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Updates for November 15th

20 Oct - Woman who took part in 2020 Grand Rapids uprising gets year in jail

A biased corporate media article follows--read with a critical eye.

MORE:

by John Tunison (*M Live*)

A 25-year-old woman who police say caused damage during the 2020 Grand Rapids riot has been sentenced to a year in jail.

Olive Marie Hull also must pay \$9,585 restitution to Sundance Grill & Bar and for damage to an ATM, court officials said.

She was sentenced Monday, Oct. 3 before Kent County Circuit Judge Christina Elmore on a charge of riot and other offenses.

Hull was given jail credit for 23 days already served.

Earlier testimony showed there was video evidence that showed Hull yelling at police officers in riot gear before she broke into Sundance Grill and caused thousands in damages.

The riot began after a peaceful protest in downtown Grand Rapids against police brutality after the May 25 killing of a Black man, George Floyd, 46, in Minneapolis.

As part of the sentence, Hull also is responsible along with other rioters in paying \$71,000 for malicious destruction of police or fire property.

31 Oct - Shell River Water Protector court victory!

On Monday, October 31, 2022, District Judge Doug Clark dismissed all charges against five of the "Shell River Seven" water protectors.

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The five include Kelly Maracle, Trish Weber, Mary Klein, Barbara With, and Cheryl Barnds. Judge Clark dismissed the cases on grounds that the State had failed to demonstrate probable cause to sustain all charges. In doing so, Judge Clark did not reach the Shell River defendants' treaty-based claims.

Several charges against the other two Shell River Seven water protectors—independent photojournalist K. Flo Razowsky and Winona LaDuke, Executive Director and co-founder of Honor the Earth—remain in place pending ongoing litigation.

The "Shell River Seven" were charged for peacefully standing up against the Line 3 tar sands pipeline in July 2021, which was forced under the Shell River at a time of extreme drought, violating Anishinaabe Treaty Rights and threatening the river's endangered mussels and other river life, as well as drinking water for millions.

"Criminalizing and over-charging protestors is a common tactic used by the State to scare activists and suppress movements. The criminalization of the Shell River defendants was no exception, and this dismissal is a powerful victory for water protectors," said attorney Claire Glenn. Glenn, the Line 3 Legal Fellow of the Water Protector Legal Collective (WPLC) and Civil Liberties Defense Center (CLDC),

represented Cheryl Barnds and will continue to jointly represent Winona LaDuke with Anishinaabe movement lawyer Frank Bibeau.

CLDC attorneys Lauren Regan and Sarah Alvarez represented the four other Shell River defendants whose cases were dismissed. "We are hopeful that the prosecutor will do the right thing and dismiss the other water protectors' cases that remain open in Wadena County, including that of Shell River guardian ad litem Winona LaDuke," Glenn added.

1 Nov - ELF Saboteur Joseph Dibee Sentenced to Time Served

As far as these things go, this is good news--no more prison time for Joseph Dibee, but potentially paralyzing restitution. As he should be, we praise Joseph for actions he took part in.

MORE:

by Ryan Fatica (*Unicorn Riot*)

Dibee is a former member of an autonomous cell of the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front, loose networks of activists who in the late 90s and early 2000s took responsibility for a string of attacks on industries, businesses, and government entities they saw as responsible for the mounting environmental crisis.

In 2005, in the midst of post-911 anti-terrorism fervor, the FBI rolled out Operation Backfire, which ultimately led to the indictment of nearly 20 people on serious felony charges. Although Dibee was not initially charged in the case, he was subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury to testify against another activist. When confronted with the choice of whether or not to cooperate, or 'snitch,' Dibee chose to flee to Syria, his family's country of origin. Shortly thereafter, he was indicted in a sweeping conspiracy case.

In summer 2018, Dibee was captured in José Martí International Airport in Havana, Cuba on his way home from a business trip in Ecuador and was held by Cuban authorities for several days. According to Dibee, he was tortured, threatened with execution, and held without food or water. On August 9, 2018, he was turned over to the FBI and extradited to the United States.

In April 2022, after nearly two years of pre-trial incarceration, Dibee signed a plea agreement admitting to his participation in a conspiracy to commit arson at Cavel West, a meat packing facility in Oregon that was known for slaughtering wild horses, and at a Bureau of Land Management horse facility near Litchfield, California.

Today, two years and five months after his initial capture, Dibee appeared remotely before Federal Judge Ann Aiken's court in Eugene, Oregon for sentencing. The prosecution asked the court to sentence Dibee to 87 months in prison, citing the severity of his crimes and his time on the run as reasons for a harsher sentence. Ultimately, Judge Aiken would reject that logic saying that time away from one's family is always a punishment, whether one is in Syria, Russia, or in prison.

"Syria and Russia were not recreational destinations" at this time, the judge said.

In her lengthy statement, Judge Aiken cited Dibee's 29 months of pre-trial incarceration, during which he was attacked by a white supremacist and later contracted COVID-19, as well as his years of self-imposed banishment abroad, as reasons for issuing the sentence of time served.

The judge also spoke at length about Dibee's decades of efforts while he was on the run in Syria, Russia, and Ecuador to use his engineering skills to advance environmental causes.

Aiken also cited Dibee's claim that he was tortured by Cuban authorities when he was captured in Havana. Dibee said they left him without water for days and told him that if he didn't confess, they'd take him on a plane and drop him in the ocean and he would never be found.

"I don't think an imagination could dream up" such stories, Aiken said.

She initially sentenced Dibee to pay more than \$1.3 million in restitution to those entities targeted in his attacks, but decided to table the issue of restitution for a future hearing after Dibee's attorney objected.

The judge cited Dibee's lack of financial resources at present, saying he is not likely to be able to pay restitution soon "unless he strikes it rich" by creating a life changing technology, which Judge Aiken admitted "seems possible."

While on the lam, Dibee taught environmental engineering at a university in Syria, even helping to plan a national project on renewable energy. In Russia, he started a business recycling used fuels into biodiesel. In Ecuador, he agreed to create a technology for ecologically sound gold mining to mitigate the dangers of mercury and other toxins involved in current technologies.

"Frankly, this country needs some of the technologies he's able to craft," the judge said.

1 Nov - Birthday call for immediate release of Ed Poindexter

Friends and supporters of Edward Poindexter gathered on November 1st in Omaha to call for his immediate release from the Nebraska State Penitentiary where he is serving a life sentence for the 1970 bombing murder of Patrolman Larry Minard.

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by Michael Richardson (*Richardson Reports*)

Poindexter was convicted at a two-week controversial trial in April 1971 for the killing of Minard despite no physical evidence linking him to the crime. The trial was marred by conflicting police testimony; perjured testimony by Duane Peak, the confessed bomber; withheld evidence from Federal Bureau of Investigation Laboratory; and spurious dynamite evidence from the Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms Laboratory.

Poindexter, leader of the National Committee to Combat Fascism, was a target of the infamous COINTELPRO operation directed by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover in his clandestine war against the Black Panthers. Preston Love, a respected community leader, led the call for freedom on Ed Poindexter's birthday.

"We gather here to publicly wish Ed Poindexter a happy 78th birthday, but we rush to mention that Mr. Poindexter celebrates his birthday this year, as he has for the last 52 years, behind bars. Twice as many years as he has celebrated as a free man. He was 26 years old when he went in. He has literally spent 2/3 of his life in prison. We stand today with cheers and tears for Ed Poindexter. Most of us believe that Ed Poindexter, who was convicted of a crime he did not commit, is innocent, and that his trial was rocked with inconsistencies and questionable evidence."

"We angrily demand that Ed Poindexter be released, and that he spend not another birthday incarcerated, if he lives to that point. Ed Poindexter is very ill, he uses a wheelchair, he receives dialysis six days a week, has repeatedly been denied due process, as it relates to his potential release via parole. Ed Poindexter is a product of the 60's, and a product of repeated, long standing, unforgiving hate, and lack of humanity on the part of those who think he should die in prison, in spite of the facts of his trial and the facts of his exemplary behavior for 52 years."

"Ed Poindexter is not a threat to society, except for maybe he is a threat to the conscience and humanity of society. Ed Poindexter should be released. At minimum, the Pardons Board should commute his sentence to time served, and release him."

