



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for December 20th

3 Dec - Oscar López Rivera: "I Am Deeply Grateful to My People"

The political prisoner does not think about something he has no control over, not even when President Obama only has 47 days left in the White House.

MORE:

by José A. Delgado (*El Nuevo Día*)

It is zero hour for his plea for clemency to President Barack Obama, and political prisoner Oscar López Rivera is mentally preparing himself for six more years behind bars.

His plea for clemency is backed by important figures of the international community, as well as the highest-ranking government leadership, and the political, religious and labor class in Puerto Rico. If President Obama ignores this plea, López Rivera may have to wait until 2023 to be set free. By then, he will have spent 42 years in prison.

His right to a conditional release will be official in May 2023, although it may happen a few months earlier due to good behavior. By then, López Rivera, who turns 74 this upcoming January 6, Three Kings Day, will have turned 80.

His supporters are nervously counting the days. However, López Rivera does not think about something he has no control over, not even when President Obama only has 47 days left in the White House.

López Rivera was mainly convicted for seditious conspiracy for his ties to the former underground group Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN, by its Spanish acronym.) These days, he is reading "Gratitude," a book of essays by deceased US neurologist Oliver Sacks. In it, the author also writes about the significance of reaching 80 years of age.

Nonetheless, in a telephone interview with *El Nuevo Día* that took place on Thursday, López Rivera recalled how Sacks tells the story of a patient that became blind. The patient continued to recreate scenes through the images that had been previously acquired and retained.

For a political prisoner that has spent 426 months in US prisons and twelve years in solitary and sensory deprivation, recovering memories from the past is a fundamental exercise.

You have told me before that you do not think about time. On June 2013 you told me, "time will be mine." Yet, how can you not be vigilant at this time when President Obama only has (47) days left in the White House?

–The main thing for me is to not fall into a delusional optimism. I have to think I have six more years in prison and prepare myself to face them. If President Obama decides something good, then I will face that.

You have acknowledged that your big chance with President Obama is this post-election period so that a favorable decision would not carry great political consequences.

–We have all been aware of that. The only thing is that President Obama is very cautious and he protects himself a lot. That is how he handled undocumented students.

If President Obama offers clemency, do you expect him to impose conditions?

–I do not have the faintest idea. I imagine he will.

Is there any condition that would be unacceptable?

–I would have to deal with that once I know what he is asking for.

What is Obama’s legacy?

–He has done positive things. I think he wasted the years when the Legislative Branch was controlled by Democrats and he could have passed a positive law for (undocumented) immigrants. He could have also worked better on the issue of infrastructure to create more jobs. However, he made the auto industry and banks, those deemed ‘too big to fail,’ a priority. The healthcare reform could have been more comprehensive.

Do you have a message for him today?

–If he were willing to listen, he would see I can still be productive. There is nothing about me that says I am a bad person. The lengthy sentences we received were unnecessary. None of the comrades that left prison in 1999 have caused this country problems. I think having me imprisoned is a waste of money. They spend \$40,000 a year per prisoner. Letting me go would be a positive thing.

There is currently a petition on the White House website demanding a response from President Obama on the plea for clemency you filed in 2011. If it reaches 100,000 signatures by December 11, the White House must respond.

–President Obama—who has spoken directly about Nelson Mandela—must understand that no Puerto Rican can seditiously conspire against the US government because colonialism is a crime against humanity. International law makes that very clear. Every colonized person has the right to exercise his or her free will and independence, using all available methods, including violence. Nevertheless, Puerto Rico, has never been violent. We Puerto Ricans have been very tolerant.

There are still those who erroneously argue that you rejected the clemency offered by President Bill Clinton in 1999 because you refused to renounce the armed struggle. You have told me you did so because two comrades, Carlos Alberto Torres and Haydee Beltrán, were not offered the same at the time, and you distrusted the system due to the additional decade you would have to spend waiting in prison.

–We were very clear about our decision to not practice or advocate violence. Historically-speaking, it no longer made sense. The Vieques struggle showed us we could accomplish goals without resorting to violence.

You have also told me there is no blood on your hands. Is the federal record not clear on that? Were you asked about the attack on January 24, 1975 in New York’s Fraunces Tavern—where four people died—during the 2011 federal Parole Board proceedings?

–If federal agencies had my fingerprint tying me to anything where people died, I would be sentenced to life. They know where I was.

Are you referring to the date of the Fraunces Tavern attack?

–Yes. We held a meeting of the Hispanic Commission in Isabela’s Episcopal Church. They have the log of the hotel where I stayed, when I returned the car I rented, the plane ticket. Up until January 26, 1975, when I heard the news in Puerto Rico, I had never heard of the Fraunces Tavern. I did not even know it existed. There is one thing federal agencies have had against me and that is that they could never catch me. I spent five years underground and they were not the ones who caught me. That also explains their behavior towards my family.

To what are you referring?

–My two brothers were called before the Grand Jury. They both refused. My younger brother spent 13 months in prison for refusing to testify. My older brother was fired from his job. My brothers knew absolutely nothing about what I did. I never involved them in anything. One of their ugliest habits was that agents would visit my mother. They broke into her house when she was out. When she would return, they

were waiting for her and told her I would be killed if she did not hand me in. During those five years I never saw a single family member. When my mother told me that, it was painful.

Do you think that, if you are not released now, you will have to wait until May 2023?

–That is the mandatory date of my release, serving 42 years out of an (70) year sentence. Oftentimes they must also calculate the time one accumulates without an infraction.

As part of a criminal justice reform program, President Obama has commuted the sentences of 1,000 people convicted for drug crimes. Do your supporters protest that your case is not being looked at?

–They are two different things. President Obama decided to develop a specific program for drug-related cases. I have met some of the people whose sentences he has commuted. I imagine it is something he has to do because the majority of people sentenced as a result of the law Bill Clinton passed in 1995 were focused on the African American and Latino communities. Many of them were young people and they were given very long sentences. I think he felt compelled to respond to something that had adversely impacted his own community.

Have people from your prison been released under those commutations?

–A Puerto Rican, a Mexican, and various African Americans. I knew the Puerto Rican pretty well. He is from Lares.

Donald Trump is the president of the United States. Were you surprised?

–During the last three days (before the election) I thought it was possible he could win. Trump is an expert in using hate and fear. He spread racism for five years before he was a candidate. He is the biggest and best prepared con-man in the world. He is a con-man; it's what he has done his entire life. Racism exists in this country. The guards in this prison prefer to give any available job to a non-Hispanic white man with whom they identify, rather than an African American or Latino prisoner.

Trump won, but he lost the popular vote.

–The difference was over two million. What kind of democracy allows the person receiving the majority of votes to lose the election? The other issue is the amount of money that has to be invested in these campaigns. Last year, the Koch brothers had over \$900 million available for the political campaign, while the Republican Party had \$450 million.

Speaking of democracy. We have a sitting Oversight Board controlling fundamental government matters in Puerto Rico.

–We can see the power of Wall Street. Obama could have made a different decision. Nonetheless, he passed the law and we have the Oversight Board. Our people do not understand this board's role yet. Poverty in Puerto Rico will increase.

The main political parties in Puerto Rico lost support. Ricardo Rosselló and the NPP won, but independent candidates exhibited strength.

