



Updates for November 11th

27 Oct - Update on Kevin Olliff/Tyler Lang Case

It's been a busy couple of weeks in the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) case against Kevin and Tyler—a house in southern California was raided and the feds quietly increased the estimated damage caused by the actions they're attributing to the two, thereby doubling their potential sentences to twenty years each.

MORE:

October 27th - Fresno County police raid a home near Los Angeles in connection with the ongoing investigation of Kevin Olliff

Two days ago, police from Fresno executed a search on the residence of someone affiliated with Kevin Olliff. Reportedly, the only item taken in the raid was a pair of boltcutters.

The affidavit has not been obtained, so what crime is being investigated is left to speculation. A Google search for “Fresno county” + “Animal Liberation Front” brings up a likely subject: The torching of 14 trucks at Harris Ranch, a large feedlot and slaughterhouse, in January of 2012. The Animal Liberation Front took responsibility.

The raid by Fresno police highlights the simple-minded thinking of police: If someone is suspected of one animal-related action, they must be suspected of all.

More information will be posted as it is learned.

November 3rd - New Support Shirt for Tyler and Kevin

All proceeds go to support Tyler and Kevin, two activists facing charges under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act. Shirts are printed on Organic American Apparel Shirts. Made in the U.S.A. Printed by Acme Prints in Tempe, Arizona. Their case is monumental in fighting the AETA. The amount of money you have has been shown to be directly connected to how much time you serve, and these amazing, kind, and sweet men don't deserve what is being done to them. Order shirts at <http://supportkevinandtyler.storenvy.com/products/10493115-fight-the-aeta-shirt>

November 8th - Motion Filed to Challenge AETA and Dismiss Charges Against Kevin and Tyler

On November 6, lawyers with the Center for Constitutional Rights, Peoples Law Office, and the Federal Defender Program filed a motion to dismiss the indictments of Kevin Johnson (aka Kevin Olliff) and Tyler Lang under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act on the basis that the AETA is unconstitutional.

Kevin and Tyler were indicted under the AETA for allegedly releasing—and conspiring to release—about 2,000 mink and foxes from Midwest fur farms. They were arrested during the summer of 2013 and took non-cooperating plea deals on state charges of “possession of burglary tools.” Then almost a year later, they were indicted on the federal AETA charges.

Although it may seem ridiculous to charge people with “terrorism” for allegedly saving animals from living in barren wire cages and being killed by methods that may include anal electrocution or having their necks snapped, the ridiculousness speaks to what is beneath the surface of this legislation. The AETA was crafted by the American Legislative Exchange Council, a group of corporate power players who write pieces of model legislation that suit their interests, and then ALEC passes off the legislation to members of Congress. Many members of ALEC are part of the pharmaceutical, big ag, and other industries that exploit and kill animals for profit—industries that have a huge interest in stopping the actions of animal liberation activists.

To add to the mix, the State uses the label of “terrorism” with a lot of flexibility in order to be able to manipulate public fear based on the State interests of the day, and this context left the label open for ALEC to apply it to animal liberation activists. And so ALEC devised the AETA, legislation—not meant so much for prosecuting activists (Kevin and Tyler are among only a handful of people who’ve been charged under the AETA), but to conjure public fear of the animal liberation movement and deter people from getting involved in activism, let alone from freeing animals from the hell of fur farms.

Right now is unfortunately one of those moments in which activists are caught in the crosshairs of an AETA indictment, and we must use this time to demonstrate to the government and corporations that we will not quietly watch our friends be taken from us or give in to the intended chilling effect of State repression. By filing the motion to dismiss the charges against Kevin and Tyler, the lawyers working on the case are fighting in the courtrooms to challenge the AETA on the basis that it is unconstitutional for being vague, overly broad, and a violation of due process rights.

As the lawyers fight in the courtrooms, we must fight everywhere else—against the intended effect of the AETA and against all other forces that try to stop us from fighting for animal liberation. Kevin and Tyler’s case should be a reminder to us all that—in addition to showing solidarity with the animals—we have to show each other love and support in the face of State repression and other obstacles. One of the best ways to fight back against government and corporate efforts to stop activism is to show them that we will unite in struggle and never back down from the fight for animal liberation. We must keep organizing, keep protesting, keep resisting, and keep fighting.

November 8th - The Fight Against the AETA Gets Real

Who among us doesn’t disdain the AETA? The Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act is, at its best, inflated legal rhetoric—and at its worst, threatens to imprison activists and friends like Kevin and Tyler for decades. But their case is already making waves as a landmark in activist history because it could be the one to topple the absurd and hyperbolic AETA.

