



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for November 8th

21 Oct - Democracy Now! feature on remaining Panther PPs

50 years after the founding of the Black Panther Party, some members are still locked up as political prisoners.

MORE:

(Democracy Now!)

As the Black Panther Party marks its 50th anniversary we revisit two decades of *Democracy Now!* interviews with members who were released from prison, in many cases after tortured confessions, wrongful convictions, and longterm solitary confinement. We also report on those still behind bars.

Political prisoners are part of the Black Panther Party legacy. Some former members have been behind bars 40 years. In some cases, court documents show they were punished essentially for being in the Black liberation struggle. Many continue face parole board denials based on their relationship with the party. Perhaps the most famous political prisoner in the United States, Mumia Abu-Jamal is a former Panther who has regularly been interviewed on *Democracy Now!* as an award-winning journalist. Learn about the others below.

Two former Black Panthers have died behind bars this year.

Abdul Majid was serving a 33-years to life sentence for the 1981 death of NYPD officer John Scarangella, and attempted murder of his partner. The incident occurred during a shoot-out after police stopped a van they said was linked to Assata Shakur's escape from prison. The suspects escaped but Majid was later arrested and brutally beaten, along with Bashir Hameed. Known as the "Queens Two," they faced three trials over five years before being convicted under a judge who was the son and brother of a police officer.

In February, *Buzzfeed News* published an in-depth report on Omaha Black Panther leaders Edward Poindexter and Mondo we Langa, who were sentenced to life in prison for a bombing that killed police officer Larry Minard even as they maintained their innocence. Langa died the next month after 45 years behind bars. Poindexter is reportedly in poor health. He was denied parole in 2014, and won't be considered again until he is 79-years-old. The case has been the subject of several investigative documentaries over the years by Channel 4, community TV and KPFK.

Many consider Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald the longest held Black Panther political prisoner. In 1969 he was convicted of attempted murder of a police officer during a traffic stop shoot-out in which he was shot in the head but survived, as well as the murder of a security guard in a separate case based on flimsy evidence. It was the same year the FBI's J. Edgar Hoover declared "the Black Panther Party... represents the greatest threat to internal security of the country." Fitzgerald suffered a stroke while in prison. Despite his medical condition he has been repeatedly denied parole despite California's push to release people over age 65 who serve 25+ years.

Jalil Muntaqim and Herman Bell are serving 25-years to life in prison for the death of NYPD officers Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini. They were members of the Black Liberation Army, an offshoot of the Black Panthers, and their parole has been successfully opposed by the Fraternal Order of Police, the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and the New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association. In 1976, Muntaqim helped petition the United Nations to recognize the existence of political prisoners in the United States. Bell recently wrote about the Black Panther Party's 50th anniversary.

Some former Black Panthers have been arrested and convicted of decades-old crimes, such as Kamau Sadiki.

Sadiki was in Atlanta with fellow former Black Panther Party members when Fulton County police officer James Greene was found dead in his car in 1973. Sadiki was released when witnesses failed to identify him in a photo line-up and no physical evidence implicated him. The case went unsolved until Sadiki was arrested on an unrelated charge, and in 2003 was sentenced to life in prison for the murder. This came after he refused to help recapture Assata Shakur, with whom he has a daughter.

Almost all former Panthers are repeatedly denied parole...

Many elderly former Panthers are denied parole because of their political beliefs and actions even though they have excellent behavior records and pose no threat to public safety. One example is 79-year-old Sundiata Acoli. Earlier this year a court overturned a 2014 order for the New Jersey parole board to “expeditiously set conditions” for his release. Acoli was convicted of killing state trooper Werner Foerster in 1973 during a shootout along with fellow Panthers Zayd Malik Shakur, who was also killed, and Assata Shakur, who has said she was shot by police with both arms in the air, and then again from the back. She later escaped to Cuba.

This is how Acoli described his June 6, 2016 New Jersey Parole Board hearing: "They questioned me primarily about the events on the turnpike and almost nothing about my many positive accomplishments. They also asked: 'Aren't you angry that they broke Assata out of prison instead of you?' My response was: 'No, I don't or wouldn't wish prison on anyone.'"

Another former Panther, Veronza Bowers, was granted release by the U.S. Parole Commission in 2004, after he served 30 years of his life sentence. But it was blocked by then U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales at the request of police. In 2011, a federal appeals court found that a parole official improperly worked to keep him behind bars by secretly handing over information to Justice Department officials. Bowers was convicted of killing park ranger Kenneth Patrick in 1973, and has maintained his innocence, saying he was framed by paid government witnesses.

Many Panthers have endured longterm solitary confinement because of their political activity...

In July, former Black Panther Russell “Maroon” Shoatz won a major settlement and permanent reprieve from solitary in a case that challenged his treatment as cruel and unusual. "I was infantilized for so long," Shoatz testified. Now aged 70, he was sentenced to life in prison for an attack on a Philadelphia police station that left officer Frank Von Coln dead in 1970. In 1983 he was put in solitary confinement for several years after becoming president of the Pennsylvania Association of Lifers, and again in 1991 for 22 consecutive years. Shoatz describes having “approximately 84 square feet of floor space” in his restrictive housing unit cell, but “the presence of the steel bunk, and toilet diminished the actual area wherein one could walk” to about 58 square feet. His lights remained on at all times, and he was strip-searched each time he left his cell for an hour a day.

