



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for August 15th

15 Jul - Court Support Doesn't End at the Courthouse

When you or your crew get pinched and have to appear before a judge, it feels like there's nothing left to do but observe the railroading you're about to receive. But that doesn't have to be the case for your legal case.

MORE:

Court support is the tops when you feel you're staring down a hopeless bottomless pit and the only thing staring back is the shell of a human that wants to suck out your soul and send you to prison. Court support must be a principle of solidarity.

A recently published book by long-term legal support organizers, Tilted Scales Collective, can be summed up in a quick paragraph:

As a political defendant, you will be dealing with the criminal legal system on its own turf. The political level of your situation includes largely unfathomable technicalities and procedures that are designed to disempower you and make it necessary to hire an expert (i.e., a lawyer). You can also approach your predicament on a political level, which may be more familiar ground to you and your supporters. A political defense may be less limited by the court's rules, ranging from complete disregard of those rules to calculated rebellions against the court's authority while attempting not to jeopardize your case entirely. Regardless of the balance you strike between political and legal defenses, you will also need to think about the personal level: what you want to achieve and what you are willing to endure.

The courts know solidarity among criminals is the antithesis to their work and they fear it. Ninety-four percent of state convictions are the result of plea deals—ninety-seven percent for federal convictions. A “fair trial” is a myth anywhere in the United States court system.

The Fraternal Order of Police overwhelmingly endorsed Trump as a candidate, and this is just one election cycle removed from 2012 when they refused to endorse either Romney or Obama—the first time the organization ever withheld an endorsement. Trump blew all the right dog whistles to trigger the state's monopoly on violence into a mess of foaming, rabid mouths. In response, the cops and courts are criminalizing any dissent and tacking on huge charges far outweighing any alleged crime, and attempting to salt the path of any court support.

In Omaha, Nebraska, on the wide open prairies away from whatever might remain of an adversarial press, the Douglas County prosecutor, Matt Kuhse, is trying to game this thirist, and this fear, by making it a condition of a plea bargain that the large support network of the half dozen people arrested in March for blowing air horns and banging drums at a pro-Trump MAGA rally not be allowed in an open court. Prosecutor Matt has nothing more than his own fear to use as wedge to drive between people due to a lack of evidence of criminal activity. The goal is to force people to self-ostracize from (post)-leftist organizing; to break networks and tower over the wreckage like a tiny god-emperor.

As anarchists we walk everywhere with the knowledge that the state surveils and criminalizes dissent down to the smallest act. Anarchism is sedition to every government and every form of coercion, and they fear publicly acknowledging this tacit agreement. As anarchists in solidarity with the criminal class, we seal that agreement with every step, hoping the next leads to the liberation of all peoples as we tear down prisons and jails brick by heavy brick, and with it, the crushing defeat of those that stand in the way. You know who you are, you capitalists; you politicians; you cops; you rapists; you soldiers; you white nationalists;

you prison guards; you landlords; you shitty tippers; you dog kickers; you prosecutors and accomplices. All yall fascists bound to lose.

Over 200 people arrested during Trump's inauguration are now each facing more than 70 years in prison because they were in the vague vicinity of a broken window. In the months since their arrests, the prosecution has continued piling blanket felony charges on the defendants, including journalists. This is punitive charging: the intention is clearly to terrorize the defendants into taking plea deals so that these inflated charges never come to a show trial.

This is not even the first time this century vast conspiracy charges were used to harass and intimidate protesters tossed in the US court system. The RNC Welcoming Committee helped to organize massive demonstrations during the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota. In retaliation, police raided several homes and arrested eight organizers, charging them with "Conspiracy to Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism." After two years of widely publicized struggle, all charges were dropped against three of the defendants, while the others plead to misdemeanors. The FBI used informants like Brandon Darby, previously known to anarchist organizers, as tools in their repression attempts.

It isn't only protestors at electoral spectacles either, in instances with far more serious implications, prosecutors are using the same strategy to terrorize people arrested defending Standing Rock in 2016, in hopes of bullying them into accepting guilty pleas. More than six hundred defendants are facing these charges. Residents of Ferguson, MO like Joshua Williams and Steve Martin are serving a decade in prison for defense of their home, while others with high profiles are tracked and executed by cops. The same repeated in Baltimore. Donta Betts got 15 years for arson, and Allan Bullock was facing a life sentence for rioting and vandalism of a cop car, but after court support pressure, he received 6 months and 5 years probation. However, after missing meetings with the probation office and court, he was arrested for probation violation and sentenced to over 7 years in prison.

Court support is one of our last weapons against the bulldozer that is the prison-industrial complex dead-set on disappearing any dissent into a violent little cage. Keep each other safe so we can live dangerously together.

15 Jul - Interview: Ray Luc Levasseur on the United Freedom Front and Jaan Laaman

Luther Blissett interviews former UFF member Ray Luc Lavasseur on the ongoing institutional repression of Jaan Laaman, one of two remaining prisoners from the Marxist insurrectionist group (the other being Tom Manning).

MORE:

by Luther Blissett (*Freedom News*)

Also known as the Ohio Seven, UFF was a US group in the 1970s and '80s which targeted banks and State facilities with bombings and robberies. In 1984-5, all members of the group were captured and sent down. Most are now released, but Jaan Laaman and Tom Manning are still in jail. Laaman has been locked up in Federal prisons since 1986 and Ray Luc Levasseur, one of Jaan's co-defendants who was released in 2004, explains the background:

In 1986 Jaan me and four others were convicted of conspiracy and bombings. These were the United Freedom Front bombings which targeted corporate and government property (i.e. no injuries). Following our sentences in April we (along with six others) were indicted in May, 1986 (District of Massachusetts) for seditious conspiracy and RICO. It was a very long case and just before the trial itself charges against Jaan were dismissed. I [Ray] went to trial and was found not guilty of seditious conspiracy. The jury deadlocked in favor of acquittal on the two RICO charges, a mistrial was declared and the RICO charges dismissed."

Three decades running and Jaan still resists. Laaman remains involved with the movement, builds alliances, authors articles and calls to action, and edits 4StruggleMag, a publication dedicated to liberating political prisoners in North

America. The Bureau of Prisons continues to punish Jaan in retaliation for his use of his First Amendment right: freedom of expression.

Since March 2017:

Jaan's snail mail is being interfered with or disappeared.

Jaan's phone privileges have been reduced or eliminated.

Jaan has been placed in a Secure Housing Unit.

This marks escalation. The Bureau of Prisons wants to move Laaman into a Communication Management Unit (CMU). Activist, prison abolition, and radical political networks have issued calls to action: pressure the Bureau of Prisons to not relocate Laaman, to reinstate his telephone privileges, and to stop interfering with his communications.