Earlier this week, Kevin and Tyler’s lawyers and the Center for Constitutional Rights filed a motion to dismiss all terrorism charges on the grounds that the law under which they were indicted is unconstitutional. An incisive quote from CCR’s Rachel Meerpol perfectly sums up the fundamental problem of Kevin and Tyler’s AETA charges:

“Releasing animals so that they can escape being killed for fur coats is a quintessential act of non-violence. Calling such an act ‘terrorism’ shows just how outlandish terrorism rhetoric has become. Ultimately, the government is saying it is a terrorist offense to save the wrong lives.”

Read the full press release from CCR and please share it widely. This is an important time to be involved in Kevin and Tyler’s case in whatever way you can. Not only do they need your support, but their legal battle could affect us all—and especially the animals for whom we work so hard.

November 9th - Feds double max sentence, now facing 20 years

Government increases damage estimates, quietly doubling Tyler Lang & Kevin Olliff’s maximum sentence to 20 years.

In paperwork filed at the bail hearing for Kevin Olliff last month, the government quietly tweaked a small detail of their indictment – raising the estimated damages to \$125,000. This small detail bumped Kevin & Tyler into a more serious strata of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, raising their maximum sentence on each count to 10 years, increasing their maximum sentence from 10 years to 20 years.

Damages are subject to fierce debate in the courtroom, as past legal cases have seen fur farmers making outrageous claims about the value of their animals and costs of fur farm raids. At times these claims have not held up under scrutiny in court, and damages have been reduced by as much as 70% when put before a judge.

This damage estimate of \$125,000 has not yet been challenged, and as it stands Tyler & Kevin face a cumulative maximum of 20 years in prison.

In articles run over the past several weeks, the media appears to have missed this detail, and continue to report the original maximum of 10 years.

The legal battle ahead of them just doubled in seriousness.

Donations needed more than ever

As they fight both a 20 year sentence and the entire Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in court, please consider organizing a fundraiser or donating today.

14 Oct - New writings by Mumia Abu-Jamal

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

MORE:

October 30th - Justice Suspended

The headline (Justice Suspended'), in the middle right-hand column of a Northeast Pennsylvania newspaper, caught my eye, and for the briefest of moments, I pondered its possible meanings.

Had justice indeed been suspended in Pennsylvania?

I thought of the hundreds of men, over 600 at last count - the most in the world! - Who were sent to prison for life in PA prisons. In 2013, the US Supreme Court, in its Miller v. Alabama decision, outlawed this practice, but this is Pennsylvania.

For these men, Pennsylvania's Supreme Court ruled that Miller wasn't retroactive; therefore, it didn't apply to them. For them - these 600 - was justice suspended?

As I said, this was the briefest of moments.

The headline referred to a judge on the PA Supreme Court (called 'justice' in this state), who was suspended from his office for his role in a still unfolding sex email scandal. He was among other high-ranking officials, from the attorney-general's office to the parole board, accused of swapping hundreds of sexually explicit and racist emails.

According to published accounts, Justice Seamus McCaffery (a former Philadelphia cop), threatened another justice whom he wished to help him, saying, ominously, "I'm not going down alone."

These words sounded like a discussion between Mafiosi; not the highest judges in the state.

Is Justice Suspended?

Perhaps it has been --for years.

November 4th - What Is Palestine To the U.S.?

For some, this may come as a surprise, for it seems illogical, but the U.S. doesn't hate Palestine.

It arms and finances its nemesis, Israel - yes.

It votes consistently with Israel in the United Nations (UN) - even against the majority of the world's nations -yes.

It quietly and surreptitiously allowed Israel to become a nuclear power - yes.

All this is true; but the U.S. doesn't hate Palestine. The truth is something far worse, for dismissal is more damning than hatred.

Palestine, its people, its history, its culture, its art, its poetry, its very land, is dismissed as a mere trifle by the U.S. Empire, not dissimilar to the response of the old British Empire, which dispatched the lands, hopes and dreams of the Palestinians, with cold, imperial aplomb.

For empire is ever an exercise of global violence, for domination is but utter violation: the very root of violence.

It violates the human soul, which yearns for freedom.

Palestine was relegated to the misery of a warren of Middle Eastern ghettos for one reason -- and one reason only:

To allow the erection of a colonial outpost from which Britain (and later the U.S.) could exercise power in a region that held the greatest prize in world history: petroleum.

That outpost? Fortress Israel.

Petroleum lit the lampposts of London, and fueled the factories of America, leading to its Industrial Age.