–I was mainly impressed by Dr. José Vargas Vidot's victory (in the Senate.) He campaigned by himself, no organization, based on his record. I respect him immensely.

Fidel Castro passed away. How did you find out?

–I leave the radio on, it was two or three in the morning when I went to use the bathroom and I heard it. Later, I sat down in front of the television to confirm it.

What did Fidel Castro represent to you?

–Out of all the Latin American heads of government, he was most aware of the Latin American reality. He created compassionate solidarity, a habit the Cuban people have of responding to (others') needs with no interests of their own.

Fidel Castro was criticized, among other things, for not allowing multi-party elections.

-I do not know whether parties are democracies. Democracy lies in the citizen's participation. I have not been to Cuba. I know many Cubans. I had the privilege of spending five years with Fernando González, one of the five national Cuban heroes (of the Wasp Network case.) I have an idea of why Cuba has that system, but I believe it is a decision for the Cuban people. In Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan we see the results of meddling in other countries' affairs. I am a veteran of the Vietnam War and I experienced the war first hand. I can guarantee that the Vietnamese people did not accept us.

You say you there is no blood on your hands. Did you not kill anyone in Vietnam?

-I spent seven months as infantry. It was two or three days at the base and three or four weeks in operations. I fired. Bullets are directional. One goes over and looks. People in war take credit for killing people. I am very sure I did not kill anyone.

We spoke of your Chicago Cubs last spring and you told me you are a fan of the team even from prison. They won the World Series 108 years later.

-I was very pleased. There was an incredible celebration in Chicago. (Javier Báez) has a lot of potential. I liked the Series because Cleveland had two Puerto Ricans and the Cubs had one.

Is Christmas in the air in prison?

- Media commercials on the radio and television bring the Christmas message. However, as to one enjoying Christmas, no. That is something we Puerto Ricans do not forget and we almost always sit together to spend Christmas Eve. My birthday is on Three Kings Day so we also sit together for a while.

How did you celebrate it before?

-I come from a very close family. We always tried to spend Christmas together. If I was in Puerto Rico, I would go with whoever held parrandas (a type of caroling.) In Chicago, we would start the parrandas and it became tradition. There was even a movie made about it. ("Nothing Like the Holidays.")

How would you celebrate it now?

-I would like to be with family and my close friends.

Before ending the interview, López Rivera—who has stated he intends to return to his hometown of San Sebastián, even if he does stop in Chicago to see family and friends—talks of returning to Wrigley Field to watch a Chicago Cubs game.

In the midst of the support he is receiving, he requested to send a message to the Puerto Rican people:

"I am deeply grateful to my people and for having been born in Puerto Rico. I have not lacked the love and support of the Puerto Rican people in all the years I have spent in prison. I want to let the people know I am grateful."

5 Dec - Leonard Peltier Update

We send our deepest condolences to Leonard, having just lost his son, and share other updates as the campaign for presidential clemency continues.

MORE:

December 5th - Health Crisis Statement from Leonard Peltier

Early this morning I was taken out of my cell in chains and taken to the infirmary where I was told to wait, sitting up in a chair which was very uncomfortable.

After about an hour an outside doctor came in and talked to me. He said that they need to do surgery on my prostate right away. As you know I have been complaining about prostate symptoms for years. He described what is usually a very long and painful recovery period, but then said that he does a new procedure that is much less difficult.

I do not know when or where this will take place. All I know is that he said it has to be done ASAP.

I would like to thank all of my friends who reached out to ask that my health issues be addressed I believe that without that help I would not be seeing an outside doctor now.

I will ask that people keep me in their prayers going forward.

I will try to let someone know as soon as I hear more if there is time.

December 9th - Political Prisoner Leonard Peltier Facing Potentially Fatal Medical Emergency

Eddie Conway speaks with organizer Jasmine Heiss about ongoing efforts to get President Obama to grant a pardon to Peltier, who has been a political prisoner in the US for more than 4 decades.

EDDIE CONWAY (EC): Thanks for joining me for this special edition of Rattling the Bars. I'm Eddie Conway, and the topic that I'm getting ready to talk to our guests about is very dear and important to me because I've kind of witnessed it from a position of being a political prisoner for 44 years in the State of Maryland, and fighting that whole entire time to prove my innocence and to win my release. And, as that was occurring, a Native American political prisoner Leonard Peltier was locked up during that period of time. He's still locked up today, and there are protests and activity demanding and calling for his release.

So, joining me today to give me an update and give you an update on the status of Leonard Peltier's case and what's going on is Jasmine Heiss and she has been organizing for political prisoners, for human rights against solitary confinement. She has worked on the state level and the national level. She had testified in front of the United Nations, and she's also been a monitor of police activities during the Ferguson and Baltimore uprisings. Please join me in welcoming Jasmine Heiss. Jasmine, how are you doing?

JASMINE HEISS (JH): Well, I wish that I was here today to talk to you about something that was less heavy. I wish I was here to talk to you about something that was more hopeful, but I do believe that we have a reason for hope, even in this terrifying political climate, and I'm very happy to be with you today.

EC: Well, what is the status right now of Leonard Peltier's case, and appeal and demand for release?

JH: Well, Mr. Peltier, as you know intimately, has endured more than four decades of unjust incarceration by the United States of America. He is more than 70 years old, and he's currently being housed in a maximum security unit at Coleman Penitentiary in Florida. So he's thousands of miles from his community, from his family. Like so many other political prisoners in our country, he is being, many would say, intentionally cut off from the support networks and the people who sustain him through this very long struggle for justice and for freedom.

Compounding that is the fact that Mr. Peltier is very ill. He has an abdominal aortic aneurism, or triple A, which is if ruptures is one of the most fatal surgical emergencies known to modern medicine. And yet the Federal Bureau of Prisons still has not operated on or treated this abdominal aortic aneurism. He's had two MRIs and they insist that despite the fact that a 72-year-old man is being held in this maximum security facility, they will wait to operate until it reaches 5 centimeters. It's currently at 4.5.

The last couple of times that I've seen Leonard in Coleman he has said to me, "If President Obama doesn't act, I'm going to die here, and it won't be of old age." You yourself know that in this country, medical care for prisoners, particularly aging prisoners, is not something that's prioritized, and we are looking at a federal prison system that is in a crisis of understaffing already. In a system that has tried to silence Mr. Peltier, some would argue to kill him, I think we can reasonably expect that he will not receive the highest level of care.

So, at this moment, his clemency petition is sitting on the President's desk. We all know that there are not many days left in the Obama Administration and so if President Obama doesn't act by January 20th to grant Mr. Peltier clemency, it may be his last hope.

EC: Well, I understand that there is an ongoing vigil and protests out in front of the White House that's been going on for some time. Do you have any information about that?

JH: I do. We're incredibly lucky this week to have Mr. Peltier's family and other members of the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee and his support network in Washington, DC, asking not only the President but Members of Congress to show some political courage that has been so sorely lacking, not only in this current political climate, but over the past many, many years with regard to issues of political prisoners, and to release Mr. Peltier. So, his son, Chauncey has been in front of the White House, his niece, Kerry Ann(?), many others are here to ask President Obama to act. They've been in front of the White House almost every single day this week, which is significant, of course, because the 10th, this Saturday, is International Human Rights Day. And as much as the United States decides to espouse human rights when looking abroad and justifying things like military intervention, there is a sore need to really take the matter of human rights to heart when looking inside our own prisons and jails.