Co-defendant David Rice [Wopashitwe Eyen Mondo we Langa] died at the prison in March 2016 while serving his life sentence. Duane Peak, the confessed killer, never served a day in prison in exchange for his testimony implicating Poindexter and Rice. The aged, ailing Poindexter continues to proclaim his innocence, but makes it clear he does not seek sympathy, he seeks justice.

Preston Love summed it up, "Let him out now."

1 Nov - Confessions and Self Criticisms by Dan Baker

Please enjoy the latest from Dan Baker.

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I just had another experience that's been happening more frequently lately: A clumsy informant approaches me with flattery and feigned interest in politics and philosophy, then makes a bold and ridiculous statement, usually about how they "want to kill the President" or "make a bomb" or something equally reckless, and they try to draw me into their verbal trap.

I offer the following self-criticisms and confessions: I regret that I have never, and never will plan or attempt any kind of violence to any politician, ever. I don't want to kill the President, I don't want to kill any past President, not even Trump, and I am ashamed of my cowardice on this subject. I offer this as a self-criticism. Also, in Syria I did not actually shoot anyone, despite my previously bragging the opposite. I just wanted to be a medic and I was assigned to carry the sniper rifle. I intentionally missed every time I shot at ISIS Jihadis. My only goal was to drive them away while treating the wounded and leading civilians to safety.

For most of my life I've lived like a Buddhist monk, and that's how I intend to spend the rest of my life. I may give my ideological support to freedom fighters and be a medic for them if I can, but I will be under intense scrutiny and observation, for life. Any hypothetical plot involving me would be doomed to failure. I can't fight your battles for you.

If you want to do any direct action the keep it to yourself. If you want to lose a battle, then talk about it first. I've had undercovers and informants trying to bait me into fictional schemes to trap me for years. One tried to get me to discuss "robbing a bank". Another tried to get me to say things about explosives and politicians. I have zero interest in such plots and I'm extremely suspicious of flattery, planned violence and strangers. In general, I'm very lazy and peaceful, I just want to garden and do yoga.

Governments who fail to protect kids, because they are scared of school shooters, also criminalize otherwise harmless people, like myself, and parents of children being shot by school shooters. Cops need to justify bloated budgets by manufacturing crimes where otherwise would be none. Don't approach me with your wingnut plots. Anyone who does is a cop, a snitch, or an idiot.

For the rest of my life, I will be laying low, staying out of trouble and living a peaceful life on non-violence. I'll continue to be reading and writing, feeding people, being a medic and a caretaker. There is no plot to do anything violent, just a constant stream of criticism for all authority figures and mutual aid for political prisoners. So, if I'm brought up on charges in the future know that it's a set up, and that right now, today in this prison, FCI Memphis, people working for cops and federal agents are still trying to bait me into false charges. To them I say: Leave me alone! Stop harassing me! I just want to live a quiet life!

I won't be carrying guns or weapons. I don't, and won't and have never sold drugs. I forgive you feds and cops and lawyers. I don't want revenge for you locking me up. All I want is to realize enlightenment and

liberation while helping others through community service. To my more militant friends, I say “don’t talk about it, be about it” and “the medium is the message”. But, leave me out of it because I am being followed and watched, as are all people who have been to prison, especially federal prison.

To sum up this current situation, this government is continuing to try to set me up and accuse me of even more false charges. Please spread the word and raise awareness of this strategy. Help me and watch out for this in your lives. I’ll be sending this message out via email, snail mail, and by telephone. Even today I was approached by an informant who tried to bait me into saying terrible and ridiculous things. All of this is beyond me. I am a simple person and I want no part of any violence or deception.

Living a simple, honest, nonviolent life of growing fruits and vegetables and providing basic first aid and medical care is my life’s goal, along with the priority of yoga and meditation. I am retired from direct actions and I never did much in that arena anyway, which makes my imprisonment that much more ridiculous.

I have been all big talk in the past to dissuade bullies, but now I am afraid to exercise free speech in this country. I am even afraid to defend myself. I offer my forced silence and non-violence as a self-criticism. I have no rights. The police and feds have ruined my life.

November 3rd - Selfless Anarchism in Action

In a previous essay we explored how to cultivate motivation for direct actions, and to visualize how to make meaningful progress toward the liberation of all beings, in detail. We will now build on that with specific examples and further motivations. Obviously, we can be moved by current events, like the Women’s Revolution in Rojava and the more recent uprising of women in Iran, and the global support pouring in for that struggle. There is also the regressive efforts of sexist religious fanatics in Amerikkka struggling to take away women’s bodily autonomy which need to be opposed. Ignoring these will only allow them to go further and further, slowing breaking down the healthy boundaries of progress that protect women’s rights.

If you still lack motivation to take direct actions then feel free to resort to the media of modern capitalism itself, which can be used against itself. I would like you, the reader, to respond to me directly. Tell me a revolutionary story. Tell me how someone defended the Earth, how someone resisted oppression. We have many examples, and we have many fictional stories too. The true stories of the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, Algeria, Vietnam, Kurdistan, Cuba, Venezuela and so on. A thrilling example is the movie “Beritan” which is available for free on YouTube. This film, produced by actual activists and revolutionaries, some of whom I was honored to meet in person in Rojava, tells the true story of a Kurdish woman named Beritan, who was a revolutionary guerrilla fighting against forces of oppression. She and her lover sacrificed their relationship to join the revolution. I met the man who played Beritan’s lover in this movie. He has striking blue eyes. Beritan was betrayed and her team was attacked on a mountain, fighting to the last partisan. She refused to surrender, surrounded and outnumbered, and when she ran out of ammunition, she smashed her own rifle and threw herself off a cliff rather face the humiliation of capture at the hands of misogynistic men. Her act of defiance moved the enemy deeply and many of them renounced their cause. Please watch this movie, it was filmed with real weapons instead of special effects, and realistically shows what modern combat is like. When I got home from Rojava I received death threats from Turkish soldiers who sent me pictures and videos of themselves killing and abusing Kurdish women. This struggle is still going on. Another more recent film is “Les Filles du Soleil”, “The Women of the Sun”, which shows Kurdish women organizing and fighting back against Islamic jihadis in Syria during the recent civil war, fighting to rescue their children and take back their homes. We grew up with shows and movies like Captain Planet, Fern Gulley, Hoot, Free Willy, Avatar the Last Airbender, Avatar (with the blue aliens), Star Wars, The Expanse, The Handmaid’s Tale, even Harry Potter. These shows include stories where the characters go ‘underground,’ live on the road, on the run, in resistance, going through hardships like lack of food, vitamins, nutrients, coffee, emotional and mental health support, facing violence of a large force of oppression that outnumbers and outguns them. They defend the environment from polluters and deforestation, protect endangered species, free animals from

captivity and resist dogmatic mysticism and tyranny. There is a movie similar to *Beritan*, but I can't remember the name, which is also on YouTube. This film shows two Kurdish men who are living in a hideout deep in the mountains. In their isolation they play chess, listen to the radio and await orders. They play guitar, smoke, eat poor quality food, discuss politics and ideology and read revolutionary books. One day, after many months of waiting, they get a call on the radio and dig themselves out of their snowed in shelter. They struggle through the difficult terrain in the freezing mountain weather. One of them gets sick. They hide from patrols of fascist forces and helicopters with clever means, like umbrellas and tarps painted white to look like snow drifts on rocks. Eventually, after dealing with twisted ankles, freezing mountain streams and dangerous climbs, they reach their target and attack, ambushing an enemy unseen to the viewer. They deplete their ammunition and retreat, pushing themselves across the treacherous terrain, unable to stop to build a fire. One of them succumbs to hypothermia and disease and eventually dies from the illness and freezing cold. His friend is filled with despair at the loss of his comrade, but they both seem to understand that this was the choice they made, to dedicate their lives, and deaths, to the struggle. In this they find meaning in their suffering. This is the reality of a revolutionary struggle. Other fictional accounts are found in the novels "Kraken Calling" and "After the Revolution."