It needed a sentry to protect this precious resource.

It needed a watchdog in this neighborhood.

Enter Fortress Israel.

Palestine is a minor after thought to the U.S. Empire and its imperialist apologists. Her pain, her sufferings, her gross humiliations don't bother the empire one whit.

Yet, to millions of people, throughout Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas, their unjust and cruel treatment at the hands of the Zionist finds purchase in hearts worldwide.

From their epic losses spring the fruits of solidarity that binds us, human to human; oppressed to oppressed.

As the cruelties of imperialism mount, giving rise to anger and distaste, the forces of solidarity grow too, encapsulating the majority of the people of the Earth.

November 6th - Texas Anti-Death Penalty Movement

To the Movement in Texas against the death penalty: Ona Move!

It's been years since I've spoken out against the death penalty in Texas. The last time (I believe was on behalf of Bro. Shaka Sankofa -- a brilliant young man, who grew to proud Black manhood in the shadow of the Death House.

A young man who would be alive today, had the U.S. Supreme Court decided the Roper case a few months earlier, for it outlawed the execution of those who were juveniles when the crimes occurred -- like Shaka Sankofa.

A stronger, deeper Movement could've kept him alive -- that's what a Movement can do.

A stronger, more militant movement could've freed him from bondage - that's what a movement can do!

So, build; multiply; expand -- that too is what Movements do!

Movements -- especially mass movements, can, quite literally, change society. But they must be militant; they must be transformative; they must be without compromise.

And they must be mass.

That's where the Movement must go.

Thank you all.

November 6th - Fear Nation

If you squint your eyes, and look at TV news, all you'll see -- no matter which channel you choose -- is fear.

Ebola. Isis. Car crashes. Plane crashes. Train crashes. Murder - and mayhem.

In essence, fear.

American TV is awash in a cold splash of fear. Indeed, virtually every channel is tuned to Fear TV.

And there's a method to the madness. For fear reaches deep into our limbic system, of the most ancient recesses of the reptilian brain; the hippocampus, the hypothalamus, the amygdala, the thalamus, and triggers our survival instincts. It also hooks us into TV, and increases the station's ratings (which is what it's all about).

For, once engaged with the seduction of fear, reason flies the room.

How many people are really threatened by Ebola? Isis? Murder?

When we look through the lens of reason, we see very few.

But fear does more. It informs and feeds our politics, and transforms society. Remember the mania over crack babies? Remember the cries that led to the national Drug War? Conservative scholars and pundits warned of the rise of so-called 'Super Predators' - and politicians - of both parties -- embarked on the fuel of fear to build more prisons, write more laws, increase drug sentences, imprison more children - all for lies spurred by fear.

I'd bet more people die from the flu than from Ebola in America. Isis was the creation of the fear-generated Iraq War, for if Saddam Hussein were still alive, he would have crushed them beneath his heel.

Crime rates - despite the fear-mongering - are the lowest today since the '80s.

But the average American watches 24 hours of TV per week. About a third of high school graduates never read another book in their lives after leaving high school. Some 30 million Americans are either illiterate, or can't read a simple sentence. That's roughly the population of Texas or California!

For them, TV news is their window onto a world that really doesn't exist. It's a world swimming in fear.

Those emotions feed the forces of repression in America, prisons, militarized cops, rabid politicians and maniacal judges who have imprisoned not only millions of people, but the U.S. Constitution itself.

Welcome to Fear Nation.

November 6th - Los Desaparecidos (The Disappeared Ones)

In Mexico, fires are burning.

I mean this metaphorically -- and literally.

For thousands of youth feel the heated indignation against their corrupt government, as shown by their Oct. 13th protest and the firing of government buildings in Chilpancingo, Guerrero State, Mexico.

Why did they set the buildings ablaze?

They were marking the deadline when government officials were told to return some 43 students, who were arrested and taken away by corrupt cops.

In September, the 26th and 27th, local police in Iguala, Guerrero, opened fire on 3 busloads of students from a rural teacher-training school at Ayotzinapa. Six people (3 students and 3 passersby) were killed, and 25 people were wounded.

The 43 students were hustled into police vehicles - and haven't been seen since.

Every day since then, protests, marches and highway blockades have rocked the city, demanding the safe return of the 43 students. The protests, against brutal, terrorist police and government corruption have only gotten hotter, as events of October 13 have shown us.

On Oct. 22nd, hundreds of thousands of people have demonstrated for the students' return all over Mexico, and around the world.

These students came from rural districts across Mexico, where the children of poor campesinos could get good educations and become teachers.

