



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for January 17th

2 Jan – Walter Bond in Transit to Federal Prison

We recently received word that Walter Bond has been transferred. He is currently being held in Oklahoma City, at a federal transfer facility. Based on other prisoners' experiences, Walter could be there for weeks, if not months, before being transferred to a long-term prison. If in the meantime, cards and letters can be sent to:

**Walter Bond #37096-013
FTC Oklahoma City
Post Office Box 898801
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73189**

2 Jan - David Gilbert's *Love and Struggle: A Brother With A Furious Mind*

*This month PM Press is publishing David Gilbert's memoirs, titled *Love and Struggle: My Life in SDS, the Weather Underground, and Beyond*. We've included a review from Counterpunch.*

MORE:

In 1981, a group of revolutionaries robbed a Brink's armored truck near Nyack, NY. In the ensuing confusion and attempt to flee, three people died from gunfire. A couple days later, one of the revolutionaries was killed by law enforcement. The robbery itself was planned and carried out by members of the Black Liberation Army: a group of former Black Panthers who had chosen armed struggle, and the May 19 Communist organization, which was founded by white revolutionaries also dedicated to armed struggle. One of those members was former Weather Underground member David Gilbert. Gilbert is currently serving a sentence of 75 years to life in the New York State prison system. Other May 19th members arrested in relation to the robbery have been paroled or pardoned.

This month PM Press, the Oakland, CA. publisher founded by AK Press founder Ramsey Kanaan and others, is publishing Gilbert's memoirs. The book, titled [*Love and Struggle: My Life in SDS, the Weather Underground, and Beyond*](#), is certain to be included in the top tier of books having to do with the period of US history known as the Sixties. There is no self-pity within these pages, but lots of self-reflection. In what can only be considered a refreshing approach, Gilbert takes full responsibility for the path he has chosen and explains that path in an intelligently political manner and with a decidedly leftist understanding. *Love and Struggle* combines objective history, personal memory, and a critical perspective into a narrative that is at once an adventuresome tale and a political guide through the past fifty years.

Gilbert begins his story by describing his youth and his developing awareness that the United States was not what he had been led to believe it was. An Eagle Scout who believed the myths inherent in American exceptionalism, he was unprepared for the cognitive dissonance he underwent while watching the attacks by law enforcement on civil rights marchers in the US South. That sense of conflict deepened when he headed off to Columbia University. By 1965, angered by the US war on the Vietnamese and armed with a well-researched understanding of why the US was really involved there, Gilbert was organizing Columbia students to join antiwar protests. Like many of his contemporaries, by 1968 he was an anti-imperialist and working full-time against the war in Vietnam and racism in the United States. By 1969, he was one of the original members of Weatherman and by April 1970 he was underground.

Gilbert tells his story with a hard-learned humility. Occasionally interjecting his personal life—his loves and failures, his relationship with his family—with his political journey, it is the politics which are foremost in this memoir. A true revolutionary, every other aspect of Gilbert's life is subsumed to the revolution. This kind of life is not an easy one. Indeed, it arguably makes the life of an ascetic monk look easy by comparison. After all, the

monk is only trying to change himself, while the committed revolutionary wants to change the world into one where justice prevails; a world that by its very structure resists such change.

Love and Struggle carefully examines the history of the periods Gilbert has lived in. From the early days of the antiwar movement and the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to the public street-fighting arrogance of early Weatherman; from Weatherman's transition to the Weather Underground Organization (WUO) and its growing isolation from the New Left it was a part of; and from the post-Vietnam war US left to the Brink robbery and its aftermath, Gilbert keeps the politics front and center in his text. In his discussion of the period between Weather's publication of its essential work *Prairie Fire* and its immediate aftermath, Gilbert provides an insight into the debates inside WUO and among its supporters in the years after the peace treaty was signed with northern Vietnam. His portrayal of the differences around theory being debated in the WUO serve as a broader description of the debates raging throughout the new left as the US intervention in Vietnam's anti-colonial struggle neared its end. For those of us who were politically involved at the time, the debates ring with familiarity: national liberation over class; the interaction between race and class in the US; the oppression of women and white male privilege. In a testimony to his writing abilities, Gilbert's discussion of the issues makes them as alive in this book as those arguments actually were in the mid- 1970s. His keen political sense reveals the interplay between different political perspectives, understandings of history, and the always present contests of ego. The political arguments outlined by Gilbert (especially when describing the battle inside WUO) are still relevant today. Their echoes are present in the General Assemblies of the Occupy Wall Street movement and in forums more specific and less specific across the nation. Gilbert's presentation of the essential WUO arguments that challenges the overriding role of class in the nature of oppression is not only reasoned and impassioned, it is worth studying and makes points useful to the future of anti-imperialist struggle in the United States. Furthermore, the book includes an ongoing and excellent discussion of the nature of white supremacy and white skin privilege. For anyone who has spent time involved in the Occupy movement the past few months, the relevance of this latter discussion is all too familiar.

For those looking for a sensationalist account of life as a revolutionary or a confession, they should look elsewhere. David Gilbert's memoir is a political account of a political life. Every action undertaken, every decision made is examined via the eye of a leftist revolutionary. This does not mean there are no page-turning moments in the book, however. Indeed, the sections describing Weather's move underground and Gilbert's daily life off the grid are interesting and revealing, as are those describing the attempts by WUO members to evade capture. The descriptions of Gilbert's clandestine life and his subsequent moving back aboveground and then back under are also riveting.

Underlying the entire narrative is a current of what is best described as self-criticism; of Weather, the New Left, armed struggle and, ultimately, of Gilbert himself. As anyone who has experienced something akin to a self-criticism session can attest, such sessions can be emotionally wrenching episodes of retribution and petty anger. They can also be tremendously useful when conducted humanely. Gilbert's written attempts at this exercise in *Love and Struggle* lean toward the latter expression while also providing interesting and useful considerations to the aforementioned issues (along with issues related to those criticisms). Gilbert's realization that his ego occasionally caused him to make decisions that weren't based on politically sound rationales is something any radical leader should take into account. In fact, Gilbert's continuing struggle with his ego and its place in the decisions he made while free reminded me of a maxim relayed to me a couple times in my life; once by an organizer for the Revolutionary Union in Maryland and once by a friend from the Hog Farm commune. That maxim is simply: if you start believing that the revolution can't exist without you, then it's time to leave center stage and go back to doing grunt work where nobody knows (or cares) who you are. In other words, you are not the revolution so take your ego out of it.

In the well-considered catalog of books dealing honestly with the period of history known as the Sixties in the United States, *Love and Struggle* is an important addition. Borrowing his technique from memoir, confession, and objective history-telling, David Gilbert has provided the reader of history with the tale of a person and a time. Simultaneously, he has given the reader inclined to political activism a useful, interesting, and well-told example of one human's revolutionary commitment to social change no matter what the cost.

3 Jan – State Files Appeal of Ryan Rainville’s Sentence

On Monday Dec. 5th, 2011 Ryan Rainville received a conditional sentence of 4 months under house arrest, followed by 4 months curfew and then one year probation. Ryan had pled guilty to 3 counts of Mischief over \$5000 for using a red and black flag and a hammer to destroy Toronto Police cruisers during the G20 riot last year. He also pled guilty to a Breach of Peace. On December 20th 2011, a member of the G20 Investigative Team came to his home at Sagatay Mens Residence to serve him with an appeal of his sentence.

MORE:

The implication of this action is that his sentence is to light. It is clear that Ryan’s pride in his convictions and anarchist values have led them to target him in an attempt to send a clear message to other anarchists, that our politics and bodies will be criminalized if we do not fall in line.

Before his sentencing, Ryan had served over 3 months in prison, 8 months under house arrest and 5 months of a restrictive curfew. He is currently serving his sentence for these charges of 4 months house arrest, 4 months curfew, followed by a year probation. It will be 3 years after the original event before Ryan is free of these charges.

