



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for May 26th

2 May - Chris Monfort Trial Update

More than three months into Christopher Monfort's murder trial, the defense is presenting evidence that he was insane when he fatally shot a Seattle cop in October 2009. NOTE: The following is a corporate news article, so please critically read it.

MORE:

by Sara Jean Green (*Seattle Times*)

Though Christopher Monfort's aggravated-murder trial began in January, the real battle to win over the jury started in April when the defense mounted its case to prove Monfort was insane when he allegedly ambushed two Seattle police officers, fatally shooting one of them, on Halloween night 2009.

For roughly 10 weeks, jurors heard testimony about an Oct. 22 arson, the Oct. 31 shooting death of Officer Timothy Brenton, and the ensuing investigation that led to Monfort's arrest days later outside his Tukwila apartment, which was stockpiled with weapons and explosives.

During the arrest, Monfort was shot in the face and abdomen by a Seattle homicide sergeant and paralyzed below the waist.

At the outset of trial, the defense made clear the case is not a whodunit but declined to stipulate to any of the allegations against Monfort, holding the state to its burden to prove each element of the five felonies Monfort is charged with.

Among those charges is aggravated first-degree murder for Brenton's killing, the only crime for which the death penalty is a possible punishment.

In addition, Monfort is charged with firebombing police vehicles at the city's Charles Street maintenance yard nine days before the shooting and attempting to kill other police officers, including Brenton's then-rookie partner, Britt Kelley.

Monfort's defense team is now trying to prove the 46-year-old is not guilty by reason of insanity — and the team is expected to offer at least another week of testimony aimed at showing Monfort suffers from a mental disease or defect that impairs his ability to know right from wrong.

Closing statements could be held as early as next week. If the jury finds Monfort not guilty by reason of insanity, the trial will end. But if they find him guilty of aggravated murder, the trial will then proceed to the penalty phase and jurors will be asked to decide if Monfort should be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of release, or to death.

Jurors must vote unanimously to impose the death penalty.

While the state attempted to poke holes in testimony provided by two defense experts, it was testimony from the defense's star witness, Dr. Mark Cunningham, that was most vigorously challenged. A Boston psychiatrist retained by the state is expected to testify as a rebuttal witness.

Cunningham, a forensic psychologist from Texas, provided dense, complex testimony over more than eight days, showing the jury a 400-page Power Point presentation and frequently referring to binders of notes stacked on a book truck at the foot of the witness stand.

He spent more than 20 hours interviewing Monfort in the King County Jail beginning in 2011 and concluded Monfort suffered from a delusional disorder that made him believe killing police officers in order to stem police brutality was morally and constitutionally correct.

Cunningham's testimony also provoked a number of disdainful outbursts from Monfort — which stopped after King County Superior Court Judge Ronald Kessler suggested a video feed could be set up in another courtroom “and Mr. Monfort can talk to the television.”

Before Cunningham first took the stand on April 9, the defense called John De Haan, an independent consultant on fire-scene reconstructions. He testified about his review of the Charles Street incident, and said he agreed with many of the conclusions reached by Seattle arson investigators.

But Monfort — who is charged with arson and one count of attempted first-degree murder for allegedly trying to kill police and firefighters responding to the fire scene — could have chosen better targets at the maintenance facility if his real intent had been to inflict mass carnage, De Haan testified.

“It was basically intended as property damage or a distraction more than anything else,” De Haan said of the fire and pipe bombs that destroyed a mobile police precinct and a handful of patrol cars.

On cross-examination, De Haan acknowledged he ignored fliers Monfort is alleged to have taped to buildings and car windows around the facility that included a reference to “these deaths” — which the state has argued shows his failed intent to kill first responders.

“I didn't know what to make of it. I didn't know which deaths those related to,” De Haan said of the fliers. “I did not find it relevant, that's correct.”

The defense also called Randall Karstetter, a computer forensic expert who analyzed the contents of Monfort's computers. He was tasked with looking for videos, Internet search histories and other files in a hunt for clues about Monfort's mental state and apparent obsession with police brutality.

A desktop computer didn't contain any relevant data, but Karstetter found 2,569 search terms containing the word “police” on Monfort's laptop. Though a majority of them were duplicates, Karstetter said, between April and November 2009 Monfort conducted searches for police radio codes, the Seattle Police Officers' Guild, and places where cops are known to eat, drink and socialize.

But on cross-examination, Karstetter said he didn't consider a vast number of videos and files on the laptop about other topics, agreeing that less than 1 percent of Monfort's activity was somehow related to the police.

Cunningham testified that Monfort isn't a psychopath, but he is mentally ill — even though Monfort “does not regard himself as mentally ill.”

He diagnosed Monfort with a delusional disorder with persecutory and grandiose themes, explaining his delusions are encapsulated around the issue of police brutality.

Someone with the mental disorder “can be quite functional and don't tend to show odd behavior except if it's related to the theme of the delusion,” said Cunningham.

Cunningham also provided details not widely known about the case.

For instance, Monfort wanted to be a cop but didn't apply because of a hiring freeze at the time. He purchased the alleged murder weapon, a .223-caliber Kel-Tec rifle, and took it to California in July 2009 with the intent of killing police there but aborted his plan.

Cunningham also testified Monfort wasn't overly concerned about getting caught since his arrest would enable him to spread his message against police brutality.

Though it wasn't explicitly stated to the jury, Cunningham said Monfort took credit for influencing a gunman who fatally shot four Lakewood police officers in a Pierce County coffee shop in November 2009, a month after Brenton was killed in his patrol car in Seattle's Leschi neighborhood.

11 May - New Messages From Jaan Laaman

Jaan Laaman has released a couple of new messages and we're pasting them below.

MORE:

May 11th - Message from Political Prisoner Jaan Laaman about the Forced Closure of Aboriginal Communities in Australia

Stop the forced closures of Aboriginal communities in Western Australia and all across Australia. Stop this racist, blatantly colonialist violation of international law and the Human Rights of Aboriginal people, who choose to live in small and remote communities, especially those in Western Australia. Stop the land seizures and the land theft from these Aboriginal communities.

This is Jaan Laaman. I am a long held political prisoner in the United States. I know I speak not just for myself, but for other revolutionary political prisoners across the USA, when I say, we stand in solidarity with the Aboriginal people who are being threatened with the closing of their towns and communities.

It was only in early May, that we heard a little information about the Western Australian government's threats to stop all services to remote Aboriginal communities and towns. We think this is outrageous and most likely designed to drive people off their land. By emptying Aboriginal countries of their inhabitants, the land becomes available to the huge mining corporations that are closely linked with the Western Australian government.

The mainstream corporate media here in the United States, has not reported about this ongoing issue in Australia. The USA government, also being a settler state, has its own long ugly history of genocide and theft of Indigenous First Nations land here in the United States. Since the recent large and widespread rallies in cities and towns across Australia, there has been a little reporting about this situation in some U.S. media. I myself, and other progressive voices, will publicly share our knowledge about this Aboriginal peoples struggle for the survival of your communities and the protection of your land.

We know that the State and Federal governments shutting down of the power, water, schools and health care facilities in your communities will cause real suffering. That is why it is important and necessary, and very positive to see, that Australians of all backgrounds, have stepped forward in demonstrations against this government attack. We join with all of you in your continuing resistance to the Australian government's assault on Aboriginal people.

In Unity there is Strength-
From Strength comes Victory!

May 13th - Thoughts on killer cops and the May 13th, 1985, MOVE massacre

Almost every day the news hits us with another case of a man, a youth, sometimes even a woman, shot, choked, or beaten to death by cops. Almost always the victims are people of color and usually the killer cop is white. We are hearing a lot more about these cases, and that is probably because the brutality and killings are captured on video. It is a lot harder for the government and mainstream corporate media to ignore these cases when the images are presented and seen on various social media platforms.

The sad and hard reality is that cops have been injuring and killing people, especially people of color for years and years. Many of us might remember the names of some decades old victims: Clifford Glover, Eleanor Bumpers, Rodney King, Sean Bell, so many other.

We are coming up on the 30th anniversary of probably the most horrid modern day police killing of 11 people, including 5 children. On May 13, 1985, the Philadelphia police surrounded and besieged the home of the Move Family in a Black neighborhood in Philadelphia. Move was and is a community and revolutionary organization that advocates for issues like natural and healthy nutrition, animal rights, opposition to government repression and corruption, including a long time exposure of and resistance to abuses and killings by the Philadelphia police department.

11 May - Why The Media Ignores Jeremy Hammond While Praising Edward Snowden

The mainstream media has devoted hundreds of articles to NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden, the subject of the Oscar-winning documentary "Citizenfour," but it's not devoted the same level of attention to many other whistleblowers and political prisoners, like Jeremy Hammond, no matter how sensational the facts they revealed.