But Mexico, as in the U.S, is under neo-liberalism's spell, which seeks to abolish these schools, which date from the 1930s.

Why? Because these schools challenge the hegemony of neo-liberals, by teaching kids to think critically and question the ways of the world.

The neo-liberal government responded to protests with police massacres - and now, the disappearance of dozens of students. But protests continue -more militant than ever!

It is interesting - and telling - that when Islamist snatched and kidnapped hundreds of girls in Nigeria, the world went wild.

When corrupt, brutal cops massacred students, and then kidnapped 43 students, and refused to tell their whereabouts, the neo-liberal, corporate press goes dark.

In Mexico, the struggle and the demand for the students' safe return, continues.

La lucha sigue!

2 Nov - A Prisoner Swap With Cuba

Here's an editorial from the New York Times in favor of swapping the Cuban 5 for a contractor imprisoned in Cuba.

MORE:

Nearly five years ago, authorities in Cuba arrested an American government subcontractor, Alan Gross, who was working on a secretive program to expand Internet access on the island. At a time when a growing number of

officials in Washington and Havana are eager to start normalizing relations, Mr. Gross's continued imprisonment has become the chief obstacle to a diplomatic breakthrough.

There is only one plausible way to remove Mr. Gross from an already complicated equation. The Obama administration should swap him for three convicted Cuban spies who have served more than 16 years in federal prison.

Officials at the White House are understandably anxious about the political fallout of a deal with Havana, given the criticism they faced in May after five Taliban prisoners were exchanged for an American soldier kidnapped in Afghanistan. The American government, sensibly, is averse to negotiating with terrorists or governments that hold United States citizens for ransom or political leverage. But in exceptional circumstances, it makes sense to do so. The Alan Gross case meets that criteria.

Under the direction of Development Alternatives Inc., which had a contract with the United States Agency for International Development, Mr. Gross traveled to Havana five times in 2009, posing as a tourist, to smuggle communications equipment as part of an effort to provide more Cubans with Internet access. The Cuban government, which has long protested Washington's covert pro-democracy initiatives on the island, tried and convicted Mr. Gross in 2011, sentencing him to 15 years in prison for acts against the integrity of the state.

Early on in Mr. Gross's detention, Cuban officials suggested they might be willing to free him if Washington put an end to initiatives designed to overthrow the Cuban government. After those talks sputtered, the Cuban position hardened and it has become clear to American officials that the only realistic deal to get Mr. Gross back would involve releasing three Cuban spies convicted of federal crimes in Miami in 2001.

In order to swap prisoners, President Obama would need to commute the men's sentences. Doing so would be justified considering the lengthy time they have served, the troubling questions about the fairness of their trial, and the potential diplomatic payoff in clearing the way toward a new bilateral relationship.

The spy who matters the most to the Cuban government, Gerardo Hernández, is serving two life sentences. Mr. Hernández, the leader of the so-called Wasp Network, which infiltrated Cuban exile groups in South Florida in the 1990s, was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder. Prosecutors accused him of conspiring with authorities in Havana to shoot down civilian planes operated by a Cuban exile group that dropped leaflets over the island urging Cubans to rise up against their government. His four co-defendants, two of whom have been released and returned home, were convicted of nonviolent crimes. The two who remain imprisoned are due for release relatively soon.

A three-judge panel on the United States Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit overturned the convictions in August 2005, ruling that a "perfect storm" of factors deprived the five defendants of a fair trial. The judges found that widespread hostility toward the Cuban government in Miami and pretrial publicity that vilified the spies made it impossible to impanel an impartial jury. The full court later reversed the panel's finding, reinstating the verdict. But the judges raised other concerns about the case that led to a reduction of three of the sentences.

One of the judges, Phyllis Kravitch, wrote a dissenting opinion arguing that Mr. Hernández's murder-conspiracy conviction was unfounded. Prosecutors, she argued, failed to establish that Mr. Hernández, who provided Havana with information about the flights, had entered into an agreement to shoot down the planes in international, as opposed to Cuban, airspace. Downing the planes over Cuban airspace, which the exiles had penetrated before, would not constitute murder under American law.

Bringing Mr. Hernández home has become a paramount priority for Cuba's president, Raúl Castro. Cuban officials have hailed the men as heroes and portrayed their trial as a travesty. Independent entities, including a United Nations panel that examines cases of arbitrary detentions and Amnesty International, have raised concerns about the fairness of the proceedings. The widespread view in Cuba that the spies are victims has, unfortunately, emboldened Cuba to use Mr. Gross as a pawn.