Ryan’s initial sentence took into account the 96 days he spent in the Toronto Metro West Detention Centre and Maplehurst Correctional Facility following his initial arrest on these charges. Ryan fought and won during a trial where he contested charges of Assault Police with a Weapon and Obstruct Officer. These charges stemmed from accusations that a police cruiser Ryan had damaged was occupied.

5 Jan – Update on CeCe McDonald’s Remand Into Custody

On January 4th, CeCe McDonald was told by her attorney that a bench warrant was issued for her, for two alleged violations of her conditions of release. Now back in custody, she needs support in the form of books and letters.

MORE:

Her PO alleges that she tampered with her electronic monitoring device for twelve hours; it was argued in court that this could have been a mechanical issue and that the state hasn’t provided evidence that CeCe was responsible. And though on previous occasions CeCe has passed the random drug tests she’s been required to take, she tested positive for THC on December 29th. On the afternoon of January 4th, CeCe turned herself in to the court and on January 5th, she appeared for a hearing on these allegations in a courtroom packed with supporters.

Judge Moreno heard arguments from both sides. The defense asked for the lowering of her bail so CeCe’s community could raise money for her release, and reminded the court that CeCe is not any more a threat to society than she was before the alleged violations. The defense also reminded the court that McDonald already has a job working at a local café and has been trusted to go to and from doctor’s appointments and work in the past, with no problems.

Judge Moreno ruled against CeCe, and set her bail at \$500,000. Her trial is not scheduled to start until April 30, 2012.

Supporters will continue to spread the word about the injustice McDonald is suffering in the legal system, and to demand that Hennepin County Attorney Michael Freeman drop the charges against her.

CeCe can receive books in jail. All books mailed to CeCe need to be **new** paperback copies sent directly from a publisher or an online bookstore. CeCe can also receive newspaper and magazine subscriptions. The following is a list of materials CeCe would like to read. It will be updated regularly and items will be crossed out when they are sent. Please email mpls4cece@gmail.com if you send her a book or magazine from this list so we can avoid sending duplicates.

- A subscription to [The Star Tribune](#)
- Deleted: A subscription to [Glamour](#)
- A subscription to [Essence](#)
- [This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation](#) edited by Gloria Anzaldua and AnaLouise Keating
- [Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism](#) edited by Daisy Hernandez and
- [My Even More Wonderful World of Fashion](#) by Nina Chakrabarti

Books can be sent to:

Public Safety Facility
Attn: Chrishaun Reed McDonald #2012000296
401 South 4th Avenue
Suite 100
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

Books and magazines must be addressed using CeCe's full information above, including the inmate number. The Bureau of Prisons website notes that publications should not be "detrimental to the security, discipline, or good order of the institution, or facilitate criminal activity" so use your best judgment about what you send into the jail.

CeCe would also love to get a letter from you (sent to the address listed above)! You can also organize a letter writing party!

6 Jan – Status Conference for Veronza Bowers

A status conference was scheduled in the Federal District Court in Gainesville, Georgia on Friday, January 6, 2012 for former Black Panther Veronza Bowers. We are still awaiting details of the conference.

MORE:

Bowers was to be paroled in 2005 after serving over three decades in prison. The Bush Administration intervened and ordered he not be released. In September 2011, a federal court ruled that a Bush appointed parole commissioner worked "behind the scenes" to block the release of Veronza, which had already been approved.

Veronza was convicted in the 1973 murder of a U.S. Park Ranger on the word of two government informers, both of whom received reduced sentences for other crimes by the Federal prosecutor's office. At his trial, Veronza offered alibi testimony which was not credited by the jury. Nor was testimony of two relatives of the informants who insisted that they were lying. His conviction is reflective of the manufactured convictions of Black Panther Party and other activists of the 1960s and 70s due to the Cointelpro policy of the United States government. The U.S. government used "any means necessary" to eliminate a militant, grassroots Black movement. Veronza Bower's continued incarceration is the continuation of this Cointelpro policy.

7 Jan – Support the Cuban 5 Visa Campaign

We are asking people to fax or mail out this letter to Ms. Navanetham Pillay, The NEW High Commissioner of Human Rights of the Office for Human Rights-United Nations Office at Geneva. We are asking her to intercede on behalf of the Cuban 5's mothers/wives to pressure the U.S. government to grant them Visas to visit their husbands/sons.

MORE:

Due to the U.S. government's denial to approve visas, Gerardo Hernandez Nordelo and Rene Gonzalez Schwerert have not seen their wives since their incarceration! Others in the Cuban 5 have not seen their parents,

wives and children with regularity. The U.S. government has taken prolonged periods of time to issue them visas.

The U.S. government's denial of visitation rights is a cruel and horrible form of psychological torture. Their rationale for denial is ridiculous and baseless; none of these family members are a threat to national security.

8 Jan – Update on Mumia Abu-Jamal

Mumia is still in Administrative Custody (AC) -- the hole -- at SCI Mahanoy. The confinement conditions in all the Restricted Housing Units (RHU) are degrading and tortuous. Authorities now claim that the reason for holding Mumia in the solitary since his transfer from death row is his unwillingness to cut his dreadlocks. We've provided more information below.

MORE:

Mumia is on a cellblock that houses AC as well as disciplinary custody inmates. He is in solitary confinement, with lights glaring 24/7, without adequate food, or the opportunity to buy food to supplement his diet. He is shackled and handcuffed whenever outside his solitary cell -- including when he goes to shower. And he is isolated without regular phone calls, or access to his property, including legal materials, books and typewriter. His visiting hours are limited. In short, Mumia is being subjected to conditions in AC that are more onerous than those on death row.

There is no legal basis for Mumia to be confined in AC. At the point he was no longer under a death sentence, he should have been transferred into general population. This is not dependent on a court date for Mumia to be formally resentenced to life imprisonment.

On January 3 and January 6, 2012 I submitted demand letters on Mumia's behalf to John Wetzel, Secretary for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC), and to John Kerestes, Superintendent SCI Mahanoy, to immediately transfer and assign Mumia to general population with full visitation, phone and commissary privileges and access to all programs and services. The stated legal grounds are the following: The degrading, dehumanizing, tortuous conditions of Mumia Abu- Jamal's confinement in administrative custody at SCI Mahanoy are an abuse of authority, counter to DOC regulations, punitive, discriminatory, in violation of his protected liberty interests and his civil rights, including First Amendment rights.

The DOC regulations allow only two permanent categories of imprisonment, death row and general population. AC is by law only a temporary placement. It must be based on defined grounds, justified and implemented subject to procedural due process. None of the grounds listed in the DOC regulations for placement in AC apply to Mumia. In fact, on December 8, 2011 the DOC transferred Mumia from death row at SCI Greene and onto a cellblock that does not house capital inmates. On December 14, the DOC ordered Mumia moved to a medium security facility, SCI Mahanoy, which by regulation cannot hold death row prisoners.

The response by the DOC via telephone by Chief Counsel Suzanne Hueston was that Mumia is in AC pending resentencing and further evaluations. These are bogus explanations. The December 2001 federal court ruling that Mumia's death sentence is illegal has been upheld on appeal. The District Attorney has stated there will be no trial to obtain a new death sentence. Therefore Mumia should be in general population.

Nor is there a reason or basis for "further evaluation." Mumia has been confined in Pennsylvania prisons for some thirty years. The DOC unquestionably knows his history, conduct and behavior. There is nothing in Mumia's personal record to justify holding him in Administrative Custody.

The DOC's treatment of Mumia is punishment for depriving the FOP and Philadelphia District Attorney of his execution. This is the latest attempt by this frame-up system to silence Mumia, an innocent man, and to subject him to tortuous, punitive conditions in the hole.