Previously we started where we are and radiate outward to make practical progress a reality. We do this again by focusing on the breath, wherever we are. We need fresh, clean air to breath, more than even water and food. In order to have clean air we need to transition away from fossil fuels and put an end to pollution. Major contributors to air pollution include the meat industry and coal burning. So these are sources we can bring our attentions to right away in order to defend our lives and the lives of others from needless suffering as the hands of those driven by profits. When you see a 'coal roller', a truck driver who has taken it upon themselves to attach devices to their vehicle which spew massive amounts of black smoke, take it upon yourself to shut that shit down. This is an act of self-defense, the right to clean, fresh air, a life free of lung cancer. In the positive aspect we can plant trees and grow edible gardens and food forests in order to protect and purify the air. The act of planting trees helps us make acts that will bear fruit long after we are gone.

Clean drinking water is another basic human right. This was brought up in the previous essay. We can take direct actions to protect water where it is being polluted. Only by making it unprofitable for those who pollute the air and water can we defend our right to a healthy life free of preventable disease. We can go to where people are without clean drinking water and deliver bottled water to them in an emergency. But this is a temporary solution which only profits companies like Nestle, who actually try to patent water so they can monopolize the sale of drinkable water. This also simultaneously pollutes the environment with the water bottles. Every front like war zone is littered with as many empty water bottles as shell casings from expended ammunition. The Earth Liberation activists have made great examples for us to follow in defending the water, and the Water Protectors fighting against oil pipelines have also set the bar high for us. They need our help when they face the fury of the state for their actions of self-defense. Jessica Reznicek is one such water protector. I offer the self-criticism that years ago my friend Shareshten Kerry invited me to join her in defending the water at Standing Rock and I was not yet conscious enough to join her, distracted as I was by my own selfish ambitions and the struggle to survive late-stage capitalism. But her efforts to raise my awareness did spark a chain reaction which led me to full time activism. I hope she reads this one day and knows that I respect and admire her.

Healthy food is another foundation of human rights and liberation. This is also related to clean air. We can grow our own food, collect food that capitalist supermarkets throw out and distribute it to the hungry. Food pantries and soup kitchens are needed now more than ever. My friends make great works in this area and I send them all my love and regards for their progress. They are doing this better than I ever did and I hope to keep up with them when I get out of prison. Everyone has a right to healthy food. One way to ensure this is to eat vegan or vegetarian. We should also be reasonable and not alienate allies who do not share our vegan lifestyle, and distribute whatever food is available, even giving meat to people who eat it. No one likes fanatics, but we can be radical in our own private spaces and in public when we are not feeding meat eaters. This also relates to the excellent works of Animal Liberation Activists, who free farm animals from lives of slavery and suffering, leading to mechanical death. They have liberated horses and cattle, sheep and

animals slaughtered for their fur. This kind of liberation is very symbolic and powerful merit. When humans treat animals as commodities for meat and skin and fur they are really setting the stage for this kind of treatment for other people, in wars and prisons and factories. There is Hindu prophecy that says that one day humans will farm each other for meat in an age of degradation. This is already a reality in wars for profit and the prison and military industrial complexes. The reality is that meat is an emergency food for times of survival, but people have gotten so used to nation state's constant forever wars that they live on canned foods, dehydrated foods and meat even when there is no war in their area at the time. So ideally, we can distribute vegan food, vitamins and means of purifying water which do not corrupt the environment or put living beings in danger of extinction. Life straw water filters are a better solution than bottled water in my opinion. But I offer the self-criticism that I have used much bottled water on the front lines and left many empty bottles there, contributing to the litter of the battlefield in the heat of the moment. All people need are fruits, veggies, carbohydrates and plant-based proteins. The International Commune in Rojava is doing admirable work to find ways to provide these solutions for the community in sustainable and ecologically friendly ways, with ecological preserves, tree planting, organic farms, solar power, hydroelectric power and composting.

Everyone needs stable shelter. There is an illogical amount of homeless people in countries where empty homes sit unoccupied because no one can afford them. "Indecline" is one group who has taken a very creative direct action to help solve this problem. They cut up billboards owned by big companies and used the material to fabricate small houses for homeless people. Then they dropped these structures off at homeless camps. I have spent many years struggle against homelessness after becoming alienated from my family, who are white Christian nationalists. Once you are on the street it is extremely difficult to get out of homelessness without an infusion of cash, a permanent shelter near sources of water, food, transportation, education, medical care and a trade to work. Squatting is another solution. People simply occupy spaces which are habitable because they are not currently being used. Profits for landlords, banks and property owners are not more important the survival of individual lives. If you have seasonal homes in different locations and do not house the needy then I feel personally insulted by your lifestyle. Your comfort is a threat to my existence and the existence of entire armies of homeless people all over the world. Consider doing something to help the situation rather than make it worse. You could give one of your homes to become a safe house for activists. I have stayed at places like this, and when safe houses were not available my life was infinitely more dangerous and difficult.

People need health care for the effects of exposure, the stress of regular work and survival, and especially for the lifestyle of resistance. We need activists who are trained medics, EMT's, Paramedics, Medical Assistants, Nurses, Doctors and caregivers. People are needed who can treat wounded fighters and help homeless populations address specific problems, like addiction and exposure to the elements, extreme temperatures and malnutrition. Even many housed up people living in poverty require basic medical care and suffer from preventable diseases. There is the example of the Rainbow Gathering, which is a roaming tribe of hippies and assorted types who caravan from national forest to national forest to live a lifestyle of protest by rejecting the material excess of conventional society, called Babylon. They need educated and skilled friends to contribute to the culture they are building.

There is a need for skilled mentors of trades and crafts, and schools of these skills for building shelters, infrastructure outside of the nation state. In the revolutionary movement there is a huge amount of respect for the foundational trades, like carpenters, plumbers, welders, iron workers, auto mechanics, electricians and so on.

These skills require 10 to 20 years of daily practice, training and application of skills to create competence, mastery and eventually intuition. We all have an obligation to humanity to master a skill in addition to a general ability to 'adult', and to pass on this skill to the next generation. Some people are very good at surviving on the road with very little, and this is valuable. These kinds of levels of mastery amount to 10,000 to 20,000 hours of applied practice and work. This can be art, construction, medical care, food production, agriculture, making clothes, anything which contributes to the movement. We are all interdependent on these various fields, none of us is truly independent. We all rely on immigrant farm

workers and construction workers. We all rely on janitors and teachers. The idea that we are separate from one another is an illusion of the ego which stalls progress. It is like a wave or a series of mountains and valleys. We are individual waves of matter reaching for the sun and the stars, but we are still simultaneously and paradoxically one with the valley, just as much as we are individuals. This is why I recommend the mental exercise of reflecting on “no self, no negative self-talk, no inherent existence, just emptiness”. This exercise is the first of a two-part practice, the second being the visualization of a light manifesting as our ideal, our fullest potential, which is a compassionate and joyful member of a universal community complete with skillful means of accomplishing the liberation of all beings. So we are simultaneously hollow forms full of peaceful emptiness and we are, for all practical purposes, also individual and unique beings with specific needs and creative expressions. I don't recommend engaging in the extremes of completely hopeless nihilism or the extreme of egotistical selfishness. The ego really is bullshit, just a compilation of memories without an inherent existence. If there's an eternal soul, which is debatable, it is not the collection of memories that is our organic brain. This organ will not survive death. Ask any raver tripping on psychedelics, any physicist, any yogi or serious meditator who is not completely brainwashed by religious of patriarchy and hierarchy. There is a reality which is the ground of all being from which all forms emerge and to which all forms return.

When we encounter obstacles in our movement, we can consider the obstacles to be part of the path towards liberation. How we deal with obstacles is very important. It is crucial that we do not compromise our ideals in dealing with difficulties, so that we do not become the monsters and enemies that we struggle against. We have to take the moral high ground. both in our own eyes and the eyes of the world, who we are trying to call to arms in our cause. There is the saying that we can do better with honey than with vinegar, and that our kindness will be more effective to “force” a lover to kindness in return than force would move them to kindness by contrast.