For years, officials in Washington have said that they would not trade the Cuban spies for Mr. Gross, arguing that a trade would create a false “equivalency.”

But a prisoner exchange could pave the way toward re-establishing formal diplomatic ties, positioning the United States to encourage positive change in Cuba through expanded trade, travel opportunities and greater contact between Americans and Cubans. Failing to act would maintain a 50-year cycle of mistrust and acts of sabotage by both sides.

Beyond the strategic merits of a swap, the administration has a duty to do more to get Mr. Gross home. His arrest was the result of a reckless strategy in which U.S.A.I.D. has deployed private contractors to perform stealthy missions in a police state vehemently opposed to Washington’s pro-democracy crusade.

While in prison, Mr. Gross has lost more than 100 pounds. He is losing vision in his right eye. His hips are failing. This June, Mr. Gross’s elderly mother died. After he turned 65 in May, Mr. Gross told his loved ones that this year would be his last in captivity, warning that he intends to kill himself if he is not released soon. His relatives and supporters regard that as a serious threat from a desperate, broken man.

If Alan Gross died in Cuban custody, the prospect of establishing a healthier relationship with Cuba would be set back for years. This is an entirely avoidable scenario, as Mr. Obama can easily grasp, but time is of the essence.

2 Nov - Anarchists Amélie, Fallon and Carlos sentenced to 7 years and 6 months by the federal court

On October 31st, 2014 judges handed down sentence in the federal process against Amélie Trudeau Pelletier, Fallon Poisson Rouiller and Carlos López Marín for the offense of damage to others’ property in the form of fire (attack on the Secretariat of Communications and Transport). Our comrades were sentenced to 7 years and 6 months imprisonment.

MORE:

The lawyers will appeal this sentencing decision within 15 days. The sentence of the local process for attacking public peace and causing damage (attack on a Nissan dealership) has not yet been issued.

November 8th - Comrades Amélie, Fallon and Carlos sentenced locally

On November 6th, 2014, in the proceeding under common law, Amélie Trudeau Pelletier, Fallon Poisson Rouiller and Carlos López Marín were sentenced to 2 years, 7 months and 15 days in prison, and ordered to pay damages of 108 thousand pesos, on charges of attacks to public peace and aggravated damages committed by gang.

In the following days the defense will appeal against the sentence. This judgment runs parallel to the sentence of 7 years and 6 months handed down to the comrades on the 31st of October, in the federal case trial, that has already been appealed.

4 Nov - Two Poems for Sundiata

As part of the “Poems For Sundiata” project, poet William Cheeks has written two new poems.

MORE:

Let’s Fight To Be Free

Let’s fight to be free,
free from racism,
bigotry, oppression.

Let’s fight to be free.
free from self hatred,
arrogance, stupidity.

When do we fight to be free?

Now is the best time
to start this fight.

Let's fight to be free
inside ourselves
Inside our minds
which must be free.
Free to think,
free to dream.
free to believe,
free to be me.
Let's fight to be free
Don't fight this fight
aimlessly.
Let's fight this fight
individually, collectively.
Let's fight to be free
We have no choice
but to fight
for such a great cause.
Let's fight to be free
for present and future
generations
who must fight
to be free.

Reality

What is reality?
Reality is when
you get angry.
See yourself
without a job
without hope.
Without a chance
to fulfill
your dreams.
Reality is when
you see
racist police
officers.
They look at you
like you're
a criminal.
They posture
themselves
disrespectfully,
smugly,
Knowing they
have power
to bust your head
open,
or to shoot you down
in cold blood.
What is your reality?
Is your reality
different
from mine?

I suppose it is.
My reality tells me
life is not
fair and equal.
African People,
People of Color
live a nightmarish
existence.
Rich White men live
high and lofty,
plenty of food to eat,
live in villas worldwide.
Secured fortresses,
blanketed inch by inch
by inch
in every nook
and cranny.
Poor people are trapped
like sardines
in a rat infested ghetto
existence, suffocated,
enclosed, surrounded
in a death trap.
High blood pressure,
suicide, drug abuse,
prostitution, idleness
results.
What is reality to you
has been a nightmare
for me.
Change my reality,
then your reality
no longer
becomes a dream.
It brings you
to a reality
you want to
escape from.
Escape, live in a bed
of ease.
Too bad, this dream
cannot last,
escape if you try.
The same people
you step on,
step over
will some day bring you
to reality.
The last shall be first
the first shall be last.
You are not alone
a lie cannot stand
forever.
Your lies of comfort,

perfection, ease.
But at whose expense,
at what expense?
Not yours, not mine
but by some misconceived
idea
That you deserve
an easy life.
This is not my reality,
nor your reality.
Reality says the rich
cannot take their wealth
with them when they die.
Reality says, all good things
must come to an end.
Face reality,
or reality
will face you
sooner or later.
Which choice will you make
in the matter?