So, this Saturday, to mark International Human Rights Day, we will be having a conference at American University's Washington College of Law beginning at 8:00 a.m. with speakers like Robert Hillary King, the first freed member of the Angola Three, Daniel McGowan, himself a former political prisoner, and then we'll be going to the White House around 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon to, again, ask President Obama to be accountable to the people and to show political courage and put his signature on Mr. Peltier's clemency application.

EC: It's my understanding that Amnesty International have looked at his case and found that there was really some serious flaws in it. Can you just talk about that a minute?

JH: Absolutely. Amnesty International, the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Rights, there's really a chorus of human rights voices who have been vocal on Mr. Peltier's case. Amnesty International is co-sponsoring the event that will take place this Saturday, on Human Rights Day, and many others will be there, either in presence or in spirit.

Amnesty International has looked at the case over the course of many years, including at Mr. Peltier's subsequent appeals, at his parole hearings where he has repeatedly been denied parole, despite the fact that the federal government now admits that they cannot prove in any way that he is guilty of the crime that they have convicted him of, yet he remains in prison.

And so, right now, when we look at this last opportunity for Mr. Peltier's freedom, Amnesty International has actively supported his clemency petition and has urged members of Congress to be vocal in supporting that petition and has urged President Obama to act before it's too late.

EC: I think one of the most significant things about his case is that the release of the FOIA records on the FBI forensic reports shows that the FBI agents lied about the tests that they took on the weapon, the firing pin, etcetera, and suppressed that information, kept it from the jury, and pretended like it never existed at all, in order to get this conviction. And that information itself proved that the weapon that they claimed Leonard used was not the weapon used in those deaths.

JH: And not only that, the FBI's efforts to force Myrtle Poor Bear, who was their key eyewitness when extraditing Mr. Peltier to stand trial from Canada where he'd fled -- because of very reasonable concerns about the way that he'd be treated by US law enforcement -- that was coerced testimony. It came from, as Myrtle Poor Bear testified, months of harassment from FBI agents. This was a woman who was already in fragile mental health, who suffered from alcoholism. Almost all of the other FBI witnesses subsequently

recanted their testimony and told additional often harrowing stories of the way in which they'd been harassed, intimidated, terrorized by the FBI.

I think that knowing not only this pattern of abuse but the fact that, as you mentioned, the FBI suppressed key ballistics evidence, the question we have to ask is: what haven't we seen? By some accounts, there's an estimated 70,000 pages of additional FBI documents that have never been released regarding this case, although they have been FOIA'd -- or if they've been released they've been redacted so heavily it's impossible to know what's in them.

So, why is the FBI so insistent on keeping someone, who they cannot prove committed a crime, in a maximum security prison? And what is it that they're hiding?

EC: Yes. Well, do you have any final thoughts on where this go and what people might need to d?

JH: Absolutely. I thank you so much for asking. I would say anyone who is in Washington, DC, or the DC area, should join us at 4:00 p.m. outside of the White House to ask President Obama to take a stand on this case, and to ensure that Mr. Peltier doesn't die behind bars.

But, for all of those who are looking at this case, who are watching, who either know about political prisoner issues or are learning about this case for the first time, can still make their voices heard. Again, we know that President Obama will look at this application personally. So, you should call the White House today and tell them that you support clemency for Mr. Peltier. You can also go online at AmnestyUSA.org/LeonardPeltier, and sign the online petition to take action today.

I would also say, you yourself know, Mr. Conway, that being held in a prison, being isolated from the world, is a measure that's meant to make people feel alone and feel forgotten, and particularly in these next months as we wait for political courage from the President and from the Department of Justice, I would encourage folks to write to Mr. Peltier and let him know that he is not forgotten and that he is not alone.

EC: And I think that's very important. That definitely helps people survive these kinds of ordeals. Okay, keep me posted, keep us posted, so we can update this, whatever may happen. Thank you for joining me.

JH: My absolute pleasure, and I hope the next time we talk it's to celebrate Leonard's release.

EC: I hope so, too. All right. Thank you for joining this special edition of Rattling the Bars.

December 9th - In Loving Memory of Wahacanka Paul Peltier

It is with a deeply sad heart that I write this. Today my dear younger brother Wa Ha walked on. He was with us here in Washington DC as we pray and work for clemency for our father Leonard Peltier. He was my little brother and I cannot believe his is gone from us. His name was Wahacanka.

His english name was Paul Shields-Peltier and he was born and raised on the Pine Ridge Oglala Lakota reservation. He had been sick for many months and was having dialysis for four hours a day three days a week and although his wife and family suggested him not to make this trip, he would not be turned back. In true Oglala way he said he wanted to go on this journey to help bring his father home.

He adored his wife Emily Two Lance-Peltier and his five children (four daughters and one son) and his mother Audrey Shields, his sisters and brothers and other family members and the Oglala Oyate. He was a quiet man who was known for his soft good humor and kind spirit. He never missed an event or a ceremony for our father. He was never one to stand up and speak but always there to help and support.

He lived the very hard life that is life on the Pine Ridge but in recent years he joined a company that was building environmentally sustainable housing for the people of the reservation and it was something he loved to do because it knew he was helping his people.

He suffered a very damaging stroke while working and has been trying to recover since.

Our dad had wished to donate one of his kidneys to Wa Ha but because of his imprisonment and his own failing health that was not possible. I will never forget my fathers words when he found out. He said, "Oh No. My Son has died. My baby has died." I wish we could console him now as we try to console each other.

We will let people know the details of his ceremonies as we find them out. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

To help with the funeral expenses, please donate at <https://www.gofundme.com/wa-ha-paul-shieldspeltier?ssid=833960254&pos=45>

With Love to all of you,

Chauncey Peltier
Elder son of Leonard Peltier

December 10th - Statement by Leonard on Wahacanka's Passing

It's taken me a while to get over this shock of my son's passing. I keep thinking this did not happen and then I realize no one is going to tell me something like this IF it didn't happen. Damn, as all parents, we expect to go before OUR children. I'm so upset. I want to lash out, blame "someone" or "anything"!! BUT I can only blame myself for not being a better father. I'm so happy that, some time ago Now, when I last spoke to him about this that we told each other we loved one another and that I would try to be a better father. BUT it is SO damn hard to be a good father from prison especially when you're in a situation like mine when all you think about is going home and being able to just sit with them and talk about life.

Now my baby son is gone and I will never be able to tell him in person again I love him, only through the spirits. I want to thank all of YOU FOR YOUR CONDOLENCES. Thank you very much. You supporters have been more than awesome. You're good people and I love all of you very much.

Since I was unable to be a better father to Wahacanka (Medicine Shield), and he has left five children (three young children) I feel it is my responsibility to take care of them at least until they are grown. He also had a grandchild with another on the way, so I will need to look after these babies too. I will need your help to set up a foundation or whatever to care for these children. I don't know what it will take, but I'm thinking maybe I could fund this through my art (paintings and prints). So if anyone has ideas, etc., please help me with this. I don't know what to do or even begin to do with something like this.