Reflecting on these mental exercises can help us find an ideal as we strive to purify environments and bring everyone to liberation and their full potential. Fascists would have us believe that a great mass of workers toils so that a few can reach a state of superiority. This is the fundamental flaw of their ideology, that they must always strive against each other for superiority. We build each other up and strive for equality, so that everyone can experience the best of life in community with their neighbors, instead of at their expense. So we still have to dialogue with our allies and enemies and neutral parties in order to build and define ourselves and to struggle against those who consider themselves superior to others and harm the world in their attempts to dominate. We have an obligation to argue against terrible ideas, like slavery and caste and class. We must speak up when we hear these people, at work, at the market places, at parties and clubs and school, wherever they try to platform their hatred. It is a moral obligation and an act of self-defense for those who are targeted and for all of humanity to fight against these ideas. We must destroy bias and prejudice. Even within our own hearts and minds we must “kill the dominant male.” Instead, we cultivate love, compassion, joy and patience. Consider that a warrior monk who is attacked on the road does not consider it a “sin” to fight for survival, to teach a thief a magic life lesson by beating them within an inch of their life, but then also being responsible for nursing them back to health if the damage is extensive. When we hear people displaying racist “dog whistles”, micro-aggressions and outright hate speech, we have to say, “That's racist, your ideas are trash, I fundamentally reject everything you just said, and you need to fuck all the way off right now.” We should always be ready to stand on our beliefs and fight for that. It is often dangerous. We can use “verbal judo” and “Jedi mind tricks”. While we should not assume that others will agree with us or harmonize with our ideas, even if they don't openly disagree, we should not compromise on issues like racism, bigotry and sexism. We must cultivate the ability to argue patiently, with logic, wisdom, humor and wit. Don't let bullies interrupt and talk over you- finish your complete sentence without raising your voice, making eye contact, with your arms crossed. Study body language and put it into practice. Don't put blind faith in those who seem to agree with you, practice equanimity towards friends, enemies, and neutral parties- everyone is a potential spy, and 1 in 10 people are informants. Anyone with a loved one, an illness, addiction or a career can be used against you by states and organizations who have some leverage over them. So be careful about what you say and don't go too far, while drawing your opponent out to extend themselves too far. Bring other in to a conversation to back you up, and go to the aid of those being bullied, verbally or otherwise.

Consider if you would be willing or able to commit your body, speech and mind to a total transformation towards your highest ideals. This involves uprooting the programming of capitalist propaganda, hierarchy, patriarchy, selfish egotism, individualism, racism, bigotry and domination. Honestly examine yourself and see if you have been tricked into sexualizing any of the unwholesome ideologies and ask yourself if this is really healthy or just an inherited trauma. Think of the sacrifices of the cadres of revolutionary guerrilla worldwide over the years, from the beginning of “his” story, where resisters fought against the walled cities that enslaved countless peoples, especially women. The history of “civilization” is the history of the oppressions of women, also known as the domestication of cattle like people. There are also many peoples who have resisted for all time, like the Kurds, and they are naturally brave and strong, including the women, due to their preference for freedom over slavery. So, we can help them and become like them by imitating them until we get used to living free. We can also donate to revolutionaries, and panhandlers. activists, disaster relief, political prisoners and join them. We can give heart felt homemade gifts to friends without expectation of return. I will offer a self-criticism here that I was not a better, more revolutionary kind of friend in Rojava, where my friend Hiwa gave me a very nice birthday present of seeds, because he saw that I like to garden and grow things, even when conditions are not ideal. There is a ragged beauty in dystopia gardens springing up from the rusty ruins of a war-torn city. I feel the loss of Hiwa’s friendship deeply because he later shot himself in a fit of hopeless desperation. My other friend Dilsoz, whose name relates to the heart in Kurdish, gave me a very nice patch to wear on my uniform. I could have been a better friend, and I hope he is still doing well. I try to be a good friend to my defense committee back home, and remember birthdays and call and write them regularly. These connections define us and motivate us. We really must prioritize repaying other’s kindness, both the direct kindness of others and the indirect kindness of teaching us who and what to avoid by negative interactions. Other self-work includes uprooting attachment, to our homeland, to our ideas of what genders should be and how we want others to be, to political structures and luxuries and the illusion of security at the expense of real freedom. We can also uproot aversion, avoidance of discomfort, gossip and self-centeredness. I will offer another self-criticism, that on the front lines I failed to communicate effectively with my friend Karker while we were holding off the enemy jihadis. When we were ordered to take the VICE News journalists to safety Karker stayed behind with an Arab machine gunner and we were very worried about them. I felt torn because I was compelled to follow orders but I wanted to stay with my comrades. The next day we were all back in the same building on the front lines, minus the civilian reporters, who had been evacuated to safety. That day we were overrun and this time I made sure to communicate effectively and I was one of the last people to leave the building, after Karker and the Arab machine gunner went to safety before me. Myself and my team leader, a former Marine, stayed back and helped carry the wounded, cover those falling back, and carry the equipment left behind by the wounded, their weapons and bags. It was almost an argument between us, but my team leader turned out to be stronger with steadier nerves and he was the last to leave that day. I respect him for that. With his guidance I was able to focus through the stress to treat some of the wounded, and he even criticized and guided me through treating his own wounds later that day, when he was shot twice and slightly blown up. These are the high stress situations in which we really have to examine our hearts and decide what kind of person we want to be. Will you protect the civilians with your body and take them to safety? Will you stay and fight, and possibly die or be captured, while your friends escape? Will you succumb to shock and injuries or make yourself useful and help others after treating your own wounds? It is better to do the thinking now, because when the time comes you won’t be able to keep up with the details if you haven’t done all the thinking beforehand.

We can do some mental gymnastics to build up the fortitude for these situations, like cherishing our enemies. They teach us wisdom, force us to learn and use grand strategy and small-scale tactics. Enemies make us learn self-defense and cultivate fortitude, endurance, patience, and tolerance, both for friends and enemies. They give us a target for all of our primal energy, and help us define exactly what we are not, and who we are and want to be. In the absence of enemies, we can make deals with our friends to cultivate a harmless rivalry in order to leap frog one another in skills. We can also equalize ourselves and others. Everyone fears death, all being afraid of pain. So, we can help others in that respect, to ease their pain and rescue them from death. Almost everyone has seen an automobile accident or knows someone dealing with pain. Get involved, personally, in other’s lives, if they give you consent. Unconsciousness in a life and

death situation implies consent- you would probably want help if you were in a similar state. Out of ten patients they may all need ten different treatments, and ten beggars may all have different needs, so we must learn various skills and cultivate the means to help others and create the conditions in which everyone can be happy, healthy and free. We can also help others equally. When I was at the CHAZ/CHOP barricades we were attacked by a car full of gang members with guns. They had been provoked by someone in the crowd. They shot at me and my friends. I had been advised by the community not to bring firearms, so I didn't. I did bring lots of emergency medical supplies. These kids who were shooting at us were eventually run down by people with firearms and they crashed. I rushed forward with several friends, other street medics, and we treated the wounds of the kids who had been shooting at us. We were able to save one of them, despite gunshot wounds to the head. We may have been able to save the other if the police had not confiscated my extensive medical supplies the day before. But the point is to help all "others" equally, and in doing so you may win allies who were previously enemies. Caregivers are admirable in this, that they skillfully help others even when they are being unpleasant or combative. One must also consider that current friends can become enemies and we should still help them in certain circumstances, like when they cannot hurt us.

