



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for March 5th

18 Feb - Data tells a new story about migrants and crime

Texas Governor Greg Abbott says since 2022, his state has transported more than 100,000 migrants to "sanctuary cities" around the country, sparking fears in several northern and western cities of a looming crime wave.

MORE:

by Geoff Hing, Weihua Li, and Ilica Mahajan (*The Marshall Project*)

New York City has been a center of this anxiety, fueled by a handful of high-profile incidents, including a "brawl" between officers and migrants in Times Square, the shooting of a tourist, and a recent raid on an alleged robbery ring. In a controversial move, Mayor Eric Adams, a former police captain, joined that raid, an extension of his often-harsh rhetoric around immigration.

Following the arrests, New York Police Commissioner Edward Caban said that "a wave of migrant crime has washed over our city, but by no means do the individuals committing these crimes represent the vast number of people coming to New York to build a better life."

It's not just New York. Recent national polling shows immigration is a top issue for voters heading into the 2024 election, and a majority of respondents in a different poll said migrants seeking to enter the U.S. were tied to higher crime rates. There is a partisan divide, with Republicans much more likely than Democrats to respond this way.

But national and local data doesn't support the immigrant crime wave narrative. *The Marshall Project* has previously reported that there is no evidence linking an increase in immigration to higher local crime rates — whether it's unauthorized, or includes lawful immigrants.

The Marshall Project took a closer look at crime data in cities that received a significant number of migrants from Texas since spring 2022 — including New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago and Denver. Our analysis showed that despite recent media coverage, policing data doesn't show a link between crime and the recent influx of migrants. Rather, crime in these cities largely follows national trends for big cities.

For instance, crime data shows that robberies — which have drawn a lot of attention in destination cities — were on the rise in 2021 and 2022, before Texas started sending migrants north. By the end of 2023, cities like New York and Denver saw their robbery rates returning to pre-pandemic levels, while D.C. and Chicago saw their robbery rates surpassing 2019 levels, according to data compiled by the Council on Criminal Justice, which analyzed crime data from more than 30 U.S. cities.

Reported robberies per 100,000 people

While policing data can help us understand how migration affects crime, it has limitations. Most data does not include the immigration status of people arrested — in fact, local police have pushed back on checking the status of the people they arrest or encounter.

Cities nationwide saw an increase in the most serious crimes like murders and shootings at the beginning of the pandemic, but by 2023, that trend was going downward. Property crimes like shoplifting and burglary showed the opposite. Most property crimes declined early in the pandemic, as people stayed home and stores shut down. More recently, many cities have seen a surge in property crimes — in some cases, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, according to the Council on Criminal Justice's data.

Reported shopliftings per 100,000 people

Leaders in some cities have focused on issues other than crime when discussing challenges brought on by Texas' busing. In both Denver and D.C., city officials have discussed housing and the costs of meeting the basic needs of migrants. "This is a plan for shared sacrifice. This is what good people do in hard situations as you try to manage your way to serve all of your values," said Denver Mayor Mike Johnston about planned budget cuts.

Migrants arrive in places that are enduring challenges, such as immigrant neighborhoods facing gun violence and barriers to employment. In a time of outcry over retail theft, the sheriff in Chicago arrested the alleged leaders of a ring that compelled recent migrants to shoplift inexpensive items in exchange for fake identification documents. Service providers said desperation for work and housing makes migrants vulnerable to such scams.

As the 2024 general election draws closer, the political tension around immigration and crime will likely grow. Immigration was a central issue in the race to fill the U.S. House seat in New York once held by scandal-ridden Rep. George Santos. The Republican candidate, Mazi Pilip, aired a campaign ad in which the narrator says "Biden's open border leads to violence right here," over footage of the scuffle between New York Police Department officers and men outside a shelter near Times Square. Not to be outdone, Democrat Tom Suozzi, also made toughness on immigration a centerpiece of his campaign. Suozzi won the election Tuesday.

And earlier this week, after Republicans shut down a bipartisan border security bill, the GOP-controlled House impeached Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, blaming him for the influx of migrants. The impeachment has little to no chance of passing the Democrat-controlled Senate.

19 Feb - Sindre Persson Needs Letters of Support

Sindre is an animal rights activist, 21 years old, from so-called Sweden. In October 2023, Sindre was sentenced to forensic psychiatric forced care, without end date, for actions against a former fur farmer.

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

Unfortunately, Sindre has not received any of the letters that have been sent to him. We do not know if this is due to the center withholding letters, but he still needs love and support.

Sindre's support team is therefore changing the address. If you want to write letters, send them to Sindre's family.

Please, send a letter to Sindre today, even if you already did so last week. It is likely the facility is stopping Sindre from receiving the letters that would've been sent previously.