Let's keep up the pressure. Our pressure, our letters, our emails, and our postcards ARE important. They make a difference. To help explain the importance of our work, Ray Luc Levasseur agreed to an interview about Laaman. Levasseur was convicted along with his comrades in 1986. Levasseur was released on parole in 2004. Since his release, Levasseur has continued the struggle to free his comrades: Jaan Laaman and Tom Manning.

The interview

What's so different about this round of suppression from the Bureau of Prisons than prior incidents?

The difference in this round of repression against Jaan is the form it's taking. In the past year they have increasingly tried to silence him by eliminating his access to phone and email. (This impacts his personal communications with family and friends and his means to express his political views). Also, the BOP is now trying to place him in a CMU so that further isolating and silencing him is enforced by the CMU's as a matter of policy.

Could you help us understand some of the risks or dangers involved with being transferred? While I read a brief comment at *4Struggle* about the risks in transfer for Keven Rashid Johnson — "Transfers have been opportunities for prison officials to arrange for violence and abuse" — I'm not clear on what this means.

Depends of the reason for the transfer and the particular prisoner(s). The circumstances with Rashid are such that folks should be very concerned about his treatment. Most mistreatment takes place in seg (the most isolated part of a prison), and seg (segregation) is where all new transfers initially land. One example — after the "crack riots" in the '90s, those considered ringleaders were sent to ADX (Administrative Maximum, i.e. the federal government's "supermax" prison, the end of the line, solitary) and were assaulted by guards when they arrived. Those with medical/health issues are at increased risk when transferring and getting stuck in seg.

As a political prisoner, what's the lived difference between where Laaman has been housed, the SHU where he is at the moment, the transfer he faces, and the final destination: a CMU?

General population is where you want to be in prison. It allows for more space, contact with other prisoners, better conditions than more restricted housing. Conditions-wise the worst place to be is SHU (seg). Partly because seg is not designed for long term use, the conditions range from draconian to horrid, and the guards working seg units tend to range from nitwits to sadists. CMU is a separate, isolated unit within a larger prison. CMUs are small group isolation with highly restricted communications with the outside world.

As a former prisoner, do the letters and postcards we send really make a difference to those inside the wire?

For a prisoner letters and cards are a lifeline. Every PP and former PP I've met will tell you this. They make a positive difference to someone who would otherwise risk being buried by isolation.

When we send postcards to the BoP, the regional director, or the warden, do they read what we send? Do they have any impact?

Sometimes letters/cards/calls to the BOP make a positive difference, sometimes not. You can't always predict because so much depends on time, place, conditions and the particular details of whatever problem/issue is being addressed.

One thing this outside intervention does do is it demonstrates to the powers-that-be a prisoner may be isolated but he/she is not alone and that people are watching the situation. Prison administrators thrive on avoiding the public eye and oversight. When they're aware their actions are being monitored, they are more likely than they would be otherwise to avoid blatant abuse. Such efforts and "campaigns" can also serve as a small building block for further support of a political prisoner.

For people who have never served time, what's the most important thing we need to understand about Jaan's situation right now?

Solitary is hell in a very small space. People's letters to him help relieve the pain of seemingly endless days in that box. Understand that he is being punished for expressing his political views. Understand that the punishment will continue in another guise if he's transferred to a CMU. Support the Center for Constitutional Rights' ongoing suit against CMU's: Aref v. Lynch, 833 F.3d 242 (DC Cir 2016).

Please feel free to repost, link, and share this interview! We need ACTION as much as words right now.

You can find more information about how to take action today at <https://4strugglemag.org/2017/05/25/political-prisoner-jaan-laaman-is-still-being-held-in-segregation>

August 1st - Interview: Ray Luc Levasseur on Tom Manning of the United Freedom Front

American prisons try to silence and kill political prisoners slowly and painfully. Right now, that is what Federal Bureau of Prisons and the Warden of FCI Butner Medium II are trying to do to political prisoner and anti-imperialist Tom Manning. Last month Ray Luc Levasseur agreed to an interview about Ray and Tom's imprisoned United Freedom Front (UFF) comrade Jaan Laaman. While Tom is not facing transfer to a Communication Management Unit like Jaan, Tom's situation is equally dire but for different reasons.

Tom's confined to a wheelchair, is locked in segregation, has medical needs, and the prison's policy seems to be to let him die slowly and painfully. If it wasn't for activists and supporters, as well as Tom's lawyer, he would have likely received no treatment or surgery at all. Tom needs our support. Thus far, Tom has already spent 18 of the past 32 years imprisoned in solitary.

This interview with Ray is meant to help readers understand why that support is important. As a prisoner, Ray spent 13 years in solitary — including Marion and ADX. He understands first hand what comrades Jaan and Tom are living through on a daily basis. As Ray indicated in the last interview, it is vital that people keep writing Tom, showing Tom and the prison that he has our support. It's also a way to consistently keep pressure up on the warden and the guards.

I understand Tom's been moved to a new prison. What do people need to know about this move?

Tom was moved to a different prison, not a new one. From the Federal Medical Center (FMC) at Butner to the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) II at Butner. This move is intended to punish him. Immediately upon his arrival to the FCI he was placed in segregation, i.e. solitary. He is in Administrative segregation as he has not been charged with any disciplinary violation. This is a man who is wheelchair-bound and has serious medical problems. In segregation he has no access to email and is restricted to one phone every 30 days. He has no access to physical therapy, which he needs. A prisoner in segregation is more likely to have their medical needs ignored than a prisoner in general population.

Is there any reason for us to be concerned about his relocation?

In addition to the above, Tom was at the FMC for almost seven years before being transferred to the FCI. The first three of those years he was kept in a special isolation unit for 23-24 hours a day. Solitary confinement, especially of long duration, is inherently damaging to one's mental and physical health.

How is Tom's recovery from surgery going?

His most recent surgery for a badly infected toe was not done as soon as it should have been. It was only done after we had an attorney and medical doctor confront Butner officialdom about the obvious medical neglect.

It is too soon to be certain if there will be post-op complications but as of this writing, he is slowly recovering. But Tom has had other surgeries while at Butner that were done long after they should have been, the result of this medical neglect being he has never fully recovered from them. That's why he's still in a wheelchair and experiences so much pain.

How central was outside support in terms of getting Tom's operation?

Every surgery Tom has had while at Butner required the intervention of outside pressure from lawyers and medical professionals who support prisoners human and legal rights.

Do you know when Tom's eligible to apply for parole?

