the identity of the 911 caller that lured police to a bomb ambush in order to make a case against the two men. Both men have consistently proclaimed their innocence at every opportunity.

The United Nations Human Rights Council has been asked to investigate the case and Mondo has a pending appeal before the Nebraska Supreme Court. No date for a decision has been set.

17 Sept - Man is charged with the attempted firebombing of Kansas City Congressional office

On September 17th, federal prosecutors charged 28-year-old Kansas City anarchist Eric King with attempting to firebomb the local congressional office of Rep. Emanuel Cleaver on September 11. All we have at this point is a corporate news article, pasted below. Remember that the government and their lapdog media conduct trials based on bullshit and lies. Comrades are in the process of contacting Eric and setting up support. More information will come as it becomes available.

MORE:

by Mark Morris (*The Kansas City Star*)

Eric G. King of Kansas City will make his initial appearance in federal court Thursday morning. According to court records, King has espoused anti-government, anarchist views on social media.

Kansas City police initially identified King as a suspect because he previously had come under scrutiny during an investigation of anti-government graffiti on a local Bank of America building and the spray painting of Kansas City police vehicles, according to federal court records.

Video surveillance records showed that someone walked up to Cleaver’s office at 101 W. 31st St. at 2:52 a.m. Sept. 11 and threw a hammer through a window.

The person then threw a flaming bottle at the window, but it bounced off the building. The person threw a second bottle at the window and ran from the area. Investigators found no fire damage on or in the building, according to court records.

Surveillance video from King’s apartment building in the 2700 block of Charlotte Avenue showed King wearing a backpack similar to that in the office surveillance images, court records say.

Police detained King on Tuesday and recovered from his backpack a container of charcoal lighter fluid similar to that used in the attempted firebombing, a clear plastic soda bottle covered in a tube sock and a can of red spray paint.

Authorities noted that the red spray paint appeared to match the color recently used to vandalize a wall at the

Liberty Memorial.

Investigators also tracked Facebook postings purportedly linked to King, including one from Sept. 10 that noted action by a group called the KC Fight Back Insurrectionist Collective.

“KC Fight Back has been ... serious in its insurrection activity, and that is the thing that is giving me the most pride in my life,” the post said.

An earlier post noted “these cops aren’t going to kill themselves, get to the streets.”

During a search Tuesday, an FBI agent recovered a letter among King’s personal papers that allegedly described the steps needed to commit a firebombing similar to that attempted at Cleaver’s office, including, “Use hammer/sledgehammer to break door,” “light bottles, throw them, light curtains.”

Notations found on the back of the letter purportedly stated that “the arsons committed on Sept. 11, 2014, were committed solely by the KC FIGHT BACK Insurrectionist Collective” and were done in solidarity with Ferguson, Mo., the site of recent rioting following the police shooting death of Michael Brown.

The letter also allegedly said the action was committed to memorialize those who died in Chile under the reign of a U.S.-backed dictator and lives lost in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen.

17 Sept - Even Model NYS Inmates Face Steep Barriers to Parole

The state's approval rate for parole applications has been sliced in half since 2005. Inmates convicted of high-profile crimes face almost insurmountable barriers—because of politics, not the penal code.

MORE:

by Bill Hughes (*City Limits*)

Craig Crimmins has applied for parole, and been denied, every two years since 2000 for a murder he committed in 1980. He says that after his latest denial he has, for the moment, given up hope that he will ever be released. In May of this year, Craig Crimmins appeared before the parole board in New York for the eighth time. He has served nearly 34 years in prison on a 20-to-life sentence for murder. Every two years since the year 2000 he has gone before the board, and every time he has been denied.

"I tell you, it's easier to do two years than it is to do the two days you have to wait after seeing the board," Crimmins said during a recent interview at the Shawangunk Correctional Facility, a maximum security prison in Walkill. Crimmins was convicted in 1980 for killing Helen Hagnes Mintiks, a violin player at the Metropolitan Opera House, where he worked as a stagehand. The woman went missing during intermission at a performance and was later found naked and bound at the bottom of an air shaft. For weeks before police identified Crimmins as the killer, the New York City tabloids ran story after story about, "The Phantom of the Opera Killer."

Thirty-four years ago, Crimmins was a 21-year-old illiterate drug and alcohol abuser with no prior criminal record who told the judge, "Something in my head just snapped." Today, at 55, he is a humbled inmate who earned an Associate's degree in substance abuse counseling and works in the prison commissary. "Every time they turn me down, it's always about the nature of the crime, nothing about who I am now or what I've done since then," he says. "I could have cured cancer, they wouldn't care."

What is obvious to Crimmins and many people who follow the criminal justice system is the simple fact that crimes that receive a disproportionate amount of media attention are judged more harshly by parole boards than similar offenses that are off the public radar.

Parole appears to be getting harder to get in New York State. As the state's prison population has fallen in recent years—it dropped 14 percent from 2007 to 2013—in part because of reforms to the Rockefeller drug laws, it is likely that the typical inmate seeking parole today committed a more serious crime than the average parole applicant in 2005.

But the decline in parole approvals is still striking: From 2005 to 2013, the percentage of parole applicants who won approval fell from 52 percent to 24 percent.

An unwritten rule

While precise figures are difficult to nail down, between 2010 and 2013 the board saw an average of 10,000 parole applicants annually from a prison population hovering around 85,000. They turned down, on average, three out of four applicants.

"It's not like it's written down anywhere, but every board member knows, if you let someone out and it's going to draw media attention, you're not going to be re-appointed," said Robert Dennison, a former parole board chairman and commissioner. And Dennison should know. He became commissioner when a vacancy opened up after his predecessor presided over the release of Kathy Boudin, who was sentenced to 20-years-to-life for her role in a botched robbery in 1981 of an armored car in Rockland County that resulted in the deaths of two police officers and a security guard.

On her third appearance before the board, Boudin was granted parole in 2003. The governor at the time, George Pataki, publicly denounced the decision and within months replaced the former chairman, Brion Travis, with Dennison. The two commissioners who voted to release Boudin were also replaced on the board.