When it rains it pours, they say. I just heard an old friend and ally Warren Allmand has passed too. Last week I'm told, and I just heard about it yesterday. This man fought hard for me to try and get justice for the fraud the USA committed in Canada's courts, against a sovereign government, to get me back here to the USA. But Canada was involved with the fraud, too. Then we found out they were also threatened by the DOJ that they would withhold multiple millions of dollars for their joint agriculture laboratory if they ruled against the USA in the extradition investigation Warren and supporters demanded. So I need to send my condolences to his family also.

I will be going for a prostate operation shortly. With modern medicine and treatment, it should be successful and quick. They will not tell me when, so stand by for results if all goes well or if not. Again, thank you.

In the Spirit Of Crazy Horse...

7 Dec - Maliki Shakur Latine is out of prison after 37 years behind the walls!

We are pleased to share some good news in troubling times! Through organization, collaboration, and a shared belief that change is possible, Maliki Shakur Latine just walked out of prison on parole after 37 years!

MORE:

He is finally reunited with his family, friends, and community!

Family and Friends of Maliki Shakur Latine would like to thank the amazing Parole Preparation Project of the National Lawyers Guild-NYC Chapter, our awesome attorney Moira Meltzer-Cohen, visionary artist Sophia Dawson, the Sekou Odinga Defense Committee, NYC Anarchist Black Cross, the Anarchist Black Cross Federation, the Jericho Movement, the RAPP Campaign, and everyone who contributed to this People's Victory! Everyone who has written a letter of support, everyone who donated financially, everyone who shared a post or passed a palmcard, THANK YOU! Thank you for all of the work you do for freedom and justice!

Maliki Shakur Latine's imprisonment is over but his transition into minimum security America is just beginning. Please visit <https://rally.org/maliki> and donate to his release fund to help him cover the costs of basic survival needs and small comforts as he gets his footing!

Thank you for support!

9 Dec - Grand Jury Resistance at Standing Rock

On or around December 3rd, 2016 a water protector at Oceti Sakowin received a summons to appear before a federal grand jury that has been convened in relation to the resistance of water protectors.

MORE:

What we know about grand juries is that they have a long history of being used to target those in resistance to the state and engaged in political or revolutionary movements. The purpose of this grand jury and all grand juries that target revolutionary people and communities is to cause division, manufacture prisoners of war, create paranoia and suspicion amongst comrades. We will not be intimidated and resistance to this is only strengthening our resolve to kill this black snake and all the others.

Water protectors stand in resistance to this grand jury and all tools of state repression, be it on the ground through Morton County's violent tactics or in the shrouded secrecy of a grand jury courtroom.

Indigenous people, water protectors, legal workers, revolutionaries and comrades from across the camps are actively organizing resistance to this grand jury. Camp wide education efforts are already underway as well as reaching out through our networks of solidarity that know no borders in order to spread the word.

If you have been contacted by federal law enforcement or have been served with a subpoena related to water protector activities or the resistance at Standing Rock please contact the Water Protector Legal Collective at 605.519.8180. Grand juries rely on the isolation and fear that can come with a subpoena. The first step of resistance is seeking solidarity and support!

10 Dec - Political Prisoner Jalil Muntaqim is in the SHU

Once again, Jalil is facing retaliation from the Corrections Officers at Attica on a First Amendment issue of freedom of speech.

MORE:

Teaching true Black History should not lead to punishment and isolation in the SHU!

Greetings, I just got word from someone who visited Jalil today that he has been in the SHU since Monday night. He was teaching Black History on Mondays and was talking about the Black Panther Party, since he had reached the period of the 1960s and 1970s in his Black History course. The authorities didn't like what he was saying, so Jalil was placed in the SHU with 5 charges.

The specifics are unclear, but Jalil wanted to get the word out. He said he most likely will have a hearing in the next week.

Jalil has also been having serious problems with tampering with his mail, so this makes the situation more difficult.

11 Dec - Sign the Petition for Political Prisoner Imam Jamil Al-Amin

There are a lot of petitions to be signed on behalf of federal prisoners as Obama nears the end of his presidency. Fortunately, it is simple, easy, and requires virtually nothing from you. Take three minutes to sign the petition for Jamil Al-Amin and then sign the ones for other prisoners, too.

MORE:

Since 2002, Imam Jamil Al-Amin, who was once known as H. Rap Brown and served as chairman of the 1960s' Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), has been a political prisoner in the U.S.

Now, because of an incurable cancer and the failure of the Bureau of Prisons to provide proper treatment, Imam Al-Amin, who is now 73, will be subject to an execution by medical neglect unless he receives a Medical Pardon—and it's critical that President Obama issue it before he leaves office.

If you agree that Imam Jamil Al-Amin, a prominent activist, community leader, and political prisoner, should be released, will you sign this petition to President Obama asking him to issue Imam Al-Amin a Medical Pardon?

Imam Al-Amin, despite overwhelming evidence of his innocence¹, has suffered imprisonment for over 16 years—12 of which in were solitary confinement for no reason. Seven of those years were in the "supermax" Federal Prison in Florence, Colorado, where he had no human contact, no fresh air, and no sunlight.

Now that Imam Al-Amin has been diagnosed with an incurable cancer and the prison has proven unable to provide medical care, it would be inhumane not to release him.

Imam Al-Amin is a real patriot. As a chairman of SNCC, he worked alongside people like Stokely Carmichael, Mayor Marion Berry, and Congressman John Lewis to register Black voters in Mississippi and Alabama during the 1960s.

Imam Al-Amin's illness is a particularly extraordinary and compelling circumstance which could not have been foreseen by the court at the time of his sentencing. In addition to Multiple Myeloma, he's also suffering from Sjogren Syndrome, an autoimmune disease.

Imam Al-Amin needs urgent medical treatment and this lack of action by the Bureau of Prisons will lead to execution by medical neglect. The outside community has quality medical specialists who will treat his condition.

Will you sign here to join us in requesting the release of Imam Jamil Al-Amin (H. Rap Brown) to Medical Parole?

<http://act.mpowerchange.org/sign/free-imam-jamil?t=1&akid=87.84899.9esWjC>

11 Dec - Urgent Medical Campaign for Robert Seth Hayes

Political prisoner Seth Hayes needs us again!

MORE:

Seth has been suffering from uncontrolled diabetes for over 15 years now. His sugars go up to the 400's, then down so low 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.

We are asking that Seth be given an insulin pump/sugar monitor immediately to avert these near fatal incidents. He was seen by an outside Endocrinologist in early October. The endocrinologist 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.

in addition, Seth had another incident of low sugar on Monday, November 28, 2016, and was in the infirmary for overnight observation. It really is a matter of life and death that Seth be provided with an insulin pump/sugar monitor as soon as possible.

Seth called on December 4 to state the following:

If Seth's sugars are high in the morning, he is given a dose of Levamir. If his sugars are still high at 11 a.m., he gets a dose of actual insulin. By the time his sugars are checked at 4 p.m. they are usually in the 30's, prompting an emergency response. Seth's constant extreme fluctuations in sugar levels have led to him no longer being able to tell when his sugars are high or low.

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

PHONE, WRITE, 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

Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci
NYS Department of Corrections
and Community Supervision
Harriman State Campus, Building 2
1220 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12226-2050
Phone: 518.457.8134
Fax: 518.457.0076

Thank you for your time & efforts. It has and continues to make a difference!

