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Updates for March 19th

3 Mar - Updates on John Mazurek

There's a new interview with one of Jack's supporters as well as writing about his interests.

MORE:

March 3rd - PUNK MUSIC

Jack has supported and been involved with DIY music around the country and in Atlanta for many years. Finding a straight edge community in hardcore punk meant the world to Jack. For years he lived in and ran a sober DIY show space, purposely booking shows to fundraise for causes he believed in and centering marginalized voices in punk. Jack's commitment to supporting the DIY music community reflects how he lives out his values of generosity and social justice. He has also played in multiple punk bands, including Tigress and creative control.

Check the links below for some of Jack's music and a video of his band opening for hardcore legends Los Crudos: tigresschicago.bandcamp.com/album/s-t-ep | creativecontrolpunk.bandcamp.com/album/misfortunate-mishaps-demo-2024 | youtube.com/watch?v=Zd9n8HGxCfw

March 5th - Supporters of Jack Mazurek Hold Rally, Punk Show, Outside Fulton County Courthouse via UNICORN RIOT

About 30 supporters of John "Jack" Mazurek held a rally on the morning of Monday, March 4 that included speakers, a banner, and even a punk show performed on a downtown Atlanta sidewalk across the street from the Fulton County Courthouse.

The rally was held on the day of a scheduled bond hearing for Mazurek, who has been held in the Fulton County Jail for almost a month on first-degree arson charges associated with a fiery attack on eight police motorcycles at a south Atlanta police precinct in July 2023. Police have claimed that there is a connection between the arson and the 'Stop Cop City' movement.

Supporters gathered to demand Mazurek's immediate release, but court officials postponed his hearing this morning after an indictment was obtained in his case. For now, Mazurek will remain in jail pending a bond hearing in Superior Court.

"We remain unfazed and unsurprised by the state's actions to postpone Jack's bond hearing," said a member of Jack's support crew who asked to be identified only as Leandra. "This is a blatant attempt to demoralize and humiliate supporters and loved ones who showed up today as well as a reassurance to Cop City stakeholders that they have people in jail. We will not be dissuaded from supporting our friend or broken by their ongoing harassment because we are motivated by the strongest force of all, love."

The indictment returned in Mazurek's case accuses him of "the offense of arson in the first degree O.C.G.A. §16-7-60(a)(5)," and states that "on the 1st day of July, 2023, [Mazurek] did unlawfully, by means of fire, knowingly aid another in damaging vehicles, to wit: motorcycles belonging to the Atlanta Police Department, under circumstances in which it was reasonably foreseeable that human life might be endangered..."

The indictment was signed by grand jury foreperson Beth Hart and 19 other grand jurors on February 29, 2024. The indictment is also signed by Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis.

Mazurek's supporters say that during his time in the Fulton County Jail, jail officials have refused to provide Mazurek with adequate nutrition and have repeatedly failed to provide him commissary items.

"While incarcerated, Jack has been denied things that are vital for his health," said Rev. Keyanna Jones, a clergy member who has been an outspoken participant in the Stop Cop City movement. "He has been denied vegan food, he has been denied medication that was needed, and apparently he has been denied access to a clergy visit."

Jones told *Unicorn Riot* that Mazurek's supporters remain hopeful that he will be released from jail soon. "Even though we heard that the indictment came down and postponed the hearing, we are still hopeful," said Jones. "We just took the spirit that was in the music that was played and the spirit amongst the people, and we took it as strength to continue. We were fortunate to have Jack's parents there, Jack's partner there and Jack's support team. I do believe that today really energized people to keep fighting for Jack."

Mazurek was arrested February 8 in the midst of a series of early morning raids carried out by the Atlanta Police Department, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Georgia State Patrol, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and FBI. Law enforcement broke down doors, cut locks, destroyed property, and pointed rifles at activists while carrying out search warrants. Another individual was taken into custody and held for most of the day for questioning before being released without charges.

"What we see right now is that the police and the state are willing to do anything to derail this movement," said Jones. "They are even willing to operate outside the boundaries of law. They've made a number of missteps in many of the cases that we have seen against our comrades and they just keep showing that they aren't concerned about the rule of law, they are really not concerned about abiding by the law. They believe that they're above the law as long as it benefits them in repressing this movement."

Despite the repression, Jones says that the movement to Stop Cop City has not slowed.

"For the movement, the movement is going to keep moving. There is nothing that has stopped this movement up to this point," said Jones. "There is nothing that is going to stop this movement, because the spirit and the heart of the people is to win... We are committed to working together within our movement so that we can win."

"This movement will continue to grow, we will continue to fight, we will continue to use a variety of tactics. Because truly, we want to stop 'Cop City'."

March 8th - Free Jack: Call for Solidarity in the Face of Ongoing Raids and Repression

by Inhabit (*Territories*)

After three years of popular opposition to "Cop City," nearly every avenue of protest has been attempted. A massive social experiment was occurring in the Weelaunee Forest the last time we spoke with Territories. Since then, the forest has been evicted of tree-sitters, the public forest known as Intrenchment Creek Park (adjacent to the "Old Atlanta Prison Farm," where Cop City is slated to be built) has been closed by the county, and the Old Atlanta Prison Farm has become a police fortress surrounded by barbed-wire fencing, FLOCK cameras, and 24/7 patrol car security details.

Much of this has made national headlines. The beloved Atlanta Solidarity Fund has been under a barrage of legal attacks, with the organizers facing politicized money laundering charges, while the state legislature has outlawed charitable bail funds. In September, the Georgia AG indicted 61 people on a landmark RICO case, directly intended to suppress liberatory social movements.

Simultaneous to the repression of the Sol Fund, thousands of Atlantans organized themselves, volunteering to canvass the entire city. After eight weeks, 116,000 Atlanta voters had signed a referendum petition, demanding the opportunity to democratically decide if Cop City would be built. The "progressive" city government and their allies attacked the referendum drive just as they had the street and forest protests.

They have so far spent millions to subvert the referendum. The legal battle tied the referendum up in court, blocking the vote from the November ballot, just as the Atlanta Police Foundation's contractors began pouring concrete. In early February, the referendum had been fully blocked. Atlanta City Council even codified more burdensome requirements for future referendums.

On February 8th, three homes were raided in south Atlanta in a coordinated joint agency operation. At around 6am people were violently forced out of their home, some half-naked, and detained outside. Police searched homes and confiscated electronics, journals, and a myriad of other personal items. They brought one person into an office and shackled them to the ground for many hours before releasing them with no criminal charge, and they arrested one person, Jack, on charges of first-degree arson. Jack was denied bond at his initial hearing and is still incarcerated as we write this, waiting for his next chance to receive bond.

The day following Jack's arrest, a police cruiser was burned in the same neighborhood and police immediately responded. They fanned out throughout the streets, interviewing residents, and combing the neighborhood—armed, in tactical gear, and with dogs. That afternoon the police raided another house just blocks away from the site of this arson and the houses raided the day before. There was no one inside, and to our knowledge nothing was taken. The homeowner held a press conference decrying the search as illegal. They said they supported the movement but this was the only pretext for kicking down their doors and searching their home. Police, in their bluster and bravado, had hastily counterattacked. This week, Atlanta police are regularly harassing and surveilling homes of movement supporters in neighborhoods near to Cop City. Activists anticipated that the project's construction would foster more police terror of local residents, and they have been proven correct.

The city of Atlanta has pulled off the mask, and revealed the true nature of the Black Mecca—authoritarian control technologies, ultra-surveillance and criminalization, political suppression of protest—as the vanguard of technological carceral capitalist innovation.

But the Stop Cop City movement has not ceased. People have committed themselves to realizing a world free from police terror and have refused to be intimidated.

Now, Jack is bravely facing this repressive apparatus determined to crush support for the Stop Cop City movement. Jack is a beloved local organizer, carpenter, punk musician, rock climber, and self-motivated student of history, religion and politics. He loves sewing, vegan food, Zen Buddhism, straight edge, and poetry. Jack is a longtime political activist who has never shied away from standing up for what is right. Now we must stand up for Jack.

Check out Jack's support website to donate to his legal fund and write him a letter: freejack.co

March 8th - Case of Jack Mazurek in Atlanta and Interview with Leon Benson

Long-running abolitionist radio show and podcast Kite Line speaks about the recent case of Jack Mazurek in Atlanta and interviews Leon Benson. Listen at wfhb.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/KITELINE_Episode361-LeonBensonPART2.mp3

This week, we focus on two people who are studies in dignity in the face of state repression. Jack Mazurek was arrested in Atlanta yesterday and charged with arson. These allegations stemmed from an attack last July on police motorcycles, which was rooted in the movement against Cop City. He is standing strong despite the serious charges against him, as people around the country mobilize in his defense.

After addressing Jack's charges, the rest of the episode features Leon Benson, who survived decades in Indiana prisons, organizing against the guards and admins despite terrifying repression, and who emerged unbroken and exonerated a year ago.

March 11th - Update

Jack was scheduled to go to court last Monday, but the filth decided to indict him on the last minute and cancel the procedures. For that reason, they are still in jail awaiting their first hearing.