"So everybody knows, if you like the job and you want to keep the job, you don't vote to release people who are going to wind up in the media the next day," Dennison says.

The decision-makers

Being a parole board member is by most estimates a pretty cushy gig. The current base salary is over \$100,000 per year for roughly three days' work per week plus the added perks of health benefits, a state car with a placard and per-diem hotel and meal expenses.

Jim Murphy is a former county legislator in Schenectady County and a longtime volunteer with the New York chapter of CURE, Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants, a national organization started in Texas in 1972 that now has chapters in 40 states. For the past four years, Murphy has been tracking the statistics of the parole board and plugging them into spreadsheets to determine the patterns in the parole process that are apparently not tracked by the board itself.

He believes he will soon be able to show a pattern emerging that can predict which parole board commissioners are more or less likely to grant or deny parole. "A good number of these people—not all of them—but a good number seem to be making their decisions based on the politics of the case.

"To me, the biggest issue is, philosophically, what is the parole board meant to do? The parole board's role was not meant to re-judge the crime; the parole board's role was to determine whether a person is ready for release or not," he says. "As it is, many members of the Parole Board just look at the crime and determine whether that sentence was long enough."

When media publicity about a past crime is compounded by impact statements from victims' families, parole is virtually impossible for someone with a sentence ending in a "to-life" suffix. A conundrum for prisoners and their advocates is the fact that those parts of their parole files are sealed.

In fact, any correspondence to the parole board opposing the release of an inmate is kept in a confidential folder that prisoners cannot access, whether the letters are from victims, their relatives or the judges and prosecutors. Other items frequently placed into a folder include newspaper clippings, but inmates have no way of knowing the entirety of the information the board commissioners are using to arrive at their decisions. Crimmins says he has heard that his victim's parents have both died and that her former husband re-married and moved somewhere

in Europe. A search of online databases turned up no information as to their whereabouts.

Attempts at reform

In December 2013 the New York State Assembly Committee on Corrections conducted a hearing on the parole system, during which Columbia Law Professor Philip M. Genty took state officials to task for failing to follow through on reforms that were implemented in 2011. That year the Legislature amended Article 259 of the Executive Law mandating parole officials to, "... establish written procedures incorporating risk and needs principles to measure the rehabilitation of persons appearing before the board."

"Despite a clear legislative mandate, the board has, to date, failed to promulgate new regulations containing the written risk and needs assessments procedures required by [law]," Gentry told the committee. "As a result, the Parole Board is still operating under an obsolete set of regulations dating back to 1980. This is simply inexcusable."

State Assemblyman Daniel J. O'Donnell who chairs the Committee on Corrections, says that the Parole Board has taken the position that they don't have to comply with the legislature's mandate; a challenge is pending before the New York State Court of Appeals. O'Donnell also says he is proposing legislation in the upcoming 2015 session to address the issue.

"I do have a bill that would eliminate one of the things that the parole board seems to use for high profile cases, that 'releasing them would deprecate the seriousness of the offense,' which to me essentially means that the parole board gets to re-sentence someone," he says."

The media role

O'Donnell is particularly concerned about the situation facing inmates like Crimmins, convicted of high-profile crimes in which judges did not impose a maximum sentence but where parole commissioners continue to sit in judgment of the inmate's freedom.

"One of the problems is the family of the defendant hears '20' and the family of the victim hears 'life,'" O'Donnell notes. "The other problem, and it's a problem with the media, is that they don't seem to understand how the system works."

That sometimes means the parole system is blamed for releasing people over which it had no control. "Many sentences release inmates to the supervision of the parole division without them ever appearing before the parole board, like the man who stabbed two children in a housing project elevator in Brooklyn this summer. A similar case is the recent killing of Rochester police officer Daryl Pierson, the first officer from that city to be killed in the line of duty since 1959. While several media outlets ran headlines and stories employing the phrase, "recent parolee," few went to the trouble of explaining that the killer, Thomas Johnson, had served time, was released to parole, violated his parole, served an additional year and was wanted for yet another parole violation when the shooting occurred. He never saw a parole board.

O'Donnell agrees that just because a crime is high-profile doesn't guarantee that release for inmates serving long sentences is automatically appropriate. John Lennon's assassin, Mark David Chapman, faces not just public outrage over killing a music icon, but "a legitimate fear on behalf of Yoko Ono and her children that that would be a threat to their safety," O'Donnell says.

"But somebody who was high on drugs and got involved in a robbery where someone died, I don't necessarily believe that that's the case so I think the board should be required to make more substantive determinations, particularly when they're so vastly beyond the minimum."

The cost of incarcerating prisoners in New York is about twice the national average according to a 2012 study released by the Vera Institute for Justice. In a survey of 40 states which participated, the national average was

\$31,286 inmate, while New York State's was about \$60,000. The cost of supervising an inmate on parole is estimated at about one-tenth the cost of keeping them in prison.

Some see board as too soft

Not all state legislators share O'Donnell's views. In a clear example of the downstate-upstate divide, state Sen. Michael Nozzolio has derided the parole board as being too soft on releasing inmates. While O'Donnell's district covers the upper-west side of Manhattan, Nozzolio's covers a swath of New York between Rochester and Syracuse. After the board released an inmate named John Edward Brown six months shy of his three-year sentence for assaulting his infant son, Brown murdered his 34-year-old girlfriend Helen Buchel and her 12-year-old daughter Brittany Passalacqua in Geneva, in the center of Nozzolio's district.

"It is unconscionable that these horrific crimes could have been prevented if the New York State Parole Board had taken a harder stance on crime and against individuals who commit violent and horrific crimes against society," Nozzolio said shortly after the 2009 murders. "Clearly the New York City-driven agenda to release criminals into our streets has failed." Brown is now serving a 40-years to life sentence.

