



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for August 10th

20 Jul - Loren Reed is Freed from Federal Custody

We celebrate that Loren Reed will soon be free after spending over a year in pretrial detention without bail, followed by a nearly two month re-arrest and incarceration.

MORE:

Reed, a 27-year-old Diné (Navajo) activist, had a sentencing hearing yesterday in U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona after accepting a non-cooperating plea deal in May. The judge accepted Loren's plea and he will be released from federal custody and into a transitional facility soon.

Reed's initial federal felony charge was pursuant to 18 U.S.C. Sec. 844(e), "Use of Instrument of Interstate Commerce (Telephone and Internet) to Threaten to Destroy a Building by Means of Fire," after he engaged in a heated debate over Black Lives Matter protest tactics in a private Facebook chat group created to organize a local police brutality protest.

In May, Reed pleaded guilty to the underlying threat charge in exchange for a deferred sentence. In Reed's case, a deferred sentence means that if he abides by all the requirements of his deal for two years, this felony charge will be dismissed and he will not suffer a felony conviction on his record. Reed also pleaded guilty to simple possession of marijuana, a Class A misdemeanor, in exchange for the future dismissal of the felony.

"Loren's case is truly infuriating because there are such limited avenues for recourse when the government acts as it has here. They finally realized that they didn't actually have a case against him, but that's after he's spent a year of his life languishing in jail, fighting this charge," said Sarah Alvarez, a staff attorney with the Civil Liberties Defense Center. "Further, the fact that the government agreed to a plea with no additional jail time demonstrates how hollow their claims of Reed's supposed 'dangerousness' really were — all they wanted was the politicized conviction of Reed, and that is clear as day."

"The FBI and the US Attorney thought that railroading Loren with a felony charge and prison time would be easy because they do it all the time," said Ryan Fatica, a member of the Tucson Anti-Repression Crew. "His case is part of a broader strategy the FBI and other law enforcement agencies are enacting across the country right now to incarcerate as many people as possible who participated in last year's protests and uprisings. What they didn't count on was Loren's courage and our solidarity. Loren was willing to face prison time rather than plead guilty and while he sat in pretrial detention, people across the country and around the world expressed their solidarity with his resistance."

Following his acceptance of the plea in May, Reed was released but was arrested several weeks later, receiving an unrelated disorderly conduct charge. He was returned to Federal custody pending his sentencing hearing.

As a condition of his release from the CoreCivic Central Arizona Detention Center where he has been incarcerated for nearly 13 months, Reed will be transferred to a transitional facility.

Reed would like to express his sincere gratitude to those who have supported him during his incarceration.

26 Jul - Albert Woodfox of the Angola 3 & Mumia Abu-Jamal Interview Each Other

Prison Radio recorded and transcribed the following interview. We are also including other entries from issue 2 of The Jamal Journal.

MORE:

Mumia: You brothers of the Angola Three did an ungodly bit in the hole. How did the state justify locking you cats up for so long?

Albert: Well, given the unchecked and unchallenged power of the prison system in Louisiana, their basic justification was the fact that Herman, Robert and I were fighting for our humanity, fighting to maintain our dignity, pride, self-respect and self-worth.

They thought that was a threat to what they considered the only function of a prison. So that was the justification. The infamous Warden Burl Cain even signed a deposition one time saying that I was the most dangerous man in America, and since I've been out, I would like to think that my activities have proven him to be right.

Mumia: How did y'all endure 40 years in the hole?

Albert: Ha! That's the most difficult question of all. I guess having a political consciousness that came from being members of the Black Panther Party. They say knowledge is power, and we had a sense of what solitary confinement was designed for. And so over the decades, it was just having strength, determination, values and principles. And we stayed active, you know. We looked to the society for inspiration, to the men and women, and in some cases the children, to people fighting for changes in conditions, rather than turn our attention inside and allow prison culture to set examples about how we should live our lives.

Mumia: What gave y'all hope?

Albert: I had a wonderful family, you know, wonderful comrades who made up the International Coalition to Free the Angola 3, and we had a great legal team. But more than anything, what gave me hope was being with the guys I lived around, seeing people in society and the social struggles that were being waged, the sacrifices that were being made, the indomitable spirit that refused to be broken. Those were some of the things that inspired me.