Approximately two years ago Tom applied for parole, had his initial hearing, and was denied. (Keep in mind — were he granted parole he wouldn't be released from prison. He'd be transferred to a state jurisdiction where a long prison sentence awaits him. The fact that the federal parole commission refuses to release him to his state sentence underscores the vindictiveness of the parole commission). Tom is now scheduled for an interim parole hearing in November, 2017.

In our support for Tom, what should we focus on?

Send Tom letters, he appreciates them. Send him downloaded or photocopied articles to read. He'll read them (he doesn't have much else of substance to read). If a "call" is issued by Jericho, Freedom Archives, ABCF or others for letters, emails and phone calls to Butner FCI or the federal Bureau of Prisons, send those letters and emails, and make those phone calls.

We don't request that level of support and intervention unless the matter is very serious. We're trying to get Tom out of segregation through lawyers. If this doesn't succeed and Tom remains in segregation we'll have to try another tactic.

30 Jul - What Is A Political Prisoner?

Please read the latest blog entry by Jalil Muntaqim and read through past entries at freejalil.com/blog.html

MORE:

We begin with an understanding that the U.S. Corporate Government does not recognize the existence of political prisoners. That is because all dissenters of racism and capitalist-imperialism are prosecuted in criminal courts. As a result, subject to the criminal code of persecution, anyone convicted in those courts are considered criminals subject to the laws of the jurisdiction of prosecution. And here lies the problem; despite our understanding that dissenters are primarily engaged in struggle for socio-economic and political change, in as much as ideological opposition to the status quo, we've yet to persuade a significant number of people to not only recognize the existence of but to support our political prisoners. In as much the

question is what are political prisoners, it is important to first consider why political prisoners would exist. To answer this question, I could go as far back as the U.S. Declaration of Independence, which states: “ . . . We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness...”.

I proclaim these words of July 4, 1776, immortalized as the determinative foundation for the existence of today’s political prisoners. If anyone doubts the significance of these words, and the intent of the so-called “Founding Fathers” of this now Corporate Government (despite many of them being slave holders), then, in my opinion, you have been severely duped. So, here we are in a continuing (r)evolutionary process to realize the true meaning of these words as a living mantra of a revolutionary experiment identified as the U.S. of A.

Therefore, it can be argued that American dissenters seek to manifest and realize the American mantra. Although they may voice their dissent in different languages, the heart of their dissent is codified in the Declaration of Independence.

This country’s history from its inception has been one of continuous turmoil, wars, insurrections and revolutionary initiatives to manifest people’s pursuit of happiness. Obviously, the system of capitalism creates class divisions and racism exacerbates these divisions ensuring conflict—in the dialectical unity and struggle of opposites. These conflicts are inherent in the nature of this system of government. By virtue of the nature of this system, logically and rationally, the system creates dissenters. For those who are anti-racist, anti-capitalist imperialism, and the varied minutiae of the many manifestations of such socio-economic and political conditions, they are subject to be persecuted by the U.S. Corporate Government.

Before anti-Vietnam war activists broke into a FBI field office in Media, Pennsylvania and subsequently discovered the COINTELPRO documents, there was a period in this country where anyone professing to be a Communist were blacklisted and some put in jail for failing to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. These ideological struggles of competing socio-economic interests served to enhance class conflicts as to who is and is not a true American patriot. This period, known as McCarthyism, was ruthless and created animosity among friends and families; such actions by HUAC were VIRULENTLY supported by J. Edgar Hoover, who declared Communists “The Red Menace.”

Today, the identity of America continues to be debated as right-wing conservatives seek to “purify” the moral and racial identity of America. They proclaim the “Founding Fathers” never imagined a multi-racial and multi-religious America. Of course, those who dissent and oppose what is now identified as Alt-Right politics are generally fighting against age-old ideals of white supremacy that forced the U.S. into a civil war. The slavocracy of the Confederacy believed themselves to beholden to no one other than a single white nationalist determination. Naturally, those who oppose white supremacy in all of its variant forms have commonly been accosted as dissenters. The U.S. Corporate Government has never supported dissenters of white supremacy until they are forced to do so by a mass movement. And, when forced to do, the Government reluctantly seeks to appease dissent, not deal with institutional or structural systems of racial and/or economic societal oppressions and divisions. The struggle against Jim Crow segregation is a case in point of the Government being forced to institute reforms and appease a “mass” civil rights movement. In fact, Black freedom has never been a given; it has always and continues to be fought for and must be maintained in a struggle.

For example, on March 9, 1968, J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI, issued a COINTELPRO memorandum that stated:

“Any negro youth or moderate who succumbs to revolutionary teachings, will be dead revolutionaries.”

It must be understood that FBI COINTELPRO did not begin with the Government's efforts to destroy the Black Panther Party. However, COINTELPRO actions were directed more at the BPP than any other target of the FBI. Of the 394 "black bag operations" and other illegal activities by the FBI COINTELPRO from 1967 to 1970, over 300 were directed specifically at the BPP, leading to approximately 33 Panthers being killed. In essence, the FBI COINTELPRO applied every method and tactic this U.S. Corporate Government uses to destabilize a country to destroy the BPP.

Given this deliberately brief synopsis of the history of dissent in this country, we must come to terms with identifying those who are captured and imprisoned for their dissent. In 1977, while in San Quentin prison, I initiated a national prisoners campaign to petition the U.N. on the existence of U.S. political prisoners and prison conditions. One of the successful occurrences during that overall campaign is that a journalist asked then U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Andrew Young were there political prisoners in the U.S. Ambassador Young responded "perhaps thousands" and for that admission, then President Jimmy Carter fired Andrew Young from his post. This is shared because, in 2017, former President Jimmy Carter wrote a letter to then President Obama, urging Obama to grant clemency to FALN political prisoner of war Oscar López Rivera. The irony of this event should not be lost on anyone, particularly those of us who continue to languish in prison 30-50 years.

Many of us were contemporaries of Nelson Mandela in his fight opposing Apartheid, while we fought against the institution of Jim Crow segregation. While Nelson Mandela was recognized around the world for his political internment, there is a collective failure to recognize and give honor to our courageous revolutionaries and freedom fighters. In my book, "We Are Our Own Liberators" in the chapter "A Case Against United States Domestic (neo)Colonialism", a detailed and legally established definition of political prisoners and political prisoners of war is presented. Suffice it to say that all those who have dissented and opposed white supremacy in all of its manifestations, socio-economic oppression, and racist police repressions at that point of dissent, and are imprisoned, are identified as political prisoners.

When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" he was announcing himself, and all those who were engaged in that struggle, as a political prisoner, which is a point in reference to Andrew Young's affirming perhaps there are thousands of political prisoners.