The gnarly issue of reforming the way parole is handled has been batted around in the state legislature from both perspectives for decades, yet little by way of substantive reform has taken hold. Like so much of Albany's work product, bill after bill gets proposed with great fanfare then dies a slow quiet death in committee. The most recent is Senate Bill 1128 and its companion in the Assembly, 4108, known as the Fair Parole Act, which would modify interview procedures and mandate the disclosure of parole records. It was introduced and referred to committee in January 2013, died there, and re-introduced at the beginning of this year and referred back into committee, where it died again this year.

"They'll never pass that bill, it doesn't stand a chance," says Dennison, the former board chairman. "Let's face it, if you're an elected official and you're seen as coddling prison inmates, your opponent is going to pounce all over you with that. Forget about the fact that there's a larger, more nuanced argument to be made about the long-term interests to society as a whole."

Rare court challenges

When an inmate is denied parole, he or she has the right to appeal the decision, first at the administrative level and then in the courts, but it is virtually unheard of for a New York State court to overturn a parole board decision.

A prime example was the recent case of Samuel Hamilton, who was denied parole for the seventh time in August of 2012. Hamilton and two friends set out to mug a man who turned out to be an off-duty transit police officer named James Carragher in 1982. One of Hamilton's accomplices got into a gun battle with Carragher, who was shot dead. Hamilton was also shot and captured, while the other two escaped. Hamilton denied knowing that Carragher was a police officer and refused to cooperate with the police in identifying the other two men. Although the prosecutor acknowledged that Hamilton was unarmed and not the shooter, Hamilton was convicted of murder and given 18-years-to-life in prison.

When he went before the parole board in 2012 he had letters of support from more than 20 corrections officers, a former prison superintendent and the prosecutor who put him away. He had earned a Master's degree in prison, mentored and volunteered in numerous programs and was by all accounts a model prisoner. Still, the three-member parole panel denied his parole 2-1. Of the two commissioners who voted no, one was a retired police officer, and the other was a former assistant district attorney.

Hamilton filed a lawsuit challenging the decision, and in July of this year a five-judge appellate panel voted 3-2 in favor of the parole board. Justice Christine Clark who wrote the majority opinion cited a passage of law that is used again and again in parole denials, that reads: "...the Board must consider whether there is a reasonable probability that, if such inmate is released, he [or she] will live and remain at liberty without violating the law,

and that his [or her] release is not incompatible with the welfare of society and will not so deprecate the seriousness of the crime as to undermine respect for law."

"So long as the Board violates no positive statutory requirement," the judge wrote, "its discretion is absolute and beyond review in the courts."

But the two judges who disagreed penned scathing dissents of the decision. "I believe that our own Court has established an overbroad rule in appeals from denials of parole. The majority asserts that this clearly extraordinary case is not susceptible to reversal upon judicial review; we have then wholly abdicated our critical judicial function, and the courthouse doors are closed," wrote Presiding Justice Karen Peters.

Her colleague, Justice Elizabeth Garry, wrote a single paragraph dissent that read, "No sound basis supports this individual's continuing incarceration. While our review powers are limited, they should not be applied in a manner that is so inordinately deferential as to render the appellate review process a mere sham."

Interestingly enough, a few weeks later on August 19th of this year, a three-member parole board voted unanimously to release Hamilton.

In Crimmins' case, when asked whether he thought he would have been paroled long ago had he killed a citizen in his Bronx neighborhood, he replies, "I think it's more about the location than the person, and the media coverage, of course. That place is a playground for the rich and famous. The fact that it happened there is why I'm still here."

He says that after his latest denial he has, for the moment, given up hope that he will ever be released. "You know, you always hear that in this country justice is supposed to be blind, but I don't know. Every time I walk into those parole hearings....," he reaches up his right hand and mimics the motion of lifting a blindfold just slightly above his right eye, "...I think she peeks."

18 Sept - The Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act and the Criminalization of Dissent

"Terrorization of Dissent: Corporate Repression, Legal Corruption, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act" is a new book examining the AETA and how it threatens the right to protest. The following is from the preface by Will Potter.

MORE:

When I testified before the U.S. House Judiciary Committee about the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in 2006, I argued that such sweeping legislation criminalizes First Amendment activity, whistleblowing, and nonviolent civil disobedience as "terrorism," and would have a chilling effect on free speech. Members of the committee, including Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), dismissed my concerns and promised that the law would only target property destruction and violence.

This has been the major talking point from supporters of this legislation for years: the law is only about "extremists," and as long as you aren't part of the Animal Liberation Front, you have nothing to worry about. Lawmakers went so far as to respond to my concerns by including empty rhetoric in the rules of construction promising that the bill "does not include any lawful economic disruption (including a lawful boycott) that results from lawful public, governmental, or business reaction to the disclosure of information about an animal enterprise."

Since that time, the true scope of this legislation has been exposed by prosecutions, uncovered FBI documents, and new campaigns by industry groups. It has become undeniably clear that members of Congress were either duped by corporations and the FBI or they intentionally lied to the American people about their intentions. The true targets of the AETA are not arsonists or underground activists. Instead, the people most at risk are undercover investigators and aboveground activists.

The very first AETA arrests were four animal rights activists in California who were never accused of property

destruction or violence. The government argued that their conduct—which included “chalking defamatory slogans,” protesting while wearing masks, distributing fliers, and attending a home protest—amounted to a campaign of terrorism. In a major blow to the government’s overzealous use of the new law, a U.S. District Court threw out the indictment because prosecutors did not clearly explain what, exactly, the protesters did. “In order for an indictment to fulfill its constitutional purposes, it must allege facts that sufficiently inform each defendant of what it is that he or she is alleged to have done that constitutes a crime,” Judge Ronald M. Whyte’s said in his ruling. “This is particularly important where the species of behavior in question spans a wide spectrum from criminal conduct to constitutionally protected political protest.”