They also have a support website now where you can keep up to date: freejack.co

Please write a letter to Jack today and ensure you let them know they are not alone. They like music (especially straight edge hardcore punk, but also hip hop, they also love rock climbing, but they are interested in many other subjects like prison vegan recipes, carpentry, poetry and just everyday stuff like sunsets and forest walks, so choose any topic and send them a few lines!

They have a fundraiser for legal costs and commissary too, you can find it at givebutter.com/tLAvDE

3 Mar - Living Slow Deaths Behind Bars

Scientists have found that most cells in our bodies regenerate every seven to 10 years, on average.

MORE:

by Barbara Hanson Treen (*New York Times*)

This includes certain cells in the heart and brain. Can we assume, then, that our moral and emotional compasses are also capable of transforming over time?

As a New York State parole commissioner for 12 years, I evaluated the readiness for release and risk to public safety of more than 75,000 incarcerated people. I saw these changes in people every day.

Yet in spite of those transformations, the number of aging long-termers warehoused in prisons has only increased in recent years.

Two bills in the New York State Legislature could challenge that trend. Both would give people in prison fairer shots at parole. Versions of this legislation have been introduced since 2018 but were never put to a vote. This year, lawmakers should pass them.

Many long-termers languish in cells or in substandard prison infirmaries or even in so-called long-term care units. With labored breathing, they limp to the mess hall and miss their chance to eat, sink deeper into dementia, fall and get seriously injured, and navigate hearing and vision impairment. At the same time, they are under the supervision of guards who lack the training and often the empathy to properly manage the diminished capacity of many older people to follow often senseless prison rules.

When I was a commissioner, from 1984 to 1996, it was unusual for me to meet a parole candidate over the age of 50. Now there are more than 7,500 incarcerated people age 50 or older in New York, or about 25 percent of the state prison population. In fact, from 2008 to 2021, the overall prison population declined by half, yet the population age 50 or older increased, with ballooning health care costs crowding out other budget priorities. The state spends \$100,000 to \$240,000 on incarcerated people who are 55 or older, according to one of the reform measures before the State Legislature; for others, the figure is about \$60,000.

Why are so many older people who have served their minimum sentences still in prison? Because of the unwillingness of my former colleagues on the parole board to release people who have served their minimum sentences and often years and decades more. Sixty percent of those incarcerated are being denied parole, and in 90 percent of denial cases studied by the Vera Institute for Justice, the reason, at least in part, was the nature of the original crime.

Because many of these older adults received life terms as a maximum sentence (such as 15 years to life), commissioners who are unwilling to accept transformation in human behavior or are perhaps too cowardly to do their jobs in the face of public and political pressure can hide behind endless denials of release. The

parole board can simply decide that a parole applicant's release would, as the state's parole rules and regulations put it, "so deprecate the seriousness of his crime as to undermine respect for the law." Thus, we have long-termers languishing through the years even though their risk of reoffending declines sharply as they age.

For older people in prison, "life" becomes just another word for a slow death sentence.

Indeed, deaths behind bars in New York State have mounted, with the average age of death by so-called natural causes in this wholly unnatural environment hovering around 60.6 years. The mental and physical stress of prison life can lead to accelerated aging; as a result, old age in prison typically begins at 50 to 55. If the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision were a country, life expectancy in its prisons would rank in the bottom 20 worldwide. In 2021, 96 of the 137 deaths in New York's prisons were of people 55 or older. That's 70 percent.

Who should be released on parole? The parole board is supposed to consider the transformation the applicant has undergone in prison, the risk he or she would pose if released, any statement made by the victim or the victim's representative and the seriousness of the offense. As a commissioner, I considered applicants' prison records, their truthfulness when answering difficult questions such as what insights they gained into why they committed their crimes and what they have done to address those underlying issues. I even assessed body language. Most of all, I looked for credibility. Could I be confident in this person's intention to safely and successfully re-enter society? To be sure, I met people every day who were not ready to be released. Whether they would ever make the changes inside to become ready was up to them.

Most people in state prison today were convicted of crimes involving violence, often including murder. Even the harshest punishment can never undo the incredible harm they caused, but encouraging them to take accountability, to investigate and transform their thinking and behavior and to work toward repairing harm is the truest form of justice. It is one that, in my experience, delivers the most satisfaction to the greatest number of crime victims and survivors. Naturally, there are other survivors and relatives of victims who may strongly disagree.

For decades I have worked in and around our justice system — from helping to shepherd a support group for the families of incarcerated people to working in re-entry housing, programs for alternatives to incarceration, jail conditions monitoring and more. One lesson has remained constant: Those demonized by society for their crimes in most cases were crime victims before they went on to cause harm, yet our legal system's response to their pain did not heal them.

New York has a real chance to at least make progress in correcting such injustices. One bill before the State Legislature, the Fair and Timely Parole Act, would establish a presumption that applicants would be granted parole once their minimum sentences are served unless the record demonstrates an unreasonable risk to public safety. Another bill, the Elder Parole Act, would simply ensure that people in prison age 55 or older who have served at least 15 years of their sentences would be interviewed by the parole board. Neither bill guarantees release, but they would offer hope and a fairer chance.

By passing these bills, the lawmakers would be voting to replace a system of permanent punishment rooted in insatiable vengeance with a system that allows for the possibility of redemption and repair. They would also save an estimated \$522 million per year, according to Columbia University's Center for Justice.

This is not just a matter of compassion. Communities benefit when their elders return to them from prison. Formerly incarcerated older adults can and have made important contributions to their communities, working to end gun violence, mentoring young people, serving as peer recovery counselors and promoting community safety.

The alternative is leaving people to die in a cell, at ever-increasing moral and fiscal cost.

4 Mar - A Short Interview with Ladislav Kuc.

Lado was released from prison a couple of months ago after a twelve year sentence for the setting of explosive devices at a McDonald's.

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

He has been trying to adapt to life outside as well as catching up with doctor appointments that prison completely neglected during his incarceration. He has quite a few health issues and is finding life outside quite complicated, especially navigating different doctors and hurdles with hospitals. He is also concerned about the huge social debt he still has to pay and is trying to fundraise for it.

Thanks to PhillyABC there is a fundraising site where anyone can send a few coins to support Lado, so if you can, please donate (cos he needs to raise 10k EUR) and if you are unable, please share far and wide, talk about it with mates and try and find other methods of support! To other prisoner support groups, news collectives and anti-repression teams: please consider helping with this fundraiser. A fundraising gig, a merch run, whatever works best for you all, let's get Lado to the other side of his social debt so that he can focus on his mental and physical health and so he knows the world has not forgotten about him.

UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL (UA): First of all, tell us about yourself!

Ladislav Kuc (LK): My name is Ladislav Kuc. Our village is located 6 km from the second largest town in Slovakia, which is called Kosice. I spent 12 years in prison.

UA: How was life in prison?

LK: The guards called me a fucking terrorist. A fucking son of a bitch. The guards beat me. The prisoners made my life hell because when they beat me the guards allowed them to hurt me. I suffered a lot in prison I hate the bastards for whom I suffered so much.

The deputy director had me called when I entered the prison and told me that because I was a terrorist he was going to make my life hell. I have to admit that the bastard fulfilled what he promised me. I had to wash the toilets 3 times a day. The prisoners defecated on the floor on purpose and they rubbed the walls with shit and I had to clean it.

UA: That sounds horrible, did you at least feel supported by people outside?

LK: In prison, people started writing to me in English. I didn't know English, so I asked my mother for textbooks and started learning English. I taught myself English. That's why I can write and read in English quite well, but I can't speak English. People wanted to send me money, but the prison warden told me that if I get supporters to send me money, they will transfer me to a section where people will rape me. The prison warden really abused his powers.

UA: What was your first thought when you came out of prison?

LK: When I got out my first thought was to eat well. In prison the food was good but portions were small. My mother brought me about a dozen cakes which I ate on the way home.

UA: Do you want to talk about your charge? Amongst other charges, you were accused of setting an explosive device at an empty McDonalds which caused no injuries.

LK: I'm a sensitive person who sympathizes with animals, that's why McDonald's. I don't like it when the weak and defenseless are hurt. Animals can't protect themselves. It's right to protect animals from abuse.

I noticed that one direct action has 100 times more effect than, for example, a public protest.

UA: How can people support you now that you are out?

LK: I have a big debt after prison, some to lawyers and some to fines. The full amount is 9792 EUR. I have been looking for job but after prison it is difficult to find a job. I need donations to help.

UA: Is there anything else you'd like to tell those reading?

LK: thanks to every good person for every single dollar

5 Mar - The Counterterrorism Witch Hunt against Anarchist Fotis Tziotzis

We cease to be amazed and wonder what the police and journalists come up with for cases that disrupt their peace.

MORE:

by Fotis Tziotzis (*Athens Indymedia*)

I have seen and read a lot these days about the alleged major operation of the DAEEV (Directorate for Dealing with Special Violent Crimes) and the dismantling of a dangerous terrorist organization.

Vile absurdities were uttered, scenarios of science fiction. They even went so far as to talk about payments between those involved in order to create the narrative of organized crime and dangerous individuals. False information was published concerning the 6 detainees, using previous conversations from people who had absolutely no connection with each other, thus creating an atmosphere of confusion and misdirection.