MORE:

by Kit O'Connell (*Mint Press*)

In November 2013, a federal court sentenced Hammond to 10 years in prison for his part in the hack of Strategic Forecasting, an Austin, Texas-based corporate intelligence agency, also known as Stratfor. Working on behalf of Lulzsec, an infamous subgroup of Anonymous, Hammond leaked 5 million private emails taken from Stratfor to the whistleblowing website WikiLeaks, a release that came to be known as the Global Intelligence Files, or GI Files.

The emails revealed that Stratfor gathers intelligence on behalf of private corporations while also sharing sensitive information with local and federal law enforcement. For example, the company spied on The Yes Men for Dow Chemical, after the activists publicly humiliated Dow on behalf of survivors of the 1984 Bhopal, India, disaster that killed thousands. At the same time, Stratfor collaborated with the Texas State Troopers to infiltrate Occupy Austin during the first months after the group's formation in October 2011.

A recent Tweet by @YourAnonNews, one of the largest Twitter accounts related to the Anonymous movement, explicitly compares Hammond to Snowden:

"A lot of people don't even know who Jeremy Hammond is. He's the original Snowden." —YourAnonNews

To understand the importance of Hammond's hack, and to examine the comparison between the two whistleblower figures, MintPress News spoke with two people who have communicated with Hammond in prison and also benefited from his work.

Azzurra Crispino is an activist with Prison Abolition and Prisoner Support (PAPS). She's spent years writing to Hammond, while the group brings attention to Hammond's case through letter writing campaigns and direct action. She was a member of Occupy Austin when the hack revealed Stratfor's spying.

Douglas Lucas is a freelance writer and journalist from Fort Worth, Texas. Lucas received early access to the GI Files through a partnership with WikiLeaks. Both of them joined MintPress on Wednesday at an Austin coffee shop.

"The first and foremost difference is that Snowden is not in prison and Jeremy is," said Crispino.

While Snowden can communicate with activists, journalists and computer engineers by video conferencing from Russia, Hammond is limited to communicating through letters which can be censored or blocked by

prison officials. The difference goes deeper, however, as Crispino explained, because Hammond is an unapologetic supporter of prison abolition.

“Snowden is giving us a message of reform,” she said. “We can just tweak this one thing and everything will go back to being right as rain regarding corporate and government surveillance. Whereas Jeremy is saying this is egregious and it all has to go from start to finish.”

She added that Hammond, like his imprisoned brother Jason, has a history of participating in violent actions against Neo-Nazis in Chicago.

Lucas stressed that the GI Files exposed a portion of the American surveillance state that’s normally both invisible and entirely immune to accountability. When the media quotes Stratfor employees, such as Fred Burton, vice president for Intelligence, reporters rarely question the accuracy of their words.

Lucas gave examples of key details often revealed by the emails: “To whom did Stratfor sell their intelligence? What else was Fred Burton doing on the day he talked to the media?”

The leak allows him to weigh Stratfor and government claims against facts learned in hindsight.

In comparing Snowden to Hammond, Lucas pointed out that the mainstream media may be more reluctant to report on a corporation like Stratfor when Stratfor’s clients might be advertising sponsors:

“Journalists play a large role in controlling what information the public receives. It is safer, for business and editorial approval, to write about a whistleblower who leaked information from the federal government, the traditional opponent of influential investigative journalists, than about a whistleblower who hacked out information about local cops collaborating with corporate spies.”

Hammond’s 2011 Stratfor leak came at a time when social media was being used in unprecedented ways worldwide to support activist movements like Occupy Wall Street and the Arab Spring, and at the height of Anonymous’ power as a collective. Just as Snowden made the world aware of mass surveillance by the United States, Crispino explained how the emails enhanced the feeling of global solidarity prevalent at the time of the GI Files release.

“You might say, what do I have in common with the people of Bhopal who are fighting for justice and reparations?” she asked rhetorically. “Initially, it might seem like I have nothing in common with them.”

She continued: “I think that one of the strongest things that’s come out of the Stratfor revelations is it gave activists the ability to stand in solidarity with other activists across the world and see those connections in a way that I think is really important for The Struggle.”

And even though imprisoned, she added, Hammond has urged his supporters to show solidarity for other political prisoners like Alvaro Luna.

Crispino highlighted a final difference between Snowden and Hammond: While Snowden infiltrated the surveillance state, Hammond acted openly and brazenly under the mask of Anonymous.

“Jeremy didn’t just infiltrate Stratfor quietly. He went in loudly then proceeded to smash Stratfor to pieces,” she concluded. “It took six months for them to get their servers back up!”

12 May - Support Funds Needed for Anarchist Facing Federal Trial!

A new fundraising campaign for Eric King is underway. Donations can be made at <https://fundrazr.com/campaigns/0yoZc/sh/a4jVK6>

MORE:

Eric G. King, a 28-year-old vegan anarchist, was arrested and charged with an attempted firebombing of a government official's office in Kansas City, Missouri in September 2014. Eric is being charged with throwing a hammer through a window of the building, followed by two lit Molotov cocktails. The criminal complaint states that both alleged incendiary devices failed to ignite. Scheduled to go to trial in July 2015, he is facing up to 30 years in federal prison.

Eric was identified as a suspect by local police because he had previously come under suspicion for anti-government and anti-police graffiti. He is currently being held in the Corrections Corporation of America's Leavenworth Detention Center.

Since his arrest last September, he has been extremely isolated from his loved ones and has repeatedly been targeted by the guards, who have repeatedly put his safety in jeopardy. Despite these struggles, he continues to maintain his good spirits and his resolve to see his legal situation through to the end. He is also maintaining his dedication to struggling for a world free of domination and oppression.

We are asking for funds to help us support our comrade as he continues to weather the deplorable jail conditions. His trial may get pushed back yet again before it actually happens, which would mean more time for him to sit in the private jail awaiting his day in court. The funds collected through this campaign will go towards:

- * phone calls with friends and supporters to prevent him from being isolated
- * the costs of books and shipping to help him pass the time inside (much of which has been in solitary confinement)
- * commissary to help him purchase toiletry items and vegan food
- * helping folks be able to come support him and pack the courtroom for Eric's trial

These funds will not be used for legal defense or bail. He is being represented by the federal public defender and thus does not have any pending legal fees.

Every donation helps us support Eric that much better, which will help keep him stronger and more able to fight back against this state repression!

12 May - UN plenary on human rights overlooks COINTELPRO

COINTELPRO prisoners were ignored at the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva, Switzerland because of current outrage at police shootings of unarmed black men in the United States. The matter will still be taken up by a smaller working group.

MORE:

by Michael Richardson (*The Examiner*)

The United States underwent its second Universal Periodic Review on May 11 in Geneva, Switzerland. The UPR is a periodic examination of each nation's compliance with human rights treaties and the topic of COINTELPRO prisoners was on the table. However, the three hour session of the UN Human Rights Council, where the United States submitted to questioning, was dominated by current events on torture, racial shootings by police and the death penalty.

COINTELPRO was a massive illegal, counterintelligence operation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that targeted political activists for clandestine subterfuge. A number of state criminal trials were instigated and manipulated by COINTELPRO agents resulting in lengthy or life sentences for the mostly black defendants. The issue of COINTELPRO prisoners was brought to the United Nations by the Malcolm X Center for Self-Determination and the Jericho Movement.

Brenda Norrell, reporting on Geneva for Censored News, said that most of the time was spent by the United States making excuses for human rights abuses which she called a "fairy tale" that conceals the

facts. Norrell said that although the plenary session was devoted to topics like the police shootings of unarmed black men, other issues such as COINTELPRO were being taken up by working groups who continued to meet.

“The US did not reveal that it had carried out a systematic regime of spying on the American Indian Movement, Black Panthers and Chicano movements, by way of COINTELPRO, and that entrapment and provocateurs were used to silence and imprison activists in the US,” said Norrell.

The topic that brought the most worldwide concern was the shootings of unarmed black men by white police officers in different cities around the country. The consensus was the shootings were evidence that racism was still a prevalent problem in America despite all the talk about a multi-cultural society.

A comment from Chad was typical, "Chad considers the United States of America to be a country of freedom, but recent events targeting black sectors of society have tarnished its image.”

Namibia representative Gladice Pickering urged the United States to "fix the broken justice system that continues to discriminate.”