One thing in particular was the development of the Black Lives Matter movement, you know, which I think is a tremendous movement. And I was so proud to see all the young men and women involved in that movement come forward.

After getting out of prison and before the pandemic, when Robert and I were traveling together and speaking, we always asked the host to make it possible for us to meet some of the young leaders in the movement. So those are the things that gave me hope, you know, a lot of love of humanity, the indomitable spirit of the people and the continuous struggle that was going on in society.

Albert: Mumia my brother, given the preponderance of evidence exonerating you and the lack of evidence against you, how does it feel to still be in prison?

Mumia: Brother Albert, in the spirit of the Angola 3, I salute you. You know, I think of the early days, even before my trial began, of a pretrial hearing. I'd read a law book, showing cases from the U.S. Supreme Court. So the hearing was based on the Constitution, right? Well, I went to the law library, read those actual cases and then drew up motions. I made a motion in court. The court promptly denied this motion.

I couldn't believe it! But it made me understand the court that most people meet when they first have a case, wasn't bound by the Constitution or by Supreme Court rulings. They do whatever they want to do, because it really ain't about the law. It's about power.

Judge Sabo would later say, and I mean in open court 15 years later, in my case, "Justice is just an emotional feeling." To quote Malcolm X: "Don't be shocked when I say I was in prison. Long as you south of the Canadian border, you still in prison, so all power to people."

Albert: My brother, what was your most painful personal loss?

Mumia: The loss of my mother and daughter, Edith and Samiyah. I had dreams of walking with both of them in freedom. And of course, with other family members, brothers, sisters, cousins, brothers-in-law, Lydia, Jimmy. They live in our memory and in our hearts.

Albert: Again my brother, what is your number one priority when freedom finally comes?

Mumia: The same as it's always been: To serve the people, to work on their behalf, to work for a world where true Black Liberation is a reality, not just words. As the Rastas say: freedom is a must.

Thank you brother Woodfox.

July 27th - How Do We Change DA Krasner's Mind About Mumia's Unjust Conviction?

The Jamal Journal interviews J. Patrick O'Connor, author of the 2008 book "The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal"

Jamal Journal: It has now been almost 13 years since the May 2008 release of your book "The Framing of Mumia Abu-Jamal." When you wrote your book, could you have imagined that Mumia would still be in prison today?

J. Patrick O'Connor: No. I was almost certain that the Third Circuit Court of Appeals would vacate Mumia's conviction in 2008 and order a new trial based on one or more of the three claims a three-judge panel of the appellate court heard oral arguments on the previous year.

Two of the claims were that Prosecutor McGill violated Mumia's constitutional right to a fair trial. One, a Batson claim, was based on him using 10 or 11 of his peremptory challenges to exclude otherwise qualified blacks from serving on Mumia's jury. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1986 in *Batson v. Kentucky* that purging a potential juror based on race was unconstitutional, and it granted James Batson a new trial.

The other concerned McGill's improper summation to the jury during the guilt phase of the trial when he told the jury that if they found Mumia guilty of first-degree murder, "there would be appeal after and perhaps there could be a reversal of the case, or whatever, so that may not be final." This type of language undermines the jury's need to find the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. In a previous capital case when McGill had used nearly identical language in his summation to coax a jury to a death-sentence verdict, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court had overturned the verdict.

The third claim was that Judge Albert Sabo, who presided at Mumia's trial, demonstrated uncommon bias toward Mumia when he presided at Mumia's post-conviction hearing in 1995-97.

Any one of these claims should have resulted in Mumia being granted a new trial, but the Third Circuit, in a 2-1 decision, turned them all down.

JJ: Following the release of your book, you were featured the documentary film “Justice on Trial,” which premiered in late 2009. Also appearing in the film was Mumia’s sister, Lydia Barashango, who went on record shortly before her death from cancer to state that she and her family always suspected that Kenneth Freeman was the actual shooter of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner. The *Jamal Journal* recently interviewed Justice on Trial co-director Johanna Fernandez about interviewing Barashango where Fernandez cites your book as evidence that supports Barashango’s account, given your argument that Freeman was the actual shooter. Any thoughts or commentary on the significance of what Barashango says in the interview?