Rachel Wolkenstein, Attorney
January 7, 2012

In a statement issued late Thursday, January 12, an attorney for Mumia Abu-Jamal reported that he has been given a new reason for his continued solitary confinement - his long dreadlocks.

Prison authorities at SCI Mahanoy claim Abu-Jamal will be held in the Restricted Housing Unit on disciplinary custody until he cuts his hair. This is an old tactic that was used against Mumia when he was a death row prisoner. He spent 8 years on disciplinary status in death row until he was removed from that status--without getting a haircut--in the early 1990s.

It has taken prison officials five weeks to invent this new pretext for continuing the 30-year-long solitary confinement torture of Abu-Jamal. Mumia and his supporters are calling for his immediate release to general population and the shut down of all of the solitary units in Pennsylvania.

Tell these officials that Mumia must be immediately transferred to General Population.

1) Write Call Phone and email the Secretary of Corrections
John Wetzl, Secretary Department of Corrections
2520 Lisburn Road,
Post Office Box 598
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17001-0598
[717\) 975-4928](tel:7179754928) Email: ra-contactdoc@pa.gov

2) Write Call Phone and email the Superintendent of SCI Mahanoy
John Kerestes, Superintendent
SCI Mahanoy
301 Morea Road
Frackville, Pennsylvania 17932
[\(570\) 773-2158](tel:5707732158)
fax [570-783-2008](tel:5707832008)

3) Write Call Phone and email the Philadelphia DA
Seth Williams, DA Philadelphia
Three South Penn Square
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107-3499
[\(215\) 686-8000](tel:2156868000)
Email: DA_Central@phila.gov

and finally if you can send Mumia a note or a card.

Write to Mumia:
Mumia Abu-Jamal
AM 8335
SCI Mahanoy
301 Morea Road
Frackville, Pennsylvania 17932

8 Jan – Updates on Jalil Muntaqim + New Blog Entry

Jericho Movement folks received a call Friday, January 6th from Jalil Muntaqim to advise us that his cell had been raided on Thursday, January 5th. When Jalil asked why his cell was being searched, he was told it was

because "something happened in California." The rest of the story, as we know it, another update, and Jalil's first blog entry of 2012 are below.

MORE:

The COs confiscated pictures of the memorials for BPP members Cetewayo (Michael Tabor) and Bro. Mark "Smitty" Smith of New Jersey. Jalil received a Tier 3 ticket for possession of these photos. Of course, these photos had been sent to him by mail and had been approved in the prison mailroom.

Jalil is not in the hole. We have been told this walking ticket means they can use it against him at any time for any reason.

In a letter from Jalil written on January 6th:

"Yesterday, at approximately 10 am, three officers came to my cell and searched it. In the process they reviewed my photo album and confiscated 14 photos sent to me by mail from NYC. They said that because the photos had the BPP banner, this constituted "gang materials." ... It should be noted that if the photos were "illegal" when they reached the Correspondence Dept., they should have been sent to the Media Review Committee pursuant to Directive #4422-G, as it pertains to contraband items. Obviously, the photos were not considered contraband when received by the Correspondence Dept.

Please have people call Commissioner Brian Fischer to demand that this continued harassment be stopped immediately, and that I be transferred to Wende Correctional Facility.

Despite every effort to stay below the radar, Attica authorities continue to harass me, frisk me when going to the yard or search this cell. In my 40 years of imprisonment, I have never been charged with possessing a weapon or drugs. So, such harassment must be subject to my political beliefs and past affiliations.

Please extend my very best regards to the righteous at heart with you."

Jalil's cell has been turned over five times in the last two months.

Jalil is asking people to call the Warden and Commissioner Brian Fischer to demand:

1. An end to this campaign of constant harassment
2. The return of his pictures

When you call, be sure to use Jalil's DIN number (#77A4283) and refer to him as Anthony "Jalil" Bottom, currently at Attica.

Brian Fischer ([518\) 457-8126](tel:5184578126)

Warden: ([585\) 591-2000](tel:5855912000)

We would like to know what responses people receive. Please send an email to nycjericho@gmail.com or mxcc519@verizon.net to let us know.

January 14th Update:

Three folks went to Attica on Saturday, January 14, 2012 to visit Jalil. We had an excellent visit and have a brief update from Jalil.

First of all, he thanks everyone who took the time to make the calls to Superintendent Bradt and Commissioner Brian Fischer.

The most important thing he wants people to know is that on Friday, January 13th, at 1 p.m. all Muslims were searched while on the way to Juma. The COs took Korans and threw them on the ground during the search in a blatant attempt to provoke a confrontation, but "nobody jumped."

Also, Jalil's Tier 3 hearing for "unauthorized organization" was held on January 13th in the morning. Jalil requested that Sergeant Cochran of Gang Intel be a witness, as he was the officer who processed Jalil's possessions when he arrived at Attica, but the Sergeant declined.

Jalil showed Officer Krumph, the hearing officer, the programs from the Cetewayo, Shasha and Karim Memorials, all of which have BPP/BLA logos and asked why these items had not also been confiscated if they are considered to be "gang material."

Jalil also requested Counselor Schiffer as a witness. Jalil reiterated that, if these items had been approved by the mailroom, there was no reason for them to subsequently be considered "contraband."

Officer Krumph proceeded to call the correspondence dept., and the officers there informed him that, since correspondence had approved the mail, there was no reason why the photos should have been confiscated in the first place.

The hearing has now been postponed until sometime this week, as Officer Krumph is to interview Sergeant Cochran and Counselor Schiffer.

Blog Entry: "New Year's Resolution"

Webster Dictionary says of RESOLUTION: 1: the act or process of reducing to the simpler form; as a: the act of analyzing a complex notion into simpler ones, B: the act of answering: SOLVING c: the act of determining... These are some of the definitions of "resolution", and in understanding that many make New Year's resolutions; I am wondering what will be your resolution?

It is my hope you will resolve to become more active in the overall struggle. That you will consider how best to prevent the building of the Keystone XL pipeline that will trample the lands of Native Americans without compensation. I hope that you will resolve to ensure that reformist social-democratic protest campaign known as OWS evolves into a national organization with a national platform and program. Such a platform and program that is politically comparable or surpassing the capacity of the right wing to control the national debate and challenge the entire capitalist-imperialist system. To resolve to challenge the reactionary right-wing anti-immigrants children the right of education and health care.

Also, I sincerely hope progressive activists will resolve to challenge and demand the reversal and deny the enactment of the "2012 National Defense Authorization Act" that permits the military detention of U.S. citizens, targeting U.S. citizens for killing, arrest witnesses for recording police actions, allowing GPS to spy on U.S. citizens every move, and using surveillance drones to tract U.S. citizens every move, and using surveillance drones to spy on U.S. citizens. In other words, the overt implementation of militarizing U.S. police forces and virtually criminalization various forms of protest, demonstrations and rebellions. Although the ACLU is challenging the law that was written by Senator John McCain and Senator Carl Levin, and signed into law by President Obama. The problem is many people have no idea how this law undermines the constitutional right against illegal search and seizure.

It is obvious the U.S. government has grown to become even more anti-people and pro-corporation, particularly since the U.S. Supreme Court has determined "corporations" are also "people". When considering the majority of Americans are align to the Democratic and Republican Party (s), both which are pro-corporation, it would seem that progressive activists should organize a "We The People Party" in order to reclaim what is often sought - "the American Dream".

Lastly, sincerely hope the majority of you will resolve to join and support Jericho's amnesty movement for U.S. political prisoners. There is no other national organization that functions specifically for the amnesty and release of U.S. political prisoners. Why would you not want to in 2012 join the fight to win the release of U. S. political prisoners?

As for myself, my resolution will be simple, to lose 20 Lbs., while sitting in this dreary prison cell.