So we can engage in writing, debating, politics, direct conflict, elections, and raising and teaching kids and future generations. But when we are interacting with young people we should not be overbearing and fanatical like religious zealots. That will only alienate people. Casual, conversational ideology put in action through words, deeds and lifestyle, is much more powerful than preaching. In "Life of Pi", a lovely fictional story about an interfaith boy who survives a horrible situation at sea, Pi says that there would be more converts to Christianity if Christians said less and just left their Gideon Bibles in the hotel rooms for people to find when they need guidance during dark nights of the soul. In the same way we need to spread ideology, write books and pamphlets and leave them everywhere, without getting in the average pedestrian's face and interfering with their routine. It's like panhandling: no one likes aggressive panhandlers, scaring and bothering people, invading their personal space. Passive panhandling is much more effective, simply holding a sign at a busy intersection, perhaps at the top of a hill where it will take some time for the light to turn and people will be slowly climbing the hill. This is even spiritualized by Buddhist monks, with specific guidelines for when and how it is appropriate to beg and preach. Media is also an important way of reaching others. Videos, documentaries, and music are all necessary for a successful movement. I was deeply moved by Lee Brickly's music, and the revolutionary songs by Chumbawumba. Here are some more examples of Revolutionary music that moves me: ACAB by Iberia, ACAB by Sebastian Thunder/Babylon Race, ACAB by city morgue, ZillaKami and Nascar Aloe, Acid Rave Sex by Henrix, Animal Rights by deadmau5 and Wolfgang Gartner, BYOB by System of a Down, Bella Ciao, Bold Fenian Men by Judy Collins, everything by Anti Flag and Against Me!, Building the Barricades, Do You Hear the People Sing, and Red and Black in Les Miserables, Come out Ye Black and Tans, Fight for Your Right by the Beastie Boys, Forever Black America by Common and Gucci Mane, most of Rage Against the Machine songs, I Shall Be Released by Peter, Paul and Mary, I Shot the Sheriff by Bob Marley, War Is my Destiny and other songs by Immortal Technique and Ill Bill, I'm Gonna Join that One Big Union by Woodie Guthrie, Imagine, Lie, Cheat, Steal and other songs by Run the Jewels, Living with War by Neil Young, Louisiana 1927 by Randy Newman, Strange Fruit by Billie Holiday, Mississippi Goddamn, March of the Levelers, the Diggers Song, Masters of War, Megalomaniac, When the President Talks to God, War Pigs, Oxygen by Willie Mason, Religious Wars by Fuck You Pay Me, Modern Day Emma Goldman, Rifles of the IRA, Sacco and Vanzetti by Christy Moore, Smashing of the Van, Sound of da Police by KRS One, The Guillotine by The Coup, The Last Gasp of the Patriarchy by Kris Bowers, The Revolution Will Not Be Televised by Gill Scott Heron, The Times They Are a Changin by Flogging Molly, This Land is Your Land, Waiting on a War by Foo Fighters, Waiting on the World to Change by John Mayer, WAP by Cardin B and Meghan thee Stallion, War by Outkast, War by Screwdriver, White People for Peace, Baby I'm an Anarchist and I was a Teenage Anarchist by Against Me, Pussy Riot, and so on. Here are some examples of works of art from INDECLINE: in 2012 they installed billboards reading "Dying for Work" and "Hope You're Happy Wall St." with a dummy hanging from a noose. In 2015 they created the Largest Piece of Illegal Graffiti in the World, writing "This land WAS our land" on a disused military runway in the Mojave Desert at (35.280664*N 117.397822*W). The same year they responded to Donald Trump's statement that illegal immigrants were "rapists" by spray

painting a mural depicting Trump with the slogan “!Rape Trump!” on an old border wall on U.S. territory about a mile from the Tijuana airport. In 2016 they glued names of Black people killed by police over the names on the Hollywood Walk of Fame stars. Also, in 2016 they glued life sized nude statues of Trump to the sidewalk in Cleveland, LA, New York, San Francisco and Seattle. In 2017 they tagged several Union Pacific trains, one like a tiger. In response to the murder of Heather Heyer at the 2017 Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville they hung eight effigies of KKK hooded and robed clowns, calling it Ku Klux Klowns. A sign on one said “If attacked by a mob of clowns go for the juggler.” In 2020 they made silicone heads of world “leaders” who are known to be corrupt, like Jair Bolsonaro, Vladimir Putin and of course, Trump, then used them as soccer balls. I’d like to see this done with Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s synthetic silicone face, and Bashar al Assad’s likeness. These people admire Hitler and Mussolini and we know what happened to them. GWAR and Kathy Griffith have also made very nice political art effigies of terrible people who are famous. We can also create billboards of the martyrs and victims of police violence, like they do in the Middle East. So go forth and be creative! We have a duty to mock authoritarians.

Direct actions are self-defense. Here are some examples from recent history: protecting the environment from urban sprawl, squatting, employing and housing the homeless, picking one homeless person to sponsor, studying pure mathematics, chemistry, engineering, physics, computer science, going camping, backpacking, learning and mastering a martial art, shooting safety, tactics and skills, practicing search and rescue drills, partner carry drills and learning emergency medical rescue basics. Create ethical rules of engagement, define yourself and how you will act in specific scenarios with detailed and repetitive drills. You can practice clearing buildings, defending a location and so on. There are many examples I cannot legally give here. So think about who and what you are willing to live and die for. Watch real combat footage and search and rescue videos. One source of these is a site called [funker](#). There is an excellent channel on YouTube called [Academy of Emergency Medicine](#), which is a long series of real life and death videos of combat medics in Iraq and Syria during the Syrian Civil War recently. From these you can learn how to treat gunshot wounds, sucking chest wounds, wounds to limbs and head, wounds with protruding organs, amputated and partially amputated limbs, shock, broken bones and more, including triage and how to deal with death and stress.

How would your ideal community’s self-defense function? Invite neighbors to discuss grievances and work together to find solutions to your personal and interpersonal problems. Expect to find difficulties and to experience failures, then continue to work anyway. Practice builds skill over long periods of time, with trial and error. We also need to build unions where we work. If you are ready to dedicate your life to a movement then form a network of secret cadres whose members prepare the masses for revolution by helping them identify the enemies of humanity, building confidence through practice, creativity and actively struggling, fighting with mobility and at barricades. These people should reject power and only use grassroots organizing, spontaneously. There should be no ranks, only partisans and allies. When something dramatic and dangerous must be done, consider doing it alone without involving anyone else, so that there is no opportunity for informants to divide the movement. Divide to attack and unite to build up community infrastructure. In some circumstances this dynamic must be reversed, but that would come at a later stage. All ambitious charismatics must be rejected, criticized and stripped of power. There should be no public office or political power for these cadres, it would be too dangerous and create dictators. They should distribute ideas and organize the masses. Like waves in the sea, no one rises above the others.

We can cultivate the habit of free communal life by learning to disobey unjust laws while getting along with our comrades and neighbors by practicing solidarity. Also practice daily acts of resistance, defiance, disobedience and solidarity. Sometimes all we can do are small things. But look at the brave Persian and Kurdish women of Iran. Some of them can take up arms, others can only make rude gestures of disrespect towards the dictator and morality polices, others openly show their faces by removing their head scarves in public. Everyone does what they can and faces the consequences together or alone, as circumstances unfold. There is no army that can resist the will of the working class. Look at the examples of Vietnam, Afghanistan, India, the IWW, Tsarist Russia, the Chinese emperor, and so on. There is even an anarchist autonomous zone forming in the Ukraine, and there is modern resistance in North and South America,

Russia and China. We are in global solidarity with all oppressed peoples everywhere. We do not want authoritarian communism, capitalism, democrats, republicans, or fascists.

Take inspiration from the myths of Prometheus and Lucifer, and ponder their so-called crimes and fates in these fictional stories. A real-life example we can draw practical inspiration from in the fight against the gods of slavery is Siddhartha Gautama the Buddha. Through seeking truth, we incur the wrath of authorities and for that history will remember us and set the example for future generations.

There is a civil war looming on the horizon. “Oh, the air is sultry and pregnant with lightning... The passion for destruction is a creative passion too!” – Mikhail Bakunin. It is time to pick a side, take a stand and build a brave new world in the ruins of the old pyramids and temples. Tear them down and use the bricks to build schools, homes and hospitals. If your “middle path” is an excuse to hide in your privilege and do nothing then you are really just demanding change but expecting others to do what you are too lazy and too afraid to do. This is not the The Middle Way, your frame of reference has been displaced by state propaganda. U.S. Democrats are center-right on the political compass in the eyes of the majority of the world beyond the border wall. We should use diplomacy but we should negotiate while advancing physically to add pressure. Do not trust diplomacy alone. It is a sacred duty to fight against oppressors, for all civil rights activists, rebels, revolutionaries, anarchists, leftists, true communists, communalists, communitarians, socialists, environmentalists, feminists, libertarians, humanitarians, medical personnel and lgbtq+ populations, with the battle cry of love and sympathy for all oppressed peoples, chanting the names of the martyrs. We have gotten used to the chains of wage slavery and bureaucratic “remedies”, we fail to realize our shameful state of captivity, limited in range by preventable disease and living expenses. No one is free until everyone is free. We demand true freedom, the freedom to survive the climate change genocide and inevitable supernova. We demand an end to all oppressors, whether Russian, Syrian, Turkish, Iranian, Amerikkkan, British monarch, Korean dictator, all monarchies, dictatorships, oligarchies and puppet and representative democracies. We need direct democracy. We don’t need borders, despots, states, patriotism or nationalities. Amerikkkan “freedom” is a lie sold by Walmart “culture”, shipped by FedEx and Amazon. I send all my support to the Amazon and FedEx workers going on strike to unionize.