Imprisoned Panthers suffer more health problems as they age...

In New York, Robert Seth Hayes has Type II diabetes, shortness of breath and a mass in his abdomen. He has been denied parole repeatedly since 1998. The Vietnam veteran was sentenced to 25 years to life for the murder of transit officer Sidney Thompson during a shootout in the Bronx. Police arrested him by opened fire on his apartment while he was inside with his wife and child. Read an interview with Hayes about his time as a Black Panther.

Others linked to the Black Panthers who are still behind bars...

include Ruchell Cinque Magee, who has been in prison more than 50 years and was politicized there. He participated in the attempted liberation of political prisoner George Jackson during the Marin County Courthouse Rebellion in 1970.

Mutulu Shakur was indicted in 1986 on charges related to robberies in New York and Connecticut. In the 1960s he worked closely with the Black Panthers and later with the Revolutionary Action Movement and the Republic of New Afrika.

Former Black United Front member Ronald Reed was convicted of the 1970 shooting of St. Paul police officer James Sackett 25 years after the killing. Prosecutors presented no murder weapon, eyewitness to the shooting, or physical evidence tying Reed to the shooting. In a 2005 trial they argued Reed had sought to impress national Black Panther leaders by killing a white cop.

While in Rikers, Maliki Shakur Latine met Lumumba Shakur, one of the Black Panther 21, and was active with the Panthers upon his release. Two years later he was arrested after a shootout, tried to escape, and was caught and sentenced to 25 to life. A court overturned Latine's conviction in 1993 and ordered a new trial, but New York appealed. The second circuit reversed the decision, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear any further appeal.

As recently as 2002...

former Black Panther Party Minister of Justice Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap Brown, was found guilty of murder for a 2000 shooting that killed Fulton County sheriff deputy Ricky Kinchen near Atlanta, where Al-Amin had moved after converting to Islam to open a small grocery store. According to his wife and attorney, the prosecutor of the case said: "After 24 years we've finally gotten him."

24 Oct - Report by PP Jalil Muntaqim on Disciplinary Hearing

Finally, NYC Jericho received Jalil's October 7, 2016 report on the Disciplinary Hearing via another correspondent of Jalil's in Buffalo.

MORE:

APARTHEID ATTICA

The Silencing of a Political Prisoner

On September 23, 2016, I was placed in keeplock status for reasons unknown. On September 24, 2016, I was issued a Tier III misbehavior report that has been posted. It generally charged I was engaging in unauthorized organization for suggesting that a Critical Resistance correspondent contact and support the IamWe Prison Advocacy Network initiative to organize the Millions for Prisoners March on Washington for August 2017. The disciplinary hearing commenced on September 26, 2016, and during the course of the hearing I learned I had been under investigation and mail watch. To this date no one has informed me what prompted the investigation or exactly what was being investigated. What has been learned is that my correspondence is being censored; some mail is not being sent out of the facility, some has been sent out opened after I had sealed them, and I have not received mail from correspondents. Attica correspondence department is violating specific regulations and procedures in Directive #4422, which explains what is to happen when the Superintendent decides to order a mail watch, etc. As of this writing, I do not know what mail I am actually receiving or what letters are being sent out of the facility.

The disciplinary hearing was completed on October 7, 2016. After a vigorous argument on the merits of the disciplinary report, the charges were dismissed on a technicality. Since the disciplinary hearing did not commence within 7 days after being placed in keeplock status, there was a violation of Chapter V § 251.5. However, it was learned that I had been under investigation and there had been an ongoing mail watch. It was argued that violated Rule 105.14, which states:

"An inmate shall not engage in or encourage others to engage in unauthorized organizational activities or meetings or possess printed or handwritten material related to any unauthorized organization where such material advocates either expressly or by clear implication, violence based on race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, creed, law enforcement status or violence or acts of disobedience against department employees or that could facilitate organizational activity within the institution by an unauthorized organization."

The Rule also states: "For purposes of this rule, an unauthorized organization is any organization which has not been approved by the Deputy Commissioner for Program Services."

While I readily agree with the substance of this rule, the problem is the vague condition in the identifying of an unauthorized organization. This is especially complicated when no list exists that identifies approved or unapproved authorized organizations. During the disciplinary hearing, I was told that any organization that is not registered in New York State or approved by DOCCS is unauthorized, and prisoners are prohibited from communicating or corresponding with them. Since the disciplinary charge was resolved on a technicality, the substance of the charge was not addressed. Therefore, I sent a letter to DOCCS Commissioner Anthony Annucci. A similar letter was sent to Attica Superintendent Dale Artus.

Since this issue does not affect only me, it is imperative that legal representatives and prison activists recognize this problem severely limits prisoners' First Amendment rights of free speech. This issue must be addressed and resolved to preserve a fundamental constitutional guarantee and prohibit the silencing of prisoners' speech, including political speech.