However, it is extremely important to delineate between those incarcerated for crimes of self-aggrandizement and economic survival and those who consciously fight the system of racist oppression. While we can agree that the system is exploitative, racist and divisive, our conscious response to such socio-economic and political realities must be analyzed and understood.

For example, a drug dealer or sex trafficker by no sense of the imagination would be considered a revolutionary, progressive or, when imprisoned, a political prisoner. His/her relationship to the system of racist capitalist oppression is reactionary and detrimental to the general welfare of the social order. Similarly, those engaged in other criminal economic pursuits, in spite of having no direct control of the socio-economic or political environment in which they must eke out an existence, are still manifesting behavior destructive to the overall revolutionary determination. These lumpen-proletarians are for the most part reactionary and a detriment to the struggle. It is only when they are educated and conscious of how their negative actions serve to preserve the system of repression that the potential exists for them to evolve toward a revolutionary posture and practice. This is especially important as it pertains to those engaged in street organizations, which generally prey upon the inhabitants of the oppressed community. Hence, when any of them in prison become politicized, their relationship toward the system of repression becomes a political one. These politicized prisoners forge a conscious political determination of opposition, joining the ranks of political prisoners.

It is extremely important to make this distinction between so-called social prisoners and the politicized prisoners. One is ultimately reactionary and potentially an enemy of the struggle, while the other has become a conscious participant in a revolutionary determination. As for those who are captured and

confined for their political dissent, they qualify as political prisoners, and those who committed deliberate acts of rebellion, fighting against the system of racist repression, can be identified as political prisoners of war. Also, if aligned to a politico-military apparatus, they must be given recognition, rights and protections of POW's under the covenant of Protocols I & II of the Geneva Convention. (see, We Are Our Own Liberators).

Here, I attempted to present a historical reality that Black people, in particular, have been engaged in a struggle for “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” since the inception of this country. There is a continuum from Crispus Attucks, to Denmark Vesey, Gabriel Prosser, Nat Turner and John Brown, and Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Ida B. Wells, Fannie Lou Hamer, Queen Mother(s) Moore & Iyaluua Ferguson to Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Dubois, Asa Phillip Randolph, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, Robert Williams and James Farmer to Imari Obadele, Huey Newton, Jonathan and George Jackson, Safiya Asya Bukhari, Assata Shakur, Angela Y. Davis and Yuri Kochiyama. This tradition of resistance is embodied and lives in Romaine Chip Fitzgerald, the longest imprisoned BPP member for nearly 50 years, in Ruchell Cinque Magee, who epitomizes the transition of a social prisoner into a staunch revolutionary political prisoner, being the first to proclaim himself a slave of the state by virtue of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Kevin Rashid Johnson, Sundiata Acoli, Herman Bell, Robert Seth Hayes, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, Russell Maroon Shoatz, Mumia Abu Jamal, David Gilbert, Tom Manning, Bill Dunne, also Leonard Peltier, Oso Blanco, Xinachtli (Alvaro) Luna Hernandez, Jaan Laaman, and Imam Jamil Al-Amin, to name a few identified as political prisoners of war. This rich history of dissent and resistance imposes on all Americans the need to reflect on the so-called “Founding Fathers” ideal for this country (see above quote).

Hence, in our opposition to racist capitalist-imperialism, we need to realize our collective obligation to preserve this awesome tradition of dissent established in the Declaration of Independence. Our history of resistance opposing this corrupt U.S. Corporate Government demands this of us, and it is our duty to support our political prisoners.

30 Jul - Book Review: Mumia Abu-Jamal's 'Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?'

Though he's spent the last 35 years incarcerated—and at least thirty of those years in isolation on death row, Mumia Abu-Jamal has remained steadfast in his activism, especially in regards to police brutality, criminal punishment, and Black liberation.

MORE:

by Roqayah Chamseddine (*Shadowproof*)

Abu-Jamal, who was convicted in 1982 of killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, maintains his innocence, and continues to fight for a new trial. In 2011, he had his death sentence overturned on constitutional grounds, and the state of Pennsylvania refused to pursue the death penalty, leaving Abu-Jamal to suffer a life sentence.

While incarcerated, Abu-Jamal has continued to be a target of state persecution. Between 2015 and 2016, he was denied hepatitis C treatment, and in March, after a lengthy battle with the Mahanoy State Correctional Institution in Philadelphia, Abu-Jamal was finally allowed to receive treatment. And yet, these obstacles have not kept Abu-Jamal from writing and further exposing the military industrial project as well as the larger criminal justice system.

In “Have Black Lives Ever Mattered?”, a recently published book by Abu-Jamal, he writes from his prison cell, taking readers on a journey from slavery's traumatizing past to the brutality of today's police state.

The collection of essays—the first of which was written in 1998—has the same voice as his previous works, only this time there is an arguably more aggressive call for mobilization.

The essay, “Hate Crimes,” features the story of James Byrd Jr., a black man who was brutally tortured and murdered by two white supremacists in the Texas town of Jasper. He juxtaposed this story with that of another black man in Virginia, who was killed by drinking buddies. This man was beaten, set on fire, and then decapitated.

What’s most striking to Abu-Jamal is how both stories were publicized by the media, and consumed by the public. He writes: “Why is one story a national firestorm, and another a local curiosity? Why is one an unquestioned hate crime, and the other merely a case of ‘boys being boys,’ or a bad mix of liquor and bad company? This is so because the media said it was so, and because the local police told them this.”

“When is a hate crime a hate crime? When it is a crime of hate, or when the police say it is? And if the cops are to be the arbiters of what is or isn’t a hate crime, who will judge the cops without bias?”

Abu-Jamal additionally highlights other violent attacks on black people, including those committed by law enforcement, asking each time, “Was this not a hate crime?”

In “Legalized Police Violence,” written in 1999, Abu-Jamal recounts the story of Tyeshia Miller, of Riverside, California, who was killed after police officers rained down a hail of bullets—24 of them—on her vehicle. Twelve of the bullets hit Miller.

The list of victims of police violence and racist brutality is long, and Abu-Jamal burns their names into our heads. His words pierce with as much power and impact as if they had been penned today.

“The suffering of the slain, because they are young and black, are all but forgotten in this unholy algebra that devalues black life while heightening the worth of the assailants because they work for the state,” he writes. That this still applies today, in its entirety, is chilling.

Abu-Jamal’s final passages center around what comes next. While drawing on the civil rights movement, and the black liberation movement, Abu-Jamal discusses present organizing efforts with Black Lives Matter, and the new police state these efforts face.

“Cops, armed with the awesome powers of the state, are now doing what Klansmen did several generations ago—and a new/ancient movement stirs from generations of chronic injustice, passionate indignation, and knowledge of successful insurrectional histories. When the state permits its servants to take the life of living, breathing, growing, wondrous children, it ceases to have a reason to exist in the world. It has failed utterly,” Abu-Jamal argues.