Revolution is a necessary act of survival and self-defense. Wherever one being is oppressed we are all held back from the stars. The practical application of ideals is a difficult task but inevitable- it cannot be done by passive discussion of dead ideas and failed models. We need goodwill and unanimous cooperation, faith in humanity. It is time to update the conditions of our present-day structures. We no longer rely on myths for our hopes and dreams as we make them a reality.

4 Nov - “I’m Still Here” – Benefit for Political Prisoners

eMERGENCY heARTS has released a new track, featuring now-deceased former political prisoner Herman Wallace. 100% of sales to this track support U.S. political prisoners through the wonderful art and political project Certain Days: tiny.cc/StillHereBenefit

MORE:

The *Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar* is a joint fundraising and educational project between outside organizers across North America and political prisoner Xinachtli (s/n Alvaro Luna Hernandez) in Texas. We were happy to welcome founding members Herman Bell and Robert Seth Hayes (Rest in Power) home from prison in 2018, and founding member David Gilbert home from prison in 2021. We work from an anti-imperialist, anti-racist, anti-capitalist, feminist, queer- and trans-liberationist position.

5 Nov - Four Arrests Made In Chile In Relation To Attack On Meat Packing Plant

On the 18th of September the world woke up to the news that Grupo de Respuesta Animal had struck again in Chile, this time against a meat packaging facility that had been set alight. A few weeks later, GRA released a communique explaining their action.

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

Two days ago we heard the news that Chilean police had made four arrests in relation to that arson, claiming that the mobile phones of four people had been pinpointed into that location on the night of the action.

Today, the four comrades faced a judge, who has sent them to prison without possibility of bail whilst the cops investigate the case. They have not been charged and the filth could very easily be making up the evidence they've used to convince the judge to lock them up, but their case will be up for review in 70 days and until then they will remain behind bars.

Comrades in Chile have started to organise and donations as well as addresses for letter writing will be made public soon. We will publish those promptly after we have been made aware of how you can support.

6 Nov - Eric King Update

Eric has been on some form of commissary restriction or another for the last 4 years and will never walk another yard again, but his restrictions have finally been lifted!

MORE:

We would love to celebrate this and surprise him a bit. Basic small pleasures we often take for granted. Spoil him with sweets. Let him finally load up on enough stamps to respond to everybody. Lots and lots of peanut butter! If you drop a donation, we are going to group them together and send them via Western Union to surprise him”

Update from Eric

Hello friends, comrades, and government Nosey Nathans! I've been in ADX for about two months now and wanted to give a little update and talk over what things are like here.

This prison, more than any, exist to break spirits and disrupt connections to the real world. It was built specifically for that purpose. The isolation here is on a very deep level. There are days that pass where I literally speak to no one and hear no one else. Some folks have decades here; imagine if you can. It's brutal and sickening. This entire joint is a psychological war zone.

We are given TVs, which is cool, but you can get lost in them. It's very easy to give up on fitness, mail, reading, and live in the screen. That is 100% what they want, digital social control, screen shackles. I do lots of jogging in place when a show is on, lots of movement. I've been in the SHU the last 4 years, most of that time without radio or books let alone a TV. That time was brutal as shit but it did teach me how to set a routine, and to get by on very little...that's also easy for me to say knowing I'll be out in approximately 10 months, having done one year here...many don't have an outdate, or mail, or books coming. This is their life and those NOT swallowed by desperation are some of the strongest people imaginable.

Every day a big part of my routine is doing daily check-ins with myself, something I learned to do to keep despair at bay. I list all the things I'm thankful for, saying it out loud—usually while hitting lap Then I list all the good things about the current day I'm in—simple things like “the water was nice in the shower today” and massive things like “I got mail from my wife!” then all the good things tomorrow has in store— “[Manchester] United is on” ... “mail may come” ... “it's laundry day” ... “pancakes for breakfast” ...

My reality is that, with such limited communication with my family the days in here can get as dark as I allow them to. No one in here is going to hold my hand and make sure I'm ok ...it's on me. I need to make sure this odd hell doesn't get a hold of me ... lose just a little focus and a whole lot of darkness can sneak in. The only person who can hold you up on a daily basis is yourself, and you must do it.

I'm more fortunate than most. I'm short-timing. I have a fantastic wife, kids, and amazing comrades. I have a legal team fighting for me. I have a deep love of life and thankfully the Bureau hasn't dimmed my light yet. Mail can be super-fast one week, then take a month depending on what's going on. So if you've written me, please know that I'll try and respond as quickly as I can

Thank you to everyone sending books, letters, everything. Love and support is always needed and always appreciated. "we. all. we. Got."

Solidarity to those in ATL, wicked respect and admiration to the women in Iran, RIP to Kathy Boudin and Maroon... and solidarity and respect to our elders and comrades still inside; state and federally. This is a hard fight, a long fight, and a worthy fight.

All love and respect, friends. I'll write again soon, we're almost there...

Poem

Every day sucks
and things are ok also
Today could end up in tears
screams and dreams of revolutionary retribution
or weeping over "young Sheldon" throwbacks
cheering United, laughing w/" it's always sunny"
Either way no one will hear it
Either way I'll over feel it
All the sorrow held captive by these walls
the bodies may get out, everything else stays
what you do in here, is owned by you
what is done to you, who will ever know?
My scrubbed toilet, swept floor, daily fitness
all for me, no one else will ever see.. or care
any meaning, is the meaning I give it
Either a nihilistic nightmare
or the ultimate test of rebellious resilience
"A wall is just a wall" + suffering isn't a straight line
neither is strength, neither is victory
I'll win + lose twenty times today
then bounce back to fight tomorrow
Finding + savoring
million meaningless victories

November 10th - Eric's list: Ways the ADX is different from SHU

1. 2 doors, 2. No cell-to-cell contact, 3. TV, 4. Books, 5. You 'program' in your cell, 6. Rec is totally by yourself—indoor and outdoor, 7. Bunk is made of concrete, 8. Desk is made of concrete, 9. Every door is 100% electronic, 10. Every man is 2-man hold, 11. Guards have batons in hand, 12. No screaming or rapping-thank god, 13. No one is ever coming and going, in the SHU people are constantly coming back with news or transferring, everyone is stationary here, 14. We can wear sweatpants and shoes, 15. We have to slide 'cop-outs' under the outside door. Never hand to hand., 16. No standing count ever, 17. I control my lights, 18. Guards drop off trays—if I don't want I don't have to say or interact in any way with them, 19. I have all my sheets, blankets, and laundry. Tues and Thurs are laundry day, 20. Often feel dizzy in these cells, 21. Campers do laundry, canteen, and make our food, 22. No radios, 23. Hella coffee, 24. Entire prison is on the same status, mostly, 25. Heard absolutely zero shit talk or antagonism from staff – yet, 26. It's so quiet, eerily so

9 Nov - Incarcerated New Yorkers lose access to free electronic tablets, a critical lifeline

When Ruben Burgos was incarcerated at Rikers Island earlier this year, he used a city-issued electronic tablet to turn his poetry into music. Other detainees used the tablets to watch movies, read books, and participate in job training programs. Burgos said the tablets provided a critical outlet, helping to reduce fights over the phones, the shared televisions, and access to food.

MORE:

by Matt Katz (*Gothamist*)

"I feel like those tablets could be a safe haven for a lot of people," Burgos said. "That pad was actually setting a system for when you wanted to watch a movie, when you wanted to take a class. It was setting a standard for reintegration." He said the devices gave locked up individuals something that was theirs — and some semblance of control.