Even more disturbing is the fact that the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force has kept files on activists who expose animal welfare abuses on factory farms and has recommended prosecuting them as terrorists. This information was revealed in documents that were uncovered through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and has been reported on my website, GreenIsTheNewRed.com. The 2003 FBI file details the work of several animal rights activists who used undercover investigation to document repeated animal welfare violations. The FBI special agent who authored the report said they “illegally entered buildings owned by [redacted] Farm . . . and videotaped conditions of animals.” The animal activists caused “economic loss” to businesses, the FBI says. And they also openly rescued several animals from the abusive conditions. This was not done covertly in the style of underground groups like the Animal Liberation Front; instead, it was an act of nonviolent civil disobedience and, as the FBI agent notes, the activists distributed press releases and conducted media interviews taking responsibility for their actions.

Based on these acts—trespassing in order to photograph and videotape abuses on factory farms—the agent concludes that there “is a reasonable indication” that the activists “have violated the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, 18 USC Section 43 (a).” The file was uncovered through a FOIA request by Ryan Shapiro, a doctoral candidate at MIT who is one of the activists mentioned as being in violation of the law. “It is deeply sobering to see one’s name in an FBI file proposing terrorism charges,” Shapiro told me. “It is even more sobering to realize the supposedly terroristic activities in question are merely exposing the horrific cruelty of factory farms, educating the public about what goes on behind those closed doors, and openly rescuing a few animals from one of those farms as an act of civil disobedience.”

The FBI file, it should be noted, was dated 2003. That is three years before the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act was passed. In other words, the FBI argued that such prosecutions were possible under the previous and narrower version of the law. (If that was the case, why was the AETA even necessary?) The FBI knew that the existing law was already vague and overly broad, but joined industry groups in grasping for even more power. In recent years a legislative trend has developed that, prior to the AETA, I never would have thought possible. More than a dozen states have considered legislation that explicitly criminalizes undercover investigations by nonprofit animal welfare groups like the Humane Society and Mercy for Animals. At the time of this writing, Iowa and Utah have passed “Ag Gag” bills into law, and others are expected to follow.

These investigations have exposed systemic animal cruelty at factory farms, and completely changed the national dialogue about animal agriculture. The video footage has led to criminal convictions in Iowa, voter referendums in Florida, and consumer outrage at the most egregious animal welfare abuses. The threat that they pose to factory farming is unmistakable.

When a California slaughterhouse was shut down for egregious animal welfare violations, industry groups put pressure on Congress. Three lawmakers then sent a letter to the USDA urging the department to take action against “the onslaught of attacks” by animal welfare groups.

This is the political climate since the passage of the AETA. In the years after it was signed into law, industry groups and law enforcement have only grown more ambitious. There has been a widening of the net, which risks ensnaring more and more activists as “terrorists.” Such repression of political activists is certainly not new; for instance, the FBI used both legal and illegal tactics against civil rights, antiwar, and other activists during COINTELPRO in the 1960s. But in post-9/11 America, the power of “terrorism” rhetoric, combined with corporate efforts to manufacture and manipulate government repression, has created a unique and incredibly

powerful culture of fear.

However, the political climate within the animal rights movement has changed as well.

During the 2006 hearing, I testified as the only opposing witness. The vast majority of activists were completely unaware of the legislation, and most organizations were unwilling to speak up about it. This chilling effect still exists, in many ways, but the movement's response has radically changed. The Center for Constitutional Rights is challenging the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act on behalf of activists who have felt silenced. A diverse coalition of animal, environmental, civil liberties, and legal organizations is fighting Ag Gag bills across the country.

This current collection of essays—written by activists, lawyers, and scholars, and finely edited by Jason Del Gandio and Anthony J. Nocella II—adds critical voices to the growing chorus of opposition. It should be viewed not as a historical examination, but as a contemporary toolkit. The authors chart the legal and political history of the law and include the personal stories of those affected. These texts should be read with the understanding that this repression is dynamic. The AETA, as a legal-and-corporate tactic, is expanding to other social movements, and it is evolving as it appears internationally: Corporations have ushered in nearly identical crackdowns in Austria, Spain, Finland, and many other countries.

This book is a toolkit not just for animal rights activists, but for all social movements around the world who are effectively challenging corporate power, and who want to better prepare themselves for the backlash that is an inevitable part of that struggle.

19 Sept - Barrett Brown's Sentencing Rescheduled, Again

The sentencing hearing for the jailed journalist Barrett Brown, who took a plea agreement in April on three reduced counts and now faces a maximum of 8.5 years in prison, has been postponed again, this time at the request of the government due to scheduling conflicts.

MORE:

While it was originally scheduled for August 18th, and then October 6th, the sentencing will now happen on Monday, November 24th, 2014 at 9:00 AM CST at the federal courthouse on 1100 Commerce Street in Dallas, Texas.

19 Sept - Jason Sutherlin is FREE

On Friday, September 19th, anti-fascist prisoner Jason Sutherlin was released! Time to celebrate, all of the Tinley Park 5 are out!

MORE:

It's not too late to support Jason! Donate to his post release fund at j.mp/JasonSutherlin

21 Sept - Two Poems for Sundiata Acoli by déqui kioni-sadiki

In the lead up to "Poetry for Sundiata," we are reprinting two written by our comrade déqui kioni-sadiki.

MORE:

TERRORISM!!!! i live with terror everyday

i am a Wife, Mother, Sista, Grandmother
a Black womyn
kidnapped long-ago, bought & sold in amerikkka
that is the terror i live with everyday
i live with terror because the Man i Love
Sekou Mgobozi Abdullah Odinga
is captured behind enemy lines
a u.s. held PP/POW
in the prison death camps of amerikkka