9 Jan – Former PP Lauren Gazzola: Animal-Rights Activists Like Me Aren't Terrorists

Former SHAC 7 political prisoner recently wrote a piece about the state's ongoing redefinition of terrorism and we've pasted it below.

MORE:

I was three weeks away from taking the Law School Admissions Test in 2004 when I was arrested and charged with domestic terrorism.

I hadn't hurt anyone or vandalized any property. In fact, the indictment didn't allege that I'd committed any independent crime at all, only that I'd "conspired" to publish a website that advocated and reported on protest activity against a notorious animal testing lab in New Jersey.

In March of 2006, I was convicted of "animal enterprise terrorism," sentenced to 52 months in prison, and ordered to pay \$1 million in restitution to the lab for increased security, management time spent dealing with protests, and legal fees incurred obtaining injunctions against me and other protesters.

Incidentally, I'd been planning to focus on free speech when I got to law school.

Needless to say, now that I've finished serving my sentence at the federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut, I'm more than a little wary of continuing my activism, as I fear that my speech may once again be deemed terrorism.

That's why, as a plaintiff in a [lawsuit](#) filed by the Center for Constitutional Rights in Massachusetts on December 15, I've asked a federal court to strike down the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) as an unconstitutional infringement on free speech. This law punishes anyone who causes the loss of property or profits to a business or institution that sells animals or animal products, or to any business "connected to" an animal enterprise.

In short, it recasts as "terrorism" one of the primary purposes of protest and provides special protection to a particular class of businesses. This is no surprise. The Fur Commission USA, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, United Egg Producers, Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline, and other pharmaceutical companies — all of which are protested by animal rights activists — [lobbied heavily](#) for the AETA.

The campaign I was involved in when I got arrested was enormously successful. Dozens of investors, customers, and service providers abandoned the New Jersey lab. It nearly went out of business several times, due in no small part to vigorous protests around the country.

The speech on our website was indeed controversial. When anonymous activists liberated 14 beagles from the lab, we cheered. When protesters demonstrated outside lab employees' homes, we applauded.

This is the First Amendment's strength — not its limit. The First Amendment doesn't just protect uncontroversial speech. It protects speech that's unpopular, contentious, and even shocking.

As the Supreme Court recognized more than 60 years ago, speech may "best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger."

The animal rights movement will continue to induce unrest, as have countless other protest movements throughout history, and as the Occupy movement is doing today. But creating unrest isn't terrorism. Unrest is the growing pain of extending rights, expanding compassion, and creating a better world.

When the government protects powerful corporate interests from powerful social movements, America abandons

its high purposes, and we resign ourselves to conditions as they are.

9 Jan – Grand Jury Resister Jordan Halliday Arrested

Jordan Halliday, who we are writing tonight, was arrested on January 9th and convicted two days later of violating the terms of his bail. He is now serving the ten month sentence he received last month and was scheduled to report for later this month. Jordan has not been definitively told on what grounds he violated the conditions of his bail, but it is presumed that the state alleges he was associating with folks who are vegan and straightedge. For Jordan, that means that he got arrested for allegedly associating with folks who abstain from drugs and alcohol and are vegan; he would have been safer drunk in a steak house. How's that for perverse?

MORE:

Jordan has a support crew and updates are available at:
<http://supportjordan.tumblr.com>
supportjordan.org

7 Jan – Spirit of Freedom January 2012 Out Now

ELP is an international eco-prisoner support network founded, in Britain, in 1993 to support jailed eco-activists. "Spirit of Freedom" is ELP's international monthly prisoner listing which is circulated by e-mail.

MORE:

Welcome to the January 2012 edition of Spirit of Freedom. As some people will be aware, ELP has removed the Swedish prisoner Viktor Padellaro from our prisoner lists. Viktor used to describe himself as a fascist. ELP understands that since going into prison Viktor has written a letter denouncing his former views. ELP is currently looking at all the evidence regarding whether Viktor is a fascist. But in the meantime we have decided to remove him from our prisoner lists.

Going to other news, according to the American mainstream media Justin Solondz has pleaded guilty to his alleged role in an ELF/ALF arson. Justin is expected to be sentenced in March 2012 and is expected to receive a sentence of approximately seven years. ELP will bring more news on this story as we receive it.

As always ELP aims to bring you the names and addresses of activists jailed around the world. Not all of the prisoners listed in this newsletter are as famous or as well known as some of the others who are also listed in the newsletter. However, all of the prisoners deserve our support and all welcome letters of support. So please, no matter where you are in the world, no matter what language you speak, support the eco-prisoners. And no compromise in defence of Mother Earth!

If anyone notices any of ELP's prisoner details is out of date or we do not list a prisoner who we should list, please let ELP know as soon as possible. ELP is run by a small group of volunteers and although we try to ensure our lists are accurate, we admit we do make mistakes. So help us help keep the lists accurate by letting us know of any changes we need to make.

9 Jan - Fund Raising for Kellie and Victor Reaches Halfway

As they prepare for court, Kellie and Victor VanOrden have been getting some great support. However, with only a couple of weeks before their trial starts, they're still in need of funds to pay their attorneys.

MORE:

So glad to report that there have been a lot of benefit shows put on in the past month for Victor and Kellie thanks to some awesome folks! Last night there was a benefit in Long Beach, CA that raised about \$150 bucks in less than three hours thanks to a bake sale, bands coming out to play, and an awesome craft sale. A couple weeks before that there was another benefit show in Riverside, CA that raised a whopping \$560 dollars. And before that there was one at the Che in San Diego hosted by Matt Ants of Oceanside that made a little over \$400. Not to mention that there was a film screening in Canada that also raised a bit of money as well. Big thank you to

Jordan, Ashely, Taylor, and Tim and everyone else who was involved in putting together/and helping out at these events.

Also, all the benefit shirts have sold out completely (roughly 80 shirts) so thank you everyone who purchased one of these. As you are aware of, 100% of all the profits made from the shirt sales is being donated directly to Victor and Kellie's Legal Fund. At this point, I'm not sure if there will be a reprint of these shirts (but there very well could be!) **So sorry about the horribly long time that it has taken me to get the shirts out to you all, but I promise (actually, I pinky swear) to ship them all out this week!!!** If only I had like 8 arms and 50 hours in a day, but oh well, a girl can only dream.

There has been about \$5000 fundraised which is outstanding considering that the trial date has been 'just around the corner' this entire time. **The trail is fast approaching and will be held this month on the 24th. With only 14 days left until trial, please donate anything you can whether it's \$5 or \$50 so that we can reach our \$10,000 goal in order to insure that Victor and Kellie have the proper legal representation.**

Go to <http://supportkellieandvictor.blogspot.com> to donate or find other ways to help.

10 Jan - Oscar López Rivera: circumstances of an incarceration

"Claridad," a periodical for the liberation of Puerto Rico, recently published the below article, which we are sharing.

MORE:

The unjust incarceration of our dear friend and compañero Oscar López Rivera will have lasted for 31 years as of 2012. As with Don Pedro, he was accused of seditious conspiracy, which is a type of catchall where a lot of acts and circumstances are put together to justify a long sentence. Since it has to do with an accusation for alleged acts committed to challenge state power, the state acts as if it were the aggressor seeking vengeance against the offender who has challenged it and denied its legitimacy. If circumstances point to the fact that many people are also challenging in some fashion its legitimacy and power, then the conspiracy is to mercilessly punish the accused, because he represents the advance stage of a far broader and far more dangerous threat. That's how I measure the circumstances that brought the judges to impose absurd sentences on all the Puerto Rican patriots who, in the decade of the 80's of the last century, on various occasions, challenged the legitimacy of the alleged power and authority of the United States over our nation.