12 Dec - On International Human Rights Day, Activists Call for Freeing 'Political Prisoners'

About a dozen activists protested in Harlem to call attention to International Human Rights Day and to raise awareness about so-called political prisoners in this country.

MORE:

by Sana Ali (*The Ink.NYC*)

“What’s the call? Free them all!” they chanted.

“Some of the worst victims of international human rights violations are the brothers and sisters that we call political prisoners in the United States,” said Benjamin Ramos Rosado, 39, coordinator for ProLibertad, the group that organized the event outside the Adam Clayton Powell State Office Building on West 125th Street. “In the past two years we’ve really let the holiday go by, so we decided to reclaim the holiday by doing you know, a small little action.” he said.

One subject of the protest was Mumia Abu Jamal, 62, a founding member of the Philadelphia chapter of the Black Panther Party, who is serving a life sentence after being convicted of the 1982 murder of a Philadelphia police officer. “Brick by brick, wall by wall, we’re going to free Mumia Abu Jamal,” chanted the activists.

“Mumia was framed for a murder he did not commit by racist police in Philadelphia,” said Rosado.

Orie Lumumba, who said he represented MOVE, a Philadelphia black liberation group, made the case that Mumia was a political prisoner. “Mumia was a journalist in Philadelphia who gained a reputation as the voice of the voiceless,” he said. “He spoke out against police brutality, against unemployment, against racism. As a journalist he was doing the job that journalist were supposed to do.”

In 1978, Mumia covered what Lumumba described as the “siege, kidnapping and framing of the MOVE organization,” adding that Mumia did not take sides in his coverage of the event but was made a target.

Many human rights advocacy groups have taken up Mumia’s case but he remains in prison. “We got to step it up and do our work out here,” Lumumba said. “We’re going to keep coming out here to bring our freedom fighters home. We keep educating the community, advocating, doing what we can and stuff.”

Rosado also talked about other inmates that he considers political prisoners, including Leonard Peltier, a native American activist who was convicted of killing two FBI agents; Oscar Lopez-Rivera, a Puerto Rican nationalist who is serving a 70-year federal prison term for a range of convictions, and Ana Belen Montes, a former U.S. government intelligence analyst who has pleaded guilty to spying for Cuba and is serving a 25-year prison term.

The speakers also said they wanted to call attention to health care in prison.

“Some prisoners are getting older a lot of them are very sick,” said Anne Lamb, 61, co-chair of the New York City chapter of the Jericho Movement, an advocacy group focusing on inmates that they consider to be political prisoners. “This is really a matter of life and death.”

As an example, Lamb cited the case of Robert Seth Hayes, a black nationalist who was convicted of murdering a New York city police officer. She said Hayes has diabetes.

As the event wrapped up, Rosado joked about the cold weather. “We can’t free them all, if we’re all in the hospital with pneumonia,” he said.

He reminded the others that 2018 will be the 20th anniversary of the Jericho March, a national march called in 1998 by Jalil Muntaqim, who activists consider to be a political prisoner. He is serving a term of 25 years to life after being convicted in the murder of two New York City police officers.

“We’re still here,” Rosado said. “We don’t want to be here. We would love for our brothers and sisters to all be out. We should celebrate the movement that has continued and denounce the fact that we have to have that movement.”

14 Dec - The uphill battle in pardoning U.S. political prisoners

As the curtain falls on the presidency of Barack Obama many efforts are underway seeking the pardons or commutations for political prisoners past and present.

MORE:

by Michael Z. Muhammad (*Final Call*)

The problem according to Abdul-Jabbar Caliph co-chair of the National Jericho Movement is the government is in denial that political prisoners exist in America.

“They believe political prisoners do not exist classifying them as nothing but common criminals,” he told *The Final Call*. “We dispute this assessment especially those affiliated with the Black Panther Party. They were politically motivated as far as their commitment to the Black liberation movement and they are in fact prisoners of war. They are in jail for their participation in efforts to liberate Black people,” said Mr. Caliph.

Former Black Panther political prisoner and current activist Marshall Eddie Conway who served nearly 44 years in prison before his release agrees with Mr. Caliph’s assessment. In a recent interview with *The Final Call* he said, “I wrote a book called ‘The Greatest Threat’ that researches the United Nations political prisoners standards designation, the world’s standards if you will. The political prisoners here in the United States fall under these criteria. They are comparable to other political prisoners in countries such as South Africa, England (and) Ireland,” he said.

“America denies the existence of political prisoners because it does want people around the world to think there are flaws in the system and people are resisting those deficiencies,” Mr. Conway asserts.

So up against a government that is in complete denial grassroots efforts continue on behalf of political prisoners. On the eve of the Democratic National Convention earlier this year in July, a group of activists from across the country met in Philadelphia and called on President Obama to pardon all political prisoners.

The U.S. has the world’s biggest prison system that is not filled with nonviolent drug offenders alone. Before and alongside the war on drugs, mass incarceration was built through the wholesale repression of radical movements— especially in communities of color.

Two noteworthy political prisoners who have long sought commutations from Obama and other presidents before him: Leonard Peltier and Oscar López Rivera. Both men are longtime activists who have each served more than 30 years in prison and garnered international support for their release from figures such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu and organizations such as Amnesty International.

According to an article published in UK-based newspaper *The Guardian*, Mr. López Rivera is one of the U.S. and world’s longest-serving political prisoners. Now age 73, he has spent more than half his life behind bars. He was convicted of killing or hurting no one. In 1981 he was convicted on “seditious conspiracy” stemming from an alleged plot against the U.S. in the fight for the independence and sovereignty of his home country of Puerto Rico. Mr. López Rivera is accused of being a leader in the Puerto Rican nationalist group Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN). The organization was charged in a series of bombings in Chicago and New York in the 1970s and 1980s. Mr. López Rivera as well as supporters are adamant he was not involved in the bombings and there was no evidence connecting him.

Lin-Manuel Miranda, creator of the smash Broadway musical, *Hamilton*, confronted President Obama about López Rivera face to face during a White House visit in October. On Oct. 9 thousands of supporters

gathered outside the White House bearing placards of the long-time freedom fighter and calling on Obama to set him free. His clemency petition lies on the desk of President Obama. On Dec. 8 a group of supporters from Puerto Rico and the U.S. held a press conference on Capitol Hill several days after the White House received more than 100,000 signatures asking for his release reported nbcnews.com.

Leonard Peltier's very life may depend on a presidential pardon. He is an Anishinabe-Lakota of the American Indian Movement (AIM) serving two life sentences for the 1975 death of two FBI agents killed during a confrontation between the FBI and AIM on the Pine Ridge reservation. "Now Leonard is 71 years old. He, as many of the political prisoners in this country are suffering from a range of health challenges but most recently he was diagnosed with an abdominal aortic aneurysm which if not operated on has a 90 percent of fatality," said Jasmine Heiss, a senior campaigner for Amnesty International USA's Individuals at Risk Campaign. "Now if the Federal Bureau of Prisons [allows] to operate on Leonard, he should be fine. He has not been given either his first MRI result or his most recent MRI, so we have no way of knowing how great his health is at this particular moment," she said.