JPOC: She really says it all: Kenneth Freeman was not only Billy Cook’s best friend, but he was close to Mumia as well, almost part of the Cook family. Even though she suspected that Freeman killed Faulkner, no one in the Cook family, including Mumia, was going to point the finger at Freeman. It is impossible to be certain about who killed Faulkner, but I am 99 percent convinced it was Freeman.

JJ: Another important development following your book’s release was the 2010 ballistics test performed by investigative journalists Linn Washington and Dave Lindorff, who concluded that “the whole prosecution story of an execution-style slaying of the officer by Abu-Jamal would appear to be a prosecution fabrication, complete with coached, perjured witnesses, undermining the integrity and fairness of the entire trial.” What do you think is the significance of Lindorff and Washington’s 2010 ballistics test? Do you find their conclusions to be convincing?

JPOC: The prosecution’s contention that Mumia stood over a fallen Faulkner and fired four shots at his face, execution style, is absurd. Mumia would have never done something like that, plus he was lying in the gutter with a bullet in his chest when Faulkner was wrestled to the ground and shot in the head by Kenneth Freedman. The tests Linn and Dave had conducted prove that no such shots were fired. The idea that a fallen Faulkner was somehow able to dodge three of the four bullets by jerking his head out of the way of bullets fired point blank at his face is rank hyperbole. It shows the total disregard for the truth that McGill used to prosecute Mumia.

JJ: How credible did you find Robert Chobert and Cynthia White’s trial testimony to be even before this 2010 test was conducted?

JPOC: Neither had any credibility; both perjured themselves at trial at the behest of the police and prosecution. Without their testimony, there would have been no eyewitness testimony to hang this crime on Mumia. Their testimony was devastating to Mumia.

JJ: We write in our Color of Change petition to DA Krasner:

“Before publishing their findings, Dave Lindorff and Linn Washington informed the Philadelphia DA’s office about the results of their test, and specifically asked the DA for a quote to explain the lack of photographic evidence or testimony about bullet impact marks in the sidewalk around Faulkner’s body. The DA’s office responded to their questions with what Lindorff and Washington considered to be “a non-response.” All the DA’s office told them was: “The murderer has been represented over the past twenty plus years by a multitude of lawyers, many of whom have closely reviewed the evidence for the sole purpose of finding some basis to overturn the conviction. As you know, none has succeeded, and Mr. Abu-Jamal remains what the evidence proved – a murderer.”

What do you think of the DA’s response to Lindorff and Washington?

JPOC: I am really appalled by it. Seth Williams was a major disappointment as district attorney. I am also confused by it.

JJ: Lindorff and Washington's 2010 ballistics test is just one of several things that we cite in the Color of Change petition to support our argument that the evidence of police, prosecutorial, and judicial misconduct is so overwhelming that the integrity of Mumia's conviction has been destroyed beyond repair. We are asking DA Krasner to stop defending the 1982 conviction and to secure Mumia's release as quickly as he possibly can. What do you think of DA Krasner's continued support for Mumia's conviction?

JPOC: I was really surprised to learn that Krasner had endorsed Mumia's conviction. Krasner ran on a pledge to use the power of the District Attorney's office to make sweeping changes in the criminal justice system, and he won in a landslide. Over the last four years, he has proven to be one of the most progressive D.A.s in the nation, overturning more than 800 convictions won on the testimony of corrupted police officers. The Conviction Integrity Unit he established has led to 19 exonerations, the most by any such organization in the United States.

Krasner, by almost any measure, has been an effective district attorney and a tremendous upgrade from his recent predecessors. But there is one glaring blind spot that mars his time in office, particularly for a former public defender. Somehow, despite the injustice that the trial of Mumia Abu-Jamal represented, Krasner has chosen to ignore the mountain of evidence that points to the innocence of Mumia in the murder of police officer Daniel Faulkner.