In the decade of the 80's the contradictions between the capitalist and socialist worlds heightened. In the case of the United States, it saw its national interests threatened in many and various places. The Soviet Union's support for those who confronted U.S. power at times when nuclear proliferation had not resolved the problem, observed in the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, put the United States on permanent national security alert. Cuba, 90 miles from Florida, had decided to continue making good on the history of solidarity with those who struggled for the independence of Puerto Rico and, through this solidarity, Puerto Rico became a permanent accusation against colonialism put into practice in the very United Nations. Soviet and Cuban support made it possible for us to take to the most diverse stages the just cause of our freedom. Two years before Oscar was sentenced, in Mexico, with the decisive support of Cuba and the Soviet Union, there was a second conference in solidarity with our struggle for independence which emphasized the anger of our allies, who listened to and helped our struggle.

At the time, the struggle within Puerto Rico and in the United States appeared with a new vigor. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party was considered by the United States as an ally of subversion due to its close ties with the victorious Cuban Revolution, and there, six years before Oscar was sentenced, the most successful international conference in solidarity with our struggle was held. In the diaspora appeared a new political militancy that the United States characterized as terrorist and persecuted with the viciousness demonstrated by the accusations against the group that accompanied Oscar to federal prison.

In 1980, Carlos Romero Barceló was re-elected governor of Puerto Rico, a man who very broad sectors of our

country have held responsible for the assassinations of Cerro Maravilla and for the entire conspiracy of the police of Puerto Rico with the local office of the FBI, dedicated to carrying out or covering up several assassinations of militants of the independence movement, and in the case of Chagui Mari Pesquera, for the purpose of punishing the militancy of Juan Mari Brás.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan became president of the United States, a conservative anti-communist who became the author of a policy destined to combat progressive forces throughout the world, but especially in Central America. Those emerging forces in our region fought fiercely against autocratic, dictatorial regimes that not only seized political power from the people but subjected the region to profound repression, exploitation and poverty. Amnesty International reported that in 1981 in Guatemala, over 100,000 Guatemalans had been assassinated by official and paramilitary forces. To contain those liberation struggles, the contras were created to detain popular forces in Nicaragua, Honduras, San Salvador and Guatemala. The CIA agreed to create alliances with important collaborating drug traffickers to hide from Congress an unauthorized act and at the same time silence the popular Central American offensive, which finally managed to take over when the Central American states decided to put an end to wars induced from the outside, and in Contadora took the destiny of their countries into their own hands.

These abuses and injustices were a lesson for Latin America. From these innumerable abuses and violations of the peoples of our America has emerged the new democratic revolution with its emphasis placed on recuperating that which the United States impeded for so many dozens of years without consideration for the methods or the social and human consequences. Oscar López Rivera is today living proof of this policy, which internally within the U.S. has not been revised or corrected; Oscar has been a worthy fighter for the freedom of his country, an anti-imperialist, an anti-colonial fighter who gives honor to the principles that guided the General Assembly of the United Nations in approving Resolution 1514 (XV) en 1960, 21 years before he was convicted of fighting to put an end to colonialism, which is precisely what is set forth in said Resolution.

The year 2012 commenced with important activities to coalesce a campaign to finally achieve Oscar's release. Aside from whatever effort is carried out on other levels, Oscar's return to his country cannot and should not come without achieving the broadest support for his release from his people acting above and beyond their political affiliations. Now we speak in humanitarian terms. Oscar will have served 31 years in prison. I am not aware of any political prisoner held in custody for a longer period of time [*there are examples of Native American and Black Liberation Movement leaders who have done more time in US prisons*]. Although the crimes committed by the United States in its so-called war against terrorism will be severely judged by history (Abu Ghraib, Guantánamo, Iraq, Afghanistan), that country has announced that it will significantly reduce its armed forces, because its decline is evident. For imperialism to take such action is much more difficult than to recognize the injustice of this long and unusual captivity.

It is possible that the United States may arrive at the conclusion that the vengeful acts it has committed against so many Puerto Rican fighters, and which are demonstrated by the arbitrary sentences, were dictated by historical situations that no longer exist. That is what President Clinton understood at the time. The new president still doesn't seem to have understood it, or he feels weaker in the face of a deeply rooted racist opposition such that he will readily lend himself to disemboweling at any moment that mix of fear, prejudice and power that has led to so many and such mistaken historical decisions by the U.S.

It is up to us to present Oscar as he is: exceptional proof of the crimes of imperialism, and from that perspective achieve the rectification that Oscar and our struggle deserve. The good will that is being felt in Puerto Rico, outside of our struggles, is indicative of an understanding that the arbitrariness of a judicial sentence should not necessarily lead to a total dehumanization. We must all be disposed to contribute in accord with our efforts so that this year will be the end of his imprisonment, and we can have our friend and compañero sharing with his family in our country.

10 Jan - National Occupy Day in Support of Prisoners

On January 10th, the Occupy Oakland General Assembly passed the proposal below to have a National Occupy Day in Support of Prisoners on Monday February 20th. In the Bay Area there will be a demonstration at San Quentin. For more info go to: occupy4prisoners.org

MORE:

Proposal to Occupy Oakland General Assembly

This is the proposal that was passed at the Occupy Oakland General Assembly, on Monday, January 9th, and a list of endorsers in formation.

For more information and/or to endorse, email occupy4prisoners@gmail.com

ENDORSERS (list in formation)

Angela Davis
California Coalition for Women Prisoners
Campaign to End the Death Penalty
Jack Bryson
Kevin Cooper Defense Committee
Labor Action Committee to Free Mumia Abu Jamal
Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu Jamal
National Committee to Free the Cuban Five
Occupied Oakland Tribune
Oscar Grant Committee Against Police Brutality and State Repression
Prison Activist Resource Center
Prison Watch Network
San Francisco Bay View Newspaper
Stanley Tookie Williams Legacy Network

PROPOSAL

Summary

We are calling for February 20th, 2012 to be a “National Occupy Day in Support of Prisoners.”

In the Bay Area we will “Occupy San Quentin,” to stand in solidarity with the people confined within its walls and to demand the end of the incarceration as a means of containing those dispossessed by unjust social policies.

Reasons

Prisons have become a central institution in American society, integral to our politics, economy and our culture.

Between 1976 and 2000, the United States built on average a new prison each week and the number of imprisoned Americans increased tenfold.

Prison has made the threat of torture part of everyday life for millions of individuals in the United States, especially the 7.3 million people—who are disproportionately people of color—currently incarcerated or under correctional supervision.

Imprisonment itself is a form of torture. The typical American prison, juvenile hall and detainment camp is designed to maximize degradation, brutalization, and dehumanization.

Mass incarceration is the new Jim Crow. Between 1970 and 1995, the incarceration of African Americans increased 7 times. Currently African Americans make up 12 % of the population in the U.S. but 53% of the nation’s prison population. There are more African Americans under correctional control today—in prison or jail, on probation or parole—than were enslaved in 1850, a decade before the Civil War began.

The prison system is the most visible example of policies of punitive containment of the most marginalized and oppressed in our society. Prior to incarceration, 2/3 of all prisoners lived in conditions of economic hardship. While the perpetrators of white-collar crime largely go free.

In addition, the Center for Economic and Policy Research estimated that in 2008 alone there was a loss in economic input associated with people released from prison equal to \$57 billion to \$65 billion.

We call on Occupies across the country to support:

1. Abolishing unjust sentences, such as the Death Penalty, Life Without the Possibility of Parole, Three Strikes, Juvenile Life Without Parole, and the practice of trying children as adults.
2. Standing in solidarity with movements initiated by prisoners and taking action to support prisoner demands, including the Georgia Prison Strike and the Pelican Bay/California Prisoners Hunger Strikes.
3. Freeing political prisoners, such as Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, Lynne Stewart, Bradley Manning and Romaine "Chip" Fitzgerald, a Black Panther Party member incarcerated since 1969.
4. Demanding an end to the repression of activists, specifically the targeting of African Americans and those with histories of incarceration, such as Khali in Occupy Oakland who could now face a life sentence, on trumped-up charges, and many others being falsely charged after only exercising their First Amendment rights.
5. Demanding an end to the brutality of the current system, including the torture of those who have lived for many years in Secured Housing Units (SHUs) or in solitary confinement.
6. Demanding that our tax money spent on isolating, harming and killing prisoners, instead be invested in improving the quality of life for all and be spent on education, housing, health care, mental health care and other human services which contribute to the public good.