According to Alicia Garza, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, America's political prisoners remain incarcerated for their vision of universal social justice. "So we have to ask ourselves, why is the state afraid of them," Ms. Garza said in a recent forum.

"The simple answer is that the state is afraid because of the fundamental challenges that the Black Liberation movement posed to the ongoing conditions of poverty and racism and patriarchy and privatization and on and on and on. So our fight must also be to free all political prisoners."

Others still fighting for release, pardon or clemency include Mumia Abu-Jamal, Assata Shakur, Imam Jamil Al-Amin, the MOVE 9, Omar Askia Muhammad and many more.

An online petition on Change.org urging President Obama to pardon former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick has also garnered over 27,000 signatures. He was convicted on 24 federal criminal counts involving corruption in office in March 2013 after a trial on charges of extortion, bribery, racketeering and fraud. "He gave the city hope again, brought investments in and he truly did make a positive impact in a community that had been headed for destruction since the 50's because labor costs, white flight and the decline of the Big 3 automotive companies," noted the petition. Mr. Kilpatrick was wrong but 28 years is too excessive, it added.

Student Minister Abel Muhammad, Representative to the Spanish-Speaking People of the Western Hemisphere for the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam, has long advocated for the release of Mr. Lopez Rivera.

"My prayer is President Obama would right a grave wrong not only for Oscar but Leonard Peltier and Abu-Jamal. He has the opportunity to influence or impact this decision in his last days in office. He is very quiet unfortunately about much of the ills that affect our community," said Student Minister Abel Muhammad.

"I would pray that his compassion as one who has struggled in the community, as one who has seen firsthand the plight of Latino's and the have-nots and Black people in Chicago, he could see the benefit of having Oscar come back to his community, in a time when his community needs him more than ever before. It is my hope his activism roots in Chicago get the better of him in his last days of the office," he added.

The *Guardian* article written by Ed Pilkington and published in mid-October concludes that the Hillary Clinton "backlash" perhaps explains President Obama's apparent ambivalence on the matter. He is reported to have told Lin-Manuel Miranda that López Rivera's clemency petition was on his desk. But Congressman Luis Guterierrez (D-IL), who is of Puerto Rican descent and has been a leading proponent of a pardon, has said that when he asked Obama about the account, the president firmly disputed it and gave a bland statement that procedures must be followed, the article added.

Though President Obama has granted clemency to more people convicted of federal crimes than any chief executive in nearly 50 years according to the Pew Research Center, his years of refusing to attend to certain cases attest to an indifference to the unjust detention of political prisoners by the government he leads, say some activists.

Mr. Conway agrees stating many of President Obama's pardons are for old, obscure and "trivial drug convictions." As of Nov. 30, Obama has granted clemency to 1,093 individuals (the vast majority convicted of drug-related offenses), a figure that includes 1,023 commutations and 70 pardons, the highest total for any president since Lyndon B. Johnson, states Pew.

"I don't see him taking a stand on political prisoners even recognizing the existence of political prisoners. He doesn't have the heart to do that kind of thing. I haven't seen him do anything that requires him standing strong on issues concerning grass roots folk."

Regarding the posthumous pardon request for the Honorable Marcus Garvey, according to News America, a petition to urge President Obama to pardon the Jamaican-born 20th century Black nationalist and proponent of Pan-Africanism seems doomed to fail yet again because it did not meet the signature requirements. Even with the necessary signatures, it was improbable because Obama's Justice Department has signaled its reluctance to consider pardons for people who are already dead.

"It is the general policy of the Department of Justice not to accept for processing applications for posthumous pardons for federal convictions," the department's web page reads. "The limited resources available to process applications for Presidential pardon are best dedicated to applications submitted by living persons who can truly benefit from a grant of clemency."

Concerning legacy, many of those interviewed for this article felt if the president were so inclined to pardon political prisoners he would be met with overwhelming appreciation in the various urban communities. "Obama is the last chance for folks like Oscar Lopez Rivera and Leonard Peltier and other political prisoners. If he doesn't do it, they will indeed probably die in the prison system."

"It would help his legacy because he didn't do anything that he promised to do. For the most part, he did nothing for grassroots Black folk. That would at least take the bitter taste out of our mouth," said Mr. Conway.

Nation of Islam National Prison Reform Student Minister Abdullah Muhammad has another take on the matter. He told The Final Call, President Obama is not the last chance for many of the country's political prisoners to be pardoned.

"It is, however, Obama's last chance to leave a legacy that reads that he pardoned strong freedom fighters who are justified in their way of opposing the mind and forces of Satan's program called Cointelpro," he said.

17 Dec - Will President Obama Set Chelsea Manning Free?

Chelsea Manning, a trans woman responsible for the largest leak of classified military data in American history, has been incarcerated in a men's prison for six years. Over 100,000 people have signed a petition pleading with the White House to grant her clemency—meaning that President Obama will be forced to respond.

MORE:

by Diana Tourjee (*Broadly*)

Six years after Chelsea Manning was convicted in the largest leak of classified military data in American history, the whistleblower and transgender woman has pled for President Obama to commute her 35-year

sentence to time served. A government petition garnered more than 100,000 signatures last Friday evening, meaning the White House will be required to formally respond within 60 days, according to the federal website where the petition was hosted.

Manning's plea comes after a harrowing year fighting for access to health care with hunger strikes, and two suicide attempts behind bars. The sentence that Manning is serving is extreme: Other convicted whistleblowers have been given a range of sentences but they are generally low, in the range of one to three-and-a-half years in prison. Meanwhile, Manning is serving nearly four decades.

"In so many ways Chelsea's case is unprecedented," said Chase Strangio, one of Chelsea Manning's attorneys at the ACLU. According to Strangio, Manning's sentence is "the longest in United States history for disclosure of documents in the public interest to the news media." He added that the fact Manning is incarcerated "as a woman in a men's prison" only makes her case more exceptional.

Manning requested clemency after her conviction in 2013, but was denied by the army in the spring of 2014. In a post on Medium earlier this year, Manning explained the errors in her initial request for clemency. "It was too soon, and the requested relief was too much. I should have waited. I needed time to absorb the conviction, and to reflect on my actions. I also needed time to grow and mature as a person," she wrote, adding that now, after six years, she has now been confined for longer than other person convicted of similar crimes.

In her emotional plea to President Obama, Manning described the suffering she has endured in prison, the abuse she's been subjected to, such as solitary confinement, and the extreme toll that has been taken on her mental health. But it isn't clear whether or not President Obama will be sympathetic to her.

"Under the Obama Administration, individuals who have shared documents to the news media in the public interest have been prosecuted and jailed more than under any other presidency," Strangio said. "Indeed, more than all previous presidencies combined." In 2011, when Manning was being held by the state but not yet convicted of any crime, President Obama publicly stated that she "broke the law" and condemned the acts of whistleblowers: "We don't individually make our own decisions about how the laws operate," Obama said. Strangio says that this is just one more example of how Manning has experienced injustice under our current president's administration.

Dana Gold, a senior fellow at the Government Accountability Project, an advocacy and legal organization that supports and defends whistleblowers for the sanctity of democracy, told Broadly that there is ample reason that a commutation of Manning's sentence could and should be justified—from the unprecedented length of her sentence, to the fact that Manning did not intend to harm the United States—but she ultimately doubts that this will happen. "I sadly think the likelihood that President Obama will commute Chelsea Manning sentence is slim to none," Gold said.