But the contract with the tablet provider, APDS, quietly ended on June 30 and was not extended for reasons that the Department of Correction has not explained. The program had been in place since 2015, and was expanded to reach almost all of the approximately 5,000 detainees during COVID-19. Now, more than four months have gone by and incarcerated people haven't had access to educational, entertainment, and religious material that they had for years — and both correctional experts and the incarcerated say that could contribute to increased tensions and historic highs in violence.

The canceled tablet program was entirely free for incarcerated individuals. Civil rights activists and advocates for the incarcerated are concerned that a new tablet provider may not honor the same deal, and may charge incarcerated people to use basic services, like messaging.

In New York State prisons, the for-profit company JPay charges inmates 20 cents for every outgoing email. JPay charges for other services, too — a digital music album cost New York inmates as much as \$46, according to a 2020 state memo. The company had budgeted nearly \$9 million in revenue over five years from incarcerated New Yorkers.

Concern that JPay or another company could come in and profit off the incarcerated is compounded by the fact that correction officials announced last month that they would soon ban personal postal mail from being given directly to detainees. Correction officials say in the future they will scan letters and deliver them to incarcerated people electronically. But if a new tablet company charges for messages, advocates worry that responding to scanned letters from loved ones will cost detainees money.

The reason for scanning mail, officials said, is to stop the flow of fentanyl-laced paper products from being smuggled into the jails. But defense attorneys, detainees, and members of the City Council question whether drugs are actually coming in through the mail. They point to correction officers who themselves have been arrested for dealing drugs inside. And, they worry that the scan-mail plan is just being used as a pretext to enable a financially predatory company to make money off of detainees and their families.

A spokesperson for the Department of Correction told *Gothamist* last month that the agency was close to finalizing a contract with a new tablet company. Three weeks later, a new contract has yet to be announced, and the CEO of the tablet company that previously operated at Rikers is left wondering what happened.

"We were never invited to present to the DOC, no explanation was given to us as to why they were ending it," said Harris Ferrell, CEO of APDS, a public benefit corporation based in New York.

APDS offered a virtual law library, substance abuse therapy, audio books, e-books, games, job skill training, adult basic education, and movies, all free to incarcerated people. One popular course was developed around the book "The Master Plan" by Chris Wilson, a former prisoner whose plan for turning his life around is now used to inspire the incarcerated. The salutatorian from the East River Academy, the

school on Rikers, referenced the course in his graduation speech in June: "He inspired me not to give up, to work hard, and to know that good things come to people who wait."

Ferrell said the APDS tablet is primarily an educational platform, but the entertainment services are a recognition "that there's a lot of idle time that users are trying to fill."

"We had a number of men come up to us and thank us for the tablets and the services," Harris said. "They said it really helped bring the temperature down in the dorms because of the ability of folks to productively engage in something and have outlets, whether it was working on 'The Master Plan,' TED Talk videos, course work."

Current and former detainees say one of the challenges of life at Rikers is the lack of organized activities. Staffing shortages and constant security lockdowns mean that educational and recreational programs often don't happen, and phone call time is canceled.

Memos filed by the Board of Correction oversight body following visits last month to Rikers and obtained by *Gothamist* through a public information request show that at at least one jail, nobody in custody was getting recreation time. Another memo detailed detainees' isolation — due to lockdowns, an incarcerated individual was unable to call his family after his grandmother died.

Ferrell said it cost the DOC about \$1.29 per tablet each day, or about \$470 a year. The DOC purchased — and still owns — the tablets, which cost about \$200 apiece. To put those numbers in perspective, New York City spends more than \$500,000 to incarcerate someone for a full year.

The Partnership Fund for New York City helped to fund the program, and last year reported that housing units were "calmer" as a result. Elsewhere, tablets have been found to improve behavior among incarcerated individuals. And earlier this year, a New York City correction official even cited the positive impact of the tablets.

Stanley Richards, a former city correction official who was involved in managing the tablet program at Rikers, said tablets were intended to be used as a tool for good behavior. Richards, who is now deputy CEO of the nonprofit Fortune Society, said the plan was to build out the tablets' email and video messaging capacity; behavioral infractions could lead to a detainee losing the privilege of having a tablet, while no infractions over a period of, say, 90 days, could increase an allotment of virtual visits with loved ones.

"What I would've imagined, if [DOC] wanted to go with another vendor, you would've had some kind of transition plan," Richards. "Pulling tablets I could imagine didn't go so well."

Richards acknowledged that the tablets can be difficult for officers to oversee. They had to be returned every day to be charged, and if a detainee broke a tablet, he may steal someone else's, Richards said.

Correction officials were scheduled to talk about their plan for the tablets — and perhaps explain the unannounced cancellation of the prior tablet contract — at a meeting of the Board of Correction last month. But Molina and his senior staff didn't show up, citing the fact that the federal monitor, who likewise oversees the jail system, was visiting Rikers Island that morning.

In 2018, New York City mandated free phone calls for detainees after activists highlighted how the jails' telecommunications contractor, Securus — which is the parent company of JPay, a tablet provider — was found to have been some detainees charging thousands of dollars for phone calls from the jails.

Now, Victoria A. Phillips, a chaplain at Rikers and social justice advocate, is worried that the predatory system is back.

"The detainees have few lifelines once in the custody of the New York City Department of Correction," she said. "When you talk about eliminating someone's access to mail and putting everything on the tablet, it scares me, because what does that really look like for a company only known for charging detainees in jails and prisons?"

10 Nov - Black Liberation Elder to Be Freed From Prison — but Only on His Deathbed

Mutulu Shakur should have been released long ago, but the cruelties of carceral system know no bounds.

MORE:

by Natasha Lennard (*The Intercept*)

Mutulu Shakur will not die in prison. Once he is free, though, he will only be free to die. On Thursday, the U.S. Parole Commission confirmed that the Black liberation elder and stepfather of rapper Tupac will be permitted, after more than 36 years behind bars, to spend his final days outside of prison walls.

Shakur is dying of bone marrow cancer. His body and mind have deteriorated. In May, a Bureau of Prisons doctor said Shakur had less than six months to live. It was not until after an October hearing, however, that the federal parole commission — an antiquated institution that has denied the 72-year-old's release 10 previous times — admitted the obvious: that the dying man, who has long posed zero risk to society and holds an impeccable institutional record, and who is considered a mentor to many, will likely not commit another offense and should be released.

Shakur's belated release is a poignant example of the criminal punishment system's breathtaking cruelty. While Shakur's case turned on an obscure parole commission that today directly affects several hundred people, the broader forces behind his unnecessary and protracted imprisonment cast a shadow over America's entire sprawling mass incarceration system.

The federal parole commission is not acting out of compassion. It is simply — and finally — following its own purported guidelines. Shakur had been gravely ill with terminal cancer in April, when the same parole commission denied his release; medical reports had also attested then to his decline in physical function, his confusion and hallucinations. Yet it was only with the further dramatic decline of his health that he has now been deemed eligible for freedom.

He will spend his remaining days in Southern California with his family.

Although long overdue, this is a result for which Shakur's lawyers, family, and supporters have been fighting tirelessly, on numerous legal fronts, for many years.

"We are relieved that the Parole Commission now recognizes what has long been true — that Dr. Shakur's release poses no risk whatsoever," said one of Shakur's attorneys, Brad Thomson of the People's Law Office. "It is tragic that it took until he was on the verge of death for that truth to finally be realized."

Shakur was convicted of racketeering conspiracy charges alongside several Black liberationists and leftist allies for his involvement in the 1981 robbery of a Brink's armored truck, during which a guard and two police officers were killed. Shakur has taken responsibility for his actions and expressed remorse for the lives lost. He was also convicted for aiding in the prison escape of Assata Shakur.

Prior to his incarceration, Shakur was a member of the Black nationalist organization Republic of New Afrika. He was a renowned acupuncturist and a central figure in the movement to bring holistic health care and self-determination to Black residents in the Bronx in the 1970s — a struggle against the conditions of organized abandonment imposed on poor, Black communities under racial capitalism.