Bay Area

On February 20th, 2012 we will organize in front of San Quentin, where male death-row prisoners are housed, where Stanley Tookie Williams was immorally executed by the State of California in 2005, and where Kevin Cooper, an innocent man on death row, is currently imprisoned.

At this demonstration, through prisoners' writings and other artistic and political expressions, we will express the voices of the people who have been inside the walls. The organizers of this action will reach out to the community for support and participation. We will contact social service organizations, faith institutions, labor organizations, schools, prisoners, former prisoners and their family members.

National and International Outreach

We will reach out to Occupies across the country to have similar demonstrations outside of prisons, jails, juvenile halls and detention facilities or other actions as such groups deem appropriate. We will also reach out to Occupies outside of the United States and will seek to attract international attention and support.

We have chosen Monday, February 20, 2012 at San Quentin, because it is a non-weekend day. Presidents' Day avoids the weekend conflict with prisoners' visitation, which would likely be shut down if we held a demonstration over the weekend.

11 Jan – Walter Bond Is In Transit to a Federal Prison

We got word about a week ago that Walter Bond was pulled from his county jail cell and is not in transit to a federal prison. He is currently at FTC Oklahoma City, a federal transfer center. He will likely be there for a couple of weeks, but potentially for much longer. His current address is below.

**Walter Bond #37096-013
FTC Oklahoma City
Post Office Box 898801**

13 Jan – Mandy Hiscocks Sentenced to 16 Months

The other person we are writing to tonight, Mandy Hiscocks, was sentenced on Friday the 13th to 20-24 month for 1 count of Counseling to Commit Mischief and Counseling to Obstruct Police. With 31 days in pretrial custody and harsh bail conditions taken into account, Mandy's remaining time to serve is 16 months.

MORE:

With the courthouse filled with supporters, more than could even fit in the courtroom, Mandy delivered an awesome speech chastising the justice system and enlightening the judge as to why exactly, her desires have not been deterred by her sentence.

The Judge took it upon himself to try and engage her on many of the points she brought up, defending the state and capital, and even at one point announcing that he is also apart of the "99%". Warm cheers and chants from supporters for Mandy's words brought threats of contempt charges and removing all her supporters from the courtroom.

if you would like to stay up to date on Mandy's incarceration, check out the support blog set up for her, or check back in with Guelph ABC for relevant updates. Mandy's Blog: <http://boredbutnotbroken.tao.ca>

STATEMENT TO THE COURT

It's not every day you get the opportunity to speak directly to a judge, and I have a lot to say. This is my first opportunity to speak since this entire process started last June so I hope you'll hear me out until the end.

I plan to take about ten to fifteen minutes at most.

I don't know you as a person or as a judge, so my comments are directed at the legal system in general.

I want to address some of the things you said on this matter in earlier sentencing hearings, particularly your references to the KKK.

When you sentenced Peter, Adam, Erik and Leah to jail, you stated that this is not political, it is about our tactics. You mentioned the KKK, and compared their actions to those of the non-violent civil disobedience protesters of the 60s. I agree with you that the tactics used by the KKK are reprehensible. I disagree with you that that kind of violence against people is anything remotely like the property damage that occurred on the streets of Toronto during the G20 summit.

Regardless, by focusing on the KKK's tactics and not their politics you've missed the point entirely. The problem with the KKK isn't only their tactics. It's the fact that they're a white supremacist group.

White supremacy is defined as "an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations; for the purpose of establishing, maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege."

I don't think you disagree with me that there is a system of wealth, power and privilege in this country. I benefit from this system every day, and so do you. We benefit on the backs of others, most of whom are people of colour.

Systemic oppression is widespread in the legal system. Racial profiling affects who gets arrested in the first place, who gets charged and who gets sent home, whose charges the Crown decides to proceed with and whose they drop, who gets bail and who doesn't. It's not a secret that if you're in custody during your trial, your chances of conviction are higher. And even if you do get out on bail, who gets compliance checks and who doesn't means some people end up back in jail on a breach while others don't. Who in this is more likely to plead guilty right away because they don't have the time, tools or money to defend themselves?

The fact is that lawyers are expensive and your chance of conviction depends on how much time your lawyer is willing to put into your case. Most judges are white, and the jury selection process means that if you're poor you'll almost certainly not end up with a jury of your peers. And finally, sentencing relies on privilege (your education level, your chance of employment, your income, prior run-ins with the law, and so on.)

I don't have proper statistics for all of the above, and anyway I know you know this stuff. I just want you to be aware that I know it too, and so do most of the people in this room today and in the video room.

However, here are some statistics that I do have: According to the federal correctional investigator, over the past decade there has been a 52 per cent leap in the proportion of black offenders in federal incarceration. Black people make up roughly 2.5 per cent of Canada's population but 9.12 per cent of federal prisoners. In Ontario, 20 per cent of the federal prison population is black. Keeping in mind that people of colour have been hardest hit by the economic downturn and the conservative policies of our current government, and keeping in mind all the ways in which the legal system disadvantages people of colour, is it really any wonder?

My point is that a few broken windows and burned police cars at a protest will not lead us down the path of the KKK. The KKK targeted black people with overt violence and terror, and this system targets them with institutionalized racism, which is just a more subtle form of violence. In fact this legal system is doing the work of the KKK more than any anti-G20 protester ever could. It's very telling that the KKK was comprised in large part of wealthy businessmen and lawmakers – the kinds of people our society and our legal system hold up as the best of the best. Perhaps this is why in 1987 Weatherman Linda Evans was sentenced to 40 years for using false ID to get a firearm and harbouring a fugitive, despite the average sentence for that being 2 years. In the same year, a KKK leader named Don Black, who was planning an invasion of Dominica with a boatload of explosives and automatic weapons, was sentenced to 8 years, 5 of which were suspended, so that he ended up serving 3.

White supremacy is wrong, it's violent and dangerous, whether it's at the hands of a fringe group like the KKK or an accepted institution like the criminal justice system.

It's not always what the "justice" system does that causes the problems, sometimes it's what it doesn't do. The courts simply do not consider systemic oppression and inequality.

In a book called *The Red Lily*, Anatole France stated that "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread." The book was written in 1894 in France, but that statement still applies here, today.

A crime is a crime, you say, regardless of who committed it, and what leads people to crime doesn't matter.

In 1999 the Supreme Court of Canada tried to address systemic injustice in their ruling on *Regina vs Gladue*. They stated that we need to acknowledge the circumstances of Indigenous people, the reasons they may wind up in the justice system, and the racist treatment and attitudes they encounter there. They recommended alternatives to prison sentences that mesh more with Indigenous cultures.

According to people who work in the field, many Indigenous accused still don't know about Gladue reports or how to get them, and they aren't always informed by their lawyers. Judges continue to resist the sentencing principles outlined at the conclusion of the Gladue case.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2008/2009, 10 years after the ruling, Aboriginal women represented 28% of all women remanded and 37% of women admitted to sentenced custody. Today Aboriginal women, though less than two per cent of the Canadian population, make up 34 per cent of female federal inmates.

My point being, I don't have the power to change what happens in this legal system. I'm trying to indicate why I don't respect this legal system.

The crown wants this sentence to be a deterrent. It won't be. Please take a second to have a good look around the room. When i get taken out of here do you think you'll have increased anyone's faith in the system?