that sanctioned the murders of
Albert Nuh Washington
Kwasi Balagoon
Teddy Jah Heath
Bashir Hameed
Merle Africa
kept Mumia & Zolo on death row
& would like the exact same life & death for
Sundiata Acoli
Imam Jamil Al-Amin
Herman Bell
Veronza Bowers
Robert Seth Hayes
Mondo we Langa
Abdul Majid
Jalil Muntaqim
Kamau Sadiki
Mutulu Shakur
my Man & all our freedom-Loving
captured Freedom Fighters
i live with terror knowing that they
lynched, burned, mutilated Black bodies in
Tulsa, Wilmington, Atlanta, everywhere
just like they murdered
Nat
Emmitt
Medgar
Malcolm
Fred
Jonathan & then his brother George
Amadou
Sean
Trayvon & all those Black boys & Black men
somebody's Son, Father, Husband, Grandfather, Brother, Uncle or Friend
that they always always get away with murdering
i live with terror
remembering how they placed a \$40,000 "wanted" dead or alive bounty on Harriet's head
while hunting every one of her freedom-seeking refused to be a slave runaways
tried to burn down Ida
stalked & harassed Billie
ran Rosa outta town
beat Fannie Lou
cheated Nina
killed Eleanor
shot, tortured & dis-labeled Assata a "terrorist"
while placing a \$2 million bounty on her Afrikan head
you see Black people live with terror generations deep
in the Cointelpro's that operate as much today
in the Patriot Act, Homeland Security, this Surveillance State
& all its wickedly repressive tools of war to crush dissent & resistance
as it did 40 years ago
when it criminalized, targeted, framed, drove into exile
& murdered dozens of BPP/BLA soldiers
so that

in these streets
on the train
in 'theys' schools
in the families we call our own
young & old eyes tell the painful twisted stories of
oppression, injustice & terror
in the many angry
hopeless
beaten down
disconnected Black/Brown souls
who grow up children, marry, divorce, go to work, school & about their lives everyday
knowing that any time
the u.s. government
its killer police
its military
the real terrorists
wants
they will come after them
after me
after you
after everyone of us
until who is left to 'carry it on'
Black people know terrorism is the history of amerikkka's politics
past, present & future
yet everyday
we get up & start all over again
everyday & everyday & everyday
till we are FREE

Poetcetera 30th Anniversary Tribute to George Edward Tait

George Edward Tait
not only the Poet Laureate of Harlem
but the Poet Laureate of Black & New Afrikan freedom fighting
the Poet Laureate of our 30 & 40 year unjustly imprisoned
BPP/BLA/RNA freedom fighters
this here
Poet Laureate makes it his business
to answer when we
MXCC
the Jericho Movement
the Sekou Odinga Defense Committee
call
he answers in the language of Resistance & Freedom
& mighty mighty Mau Mau rhythms
loud & proud
fierce & strong
self-determined & courageous
armed & ready to defend
our PP/POWs
pen in hand
truth-telling bullets of Afrikan warriorwords
aimed at this criminal enterprise of u.s. injustice
making plain
what others

even some of us
choose to
ignore
silence
dismiss
minimize
reinvent
George Edward Tait
our Poet Laureate brother
puts it down
keeps on pushing us on
reminding & teaching
that our freedom is a constant struggle
this here struggle is protracted
days & weeks & months & years & generations & centuries
millenniums deep
& he don't stop
& we don't stop
till there ain't no such thing as "Political Prisoner Blues"

22 Sept - Krow's Press Release

Statement from Krow, AKA "Katie Kloth"; Post-settlement hearing press release.

MORE:

On Friday September 19th 2014, at the Iron County court house on Taconite St. Krow aka "Katie Kloth" made a non-cooperating plea of "no contest" to two charges with great hesitation and a heavy heart. The charges include, robbery with use of force a class e felony, and party to a crime criminal property damage, a class a misdemeanor. Two other property damage charges were dropped but can still be considered in Krow's future sentencing.

A "no contest" plea states that you are choosing to not fight the charges but are also not pleading guilty and reserve the right to retract your plea. Krow is confident that the struggle to protect the water and land bases of and connected to the Penokee Hills will continue. Krow holds a disdain for "state coerced cooperation" and believes that no other anti-mine individuals deserve to suffer under the hand of the generalities of unjust law in our "criminal injustice system".

Gogebic Taconite LLC. and their affiliates still remain unencumbered by the law though G-TAC president Bill Williams has been indicted for crimes against the environment in Spain, as well as being accused by a Bad River Tribal member of forcibly removing a phone from their arms whilst simultaneously injuring them.

As usual, money, political power, and corporate interest to extract resources for the capitalist regime still reign supreme, and have unfairly stacked the cards against Krow in Iron County. Krow is confident that the will of the people and the creatures of the land to stop the proposed iron mine will prevail.

G-Tac believes they will be unimpeded in their efforts to avoid legal penalties and influence the Iron County district attorney to give citizens at risk from deadly mining activities felonies, whilst G-TAC arms unlicensed, illegal para-military to patrol the Penokee Hills before their intended state supported destruction by G-Tac or another purchasing body. They are wrong.

Mining act I will be repealed, Governor Scott Walker ousted from office, and the will and actions and love of the people to protect their land and homes will prevail.

We must stand in solidarity with each other, develop the communities we want to be a part of, and collectively reject state coerced informing and negate state repression whenever possible. Our own community accountability is the only thing which can protect us and enable our ability to continue to organize. We can only move forward

with positive intention to continue our fight in the struggle against resource extraction.

23 Sept - Chelsea Manning Sues Pentagon for Denying Her 'Urgently-Needed' Medical Care for Gender Dysphoria

Chelsea Manning has filed a lawsuit against the United States Defense Department and the Department of the Army for denying her medical care for her gender dysphoria.

MORE:

by Kevin Gosztola (*The Dissenter*)

It seeks a preliminary injunction requiring the Pentagon to provide “clinically appropriate treatment.”

While deployed as an intelligence analyst in Iraq, Manning provided WikiLeaks with around a half million classified documents, which exposed details of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, including war crimes like torture and summary executions. She is currently serving a 35-year prison sentence at Fort Leavenworth after being convicted of Espionage Act violations and other offenses on July 30, 2013.

She has spent more than a year trying to convince the Pentagon to provide her access to hormone therapy, but they have ignored her requests or insisted on denying her access to treatment—an alleged violation of her Eighth Amendment rights under the US Constitution.