19 Feb - Leonard Peltier Update

Leonard was seen by a specialist this past Friday and will be receiving new glasses soon. He will also be seen by another specialist to fully address his recent loss of vision.

MORE:

On behalf of Leonard, we extend our sincere thanks for your support and calls. They certainly made a difference. In a recent email, Leonard said this, "...as you all (have) seen, unity works so thank you all...you might just have save(d) my life yet."

On a personal note, Leonard was truly heartened by the efforts YOU went to on his behalf. It hit him hard, losing his vision, then his sister. He is hanging in there, though. Leonard told me that a large part of what keeps him going is YOU – all the people out there who believe in him and support him.

February 28th - Leonard Peltier's Life Is At Risk

Leonard Peltier is still in need of urgent medical care. Your efforts, along with the strong advocacy of Leonard's legal team and the Ad Hoc Committee, got the attention of the BOP. However, BOP personnel informed Leonard that he will need to wait at least 8-10 months until he sees an eye specialist. This is unacceptable.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has deprived Leonard of necessary medical care for decades and in doing so has sentenced Leonard to death by incarceration. Locked down for 22 hours per day at maximum security prison, USP Coleman I, Leonard, who is 80 years old, suffers from multiple severe health conditions. Leonard's current conditions include kidney disease, heart condition, diabetes, high blood pressure, bone spurs, a degenerative joint disease, and painful injuries to his jaw - all of which require immediate and ongoing medical care. Leonard is in constant pain from arthritis in his hip and shoulder, has an enlarged prostate, and an aortic aneurysm. Leonard uses a walker and is having a hard time eating due to a lack of any dental care, having lost most of his teeth as a result. This dangerous cocktail of neglect places Leonard within a serious risk of harm and amounts to death by incarceration.

Our physician expert believes that not only is the BOP not properly addressing Leonard's medical care, but cannot meet Leonard's medical needs at USP Coleman I. Our lawyers are working hard to ensure Leonard receives health care as required by the 8th Amendment and is transferred to an appropriate facility pending his release.

We do not want our vulnerable elder to be in pain and go without proper care, and we don't want him to die in prison! We need you to stand united with us for Leonard. Act now. Enough is enough. Not one more year for Leonard Peltier. Enough is enough.

Please call and email the following officials and tell them Leonard Peltier needs immediate medical treatment, a transfer, and RELEASE:

- Senator Cory Booker
D.C. Office Phone: 202.224.3224 | Newark Office Phone: 973.639.8700
- Sen. Richard Durbin
DC Office: 202.224.2152 | Chicago Office: 312.353.4952
- Sen. Alex Padilla
DC Office: 202.224.3553 | Los Angeles Office: 310.231.4494
- US Rep. Maxwell Frost
DC Office: 202.225.2176 | Orlando Office: 321.388.9808

21 Feb - HONORING THE LEGACY OF MALCOLM X

Please read the latest by Xinachtli.

MORE:

Fifty nine (59) years ago, on February 21, 1965, oppressed people lost a revolutionary giant of a man, who taught all demoralized, lost souls the dialectical process of personal self-transformation and metamorphosis while in captivity, by reading books and coming to the realization that his past lifestyle, bad habits, as pimp, player, gangster, and parasite, were all past lifestyles of self-destruction, with deep roots in perpetuating the systems of settler colonialism, white supremacy and plantation slavery.

Malcolm Little, or his new name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, studied and embraced Islamic faith in prison. Upon his release from prison, his religious faith evolved into Black nationalism, then towards revolutionary internationalism, coming to the realization that global capitalism and imperialism were the chief causes of

so much poverty, injustice, racism, human alienation and misery, especially amongst the poor, the voiceless, the colonized peoples in the United States and around the world. Malcolm always used the term "prison" as a metaphor to educate Blacks that America meant prison to them, outside and inside prison walls. He said that racism was capitalism and capitalism was racism; that he saw no "American dream, only an American nightmare." He preached revolution with the basis in land, and land as the basis for independence, true freedom, justice and equality that could never be achieved under capitalism. He denounced civil rights as a tool in the hands of the oppressor class to deceive, under the monopolistic control of Uncle Sam. He embraced international human rights, the inalienable right of oppressed nations to self-determination, calling for the oppressed of the world to unite and fight for their liberation BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY, against the principal enemy of the human species --- U.S IMPERIALISM. He went on to form his ORGANIZATION OF AFRO AMERICAN UNITY.

This is not an autobiography of MALCOLM X. You can find many books, films, and live recordings of his speeches, before an assassin's bullet took him from us all at New York's Audubon Ballroom during a forum on February 21, 1965. But his legacy lives on, especially within the hearts of the unjustly imprisoned by white racist society, police, courts, and prisons, prisons overcrowded with Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans disproportionately represented in the U.S. Prison Industrial Complex in this genocidal system of mass incarceration.