I have been portrayed as an obsessive, dangerous person who teeters between two worlds: the political and the criminal, as they call it, with the sole objective of seeking revenge against the prosecuting authorities. What I want to say to all the Pretenderis and Evangelatos of this world is that, besides being ridiculous, you are also foolish because you are trying to convince the world of the profile of a person that serves you and at the same time how well your government, which has been feeding you all these years, is doing its job. You are the very same garbage that covers up state murders like in Tempi and you try to shield all the responsible friends of yours and primarily the then Minister Karamanlis with every ridiculous means available. You didn't care for even a second about the children who were murdered because of you, and provocatively you shift the blame right and left, while we all know about the friendly appointments without a public examination authority, the bribery in Serres, and so on. The henchmen of your then Minister. We all remember the minister saying that it is a shame to talk about security issues on the railway, and 8 days later we become witnesses to capitalist-state crime in Tempi.

You are the same ones who remain silent when the police evict poor people from their homes for debts to your bosses, the bankers. You are the same ones who dine with golden spoons next to the real mafia of this country – politicians and businessmen – laughing at the suffering of the oppressed.

Therefore, I am happy and content that I don't resemble you in the slightest. I have learned to look the world in the eye and not deceive them, to care for people and take a stance on whatever happens. I am proud to have grown up with values that you don't even know.

I may be a captive in your prisons, but my soul and mind are and will remain free. So, continue your witch hunt, create scenarios that serve you, and label whatever and however you want.

You were born cowards, and you will live as thugs.

'I want to go on my way,
bypassing the hesitant
and the slow-walkers'

P.S: The above text is just a few words about the restoration of truth and a critique of the current condition. I will provide a more detailed explanation once I am called for the interrogative procedure and have the indictment in my hands.

5 Mar - Drone Whistleblower Subjected To Harsh Confinement Finally Released From Prison

Daniel Hale's case was part of a continuation of the U.S. government's war on whistleblowers under President Joe Biden

MORE:

by Kevin Gosztola (*The Dissenter*)

Drone whistleblower Daniel Hale was released from prison in February after spending 33 months in some of the harshest confinement conditions ever imposed on a person for disclosing classified information to the press.

Hale remains in federal custody but is living in home confinement until July.

Though President Donald Trump's Justice Department indicted Hale, his case became the first major Espionage Act conviction secured by prosecutors under President Joe Biden.

In an opinion article for *Al Jazeera* English, Hale weighed in on the decision by Special Counsel Robert Hur to not recommend charges against Biden for mishandling classified information.

Hale noted the similarities between what he did and what Hur said Biden did and powerfully illustrated the disparate treatment that he survived.

Both Biden and Hale kept classified information "outside of a secure facility" at their homes and offices. Both spoke to a reporter about the information. Both expressed concerns about official United States policy, with Biden objecting to the 2009 "surge" in Afghanistan and Hale objecting to the "consequences" of prolonging the war.

"Biden [was] let off the hook because he did not mean any harm," Hale wrote. "In contrast, the government's pre-trial motions in my case argued that I not be allowed to present evidence of what it called my 'good motives.'"

"Afraid my motives might make me appear too sympathetic to a jury, I—like every other whistleblower before me—was rendered effectively defenseless because of a legal technicality in the way the law is written. Given no other choice, I was forced to plead out to avert a costly, unwinnable trial," Hale recalled.

Hale was a signals intelligence analyst in the U.S. Air Force. He was deployed to Afghanistan and stationed at Bagram Air Base, and Hale later worked as a contractor for a firm known as Leidos. His contracting job gave him access to documents on the U.S. military's drone program, which he shared with journalist and *Intercept* co-founder Jeremy Scahill.

Documents from the 2010s, which Hale revealed, brought attention to the sheer amount of civilian deaths caused by "targeted" killing operations. For example, during "one five-month period" of Operation Haymaker in northeastern Afghanistan, "nearly 90 percent of the people killed in airstrikes were not the intended targets."

Hale also released a "watchlisting guidance" document that showed "more than 40 percent" of the people in the U.S. government's database of terrorism suspects had "no recognized terrorist group affiliation." This helped Muslim Americans clear their names, forcing the government to remove them from the list.

On March 31, 2021, Hale pled guilty to one count of violating the Espionage Act. The U.S. Justice Department had him jailed at the Alexandria Detention Center until he was sentenced to 45 months in prison on July 27.

The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) transferred Hale to U.S. Penitentiary Marion in Illinois in October. He was placed in a Communications Management Unit (CMU), which prisoners nicknamed “Little Guantanamo” in the 2000s as it was established by President George W. Bush’s administration for Muslim prisoners.

By putting Hale in a CMU, he was effectively cut off from the support network that came to his aid during his prosecution. The prison could prevent him from writing articles for publication or retaliate against him if he gave any journalists permission to publish his writing.

Noor Mir, a close friend and member of his support team, said in December 2021 that his communications were “severely limited.” Mir was his only contact during the first months that he was in prison.

Hale was only permitted two 15-minute calls per week and anyone he contacted had to be approved by the BOP. All phone calls were monitored in real time by the FBI, and any letters or reading material sent to him were scanned.

I wrote a couple letters to Hale. A copy of my first letter, which I mailed in November 2021, was not shared with him until nearly a year later. I received a reply from Hale before the end of 2022.

In early 2023, I sent a second letter. I have no idea if Marion prison administrators shared that letter.

I frequently shared articles with CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou while he was incarcerated to help him maintain a connection to the outside world, and every so often, I had an opportunity to forward some of my reporting on whistleblowers and the government's latest Espionage Act prosecutions to Hale.

Until Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg was gravely ill from pancreatic cancer, Hale spoke with Ellsberg every Sunday. Ellsberg was a “confidant, mentor, and moral compass on the darkest of days,” according to Hale’s support network.

Sadly, Ellsberg died before Hale was released from prison. His incarceration made it impossible for Hale to join fellow whistleblowers in paying tribute to the godfather of whistleblowers when his family organized a memorial event.

Since Hale was sentenced to prison, the Justice Department has intensified the government's ability to wield the Espionage Act to enforce secrecy.

IRS whistleblower Charles Littlejohn was severely punished for revealing Trump's tax returns to the *New York Times*. Joshua Schulte, who was found guilty of providing the Vault 7 materials to WikiLeaks, received a 33-year prison sentence for leaking that included a terrorism enhancement.

The Justice Department has also ignored calls from lawmakers, journalists, and human rights advocates from around the world, who have demanded that prosecutors end the government's dangerous case against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.

On February 25, Aaron Bushnell, a 25-year-old U.S. Air Force member, protested Israel’s genocidal violence in Gaza and self-immolated in front of the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C. Hale expressed his solidarity a day after Bushnell sacrificed himself.

“Both Aaron and I share a commonality that is more widely spread throughout the American military than the ruling class would have you believe,” Hale declared. “The weight of guilt for the many crimes against humanity perpetrated by our own government hangs heavy over every veteran.”

“Aaron succumbed to the most pervasive wound in the U.S. military—a moral wound.”

“I urge each of you to honor his memory by going and looking at his final moments uncensored. Aaron wanted everyone to witness the horror of human beings consumed by flames, lest we continue to ignore the reality of what bombs are doing to the bodies of Gazan children by the tens of thousands,” Hale concluded.

6 Mar - Support for Alexey Rozhkov, anarchist from Russia

Support the fundraiser for Alexey Rozhkov's defense!

MORE:

Alexey is charged with three criminal articles for the arson of a military recruitment centre and an interview with an opposition channel. The investigation saw the arson as a "terrorist act" and Rozhkov's words as "justification of terrorism" and "fake news" about the Russian army.

We are trying to raise €3442 — this will be enough to pay for the lawyer's labour during the trials and to produce reviews of the expert examinations that allowed for the declaration of the new charges.

Support the fundraiser in any way you can:

💰 **PayPal:** solidarity_zone@riseup.net (with note "for Rozhkov")

👤 **Cryptocurrency** (write to solidarity_zone@riseup.net if you are transferring cryptocurrency):

Monero:

4B1tm6boA5ST6hLdfnPRG2Np9XMHCTiyhE6QaFo46QXp6tZ7Y6nJjE43xBBTwmHM84bWwexR8nS4KH36JHujjc1kC8j2Mx5e

Bitcoin: [bc1qn404lrshp3q9gd7852d7w85sa09aq0ch28s3v4](https://blockchain.info/address/bc1qn404lrshp3q9gd7852d7w85sa09aq0ch28s3v4)

USDT (TRC20): [TRcCCUHKSMY7iLJPvDxLc6ZnvAud72jTgj](https://tronscan.org/#/address/TRcCCUHKSMY7iLJPvDxLc6ZnvAud72jTgj)

By participating in the fundraiser you are not breaking any Russian laws: we are not recognised as foreign agents, extremist or terrorist organisation, and raising money to pay for a lawyer is not yet prohibited in Russia.

7 Mar - Will Aaron Bushnell's Death Trigger Anarchism Witch Hunt?

Aaron Bushnell's death by self-immolation in front of the Israeli Embassy in Washington last month has provoked nationwide soul-searching about the war in Gaza.