Keith Harper and Mary McLeod of the State Department led the US delegation which remained silent on COINTELPRO. In February, Harper submitted a formal statement to the UN Human Rights Council:

“As we look to the future, the United States stands committed to the enduring promises of protecting individual freedoms, fairness and equality before the law, and human dignity—promises that reflect the inalienable rights of each person.”

14 May - CMU taking special interest in Kevin Olliff's communications

Things have taken a turn for the worse since the last update about the BOP restricting Kevin's communications. Earlier this week, Kevin was notified that the Communications Management Unit (CMU) had taken a special interest in his correspondence with the outside world. Please read this post in its entirety to get necessary information on staying in touch with our friend.

MORE:

Using the terms “animal liberation” & “earth liberation”

In short, stop doing it. Apparently the CMU is tallying the number of times these terms are used in letters to Kevin as some crude form of “investigating” (or just intimidating) him and his contacts. Yes, it smacks of censorship. No, it's not fair. But since the prosecution is seeking longterm, stringent incarceration for Kevin, it's important not to give them any ammunition to hurt him further.

And don't try to be clever by talking about a liberation without using the term. Obviously the government is going to decode it. *Please leave all mentions of extra-legal activity—no matter how heroic or exciting—out of your letters to Kevin.*

People currently under investigation

Of course, most of us have no idea who's being investigated and who's not—that's the nature of how the FBI works and they're not keen on giving up their records. *Simply put, Kevin cannot receive correspondence from anyone under federal investigation.*

More on these new restrictions

Kevin's communication is being handled in such a sensitive way that every letter (even if it comes from someone Kevin doesn't know personally, and even if he's unaware of the contents of said letter) can have grave impacts upon his conditions of confinement. *We simply ask that you take caution when writing to him, keep everything PG-13, and consider making a donation if you don't feel comfortable sending a letter.*

14 May - Mumia Abu-Jamal Update

The saga surrounding Mumia Abu-Jamal's health continues. We must maintain focus on him to insure that the state isn't able to quietly kill him.

MORE:

May 14th - Mumia Abu-Jamal Hospitalized

A SCI Mahanoy prison nurse called Wadiya Jamal Mumia's wife at 8:50 pm last night May 12th and told her that Mumia had been moved to the hospital. This is a disturbing development and is cause for grave concern. There are reports that he had a fever, and that he has open wounds and sores on his legs. His attorney Bret Grote visited him on Friday. He was engaged, alert, yet he was in pain in his knees and leg.

We will be working to gather more information as the day goes on. His hospital conditions will be abhorrent: he will be chained to the bed. He could, as they did before, be arbitrarily and systematically denied visitors. The last time we were in the ICU they did not let his family or lawyers see him, or give them any information for 24 hours. Even though they were the ICU waiting room just a few feet from Mumia's bed..

Clearly Mumia's chronic conditions remain undiagnosed and unsuccessfully treated. Mumia was given a skin biopsy on Monday of this week, and had been in the infirmary following that procedure.

Mumia's legal team of Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law Center, has been augmented with the addition of attorney Bob Boyle. Mumia's doctor has been speaking directly with Mumia, even though the time he has been allowed for the phone in the infirmary was limited. There is no phone at the hospital. Mumia's expert medical team has been advising Mumia on the tests and the medications that have been done. This advice has been critical, and is now not possible.

As we noted in our last update oversight and close monitoring of any tests, especially the diagnostic tests are crucial. The prison is preventing Mumia and Mumia's doctors from adequate oversight and input. Because communication is being limited by prison officials Mumia does not have access quickly enough to information he needs to advocate for his own care.

We are clear that Inadequate testing, delays, and any deviation from the medically necessary course of treatment, will be challenged.

Obtaining a diagnosis is of paramount importance at this moment.

Mumia remains seriously ill. Public pressure has been key every step of the way, and remains extremely important. Please keep up the calls, emails and faxes. Demand that (1) Adequate diagnostic testing be done (2) That Mumia's doctor is able to communicate freely and regularly with the prison infirmary physicians who are delivering Mumia's medical care (3) His doctor has meaningful and regular phone access with Mumia. (There are no phones in the hospital, in the infirmary, his calls are limited to 15 minutes and he has limited access to the day room where the phones are). (4) And allow Mumia's chosen doctor to conduct an onsite medical examination. And as many have said, it is past time for Mumia to be released from prison.

May 17th - Mumia Update

We have seen or spoken to Mumia Abu-Jamal for a week. He is being held incommunicado in a hospital without access to visits of any kind or the phone. They won't even confirm where he is being held.

This is deeply troubling.

On Tuesday May 12th in the evening Mumia was taken from the prison infirmary to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania. An infirmary nurse called his wife at 8:30 pm noting that he was transferred because he had a fever and blistering open sores. He was last visited on Saturday.

Since Tuesday Mumia Abu-Jamal has been isolated from his family, his lawyer, and his doctor. Wadiya Jamal, his wife, has been trying to get into the hospital.

The Legal and Medical Team have been working 24/7.

Bret Grote, Esq, (Abolitionist Law Center) and co-counsel Bob Boyle are preparing an emergency court action to be filed in Federal Court. They have been calling the prison and the hospital demanding access. Bret Grote, notes:

"The DOC is once again demonstrating its contempt for human rights and proper health care by holding Mumia Abu-Jamal incommunicado from his family and lawyers. Instead of recognizing the value of family support and legal consultation in protecting and improving his health, the DOC is treating Mumia like a piece of property that it can withhold access to and information about arbitrarily and with impunity. People around the world have been fighting like hell for Mumia for more than 33 years and we are all needed once more to push back against another attempt to silence him. Demand that Mumia be permitted visits and phone calls with his wife, family, and lawyers."

Diagnostic Treatment demand letters have been sent to both the Department of Corrections and the Chief Medical Officer at Geisinger Hospital.

Prison Radio has raised \$47,269 from 801 donors. Even though we don't actually have the money yet (it is on its way from Indie GoGo), we have already sent \$20,000 to the lawyers, and spent thousands on expenses, doctors, medical records, and travel. We just purchased a full page add in the nation magazine. We are pulling out all the stops. Can you call, can you write? Can you give? bit.ly/rise4mumia

Activist, Journalists, and Religious People have been attempting to see Mumia.

A delegation from Collectif Français 'Libérons Mumia' (Claude Guillaumaud-Pojol, Jacky Hortaut, and Jonathan Lere), from Paris, France went to the hospital & the prison. On Sunday, the prison guards denied their visit. On Saturday Mark Lewis Taylor, a professor at the Princeton Theological Seminary went to the hospital as a spiritual advisor. He was turned away after hours of negotiations with security officials.

Keeping Our Eyes on Mumia

Preventing Mumia Abu-Jamal from speaking with his private physician is disturbing. Mumia's doctors have outlined the medically indicated steps that need to be taken to find out what is driving Mumia's chronic serious and now life threatening health conditions. Considering our recent experience detailed below, Mumia need his doctor's advice and his families care.

In the past two weeks, Mumia's doctor has identified serious inadequacies in the medical care provided by the infirmary. Mumia's doctor stressed that a cat scan was needed. The prison said it was fine. After we obtained the records, it was obvious that there were serious medical issues raised by the troubling cat scan results. Then Mumia was given a topical cream that was on the warning label counter indicated to the very specific and rare potential cancer that is a possible cause of his extreme skin ailment. Clearly, a biopsy was called for and that demand was made. Upon hearing that on Monday a biopsy would be conducted, Mumia's doctor immediately specified that it should be taken from his trunk area. Mumia was given this information. But because Mumia's doctor has been prevented from speaking with any prison health care professionals and the treating physicians he could not tell them this. The DOC was informed that the biopsy should be performed from the maximally advantageous place. When Mumia told the Physician's assistant who conducted the biopsy at the infirmary, he could not change the standing order which was to take the biopsy from his arm. The concern is that what might be driving the extreme skin condition is subcutaneous T cell lymphoma – a treatable cancer. We cannot rule that out or confirm that until the appropriate tests are given. Mumia was told that the physicians at SCI Mahanoy in March were prevented from ordering additional tests by officials of the Wexford Corporation, which has the contract for medical care in Pennsylvania prisons. The Pennsylvania division is named "Correct Care Solutions."

Clearly Mumia needs an immediate diagnosis, and then a competent treatment plan. Please join us in keeping Mumia alive, and then seeing him free.

May 18th - Lawsuit seeks attorney and family access to Mumia Abu-Jamal

This morning attorneys for political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal filed a lawsuit in the Middle District of Pennsylvania federal court seeking immediate access to their client, who has been held virtually incommunicado at the Geisinger Medical Center since Tuesday, May 12. Abu-Jamal has been denied all communication with his attorneys since that time.

Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law Center and Robert Boyle, attorneys for Abu-Jamal, are plaintiffs in the action along with Abu-Jamal. A motion for preliminary injunction and a temporary restraining order was filed with the lawsuit asking that the court issue an order granting Abu-Jamal visitation with his attorneys and wife, Wadiya Jamal.

On Tuesday May 12th in the evening Mumia was taken from the prison infirmary to Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania. Since that night he has not been allowed any visits and has been prevented by the hospital and the Pennsylvania Department Of Corrections (DOC) from his constitutionally protected access to the courts and counsel. In addition, his immediate family members have been prevented from visiting him.

This legal action seeks to immediately restore Mr. Abu-Jamal's constitutional right to access the courts.

According to Abu-Jamal's attorney, Robert Boyle, The immediate relatives of a prisoner have a right to know the medical status of their loved ones in the case of hospitalization; and all prisoners have a right to communicate with their attorney, especially in case of an emergency. "That my client and his family have been deprived of these rights is a constitutional violation."

May 22nd – Update

Mumia Abu-Jamal called on Wednesday night from the day room just outside the prison Infirmary and Prison Radio was there. Of course it was topical, brilliant and searing. You make it possible for his voice to continue soaring over the prison walls. He was returned to SCI Mahanoy late on Tuesday night from the Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania. Yesterday, he was visited by his wife at the prison.

The last week has been rough. We knew he was chained to the bed, in the hospital. We had not seen or spoken to Mumia for many days. For over a week, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections had kept Mumia completely isolated and prevented his family, his doctor, and his attorney from having any contact with him during his entire stay in the hospital.

On Monday May 18th Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law Center and co counsel Robert Boyle filed a Federal Lawsuit challenging the DOC's complete disregard for Mumia Abu-Jamal's constitutional rights. You have made that happen, 824 of you have helped us fund this suit and we have sent \$20,000 to the Abolitionist Law Center.

Just to show you the extent that the Department of Corrections went to prevent anyone from seeing Mumia, let me share this with you. On Saturday, May 16th Dr. Mark Lewis Taylor, attempted to visit Mumia in the hospital, as a spiritual advisor, (He teaches at Princeton Theological Seminary and is co-founder of Educators for Mumia). He was not able to confirm Mumia's presence at Geisinger. He was stopped from even praying for longer than ten minutes in the lobby. Moreover, a chaplain friend called Geisinger to request Mumia receive a visit from the hospital chaplain only to be told "that there was something unique about this case and security would not allow it." Once again, the Mumia exception.

On Monday the 18th, After your calls, letters, and faxes, and French international delegation visits to the hospital, Mumia's wife was finally permitted a fifteen minute phone call with her still hospitalized

husband. Mumia's voice sounded strong, and he indicated he was undergoing a series of diagnostic tests. Mumia remained shackled to the bed at the arms, and his legs were in restraints through his hospital stay. Legs that are sore, bloody, and swollen.

Our one hope, that we have to confirm, is that because Geisinger is a large hospital with rotations of specialists, that the week at the hospital included significant diagnostic testing. Remember, during his initial hospital stay at the Schukill Medical Center in Pottsville, he did not receive specialist care or diagnostic tests such as the CAT Scan or biopsy. Those were done after he was discharged. This is the first time Mumia has had extensive, and hopefully correct, diagnostic treatment. Now we have to get those records and monitor whether or not they did the right tests. Can I say this again? Your calls, your faxes, your witness is the reason they did the tests. Your commitment to his health and his freedom is the reason he will come home well.

On Thursday the 21st, Wadiya Jamal visited Mumia at the prison. He laughed and was warm, but he came out to the visit in a wheelchair. He is still recovering from his near death incident. He still has no diagnosis and no treatment plan. Once we have the medical records (records the prison is being slow to provide) we can have our experts develop a diagnosis and treatment plan. You, dear reader, are going to play a very large role in whether or not Mumia gets the care he needs. Together, with your help, your donations are funding this work. Your calls and actions are the only reason he has had any contact with his family. Please keep your drumbeat of support going. He is reaching out to us with his voice, and we need to keep reaching back in to him.

14 May - Transform Now Plowshare Update

The three Transform Now Plowshares prisoners— Michael Walli, Megan Rice and Greg Boertje-Obed, have been released. We're including several articles about how this came to pass.

MORE:

May 14th - TNP attorneys file motion for immediate release

Everyone seemed to have the same question following the news that the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals had thrown out the sabotage charge against Michael Walli, Megan Rice and Greg Boertje-Obed and vacated the sentences on both the sabotage and the depredation charges. The court noted if the three had been sentenced only on the depredation charge, according to the sentencing guidelines, they would likely have received shorter sentences and would have already served their full time. So the question of the day: When are they getting out?

A fair question—they now are being held in federal prison with no sentence at all.

Within days of the Sixth Circuit's ruling, Judge Amul Thapar, who handled the original case, convened a conference call with the lawyers from both sides. He apparently told them he had not yet been assigned the case, but he wanted to set a schedule in case he was. The result was a July 8 date set for resentencing. (The Court's decision to throw out the sabotage charge and vacate the sentences could be appealed by the prosecutor, a decision we are told would be made not in Knoxville, but in Washington; the feds have two weeks to file a notice of appeal, then as much as 90 days to actually file the appeal, after which the defense gets time to respond, and the feds get more time for a final response—you can see how this would drag out with Greg, Megan and Michael still in prison.

But the case resides still in the Sixth Circuit (Thapar, who is a federal judge in Lexington, Kentucky, originally drew the case because the Knoxville court had a vacancy on the bench; the judge who had been assigned the case had retired; Thapar drew the reassignment. That empty seat in Knoxville has since been filled, so it is not absolutely certain that the case would be remanded to Thapar for re-sentencing.) So, long story short, attorneys for MGM filed a motion with the Sixth Circuit on Thursday, May 15, asking for immediate release.

The Sixth Circuit wasted no time. Within hours, it issued an order requiring the government to respond to the motion for immediate release by noon on Monday, May 18.

That is where things stand at this moment.

May 15th - Sixth circuit orders immediate release of Michael, Megan and Greg

In an amazing turn of events, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals this evening ordered the immediate release of Megan Rice, Michael Walli and Greg Boertje-Obed, the Transform Now Plowshares activists who were serving time in federal prison for their action at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN to protest plans for a new multibillion dollar nuclear bomb plant there.

Things rapidly unfolded this afternoon.

At 4:00pm word came from Bill Quigley, attorney for MGM, that the government had filed a notice that it would not oppose the release of Greg, Michael and Megan pending resentencing. The government's notice was interesting—it included notice to the court that, when resentencing did happen, the government would not be seeking terms of imprisonment greater than the time already served. But, the prosecutor said, the court could not release the defendants unless it determined their were “extraordinary circumstances.” The government's brief went on to note the issues cited by the defendants did not constitute ordinary circumstances. There was a way, though, the government pointed out, under a different statute, and then noted that another court had ruled keeping a defendant unjustly incarcerated beyond the time they would be expected to serve would be an extraordinary circumstance. “We defer to the Sixth Circuit” said the government.

Then, just after 7:00pm this evening, the Sixth Circuit ordered the immediate release of Megan, Greg and Michael on their own recognizance. The order is not available at this time, but the word from Quigley is reliable. In a delightful serendipity, Monday is Greg Boertje-Obed's birthday—with any luck, he will be home to celebrate it with his family!

May 18th - A Nun Walks Free: The Government's Sabotage Case Dismissed

by Eric Schlosser (*The New Yorker*)

On May 16th, three Christian pacifists—Gregory Boertje-Obed, a sixty-year-old housepainter; Michael Walli, a Vietnam veteran in his early sixties; and Sister Megan Rice, an eighty-five-year-old nun who belongs to the Society of the Holy Child Jesus—were suddenly and unexpectedly released from federal prison. They are members of the Plowshares movement, which is devoted to abolishing nuclear weapons and seeking world peace. As I recounted in an article in the magazine, during the summer of 2012 they broke into the Y-12 National Security Complex, in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Y-12 is a nuclear-weapons plant, often referred to as the Fort Knox of Uranium. After cutting through four fences with bolt cutters, evading sophisticated intruder alarms, and eluding armed guards authorized to use lethal force, the three activists reached the Highly Enriched Uranium Materials Facility—a fortified building that contains about nine hundred thousand pounds of weapons-grade uranium. Instead of trying to steal some of the uranium to make a bomb, as terrorists might, they threw blood on the building and spray-painted antiwar slogans on its walls. For this nonviolent act of civil disobedience, they were sent to prison for destroying government property and committing sabotage. The legal decisions that freed them last week were as unprecedented and surprising as the break-in that put them behind bars.