During these critical times of the rise of fascism outside and inside of AmeriKKKa's prisons, Malcolm's words ring true for our salvation from a racist, evil, cruel, and criminal system of capitalism that cannot be reformed, but must be dismantled through the power of the creativity and dynamics of the very oppressed, who hold the keys for revolutionary change in their hands. Change must begin in our hearts.

Today, the oppressed must choose the type of uncompromising militant revolutionary leadership called for by Malcolm X. As fascism is on the rise, spearheaded by the neocolonial of state of Texas and its right-wing rulers of the modern industrial fascist state, their racist rhetoric and hyped-up frenzy has been the cause for racist violence against immigrants, people of color, the LGBTQ communities and other marginalized groups, targeted as scapegoats for the ills of a corrupt, morally bankrupt and decaying system of capitalism/imperialism.

The ruling class fears losing its domination over oppressed society, here domestically and around the world, feeding the extremist hysteria to divide and conquer. Texas is spearheading the new fascist movement, outside along the military border, and inside prisons, with gang wars flaming the fires of white supremacy. Teaching critical race theory, free speech, defense of human rights, voting rights, have all been criminalized.

We must wake up to see what is really going on, as conditions will get more repressive as the two contending political parties, Republican and Democrat, seek control of the White House. These political parties represent the interests of capitalism, deliberately indifferent to people's human needs; their interests are more laws to oppress workers and exploit their labor.

On this day, February 21, 2024, we honor the legacy of Malcolm X, and give thanks for Free Books To Prisoners for sending books to us, so we can continue with our STUDY AND STRUGGLE groups, IN THE SPIRIT OF MALCOLM X, as we create cadres inside to support our communities upon release from prison.

24 Feb - Talk with Legal Team of Marcelo Villaroel

Brief Interview with the Legal Team of Comrade Marcelo Villaroel, Prisoner Currently in C.P. Rancagua 'La Gonzalina'

MORE:

translated by *Act for Freedom Now!*

Marcelo was convicted by the military court in the 90s for various urban guerrilla actions when he was a member of the Mapu-Lautaro (Marxist-Leninist organization with which he broke ties afterward to begin moving towards antiauthoritarian paths). He was in prison for these actions for more than a decade and was released with intra-prison benefits. Said benefit was broken after he went underground when he was accused by the press and the police of having participated in various bank robberies. For these acts he would be sentenced to 14 years of prison.

From Espacio Fénix and thankful for their willingness, we present a brief interview that we carried out with the comrade's legal team with the intention of understanding his current legal situation.

1. Under judicial logic and time served, Marcelo has already finished his sentence for bank expropriations. Why is he still in prison?

Indeed, Marcelo should already be free. But the Gendarmerie of Chile and the Public Prosecutor's office in their various allegations and reports have added the previous sentences established by the Military Court, as if in the Security case he hadn't served a single day.

2. What does it mean that Marcelo is being processed by the military court?

Currently, no civilian can be judged by a military tribunal. Sadly in the 90s and part of the 200s, these tribunals were able to judge civilians, which meant a systematic violation of various fundamental rights such as, for example, due process. In this sense Marcelo, because of the era in which he was processed and the political context of his actions, was unjustly sentenced in a system that is totally illegal, as was also indicated by the Inter-american Court in other cases, condemning even the Chilean State.

3. What have been the results of the various legal motions that have requested the revision of the application of military law to the comrade?

During the legal process that we've had with Marcelo, we've taken several actions, but all of these were mainly framed in the application of parole, since he fulfills all the requirements for this. However finally the courts, contrary to all criminal principle, have retroactively applied a reform to DL 321 which regulates parole establishing heavier requirements.

4. What is the legal team doing? What legal motion remains? And how can we support, as comrades who find ourselves outside the prison walls?

Understanding that all of the legal motions with respect to parole have been exhausted, the path that we're working on is the presentation of an appeal for review, which mainly seeks to annul all of Marcelo's military justice convictions. We believe that even in these legal logics established in this Chilean system, there is not a singly argument concerning the illegality of the processes of military law against civilians. For this reason, we will ask the Supreme Court for its pronouncement, which has already accepted our thesis in cases of court-martial convictions.

So, we think that we need to focus our energy on Marcelo's case, highlighting this situation and exerting political pressure. This is the last legal measure in Chile that we have in regards to his case. The situation that he is living through is entirely unjust and his freedom is paramount.

26 Feb - 'Cop City' Prosecutions Hinge on a New Definition of Domestic Terrorism

Are the protesters against a new police training center part of a violent "extremist organization," or are the serious charges they face a means of stifling free speech? This question asked by the New York Times, so please read their conclusions with a critical eye.

MORE:

by Sean Keenan and Rick Rojas (*New York Times*)

In a forest on the outskirts of Atlanta last March, hundreds of protesters had gathered once again to try to stop the construction of a new police and fire training center.