I want to thank all those who wrote and called in support of my efforts to defeat these charges. It is my hope the unintentional consequences of the efforts to curtail my correspondence result in increased support of IamWe Prisoner Advocacy Network's exercise of their constitutional right to assemble in opposition to mass incarceration.

October 24th - Blog #38: Kaepernick's Protest

"They were peace men; but they preferred revolution to peaceful submission to bondage. They were quiet men; but they did not shrink from agitating against oppression. They showed forbearance; but that they knew its limits. They believed in order; but not in the order of tyranny. With them, nothing was 'settled' that was not right. With them, justice, liberty and humanity were 'final;' not slavery and oppression. You may well cherish the memory of such men. They were great in their day and generation. Their solid manhood stands out the more as we contrast it with these degenerate times."

Quote from: "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" An address delivered in Rochester, New York, on July 5, 1852 by Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass made these observations of the Founding Fathers of this country while protesting the idea of the 4th of July when the country suffered Afrikan chattel slavery. As many know, Frederick Douglass had been in chattel bondage, escaped from slavery and struggled to become the country's foremost abolitionist. In this quote, Douglass exclaims the Founding Fathers, in his understanding, opposed the existence of slavery as they sought to establish their own sovereignty from British imperialist power. Douglass' reflection on the Founding Fathers during his protest of the 4th of July lends an enduring reality to today's protests: "we contrast it with these degenerate times."

Colin Kaepernick's protest, not standing for the National Anthem, reminded me of Frederick Douglass' statement on July 5, 1852, that spoke volumes as to why honor a holiday or a symbol of the nation when the nation fails to live up to its creed. Kaepernick's protest is not unique for an athlete; as we know, Black athletes have often protested racial injustice, from Kurt Flood to Jackie Robinson and Muhammad Ali, etc. None had become so symbolic as the 1968 Olympic protest in Mexico by Tommie Smith and John Carlos (note: As a student at Overfelt High School in San Jose, California, I was tutored in math by John Carlos).

However, what is important to contrast between Kaepernick's and Douglass' protests, as existed in the times of Douglass concerning slavery, Kaepernick needs to be reminded that slavery still exists today.

As I've often written concerning the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, it enshrines the institution of penal involuntary servitude and slavery. Obviously, it is possible the so-called Founding Fathers did not imagine that 240 years after independence from England, slavery would be codified in the U.S. Constitution. President Thomas Jefferson (a slave owner), in March 1807, signed a law "to prohibit the importation of slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States." Unfortunately, that congressional act failed to prevent the continued trafficking of Afrikan slaves to the U.S., and it was not until the civil war forced President Abraham Lincoln, in 1865, to sign into law the 13th Amendment to end chattel slavery. Essentially, the 13th Amendment prohibited individuals to own and profit from Afrikan slavery. However, it institutionalized involuntary servitude and slavery, permitting the State and Federal governments to engage in this "degenerate" practice.

"Would you have me argue that man is entitled to liberty? That he is the rightful owner of his own body? You have already declared it. Must I argue the wrongfulness of slavery? Is that a question for Republicans? Is it to be settled by the rules of logic and argumentation, as a matter beset with great difficulty, involving a doubtful application of the principle of justice, hard to be understood? How should I look today, in the presence of Americans, dividing, and subdividing a discourse, to show that men have a natural right to freedom? Speaking of it relatively, and positively, negatively, and affirmatively. To do so, would be to make myself ridiculous, and to offer an insult to your understanding. There is not a man beneath the canopy of heaven, that does not know that slavery is wrong for him."

Could not the same be said of Kaepernick's protest given the rash of police killings, the wave of injustices Black men, in particular, have experienced via the criminal justice system, ushering them into a system of slavery? And yet, protest we must to ensure not only national dialogue on the pervasive issue of racial injustice, but the need to build national organizations to force institutional and structural changes in government and governing. When we collectively come to terms that this struggle is a continuing process in a national revolutionary determination, we will give full support to those like Kaepernick who "get it", those who are prepared to put their careers on the line, put their money where their mouth is, and simply challenge the nation to recognize that slavery in all of its forms is inhumane. That "We the People" pursuant to the Jeffersonian doctrine, have an absolute right to rebel against government tyranny.

25 Oct - Political Prisoner and former Black Panther Seth Hayes having Serious Medical Crisis

This is not your typical call in/action alert.

MORE:

Seth Hayes has been in prison for over 40 years and has lost many parole hearings in a row since 1998. He has been suffering from uncontrolled diabetes for over 15 years now. His sugars go up very high, then down so low he that he falls into a diabetic coma. He has had 3 such code blue diabetic comas in the past 2 months. Each diabetic coma he goes into could end in death if not noticed and treated right away. This is not a joke. Seth can fall into a coma and then slip away. We find this unacceptable.

Our demand is simple: give Seth an insulin pump/sugar monitor *IMMEDIATELY* to avert these near fatal incidents.