The lawsuit accuses the Pentagon of prohibiting her “from expressing her female gender by growing her hair and otherwise following female grooming standards.” It says she is “experiencing escalating distress and is at serious risk of severe and imminent harm, including resorting to self-surgery (auto-castration) or suicide, because this medically necessary treatment is being withheld.”

It was filed in the US District Court for the District of Columbia by David Coombs, a military defense attorney who argued her case when she was court-martialed, and lawyers from the American Civil Liberties Union.

“Despite my repeated efforts to follow each and every procedure to pursue medical treatment,” Manning states in a declaration to the court [PDF], “I am not receiving hormone therapy or permission to follow to the hair, cosmetics, and nail grooming standards consistent with my female gender.”

“On August 20, 2014, approximately six weeks after my attorneys put in a request for my medical records from the USDB, I was informed that I would be issued sports bras and female underwear. I received those items shortly thereafter but I have not been permitted follow female hair length and other female grooming standards that would allow me to outwardly feminize my appearance. And I have not been provided hormone therapy.”

She adds, “Because I have not been treated with hormones or given permission to outwardly express my female gender by growing my hair and receiving permission to follow the other female grooming standards, I am becoming increasingly stressed, anxious and depressed.”

“Instead of feeling more like the woman I want to express myself as being, I feel like I am just a ‘man in a bra,’ and I feel as though I am slowly being poisoned by the testosterone that my body produces.”

“It has now been more than four years since I was first diagnosed with gender dysphoria, a condition that I have struggled with my entire life,” she explains. “It has been more than a year since I first requested treatment consistent with the [World Professional Association for Transgender Health Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming People] at the [US Disciplinary Barracks (USDB)].”

“My treatment request is, and has been, my highest priority since arriving at the USDB – even more than the appeal of my conviction and thirty-five year sentence. If my requests for medical treatment are ultimately denied, I do not believe I will be able to survive another year or two – let alone twenty to thirty years – without treatment.”

Manning recounts all the steps she has taken to obtain medical care.

She arrived at the USDB on August 22, 2013, and immediately requested that the Army provide her with a “mental health assessment and treatment plan consistent with the standards for treating gender dysphoria.”

That same day John Lesniak of the Chief Assessment Division conducted a “series of interviews and evaluations to assess” her “treatment needs and risk for sexual victimization based on the fact” that she is transgender, effeminate and have “a slight build.” Lesniak informed her treatment would be limited to psychotherapy, such as “anti-anxiety and anti-depressant medication.”

On September 12, Manning saw Dr. Ellen Galloway, who is the Chief of the Mental Health Division. For two weeks, Galloway conducted “psychological tests and one-on-one interviews.” She reviewed documentation detailing how Manning had been diagnosed with gender dysphoria and what she needed for treatment. The records came from Dr. David Moulton, a defense forensic psychologist who extensively evaluated her between August 2011 and August 2013 and also testified at her trial.

Galloway informed Manning on October 1 that she “met the criteria for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria” and would be diagnosed with the condition. Then, a few weeks later, Manning was interviewed by Colonel Ricky Malone, a forensic psychiatrist from Bethesda, Maryland, who produced an assessment to help establish a treatment plan.

By November 25, Galloway notified Manning that a treatment plan was completed and had been sent to the US Army Western Regional Medical Command (WRMC) and US Army Corrections Command (ACC) and US Army Office for the Surgeon General for approval.

When January came and it had been more than a month since Manning had heard anything about her treatment, she became “anxious and fearful.”

“I continued to meet with Dr. Galloway regularly to discuss my mental health,” Manning shares. “During these meetings, I expressed my ongoing distress over not being provided with treatment for gender dysphoria. Dr. Galloway repeatedly told me that the requests were being reviewed at various commands, then later she informed me that the requests were at ‘the highest levels,’ and ultimately, that decisions related to my health care would be decided by the Secretary of Defense.”

Manning requested “permission to follow hair and grooming standards for female prisoners” on April 2. She asked for “female-specific issued clothing” and “female health and grooming items.” She heard nothing and submitted a request again on July 23.

On August 21, she submitted a request to the Army for “permission to use the female hair grooming, cosmetic and nail grooming standards” in the military as part of her “medically supervised treatment for gender dysphoria.” No response to this request has been received.

Efforts to obtain redress for her request for treatment have been rebuffed. One commander, Major General James McDonald of Fort Sill, found her complaint “deficient.” A request filed with the US Army Office of the Judge Advocate General (OTJAG) was denied. One captain in her chain of command who one would think could take action claimed he had no authority to implement her treatment plan.

Manning submitted a complaint to the Office of the Inspector General of the WRMC on January 30. It declined to take any meaningful action.

Meanwhile, as gender treatment has been repeatedly denied, Manning was successful in changing her legal name to Chelsea Manning. The district court of Leavenworth County, Kansas, approved her petition for a name change on April 23.

Lieutenant Colonel Nathan Keller, who is the Director of Treatment Programs at the USDB, wrote in a memorandum on October 15, 2013, that he saw no way the USDB could provide a “full course of therapy for Mr. Manning’s gender dysphoria...because the USDB cannot house a female or highly feminized inmate. Permitting Mr. Manning to live as female, much less begin to feminize his body, will create operational challenges as the inmate population respond to these changes.”

“Stop-gap” measures were proposed by Keller, like “weekly therapy at the Transgender Institute in Kansas City or supervision of Dr. Galloway by the Transgender Institute.” (Galloway later informed the ACC she lacked the expertise to treat Manning.)

On August 27, 2014, Manning saw Dr. Randi Ettner, who concluded her condition was “moderate to severe.” She recommended hormone therapy be “initiated immediately” and that Manning be permitted to “outwardly express her female gender by growing her hair and following the grooming standards applied to female prisoners.”

As the lawsuit argues, her claim that the Pentagon and Department of Army is “withholding necessary medical care in violation of the Eighth Amendment is extremely strong on the merits.” She will “suffer irreparable harm” if this is “permitted to continue.”

“To the extent defendants may claim safety concerns related to housing a female or feminized prisoner, they cannot substantiate such concerns given that [Manning] is never left alone with other prisoners outside the presence of one or more staff members and is under constant surveillance.”