MORE:

by Ken Klippenstein (*The Intercept*)

For the U.S. government though, the airman's death excites a different kind of search: for so-called extremists, particularly left-wing ones.

Last Wednesday, Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., former Army officer and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, sent a letter to Defense Sec. Lloyd Austin asking why and how the Pentagon could tolerate an airman like Bushnell in its ranks. Calling his death "an act of horrific violence" that was "in support of a terrorist group [Hamas]," Cotton goes on to ask about the Defense Department's internal efforts to address extremism and whether Bushnell was ever identified as exhibiting extremist views.

Cotton's agitation to find Hamas supporters in uniform twists Bushnell's political act, which Bushnell said was in support of the Palestinian people. But it also follows a longstanding urging by other members of Congress like Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa — ranking Republican of the Judiciary Committee and former president pro tempore of the Senate — for the military to pursue some kind of similar treatment for leftists.

While studies show that support for extremism is similar or even lower among veterans than the general population, extremism in the active-duty military has become an obsession of the Washington brass since January 6. Soon after taking office, new secretary of defense Austin, a retired Army general, directed the military to conduct an all-hands "stand down" to address extremism in the ranks, commissioning a number of panels and studies to evaluate white nationalism and neo-Nazi support among service members.

Outside of the Defense Department, the FBI is responsible for domestic counterterrorism. Since Israel's war on Gaza began last October, it has been focused on any foreign blowback on the United States.

"In a year when the [foreign] terrorism threat was already elevated, the ongoing war in the Middle East has raised the threat of an attack against Americans inside the United States to a whole 'nother level," FBI Director Christopher Wray told cadets at West Point on Monday. "We cannot — and do not — discount the possibility that Hamas or another foreign terrorist organization may exploit the current conflict to conduct attacks here, on our own soil," Wray told Congress right after the Gaza war began.

Will Bushnell's death, and congressional pressure, open the door to build some speculative link between domestic supporters of Palestine and the bureau's foreign-oriented anti-Hamas work?

Though Bushnell's suicide was intended to demonstrate his anguish over the plight of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, he also embraced anarchism, or at least a present-day articulation of anarchism that is a general rejection of established authority. Bushnell's posts on Reddit and other social media platforms before his death reflected this embrace of anarchism, and he chose the anarchist symbol as his profile picture for the Twitch account he used to livestream his self-immolation. His Facebook page also followed and liked pages for several anarchist groups. The anarchist collective CrimethInc. also said in a blog post that Bushnell had emailed the group shortly before his death.

Bushnell was also a community activist in San Antonio, Texas, where he was stationed. The Democratic Socialists of America San Antonio chapter issued a statement expressing solidarity with Bushnell and mentioning his work with them on homelessness. "He was an anarchist," a San Antonio DSA member who interacted with Bushnell told *The Intercept*, asking that their name not be used. "He had a good nose for recognizing coercive / unhealthy organizing structures and practices; and was very intentional about his relationships with other people."

Anarchism and the FBI

Since 2019, the FBI has used five "threat categories" to describe domestic terrorism: Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism, Anti-Government or Anti-Authority Violent Extremism (AGAAVE), Animal Rights or Environmental Violent Extremism, Abortion-Related Violent Extremism, and "All Other Domestic Terrorism Threats," which is defined as "furtherance of political and/or social agendas which are not otherwise exclusively defined under one of the other threat categories."

The AGAAVE threat, the FBI says, "includes anarchist violent extremists, militia violent extremists, sovereign citizen violent extremists, and other violent extremists." FBI data reveals that 31 percent of its investigations relate to AGAAVEs and 60 percent of all investigations include cases categorized as AGAAVE and "civil unrest." Most of that focus since January 6 has been on groups that participated in the protests at the Capitol and supporters of Donald Trump.

Behind the scenes though, according to congressional testimony reported here for the first time, the FBI maintains a program specifically for combatting anarchists, called the Anarchist Extremism Program. In Senate testimony, the FBI says that it had increased its targeting of anarchist "violent extremists" across the country by using both human and technical sources to spy on them. Since the nationwide protests after the death of George Floyd in 2020, the bureau has tasked field offices to tap confidential informants to develop better intelligence about anarchists. In 2021, the FBI more than doubled its domestic terrorism caseload; and Wray told Congress that arrests of what the bureau calls "anarchist violent extremists" were more numerous in 2020-2021 (the months around January 6) than in the three previous years combined.

An internal FBI threat advisory obtained by *The Intercept* defines Anarchist Violent Extremists as individuals "who consider capitalism and centralized government to be unnecessary and oppressive," and "oppose economic globalization; political, economic, and social hierarchies based on class, religion, race,

gender, or private ownership of capital; and external forms of authority represented by centralized government, the military, and law enforcement.”

By the FBI’s definition, little of this applies to Bushnell’s own articulation of his political views, despite the anarchist label. But the airman’s protest fulfills the push by many Republicans and conservatives to get the FBI to equally focus on leftists. In a 2021 hearing, Grassley pushed for more investigations of those on the left, alluding to the bureau’s anarchist extremism program.

“Former Attorney General Barr stated that the FBI has robust programs for white supremacy and militia extremism, but a significantly weaker anarchist extremism program,” Grassley said to Wray. “How do you plan to make your left-wing anarchist extremism program as robust as your white supremacy and malicious extremism program?”

At a press briefing last Thursday that discussed Bushnell’s ties to anarchism, the Pentagon appeared to hint that his death might be considered an act of extremism.

“A review of Aaron Bushnell’s social media account indicates that he has some pretty strong anarchist views,” a reporter asked. “Under the Pentagon’s definition of extremists, would he fall under that?”

“I do think it’s fair to say that suicide by self-immolation is an extreme act,” Pentagon press secretary Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder replied, promising a “full investigation.”

7 Mar - Government Overreach on Activist Surveillance Again? Shocking!!

The Civil Liberties Defense Center (CLDC) recently crossed an important hurdle in a lawsuit against the Oregon Department of Justice's "Titan Fusion Center."

MORE:

After the events of September 11, 2001, a total of 79 Fusion Centers were created throughout the United States, with the purported goal of helping law enforcement agencies coordinate and share information with each other.

In the wake of the successful citizen challenge to the Jordan Cove pipeline in southern Oregon, investigative journalists at the *Guardian* and the *Intercept* revealed that Oregon's Fusion Center had for years been amassing information and creating dossiers about activists' work to challenge it. In doing so, the Oregon DOJ violated an Oregon statute going back to the 1980s, that prohibits such surveillance.

Very simply worded, the one-sentence statute (ORS 181A.250) prohibits all Oregon law enforcement agencies from collecting or maintaining "information about the political, religious or social views, associations or activities" of any person or organization, "unless such information directly relates to an investigation of criminal activities, and there are reasonable grounds to suspect the subject of the information is or may be involved in criminal conduct."

When we learned that the Fusion Center had gathered and maintained files about our clients, 360Eugene and Rogue Climate, we joined the Oregon state court lawsuit challenging that behavior (Farrell-Smith v. Oregon Department of Justice, Marion Co. No. 21CV47809).

Rather than seeking financial compensation, this suit goes deeper, to the roots, asking the court to declare that the Fusion Center is operating in violation of the law and without legal authority, and to issue an injunction prohibiting the Center from conducting such surveillance in the future. Examples of the types of activities the Center surveilled were peaceful marches, letter-writing campaigns, and planning meetings. CLDC and our clients are concerned that such surveillance chills free speech and organizing, and that the little-used Oregon statute must be enforced.

Before any meaningful discovery had taken place, Oregon DOJ filed a motion for summary judgment. Last month we won a ruling from the judge, who put that motion on hold while we proceed with depositions and more in-depth disclosure of written DOJ documentation. We look forward to proceeding to the substantive issues in this lawsuit. Stay tuned!

8 Mar - Indigenous Land Defender Facing 46 Years in Prison

Communique from the Community Assembly of Puente Madera and the Assembly of Indigenous Peoples of the Isthmus in Defense of Land and Territory (APIIDTT) demanding the revocation of the conviction and sentence against David Hernández Salazar.

MORE:

We energetically reject the sentence handed down against David Hernández Salazar: 46 years and 6 months, with a fine of \$182,818 pesos, and a damage repair payment of \$1,100,015 pesos. These sanctions clearly represent the criminalization and persecution of David for his struggle in defense of land, human rights, and Indigenous peoples.

Yesterday, February 7, after the Public Prosecutor of Tehuantepec presented his verdict, the District Judge presented the sentence. Both authorities ignored and completely dismissed information presented during the hearings demonstrating David's innocence, such as the reports presented by his defense and the contradictions of supposed witnesses.

Rather, the judges decided to convict him of crimes based on false accusations and inconsistent testimonies. This case makes clear the corruption and collusion of judicial authorities with political and business groups in the region who are linked to organized crime. Territorial defenders are bothering these powerful figures, so they seek to silence them with prison, disappearances, and assassinations.