She views Manning's imprisonment in the context of Wikileaks and the organization's dissemination of the data she gave to them. Given that data given to Wikileaks may have helped sway the 2016 presidential election, Gold is concerned that the government would not want to signal support for such actions at this time.

"I would love to be wrong on this," Gold added, "because I think more than ever we need to see leaking and whistleblowing as a symptom of institutional corruption and to come up with more nuanced and effective ways to address this root problem rather than attacking individuals who report abuses of power."

Given President Obama's track record with whistleblowers and statements regarding Manning specifically, it does seem unlikely that he would alter Manning's sentence. However, the Obama administration is coming to an end, and some see this as a time of urgency and opportunity. The political landscape of the United States has shifted dramatically in 2016 with the resurgence of far right ideologies empowered by Donald Trump, as well as the loss of Democratic power throughout federal government. Many people in

prison feel a sense of urgency in the face of a Trump administration, and they are hastily pleading for clemency from President Obama, who is himself "racing" to use his powers for progress before his time in office is over. In November, President Obama "granted clemency to 72 more federal inmates," according to the Washington Post.

"It is impossible to know whether President Obama will take action on Chelsea's clemency petition," Strangio explained, "but as Chelsea's friend and lawyer, I hope that he recognizes the perilousness of her circumstances and the fact that her survival depends on his taking action now."

In addition to Manning's survival, her sentence commutation would also be an important demonstration of our government's commitment to the people's interests at a time when many fear our democracy is slipping toward an authoritarian form of rule. "Those who care about Chelsea—not to mention justice, accountability, and democracy—can only hope that [President Obama] has come to recognize the important role that whistleblowers play in building democratic accountability of an ever-growing national security state," Strangio says.

17 Dec - Out Of Prison, Barrett Brown Recommits Himself To Agitating Against Existing Order

After four years behind bars, journalist and activist Barrett Brown was released from federal prison on the morning of November 29, 2016, and ordered to report to a halfway house in Dallas, Texas.

MORE:

by Brian Sonenstein (*Shadowproof*)

"I was picked up by my parents and Alex Winter and his camera crew," Brown told Shadowproof. "They filmed me on the six-hour drive over to Dallas. We had to get to the halfway house by 4:00 pm, or it would be an escape charge. So, we barely made it."

"[The Bureau of Prisons] originally gave me less time than was necessary to get there, and I had to go in there and forcibly get them to give me an hour more," he said. "They also told me falsely that I could go in any car, and it wouldn't be any problem, when in fact I could actually go back to jail for not being in a registered car."

Brown faced 100 years in prison in 2013 for charges stemming from the hacking of the private intelligence firm Stratfor the year before. The hack—of which the hacker groups Anonymous and LulzSec took credit—revealed Stratfor was hired to spy on activist groups for corporations, such as Dow Chemical.

He was pegged as a spokesperson and co-conspirator for Anonymous despite renouncing ties with the group in 2011, and the most controversial charge brought against him by the Department of Justice was for linking to hacked data. That charge was eventually dropped.

Brown accepted a plea deal, under which he pled guilty to lesser charges for threatening an FBI agent in a YouTube video after the FBI raids. He also pled guilty to being an accessory to a cyber-attack and to obstruction of justice for putting his laptops in a kitchen cabinet. After over two years of pretrial incarceration, he was sentenced to 63 months in prison.

While incarcerated, Brown wrote award-winning columns, where he documented prison life and administration. He wrote about an endless stream of abuses and misconduct by BOP officials seeking to silence him and violate his rights and the rights of other prisoners. This includes multiple stints in solitary confinement and restrictions on his access to the press and use of email.

The Halfway House

The halfway house Brown currently calls home is operated by the nonprofit Volunteers of America under BOP jurisdiction. While halfway houses are supposed to help people get jobs and reintegrate into society after prison, Brown said the BOP “has a number of regulations that kind of get in the way.”

“Until recently, [halfway house residents] weren’t allowed to have cell phones,” he said. “Now they can have cell phones, but they can’t have iPhones or any phones with cameras or web access, which rules out 99.9% of phones. So people have to sort of scramble around. People have to find these phones that are allowed.”

Such hurdles are “pretty typical,” he said. “There’s some bureaucracy and some requirements. There’s rules that make those requirements hard to deal with.”

Brown said the director of his halfway house is “actually a pretty good guy; very, very dedicated to what he does. The assistant director, a guy named Woody something-or-other, he’s a wacky little rat creature that sort of runs around, a hyperactive bureaucrat.”

He shared he was written up the day before for smoking outside the facility. “Everyone goes out and smokes in the front area, they really don’t screw with you. But, me being who I am, I’m always subject to scrutiny,” Brown said, adding, “It really didn’t mean anything but I did had to get a 5 minute lecture about propriety from this rat creature.”

“A lot of my bandwidth has gone toward nonsense here, but at the same time, I’ve been able to get a lot done. I’ve got some projects. I hit the ground running on getting things launched, and that’ll be made public fairly soon.”

After his stay at the halfway house, Brown will be confined to his home, which he said is “not very restrictive in terms of what I do.”

Computer Restrictions & Employment

“When I’m on probation six months from now, we have very clear restrictions where I can use a laptop,” he said. “I have to bring a new laptop to the DOJ’s office, and they’ll install monitoring software and that’s it. I can use the internet just like any other civilian.”

“Until then, I’m still under BOP jurisdiction, and that’s where things get interesting. I’ve yet to get a written, any kind of written declaration of what I can’t do as opposed to other ex-convicts.”

Brown explained he was planning to bring a Playstation 4 to the halfway house “so everyone could have video games,” but “the assistant director, this Woody something, said, oh, let me go check on that. And, of course, if you ask the BOP if I can have something, they’re going to say no.”

“In this case, they said I could turn it into a microcomputer. I don’t know what a microcomputer is exactly. Even the DOJ doesn’t say I’m a hacker.”

Brown renounced his ties to Anonymous in 2011, and while he was previously labeled as a spokesperson for the group, it was established at his trial that he is not a hacker.

He did not participate in the Stratfor hacking for which he was incarcerated. Yet, even before the Playstation 4 incident and despite his trial, the BOP labeled him as someone who should not be allowed around computers.

For example, Brown said federal prisons typically circulate lists of around 15 inmates once a month, which include their pictures and information about them. Staffers are supposed to memorize the information. “I was informed by a couple of staff members that I had been sort of cultivating that I’m on that sheet at Three

Rivers listed as a hacker,” he said. (Federal Correctional Institution Three Rivers is where Brown was imprisoned for part of his sentence.)

Brown feels the DOJ’s probation officers are on his side, agree he’s been wronged, and understand he shouldn’t be under constraints except as provided for by law. “They’re trying to accommodate me,” he said.

The DOJ’s probation officers sent emails to BOP requesting clarification on what kinds of jobs he is allowed to have, but Brown said the BOP has not been responsive or helpful.

“I’m trying to get a job, a physical, 9-5, 40 hour week job at D Magazine down in Dallas,” he said. However, it is unclear what he’s allowed to do under the conditions of his release. “Can I touch a computer? Can I look at a monitor?” Brown asked.