It is in the public interest to uphold the Constitution and prevent “avoidable injury to individuals held in government custody.”

25 Sept - Baba Herman Ferguson has passed

September 25, 2014, our beloved brother, comrade, friend and freedom fighter, internationalist, Baba Herman Ferguson passed. It is with heavy hearts and in celebration of the remarkable life of a warrior for the people and elder (Baba) that we share this news with you.

MORE:

We believe, that the loss of Baba Herman will serve as yet another moment to re-dedicate ourselves to serving the people in all our respective movements and to support one another in the complete confidence that the final victory will be ours.

The National Jericho Movement will be providing information of services in the coming days.

Long Live Baba Herman!

Baba Herman Ferguson, ¡Presente!

September 28th - Dr. Mutulu shakur on the passing of our Herman Ferguson:

A great man is gone to a new level, work well done, i will that he still existed, he surely would not want to be here without being as productive as he believed he would want to be his role in my life was so important to who i became all good stems from his teachings and examples.you have to laugh to keep from crying .My failures were all mine, in the past i have written extensively on our travels in the struggles across america, with him and Iyaluua must hug and comfort me and try to provide companionship and love to his life long comrade, partner and consciousness.

Recently while reading herman's book with a friend of mine in prison who had some respect for me read in the passage that herman said that he was proud of my role in the struggle and my young steadfastness and that i had accomplished all this without ever finishing high school, i argued with my fellow comrade, "i said that i know

that my mentor did not put that in his book!!!!".BECAUSE The main reason i finished high school was because in my teenage years my mentor and hangout partner was the only black principal in New York City at the time, and the head of Malcolm X Grassroots Education Agenda.

Many of the men and women who the world has grown to know as the committed of black liberation struggle dedicated to self defense demonstrated by their audacity and sacrifices, their lives were navigated by brother Herman Ferguson and his leadership and RAM (Revolutionary Action Movement),and the direction he gave to the South Jamaica Grassroots Organizations Minister of Education and Interior to the Republic of New Africa. We can only imagine the many men and women he commanded in guyana as a coronal in their army. I will not try re-write his history to tell you about new bethel again a story that has become folk lore in New Africa to tell you the he was the hero to the Ocean Hill Brownville school board struggle that set the perimeter for community control of the education system in our community.

I can only say that when he ran for Senator of New York in the Freedom and Peace party i stood by his side where he very candidly, passionately and logistically spelled out the compelling need under those circumstances a need for an independent nation for black people, and because he was not filled with hate and with compelling arguments the justness of his position threatened the powers that be and became an enemy of the state, and he carried on his statesmen duty for the new african nation.and because he was an educator the very basis of his foundation was to educate and prepare our youth for the building of a better nation or the defending of a better people.

In summary many of us that they claim "think they know everything" draw from Herman for our confidence and style of work. Lessons taught to us through the clenched teeth and the toothpick was some the most intense lessons ever learned one of the most important lessons taught to us was to know what you want and know how to say it.

I love you brother with everything in me, keep the ancestors laughing, tell Yuri i said i love her and i said hello, should be exciting.

25 Sept - Five Land Defenders Arrested at Utah Tar Sands Protest

Five Land defenders were arrested on the morning of September 24th at the construction site of US Oil Sands' tar sands strip-mine in Utah.

MORE:

The Canadian company's 32,000 acre lease-holding are on state-managed land in the Book Cliffs, on the East Tavaputs Plateau, though the land is traditional Ute land, and lays within Indian country, with sections of the tar sands project straddling the boundary of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation.

Currently, the land defenders (including the media team) are being held on Class A Trespassing charges, with a total bail estimated at \$10,500.

One of those arrested is a trans woman, and at this time we are unsure if she is being held in solitary, or if she is being housed with the male population. Neither situation is acceptable, we are extremely concerned about the dangers she may be facing.

We will provide updates and media here as they become available.

27 Sept - 4 People Prosecuted Under #AgGag Law for Photographing Factory Farm From the Road

As Ag-Gag laws, designed to keep folks from photographing what happens on factory farms, make their way through various state legislatures, four folks in Utah are being prosecuted under that state's existing variation of the law.

MORE:

by Will Potter (*Green Is the New Red*)

Circle Four Farms sprawls across 90 square miles of land in southwestern Utah. There are about 600,000 hogs here at a time, packed by the thousands into long warehouse sheds. About one million hogs—185 times the human population of the county—are raised at Circle Four each year, making it the largest factory farm in the state; its parent company, Smithfield Foods, is one of the largest in the world.

The farm is so large that its scale is difficult to view from the public road. At best, one could see a few of the sheds, some feed bins, trucks.

But Circle Four Farms has plenty of reasons to be wary of exposure, even from a distance. The company came under scrutiny earlier this month by the USDA because of a deadly pig virus. Last year, it was part of a controversial financial deal—the largest-ever Chinese takeover of a U.S. company. Public health studies have shown that people who live near the farm are much more likely to be hospitalized, for a wide-range of illnesses. And the farm has also been investigated by the Justice Department as part of the largest-ever case of human trafficking.

So it is perhaps not surprising that when farm employees saw people driving by on Wednesday, September 24th, and taking photographs, they reacted quickly. They followed the two cars, stopped them, demanded that they turn over their photos and, when they refused, called the sheriff.

Four animal rights activists had driven to Circle Four Farms on Wednesday, September 24th, to wait for slaughterhouse-bound trucks leaving the facility. They were going to photograph and videotape the transport for a national non-profit group called the Farm Animal Rights Movement. The photography was part of a series of efforts by FARM leading up to World Day for Farmed Animals on October 2nd.

When they were waiting for the trucks, one of the activists, Sarah Jane Hardt, photographed the farm from the street. The photographs capture the rows of sheds and the barren landscape, but not much detail of the farm.

When they set off down the road again, that's when Circle Four Farms trucks pulled in front of them and stopped them.