JJ: If you had five minutes alone with DA Krasner, and you wanted to say something constructive that would convince him to rethink his position on Mumia's case, what would you say to him?

JPOC: First and foremost, Mumia is innocent. His trial was a monumental miscarriage of justice from start to finish. McGill violated Mumia's constitutional right to a fair trial by purging blacks from his jury, by repeatedly putting on perjured testimony, and by improperly telling the jury during both the guilt and penalty phases of the trial that Mumia would have appeal after appeal. The last thing the district attorney should be doing is defending this conviction in any manner. By defending this conviction, Krasner makes himself complicit in this miscarriage of justice.

I would encourage him to watch the 1996 HBO documentary, Mumia Abu-Jamal: A Case for Reasonable Doubt, and to read Amnesty International's pamphlet published in 2000 entitled The Case of Mumia Abu-Jamal: A Life in the Balance.

26 Jul - A Dispatch from FCI Englewood's Segregated Housing Unit

Read a message from Eric's attorneys below.

MORE:

Today I was locked in a small windowless room with asbestos walls crumbling onto a filthy floor for over seven hours. I was allowed to leave only once to use the restroom. I was not permitted to have water, food, or access to my cellphone to let anyone know whether or not I was OK.

A small metal shelf, about the size of a laptop, is mounted on one of the walls of the room. Above the shelf is a window of plexiglass that looks into an equal sized cement room in which our client, Eric King, sits looking back at me. I am in the attorney visiting room of the segregated housing unit (SHU) at the Englewood Federal Correctional Institution outside of Denver, Colorado.

Eric is an antiracist, antifascist anarchist serving a 10-year federal sentence for an act of protest over the murder of Michael Brown, an 18-year-old black man who was killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014. He is scheduled to be released in 2023. In a federal prison system filled with racial segregation, white

supremacist gangs, and brutal violence, Eric's time locked up has been the stuff of activists' nightmares. Some prison guards and "white power" prisoners work together to exact vengeance on prisoners like him — "race traitors," LGBTQIA individuals, and smaller-framed people who are visibly proud of standing against fascism, as evidenced by their tattoos.

Eric has been left in a cage by guards to be beaten or killed by the leader of an infamous white supremacist gang; framed; seriously beaten at least a dozen times; had his head split open by a guard and rendered unconscious; and was taken into a mop closet and punched multiple times in the face by a Bureau of Prisons Lieutenant who screamed "terrorists killed my daughter" before throwing the first punch. Eric was then strapped to a metal bed in four-point restraints while multiple guards beat him, and a captain used a shield to smother him while hissing "I hope you get raped or beaten up at your next institution." And, sure enough, he did get beaten...while guards watched. Eric currently faces a federal criminal assault prosecution for allegedly punching the BOP Lieutenant in self defense. He has been waiting for a trial on the charge for almost three years now. If he is convicted, this hell may be prolonged for several more years.

About a year ago CLDC took on Eric's criminal case. After reading through the evidence and viewing the security videos — which appear to be edited to remove several periods of torture — we knew we had to try to help keep Eric alive until he could come home to his wife and daughters. Two months ago we filed a federal civil rights case on his behalf. You can read more about the trauma and abuse Eric has endured, and our suit on his behalf, [here](#).

In addition to Eric's criminal case, our small legal team is also handling several other major #BLM related cases, including several federal prosecutions. Those clients are largely young BIPOC activists also rooted in the antiracist/antifascist movement. In the event that any of them are forced to do federal prison time, we must attempt to make that place survivable by at least shedding light on the secretive system of racism and abuse that has been running rampant within the BOP for a long time. It is necessary to call for the abolition of the prison industrial complex and the carceral state in order to permanently stop these egregious harms. It is also necessary to try to keep our comrades safer as they attempt to survive alone within the cement walls of those jails and prisons where some prison employees act with impunity.

After a long day of listening to Eric's terrifying, tragic saga of imprisonment, I will return again tomorrow for another eight hours in the tiny, foul attorney cell. Of course, I am grateful that, at the end of the day, I can leave, but I am intensely worried for our client and friend who fears for his life almost every minute of every day.