For Timothy Bilodeau, a 26-year-old who had flown in from Boston, the fight that began in 2021 had gained new urgency after state troopers killed a protester in a shootout in the forest weeks earlier that also wounded an officer.

On the day that Mr. Bilodeau headed in, there was another fiery confrontation. A crowd marched to the development site, where some protesters threw fireworks and Molotov cocktails, setting equipment ablaze. The police arrested nearly two dozen protesters, including Mr. Bilodeau.

As Mr. Bilodeau saw it, he was taking a principled stand against the destruction of the forest. But prosecutors had a darker take: They charged Mr. Bilodeau and 22 others with domestic terrorism.

In all, 42 people involved in the demonstrations against the training facility have been charged under Georgia's domestic terrorism law, making for one of the largest cases of its kind in the country on a charge that is rarely prosecuted.

As several states have added or expanded laws related to terrorism, or are considering doing so, the case in Georgia is at the center of debate about the need for these measures, the dangers they pose and, more fundamentally, what constitutes terrorism. (One proposal in New York has suggested that blocking traffic, a tactic occasionally used in demonstrations, could be considered domestic terrorism.)

Georgia broadened its definition in 2017 to include attempts to seriously harm or kill people, or to disable or destroy "critical infrastructure," with the goal of forcing a policy change. The charge carries a penalty of up to 35 years in prison.

Officials in Georgia have argued that those charged were involved in sowing disorder and destruction — actions that demanded a swift and forceful response.

"We will not waver when it comes to keeping people safe, enforcing the rule of law, and ensuring those who engage in criminal activity are vigorously pursued and aggressively prosecuted," Christopher M. Carr, Georgia's attorney general, said in a statement.

Critics say that the charges in Georgia justify their worst fear about domestic terrorism laws: that they can frame activism as terrorism, and allow prosecutors to pursue even harsher punishments for "property crimes that were already illegal, simply because of accompanying political expression critical of government policy," as the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia said in a recent statement.

The result, critics argue, is stifling free speech.

"It's chilling," Mr. Bilodeau, a tech consultant, said. "It is a devastating threat to all people who are advocates or activists for the well-being of our planet or climate or communities."

Legal experts have also raised concerns about many people being prosecuted for serious crimes over the actions of a few.

Mr. Bilodeau's lawyer, Amanda Clark Palmer, argued in a motion for a bond that his arrest warrant contained "no specific allegation that Mr. Bilodeau himself possessed or threw a rock, firework or Molotov cocktail."

"The only specific allegation," she added, "is the following: The accused was observed with muddy clothing from breaching and crossing the embankment. Accused was also in possession of a shield."

Officials in Georgia have maintained that the charges were warranted, with the Atlanta Police Department calling the accused "violent agitators," mostly from out of state, who committed violence "under the cover of a peaceful protest."

The charges have not yet proceeded to indictments, in part because the local district attorney withdrew from the case, citing a “fundamental difference in prosecutorial philosophy” with Mr. Carr, the Republican attorney general.

But the allegations also provided the foundation for a broader case that Mr. Carr's office is pursuing under the state’s racketeering law — a powerful tool that prosecutors have used to target street gangs, public officials accused of corruption and even former President Donald J. Trump, who is accused of conspiring to overturn his election loss in 2020.

Mr. Bilodeau and 60 others are now facing racketeering charges, with prosecutors describing them as part of “an anarchist, anti-police and anti-business extremist organization” that conspired to block the training center. The first trial in the racketeering case could start in the coming weeks.

The Atlanta City Council voted in 2021 to authorize the training facility, officially named the Atlanta Public Safety Training Center and derided by protesters as “Cop City.”

The project stirred a diverse coalition of opponents: environmental activists who objected to developing a rare expanse of forest in a rapidly developing metropolitan area; social justice activists who believed the facility would train officers to police communities with militarized tactics; and nearby residents opposed to a potentially disruptive new neighbor.

The opposition intensified in 2022 as officers began sweeping the site. Protesters had set up camp in the trees and erected barricades to block officers and construction crews. Some of the demonstrators threw Molotov cocktails and set off fireworks, the police said. Officers responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, and in January 2023, a 26-year-old activist, Manuel Esteban Paez Terán, known as Tortuguita, was fatally shot by state troopers.

Officials have said that the activist shot first, wounding a trooper, but protesters have remained skeptical, partly because the troopers were not wearing body cameras.

More construction and police vehicles at the site have been set on fire since then, including as recently as late January. Construction companies in Georgia and beyond — including at least one mistakenly associated with the training center — have had equipment vandalized or burned, the authorities said.

Last month, city officials said that the destruction had caused the cost of the facility, which had been estimated at \$90 million, to jump by nearly \$20 million.