The workers repeatedly asked to see the cameras, said Bryan Monell, one of the activists. "He was asking, 'Have you ever heard of PETA? Are you a member of the Animal Liberation Front? After a while they just let us pass,'" Monell said.

Before the group had reached Utah State Highway 21, though, they were pulled over by the Beaver County Sheriff's Department.

The police officer immediately started talking to them about Utah's ag-gag law and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, Monell said.

"He was really adamant about getting hold of our photographs," Monell said. "He said, 'There's a thing called ag-gag out here. I'm not going to say whether I support it or not, but it's serious. They don't take kindly to that stuff out here.'"

As officers questioned the group, employees from Circle Four Farms were nearby urging their arrest. "At one point [the employees] started telling the cops that we broke through a barn door and were running through the sheds," Monell said. "That's just crazy."

They were detained for about five hours, they say. Eventually, after repeatedly refusing to turn over their photographs or allow the police to search their cars, they were each given two citations. One for criminal trespass, the other for "agricultural operation interference," or violating Utah's ag-gag law.

It's only the second time that an ag-gag law has been enforced, nationally. The first time was also in Utah. A

young woman named Amy Meyer saw a sick cow being pushed by a bulldozer, and she filmed it from the public street. After a news report on this website about her prosecution went viral, prosecutors dropped all charges.

Utah is one of seven states to enact ag-gag laws that make it illegal to photograph factory farms and slaughterhouses. The laws are a direct response to a series of undercover investigations by animal welfare groups exposing horrific animal cruelty.

Right now ag-gag laws are being challenged in court as unconstitutional in Utah. A similar lawsuit in Idaho has the support of 16 different professional journalism organizations along with food safety, whistleblower, and consumer groups.

The activists said that as they were detained, and police officers were talking about felonies and terrorism charges, they had no idea what to expect.

“I really thought I was going to be talking to you from a jail payphone,” Monell said.

28 Sept - Brent Betterly to be transferred

Brent Betterly received notification that he will be moved from Sheridan Prison in Illinois to Broward County Jail in Florida sometime before October 11th.

MORE:

He is going to be resolving a previous charge in Florida while being given credit toward his sentence here. Once it is resolved, he will be moved back to Sheridan Prison in Illinois for the remainder of his sentence. If you write him, it may not reach him, as he may be in transit. We will post his new address once he has arrived to Broward County Jail in Florida.

2 Oct - Shattering Captivity: Struggles of Incarcerated People Against Solitary Confinement, Control Units, and Communication Management Units.

WHAT: Panel Discussion

WHEN: 7:00pm, Thursday, October 2nd

WHERE: Interference Archive - 131 8th Street #4 Brooklyn, New York

COST: FREE

MORE:

Participants are formerly incarcerated people who experienced control units and solitary confinement, and the sister of a man currently in a Communication Management Unit (CMU): Tyrell Muhammad, Five Mualima-ak, Susan Rosenberg, and Sharmin Sadequee.

6 Oct - Rally for Norberto Gonzalez Claudio

WHAT: Rally

WHEN: 5:00pm, Monday, October 6th

WHERE: 26 Federal Plaza New York, New York

COST: FREE

MORE:

Puerto Rican Political Prisoner Norberto Gonzalez Claudio was supposed to be released from jail on September 7th, 2014! BUT HE'S STILL IN JAIL!

During his imprisonment, Norberto Gonzalez Claudio was denied medical treatment for his cancer; had his orthopedic shoe taken from him; wasn't allowed to receive his mail; and denied visitation from family and legal counsel. Now, he is being kept in prison with no set release date.

Norberto was supposed to be released on September 7th, but prison officials told his family and legal counsel that that date was incorrect. All of this makes no sense! It had been clearly established that September 7th would be

his release date. Despite inquiries from his lawyers, no date has been established.

On October 6th, a hearing will be held at Norberto's penitentiary with his lawyers to discuss his release date, which could be in January 2015 or later.

Join ProLibertad as we denounce the U.S. government's railroading of Norberto's family and legal counsel. Join us as we demand Norberto's immediate release!

9 Oct - Prison is a form of violence against women

WHAT: Panel Discussion

WHEN: 7:00pm, Thursday, October 9th

WHERE: CUNY Graduate Center - 365 5th Avenue New York, New York 10016

COST: FREE

MORE:

This event will highlight women and transpeople's struggles against "protective" isolation, the criminalization of self defense, and negligent healthcare through short videos, readings, and discussion with people who have been directly involved in organizing within prisons. The program will include concrete ways to provide support for current organizing. The event moderator will be Vikki Law and panelists include Cecily McMillan, Amy Meacham, and Sharon Richardson.

18 Oct - Punk Rock Karaoke for The Queer Detainee Empowerment Project

WHAT: Spooky Karaoke

WHEN: 8:30pm, Saturday, October 18th

WHERE: Pine Box Rock Shop - 12 Grattan Street, Brooklyn, New York 11206

COST: \$8 with costume, \$10 without

MORE:

PRK is really excited to be teaming up with the Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP) for their next fundraiser and since it is taking place in October, they figured why not get a little extra mileage out of our Halloween costumes and have it be a costume party.

In keeping with the theme, there will also be:

Tarot card reading booth run by the witchy woouoo Audrey Zee Whitesides!

Spanking booth run by Zil Goldstein and the paddle team!

There will also be a karaoke costume contest (details to come) and a whole lot more! So come out and have an awesome time with us raising money for an awesome organization. See you there.

About QDEP:

The Queer Detainee Empowerment Project (QDEP), is an alternative to detention program (ATD) for queer/trans/HIV+ immigrant detainees, undocumented folks, and asylums seekers and their families in New York City. QDEP assists folks in securing structural, health/wellness, legal, and emotional support and services. QDEP works to advocate around the barriers that our members face as well around limitations due to immigration status, race, sexuality, and gender identity. We are committed to assisting folks in building lives outside of the detention system, to keeping queer families together by demanding an end to deportations, and to queering dialog and work on immigration justice.

For more info on the organization and how to get involved, check out <http://qdep.org>