“Perhaps, that is the force that fuels today’s youth to fearlessly stand up against automatic weapons, armed Humvees, and sniper rifles, as have the youth of Ferguson. They are fueled by deep and moving forces that compel them to confront the state terror unleashed against them.”

This is “their time,” according to Abu-Jamal. In many ways, the elders have failed the youth, he contends, and now it is their turn to take up the fight.

31 Jul - Walter Bond is Out Of The SHU

Walter is out of the SHU after months in there and has written the following.

MORE:

On Father’s Day there was an altercation amongst the Puerto Ricans here at FCI Greenville. Me and 5 others were detained and held in the Special Housing Unit (SHU, or the hole) under investigation for assault. I was under investigation for about 40 days after which time I was released along with 2 others without any disciplinary action. I’m back in general population and all is well (as well as it can be in prison).

Thanks to everyone that wrote me while I was in the SHU your letters were inspiring and uplifting. I am very grateful for all the support I have received from the Vegan, Straight Edge and Anarchist communities over the years and am always amazed that after years in prison I'm still considered and thought about so much in the world! I only have about 3 years left, which for me is short time. so no worries.

It's too bad that the Earth and her Animal Nations have been sentenced to a far more nefarious prison sentence than I have ever faced! human tyranny, greed and gluttony have left all in a state of suffering! For the sake of consumerism and capitalist greed this Earth suffers and dies! and as long as that is the case we all must remain vigilante in the fight for eco-defense! Vegan Fucking Straight Edge! !Liberacion Animal Cueste Lo Que Cueste!

31 Jul - Free California political prisoners Romaine 'Chip' Fitzgerald and Ruchell 'Cinque' Magee

Resolution calling for the release of California political prisoners Romaine 'Chip' Fitzgerald and Ruchell 'Cinque' Magee by the National Lawyers Guild.

MORE:

by National Lawyers Guild Political Prisoner Support Committee (*San Francisco BayView*)

WHEREAS, Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald and Ruchell "Cinque" Magee have been incarcerated for their political views and actions in support of the Black Liberation Movement;

WHEREAS, even while in prison, Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald and Ruchell "Cinque" Magee continue to adhere to their principles;

WHEREAS, the term "political prisoner" is accepted throughout the international community;

WHEREAS, many of the political prisoners who have been imprisoned for decades were victims of an infamous and illegal counter-intelligence program of the U.S. government, coordinated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, called COINTELPRO;

WHEREAS, a congressional subcommittee, popularly known as the Church Committee, investigated COINTELPRO and concluded that "many of the techniques used would be intolerable in a democratic society even if all the targets had been involved in violent activity ...";

WHEREAS, one of the prime targets of COINTELPRO was the Black Panther Party;

WHEREAS, Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald joined the Southern California Chapter of the Black Panther Party in early 1969 as a teenager, and in September of that year, as a dedicated member of the Party, Chip was arrested in connection with a police shoot-out and tried for assault on police and related charges, including the murder of a security guard, and sentenced to death, but fortunately the death penalty was rescinded by the Supreme Court in 1972, so his death sentence was changed to a life sentence;

WHEREAS, Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald suffered a stroke in 1998 and is partially paralyzed, and, after 47 years, he is one of the longest held political prisoners in the world – Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald should be free;

WHEREAS, Ruchell "Cinque" Magee has been in prison since 1963;

WHEREAS, Ruchell "Cinque" Magee was politicized in prison and participated in the Aug. 7, 1970, Marin County Courthouse Rebellion – the attempted liberation of political prisoner George Jackson and the Soledad Brothers by George Jackson's younger brother, Jonathan Jackson;

WHEREAS, Ruchell “Cinque” Magee was seriously injured in the incident and subsequently pled guilty to aggravated kidnapping, and was sentenced in 1975 to life in prison, and has been denied parole numerous times;

WHEREAS, Ruchell “Cinque” Magee’s co-defendant, Professor Angela Y. Davis, was arrested and charged with having provided Jonathan Jackson with the legally purchased guns used on Aug. 7, 1970, and was later acquitted of all charges in a separate trial;

WHEREAS, Ruchell “Cinque” Magee, after 53 years, should be free;

WHEREAS, California State Gov. Edmund Gerald “Jerry” Brown Jr. is authorized to grant a commutation of sentence to people currently serving a sentence for a conviction by the California courts;

WHEREAS, many U.S. held political prisoners, such as Romaine “Chip” Fitzgerald, have increasingly serious medical issues which are not being treated and will die in prison unless they are released;

THEREFORE, be it hereby resolved that the National Lawyers Guild at its convention in New York City in 2016 calls upon California State Gov. Edmund Gerald “Jerry” Brown Jr. to commute the sentences of Romaine “Chip” Fitzgerald and Ruchell “Cinque” Magee and immediately grant their release.

THEREFORE, let it be further resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild reaffirms its support for Romaine “Chip” Fitzgerald and Ruchell “Cinque” Magee.

IMPLEMENTATION: This resolution is to be implemented by the NLG Political Prisoner Support Committee, in coordination with the NLG National Office, and the anticipated support of other committees and chapters to educate their members and the public about this issue.

2 Aug - #DropJ20: Campaign to Drop the Charges, End the Repression

U.S. Attorney Channing Phillips must immediately drop all charges against J20 defendants.

MORE:

On January 20, 2017, tens of thousands of people converged in Washington, D.C. for the #DisruptJ20 protests to oppose the inauguration of Donald Trump. A combination of blockades, marches, and festive demonstrations shattered the spectacle of a peaceful transition of power, and made it clear around the world that people do not recognize Trump’s authority. What could have been a day signaling resignation and defeat became a moment of defiance and resistance. As such, the protests on J20 set a tone and precedent for the events that unfolded shortly after, including the notably successful, mass direct actions at airports against Trump’s Muslim ban, as well as ongoing resistance to deportations. While Trump and his alt-right foot soldiers have encountered few meaningful obstacles from liberal politicians in the halls of power, grassroots resistance has continued to prove a substantial force.

Unfortunately, however, with resistance comes repression. In addition to shooting pepper spray and concussion grenades indiscriminately at protesters, including children, the elderly, and people with disabilities, DC police cordoned off an entire block and mass arrested more than 230 people in an attempt to stop an anti-capitalist and anti-fascist march. On April 27, the U.S. Attorney Channing Phillips issued an indictment, charging more than 200 people with eight felonies each—inciting to riot, rioting, conspiracy to riot, and five counts of property destruction—punishable by 75 years in prison.