“These individuals are trafficking in fear,” John F. King, Georgia’s insurance and safety fire commissioner, said in a recent news conference announcing rewards of up to \$200,000 for help finding and convicting arson suspects.

When Georgia lawmakers strengthened the state’s domestic terrorism laws, it was in part a response to the racist massacre in 2015 at a Black church in Charleston, S.C. The point, they said at the time, was to empower prosecutors to charge perpetrators of racist attacks as domestic terrorists. Georgia lawmakers are currently considering another measure to bolster its law further.

Like Georgia, other states have also moved to expand terrorism-related laws, reflecting an increasingly fractured political climate and fears of rising extremism. A bill in West Virginia would clarify definitions of terrorism and create mandatory sentencing rules.

Last year, Oregon — where the authorities have had showdowns with armed militias on public land, and where far-right demonstrators breached the State Capitol in 2021 — became the latest state to enact a domestic terrorism law.

Officials in Georgia have used the expanded law to target left-wing activism that, they argue, took a violent turn in Atlanta around the time of the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020.

One of the demands in the nationwide protests that followed the murder of George Floyd was to strip funding away from police departments and redirect those resources. The Cop City protesters see Atlanta as doing the opposite with the training center, which officials have hailed as an investment in a police force struggling with depleted ranks and morale.

“We don’t need more police and more of a surveillance state,” said Ayla King, 19, a recent high school graduate from Worcester, Mass., who traveled to Atlanta last March after following the developments on social media. Mx. King, who uses the they pronoun, faces both domestic terrorism and racketeering charges.

Mr. Bilodeau, who spent 17 days in jail after the confrontation last March, declined to discuss what he did in the forest in March, pointing to his impending trial. In charging documents, prosecutors accused him of criminal trespass and of joining “an organized mob designed to overwhelm the police force,” occupy the forest and cause property damage.

He returned to a life in Boston that was upended. His bank closed his accounts, he said. The youth art and music program where he had been a regular volunteer told him he was no longer welcome. His anxiety about the police seeped into his dreams, and he is wary of participating in any more protests.

“This has been just a crushing emotional and legal process, and we’re not really in the thick of things yet,” Mr. Bilodeau said.

Mx. King has had to set aside plans for college.

“This is terrifying,” Mx. King said in an interview in December, before a gag order was issued in their case. “But it’s really important to stay strong and just know that, just because the state says that I’m a domestic terrorist, it doesn’t mean anything, really. It’s such an inflated charge.”

Still, Mx. King has no illusions about the gravity of the situation. In fact, they recently had a stark reminder of the stakes: They declined a plea offer of a 10-year sentence that included three years in prison.

28 Feb - How to Resist the Deliberate Medical Neglect of Our Political Prisoners

The state uses tactics such as medical neglect to slowly assassinate political prisoners like Mumia Abu-Jamal.

MORE:

by Julia Wright (*Black Agenda Report*)

Dr Joy James asked a crucial question on a Guerilla University podcast which she co-hosted with Kalonji Changa on February 13th, 2024: "How does one organize a resistance against the medical assassination of our elders behind bars?"

As abolitionists, we believe that there is no resistance without testimony and in this case without first person singular testimony about the reality of the hidden and daily torture of death by incarceration that Mumia Abu-Jamal calls slow death row.

The common denominator that links all our political prisoners is slow death row.

During the same panel, it was stated that Mumia was in relatively good health during the thirty tortuous years he was on death row - " the occasional cold" - but it was when the movement saved him from

execution and he was given life without parole in the general population that his health started to decline. When the FOP learned that their illegal framing of Mumia for the death of the FOP cop Daniel Faulkner had failed to lead to the death penalty and that a Black Judge, Judge Tucker, had given Mumia the right to appeal against death by incarceration, a powerful police union proclaimed publicly that they had a "plan" and that they vowed to make Mumia's life a "living hell."

We begin to understand here that there is a thin blue line between the "living hell" sentence which the FOP felt empowered to hand down - and the slow but steady decline of Mumia's health. Let's break that silence. Let's listen to more testimony.

Noelle Hanrahan of Prison Radio remembers that Maureen Faulkner told her: " We know that Mumia will eventually go free but we want him to rot in prison for as long as possible"

Certainly the "as long as possible" can be detected in the arcane dilatory tactics of the courts that are in fealty to FOP ideology as former sitting Judge Wendell Griffen states. To the point where the movement to free Mumia came up against the cruel contradiction of the fragility of the vital prognosis of a congestive heart patient vs the procrastination of those courts. It is to be noted that this is an inhumane contradiction encountered in all our incarcerated elders' cases - especially those who are political.

On February 11th, during a panel called "Mumia and Mass Incarceration", Isa Abu-Jamal, the oldest son of Mumia and his late wife Wadiya bore the following testimony: " When Mumia walked up to the visiting room, when he walked up to me, I didn't know who he was until he stood exactly in my face. (...) And one thing that he said to me, he said: "the loss of your mother just broke me down". He is so scared from my mother's passing".