“I had Tim Rogers, the editor down there, call the BOP representative down here and she said, I can’t give information about that case. Keep in mind, this is my employer trying to find out what I can do.”

“It’s not her this is coming from,” Brown said, again noting the absurd bureaucracy that not only frustrates him but obscures who it is within the BOP that he can hold accountable for such a decision.

“She is just passing on something from someone. That’s why I went in there to the director first couple days I was here and said, look, I need something in writing. Tell me exactly who is saying I can’t have a Playstation because that has implications about whether or not I can have a computer or touch a computer or be in a room with a computer.”

The BOP has not answered Brown’s questions, and he vowed to more forcefully ask “for them to explain what their authority is for making these declarations” and show in writing “exactly what they think my stipulation should be under BOP jurisdiction.”

Brown questioned whether the BOP was setting a dangerous precedent with their treatment of him, noting his columns had “already exposed a lot of the BOP’s activities and have already sort of made formal complaints of retaliation against me.” His email access was previously revoked for a year by the BOP.

Restitution

Another obstacle Brown faces is the more than \$890,000 in restitution he must now pay, the vast majority of which is owed to Stratfor.

“My restitution was \$200 a month for a while, then \$100, and it’s based on how much money I brought in previously. That was determined by the case manager at the prison. Now that I’m out under a halfway house for the next few months, I don’t have to pay anything and then it goes back up to be calculated based on my income.”

When he begins probation, he will have to pay Stratfor and his the other “victims” a percentage of his income in restitution, and if he is compensated through a bequest or an award, he has to pay half of it.

“The bottom line is I do owe over \$800,000 to Stratfor, Combined Systems, and the nonexistent law firm of Puckett and Faraj, which was quite literally destroyed by [Jeremy] Hammond. That’s still the case, and we’re going to make as much of that as we can.”

“The way I see it is we’re paying a bit of a price each month in order to remind people of what these firms are doing,” Brown argued. “That’ll stay in the news as long as we can keep it, and it’ll be a monument to the age we live in and to the injustice of the system. I think eventually Stratfor may decide they want out of that. We’ll see what happens.”

A Real, Cogent, Viable Opposition To The State Of Things

Assessing his plans now that he's out of prison, Brown said his main objective is the same as it was around the time he started Project PM in 2008-2009: "to launch a global platform, a method by which to generate a real, cogent, viable opposition to the state of things; opposition to the nation state, corporations, the existing order."

"At this point, it's more viable for me to get something like that launched and make it quickly viable than it would have been years ago. Because at this point, I've got a degree of respect from the activist community and even establishment figures, who I think years ago would not have been as interested in radical solutions as they are now."

"Obviously, the election results sort of sealed the deal in terms of getting people to realize there's a problem here," he said. "The grown ups are not in charge."

"The greatest, most important fact of the 21st Century will be that any individual can collaborate with any other individual," he explained. "That's vaguely obvious now, but [...] you're going to see, on a global scale, an unprecedented non-state opposition grow up as little entities develop and evolve and start connecting with each other. That's the period we're entering. We're entering a period of conflict."

He described the first phase of this as "the last six years of Wikileaks and Anonymous and these different groups challenging the system." Brown pointed to Wikileaks' role in the 2016 election, saying they scored "sort of an unfortunate success to the extent that the election was somewhat thrown by [Julian] Assange."

"It's not the way I would have wanted it to be, but it does go to show that this is the age of non-state actors," he said.

Brown said he would soon make an announcement with more concrete details about his upcoming projects. But for now, what is important is to understand the most pressing issues facing society "have to be addressed by outside forces, well organized systems in which we channel dissent." His goal is to "channel peoples' capabilities and skills and resources in a way that they don't have to work through the Democratic Party, for instance, which is an organization in which scum rises to the top."

"You look at someone like Dick Morris and then you think about all the twenty-something kids out there, who are actually very, very talented, very knowledgeable, they're honest. But they have no viable way, for the most part, to get involved and bring their talents to bear and bring their honesty to bear."

"If we give them something where they can rise, where they can channel those talents, if we create something for them and say, there's no more excuses, here it is, here is your ability to change the system, and we do it in the right way and we provide charismatic leadership and an ethos that works to burn off this morass—this ridiculous over-entertained culture, then we will finally see results."

Brown asked people to "start thinking about what obligations they have to the civilization they've been born into. Think about the people who have come before us, who have made sacrifices, much more considerable sacrifices than we're asking of anybody. We'll be asking people for their time and for their efforts without any real risk."

"Just think about if they are going to take and enjoy the fruits of our liberty and this civilization or if they feel that they have a moral obligation to put something back into it," he said.

28 Dec - From the Frontlines of Sacramento: The Anti-Racist Action

WHAT: Discussion

WHEN: 7:00pm, Wednesday, December 28

WHERE: The Base - 1302 Myrtle Avenue

COST: FREE

MORE:

On June 26th, 2016, antifascists successfully prevented a Neo-Nazi rally that was set to take place at the Sacramento Capitol. The Traditionalist Worker Party (TWP) and the Golden State Skinheads (GSS) came together to plan the rally as a show of force and a platform for their racist ideology. Well, they never got that far and were instead denied such a platform due to 400 brave individuals taking the capitol grounds and making such a rally in fact impossible. Unfortunately this came at a cost, and once the dust settled 9 antifascists were on their way to the hospital; 3 who had suffered blunt force trauma, and 6 who had suffered serious stab wounds. For the entire week that followed there was support and solidarity there at the hospital to be demonstrated, and thousands of dollars to be raised. In addition there was an effort by Nazis from all over the country to track down personal information of any of the antifascists who were hospitalized and anyone from the anti Nazi protest back on June 26th to then give to their local connects. For example: it was stated in an online forum by Nazis that they were coming to the hospital " to finish the job" and it was threats like those that we had to take seriously. And we did. The 3-4 weeks that followed the antifascist action at the Sacramento capitol were filled with uncertainty, high intensity, and moments where smart decisions really needed to be made fast. There was also incredible amounts of camaraderie, inspiring situations, and periods of real joy. There is so much to share and yet so much to reflect on and learn from while looking back. Looking forward to a good amount of time for a discussion at the end too.

31 Dec - NYE Noise Demo Against the Prison Industrial Complex, In Solidarity with PPs and POWs

WHAT: Noise Demo

WHEN: 9:00pm, Saturday, December 31st

WHERE: Metropolitan Correction Center (MCC, the federal prison in downtown Manhattan); Pearl Street, between Cardinal Hayes Place and Park Row (J to Chambers Street or 4/5/6/ to City Hall)

BRING: Noisemakers, air horns, drums, anything that is loud!

MORE:

On the noisiest night of the year in New York City, come help us remind folks locked up that they are not alone. NYC Anarchist Black Cross, in response to an international call for noise demonstrations outside of prisons, is asking folks to join us outside of the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in lower Manhattan. Come, not to appeal to authority, speak truth to power, or any other contrivance, but rather to stand arm in arm with comrades and show direct solidarity to those on the other side of the wall.

The state, writ large, is targeting anarchists all across the United States and abroad. This will be both protest and celebration. To keep the cold at bay, comrades will again be on hand with hot cocoa to keep the vocal cords nice and warm.