If you support our legal defense of antiracist, antifascist activists and political prisoners, please consider becoming a monthly CLDC donor. Your contribution will help defray the costs we incur in taking on these pro bono cases. Thanks to generous donations, our activist clients are never turned away for lack of ability to pay for litigation expenses.

27 Jul - Drone Whistleblower Daniel Hale Receives 45-Month Sentence For Releasing Drone Documents

Drone whistleblower Daniel Hale was sentenced to 45 months in federal prison. It was a severe sentence but not the harshest sentence ever issued in an Espionage Act prosecution against a former United States government employee or contractor for the "unauthorized disclosure" of information.

MORE:

by Kevin Gosztola (*Shadowproof*)

The sentence was not what U.S. prosecutors demanded. They wanted Hale to go to prison for nine years, but it is likely Judge Liam O’Grady issued a lower sentence after considering his mental health problems.

This case is the first major Espionage Act conviction under President Joe Biden.

Hale was a signals intelligence analyst in the U.S. Air Force, who was deployed to Afghanistan and stationed at Bagram Air Base. He helped track down the “geographic location of handset cellphone devices believed to be in the possession of so-called enemy combatants” so they could be targeted and killed by drones.

He later worked as a defense contractor for Leidos at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), where he decided to release documents on the drone program to journalist Jeremy Scahill.

In a letter to Judge Liam O’Grady, Hale shared the trauma he experienced as a participant and witness to gruesome and violent drone strikes. He recalled the moment when colleagues at the NGA asked him to join them to watch “war porn” or archived footage of drone strikes. He could no longer suppress his conscience.

“My conscience, once held at bay, came roaring back to life. At first, I tried to ignore it. Wishing instead that someone, better placed than I, should come along to take this cup from me. But this, too, was folly,” Hale stated. “Left to decide whether to act, I only could do that which I ought to do before God and my own conscience. The answer came to me, that to stop the cycle of violence, I ought to sacrifice my own life and not that of another person.”

“So I contacted an investigative reporter with whom I had had an established prior relationship and told him that I had something the American people needed to know.”

His defense asked the court for a sentence of 12 to 18 months and a “period of supervised release with mental health counseling,” maintaining that was reasonable given prior sentences issued by the same court against former CIA officers John Kiriakou and Jeffrey Sterling. (Both were the target of Espionage Act prosecutions.)

Despite the fact that Hale pled guilty on March 31 to one of the five Espionage Act offenses he faced, prosecutors remained spiteful and unwilling to support anything less than a “significant sentence” to “deter” government employees or contractors from “using positions in the intelligence community for self-aggrandizement.”

Prosecutors requested a sentence of at least 9 years because Hale only accepted what he did was legally wrong, not morally wrong, and refused to believe prosecutors’ claims that the disclosure of documents risked “serious” or “exceptionally grave damage” to U.S. national security.

Court was cleared during the sentencing hearing so the U.S. government could further present secret evidence involving an alleged “internet compilation” distributed by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) that referenced two of the documents. Prosecutors refused to declassify this in order to ensure transparency and fairness in the proceedings.

Harry Cooper, a former CIA executive expert for classification who trained the “agency’s top-tiered executives,” including the CIA director, contended the “internet compilation” supported his conclusions that the disclosure of documents did not pose “any substantial risk of harm.”

“It suggests that the adversaries treated the documents as trophies rather than as something that would give a tactical advantage, given that publication would reduce to zero any tactical advantage that the documents might otherwise have given,” Cooper added. “In short, an adversary who has gained a tactical advantage by receiving secret information would never publicize their possession of it.”

“Shortly before trial,” according to Hale’s defense, “the government produced in discovery a document indicating that some or all of the years-long delay between the conclusion of the FBI’s investigation in this case and the decision to prosecute was because the prosecution team lacked the approval of superiors within DOJ.”

Hale’s home in Northern Virginia was raided on August 8, 2014, the last day he worked as a contractor. He was not immediately indicted, and the defense suggests that the Justice Department’s National Security Division stopped their investigation in 2015.

With President Donald Trump in office and senior officials even more committed than President Barack Obama’s administration to punishing people for leaks, they revived the case and charged Hale in May 2019.