I am certainly not deterred, I'm just angry.

No matter what my sentence is today, it won't be about justice. Your system is not about justice. If it was, don't you think we would have come to you when the G20 decided to set foot here to pursue their obviously unjust austerity agenda? Don't you think we would have asked for your help when the police started to put up their fences and cages, and randomly arrest whoever they felt like so they could systematically abuse them in the detention centre?

If this system was about righting wrongs, don't you think we would come to you to hold the rich to account for their abuses against the poor, immigration officials to account for their abuses against people without status, and settlers to account for our abuses against Indigenous people?

We didn't and don't come to you. We won't ever come to you.

A court of real justice would defend people against aggressors. In this society, the privileged are the aggressors, but time after time you choose to protect their privilege and their property against people who are struggling to survive. You're doing it wrong. Let's not debate. The obvious answer to the violence and the chaos is the cops brought that. I'm going to try and finish.

This legal system that we have here is not equal, it's not fair and its not just. And a lot of people out there believe that it is. What I would like to impart to you is that I don't buy it and the statistics don't support it.

You speak of dignity, that everyone should be treated with dignity. I agree with you. But you can't treat someone with dignity, or expect to be treated with dignity in return, while one person is up high and the other person is down low, while your boot is on their neck.

This is why we, myself and the people in the other room, don't have decorum in this system.

Throughout this farcical legal process that's coming to an end today the accused have been told that our actions were an attack on the rule of law, which is at the heart of our society. Well good. Our society is racist and colonial, its rooted in wealth and power, and so is the rule of law that upholds it.

And I'm going to leave this court room today, to quote Chilean anarchist Diego Rios:

"I am carrying all my hatred and contempt for power, its laws, its authority, its society, and I have no room for guilt or fear of punishment."

FROM MANDY'S BLOG

"Day One At Vanier"

this is going to be a short post because i do not have any paper or pencils yet and i am dictating this over the phone. when i have the ability to write i will make longer, more in depth posts.

i am at vanier on unit 2 maximum security. everything is fine here, my cellmate is great. i am not on the same range as [Mandy's codefendant] Leah.

i want to say a big thank you to everyone who came out to court yesterday. i could hear all the chaos from the video room - it was really amazing.

13 Jan - 6 Years - A Note from Eric's Partner

It's amazing to us to think that eco-prisoner Eric McDavid has been locked up for six years. His partner wrote

the following on the anniversary of his arrest.

MORE:

Dear friends,

Today marks the 6th year of Eric's arrest and incarceration. I'm not quite sure why I always feel compelled to commemorate this day – the memories it awakens bring so much pain, anger and frustration. It is not something I really want to remember. It is also something I can never forget. That day forever altered the course of Eric's life – and the lives of all his loved ones.

But I also know that it is our responsibility to remember. To remember why Eric was arrested in the first place – not because anything burned down or was damaged, but because he dared to think he could change things. And that he didn't have to wait for permission from those who would never give it. Eric was arrested – and sentenced to an inordinate amount of time – because of his politics

We also must remember what it really means to show solidarity – with Eric and all of our other comrades behind bars. We must remember that they are still here. They are all still a part of our movements and we need to act – every day – to include them. And, most importantly, we must carry on the struggles for which they have given so much.

And we need to remember that sometimes things do change overnight. Sometimes our loved ones are ripped from us. There is no way to really prepare for such a heartwrenching experience, but what we can do is remember to use the time we have now to be good to each other. Love fearlessly. Never take for granted the time we share with each other. It is a precious gift.

Recently, Eric and I had something returned to us that was taken 6 years ago. I have no one to thank. It should never have been taken in the first place. But I cannot tell you how overjoyed I was at its return. On November 21st, during our visit at Terminal Island, Eric reached across the “coffee table” sitting between us and grabbed my hands. Eric and I had not been allowed to sit and hold hands in almost 6 years. Human touch is such an integral part of leading a healthy, happy life. Not being able to touch the people you love is tortuous. It is cruel and inhumane. (Imagine watching a loved one cry and not being able to wipe away their tears, or hold their hand...) Touch deepens our connections with each other – it moves beyond language into a realm that words cannot contain or explain. Of course, the powers that be know all of this, which is probably why it was denied us for so long. We are acutely aware that it could be taken away again at any moment. But for now we are reveling in every second of it.

And so I remind myself of this, too – don't ever take these things for granted.

Eric and I both would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

It is abundantly clear that so many people have not forgotten. Eric continues to get mail from people all across the globe – please keep it coming! He loves hearing from you. You are his connection to the outside world – to the movements and places and ideas he cares about. Keeping those connections is incredibly important to him.

And to all of you who have donated to Eric's support fund – you have no idea how grateful we are. These donations not only help Eric with things like stamps, food and personal items from commissary and time on the telephone – they also help fund visits for him and his loved ones. These visits are key to keeping everyone sane. It would be impossible for us to visit as often as we do without your help.

Eric and I feel your support on a daily basis. “Thank you” could never be enough...

Eric is 6 years into an almost 20 year sentence. Sometimes that thought is almost overwhelming. But then I remember. I remember Eric and who he is and how he has held onto that throughout this whole ordeal. I

remember all of you and how much love and support we have felt coming from all directions. And I remember that we can do this.

With so much love,
jenny (eric's partner)

PS

Please remember our other friends, too! Marie Mason is turning 50 this month. Visit her website: www.supportmariemason.org for more details on how to send her a birthday card or a note of support.

13 Jan – Arresting Alex Sanchez: Part 10 - Judge Manual Real is Removed

On Wednesday, January 11th, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals made the surprising decision to remove controversial Judge Manual Real from the federal RICO case that involves Alex Sanchez.

MORE:

This news shocked nearly everyone who is closely tracking the Sanchez matter. Yanking a federal judge from a case is anything but business as usual.

As most longtime Witness LA readers know, Alex Sanchez is the Salvadoran-born, former MS-13 gang member turned highly respected gang violence reduction activist who has been accused of a long list of Federal racketeering and conspiracy charges. According to the government's case, the supposedly reformed Sanchez never reformed at all, but remained, in reality, a MS-13 shot caller who ordered at least one murder.

The judge assigned to his case, U.S. District Court Judge Manual Real, was appointed to the federal bench in 1966 by Lyndon Johnson.

At nearly 88 (his birthday is Jan. 27), Real is what we used to call a character. He has spent 45 years on the same bench and, in his court room, he projects an image that combines the demeanor of an irascible uncle who mutters loudly and tyrannically over his soup at Thanksgiving dinner, with that of a glowering bird of prey.

Yet, unlike your irascible uncle, Real wields enormous power over the lives of those who come before him.

According to his critics, who are many and varied, he is a bully on the bench who often makes up his mind on a case before it goes to trial and then may visibly telegraphs his opinion to all in the courtroom. He once threatened to throw then California Attorney General Dan Lungren into jail for contempt and used to be known for telling lawyers "This isn't Burger King. We don't do it your way here."

Real's reversal rate is estimated to be 10 times the average for sitting federal judges.

He has had at least ten cases outright snatched away from him by appeals courts.

In 2006, there was serious talk of impeaching him.

Even in the Sanchez case, it took four separate hearings and the interference of the 9th Circuit, before Real would allow Sanchez' attorney to fully present arguments for setting bail for Sanchez. (However, to Real's credit, in January of 2010 [Real called for a special closed door hearing, after which he did set Sanchez's bail at \\$2 million](#), an amount that friends and supporters had already raised in the form of surities and property.)

Since Sanchez was originally arrested on the RICO charges in June 2009, this means, had thee been no bail he would have spent, as of this writing, 2 years and 7 months in jail, with no trial as yet in sight.

The change in judges will, of course, push Sanchez' trial back still further.