With these heightened charges the state is trying to set a precedent for harsh crackdowns of disruptive protest in the future, so that Trump can proceed with his agenda unimpeded by anything but symbolic hand-wringing. This strategy corresponds with a broader wave of repression and reaction, from the arrests and grand jury investigations of Indigenous water protectors at #StandingRock to attacks against #BlackLivesMatter and black-led uprisings against police brutality.

Just as all of our struggles are connected, we understand these arrests to represent a real threat to all efforts towards true freedom, dignity, and autonomy. We stand in solidarity with J20 defendants and strongly oppose this crackdown on dissidents. We call on U.S. Attorney Channing Phillips to immediately drop all charges against J20 defendants.

Call-In Campaign

Please join us in calling for these charges to be dropped!

Call US Attorney Channing Phillips at 202.252.7566, or send a letter to the Judiciary Center Building, 555 Fourth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20530.

Sample Script:

Make the below script your own. You want this to be a human interaction. If you live outside of DC, emphasize that people from all over the country came to DC to protest, and that the actions of the police represent DC to everyone who may come here to make their voice heard.

Hello, my name is _____ and I live at _____.

I'm calling [writing] to demand that the charges against the protestors who were mass arrested on Inauguration Day be dismissed.

The conduct of the DC Metropolitan Police Department was unacceptable, and more importantly, it was unlawful. They unleashed chemical agents and concussion grenades against the crowd without provocation, they used police lines to cut off an entire city block, and then indiscriminately arrested over two hundred people after holding them in the kettle for hours.

A report from the Office of Police Complaints notes that in doing so, the MPD broke multiple sections of the First Amendment Assemblies Act, in addition to several sections of their own Standard Operating Procedures. As you know, the ACLU has also filed a civil lawsuit over the MPD's actions including allegations of harsh treatment of arrestees.

These policies were put into place after Peter Newsham ordered the mass arrest of over 400 people in 2002, an arrest which was deemed illegal in a civil lawsuit that cost the District millions of dollars. Now the exact same officer has violated the policies put into place specifically because of his prior misconduct. I understand that the MPD is refusing to release documents to the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund regarding Newsham's conduct on Inauguration Day, which is also required by law under the First Amendment Assemblies Act. I believe that is because the MPD know it will reveal more details about their unlawful behavior.

I believe that it is abundantly clear this mass arrest was illegal. Consequently, these charges should be dropped. People come from all over the country to make their voices heard in DC, and police here should be held to the highest standards when it comes to the rights of protesters. Should this case continue, it could set an unacceptable precedent of drag-net arrests against protestors that violates numerous constitutional rights to assemble and demonstrate.

Thank you for your time. Please drop these charges immediately.

Email Action

If you cannot call or write a letter, you can sign an online petition/email demanding that the charges be dropped at actionnetwork.org/petitions/dropj20-end-the-repression

Spread the Word About #DropJ20

For more the ongoing campaign, visit defendj20resistance.org/dropj20

There is an informational flyer on the #DropJ20 campaign as well as a flyer with the call-in script. Please circulate them widely.

2 Aug - On U.S. Political Prisoners by Herman Bell

Herman Bell wrote the following for Critical Resistance and it does a great job of explaining why we prioritize political prisoners while maintaining prison abolition as a goal.

MORE:

Your thoughtful words and warm greetings prompted me to express, as requested, a few thoughts on u.s. political prisoner (pp) support work and alternatives to incarceration.

How do organizations work to support pps and simultaneously work to abolish the prison industrial complex? First, it's crucial that people are educated on u.s. political prisoners, and that PPs not be regarded as a label or slogan, or as a poster or category but as passionate, caring human beings; devoted social activists imprisoned by the state to punish and silence them for their advocacy in the social justice struggle, including humane treatment of the earth, the environment and all living things on the planet.

These are people you know; some of whom you know personally and who should be widely known and revered by freedom loving people everywhere. They are not martyrs. They have no wish to be thought of as such. Their bodies bled in the streets, were frequently soaked by water cannons at demos, and as with others, desperately gasped for fresh air outside choking fogs of tear-gas. Separated from wives, children, friends and community, sentenced to unimaginable prison time and unrelenting suffering. Militant? Yes! Rational? Yes! Staunch advocates for social justice? Yes! These are people you should want to know and support. And the greatest support you can give them is to demand their freedom or release on parole.

Supporters may come to realize that they are seeing themselves in these PPs and if seen in this regard, whatever is done to relieve their plight, to free them, becomes fixed in the social consciousness; and people draw strength and inspiration from that, from being part of something that is noble and good; especially from being part of the fight to rid the world of human suffering and deprivation. The writer Eduardo Galeano noted that:

"The world, which is the private property of a few, suffer from amnesia. It is not an innocent amnesia. The owners," he went on to say, "prefer not to remember that the world was born yearning to be a home for everyone."

And so people have reason to resist the present social arrangement.

With few exceptions u.s. PPs are not well known or represented in u.s. society (and u.s. corporate media, as expected, totally ignore them except to report an obituary or legal setback, like parole denial). This, on the one hand, is a continuation of state controlled media to silence dissent and protest, and on the other, is an illustration of ineffective PP education and support work for their release. Appeals for support and demands that PPs be released should always be in the forefront of any progressive public address, rather than, as is typically the case, at the end, sometimes not at all; or as an afterthought in closing remarks. Though the prevailing social climate offers hope.

When dissidents outside the u.s. speak of PPs, their own and those in other countries, seldom, if anything is ever said of u.s. PPs; and on the rare occasion when it is, it's so vaguely expressed as though to suggest it's of no significant concern. This especially speaks to ineffective domestic PP education and organizing support work. PP support work is an integral part of the social justice struggle against racism, poverty, discrimination, hunger, police violence, mass-incarceration, prison warehousing and crony-capitalism.

Thus in calling for prison abolition and alternatives to incarceration, a coherent alternative model would help (illustrated through use of skits, workshops, teach-ins, songs, art and the like) so that people may see

the sense of it for themselves. Suffering is not inevitable, alternatives are possible. Show how prisons are human warehouses where people are numbered and commodified like products on the shelf in a supermarket with unlimited space for more. Expose how the capitalist system (the exploitation of man by man for profit) has failed to meet basic human needs. As Comrade George Jackson observes: "The only way the exploiter can maintain his position is to create differences and maintain deformities." Show how diverted prison resources can be more productively used in education, job training, housing, health care, community programs, etc. Despite their power and beauty, words without deeds are useless. People have to demand change.

Vested interests: including the courts, police, prisons and all the local supply services whose livelihood depends on this arrangement ain't gonna roll-over and play nice simply because a new, humane and more efficient alternative to incarceration has been introduced.