Wadiya passed away a year ago and Mumia was unable to attend the funeral even via zoom - only a limited number of minutes of the viewing as he was watched by several guards.

The conditions on DBI in Pennsylvania - preventing the prisoner from touching the letters sent to him under the pretext of contraband and substituting only censored photocopies, violating his human right to mourn - are all part of the gradual objective to deprive him of his sense of self. The threatening of the sense of self identity and the ability to mourn constitute a first step to threatening the body.

POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE NOT INVISIBLE MEN

The impunity of the medical neglect perpetrated against our political prisoners is tightly linked to the fact that their status of political prisoners is not recognized in the United States.

If it were recognized, the Geneva Convention would apply. We remember how selective the U.S is in recognizing "faits accomplis" which could mean less impunity and more transparency. Initially not recognizing the coup d'état in Niger was a case in point.

The case of our invisibilized political prisoners is all the more politicized. Our resistance against their carceral torture implies creating the visibility for them that the state denies them, listening to the testimony of their impacted families, supporting those impacted families and exposing the methods of torture used - often methods honed the better to be recycled in imperial wars.

Mumia has written about how Charles Graner practiced his sadistic skills (slipping a razor in a prisoner's food) on the death row where he was incarcerated. Charles Graner was later promoted to become the torturer-in-chief at Abu Ghraib.

Conversely, tanks and other weapons used inhumanely by the U.S. government abroad have been recycled domestically to militarize law enforcement in our streets.

And as I wrote in my poem "Prison Blockade" comparing the state of our prisons to the blockade of Gaza:
"just as Palestine is a laboratory
to battle-test new weapons
made in USA,
our prisons
are in vivo test tubes
to experiment
the genocidal methods
of
a slow death row
already spreading to
our Black Brown and Indigenous peoples

Gaza
and
Mumia
rhyme."

"I AM A FROG IN BOILING WATER"

Today Mumia presents a cluster of symptoms that are highly concerning given his background of diabetes, cirrhosis of the liver, high blood pressure and congestive heart failure and the fact that his prison is denying him the cardiac diet and exercises prescribed to him 3 years ago by his double bypass operating surgeon. These exacerbated symptoms are: hair loss, weight loss, sleep depriving itching over the whole body: "I feel like a frog in boiling water".

We should also take into account the recent national and international context in which this new serious health crisis has alerted us to the fact Mumia has accumulated and worsened morbidity.

The Stop Cop City movement has attracted the attention of the whole radical left to potential young generations of political prisoners' and their plight in crowded jails in Georgia.

The Stop DBI movement has worked with the United Nations Human Rights Council to denounce death by incarceration as violating the right against racist discrimination, arbitrary detention, torture and the right to life. Included in considerations around the right to life there is conclusive research on the erosion of health and of longevity during DBI. In response, last March the UN Human Rights Committee has enjoined the U.S. government to declare a moratorium on DBI.

Prisons in the US are slowly much too slowly but surely becoming glass houses.

A TIMELINE OF PRESSURE BEGINS

On February 12th 2024, Mumia's medical lawyer, Robert Boyle, wrote SCI Mahanoy, Mumia's prison, a state-of-the-art letter listing those symptoms and others, enumerating the tests Mumia was prescribed but failed to get and pointing out the denial of the cardiac diet which is a human rights violation under the American Disability Act - even for prisoners. The letter asked that Mumia access a dermatologist.

Then as already mentioned, two panels went viral on youtube the first one on February 11th with Cornel West, Marc Lamont Hill, Susan Aluhawa, and Gabe Bryant - the second one three days later on Guerilla University with Noelle Hanrahan and Ricardo Alvarez. And presto, on February 16th, to his surprise Mumia was given a different injection than the usual one. This injection prescribed by the prison dermatologist gave Mumia the first relief from his itching he had for a long time and his first real night of sleep as he reported to Pr Mark Taylor who visited him on February 19th.

WE WILL CLAIM NO EASY VICTORIES

Eyes on our political prisoners making them visible. Words in the first person singular as incontrovertible testimony. Unrelenting pressure through phones, emails and social media - all this is needed more than ever because a different injection could well be a crumb, a tactical deflection the better to continue to deny what remains vital for Mumia's prognosis: the cardiac diet and the exercises. Nor is the injection against a symptom tantamount to a desperately needed diagnosis. Nor can the prison deny that fresh fruit, veggies, fiber, whole grains and legumes, less processed foods and less starch are as costly on a daily basis as the highly expensive anti-viral Hep C treatment Mumia sued his prison for and won. Nor can the prisons in the US of A argue roguishly for much longer against the fact that the best treatment for all our incarcerated elders - is freedom.