Documents Hale revealed showed “more than 40 percent” of the people in the U.S. government’s database of terrorism suspects have “no recognized terrorist group affiliation.” The “watchlisting guidance” document he shared helped Muslim Americans clear their names and force the government to remove them from the No Fly List.

Additionally, he exposed how the U.S. president authorized targeted assassinations, calling attention to the “system for creating baseball cards and targeting packages” that is, according to Hale, based on “intelligence intercepts and a multi-layered system of fallible human interpretation.”

The U.S. military designated all people killed as “enemies killed in action” or EKIA, regardless of whether those killed were all targets.

“Unless evidence posthumously emerged to prove the males killed were not terrorists or ‘unlawful enemy combatants,’ EKIA remained their designation,” Hale shared. “[That process] is insane. But we’ve made ourselves comfortable with that. The intelligence community, JSOC, the CIA, and everybody that helps support and prop up these programs, they’re comfortable with that idea.”

Hale further described “official U.S. government statements minimizing the number of civilian casualties inflicted by drone strikes as ‘exaggerating at best, if not outright lies.’”

July 30th - Drone Whistleblower Daniel Hale Is a Truth-Teller in a Time of Systemic Deceit and Lethal Secrecy

by Jeremy Scahill (*The Intercept*)

Since the arrest and indictment of Daniel Hale on charges that he leaked the documents that formed the basis for *The Intercept*’s series “The Drone Papers,” as well as documents about the government’s secret watchlisting system, I have wanted to speak publicly about this unjust prosecution. However, due to security concerns, legal advice, and a desire not to hinder, in any way, Hale’s defense or to aid the government in its disgraceful prosecution, I have been unable to do so. Now that the circumstances have changed, I am able to share some aspects of my thoughts. In doing so, I am speaking only for myself and not for *The Intercept* or anyone else.

Daniel Hale is a man of tremendous conscience, courage, and moral clarity. It is an abomination that this brave whistleblower has been sentenced to nearly four years in prison after being convicted of exposing the horrors of the U.S. drone assassination programs, the killing of civilians, and the Kafkaesque “terror” watchlisting system run by the government.

President Barack Obama’s Justice Department did not prosecute Hale, but the Trump administration dug up the case and threw the book at Hale in an obvious ploy to stanch leaks about President Donald Trump and his corrupt administration. The indictment Trump’s prosecutors crafted was a dishonest piece of political propaganda intended to criminalize Hale and attack the freedom of the press.

The initial threat of decades in prison against Hale was a cudgel deployed by prosecutors in an effort to break Hale’s spirit and to frighten other prospective whistleblowers. That President Joe Biden’s Justice Department continued this prosecution instead of dropping the Trump administration’s case serves as an ominous reminder that the war on whistleblowers is a permanent fixture of the U.S. system. The use of the Espionage Act by successive administrations to prosecute whistleblowers is an affront to basic liberties and the constitutional rights of the accused, as it prevents people of conscience from presenting a real defense before a judge or jury. Its use to target dissent, independent journalism, and whistleblowing is an authoritarian weapon masquerading as a law, and it should be abolished.

In 2013, Daniel Hale and I were separately invited to speak at a public forum alongside a Yemeni American activist in Washington, D.C., about drone strikes and the murderous U.S. war in Yemen. As I listened to Hale speak that day, he struck me as a deeply moral person who was profoundly grappling with the role he had played in a lethal global system of assassination. I found him to be a thoughtful, sincere, caring person with an inherent degree of selflessness and honesty rare in our society. Hale appeared to be viscerally struggling with the nature of the work that he had done on behalf of the U.S. government and the horrors he had witnessed.

The Trump Justice Department indictment against Hale was anemic in its “evidence” and replete with innuendo and circumstantial events dishonestly crafted and presented as a substitute for facts. The government spied on Hale and manipulated his communications to paint a grossly distorted picture of his character and motivations that served the prosecutors’ campaign to railroad him.