7 Nov - Chelsea Manning featured in performance piece TRUTH

Chelsea Manning will be represented in the performance art presentation, TRUTH, Tuesday, November 11th, 2014 in Salina, Kansas. TRUTH is part of a collaboration with Unfinished Portrait, an exhibit that brings audiences face-to-face with the US-led invasions and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan by presenting images of those that have died as a direct result of the conflicts. Sarah Crews and Priti Gulati Cox of CODEPink take on the performance aspects of the piece.

MORE:

TRUTH, puts emphasis on the costs of war and the predicament of Chelsea Manning. Chelsea has become the poster child of truth in this country, at least in the eyes of those that are willing to acknowledge it. But her treatment is not separate from the truth that is actually available for people to access but choose not to. One supposedly broke the law, while the other didn't. And they're both hidden.

8 Nov - Enforcing Apartheid

An interview in Jacobin Magazine about the persecution of Rasmia Odeh and other Palestinian activists.

MORE:

The trial of Rasmia Odeh — feminist, community organizer, Palestinian refugee — is entering its fourth day. The US government is targeting Odeh as part of a coordinated, multi-pronged attack on Palestinians in the United States, aiming to cut off Palestinians in exile from the struggle in their homeland and to further shatter the Palestinian national movement.

By attempting to destroy what the *Reut Report* has called “hubs” of the organizing effort, the US government is in effect carrying out a counterinsurgency operation against both Palestinians in this country as well as their supporters. To that end, the government has repeatedly attempted to link Palestinians in exile to what it calls “terror.” By using “terror lists,” for example, it has successfully managed to prevent Palestinians in the United States from offering support to any of the Palestinian political parties that have not caved in to the Zionist project.

The government has also used those lists to criminalize purely humanitarian efforts to strengthen Palestinian society — most notoriously in the case of the Holy Land Five. Furthermore, the US government has sought to judicially harass and disrupt any and all Palestinian exile formations. The prosecution of Odeh is one example of

that ongoing persecution.

What follows is an interview with Michael Deutsch, one of Odeh's attorneys.

Jacobin: Can you give a capsule summary of how the United States government has gone after Rasmia Odeh?

Michael Deutsch: Yes, it began in September 2010. They began to investigate her, and it was part of the investigation they were conducting of the [Arab American Action Network] in Chicago. The US attorney in Chicago requested documents from Israel about her background and history.

Ultimately, they received the documents from Israel and they begin to prepare a case against her for basically obtaining her naturalization and citizenship in violation of the law – in other words, in not being truthful in answering the questions on the application. They indicted her about a year ago, and brought her to Detroit to stand trial.

J: Can you quickly walk us through what the legal strategy was until last week's rulings?

MD: Basically we wanted to show, first of all, that all the documents from Israel were the product of an occupation military judicial system that systemically tortures people to get confessions, that is run by soldiers posing as judges, that doesn't provide you with access to counsel until you've already confessed. Therefore we argued that any documents provided through that system were in violation of international law and US law and shouldn't be admitted to the courtroom.

In addition we wanted to show that because she was so viciously and horrifically tortured, she suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], she's been evaluated and diagnosed with that. That resulted in her basically blocking what happened to her in Israel when she was asked the questions in her naturalization application about whether she had ever been arrested, convicted, or imprisoned.

She interpreted that to mean imprisoned and convicted and arrested in the United States. She had been in the United States for nine years, and had a green card, and when she went for her naturalization, she assumed they were asking her about her background in the US.

What she didn't know at that time, which she later found out after the indictment, is she had PTSD. What happens with someone who has PTSD is they cognitively block past trauma to avoid having to deal with it. So when she interpreted the questions to simply be asking about the United States, it was not only that but her PTSD blocking past trauma.

Our defense was multifaceted: keep out the documents, show the jury the illegality of the military tribunal, then put out an expert who examined her and evaluated her and said she had PTSD. The judge allowed in the documents, he blocked any testimony of torture – or innocence – because we wanted to say she was innocent, she confessed under torture, and he blocked the PTSD defense, and kept the expert out.

J: Can you just clarify the legal strategy and the ruling linked to the Israeli documents — how is that banned according to US law?