He has just recently been seen by an outside Endocrinologist who recommended he be issued the device. The NYS DOCCS is aware of the situation and is moving in the right direction but it is not fast enough; we cannot afford to have another incident of low sugar. The last coma just happened earlier this week and Seth had to spend the night in the hospital. The sugar monitor sends a loud warning if his sugars are beginning to get either too high or too low and the pump allows him to use small dosages of insulin when needed along with his eating schedule and daily activity.

We are asking for you to call, fax and write to demand immediate provision of an Insulin Pump/Sugar Monitor to Robert Seth Hayes 74-A-2280. Seth needs this device immediately!

PHONE and FAX THIS DEMAND TO:

Carl J. Koenigsmann M.D.
Deputy Commissioner/Chief Medical Officer
NYS DOCCS Division of Health Services
Harriman State Campus, Building #2
1220 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12226-2050

Phone: 518.457.7073

Fax: 518.445.7553

25 Oct - New Poetry From Eric King

We have a handful of new poems by Eric King to share.

MORE:

I Know I Am Free

I'll know I am free
when I am stretching out
feeling the wind on my face
doing all sorts of weird yoga poses
and I when I turn my head
to the left or the right
I wont see
a single god damn fence
with a single god damn piece
of razor wire that a worker in some factory
helped make to keep other people
locked in cages
Stop making the fucking tools
to oppress other people
Remember what color shirt you're wearing
I'll know I'm free
when the color of shirt someone is wearing
will mean less to me
than the color of their shoe laces

treason

How long until its illegal
to just not want to be long
they'll sizzle our brains
til we're just mush in a shell
then put us to work in
factories to waste
Our horrific rap sheet will read
'Wanted nothing to do with society'
Treason for not partaking
in the commercialization of our identities

Am I Allowed to Breathe

Am I allowed to breathe?
Is that a punishable offense
Am I allowed to feel
is that a shot?
Are my thoughts read
like my letters
scanned and stored
to be used against me later
My dreams dissected and distorted
Tearing apart the meanings
Digging for something
anything
Does my every firing neuron
Have sinister intentions
Yes...

Baby Teeth

Are we the states baby teeth?
Yanked and picked
from societies expanding mouth
Store for safe keeping
in tight little boxes
Have we outgrown our storage?
Maybe we are the cavities
rotting out the core
And when we are gone, the dentist
will cease hostilities

Crime of the century being
Not wanting to make or spend
any fucking money.

Even when we are uprooted
there'll never be an end
to all the nerve damage

26 Oct - Free the Austin Antifa 3

Wednesday October 26, our comrades in Austin asked us to help spread the word that three members of Antifa Austin have been arrested and charged with felonies for covering racist graffiti on the University of Texas campus.

MORE:

We'd like to remind our readers that in recent months, white supremacists have been targeting college campuses with racist leaflets and posters in an attempt to capitalize on the current reactionary climate and enflame racial conflict.

Austin ANTIFA comrades have been arrested, they are in urgent need of our utmost support. Three Anti-fascists were arrested after being suspected of attending an action on the University of Texas Campus. Fascist organizing has escalated recently and multiple student organizations have issued the call to fight back. At a young conservative racist bake sale this morning masked activists expropriated the goods and stopped the sale. This afternoon ANTIFA buffed a white power Celtic cross and hung a big letter poster. The poster reading something to the effect of: anti-racist students have removed racist graffiti which the University of Texas has let stand for 8 months. A statement was read over a megaphone and comrades chanted ANTIFA. No one was arrested at the action but three of our comrades were detained after the fact and have been charged with felonies.

We need your help! These arrests were made in the context of increased fascist activity and state repression. *InfoWars* fascists have stirred the pot on the anti-gentrification struggles on Austin's east side, mobilizing their base of violent fascists who have been online stalking, making death threats and planning demonstrations.

Red Guards Austin sends our utmost solidarity to these Anti-fascist political hostages of state repression. We must increase the pressure and organize on their behalf. Please consider a donating to Austin ANTIFA at youcaring.com/austinantifa-679908

Dare to struggle dare to win!
Smash fascism on campus and in our streets!
SUPPORT OUR PRISONERS!

26 Oct - Barrett Brown reports on more instances of misconduct in the prison system

Barrett will spend his final month lifting the curtain on abuses that occur in prison.

MORE:

In the four years I've spent in federal prison for my supposedly criminal efforts to look into government misconduct in cooperation with a loose array of Anonymous-affiliated hackers, I've had the unique experience of investigating government misconduct from within. But although I've spent much of this time writing about prison life in articles for *The Intercept* and other outlets, I've generally refrained from going into the specific violations of Bureau of Prisons policy and even federal law that one witnesses on a daily basis in BOP institutions. This is largely because I prefer writing about other things, but also because there's usually no point in reporting such matters in a nation where the press will have spent some 10,000% more time this year analyzing sexist attacks on the latest *Ghostbusters* film than they have the actual rape and sexual exploitation to which actual women are subject in U.S. prisons – and which could be largely ended within a month if that same degree of oh-so-fun *Ghostbusters* internet feud energy were to be directed at forcing the prison rape issue into prominence and shaming Congress into implementing safeguards that reformers have been proposing for years.