It has been particularly disheartening to see people purporting to support Hale repeating Trump Justice Department assertions as established fact. There have been a lot of lies told about what happened in this case — in the Trump Justice Department indictment, by the prosecutors, on social media, and, unfortunately, in some news reports. Contrary to what the judge and prosecutors in this case stated and implied, it is evident that Hale was not motivated by trying to impress a journalist or anyone else. Hale was motivated by love of his fellow humans and by a deep and abiding sense of duty — duty to protect the innocent and the defenseless, as well as dedication to a sense of morality none of his detractors come close to matching. He is a noble teller of truths in a time of systemic deceit and lethal secrecy.

Among the “crimes” that Hale was convicted of are the following: revealing that, at times, nearly nine out of 10 people killed in so-called targeted strikes by the U.S. are not the intended targets; exposing the complicity of top U.S. government officials in a secret kill chain that decides who should be assassinated by drone strike; exposing that the U.S. government officially labels unknown people it kills as “enemies killed in action” unless they are posthumously proven to have been civilians; and exposing the secret watchlisting rulebook used to label people, including U.S. citizens, as “known or suspected terrorists” without evidence that they did anything wrong.

Daniel Hale should be pardoned and released, and the government should pay him restitution for the trauma it has inflicted on him for daring to speak out, at great personal risk, for the victims of wars and extrajudicial assassinations funded by U.S. taxpayers. He deserves the gratitude of good people everywhere for his courage, bravery, and sacrifice. It is a grave injustice that a man who blew the whistle on the killing of civilians is in jail and that those who murder them receive medals or appear as pundits on cable news.

29 Jul - 15th NYC Anarchist Bookfair Will Be in Person & Virtual

The book fair will be outside in a NYC Community Garden with film/art/music/books, zines and workshops and NYC ABC will be on hand with free political prisoner and prisoner of war literature as well as shirts, pins/buttons, posters, and more as a fundraiser for our ongoing work.

MORE:

The in-person portion of the book fair happens October 2nd. October 3rd will be virtual with workshops and conversations with anarchists, activists, artists, organized by Kuñangue Aty Guasu – Assembly of Guarani and Kaiowa Indigenous Women Brazil: kunangue.com with translation [English, Spanish and Portuguese] support from the UCL Multimedia Anthropology Laboratory (UCL MAL), London

Our main topic this year will be Zero Money = Live in Mutual Aid. Read Our Full Statement at anarchistbookfair.net/15th-nyc-anarchist-book-fair-2021

30 Jul - Out of Egypt I Called My Son

Please read the latest from Kings Bay Plowshares prisoner Patrick O'Neill.

MORE:

My Time in Elkton is Drawing to a Close

July 15: It is 9:00 a.m, and I'm waiting for Rec. As I get closer to leaving Elkton, I am also getting more anxious. In a few days or a week or so (they don't tell you when), I will be moved to a quarantine cellblock for the final month or so of my stay here. It's in the same building, but down on the first floor. I will still have email and receive mail but no leaving the building until the day of my release. Indoor walking or jogging in place only and all meals and meds delivered to the cellblock. Even though I am vaccinated, they do this ... far beyond medical necessity.

July 21: I am now in quarantine for the final 5 weeks of my time here at Elkton. I am in the EA (Echo Alpha) block in the same building I have been in, but on the first floor in a separate wing, so I have a different view from the window. Tuesday I was moved to the quarantine cellblock, which is just a small group of guys with lots of room and a bottom bunk! I was negative on my Covid test, which is good. I will be here until the morning of Aug. 24, if all goes as planned.

Guys Unready to Face a Harsh World

I miss the guys I spent 6 months with in Fox Bravo. I have collected a lot of names (at least 60) to make a Christmas card list for December. I plan to host a Christmas card-writing party, and you are all invited! I will need cards with "white envelopes" or the BOP may return the cards! I also plan to write to each of the men at least once in the months after I get out. I may have more opportunities for pen-pals if anyone is interested. I will spend the next month sending out final letters to folks as I transition out of here.