Yet, with the alarming wild card presence of Judge Real now removed, no one in either the Sanchez or the prosecution camps, appears to be complaining.

Alex continues working with Homies Unidos, while out on bail.

14 Jan - Birthday, Transfer and OWS by Sundiata Acoli

A comrade recently received a letter from Sundiata Acoli and it's well worth the read to understand his recent transfer and the transfers of other political prisoners and prisoners of war.

MORE:

Thank each of you for such warm Birthday (Jan. 14th) greetings, they brightened my day immensely but frankly it's hard for me to fully comprehend that i'm actually 3/4 of a Century old. That is old by any standard!

i was transferred from FCI Otisville, NY because they're supposedly converting it into a "Sex-Offenders and Debriefed-Gang-Members" prison. Otisville population stands at around 1200 prisoners. Staff said they planned to transfer out 500 prisoners, mostly gang members and replace them with sex offenders and debriefed gang members, i.e., prisoners who have gotten out of the gang and off the prison's gang list as a result of them debriefing by telling what they know of their gang's operations and pointing out other unknown gang members to the staff.

Otisville had transferred out approximately 20 gang members (1 bus load) each week for a month or more when they added "convicted murderers" to the transfer list. i departed Otisville on the 2nd busload of prisoners convicted of murder. At each stop along the way, MDC Brooklyn, NY and FDC Philly, PA the prisoners there were very welcoming and helpful although federal men's prison are so overcrowded that there's a widespread chronic shortage of the most basic supplies, prisoners are literally stacked atop each other and as soon as any prisoner transfers out, another moves into his bed space that same day or the next.

At MDC Brooklyn i received a much welcomed visit from each of my long time attorneys: Florence, Soffiyah, Marisa and Joan. Attorneys can simply show up at the Detention Center and visit. Not so for family or friends, they must be on a new visit list created at the Center. None of my family or friends were able to get on my list before the week or so lapsed by which time i was long gone to the next detention center.

The same visit rules were in effect at FDC Philly, PA. After a week or so there our bus departed on a round-about trip to FCI Schuylkill, PA, our final destination. The first stop was Harrisburg International Airport, PA which looked every bit like a modern day slave market. 40 to 50 bus and van loads of prisoners, mostly Black and Brown with a splash of White and smaller splashes of Red and Yellow, chained hand and foot, sat along the runway of a "Con Air" transport jet disgorging hordes of cuffed hobbling prisoners from it's entrails. Empty, and refilling its belly with just as many new prisoners from the buses/vans until finally sated, it turned, waddled down the runway, belched, and lurched into the horizon.

Other buses and vans mixed and matched, switched and swapped prisoners till each bus was loaded only with prisoners going to the same destinations across the Northeast: NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, VA, WV; the whole operation was surrounded by a cordon of federal marshals, prison guards, state troopers and county sheriffs.

It was here that all the prisoners on my bus were switched to a bus bound for FCI Schuylkill...except me. Shortly, a guard i vaguely recognized from long ago came, took me off the bus and escorted me to another filled with different prisoners. Once seated i asked where they were headed. They said "Cumberland." My property and traveling papers continued on to Schuylkill. We arrived at FCI Cumberland and i was immediately put in SHU (the Hole) because they had no papers for me. I did 10 days semi-incommunicado in "the hole" until my papers arrived and was then let out into general population. i thank all those who expressed concern about my welfare during the transfer, particularly Mumia Abu-Jamal, Pam Africa, the Jericho Movement and numerous others. i've

since learned that at least 5 convicted murderers who left Otisville on the bus with me were rerouted back to FCI Otisville before reaching their transfer destination. They were all White.

i and SAFC support the OWS/OCCUPY MOVEMENT and i thank them for the evolving mutual support they've shown at various times and places for the Jericho Movement, the Black Movement and other Movements of People of Color and the Oppressed.

19 Jan – Court House Rally For Jazz Hayden

WHAT: Press Conference + Court House Rally

WHEN: 8:30am, Thursday, January 19th

WHERE: 100 Centre Street, Manhattan

MORE:

JOIN US ON THE STEPS OF THE MANHATTAN SUPREME COURT, IN SUPPORT OF HARLEM COMMUNITY ACTIVIST JOSEPH "JAZZ" HAYDEN.

On Friday, December 2, 2011 Bro. Jazz Hayden was stopped in Harlem for an alleged traffic violation and when he was pulled over, the cops stated, "**We Know You**" because they were the very **SAME** cops he had filmed during the below cop watch of a stop and frisk over the summer:

<http://bit.ly/rJr4Ku>

The cops then proceeded to **ILLEGALLY** search his car and arrested him for a **PEN KNIFE**. This is completely outrageous - there's nothing remotely illegal about carrying a pen knife. Jazz was then held captive for nearly 48 hours and finally released on his own recognizance after the judge denied the DA's attempts to have him post a This is of course just the latest example of both the out-of-control racial profiling and stop and frisk tactics of the NYPD and; its targeting of Anti-Police Terror Activists like Bro. Jazz and most recently Bro. Shaka Shakur & Bro. Bullwhip.

The Pigs seriously need to understand that when they fuck with ONE OF US then they are fucking with ALL OF US!

SAVE THE DATE & OCCUPY THE COURT HOUSE!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT CAMPAIGN TO END THE NEW JIM CROW AT 212-501-2112 or campaigntoendnewjimcrow@gmail.com

4 Feb 2012 - International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

WHAT: International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier!

WHEN: 2:00-6:00pm, Saturday, February 4th

WHERE: Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Drive (120th and Claremont, Manhattan)

COST: \$5 to \$10 Donation (Nobody turned away due to empty pockets!), delicious homemade food for only \$5

For more information: nycldoc@gmail.com • nycjericho@gmail.com • 718-325-4407

MORE:

Leonard Peltier is a Native American activist wrongfully accused in 1975 in connection with the shooting deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Government documents show that, without any evidence at all, the FBI decided from the beginning of its investigation to 'lock Peltier into the case'.

U.S. prosecutors knowingly presented false statements to a Canadian court to extradite Mr. Peltier to the U.S. The statements were signed by a woman who was forced by FBI agents to say she was an eyewitness. The

government has long since admitted that the woman was not present during the shootings.

Meanwhile, in a separate trial in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Mr. Peltier's co-defendants were acquitted by reason of self defense. Had Leonard been tried with his co-defendants, he also would have been acquitted.

Unhappy with the outcome of the Cedar Rapids trial, prosecutors set the stage for Mr. Peltier's conviction. His trial was moved to an area known for its anti-Indian sentiment—Fargo, North Dakota. The trial judge had a reputation for ruling against Indians, and a juror is known to have made racist comments during Mr. Peltier's trial.

FBI documents prove that the U.S. government went so far as to manufacture the so-called murder weapon, the most critical evidence in the prosecution's case. A ballistics test proved, however, that the gun and shell casings entered into evidence didn't match. The FBI hid this fact from the jury. Mr. Peltier was convicted and sentenced to two consecutive life terms. According to court records, the United States Attorney who prosecuted the case has twice admitted that no one even knows who fired the fatal shots.

Leonard Peltier is 67 years old and in poor health. An accomplished author and artist, Mr. Peltier is renowned for his humanitarian achievements. In 2009, Leonard was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the sixth consecutive year.

Although the courts have acknowledged evidence of government misconduct—including forcing witnesses to lie and hiding ballistics evidence reflecting his innocence—Mr. Peltier has been denied a new trial on a legal technicality. Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, 55 Members of Congress and others—including a judge who sat as a member of the court in two of Mr. Peltier's appeals—have all called for his immediate release.

The Courts may not be able to act but Barack Obama, as President, can. Please join with us to free an innocent man. On February 4, 2012, tell Obama to grant clemency to Leonard Peltier.

Scheduled events will be announced and details provided at whoisleonardpeltier.info