28 Feb - Daniela Klette: Alleged Red Army Faction member held after 30 years

Alleged Red Army Faction (RAF) fugitive Daniela Klette has been arrested by German police after more than 30 years in hiding. Please read the following report with a critical eye...

MORE:

by Damien McGuinness (*BBC News*)

The 65-year-old was tracked down on Monday evening in the Berlin district of Kreuzberg.

A second person, whose identity has not yet been confirmed, has also been arrested.

Ms Klette is renowned for allegedly being part of the far-left armed group which terrorised Germany for decades.

She is accused of attempted murder and a string of serious robberies.

The second person to be arrested, a man who appears to be in the same age range as Ms Klette's robbery accomplices, was carrying fake identification. Police have not yet determined his identity.

Ms Klette has been flown by helicopter to Bremen, in the region where she committed the alleged robberies, and is now in pre-trial detention in Verden.

Police confirmed her identity using fingerprints. She did not resist arrest. Police found her after a tip-off from the public in November 2023.

Officials say they do not yet know how she managed to stay underground for 30 years, whether she was in Germany and who helped her to remain undetected.

The apartment is now being searched. Police have found magazines and ammunition for a handgun in the apartment but have not found a weapon.

Officials describe this arrest as a milestone in the fight against "terrorism" and say that it shows that "terrorists" can never feel safe no matter how long ago their crimes.

'Third generation'

Tabloid headlines about "RAF Rentner" or in English - the "Red Army Faction pensioners" - make the robberies between 1999 and 2016 sound like a TV sitcom about an elderly grandma on the run.

But the now-disbanded RAF - sometimes referred to as the Baader-Meinhof Gang - was violent.

Thirty-four people were killed between 1971 and 1993. The group targeted political figures and business leaders and among its victims were an attorney general and a Deutsche Bank chairman.

More than 200 people were injured.

Officials allege Ms Klette was part of the RAF's so-called third generation, which was active in the 1980s and 1990s.

It allegedly killed the Deutsche Bank boss in a roadside bomb, and shot dead a centre-left politician, tasked with privatising business in former communist East Germany, in his home.

In 1991 the group launched a gun attack on the US embassy in the western city of Bonn. No-one was injured, but traces of Ms Klette's DNA were later found at the site.

Two years later, the group bombed and partly destroyed a new prison which had just been built.

Hiding in the shadows

The Red Army Faction grew out of the 1960s radical student movement. Its aim was to undermine West German capitalism, and the group had links to Middle Eastern guerrillas.

Still today, the RAF is sometimes revered in certain radical-left wing circles. The gang's symbols occasionally crop up on clothing, regularly sparking anguished debates in Germany about whether left-wing extremism and violence is glamorised, rather than taken seriously.

The RAF officially disbanded in 1998 and some members, including Daniela Klette, went underground. Since then, she and two other former RAF members allegedly survived financially by carrying out armed robberies of supermarkets and cash transporters. It is thought they raked in millions of euros in total.

Police wanted posters, saying "these people could be your neighbours", show grainy 1980s photos of the trio as shaggy-haired students.

More recent police photos of Ms Klette's two accomplices show grey-haired middle-aged men. But she appears to have avoided being spotted or photographed and police photos simply show a reconstructed image of what she might look like aged 65.

On 14 February, a state prosecutor called for information from the public on national TV during a true-crime documentary series, and hundreds of people called in with possible leads.

Somehow Daniela Klette managed to stay in the shadows and undetected for half her life as the search for her went nowhere for decades.

Until now.

March 3rd - Police raids in Berlin fail to find two Red Army Faction fugitives

by Lisa O'Carroll (*The Guardian*)

Over 100 officers joined operation, which will continue despite setback, as part of hunt for Ernst-Volker Staub and Burkhard Garweg in Germany. Read this corporate news article with a critical eye.

The renewed German police hunt for two alleged members of the Red Army Faction, previously known as the far-left militant Baader-Meinhof gang, who have been on the run for more than 30 years, will continue after an operation in Berlin failed to find the suspects.

Special armed police units launched raids in the Markgrafendamm area at 7.30am on Sunday in a search for Ernst-Volker Staub, 69, and Burkhard Garweg, 55.

In an indication of the intensity of the search, 130 officers were involved in the raids and 10 people were detained. All were released after their identities had been checked, the Lower Saxony state criminal police office (LKA) said.

LKA, which is in charge of the investigation, said shots were fired “in relation to the opening of a door” and that no injuries resulted.

Last Monday a third member of the Red Army Faction, Daniela Klette, 65, was arrested in Berlin.

Police had offered a reward of €150,000 (£128,000) for any information leading to the whereabouts of the three, and a TV appeal led to 250 tipoffs.