When I first started out as a journalist, I wrote a piece about how in the aftermath of one of the few rapes of a woman by Texas prison guards to have made the news, the Texas prison board met to enact a new policy – a rule making it more difficult for journalists to interview inmates. There are places in the world where this would have prompted civic outrage and prompt action, but the United States is not one of them. Today I’m the only journalist in the US who has no problem whatsoever interviewing inmates. But it’s hard to say that this has helped. We live in a time and place in which it’s not enough for a journalist to uncover serious and unambiguous instances of wrongdoing by the powerful, or even to get it published in a major outlet. Without some partisan hook or compelling video or a connection to whatever fun internet battle that the working press is currently big on because it’s easy to cover and can generate the clicks that now constitute our true and most revealing form of democracy, documenting wrongdoing by the state is futile. Nothing will come of it.

Still, I’m going to spend the last two months of my sentence doing just that, partly because I want to provide a more or less real-time record of the manner in which federal employees will conduct themselves when they find themselves free to act without consequences. This isn’t to say that all prison staff are bad people; indeed, at the six facilities where I’ve been held, serious misconduct generally seems to be confined to about 30 percent of staff, at least in federal prisons. The problem is that the 30 percent inevitably includes the very administration officials who are allegedly on hand to ensure that policy is followed. Thus it is that it was the prison’s internal affairs head himself, Terance Moore, who took away my access to the inmate e-mail service contrary to policy an hour after I’d used it to contact a journalist about the sort of official misconduct that Moore himself is theoretically being paid to prevent; and when I was held in the hole for two weeks last July despite no such punishment having been handed down to me – one of several incidents of retaliation I’ve noted here – it was an assistant warden, Yates, who ordered them to keep me there, apparently because I’d hurt his feelings.

All of that is incidental, though. I’m not documenting official misconduct in spite of the fact that it will lead to zero consequences for the perpetrators and will do nothing to help the victims; I’m documenting these things precisely because of it. The baroque nightmare that the US has inflicted upon millions of families for decades is certainly a story worth telling, and I’ll be telling what I can of it for years to come, but even more fundamental is the failure of our government, our press, and our citizenry to take responsibility for the institutions that it creates and thereafter forgets. To this end, each of these posts – along with other documented evidence I’ve already published to the effect that high BOP officials are actively sabotaging the ability of inmates to challenge serious instances of abuse and due process violations in court – will be forwarded to the Office of the Inspector General, which ostensibly exists to investigate these things. But, again, nothing will come of it.

Enjoy!

Post One

Incident: When inmate Ravi Hassan, #272203-009, was placed in the hole, or Special Housing Unit, in late June of this year, ostensibly for a “custody level reclassification” that prevented him from being with other medium security-designated inmates on our prison yard until the administration signed a document that would technically allow him back in the compound, he expected to return within two days, that being about how long it usually takes the warden to handle that. Instead, he was there for 30 days, and strongly suspects that this had something to do with the fact that he’d complained about an administration member who’d failed to properly handle an issue involving his release to a halfway house. SHU inmates usually get their property within a few days of arrival in the SHU; I myself was being held in the SHU at that time, illegally, on the orders of Assistant Warden Yates, and received mine within three days, and on a prior occasion when I’d likewise been thrown in the SHU for an “investigation” an hour after giving a phone interview to a radio station, I got my stuff the next day. But for the first two weeks he was being held, Hassan didn’t get any of his property, even his legal work; a SHU property officer by the name of Gamble even taunted him about it, on two occasions cheerfully bringing property to other SHU inmates, and at one point loudly remarking while standing in Hassan’s corridor about how he’d enjoyed “killing a couple of Muslims over

in Iraq.” After a series of complaints, Gamble was replaced as property officer and Hassan finally got his property. Gamble continues to work at the prison.

Analysis: Proclaiming your enjoyment of killing people of a particular religion as a means of intimidating a member of that religion while also preventing that inmate from accessing his legal papers contrary to policy is not enough to get you fired from the Bureau of Prisons. Hassan’s other, even more disturbing adventures at Three Rivers will be detailed in future posts.

Incident: A relative of Three Rivers Federal Correctional Institution inmate Saloman Bustos, #49859380, bought him a subscription to Playboy, which switched to a non-nude format some months ago and is now again being accepted in many of the prison systems that had banned depictions of full nudity back around 2000. When the first several issues arrived, Bustos received a notification from the mail room that they had been sent back due to “sexually explicit” material. I wrote a staff notification message to the mail room for Bustos pointing out that the term “sexually explicit” in the Bureau of Prison guidelines is defined very specifically in such a way that does not include the pictorials in Playboy. A staff member replied that Bustos should write a BP-8 grievance form. I had him forward the same message to the Assistant Warden for Operations, a fellow named Yates, repeating the point. Yates replied by quoting the very policy that I’d referred to: “Nudity means a pictorial depiction where genitalia or female breasts are exposed. Specifically, when the pictorial depiction of the female breast displays the areola or nipple, this material will be rejected.” I had Bustos write the BP-8 form pointing out that he understands that the policy calls for the rejection of pictures with aureolas and genitalia but that “Playboy DOES NOT run pictures with genitalia & nipples and so my three magazines were sent back contrary to policy,” offering to provide copies of news articles verifying that Playboy no longer runs such material, and asking that the prison reimburse him for the publications and refrain from further violating his due process rights by rejecting future copies of a magazine which he is legally permitted to receive. On October 3rd, the response came back from a certain F. Rodriguez: “Per 5266.11 (2), Nudity means a pictorial depiction where genitalia or female breasts are exposed. Specifically, when the pictorial depiction of the female breast displays the areola or nipple, this material will be rejected.”