MD: Well, it is inconsistent with due process and fundamental fairness – if you have a conviction that's based on torture, you don't allow that.

In US courts they don't allow convictions based on torture. In the United States you have judges who are supposedly impartial, and you don't have civilians being put on trial in military court where the judges are military officers who are involved in the invasion and occupation of your land.

So the whole process is illegitimate, and they shouldn't be using any information obtained through that process in a US court.

J: Can you tell us what, if any, legal options are remaining?

MD: She's charged with knowingly answering questions falsely. Knowingly means not innocently, not mistakenly; knowingly means with the intent to lie. Even keeping out her PTSD, and keeping in the military documents, they have to prove she knowingly answered the questions falsely. She maintains she interpreted the questions to apply to the United States, not foreign convictions or imprisonments.

J: Can you talk about how the persecution of Rasmae Odeh fits into the broader pattern of what you've called the "domestic counter-insurgency?"

MD: Yes, I think this is part of a campaign to suppress the Palestinian people living in the US who want to educate US people about the occupation and the attacks on Gaza, and the attacks on the Palestinian people. So what they've done is target the Arab American Action Network. Also they target people who travel and visit the Middle East. I think it is an intentional effort by the United States and the Israelis to suppress the truth about Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people.

The prosecution of Rasmae is part of the attacks on students on campuses – Palestinian students on campuses who are trying to educate and organize around Palestine. And it's about the people who were subpoenaed to the grand jury in Chicago, twenty-three of them, many of them worked or went on trips to the Middle East and the occupied territories. It's about the people whose homes were raided in 2010 who were doing Palestine solidarity.

It is all part of a campaign to disrupt and neutralize Palestinian solidarity work.

J: And can you trace this back a little historically – you've spoken of similar techniques used against Puerto Rican activists?

MD: Many of us are familiar with the counterintelligence program that targeted the rise of a black messiah – a program that sought to disrupt and neutralize the black liberation movement. The Puerto Rican independence movement was similarly targeted and in the course of prosecuting members of the Puerto Rican independence movement, they instituted a lot of repressive changes in the judicial system.

For example, they put in anonymous juries, they allowed secret cameras to be put in people's homes, they talked about terrorism, and at the trials said you couldn't raise the issue of colonialism and Puerto Rican independence. They kept the politics out. They also brought very stiff and hard sentences against people who were convicted of seditious conspiracy, which has hardly ever been used, but it is a conspiracy to oppose the authority of the United States by force.

And so by charging people with seditious conspiracy, anyone who was a member of a clandestine group that they determined to be illegal, whether they did anything or not, could be prosecuted or imprisoned for up to twenty years.

J: And what forms of support can be helpful at this point?

MD: Well – public support, here in Detroit. There was an op-ed piece by Angela Davis in support for Rasmae, there was an open letter to Obama and the Justice Department signed by over one hundred feminist scholars in support for Rasmae. People come from Chicago to bear witness, they go to court, they fill the court room, and they're demonstrating outside the court.

All those things have an impact and are helpful in terms of building support and educating people about her case.

8 Nov - Pre-trial hearing on Nov 6 for Eric King. Jury trial set for July 13 2015

Eric King had a pretrial hearing on Nov 6 where it was decided he would have an accelerated jury trial set for July 13 2015. Keep the letters and support for Eric coming and please remember DO NOT write about his arrest, his case, or the charges he faces. Too often, letters written to comrades who are pre-trial, and discuss those things, are used as evidence at trial.

13 Nov - Steps Towards Prison Abolition: A Strategic Conversation

WHAT: An informal discussion about the different political strategies we embrace in our fight for prison

abolition.

WHEN: 7:00pm, Thursday, November 13th

WHERE: Interference Archive - 131 8th Street No. 4 Brooklyn, New York 11215

COST: FREE

MORE:

What have we—individuals who know that the whole prison industrial complex must be abolished—discovered in our education, advocacy and lobbying efforts? What is working and not working? How can collaboration become more than showing up for one another's events? How can we creatively combat the media's dominant narratives on crime and corrections?

Interference Archive's current exhibit, Self Determination Inside/Out features cultural materials produced by incarcerated people in the struggle for freedom from Attica to the present and inspires us to step outside of the day-to-day political organizing of our criminal justice organizing projects to reflect on our personal and collective struggles to end mass incarceration. Join us at this special exhibit to learn from the past and each other towards an abolitionist future.