The fact that three people without commando training—let alone a nun, in her eighties, with a minor heart ailment—could get so close to the nation's largest stockpile of weapons-grade uranium caused the Department of Energy a great deal of embarrassment. Although members of Congress thanked Sister Megan for helping to expose major security problems at Y-12, the Justice Department charged her, Walli, and Boertje-Obed with crimes that could bring prison sentences of as long as thirty-five years. After being found guilty by a jury, in May, 2013, Sister Megan was sentenced to three years in prison; Walli and Boertje-Obed to five. Their defense team decided not to appeal the convictions for destroying government

property. The three not only admitted to cutting fences, spraying graffiti on the building, and throwing blood, they were proud of it. And they were willing to spend years in prison on behalf of their beliefs.

The sabotage charge, however, seemed unreasonable. Enacted during the First World War, the Sabotage Act ostensibly aims to prevent enemies of the United States from damaging factories, weapons, and equipment essential to the war effort. But the statute's definition of sabotage is so broad—the “intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of the United States”—that the law has often been used to incarcerate people who protest against the nation's defense policies with civil disobedience. During the nineteen-eighties, one anti-nuclear activist was convicted of sabotage after breaking into a Minuteman missile site, and given a prison sentence of eighteen years. Walli, Boertje-Obed, and Sister Megan believed that nuclear weapons, not the protest against them, posed the real threat to America's national security.

William P. Quigley, a professor of law at Loyola University, in New Orleans, consulted with two young attorneys, Judy Kwan and Marc R. Shapiro, on the appeal of the sabotage convictions. Quigley had been defending peace activists since the late nineteen-eighties, but Kwan and Shapiro were relative newcomers to the field. Employed by the law firm of Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, they spent thousands of hours on the Y-12 case, pro bono, leaving behind the world of patent, copyright, and securities law to immerse themselves in the minutiae of nuclear-weapon production, Catholic pacifism, and the legal theory behind the Sabotage Act.

Jeffrey E. Theodore, an assistant U.S. Attorney, had managed to persuade a jury in Knoxville, Tennessee, that the three Plowshares activists had meant to harm—and indeed, had harmed—the national defense. After the break-in, Y-12 had been shut down for two weeks, delaying a shipment of uranium. Fences there had to be repaired; the security had to be upgraded; guards were diverted from their usual tasks; and the whole thing had harmed the reputation of the United States.

In March, during arguments before a three-judge panel of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, Theodore implied that seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons might even be a form of sabotage. “These are people who have a desire, intent, to disarm, and they are taking action in furtherance of that goal,” he said. Shapiro countered that the sabotage charges were an example of government overreach, and he cited another recent case in which a woman who attempted to poison her husband's mistress was convicted, under an anti-terrorist statute, of using a chemical weapon.

On May 8th, the court of appeals panel issued a two-to-one decision in the Y-12 case. The judge who wrote the opinion was appointed to the court by President George W. Bush; the judge who concurred with it was appointed by President Obama. They threw out the sabotage convictions, and their view of the government's arguments was scathing. “The defendants' actions in this case had zero effect, at the time of their actions or anytime afterwards, on the nation's ability to wage war or defend against attack,” Judge Raymond Kethledge wrote. He criticized the government's “vague platitudes” and the notion that Y-12's guards were in any way diverted from their usual jobs: “responding to intrusions is what guards do.” The court vacated the defendants' prison sentences and sent the case back to the original trial judge for resentencing.

The ruling and its tone surprised Quigley. This was the first time in thirty years that the sabotage conviction of an anti-nuclear protester had been overturned. He thought the decision conveyed a radical message for the federal judiciary: “Peaceful protest isn't sabotage.” And the appeals court noted that the defendants had already served more time in prison than warranted by their conviction for destroying government property. The defense team requested that all three be released while awaiting an appearance before the original trial judge. Assistant U.S. Attorney Theodore offered no objection—another surprise. And, in a highly unusual move, on a Friday evening the court of appeals ordered that three be freed immediately. Sister Megan left the Brooklyn Detention Center the next day. Walli walked out of a medium-security prison in Pennsylvania. And Boertje-Obed was led from his cell at Leavenworth Penitentiary, in Kansas, and put on a bus to meet with a probation officer in Tennessee.

The government has until May 22nd to challenge the appeals court decision. It is now seeking a thirty-day extension of that deadline. The original trial judge has scheduled a resentencing hearing for mid-July. In the meantime, the peace activists, no longer convicted saboteurs, can enjoy freedom after two years behind bars. They are still obligated to pay the government a fine of \$52,953 for the break-in at Y-12. But they took vows of poverty decades ago, don't have bank accounts, and have neither the means nor the intention of paying it.

17 May - Russell Maroon Shoatz Update

The following is a monthly update on the status of U.S.-held political prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz.

MORE:

We're building on the momentum of some recent victories—most notably Maroon's release into the general prison population at SCI Graterford after over 20 years in solitary confinement—and are truly grateful for YOUR support and efforts in helping to expand our network, with the ultimate goal of bringing Maroon home.

In this month's update, find out about Maroon's current cancer treatments, hear from Maroon supporters at a 61st birthday event for fellow political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal in Pittsburgh, and read one of Maroon most recent essays, an assessment of the renewed movement against unchecked police power, entitled "*After Ferguson: Looking Forward and Looking Back.*"

Maroon's Health Update

Maroon continues to journal about the treatment he is receiving through SCI-Graterford. He currently has about 10 treatments left of the 44 he is prescribed. Other than extreme fatigue and a strict diet, Maroon seems to be doing well. He has found some support within the walls, meeting other men who have completed the same treatment for the same cancer, finding camaraderie in sharing information and experiences.

Maroon writes: "My relatives, friends, and supporters are relieved that the treatments that could rid my body of this cancer have finally begun, and I more than anyone (smile). Thanks for all the support, and you can depend on me to follow the instructions given to me by my radiation therapy team in our struggle to rid my body of this cancer."

Spring Maroon Tour Update

On March 28th, we launched the Spring Maroon 2015 Book and Culinary Tour. Throughout the country, Maroon's son, Russell the III, hosted community discussions based on writings in Maroon The Implacable, breaking bread with healthy food, and strategizing around Maroon's recovery from prostate cancer and freedom from prison. From Philly to Denver, Brooklyn to Baltimore, we've had the opportunity to meet and build with some extraordinary activists, discuss the important organizing models and historical lessons Maroon's offered in his book, and recharge our efforts to bring Maroon home. Many thanks and much respect to everyone who came out, and stay tuned for the final few events on the tour, coming up next month in the Bay Area and D.C

The Spring Maroon Tour stopped by Pittsburgh on April 24th to participate in a panel discussion, music and educational sharing on the issues surrounding Mumia's Health, Political Prisoners, Women, and Youth.

Pam Africa was the keynote speaker. Tension was high as we were alerted that evening that Mumia was very ill and not receiving treatment. Please keep in touch with the Campaign to Bring Mumia Home.

"There is no such thing as a dying from natural causes in prison." -Bret Grote of the Abolitionist Law Center.

After Ferguson: Looking Forward and Looking Back

by Russell Maroon Shoatz

Ever since the police killed Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri – closely followed by the killing of Eric Garner in New York, as well as the killing of lesser-known individuals elsewhere – the world has witnessed a new Movement emerging against unchecked police power. We can have no doubt this is an emerging Movement, one that has the potential to qualitatively change our struggles for Human Rights.

Why do I say that? Since the historic Anti-Globalization upheaval that occurred in Seattle, Washington in the late 1990s, followed by the global fight-back against the World Trade Organization and its deadly consolidation of corporate power, the youth of the North have joined hands with the ongoing revolutionary upsurge in country after country in South America. Each in their own way, they have demanded that people and the environment take center stage over corporate profits.

That spirit of resistance led to the coalition that elected Barack Obama as the first Black President of the most powerful nation on the planet. Not only did that coalition propel him into office, the hopes of billions around the world served to energize that effort. Not since the ending of apartheid in South Africa and the election of Nelson Mandela to head of that country had so many felt they were witnessing the anointing of another savior. Indeed until Ferguson many would cling desperately to that illusion.

Alas, in the in-between years, not only had not much changed at home or globally, much had gotten worse: targeted killings, drone strikes, stonewalling on climate change measures, economic suffering, and in the U.S., the “Police State” was exposed in all its horror by wikileaks, Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden, and lesser-known whistle blowers. Much of which the Black and Brown communities were not surprised about, seeing how the militarization of the police in their areas had long ago taken place, all but crushing their spirits; or so it seemed...