It is important to remember that David Hernández Salazar has been persecuted since 2017 in his struggle in defense of the common use lands of El Pitayal. At that moment, he was involved in the resistance against the imposition of an electric substation of the Mexican Military. He was illegally detained and beaten by municipal police. Afterwards, there were a series of slander campaigns carried out against him, along with physical and psychological threats.

He was criminalized again in 2021 for his role as community agent of Puente Madera, and member of the general coordinator of APIIDTT. He has been persecuted and prosecuted by the Municipality of San Blas Atempa, the State Government of Oaxaca, the Interoceanic Corridor, the Secretary of Communications and Transport, the National Agrarian Registry, the Secretariat of Defense, the Marines, and the National Guard. He faced his first federal lawsuit in 2021 (case file 269/2021) where he was not indicted.

At a second moment, at the beginning of 2022, began the criminal case 446/2022. On January 16, 2023, he was illegally detained and his legal process began. That specific case leads us to this present document. However, in October of 2023, he was notified of another federal lawsuit, with the first hearing set for February 21. In these three legal processes, the figure most responsible for the criminalization against David has at all times been the Municipality of San Blas Atempa, obeying the ex-administrator of the State of Oaxaca, and the current candidate for Senate, Antonino Morales Toledo.

This sentence isn't definite, and it will not be applied immediately. We have appealed the arrest warrants against David and the 17 community members of Puente Madera in case file 446/2022. We will continue working on the legal defense, filing the necessary appeals, and seeking out the competent authorities who can review and rule on this unjust and absurd sentence.

With much rage and courage, we confirm that our struggle will continue for the defense of the common use lands of El Pitayal. These lands give life to our community and history as Binnizá people. We have been

active for years defending the commons, what is ours, the collective, and will continue doing so, defending life with life itself if necessary.

In this context, as the Community Assembly of Puente Madera and the Assembly of Indigenous Peoples of the Isthmus in Defense of Land and Territory, we make a call to:

- Issue statements demanding the revocation of this sentence against David Hernández Salazar, and the dismissal of the criminal case 446/2022 where there exist 17 other arrest warrants against inhabitants of Puente Madera.
- Carry out solidarity actions, in the mode and form of each individual, collectivity, and organization, with the dignified resistance of Puente Madera against the Industrial Park and Interoceanic Corridor megaproject of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.
- Help with legal expenses.

Lastly, we want to use this communique to make a first call and invitation to the celebration of three years of resistance in defense of El Pitayal, which will take place on March 14-17, 2024, in the rebel community of Puente Madera, San Blas Atempa, Oaxaca.

From the barricade we reiterate: To defend El Pitayal is to defend the commons, to defend life!

8 Mar - Victor is Free! Support Still Needed

Call for continued support for Victor Puertas, an indigenous forest defender. For more information on Victor, go to unicornriot.ninja/2023/cop-city-defendant-victor-puertas-has-been-held-for-months-without-trial-but-his-community-hasnt-forgotten-him

MORE:

After 11 months kidnapped by the state, Victor Puertas, an indigenous forest defender arrested during a festival in Cop City, has been released. He spent three months in DeKalb County jail without bail and then he was transferred to an ICE facility where he was held for another 8 months.

Now that he is free, he could do with some economic help to help him with medical, living and jail recovery expenses, as well as with legal fees to fight the domestic terrorism and RICO charges he is facing. If you can afford it, please drop a couple of coins:

VENMO: [@peacefuluprising](https://www.venmo.com/@peacefuluprising)

PAYPAL: donations@peacefuluprising.org

8 Mar - In Contempt #38

We're re-printing a condensed version of the monthly column for It's Going Down that focuses on a roundup of political prisoner, prison rebel, and repression news, announcements, action and analysis.

MORE:

Chicano anarchist political prisoner and *Certain Days* collective member Xinachtli now has new legal representation, connected to the Water Protector Legal Collective, as he prepares for an upcoming parole bid. His support crew report that:

Beginning 2024, Xinachtli is scheduled for another parole review hearing, and his freedom campaign will soon announce what supporters can do to support the movement to free him from this wrongful COINTELPRO-style extra judicial captivity and 50 years jury sentence for disarming a Texas Sheriff in self defense.

A new zine has been released on *It's Going Down* about the case of Mexican anarchist prisoner Miguel Peralta, which is available in both Spanish and English.

February 6th was the Global Day of Solidarity with long-term indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier. Leonard Peltier is experiencing serious problems with his vision, and his support committee organized a

series of phone zaps to pressure the BOP to arrange adequate medical treatment and help save his eyesight. In a statement to supporters, Peltier wrote:

Time has twisted one more year out of me. A year that has been a moment. A year that has been a lifetime. For almost five decades I've existed in a cage of concrete and steel. With the "good time" calculations of the system, I've actually served over 60 years.

Year after year, I have encouraged you to live as spirit warriors. Even while in here, I can envision what is real and far beyond these walls. I've seen a reawakening of an ancient Native pride that does my heart good.

I may leave this place in a box. That is a cold truth. But I have put my heart and soul into making our world a better place and there is a lot of work left to do – I would like to get out and do it with you.

I know that the spirit warriors coming up behind me have the heart and soul to fight racism and oppression, and to fight the greed that is poisoning our lands, waters, and people.

We are still here.

Another phone/email zap has been organized for long-term Black Liberation prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is not receiving his required cardiac diet and opportunities for exercise following heart surgery: prisonradio.org/news-update/mumia-abu-jamal-am-8335-health-alert-action

Water Protector Jessica Reznicek has been moved to disciplinary segregation. Her communication is limited while in segregation so she will not be able to respond to letters as quickly, but it's important to support her through this experience.

The Final Straw Radio recently broadcast a new interview with supporters of antifascist prisoner Alex Stokes, along with a segment about the case of Ruslan Siddiqui, a Russian anarchist facing charges for sabotaging the war effort.

The San Francisco Bay View has published an obituary for Sekou Odinga, a long-term Black Liberation prisoner who passed away at the start of the year: tiny.cc/SekouObit

10 Mar - Tomás González is Sentenced to 16 Years in Prison (Chile)

This past January, the comrade Tomás González was sentenced to 16 years in prison, setting his release date for 2038.

MORE:

via *Informativo Anarquista* translated by *Act for freedom now!*

"All of these young people planted seeds of rebellion and today we continue learning from their successes and errors, each autumn we gather to glimpse ourselves, to contrast our realities, to analyze the grim context we live in and though our present may be very bitter we continue resisting."

– Tomás and Mawvnkho

Remembering that his co-accused Mawvnkho has been free for months after having received an abbreviated sentence accepting the charges handed down by the Prosecutor.

At 23:00 of May 19, 2022, Tomás, Mawvnkho and two people who could not be captured were approached by three motorcycle cops in an ID check while they were in a plaza in the Ñuñoa neighborhood. It was then that Tomás shot at the two cops, wounding one in the leg and managing to flee for minutes, but being detained later on along with Mawvnkho by a patrol that came to support the cops.

For these acts Tomás received the sentence of 16 years, broken down as:

- 7 years for "attempted homicide of an on-duty police officer", for having shot one cop in his bullet-proof vest.

- 6 years for “serious wounds to an on-duty police officer”, for shooting the other cop in the leg, resulting in a fractured femur.
- 3 years for “possession of a forbidden firearm”, for having a modified blank gun brand Ceonic 9mm caliber and 5 bullets .38 caliber

Tomás’ writings can be found at informativoanarquista.noblogs.org/post/tag/tomas

10 Mar - Louisiana embraces incarceration, repeals reforms

For decades, Louisiana had the nation's highest rate of incarceration.

MORE:

by Jamiles Lartey (*The Marshall Project*)

And — given that the U.S. is among the most carceral countries on the planet — the state arguably spent some 20 years as the "prison capital" of the world.

Louisiana lost that distinction, by a hair, after a series of 2017 reforms successfully shrank the prison population by a third. (In recent years, it has jockeyed back and forth with a few states for the title.)

But "prison capital of the world" is a sobriquet the state is likely to regain after state legislators sent a suite of punitive changes to Gov. Jeff Landry's desk this week. The new laws would end the possibility of parole for most new convictions and increase how much of a sentence a person must serve before being released for good behavior, from 35% of the sentence to 85%. The changes also do away with the tools local prosecutors had for undoing wrongful convictions, more common in Louisiana than in the rest of the U.S.

Criminal justice reform advocates have pushed back on the legislation, arguing that people released on parole are less likely to commit new crimes than those who serve full prison terms. In 2023, fewer than 400 people, or about 1% of the state's prisoners, were granted parole. There's also evidence that getting rid of parole, alongside time reductions for good behavior behind bars, makes prisons more dangerous by removing the incentives for people to pursue rehabilitative programming and avoid disciplinary violations.

Another new Louisiana law mandates that 17-year-olds accused of crimes be charged as adults, rather than in the juvenile justice system, reversing a 2017 reform that did the opposite. Proponents of the change say that the state's youth jails became more volatile with the introduction of 17-year-olds. Critics note that the state already has mechanisms for transferring 17-year-olds accused of serious crimes into the adult system, so the change will mostly serve to criminalize teens charged with petty crimes.