The Baader-Meinhof gang, named after its founding members, Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof, was behind attacks including kidnappings and murders in what was then West Germany in the 1970s and 1980s.

It is believed that since the Red Army Faction disbanded in 1998, Klette and the two fugitives have been financing their lives on the run through robberies of money transporters and supermarket cash heists.

According to reports in the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*, Garweg is said to have stayed frequently in a construction trailer on the site that was raided on Sunday. The LKA refused to comment on this.

Klette, the only woman tagged as “dangerous” on Europol’s most wanted list, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and various serious robberies between 1999 and 2016.

After the breakthrough, police said they believed the two remaining fugitives were also hiding in Berlin. On Saturday they published new photos that they said were likely to be recent images of Garweg in his private environment, including one of him sitting between two dogs.

Police said it could not be ruled out that Garweg and Klette had maintained “personal and direct” contact.

29 Feb - Illustrated Guide Version 17.1.1 Uploaded!

nycabc.wordpress.com/2024/02/29/guide_17_1_1

MORE:

We’ve finished the latest version of the NYC ABC “Illustrated Guide to Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War” and it’s available for viewing (and download) by visiting the link at the top of this post. This update includes updated mini-bios, photos, and address changes for several prisoners.

3 Mar - Toby Shone + Updates from Argentinian Antifascist

This week, The Final Straw is sharing audio from anarchist prisoner in the UK, Toby Shone. Listen at tiny.cc/TFS_Toby

MORE:

Toby was arrested in November of 2020 after a car chase and during 5 simultaneous raids on residences in the Forest of Dean outside of Bristol.

Toby was accused of being responsible for the insurrectionary counter-info anarchist site 325.NoState.Net as well as participation in the Informal Anarchist Federation – International Revolutionary Front, authoring communiques on behalf of IAF-IRF & the Earth Liberation Front, funding terrorism and being involved in the sabotage of a cellphone tower and having information on explosives. This raid and the case were brought in conjunction with the attempted linking of a diverse array of UK anarchist projects with terrorist charges via Operation Adream, which Toby understands to be conducted in conjunction with intelligence

services from the Netherlands and German. The court failed to convict Toby Shone on these charges and only succeeded in convicting him of having and distributing hallucinogens and got 3 years, 9 months. Toby was then re-arrested while out on probation for having a cellphone and attending a prisoner support event.

You'll hear two audios from Toby, first him explaining his conviction and situation during his first incarceration, and then you'll hear Toby recently answer a few of our questions and updating listeners about his recent re-imprisonment in HMP Garth, far away from his supporters in the Bristol area. Much thanks to Brighton Anarchist Black Cross for supporting Toby and this conversation. More information at <https://brightonabc.org.uk>. Brighton ABC and Toby's supporters have noted that he's been receiving pretty spotty treatment for his cancer and not getting a healthy vegan diet and so has lost some weight of recent. Toby's mail, including letters and books haven't been making their way to him at HMP Garth. It's requested that supporters consider writing Toby a postcard, letter or email to help him through these next 8 months or so before his scheduled release and to inform his crew at forestcase@riseup.net of the mailing so they have a record in case it doesn't get to Toby.

7 Mar - Indigenous Political Imprisonment and Visions of Abolition

WHAT: Panel Discussion

WHEN: 2:00pm, Thursday, March 5th

WHERE: The Internet - Register at tiny.cc/NDNPP

COST: FREE

MORE:

Every day Indigenous Peoples struggle against environmental exploitation, colonialism, and state repression. Join Water Protector Legal Collective for a panel discussion featuring prominent Indigenous activists, Water Protectors, and #NoDAPL Political Prisoners as they share their powerful stories of resistance, resilience, and solidarity in the fight for Indigenous rights and environmental justice. Through personal testimonies and expert analysis, this panel will explore the intersection of Indigenous activism and political repression and imprisonment, with a focus on de-stigmatizing the experiences of Indigenous political prisoners and advocating for their liberation. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the systemic injustices perpetuated against Indigenous peoples, as well as the ongoing resistance movements working towards meaningful change.

Moderated by Sandra Freeman, the panel will include Leoyla Cowboy, Red Fawn Fallis, and Akicita Mato Tanka (Michael "Rattler" Markus)

10 Mar - Community Seed Exchange

WHAT: Seed Exchange

WHEN: 1:00pm, Sunday, March 10th

WHERE: Woodbine - 585 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join Woodbine for their fifth annual community seed exchange! 🌱 We have an incredible selection of seeds to share - whether you have your own garden, a plot in a community garden, or just a little bit of window space in your apartment.

🌸 If you are bringing seeds to share, please make sure they are two years old or younger to ensure max success for all gardeners. We'll provide seed bags. All seeds leftover at the end of the exchange will be added to our seed library, which can be accessed anytime the space is open. We'll have local gardeners on hand to answer any questions.