Analysis: Due process is a myth.

30 Oct - NYC Anarchist Action: Prison Strike Solidarity Action

The September 9th national prison strike has forged a new potentially decisive link between the Black liberation struggle in the streets and the war against the American plantation system inside the penitentiaries.

MORE:

Prisoners have now launched themselves to the forefront of the struggle, setting a new bar for those of us outside.

Many of us in NYC Anarchist Action see this period as a vital situation in a chain of activities necessary for revolutionary momentum in the United States. The growing rejection of the American plantation system and the call for abolition is gaining strength.

As the prison strike is about to enter its second month, the censorship of the prison rebellion and suppression of its participants has reached a critical juncture. At least three deaths have occurred and organizers are facing extreme repression. Kinetik Justice, a key organizer in Holman Prison, has gone on a hunger strike after being shipped to a new, even more barbaric unit. At this moment, outside support becomes vital for bridging the muting division of the prison wall.

Prison organizer Keith Malik Washington incisively noted the following about the punishments doled out for participation in the prison strike: “There are elements and individuals within the Texas criminal justice

system that don't want to acknowledge the humanity of prisoners. The slave plantation mentality is deeply embedded in the hearts and minds of the oppressor and the oppressed.”

At the outset of the prison strike, the Free Alabama Movement requested that those on the outside put pressure on businesses that use prison labor, the same companies the prisoners are depriving of profit through withholding their labor.

On October 29th we held a roaming demonstration in downtown Brooklyn, targeting business after business, to denounce these businesses' slave labor practices on a popular shopping day. Our banners and chants that connected the prison strike to the overall racism and dehumanization of Black people in this country were well received. As we posted up by the first business, we immediately were engaged by a man who had just been released from prison. He, amongst many others, immediately recognized the significance of our action. At Target, Victoria's Secret, AT&T, Starbucks, Shell, and Bank of America, people cheered and put up fists, commending the struggle.

It was clear from the public reaction that people are ready for more militant resistance against police, prisons, and the political status quo. 'Off the pigs' elicited raised fists at every location. People who took flyers or stopped to talk were surprised to learn about the prison strike, yet immediately sympathetic to the goals and the resistance.

This was one of many actions taken around the world in solidarity. We in NYC wanted to give a revolutionary salute in the streets to those fighting in prison, to those struggling around the United States, and to our comrades in Mexico and Greece whose dignity and rebellious spirit cannot be contained.

1 Nov - Support Zolo Azania and Barbara Curzi

It's not uncommon for those of us in NYC ABC to write or talk about the importance of post-release support of political prisoners. We've seen comrades come home and know all too well that appropriate support can not end when they leave prison.

MORE:

What post-release support looks like is not a singular thing. Some folks need immediate support that might be financial, emotional, medical, or entirely something else. Others have communities of support to which they return and it is only years later that needs arise. We are at a point in time when two folks, at different stages of imprisonment, need your direct support. Both Zolo Azania—still imprisoned, but expecting to be released in early 2017 after 35 years inside, and Barbara Curzi—a former political prisoner released in 1991 who now faces a medical crisis, need those of us in radical and revolutionary communities to pitch in and help them out.

Excerpted from gofundme.com/HelpZoloRebuild:

Zolo will exit prison practically penniless and will face enormous financial challenges. He will need to pay for housing, food, clothing, transportation, furniture, a cell phone, utilities, and the many other expenses we all encounter.

Let's ease Zolo's path and make sure he does not confront his financial challenges—and all the challenges he will face, alone. Please generously donate.

Zolo is alive today due to his efforts and the work of his supporters and a strong legal team.

In spite of his difficult circumstances, Zolo is a positive person with a quick smile and a vibrant laugh. Let's answer his positivity with support.

All funds will go directly to Zolo and will be deposited into a fund managed by a team that has supported him for 13 years. For more information contact zoloazania.org or the Chicago Committee to Free Black Political Prisoners.

Excerpted from Sacramento Prisoner Support:

Barbara is a former political prisoner, one of the Ohio 7, who, after their arrests in Ohio in 1984, went on trial for actions by the United Freedom Front against corporations who upheld apartheid in South Africa and contributed to the wars in Central America.

Unfortunately, Barbara was recently diagnosed with a very aggressive form of breast cancer. She is beginning an intensive six-month chemo regimen and then is expected to undergo surgery, possibly followed by radiation.

She was about to get a part-time job just before her diagnosis, to supplement her disability check but now instead finds herself way behind not only on her mortgage and utilities, but can't get Internet and phones services back until she pays them off completely.