After the acquittal of George Zimmerman for killing Trayvon Martin, followed by the gunning down of other Black and Brown youth before the killing of Michael Brown, and nothing being done about those crimes – closely followed by the broadly reported strangling death of Eric Garner by New York’s cops – tens of thousands across the world got out and disrupted business-as-usual, chanting “Hands up, Don’t shoot! Hands up, Don’t Shoot!” interspersed with Eric Garner’s last words: “I can’t breathe; I can’t breathe; I can’t breathe...”

No longer did these multitudes look to President Obama or any other politician to aid them. The murders of Michael Brown and Eric Garner had forced them to act on the rhetoric they had been served up by their silver-tongued “savior”; they became the change they were looking for.

How did they do it? A way to understand the immense changes since Ferguson can be seen operating in SWARM intelligence; a name given to naturally occurring phenomenon amongst insects, fish, humans, and other life forms.

Swarm intelligence is the collective behavior of decentralized, self-organized systems. Agents follow simple rules, and although there is no centralized control structure dictating how individual agents should behave, local – and to a certain degree random – interactions between such agents lead to the emergence of intelligent global behavior, unknown to the individual agents. From the perspective of the mathematical modeler, it is an emergent behavior arising from simple rules that are followed by individuals and does not involve central coordination...

- Move in the same direction as your neighbors
- Remain close to your neighbors
- Avoid collision with your neighbors

“Examples of biological swarming are found in bird flocks, fish schools, insect swarms, bacteria swarms, molds, molecular motors, quadrupled herds, and people... A collection of people can also exhibit swarm behavior, such as pedestrians or soldiers swarming a par pet.” – Wikipedia

Looking back, swarming has long been utilized by humans to resist oppression. Through TV documentaries, most have witnessed the Berlin Wall being demolished by swarming citizens on both sides of that barrier. The racist apartheid police and armed forces of South Africa were endlessly swarmed by resisters, as were all of the regimes in the Middle East. The Palestinian uprisings and the Arab Spring are also examples of recent swarms. We should not fail to remember that in the U.S. during the 1960s and 1970s, the struggles against the war in Vietnam, and against racial, gender, and political oppression led to untold instances of swarming – often misrepresented as “riots” and “looting,” though still adding to the Movement that brought about a number of reforms.

What will allow the swarming techniques so widely adopted since Ferguson to cement themselves as part of a new Movement, and not fizzle out or easily be repressed or co-opted, are two things: Cheap, readily available, and widely utilized communications technologies, coupled with the groundbreaking adoption of that communications capability to stage actions to enforce the rejection of the oppressive status quo, by swarming streets, roadways, bridges, building, and other public facilities, thereby forcing large segments of society to also feel some of the pain that is motivating those swarming. This is a tactic that will prove extremely hard to eradicate – short of addressing some of their main concerns.

It’s ironic that since Ferguson there is still a segment of this new Movement that continues to nostalgically utilize tactics and methods from the past, in the teeth of facts that point to the reality that those tactics did not and could not prove as effective as the swarming methods already being widely used are showing, regarding a clear potential – with room for growth – for a LEAP towards a strategic breakthrough.

For one, the old charismatic leadership style has lost most of its relevancy, simply because modern communication in so many hands effects a form of mass democracy. Meaning: information, ideas, proposals, and plans can rapidly be shared – then just as quickly modified, agreed upon, adopted, and acted on – something the charismatic leaders of the past excelled at, and used to more rapidly organize people to achieve results than the slower-to-communicate masses at the time. Not anymore.

Since Ferguson the global swarming activities have been the products of too many “leaders” to know of! Nowadays if you have a good enough idea, proposal, or plan of action, through the democracy of modern communication, it can readily be accepted, modified, and implemented, leaving less of a need for the charismatic leadership style.

Then the swarming of the 1960s and 1970s in the U.S also suffered a great deal from a means of rejecting the status quo that at the same time did great harm to the oppressed’s own interests. Thus when the “Long Hot Summers” of rebellions (swarming) from that period degenerated into the wholesale torching of parts of lower class communities, “Burn Baby Burn” became the mantra and practice of those who rejected the slower and, in many, many instances, more painful and demeaning nonviolent civil disobedience campaigns led by Martin Luther King.

Since Ferguson, however, untold thinkers have devised ways to utilize modern communication to bring together masses of people to enforce a halt to business-as-usual, while still being able to avoid mass arrests, or the destruction of their communities, and being able to withdraw with their numbers having struck blows for their causes and still strong enough to continue the efforts at another time and location – something that is easily grasped by the participants, as well as many, many others who previously saw no way to accomplish such things, meaning the initiative remains in their hands, while a backlash from those who are wedded to the status quo is inevitable.

At this stage, a weakness of this new movement is its failure to formulate and push forward intermediate goals – winnable objectives that can be accomplished so that the participants acquire things to “Hang Their Hats On,” as the more deep-rooted causes of injustices will take a long time to uproot.

In the meantime, be confident that this new Movement’s ability to utilize modern communications and the democracy that affords, along with its breakthroughs in developing and utilizing brilliant new tactics that render the status quo unworkable (even temporarily), gives it “legs” that no movement of comparable breadth in a long time has enjoyed.

There is still much that needs to be done, but let’s not try to win this round by believing that certain tactics that were used in the past are superior to what we are witnessing right now. And if you don’t believe your own eyes ... then I can’t help you!

Reject the Status Quo! Non-Cooperation With Oppression! Human Rights Now!

17 May - Robert Seth Hayes Health Update

Seth’s wife Sheila had a trailer visit with him on the weekend of May 9th and 10th and states he cannot lie down for any long period of time, including to sleep, because he feels like he cannot breathe. He still has a dry cough, which makes him feel like he is choking.

MORE:

I spoke with Seth Sunday May 17, and he explained that one of the reasons he feels that he can't breathe is because he has what feels almost like a protusion in the upper left quadrant of his abdomen.

He says that to the left and directly above his navel, his abdomen is swollen and this is pressing on his diaphragm, making it hard for him to breathe.

We really have to do everything possible. They never did rule out cancer for the weight loss in the campaign we started at the beginning of last year.

May 19th - Seth Hayes’ Health Continues to Deteriorate due to Medical Neglect

Seth’s medical condition continues to worsen, and he has not been evaluated or treated for potentially life-threatening symptoms despite following formal medical care request procedures within the prison. Because the medical staff at the prison and Health Services of the Department of Correction continue to neglect his medical needs despite numerous calls from concerned medical providers and other citizens, we urge both Commissioner Annucci and Governor Cuomo to exercise oversight and see to it that Seth finally receives proper medical care.

Please call:

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo at 518.474.8390 x2

Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci, NYS Department of Corrections at 518.457.8134

Please fax (you can use a free online fax service like faxzero.com if needed):

Governor Cuomo at Fax: 518.486.4466

Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci at Fax: 518.457.0076

Suggested talking points

State who you are calling about and include his prisoner #: Robert Seth Hayes, #74-A-2280, at Sullivan Correctional Facility;

Say that you are requesting oversight of the medical team at Sullivan and DOCC Health Services as well as:

- 1) an immediate work-up of his cough and shortness of breath;
- 2) an assessment of his weight loss to have potential malignancies ruled out;

3) modification of his insulin regimen to better control his diabetes and prevent low blood sugars; and
4) a physician's order for a diabetic diet.

Please email nycjericho@gmail.com and let us know what response you receive so that it can be given to Seth's legal team.

17 May - A Message From Leonard Peltier

Leonard Peltier asks that his supporters please assist Roselyn Jumping Bull's family with their funeral expenses. If you wish to send a check or money order, please mail to Yvonne Long Visitor (Roselyn's daughter), 127 Pinedale Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota 57701. You may also donate online, at <http://www.gofundme.com/urdk4g>

MORE:

It is always hard to accept the passing of our elders, especially when it is one who has spent so many years of their life fighting for their People's survival.

For me, Roselyn's passing is very difficult because I knew her personally. She was a great friend, a loyal fighter, and a tireless supporter of my freedom. I loved her and I certainly will miss her very much.

Roselyn fought hard in dangerous times. America was at the point of exterminating Native People, The Termination Act was full speed forward in 1958 and she was in the thick of it. It could have been the end for our Peoples. THERE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ANY MORE RESERVATIONS, NO more Native Lands, NO more native Nations and, in time, no more native Peoples. All there would have been is just very short mention of Native Peoples disappearing. In the 50's, they began to call US THE VANISHING AMERICANS. Their plan was simple termination. This is an old idea that started way back in the 1700's, a long time plan started by the British, and the end result would have been we would be gone. The Nations would have been gone and the People relocated where they would intermarry with the outsiders. Over time, our blood line would have been gone. This is what assimilation is all about and Roselyn fought to protect us from it.