Freedom for longtime incarcerated Black liberation elders has always been hard won. Several aging former Black Panthers — like Herman Bell, Jalil Muntaqim, and Sundiata Acoli, who were imprisoned in state prison systems for all too many decades — were granted parole in recent years, despite the zealous opposition of powerful police unions. Shakur has faced the same systematic, ideological intransigence, plus further institutional blocks as a longtime prisoner in the federal rather than state system.

Shakur was incarcerated under a set of federal sentencing guidelines, known as “old law,” because he was convicted for crimes that took place before 1987, when the guidelines changed. As such, his parole decisions have been under the oversight of the U.S. Parole Commission: an outdated body consisting of just two decision-making commissioners that was intended to be phased out decades ago.

The new sentencing guidelines eliminated parole for defendants convicted of post-1987 federal crimes, decreasing the need for the commission. The commission’s very existence thus rests on the continued incarceration of fewer than 200 “old law” prisoners like Shakur, who are eligible for parole. There’s a grim vested interest in keeping these people in prison. With Shakur on the verge of death, however, it would have been an extreme violation of the commission’s own guidelines to deny parole once again.

According to the guidelines, the commission “shall” release any prisoner on mandatory parole if they have served two-thirds of their sentence, or 30 years of a sentence of more than 45 years, unless “he has seriously or frequently violated institution rules and regulations or that there is a reasonable probability that he will commit any Federal, State, or local crime.” Shakur more than qualifies; he has qualified for years.

“We now find your medical condition renders you so infirm of mind and body that you are no longer physically capable of committing any Federal, State or local crime,” noted the parole commission in its decision to grant Shakur’s release.

Grounds offered by the commission to deny Shakur’s release in the past have, as I’ve noted, been preposterous. The commissioners previously cited as a “serious violation,” for example, the fact that Shakur had been put on speakerphone during a phone call with a professor and her class in 2013, while they discussed his support for founding a truth and reconciliation commission in the United States.

Meanwhile, Shakur’s parole packet has been a glowing testimony to his character and the positive influence he has had on those incarcerated with him. “I recognize Dr. Mutulu Shakur not only as my father, but as the man who changed my way of thinking and saved my life,” Ra’ Sekou P’tah, who served 20 years in prison for a nonviolent drug crime before his sentence was commuted by President Barack Obama, wrote in a letter of support for Shakur’s parole. Dozens of letters detailing how Shakur has been a transformative force for his communities both within and beyond prison walls accompanied his parole application.

That Shakur has only been released on his deathbed did not come as a surprise. A judge who rejected his request for compassionate release in 2020 told him he should not expect anything less. The judge told Shakur that he could reapply at “the point of approaching death.” That same judge, now over 90 years old, was the one who sentenced Shakur to prison over 30 years ago.

In the end, Shakur’s release has been granted through the parole commission, not the court, and only after his legal team and support committee urgently tried every avenue to secure his freedom before death.

Thomson, his attorney, said, “Mutulu will now be able to live out his final days, surrounded by the love and care of his family and close friends.”

November 10th - Statement From Mutulu's Friends, Family, and Supporters

Today, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, a 72-year-old grandfather and respected healer and elder, was granted parole by the US Parole Commission. The Parole Commission has recognized that his release poses no risk, particularly in light of his medical condition. He will be released shortly. Mutulu is one of thousands of

incarcerated older people in federal and state prisons who has been repeatedly denied parole for over a decade after completing his minimum sentence.

Mutulu is deeply grateful and thankful for the broad expression of trust and support, and thanks everyone who has helped him over the years. We ask that he have space and time to be with family when he is released and to continue receiving medical treatment.

We welcome him home with great joy.

In order to bring Mutulu home to his family in California safely and comfortably, we must raise funds to cover several urgent costs. These costs include Mutulu's ground transportation from the prison to the airport, medical air transport from Kentucky to Los Angeles to be reunited with his family, adding a wheelchair accessible ramp and other modifications to his home, healthcare to address existing and emerging urgent medical needs, and other costs associated with him returning home.

If you don't need your donation to be tax-deductible: paypal.me/freedomforMutulu

To make tax-deductible contributions to his release fund, please donate through:
Community Aid and Development Corporation
EIN# 95-3402456 | cadnational.org

To donate through the CAD National website, click on the DONATE button, on the right side of any page. In the "Use this donation for" box, there's a drop down menu. Scroll down to FFMS (Friends and Family of Mutulu Shakur) to donate to Mutulu's release fund.

10 Nov - Demonstrator involved in 2021 Pacific Beach protest gets 4+ years in prison

Another corporate news article, now with extra bias. Read with care.

MORE:

by Shannon Handy (*KFMB*)

One of the demonstrators involved in a violent clash of competing protests in Pacific Beach in January of 2021 was sentenced to four years, eight months in prison Thursday.

Prosecutors arrested 11 people, who they say are associated with Antifa, an anti-fascist group.

They allege the protestors crashed a rally organized by supporters of then President Donald Trump, and instigated violence, attacking at least 16 victims using impact weapons and mace.

The sentencing of "Nikki" Hubbard, 38-year-old a transgender woman, comes after she accepted a deal, agreeing to plead guilty to conspiracy, assault and unlawful use of a tear gas weapon.

Her husband, a transgender man named GG Hubbard, addressed the court, defending her actions.

"She defends people. She's not violent. And this is just political and fascist nonsense."

GG also questioned why his wife is in a men's prison, claiming she's been assaulted while in custody: *"I wanna make sure she gets put in the correct facility according to her gender. This is violating the law. Why is this allowed? When a celebrity trans person or a celebrity anything this happens people are up in arms, but since it's my wife and she is not known, just one member of the trans community, nobody is caring."*

GG says he will continue to fight on Nikki's behalf.

As for the remaining defendants, a trial date has been set for March. Sentencing could range from probation to more than 10 years behind bars.

When asked about evidence, and why none of the Trump supporters were arrested, Deputy DA Mackenzie Harvey said cell phone video, as well as victim statements were key factors in this case.

“We charged what we thought happened based on what we saw on video and the grand jury indicted based on what they heard and what they saw,” said Harvey.

As for why this case has taken so long to prosecute, Harvey said most of the people arrested and charged were wearing masks, so they were difficult to identify.

Hubbard will receive nearly two years credit for time served.

17 Nov - Statewide Rally For Clemency #HochulBringThemHome

WHAT: Rally

WHEN: 6:00pm, Thursday, November 17th

WHERE: 633 Third Ave (at 41st Street), NYC

COST: FREE

MORE:

Don't miss the chance to join us THIS THURSDAY, November 17 at 6pm in Albany, Buffalo, and NYC to tell Governor Hochul: Time to keep your promise and grant clemency to incarcerated New Yorkers.

18 Nov - Events At Woodbine

Homies at Woodbine have been organizing for years and they have a lot coming up. Check them out at woodbine.nyc

MORE:

--Friday November 18th: Crush Reading Series #31

--Friday November 18th: Gottscheer Karaoke

--Sunday November 20th: The Far Right and Climate Change with Geoff Dembicki & Alleen Brown

--Sunday November 27th: On Libertarian Socialism with Strange Matters

20 Nov - Anti-Landlord Movie Night

WHAT: Movie Night DOUBLE FEATURE

WHEN: 5:00pm, Sunday, November 20th

WHERE: Mayday Space - 176 St. Nicholas Avenue, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Come join Cine Móvil & Brooklyn Eviction Defense for an evening of anti-landlord Japanese horror, spooky crafts, tasty snacks, and tenant solidarity! Kicking off with a general assembly at 5PM for tenants to discuss our struggles & successes. Followed by these ghostly works of horror:

100 Monsters

A greedy developer, in league with a corrupt Shrine Magistrate, brutally tries to drive people out of a tenement building and destroy the shrine in back. But he makes the fatal mistake of hosting a 100 Ghost Stories ceremony without the closing cleansing ritual, opening the door for the Yokai Monsters to punish the wicked.

World Apartment Horror

From the creator of Akira (Otomo) and written by the late, great Satoshi Kon (Paprika). A Yakuza underling is given the assignment to rid an apartment of its tenants within a week. He tries a variety of desperate tactics to no avail. Soon his problems get worse as an evil spirit makes its presence known.