The package of laws included other components that may not directly increase the prison population, but are designed to signal a "tough" approach to crime. This includes authorizing electrocution and nitrogen gas as execution methods, and making public the criminal records of minors accused of certain crimes. In total, the new suite of laws likely makes Louisiana the most punitive justice system in the nation, with harsher penalties than it had even before the bipartisan reforms passed in 2017. The new changes likely will bring a substantial cost to taxpayers.

Louisiana is not alone. Across the country, state legislatures are rapidly advancing punitive bills and rolling back criminal justice reforms, largely in response to fears about crime. In Georgia, Senate Bill 63 — which has passed the state Senate and House — would add 30 charges to the list of crimes that require judges to impose cash bail to release a person from jail pretrial. That list includes many minor and nonviolent crimes like shoplifting and forgery, if they're not a first offense. The bill would effectively ban charitable bail funds in the state, in what some have interpreted as a direct attack on the "Stop Cop City" protest movement, which has relied on bail funds to get arrested activists out of jail.

In Kentucky, a similar measure to restrict charitable bail funds passed in the state House and is pending in the Senate. It's part of a broader package that would also stiffen penalties for the sale of fentanyl and some

gun crimes, and impose a life sentence without parole on anyone convicted of a violent offense for a third time. The bill would also create a new law against "unlawful camping," an effort aimed at policing unhoused people. Both Kentucky and Georgia have experienced serious issues with overcrowding and understaffing in jails and prisons in recent years, problems that the pending laws are likely to make worse.

This week the Washington, D.C., city council also passed a "massive" crime bill that, similarly, "puts the liberal city on a track toward harsher punishments for a range of crimes from illegal gun possession to retail theft," according to *The Washington Post*. The new criminal code, which has increasingly become a political football in the nation's capital, has to be approved by Congress to take permanent effect.

While they vary dramatically in scope and approach, punitive legislative efforts are also underway in Oregon, Tennessee, Vermont and elsewhere. As in Louisiana, many of these legislative efforts aim to undo reforms passed in recent years.

Aswad Thomas, the National Director for Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, told me this week that some of these efforts also come as states cut resources "for victims to access healing and recovery services" and invest more in policing and incarceration. "That's going to have a ripple effect on domestic violence victims, sexual assault victims, and victims of gun violence," Thomas said.

For example, in Louisiana, the governor's proposed budget — unveiled at the same time as the special session about crime — cuts \$7 million in funding for domestic violence shelters in a state where more than half of all murdered women are killed by an intimate partner. "Every single person we are serving is a victim of crime," the director of one shelter told the *Louisiana Illuminator*.

10 Mar - Music for Leonard Peltier

For years Political Prisoner and Native American activist, Leonard Peltier has dreamed of a compilation featuring artists who stand with his struggle and case using their voice to spread his message.

MORE:

World music/Hip Hop producer and activist Opium Sabbah--son of world music pioneer Cheb i Sabbah, co-chair of Oakland Jericho Movement, and member of Leonard Peltier's Ad Hoc Committee, is working with Leonard to support the project. This compilation will feature folk artists, native hip hop artists, and traditional native artists.

"We Still Here," the first single off of the album, is due to drop Saturday, March 16th and features Opium Sabbah, Swiggle Mandela, and Mic Crenshaw. Please pre-save the single on your preferred streaming service and help spread the word. Opium will be headlining a Hip-Hop show dedicated to Leonard alongside Mic Crenshaw, Swiggle Mandela, and Blacque Butterfly at "My Memories of Time Past" Art Show & Paintings of Leonard Peltier in Portland, Oregon and they will be shooting the video for "We Still Here" live at the event.

March 15th - Update on Leonard Peltier: He is Experiencing the Onset of Blindness

Leonard is in trouble, physically. He's experiencing the onset of blindness. He's losing strength in his limbs. His blood sugar is erratic. This, on top of already severe conditions that have become dire. Leonard has not seen a dentist in ten years. His few remaining teeth are infected. He is locked down, in pain.

Leonard's fortitude remains astonishing. He isn't scared of dying. He doesn't want to die in lockdown.

Our legal team has an emergency transfer underway. They are going to extraordinary lengths. We must get a top ophthalmologist to him. Thanks to your calls, the BOP did see him. They told him a specialist would be 8-10 weeks out. Leonard does not have 8-10 weeks. He needs emergency care immediately.

If you can, please donate to this GoFundMe: [tiny.cc/LeonardVision](https://www.gofundme.com/LeonardVision)

March 15th - Schatz Leads Group of Senators Urging U.S. Attorney General Garland to Allow for the Compassionate Release of Leonard Peltier

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i), chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, led a group of senators urging U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland to allow for the compassionate release of Native American rights activist Leonard Peltier.

"Mr. Peltier, who has been imprisoned for the past 49 years and is suffering from severe health conditions, should be able to return home and live out his remaining days among his own people," the senators wrote in the letter to Attorney General Garland. "It is time that the federal government rectifies the grave injustice of Mr. Peltier's continued imprisonment, and strongly urge you to allow for his compassionate release."

The letter was also signed by U.S. Senators Mazie Hirono (D-Hawai'i), Edward Markey (D-Mass.), Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Tina Smith (D-Minn.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Peter Welch (D- Vt.).

We write to urge you to allow for the compassionate release of Native American rights activist Leonard Peltier pursuant to the Bureau of Prison's procedures. Mr. Peltier, who has been imprisoned for the past 49 years and is suffering from severe health conditions, should be able to return home and live out his remaining days among his own people.

In 1975 [was actually 1976], Mr. Peltier, a citizen of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, was arrested and later convicted for his alleged involvement in the murder of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, despite evidence of prosecutorial misconduct and due process violations mounted throughout his trial. Over the past several decades of Mr. Peltier's federal incarceration, calls for his release have received widespread and growing support from both faith and human rights leaders – including Pope Francis, Saint Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama, and Coretta Scott King – as well as those previously involved in his prosecution. James H. Reynolds, the U.S. Attorney who handled the prosecution and appeal of Mr. Peltier's case, previously stated that Mr. Peltier's "conviction and continued incarceration is a testament to a time and a system of justice that no longer has a place in our society." He further explained that Mr. Peltier has served his sentence "on the basis of minimal evidence, a result that [he] strongly doubt[s] would be upheld in any court today." The United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention issued a 17-page legal opinion reviewing Mr. Peltier's case, concluding that he "continues to be detained because he is Native American." And the late Judge Gerald Heaney, who presided over Mr. Peltier's 1986 appeal in the 8th Circuit also publicly called for Mr. Peltier's release – first in 1991 and again in 2000, detailing the injustice of Mr. Peltier's trial and proclaiming that "a healing process must begin."

The Bureau of Prisons (BOP) procedures allow its director to grant a reduction in sentence, or compassionate release, to prisoners that meet certain criteria, including advanced age and deteriorating health; Mr. Peltier is nearly 80 years old and suffers from numerous health conditions, including a potentially fatal abdominal aortic aneurysm. If the Director of the BOP approves a compassionate release, and the Parole Commission agrees, Mr. Peltier could be released immediately.

We commend the steps that the Biden-Harris Administration has taken to right past wrongs of our federal government's treatment of Native Americans, and the steps you have taken to uphold the American values of liberty and justice, including rectifying inequities in our nation's criminal justice system. Now, it is time that the federal government rectifies the grave injustice of Mr. Peltier's continued imprisonment, and strongly urge you to allow for his compassionate release under the BOP's procedures.

11 Mar - Activist Given Longest Sentence in German Campaign to Oust U.S. Nukes

First Ever U.S. Woman Sentenced to Prison in Decades-Long Effort

MORE:

by John LaForge (*Nukewatch*)

Susan Crane, of the Redwood City, California Catholic Worker, has been sentenced to 229 days in prison in Germany for daring to interfere with the U.S. nuclear weapons stationed at Germany's Büchel Air Force base, southeast of Cologne.

Crane participated in six nonviolent go-in actions, confronting the air force system on base which routinely trains to drop the U.S. H-bombs on targets in Russia, most provocatively this winter in operation "Steadfast Defender 24" — which was launched in the midst of NATO's war in Ukraine.

As a result of convictions on misdemeanor charges of trespass and damage to the chain-link fence, Crane was fined a total of €2,500. Now, for refusing to admit guilt or pay, a mid-level court on Jan. 18, 2024 ordered Crane to report June 4, 2024 to Rohrbach penitentiary, a 450-bed, co-ed in southwest Germany. Crane's 7.6-month penalty is the longest prison sentence ever imposed in the 25-year-long series of rallies, protests, marches, peace camps, and civil resistance directed at the NATO nuclear weapons base. Crane is also the first U.S. woman to be ordered to German prison in the decades-long effort.

In 2018, and 2019, Crane and others were able to get inside the base and even climb atop earthen bunkers used to store both the nuclear weapons and German Tornado fighter jets. Dozens of Germans, as well as two other U.S. citizens and one Dutch national have done prison time in Germany for related go-in actions.

Between 2017 and 2021, Susan joined five delegations of U.S. anti-nuclear activists attending annual summer peace camps just outside the base — organized by *Nukewatch* and Nonviolent Action to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Crane said in a statement March 6, "When we went on the base, we reminded the military that nuclear weapons are illegal and immoral. We asked them to resign their commissions, or, if ordered, to refuse to load the nuclear weapons on their Tornado fighter jets, or to drop them anywhere."