And, so we fought and in many ways we won. Our Nations are still here. Our Peoples still breathe the air of life. Roselyn played her part in it and it was a huge.

I know the Oglalas are very proud of Roselyn as I am, and I join you in praying for a safe journey for her, and that she'll find her family and friends and be happy. I know that she will.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse.

19 May - The Barrett Brown Review of Arts and Letters and Jail: This Prison Is Kind of Corrupt

Here's the latest from Barrett Brown, which (due to space limitations) does not include a lot of internal links from the original internet version.

MORE:

Last time I noted that the prison administration here at Federal Correctional Institution Fort Worth had cut off my access to the inmate email system shortly after I sent a message to another journalist about wrongdoing by Bureau of Prisons staff, thus providing us with a fine opportunity by which to see how the BOP really operates as I take my case up through the agency ranks via a charmingly baroque complaint procedure known as the Administrative Remedy Process. There have been some telling new developments on that front that I'll relate by and by, but it would be remiss of me not to first say a few words about the prison itself, and fuck if I'm going to leave myself open to accusations of being remiss.

FCI Fort Worth is unusual among U.S. prisons in that it wasn't built within the Nixon-Obama era of frantic hyper-incarceration, but rather way back in the 1930s or thereabouts. As such, it's not done up in that interchangeable, two-tier, stainless-steel-everything, Late Empire style common to most American penal

institutions, but instead consists of a collection of fenced-in brick buildings that once served as a military hospital. This gives the place some character. What it doesn't give it is adequate space or sanitation. I hereby present a June 2012 inspection report by the Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, a copy of which was recently obtained by another inmate via a Freedom of Information Act request, and which details several instances in which this prison has failed to comply with the agency's minimum standards for humane housing of inmates. Although each occupant is officially entitled to 25 square feet of unencumbered space, residents of Building 2 are listed as having 23, while those in Building 4 have only 21. The report also notes that "[t]he ratio of washbasins to inmates is 1:18 and the standard requires it to be 1:8." Likewise, "[t]he standard requires a shower to inmate ratio of 1:8. The facility has a ratio of 1:17."

For each of these shortfalls, FCI Fort Worth had a boilerplate explanation as to why its failure to meet the basic standards was actually not a problem at all. Weirdly citing the institution's "management philosophy," an unnamed prison emissary sees fit to note, with relevance to the sanitation issue that may not be immediately obvious to the layman, that "religious activities are available seven days a week, including evenings" and that "[a]ll staff are trained for and practice effective communication skills" (those who recall the bellicose and marginally literate rules listings I relayed last time may be inclined to dispute this claim, as would presumably the group of black inmates who complained last summer after the notoriously deranged Lt. Christie suggested to them that their mothers may very well have been "crack hos"). For good measure, this mystery administrator — whose name was redacted by the FOIA folks — goes on to claim that "[a]ll medically able, sentenced inmates are required to work (except those who, for security or educational purposes, are unable to do so) and do so on average seven hours per day," which, thank God, is not anything close to being true — and, again, it's not terribly clear why any such slave labor program would necessarily relieve the need for adequate showering facilities even were it something other than a bizarre lie. Finally, we're told, "the facility does not experience waiting lines" for showers; this, too, may be easily confirmed as outright fiction by, say, waiting in line for the showers, as I've been doing every day since arrival.

Still, misrepresentation is the precious lubricant that keeps the engine of state running smoothly. In each of these three instances, the institution requested a waiver for its failure to meet the minimum standards. All three waivers were happily granted. In a fourth instance — that of failure to comply with Standard 4-4129 by exceeding "the maximum allowable inmate population as based on the Standards Compliant Bed Capacity (SCBC) formula" — the commission simply notes, rather demurely, that "Standard 4-4129 was deleted from the standards by the Standards Committee in July 2012," which certainly solves that problem! Recall that the inspection itself was conducted in June 2012. Recall it and smile.

But even amidst a regulatory environment marked by the liberal granting of waivers based on demonstrable falsehoods coupled with the hilariously timed revocation of basic requirements, FCI Fort Worth still can't comply with the nation's minimum institutional standards. Although the matter for some reason goes uncommemorated in the 2012 report, the prison is also very much short on toilets. For strategic reasons, I will leave the specifics and relevant documentation for another day (strategy is always a factor when one is dealing with corrupt and vindictive officials who are effectively above the law, so it's good that I had several years of practice with the DOJ).

New inmates like me must undergo all manner of bureaucratic rigmarole. Shortly after arrival, I had to have blood drawn for an AIDS test. Two weeks later, I had to have blood drawn for another AIDS test because, I was told, they never quite got around to testing the first batch of blood for AIDS. Two weeks after that, the exact same thing happened. This is all in addition to the previous two BOP-administered AIDS tests I've had to undergo in as many years, and I never got the results for those either. So I'm getting very, uh, frequent medical care.

Last month, I had to take a high school placement test because the BOP has no record of my having a high school diploma. They have no record of this because the probation department staffer who prepared my pre-sentencing report for the court, Edith Foster, claims not to have been able to confirm that I have a high school diploma, even though she could indeed confirm that I briefly attended the University of Texas — admission to which, of course, requires a high school diploma. Foster also couldn't confirm my

employment with *The Guardian*, even though the prosecutor, Candina Heath, once famously complained about an article I'd just written for *The Guardian* that she denounced as "critical of the government" and thus necessitating a gag order, and thus one might assume my authorship of *Guardian* articles to be a matter of record. Foster also stated as fact that the money for my legal defense came from my parents, when in fact the vast majority of it came from public donations — another matter of public record, one would suppose, since the prosecution attempted to seize those funds for reasons she never quite managed to articulate. Elsewhere in the report — which the government has wisely kept sealed — Foster notes that I was charged with 11 counts of aggravated identity theft for copying and pasting a link but does not see fit to mention that those were dropped after we filed a motion to dismiss, pointing out the charges were based on an exquisitely surreal misreading of the law. Again, the fact that all three of these things made headlines at home and abroad and were furthermore a matter of court record did not seem to interest Foster, who on the other hand was more than willing to include as fact a series of long-discredited FBI claims and went on to recommend that I be sentenced to 16 years. In the federal justice system, one's Fourth Amendment right to due process is treated with all the gravity of a BOP AIDS test. Anywho, my alleged failure to complete high school puts me at a higher prison security custody level than is supposed to be the case, but then if they'd refrained from screwing me over on something like that, I'd probably have had a shock-induced heart attack, in which case I'd no doubt be dragged back over to the prison's medical unit for a series of emergency AIDS tests.

In all seriousness, I suspect that the government is using all of this blood they keep taking from me to construct a golem.

Just a month after I got here, I had to attend a sort of pre-release class. One might wonder why, seeing as how I have two more years left on my sentence. The answer is that over-sentencing is so endemic to the federal system that two years is actually regarded as being just around the corner, relatively speaking, a state of affairs that's thanks in large part to people like Edith Foster.

By far the most strangely captivating of these prison initiation events, though, was the orientation seminar that a couple dozen of us had to attend not long ago. This consisted largely of short speeches by the heads of the prison's various divisions, which were sort of like TED talks, except that useful information was occasionally imparted and no one seemed to be promoting any books. The event was capped off with a 10-minute film clip centered on BOP director Charles Samuels Jr., and which may very well have been one of the most poorly executed pieces of video to come out of a First World country in two generations. I'd describe some of the garish and archaic special effects to which the BOP saw fit to subject us, but I'm unfamiliar with the necessary terminology, never having attended any video production courses at some rural Midwestern community college circa 1986 (not that Edith Foster would have put it in my pre-sentencing report anyway). More jarring was Samuels himself, who gives off the disturbing impression of not being entirely cogent of what he himself is saying at any given moment; whether regaling us with tales of the prison system's allegedly ubiquitous educational offerings or threatening swift and sure retribution to those who break the rules in imitation of his own criminal underlings, the fellow utters everything in the same stilted cadence and without ever changing facial expressions. As this awkward monologue proceeds, it becomes more and more difficult to avoid the conclusion that some extraterrestrial has implanted a biomechanical cortex control pod into Samuels' brain stem and is now using him as an organic puppet by which to advance the incomprehensible socio-theological agenda of the Alpha Centaurians and their Transcended God-Emperor, although I'll admit it's also possible that the head of the BOP is just half a retard. Either way, we could easily replace him with one of our own FCI Fort Worth staffers, whose "effective communication skills" are reputed to be so great as to actually reduce the need for showers and sinks, much as European kings of old could heal skin disease with a mere touch. I nominate Lt. "Cicero" Christie for his still-celebrated oration "On the Strong Possibility of Your Mothers Having Been Employed as Crack Whores."