She returned to Massachusetts after her release from the federal prison system to rebuild her life with her children. As many former prisoners, and especially political prisoners, Barbara has struggled to find work and survive, but she is still deeply committed to the struggle for justice.

If you would like to contribute to the effort to minimize the stress to survive for Barbara, and help her make it through this battle, please see the linked "Go Fund Me" page at gofundme.com/barbaras-loving-circle-2w49vnqs

4 Nov - Leonard Peltier: The Case for Clemency

A press conference centering on clemency for Leonard Peltier will be conducted beginning at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

MORE:

The panel will include Martin Garbus, lead counsel for Leonard Peltier; Cynthia Dunne, attorney for Leonard Peltier and former federal prosecutor; Justin Mazzola of Amnesty International-USA; John Dulles, former Regional Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; and Jean Roach and Norman Brown, survivors of the June 26, 1975 firefight at the Jumping Bull ranch, commonly referred to as "the Incident at Oglala" that led to the decades-long imprisonment of Leonard Peltier. Other panelists TBA. The panel will be joined by Peltier family members and other invited guests. The panel presentations will be followed by a Q&A session. Opportunities for individual interviews with panelists and other attendees will be provided.

Supporters believe that Native American activist Leonard Peltier was wrongfully convicted for the shooting deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1977. Imprisoned for over 40 years—currently at the federal prison in Coleman, Florida—Peltier has been designated a political prisoner by Amnesty International. Over 50 Members of Congress and others—including Judge Gerald Heaney (8th Circuit Court of Appeals) who sat as a member of the court in two of Peltier's appeals—have all called for his immediate release. Peltier also is an accomplished author and painter.

Appellate courts have repeatedly acknowledged evidence of government misconduct in the Peltier case—including knowingly presenting false statements to a Canadian court to extradite Mr. Peltier to the United States, and forcing witnesses to lie at trial. The federal prosecutor has twice admitted that the government "can't prove who shot those agents."

Per the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals "the FBI used improper tactics in securing Peltier's extradition from Canada and in otherwise investigating and trying the Peltier case." The court concluded that the government withheld evidence from the defense favorable to Peltier "which cast a strong doubt on the

government's case," and that had this other evidence been brought forth "there is a possibility that a jury would have acquitted Leonard Peltier."

For decades, Peltier has enjoyed the support of Nobel Laureates including the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu of South Africa, who recently joined with other Nobel Laureates Mairead Maguire, Ireland (1976), Jody Williams, USA (1997), Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Argentina (1980), Shirin Ebadi, Iran (2003), Tawakkol Karman, Yemen (2011), and Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Guatemala (1992) in asking that President Obama commute the sentences of the aging and ailing Peltier.

At 72 years of age, Peltier suffers from serious medical problems that impair his ability to walk, see, and conduct normal life activities. He suffers from severe diabetes, hypertension and a heart condition, and was recently diagnosed with an abdominal aortic aneurysm.

Peltier's 1993 application for clemency was denied in 2009 by then President George W. Bush as one of his last official acts in office. Mr. Peltier formally re-applied for a commutation on February 17th and awaits President Obama's decision.

What YOU can do: Call President Obama for Leonard Peltier: 202.456.1111 or 202.456.1414; email President Obama: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments>; post a comment on Obama's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/potus/> or message him at <https://www.facebook.com/whitehouse> (or <https://m.me/whitehouse>); send a tweet to President Obama: @POTUS or @WhiteHouse; and/or write a letter: President Barack Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20500. You also can send a post card to the President: whoisleonardpeltier.info/home/store/send-a-postcard-to-the-white-house

12 Nov - Launch party for 2017 *Certain Days* calendar

WHAT: Launch Party

WHEN: 7:00pm, Saturday, November 12

WHERE: Interference Archive - 131 8th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11215

COST: FREE

MORE:

This calendar launch party will featuring artists and contributors to the 2017 calendar including Laura Whitehorn, Sophia Dawson, Naomi Jaffe, Daniel McGowan, Jenn Meeropol and reps for Leonard Peltier and Oscar Lopez Rivera. There will be art on display from the calendar, refreshments and the 2017 calendars for sale!

The 2017 calendar's theme is 'sustaining movements' and features art and writings by Farha Najah, Sekou Odinga, David Gilbert, Daniel McGowan, Free Oscar López Rivera Now, Sophia Dawson, Chris Dixon, Emory Douglas, Laura Whitehorn, Mumia Abu Jamal, Xinachtli, Micah Bazant, Capital Area Against Mass Incarceration, South Asian Women's Community Centre, Mazatl, Support Marius Mason, Eric King, Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, Jennifer Meeropol, International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, Amanda M Priebe, the Termite Collectie, Walidah Imarisha, Ali Cat Chavez Leeds and more.

The *Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar* is a joint fundraising and educational project between outside organizers in Montreal, Toronto, and New York, in partnership with three political prisoners being held in maximum-security prisons in New York State: David Gilbert, Robert Seth Hayes and Herman Bell. The initial project was suggested by Herman in 2001, and has been shaped throughout the years by all of our ideas, discussions, and analysis. All of the current members of the outside collective are grounded in day- to-day organizing work other than the calendar, on issues ranging from migrant justice to community media to prisoner solidarity. We work from an anti-imperialist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, feminist, queer- and trans- liberationist position.