"I thought the German courts would listen to the reasons we went on the base, and understand our peaceful actions were justified as acts of crime prevention. But international law was not respected," Crane said.

According to legal scholars, the U.S. transfer of its nuclear weapons to Germany — formally a non-nuclear weapons state — is prohibited by the Treaty on Nonproliferation. Articles I and II of the treaty explicitly forbid any "transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons". The U.S. nuclear bombs at Büchel are the 170-kiloton "B61-3," and the 50-kiloton "B61-4."

Crane, who has two adult children and four grandchildren, has devoted her life in California to serving poor and often homeless people of Redwood City. In her statement, she said, "I see people living in camps, living in cars, and I see working people who don't have enough income for basic needs like rent, food, or medical care. Then, I think of the money wasted on war-making by the U.S. and NATO nations; and that 3% of the U.S. military budget alone could end starvation around the world."

Crane argued at trial that she was justified in attempting to interfere with an "ongoing criminal conspiracy", the unlawful plan to wage wars of mass destruction, wars in violation of the Geneva Conventions and the Nuremberg Charter and Judgment. Crane appealed the convictions all the way to Germany's highest court. However, it was dismissed without comment in the same way it has ignored 19 similar anti-nuclear protest case appeals. Susan then appealed to the European Court of Human Rights, in Strasbourg, France, just as five others in the campaign have done. (The ECHR hears appeals by defendants from 31 EU states who've exhausted legal redress in their respective countries.) Last December, the ECHR used a technicality to reject Crane's appeal and did not address its merits. The ECHR has yet to decide whether to take up the appeals from the other weapons resisters.

"I don't want to give money to the court system which I view as protecting nuclear weapons," Crane said in her statement. "I don't believe nonviolently resisting nuclear madness is wrong, and I don't need to apologize for it. Paying a fine would be like admitting some guilt, while refusing is a way of withdrawing my cooperation from the courts, and from the judges who build a wall of silence and hide behind it. They

deny that threatening mass destruction violates international law. I acted to uphold this law, but they pretend that treaties don't apply in their courtrooms," Crane said.

11 Mar - Activist Facing Prison After Uncovering A Zoophilia Case

Animal rights activists indicted in Sweden, accused of separately spreading a video clip in which a farmer openly talks about having sex with non-human animals.

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

The indictment is about something that happened in 2018 and two activists are accused of allegedly spreading the film clip. At the time, the farmer was a high-ranking person in the Swedish agricultural lobby. The lawsuit came in 2023.

The activists are accused, among other things, of spreading the film clip on social media. The prosecutor argues that the film clip has harmed the farmer, and therefore the activists should be held guilty of gross defamation (a crime which in Sweden, among other things, can lead to up to two years in prison). Having sex with non-human animals is also a crime in Sweden (called "tidelag"), which can lead to up to two years in prison. The farmer is currently not charged with tidelag. The farmer says that the film clip is a montage, a fake, that there is another person in the recording. Today, the farmer no longer has any higher responsibilities within the animal industry.

Ever since the lawsuit, the Swedish judiciary has tried to hold a trial. Which, for various reasons, they have not been able to do (until recently). One of the activists has previously not been served with a summon to the hearing. The district court and the police have tried to reach the activist, and in May 2023 an obstruction certificate was drawn up. On March 5 2024 the trial against the animal rights activists was held. The verdict will be announced March 19th. The prosecutor demands, among other things, that one of the activists should get six months in prison, and pay SEK 100,000 in damages.

11 Mar - Cassation Hearing for Anarchists Anna and Alfredo

Following requests from both the Public Prosecutor's Office and the defense lawyers, there will be a Cassation hearing against the appeal sentence which had re-determined the sentences for Alfredo Cospito and Anna Beniamino, sentencing them respectively to 23 years and 17 years and 9 months in prison.

MORE:

via *Abolition Media*

The prosecution had requested life imprisonment, with one year's solitary confinement during the day, for Alfredo and 27 years and 1 month for Anna. Less than two weeks after the appeal sentence, which had recognized the "low seriousness" of the Fossano explosive attack, now officially defined as a "political massacre", the public prosecutor's office had lodged an appeal in cassation, asking that this type of mitigating circumstance not be recognized.

The hearing will take place on April 24, 2024. We remind you that on March 19 there will be another hearing at the Court of Cassation, which will once again rule on the 41-bis imposed on Alfredo.

Alfredo is in state custody due to his participation in actions claimed by the Informal Anarchist Federation (FAI). Specifically, the kneecapping of Roberto Adinolfi, executive of the Italian nuclear power company Ansaldo Nucleare. Cospito also received an additional 20-year term for the 2006 bombing of a Carabinieri cadet barracks near Turin. His partner Anna Beniamino was also convicted for the action. The attack was claimed under the acronym Animal and Tremendous Revolt/Informal Anarchist Federation (RAT/FAI) in a letter sent to the Corriere della Sera.

14 Mar - Mumia Is Better, But Keep Up the Pressure

This is very welcome news, but not a reason to let up on the medical campaign -- which is having an impact! -- pressuring prison officials to reverse their months-long denial of Mumia's doctor's prescriptions since his double-bypass heart surgery.

MORE:

by Noelle Hanrahan (*Prison Radio*)

Yesterday I drove a couple hundred miles round-trip on the PA turnpike to SCI Mahanoy in Frackville, PA.

Let me share some welcome news from the visit: Mumia looked the best I have seen him since August 2023. He is stable, his health is slowly improving. And the advocacy that you have engaged in for a healthy diet is making an impact. Your calls and letters have made a difference.

He is getting his prescribed medicines and advocating for alternatives as well! Yesterday he said "In the last week they served wheat bread 3 times! Usually, it is a rare Sunday, maybe once a month when I see anything but white bread... this week there was a heaping pile of salad in the middle of my tray, I was shocked."

He is vibrant, alert, and solid. This is in sharp contrast to all of my visits since September, when I have wanted to wheel him to the ER. I visit every two weeks in person, sometimes more, because Mumia is extremely vulnerable: he is being denied cardiac rehabilitation, at risk of complications from historic lack of Hep C care, managing raging psoriasis, and bearing the stress of living in prison for 42 years (29 years in solitary). *The simple truth is that every single one of you has kept Mumia Abu-Jamal alive.*

When you picked up the phone or sent a postcard, put a magnet on your fridge, read and listened to his work, wore a t-shirt, gave a gift, or marched, it mattered.

Thank you for making a connection with him, to his smile, his resilience, his intellectual leadership and unfaltering integrity. Every single word Mumia puts to paper, he writes in response to your efforts to reach across the prison walls.

Mumia will be 70 on April 24th, 2024. Prison ages you. The lack of enough exercise, a healthy diet and adequate medical care is directly linked to failing health. Trauma only adds to the risk. Mumia was shot by police, lived on death row for three decades, and survived two death warrants. This combined with the losses of Samiya 'Goldii' Davis Abdullah, his daughter, and just over a year ago, the loss of his wife of 42 years Wadiya Jamal makes Mumia's health precarious.

His diet is still not heart healthy and we must continue to advocate for cardiac rehabilitation. Mumia told me that exercise is still very limited: "Today they shut down the yard after 15 minutes because snow started falling and the wind was biting so the shift commander shut it down." As we are talking about outdoor exercise, Mumia noted that only a handful of folks go out. Prior to Covid and the prison lockdowns, there were hundreds of guys in the yard.

Before 2021, everyone had the chance to walk to the cafeteria and congregate, but now all the food is taken on trays to each cell. They locked everyone down for 72 hours last week because a water main broke. Recently SCI Mahanoy banned walking in the day room. So, when Mumia buzzes out to the day room, it is a room he is forbidden from walking in. Prison officials have parked an elliptical there, but the machine has no outlet near it. Mumia can use it because he "bought an adapter in Huntingdon over 25 years ago. He explained "I am geeky, and kept it." But every single other prisoner is out of luck, as the machine will not work without power. Mumia is one among many lifers who are being subject to, as he says, "slow death row" and "Death by Incarceration" (DBI).

Yesterday, I pushed open the heavy metal doors, after being buzzed through, and walked down the cold long hall to the visiting room with Natalie, a woman who was visiting for the first time. She had not seen her brother in 23 years. Freddy, 52 years old, is serving a life sentence and has metastasized cancer with

just months to live. He received a terminal diagnosis after being in severe pain and misdiagnosed. This is all very rough, but we are not alone. Take a moment to honor the connection Mumia shares with us, by continuing to take action, and by giving when you can.

15 Mar - The subversive written word

Speech by comrade Toby Shone from Garth prison on the occasion of “Pensiero e Azione” (“Thought and Action”) debate organized for the Tattoo Circus in El Paso Occupato, Turin (Italy).

MORE:

by Toby Shone (*La Nemesis*)

This is Toby Shone, an anarchist imprisoned in the Operation Adream which was an antiterrorist investigation against the counter-information project 325. I am calling from a prison in northwest England, it's a long term, high security prison, and the fact that we can steal these moments is very important.