Vested interest has a way of protecting itself and will use any and every means to discredit and destroy this alternative use of vital resources and humane treatment. The fight for it reveals alternatives, exposes contradictions, and is therefore worthy to undertake.

All power to the people and free all political prisoners!

2 Aug - An Open Letter to the FBI

Connor Stevens wrote the following this past 4th of July.

MORE:

I.

Explosions ripple across the republic and celebrations crowd the streets. In this patriotic orgy, one must ask: how many actually know the history of this nation? How many actually know the Constitution of the United States of America? How many know the Bill of Rights?

Over five years ago, the FBI oversaw the entrapment operation which led to my imprisonment and subsequent sentence of eight years plus lifetime probation. There are three others who received comparable sentences. In the course of this operation, the FBI violated the heart and letter of the Constitution and even broke your own rules. I know J. Edgar Hoover would be proud. Nevermind what the Founders would think. And we all know that basic human decency is just another casualty in your endless war of terror.

You do not really know me. But I know you pretty well. The all-American storm troopers simply following orders. Your masters directed you to undermine the Occupy movement, which was up to that point the greatest democratic movement in more than a generation. You were directed to target and demonize anarchists, and you obliged your masters.

I know this about FBI tactics: they include lying. Things like telling the grand jury whatever you need to, and then having no problems contradicting yourself later if expedient. And altering the transcripts of recordings to fit your pathetic narratives. The FBI doesn't pay all that well, so I must assume that you actually believe you are fighting for your nation, even as you obliterate the ideals this nation was founded upon, and lock up the youth of this republic.

Here in prison, I have a lot of time to reflect. I have often wondered how you live with yourselves.

You undermine the Bill of Rights and destroy lives for a living. And yet, to you, I am a terrorist. I, who take as sacred those three concepts: Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. I, who believe wholeheartedly that all are entitled to the pursuit of happiness. I, who worked my hands in the ill soil of the city to grow food, and worked to feed the poor. I am not pure or innocent. I have done too much damage to loved ones and the world around me. But my sins do not even approach the terror that you have brought into this world.

Do your dreams haunt you as my dreams haunt me?

I know that FBI agents are just pawns in their game. I know that if it wasn't you, someone just like you would be in your place.

However, I feel compelled to say something after these long hard years, across this gulf of silence, once your little circus was over. Now that this press conference is all but forgotten and the Republican National Convention is merely just one more mild trauma lingering in the hazy memory of that poor city, I want to tell you a few things.

It would cost the bureau and its partners a lot less to send young men to college, rather than entrap them and send them to prison. It would be so much easier to give the youth decent jobs. Even effective drug treatment pales in comparison to the costs of your paramilitary armies.

And all you do is make enemies.

II.

But who are we fooling?

It is a public secret that the FBI has always been a political police force. It is no wonder that the National Lawyers Guild has recognized us, the Cleveland 4, as political prisoners. It is my understanding that all of your actions are politically motivated.

The bureau has a lot of blood on its hands.

Five years in prison have tempered and matured my beliefs. I have acquired an education that one cannot possibly achieve outside these walls. I have come to know in my bones the meaning of words like oppression, violence, and loneliness. I have lived with chronic trauma. I have mastered the wretched art of silent weeping. I have come to know and love many of the human beings the FBI and other agencies ruin for a living. They are worth so much more than you will ever acknowledge. I have learned about nations and cultures the world over. I have read a thousand books. I know a great deal about what is wrong with the world, and how to resolve these problems.

I now have a deeper appreciation for those old white men some of us refer to as the Founding Fathers. They had their shortcomings, and they were essentially aristocrats seeking the expansion of their wealth and power. But some of them were truly brilliant and brave and put forth some splendid ideas, like those we find in the Bill of Rights.

There is another document some of those men attached their names to, which I am sure you are familiar with. They are words that I think we should study and take to heart. On this Fourth of July, while the Constitution is all but ignored and the executive has grown out of all proportion, and democracy – even of the representative type – is so evidently no longer the basis of governing, I think of the FBI, and I am reminded that after all that has transpired, this truth remains:

"Governments are instituted among [humanity], deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and institute new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in which form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

Towards a world without the State,
without cages or hierarchy,

For the sake of the next seven generations.

2 Aug - Katie Yow refuses to testify amid activist 'witch hunt'

North Carolina social worker and anarchist risks jail by not complying with order to attend federal grand jury.

MORE:

by Creede Newton (*Al Jazeera*)

An activist in the US state of North Carolina could face up to 18 months in jail for refusing to testify before a federal grand jury over the firebombing of a Republican Party office during the 2016 presidential election.

Katie Yow, a 31-year-old anarchist and social worker, decried the order, arguing that the secretive nature of grand juries enables the government to target activists without accountability.

Because witnesses' lawyers are not allowed in grand jury testimony sessions, Yow's supporters accuse the government of using the subpoena to intimidate activists and gather information on protest movements.

Their fears come at a time when hundreds of anti-Trump protesters are facing felony charges nationwide.

On Monday, dozens of supporters rallied outside the US Middle District Court while Yow was inside.

She later emerged and informed the crowd that a hearing over her fate had been scheduled for a later date.

Kris Hermes, an activist and legal worker affiliated with the Grand Jury Resistance Project, said the use of grand juries by the state occurs "in waves".

"It's a tool that becomes used by the state when political movements are gaining traction," he told *Al Jazeera*.

'I will never comply with this'

A grand jury is different from a trial jury in the US justice system because they are used to assist a prosecutor in deciding whether or not to bring criminal charges against an individual during an investigation.

With no judge present and no legal defence lawyer for the witness, the prosecutor explains the law to the jurors, decides what type of evidence jurors see and can effectively interrogate any witness they like.

Grand jury members and the prosecutor are also barred from revealing what took place during the hearing.

However, there are legal repercussions for refusing to appear, including being jailed for the duration of the grand jury, which can span up to 18 months.

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The FRSO members were planning trips to support Palestinian and Colombian political movements. They refused to cooperate with the grand jury, citing political oppression. While no charges have been made, it is unclear whether the investigation has ended.

More than 200 activists are currently facing 70 to 80 years in prison for protesting against Trump's inauguration on January 20 in Washington, DC, a move many view as an example of increased political pressure on anti-Trump activists.

Antiracist activists in Virginia have also accused police of a crackdown on their communities as far-right movements are allowed to organise and rally.

The Guilford County District Attorney's Office could not be reached for a comment.

Ortiz said that he and members of the anarchist movement across the country plan to support Yow until "the end".

8 Aug - 39 years in prison for MOVE members

Please read the latest commentary by Mumia Abu-Jamal, on the decades spent in prison by the MOVE 9.