The proceeds from Certain Days 2017 will be divided among these groups: الأسير لرعاية الضمير
Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Release Aging People in Prison - RAPP and the Unist'ot'en Camp.

13 Nov - Resisting FBI Repression with Leslie James Pickering

WHAT: Multi-media presentation

WHEN: 2:00pm, Sunday, November 13

WHERE: WESPAC - 31 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite 403, White Plains, New York 10601

COST: Free; Snacks provided.

MORE:

For two years beginning in 2012, the FBI used informants & extensive surveillance in an eco-terrorism conspiracy investigation into Buffalo's radical bookstore, Burning Books. Undercover agents were sent to public events at Burning Books while co-owners had their mail copied, were placed on a secret list for airline travel, were subject to over a dozen federal grand jury subpoenas, were followed around & had their photographs secretly taken by teams of FBI agents & much more. Leslie James Pickering, former Spokesperson for the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) Press Office, exposes secret FBI files, tactics deployed by the FBI against activists & strategies for resisting state repression in this shocking & eye-opening presentation.

We will also read statements from current political prisoners, offering their insights on how to resist government repression.

Sponsors include: WESPAC Foundation (Explore WESPAC), National Lawyers Guild - New York City Chapter (NLG-NYC), PUSH: Ideas into Action, NYC Anarchist Black Cross, and Hudson Valley Earth First.

More info contact WESPAC: 914.449.6514 or email wespacfoundation@gmail.com.

16 Nov - Book Drive for Prisoners at Topos!

WHAT: Book Drive

WHEN: 7:00-9:00pm, Wednesday, November 16

WHERE: Topos Bookstore Cafe - 788 Woodward Avenue, New York, New York 11385

COST: FREE

MORE:

You can help your fellow comrade by donating books to US prisoners. It is extremely difficult for prisoners to access good, educational, up-to-date reading material on the inside which should be a basic right.

Join us by donating your gently used or new paperbacks to Books Through Bars. There will be a donation bin at Topos beginning November 1st, and we will also be holding this culmination event on November 16th.

On the 16th we will offer light refreshments and will be having discussions, readings, and conversation about helping your fellow comrades on the inside as well as the prison industrial complex at large.

Please bring at least one donation to this event to show your support!

Below are the needs of BTB NYC

Paperbacks in good condition in the following subject areas:

African-American history, especially 20th century; Native-American history; Latin-American history; Social sciences; How-to (drawing, origami, chess, knitting, sign language...); Mayan and Aztec history;

Memoirs and fiction by people of color; Mythology; Dictionaries, thesauruses, GED studies, atlases; Language studies; Sudoku/puzzles; Guides to starting a business; Yoga and pilates guides

BOOKS WE CANNOT ACCEPT:

Hardcover books; Encyclopedias; Religious texts (INCLUDING BIBLES); Old magazines; White supremacist literature; Books advocating racial animosity, sexism, or homophobia; Computer books; Books with notes or underlining; Heavily worn books; Outdated books

3 Dec - NYC Books Through Bars 20th Anniversary BiNgO! Fundraiser

WHAT: BINGO

WHEN: 8:00-11:00pm, Saturday, December 3

WHERE: May Day Space - 176 St Nicholas Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11237

COST: Bingo cards per round will be \$3 each or 2 for \$5. Beer and other refreshments will be available for donation throughout the night.

MORE:

Join us for a fun night to raise much-needed funds for postage to mail packages of books!

We will have many great prizes, including from the following generous supporters: justseeds, Greenlight Bookstore, Pok Pok Ny, Spectacle Theater, Verso Books, Lagusta's Luscious, Dr. Bronner's, Fit4Dance, The Cliffs at LIC, Nighthawk Cinemas, Van Brunt Stillhouse, Apollo Theater, Hi Wildflower, Molly Crabapple, Body by Brooklyn, Gristle Tattoo+Art Gallery, Third Root Community Health Center, Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store, Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar, Seth Tobocman, Topos Bookstore Cafe, Superiority Burger

We will have more prizes confirmed in the future, so stay tuned.

The evening will feature a very special guest: our co-founder Victoria Law! Vikki is, among other things, an incredible journalist and activist with many publications, including "Resistance Behind Bars, The Struggles of Incarcerated Women."

If you'd like to bring some homemade vegan goods to contribute to help raise donations, we would be truly grateful!

We will NOT be collecting books at this event, with the exception of paperback English or Spanish dictionaries, our two most requested items.

Please spread the word about our anniversary bingo night! Invite your friends, comrades, and family and share the event on social media!

If you cannot attend but would still like to help, you can donate funds here:

<http://booksthroughbarsnyc.org/wp/index.php/donate/>. Just \$10 helps us send out three packages to incarcerated people.

We are looking forward to making this a great way to mark the end of our 20th year of sending books to TENS of THOUSANDS of people!

If you have any questions, email btb@abcnorio.org. To learn more about us, visit www.booksthroughbarsnyc.org.