As you may already know, Operation Adream was a repressive attack by the UK state in which 3 collective housing projects, a family home and storage unit were raided by cops. I was accused of being an administrator of 325.nostate.net, which earned me 4 terrorist charges: section 2 (distribution of terrorist publications), section 15 (funding terrorism) and two counts of section 58 (possession of information which is likely to be useful for terrorist purposes). I was also accused of several direct actions and membership of FAI, ELF and ALF. Hundreds of police were involved in the simultaneous raids and despite this, only one of the comrades were briefly detained and subsequently released for lack of evidence. It's clear through the conditions of imprisonment I am held under and the constant monitoring that an active investigation continues with tailings and surveillance of comrades on the outside along with observation of anarchist social spaces.

Why is this taking place? It's because anarchism is a threat to the existing technocratic order, our direct-action groups have a palpable reality in however minimal way in comparison to the task to be done, and the counter-information constellation continues to shine in the dark nights and become easier to use and navigate. Anarchist publishing is viewed as being an unacceptable endeavour by the police and intelligence services. Reporting on anarchist direct action, social struggles, and uprisings because it forms a narrative of subversion is arguably targeted with as much repression as that towards those who carry out the deeds that are being reported. It's a strategy which has been in existence for a very long time. In the case of Operation Adream, the police were scared of the explicit anarchist insurrectionalist and anti-civilization rhetoric combined with the distribution of electronic and paper publications. During the interrogations a particular concern of the detectives was the purpose of anarchist paper publication. All the electronic documents have a digital forensic signature known as the hash value which can be tracked across the internet and devices even if deleted from those devices. Paper publications on the other hand, cannot be tracked as they are distributed – an investigation into them requires material forensics and a traditional police enquiry: this needs more resources, money, and personnel and especially the underground publishing initiatives which may have an irregular schedule of publishing and “informal” methods of distribution.

This brings us back to the purpose of anarchist publications: paper copies exist and have the power through being passed hand to hand to have an impactful material reality. They also accumulate forensic traces, the books, magazines, and pamphlets we are talking of, dangerous ideas, which can inspire our lives. Their time duration is different from those digital, and we can view that accordingly. With our publications, even if they are doomed to be in university libraries, mainstream bookshops, or worse, museums and art galleries, they always remain controversial and even illegal in some cases. Their purpose is social war and the destruction of the State. In the investigation files of Operation Adream, dozens of anarchist publications were cited many of which we may take for granted, that are freely available at anarchist bookfairs, squats, social centres and stalls at events. Yet to the police, special unit, and prosecutors these publications form part of an amorphous conspiracy aimed at overthrowing the establishment, which is correct, but not exactly in the perverse way that they wish to interpret it. To explain, we are often confronted by the repressive model that has a special function ascribed to theorists and writers, that of “leadership”. They are accused of

giving orders and instructions and then cells or cadres then carry out those orders. I don't need to tell you that this is an offense to anarchist practice, but it was a clear line of questioning put to me by the counter terrorist division. Does possession of 325 magazine indicate membership of an organization? Does that organization execute actions? And is that organisation part of a larger terrorist infrastructure? These are the types of questions bounced at me. With this scheming, marionettes of repression are formed, arranged in hierarchical structures which reflect their feverish minds. So, in those interrogations the investigators focused in some parts on questioning me about administrative functions, decision making flows, statistics figures, target demographics, research and linguistics, or translations. To the latter the cops wanted to know who was responsible for the translations, how they were organized, and who decided what should be translated.

At what level does the level of repression equate to that of our actions? For me, the answer is straight forward. The level of repression is currently far beyond that of the anarchist direct action. It's the nature of State's repression to aim to be overwhelming and our struggle is still only an active minority. In the UK the silence and lack of action highlights the social living death. But it was not always this way. And the future remains unwritten. That's why police infiltration will continue to try to prevent for ruptures and individual attacks. It's impossible to separate Operation Adream from the consequences of over a decade of anarchist direct action and social riots in Bristol. Although those things are at low ebb currently, it doesn't mean that it will remain so. Anarchism remains part of the fabric of this South-West region. And where the reports, communiques and analysis are published will remain high in the list of targets for the State. The hundreds if not thousands of publishers across the world, part of a connectivity of contemporary anarchism, add to our ability to stay relevant and expansive.

Huge changes are taking place in society, and mass discontent has the possibility to form into a needed vital resistance. The new anarchist critique of high technology is cited by various intelligence agencies, State and private, as having the threatening ability to infect the population with a deep anger of the digital future. This future being planned by the bosses is a vast surveillance state which is part of the cybernetic matrix, where machines are taking the place of humans, and the artificial intelligence has inserted itself into every place it can be situated. Likewise, we can see human beings are becoming more machine-like, and their environment is degraded and polluted. Increasingly we can talk about the fact that many complete failures are taking place in various social systems, due to the ecological collapse and economic and post-industrial transformation. Huge territories are rapidly changing from floods, wildfires, draughts and intense storms. Unprecedented challenges are coming very quickly with harsh effects on critical points pertaining to agriculture, migration, division of labour, geopolitical conflicts and so on. Our publications and counter-information networks are a direct way in which we can communicate our analysis and methods of organization. Repression recognizes the danger of the contagion of this message, and the narrative which we possess. To the extent that they illegalize our publications and try to impose exemplary sentences is only a means to an end for them. And this is what we have always faced. If we are effective, we meet repression, prison, death. That's what many comrades face across the world right now. Essentially some of us have been living under surveillance and investigation for so long, everything we do could be considered as crime, simply existing. That's worth writing about and when we read and know more about what others are confronting and how, we can gain our power.

Lastly, I want to talk about the censorship I am facing here. Since it's been a consistent feature of my imprisonment and is also part of the topic we're discussing. Many comrades face problems with their correspondence and receiving publications. This is not unusual. But it's worth saying here that I've been denied access to the majority of my correspondence and books which I am being sent. Even though I am facing denials by the prison administration that this is taking place, it most certainly is. This is the strength of our newsletters, our books, our letters to catch with comrades, that they make the enemy afraid. In my case, I'm also being denied socialist, autonomous-marxist and communist papers and books, which have been sent to me by those in solidarity from the radical left, as well as books on black history, transformative justice, and prison abolition. The very few anarchist books I have managed to receive I hold them close to my heart, here in my cell. Freedom is written with ink and our blood, like it always has been and will be.

Value your books, your newspapers, your letters sent and received, combative memory persists, and we pass it to each new generation without efforts alone.

I'll finish here and so I thank you for your energy and your attention, and a strong hug to all, and especially those under repression for the written word. For from the words come deeds, and that is the topic we've encountered today. Love and rage, thank you.

16 Mar - ATF Repression in Charleston, South Carolina

Federal repression has come for the Stop Cop City movement wearing the olive drab uniform of the ATF.

MORE:

by A Silent Canary (*Scenes From the Atlanta Forest*)

In Charleston, South Carolina, one person was arrested and had their home raided by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) on December 31. They were initially charged at the state level with second degree arson for alleged actions related to the Stop Cop City movement.

Those state level charges, however, are set to be dropped in favor of federal ones. In the time since this arrest, the ATF has been conducting a full-scale investigation of the radical scene in Charleston and the surrounding areas. A number of people have been subpoenaed and forced to give interviews [administrative note: no-one is ever forced to give an interview, regardless of circumstance you can, and should, choose silence, currently the words "I am invoking my right to remain silent, I want my lawyer" will end the interview in most cases, if the filth continue to pester you after that, repeat those words and nothing else.], with several more reporting door knocks and contact cards left at front doors by ATF agents.

This may be a harbinger of things to come in other cities and states. So far, federal repression in Charleston looks like the ATF casting as wide a net as possible in the hopes that something will stick. This communique is being sent out as a word of warning for other cities. In Charleston, the Feds have seen an opportunity and they're attempting to use it to tie up as many people as possible. In other cities where solidarity actions have taken places, the same thing may happen.

Know your rights if an agent knocks. Have a plan BEFORE the net of repression tightens around you and your town. If you are approached to speak by a federal agent, you can say no. If an agent leaves a phone number, have a lawyer contact the number. Don't do so yourself. Crimethinc has an excellent resource for when cops knock on your door: tiny.cc/CWC_KYR

The national lawyers guild operates a federal anti-repression hotline at 212.679.2811. Know your rights. Protect yourself. Stay safe to stay dangerous. We keep us safe.

21 Mar - Memorial Tribute for a Revolutionary Warrior – Ralph Poynter

WHAT: Memorial

WHEN: 5:00pm, Thursday, March 21st

WHERE: Riverside Church - 409 Riverside Drive, NYC

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join us in honoring the memory of the fearless revolutionary warrior, Ralph Poynter, at our memorial tribute event.

Come join us at The Riverside Church on Riverside Drive in New York, NY, USA to honor the life and legacy of the remarkable Ralph Poynter. This event is a heartfelt tribute to a true revolutionary warrior who dedicated his life to social justice and activism. Let's come together to celebrate his impact and remember the passion he brought to every cause he championed. Don't miss this opportunity to pay homage to a remarkable individual who made a difference in the world. See you there!