MORE:

Early morning.

A time of rest, quiet and repose.

On August 8th, 1978, only the early birds in search of worms were stirring.

Also, cops assembled, heavily armed.

They attacked the MOVE House in Powelton Village, West Philadelphia, dozens, then hundreds and perhaps thousands of shots poured into the home. How could we know the number? For before night fell, the building would be shattered, razed into the dark, wet earth.

Water cannons pumped hundreds of gallons into the house, a deliberate attempt to flush MOVE people from their own communal home.

When they emerged, to escape drowning and bullets shot into the dark basement, men, women and children arose from the murky waters to find themselves facing dozens of cops, fiendishly pointing rifles and pistols at them.

Instinctively, they raised their arms to show that they weren't armed, to avoid being shot by the maddened coterie of cops.

Delbert Africa pulled himself out of a basement window, his arms raised above, his back and chest bare, only to be rifle-butted, slammed with a police helmet, and when he fell, pummeled, kicked repeatedly in his face and head. When he appeared in court for arraignment some hours later, his left eye looked more like a golf ball than an eyeball. Saliva ran down his chin, reflecting his broken jaw.

Almost all of the men were beaten, and what of the women?

They were driven to the banks of the Delaware River, where they heard cops arguing amongst themselves.

One cop said, "Let's rape them and throw them into the water!"

They were rerouted, and driven to the nearby House of Correction, a county prison, to await trial. What happened to them on August 8th, the hellistic rain of police gunfire, beatings, rape threats and incarceration, was nothing compared to what they faced in Philadelphia courtrooms, where they were denied their every right, including their alleged right to self-representation, beaten again when they refused to attend their own legal lynchings, and then, the lynchpin - convictions, and common sentences before Judge Edwin Malmed, of 30 to 100 years, for 3rd degree murder?!?!?

Malmed, during a phone call from me to the Frank Ford Show on WWDB-FM (where the judge was a guest) answered the question of who killed the cop, by saying, "I haven't the faintest idea."
9 people. Nine men and women. Nine MOVE members -- and 30 to 100 years!

Today, Aug. 8th of 2017, marks 39 years in prison for MOVE members, of which 7 survive.
Merle and Phil Africa have returned to the Source, under what can only be called suspicious circumstances.

Another fact: none of the imprisoned MOVE sisters had weapons charges.

Eddie Africa was never convicted of any degree of murder! His charges? Attempted assault.
I kid you not.
MOVE members are in prison today because they were MOVE members. Period.

They are guilty of nothing -- except resistance to a racist, brutal, corrupt system.
The same System that gave rise to mass incarceration on a scale that the world has never seen before.

Their sentence is an abomination.

Free Delbert, Eddie, Mike, Chuck, Janine, Janet and Debbie Africa!

17 Sept - Running Down the Walls

WHAT: 5k Run/Walk/Jog/Bike

WHEN: 2:00-7:00pm, Sunday, September 17th

WHERE: Prospect Park-- Lincoln Road/East Lake Drive, east of the Terrace Bridge

COST: \$10 registration (includes food and drinks afterwards)

MORE:

Every year, prisoners and supporters of political prisoners organize solidarity events with Running Down the Walls. In the last few years, we've had runs in Albuquerque (NM), Arcata (CA), Ashland (OR), Bellefonte (PA), Boston (MA), Buffalo (NY), Chico (CA), Denver (CO), Elmore (AL), Inez (KY), Los Angeles (CA), Marion (IL), Minneapolis (MN) New York (NY), USP Navosta (TX), Pelican Bay (CA), Phoenix (AZ), Tucson (AZ), Seattle (WA), and Toronto, Ontario. This year we hope to expand the amount of runs in prisons and other cities, as well as increase the amount of funds raised for community projects. NYC ABC's goal with this year's run is \$4,000. You can donate online by going to gumroad.com/nycabc

This year's run will take place on Sunday, September 17th at 2:00pm in solidarity and conjunction with runs that will take place in cities and prison yards across the country at the same time.

REGISTER AS, OR SPONSOR, A PARTICIPANT

To raise our goal of \$4,000, we need your support:

Promote – print and distribute this poster <<https://nycabc.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/rdtw2017-copy.pdf>> and/or this flyer <<https://nycabc.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/rdtw-2017-quarter-sheet.pdf>> to friends and local businesses, your doctor's office, laundromat, food co-op, wealthy benefactor, et cetera.

Run/walk/bike/roll in the 5k – We need participants who can run/walk/bike/roll the 5k and are able to collect financial pledges to offer as donations to the run. Download the brochure, complete with registration and sponsor form at https://nycabc.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/2017-participant_sponsor-brochure-back.pdf

Volunteer for the run – We need folks who are willing to staff a registration/literature table, hand out water, bike the route as street medics, and help chalk the route beforehand.

Donate online at gumroad.com/nycabc

Donate to the run/sponsor a participant – If you are not able to attend, but want to support this fundraising effort, please mail donations to:

NYC ABC

Post Office Box 110034

Brooklyn, New York 11211

Your donation of \$10 or more entitles you to the celebratory picnic after the event.

Each year, we split proceeds between the Anarchist Black Cross Federation's Warchest Program and a local organization. This year's partner group will be the 5 Borough Anti-Repression Committee (5BARC).

The Warchest Program:

The Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF) has initiated a program designed to send monthly checks to those Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War who have been receiving insufficient, little, or no financial support during their imprisonment. The Warchest program was initiated in November 1994. Its purpose is to collect monthly funds from groups and individual supporters, and send that money to Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War (PP/POW) via monthly checks. Over the last two decades, the ABCF warchest has dispensed over \$85,000 to political prisoners in the United States. Currently, there are ten imprisoned comrades who receive a monthly stipend as part of the program; they are:

David Gilbert, Hanif Bey, Herman Bell, Jaan Laaman, Jalil Muntaqim, Joseph Bowen, Malik Smith, Oso Blanco, Robert Seth Hayes, Ruchell Magee, Sundiata Acoli, Tom Manning, and Xinachtli (FKA Alvaro Luna Hernandez)

For more information, visit: abcf.net/warchest-program

5 Borough Anti-Repression Committee (5BARC):

The 5 Borough Anti-Repression Committee (5BARC) is dedicated to defending NYC #DisruptJ20 defendants who were mass arrested on inauguration day in Washington D.C. while protesting against everything Trump stands for. Each defendant now faces at least 8 felony charges which amount to 75 years

in prison. 5BARC aims to build a local coalition of organized supporters who will voice their opposition to these absurd charges. #DISMISSJ20

From the Q train, get off at the Prospect Park stop. Walk to Lincoln Road and turn right into the park. We'll be about 700 feet away.