Let us conclude with an update on the ongoing retaliation by the administration for my efforts to bring public attention to the criminal conduct and poor grammar perpetuated by certain of its deranged and unattractive employees. Here [contents of link omitted due to limited space] you will find a copy of the BP-

8 form I submitted in mid-April after my email was shut off by some toy fascist member of the SIA internal affairs division named Terence Moore after I'd contacted the journalist, and here [contents of link omitted due to limited space] is my attached account of the details in which I point out that this particular instance of illegal retaliation also happens to violate sacred BOP policy. And although I don't address it in these filings, the fact that a BOP employee who is ostensibly on hand to investigate violations of procedure by prison staff is instead spending his time violating procedure in order to better cover up still other violations of procedure by prison staff is certainly interesting. I should also point out for the record that Moore wears a stupid fucking derby cap to work every day and clearly feels no shame in doing so.

And here is Moore's response [contents of link omitted due to limited space]. Note that he doesn't deny that he engaged in retaliation or that he failed to provide me with a written reason for my loss of email, but instead rather bizarrely decides to quote the very portion of the guidelines, detailing that very requirement, of which he is in most explicit violation. AND MAY ALL MANKIND BEAR WITNESS THAT THIS DEGENERATE HAT MONSTER FAILS TO PROPERLY CLOSE THE QUOTATION, WHICH IS TO SAY THAT HE CANNOT EVEN COPY-PASTE SOMETHING WITHOUT FUCKING UP THE GRAMMAR SOMEHOW.

Finally, here [contents of link omitted due to limited space] is the BP-9 form that I submitted on April 30 to the prison's Administrative Remedy coordinator, Mr. McKinney, who is supposed to enter it into the system immediately up receiving it and then provide a receipt to the inmate, at which point the clock starts ticking on the 20 days the prison has in which to respond, as laid out in the BOP's own Administrative Remedy Program Statement dated January 6, 2014. As of May 10 I have yet to receive any such receipt. But a few days after I turned in the BP-9, I just happened to be the only inmate on my 300-man unit to be given a "random" drug test, which, if not quite constituting a receipt in the traditional sense, at least serves as confirmation that the administration is aware of the problem and is now taking steps to "solve" it, after a fashion.

Also note the superhuman restraint and maturity I displayed while preparing this form by refraining from demanding weekend visitation rights with the blood golem.

24 May - Sekou Kambui Needs Our Help

The following is from former political prisoner Sekou Kambui. Post-release support is part of this work and deserves the same priority as the rest of it. Please carefully read how to help.

MORE:

I'm One (1) year as a formerly incarcerated Political Prisoner!

For me, this is an irregular solicitation: uncharacteristic of me, but emphatically necessary under the circumstances. It behooves me to say in the most direct and simple, clear and distinct words possible, I'm hurting financially, and need some support, loving kindness, solidarity, and some support from any and all that feel so inclined to assist me. To send me a much needed check or money order, do so care of:

sekou kambui/william turk
Post Office Box 195
Dothan, Alabama 36301

However, first and foremost, permit me give articulation again, to those who contributed to my support upon my release, your caring and loving support helped me get a home, (rented, of course), furnishing for it to the point it looks kind of cute inside / out.

Since my release from behind enemy lines on June 30 2014, I've had to lean on family and friends to survive financially. The government refuses to grant me "DISABILITY"...says, since I've never worked a job out of prison, i'm ineligible for anything but SSI for retiring? How do you retire if you've never worked? I have worked everyday for over 50 years in prison, many times on three or more jobs: chapel and

law clerk, hospice worker, paralegal adviser, social worker and counselor with my group Social Consciousness development group, paralegal adviser, computer literacy aide/teacher, and such like. But never worked for the STATE, HUH? who runs the prison if not the STATE?

The state refuses me disability, even as it appears they didn't adequately describe my health status; they said I had acquired "anemia," when in fact, what I had acquired was a golf-ball sized tumor in my colon at the joining of my lower intestine, causing me to lose weight and not "anemia."

Since that discovery, I've now contracted congested heart failure, hypertension, some stage of Hepatitis, and they still refuse me food stamps to supplement the insufficient SSI Check, that is gone once rent, utilities, internet fees, and groceries are deducted.

This brings me to this point:

Should you be willing to extend some much needed financial support; it will be emphatically appreciated w/ love.

Should you not feel so inclined, you'll still be loved as a friend to me. Loved and Appreciated: UNCONDITIONALLY!

SINCERELY YOURS,
Sekou Kambui

30 May - March and Rally for Oscar López Rivera

WHAT: March For Oscar

WHEN: 11:00am, Saturday, May 30th

WHERE: Assemble at 125th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard

COST: FREE

MORE:

On Saturday, May 30th, we are organizing over 5 thousand people to gather in New York City for "A Day For Oscar López Rivera," a march and rally to demand the release of Puerto Rican activist and icon Oscar López Rivera, a 72-year-old decorated Vietnam veteran who on May 29th begins his 34th year in prison despite having never been charged with any violent crime. He has served 12 of those years in complete, total isolation.

A broad coalition of church, community, labor and civic organizations has come together to plan and support this unprecedented mobilization. This support includes: Nobel Prize winners, governors, senators, celebrated artists and people from across the political and religious spectrum. The coalition has already accomplished a great deal, from turning out a huge contingent of supporters at the National Puerto Rican Day Parade—which was dedicated to Oscar's freedom—to launching a highly successful social and digital media campaign to amplify the calls for his release. But we need your help to take this movement to the next step and to turn out as many people as possible on May 30th.

From donations to passing out leaflets, from Facebook to phone banking, there are countless ways you can help this grassroots campaign grow powerful enough to bring Oscar home.

Support for his freedom continues to grow— in Puerto Rican communities in the U.S., in Puerto Rico, and internationally.

More information at <http://freeoscarnycmay30.org>

May 29th - National Call in Day for Oscar López Rivera
CALL OBAMA AND DEMAND OSCAR'S RELEASE!

Former Political Prisoner Rafael Cancel Miranda endorses this month's National Call in Day. Read his statement below!

I, wholeheartedly, join all of those who demand the U.S. government release of Puerto Rican patriot Oscar López Rivera, who is the honor of the Puerto Rican people and to all those who respect justice and human dignity. The Puerto Rican Patriot Oscar López Rivera has dedicated his life to fighting against colonial slavery. It is the duty of everyone, who respects himself, to fight for the liberation of Oscar, who would fight for our own release from the colonial prison. Thank you all, who in one way or another are part of this struggle for the liberation of a brother who honors us all.

Make your phone call on Friday May 29th for Oscar López Rivera!

Rafael Cancel Miranda
FORMER
Political Prisoner

Inspired by the “5th of every month for the Cuban 5” campaign and the 33 x Oscar initiative in Puerto Rico, The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign has decided to dedicate the 29th of every month to Oscar López Rivera! On the 29th of each month, we’re asking all our allies and supporters to CALL THE WHITE HOUSE AND DEMAND THE RELEASE OF PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL PRISONER OSCAR LÓPEZ RIVERA! Call President Obama at **202.456.1111** and leave a message! Let him know that Oscar López Rivera has been in prison for too long and deserves to go home! We need to flood the voice mail with our united demands for freedom!

6 Jun - Victory Bus Project Rides

Victory Bus Project is a project of the Freedom Food Alliance and the VROOM Bus Cooperative. The name comes from Herman Bell’s Victory Garden’s Project, where farmers in Maine grew organic vegetables to be distributed for FREE in the Bronx, Brooklyn and parts of New Jersey. Herman Bell continues to inspire the work we do from inside the prison walls.

MORE:

The goal of this project is to provide affordable transportation for families in urban areas going to visit their love one’s in rural prisons for a box of fresh fruits and vegetables, making farm produce accessible. During the rides we engage families on how we collectively address the prison industrial complex and food sovereignty. Pushing folks to demand FARMS NOT PRISONS.

Pick up’s are available in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Westchester. Servicing 15 prisons in the Hudson Valley.

NEXT SCHEDULED TRIPS:

Saturday June 6th and Sunday June 7th - Sing Sing, Bedford Hills, and Taconic

Saturday June 13th and Sunday June 14th - Sullivan, Woodbourne, Eastern and Ulster

Saturday June 20th and Sunday June 21st - Green Haven, Downstate, Fishkill Wallkill and Shawangunk

Saturday June 27th and Sunday June 28th - Greene, Coxsackie and HudsonPage