Sponsored by RAPP (Release Aging People in Prison) and Milk Not Jails

2 blocks from F/G/R trains at 4th Avenue/9th Street

This conversation is part of the Interference Archive's programming for its newest exhibit "Self Determination Inside/Out"--a curated exhibit of cultural materials produced by incarcerated people and their allies. For a complete list of the planned programming go here: <http://interferencearchive.org/self-determination-insideout-exhibition-tour>

15 Nov - Fight the Good Fight – In Honor of Dr. Mutulu Shakur

WHAT: Acupuncture and massage benefit

WHEN: 2:00-8:00pm, Saturday, November 15th

WHERE: Third Root Community Health Center - 380 Marlborough Road (Brooklyn)

COST: \$20-60, sliding scale

MORE:

Heal & Honor (2-6:30pm): Book an appointment for acupuncture, East Asian massage or herbal medicine for yourself or as a gift for someone who deserves it. Your \$20 – \$60 sliding scale donation is tax-deductible & supports Dr. Shakur's legal defense, commissary essentials, and projects promoting justice for the Black community.

Educate & Empower (7-8pm): A closing discussion will feature comrades of Dr. Shakur, Dr. Shadidi Kinsey, Susan Rosenberg and Bob Lederer, speaking on the legacy of radical healthcare in revolutionary social change.

Dr. Shadidi Kinsey became the first African-American to be licensed by New York State to practice acupuncture in 1992. Her interest in acupuncture began in 1981, when she read a story in the New York Amsterdam News about the Harlem Institute of Acupuncture directed by Dr. Mutulu Shakur. She subsequently enrolled in the school, and later became a certified doctor of acupuncture at the International Institute of Acupuncture and Traditional Medicine in Canada and co-founded the P.E.A.C.E. Health Center in Brooklyn.

Susan Rosenberg is an American radical political activist, author and advocate for social justice and prisoners' rights. She studied acupuncture with Dr. Mutulu Shakur at the institute he founded in Harlem. Like many activists of the 60's and 70's she was targeted by political repression and went underground for two years before she was captured and sentenced to 58 years in prison on weapons and explosives charges. She spent 16 years in prison, during which she became a poet, author and AIDS activist. She is the author of a memoir An American Radical.

Bob Lederer has been an anti-imperialist, anti-racist activist supporting U.S. political prisoners for 35 years. He has also been a health journalist and activist, having worked in the past with ACT UP (where he helped organize protests for alternative HIV/AIDS treatments, needle exchanges, and affordable anti-viral drugs, among other issues) and LGBT rights groups. He is a co-host of the “Health Action” program on WBAI (99.5 FM, wbai.org), for which he has produced many critiques of corporate medicine and prison healthcare and segments about the importance of nutrition and holistic healthcare. As a current student in Hunter College’s Master’s in Public Health Program, he is now pursuing a study of NYC acupuncture clinics serving low-income communities today in comparison with the model set by the radical Lincoln Detox Program in the 1970s.

15 Nov - Out In The Night

WHAT: Film Screening

WHEN: 5:00pm, Saturday, November 15th

WHERE: Interference Archive - 131 8th Street No. 4 Brooklyn, New York 11215

COST: FREE (But donations appreciated)

MORE:

Join director blair dorosh-walther and Terrain Dandridge, Patreese Johnson, and Renata Hill of the New Jersey 4 for a screening of Out in the Night.

18 Nov - To Palestine With Love Letter Writing Night!

WHAT: Letter Writing To Political Prisoners In the US and Palestine

WHEN: 6:30pm, Tuesday, November 18th

WHERE: CUNY Graduate Center (Room 5414) - 365 5th Avenue (Manhattan)

COST: FREE!

MORE:

Please join the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home in our first installment of monthly events. We will be writing letters to Palestinian teenagers, known as Hares Boys, who are wrongly imprisoned in occupied Palestine and being held in solitary confinement.

20 Nov - Ending Child and Family Detention

WHAT: Vigil

WHEN: 5:00-8:00pm, Thursday, November 20th

WHERE: Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, New York, New York 10017

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join the Queer Detainee Empowerment Project, American Friends Service Committee, Black Alliance for Just Immigration, DRUM - South Asian Organizing Center, First Friends of New Jersey & New York, Families for Freedom, Immigrant Defense Project, International Detention Coalition, Justice Strategies, Loretto at the UN, New Sanctuary Movement, Reformed Church of Highland Park, Terre Des Hommes, United Methodist Women, We Belong Together Campaign, & Women’s Refugee Commission for a vigil to demand the end of immigration detention for children and families!

Thousands of families a year are placed in immigration detention, any of them are queer and trans families. Children face sexual abuse in immigration detention, as well as other forms of unprecedented state violence.