Many of the guys in this "to be released unit" with me have been in prison for 3-10 years, and many seem unready for the "real" world. Some guys have no family support and really have nowhere to go and no

resources; it is a sin to imprison people for many years and leave them high and dry with nothing — no resources — when you finally let them out. I am certain many will end up homeless and/or back in jail/prison (especially since the feds basically keep everybody on a leash with supervised probation, of which I have 3 years. They spend the money to keep folks on probation, but provide no resources to help them carry out viable plans to live in this “great” country of ours). Then there are the guys with mental illness; a few walk around with blank stares on their faces and don’t talk very much. A few have their entire heads (and face) tattooed, which I imagine limits your job prospects. (In fact, there must be tens of thousands of dollars spent on the tattoos by the men at Elkton!!). There are just a lot of guys who I can’t imagine doing well in this harsh world we live in. I have made a couple of acquaintances in here, but it’s not a close unit; people seem focused on themselves and what’s ahead. Many might be scared of the unknowns.

The BOP budget is \$8 billion-plus a year for 122 prisons, and taxpayers get nothing in return for that investment. The prison system is a complete and total failure that only makes matters worse. As I’ve noted few guys get mail, and VERY FEW get visits. Guys who have been here for years say they used to hear from folks when they first came to prison, but have since lost touch, even with parents and siblings in many cases. Also, when a family member dies, we are not permitted to go to funerals so that’s a big disconnect for the person in prison. The story just gets sadder and sadder. I am grateful for your ongoing support!

A Birthday Blessing, a Need for Prayers, our Anniversary, and Special Thanks

Thirty-three years ago, our dear tiny 6-pounder daughter Bernadette came into to the World at the Siler City birthing center in Chatham County, NC after 18 hours of labor (not me, Mary!!!). I immediately carried her outside into the warm summer air to see the stars and feel the air for the first time. Bernadette has been a great big sister and a great little sister!! May she be blessed on this Special Day of Celebration as she also awaits the birth of her second child (and our 3rd grandchild!!). Peace be with You, Bernadette. Love and Blessings, Dad.

Mary is having a rough time of late with many of our children needing her love and support through various problems. She also had THREE flat tires on two vehicles in 5 days last week and had to call roadside assistance twice!!! Keep her in your prayers. And of course, Mary is my best supporter and co-conspirator.

July 7 was Mary and my 31st wedding anniversary. The best two words I have ever spoken and heard were “I do” 31 years ago. I’m a blessed man.

I want to offer a special thanks to Marcia Timmel, a long-time friend to Mary and me and part of our extended Catholic Worker community in Garner, N.C. Marcia volunteered to supervise Mary Evelyn’s online classroom at the Exploris School so Mary could keep her part-time job as a home-health social worker, and also to give Mary a little time to herself. Marcia was the key supporter of my first Plowshares action on Easter Sunday 1984 in Orlando, FL, the Pershing Plowshares. She has been a loving and caring friend for many years. She and Mary share a beer together as often as they can!! She lives about a half mile from us. So Thank You Marcia. Thanks too, to Steve Dear, Mark Davidson and Erik Johnson (two of the best Presbyterian minister friends a convict can have!!) The trio of devoted supporters made my 7-plus month stay at Elkton more bearable, and allowed for far better communications with all of you.

No More Cloudy Days

I saw a P.A. at the prison recently (July 7) for an eye check-up. When she told me to cover my right eye and read the chart, I discovered that I am basically blind in my left eye. I was having vision problems, but I

never realized I had no vision (with or without my glasses) in my left eye. I have some peripheral vision in that eye, but not much. This vision problem has been going on for a while I guess, but it just never occurred to me to close one eye and see how the other one was; strange. I guess I just kept closing the left eye because I was unable to see out of it at all!

My eye is getting a bit worse (cloudy). I wish I had a patch. My first order of business when I go to the halfway house is to get an appointment with an ophthalmologist and get my vision back in my left eye (and it's not very good in the right eye either!)

I ended up seeing the prison doctor on July 9, and he examined my eyes with a flashlight-type tool. He looked at both eyes, straight on and from angles. He asked me if I ever had cataracts. I said no. Thankfully, he thinks that's what I have. I am thankful for the prayers that sustain me. I was reading today that Cesar Chavez's mother was a big believer in Saint-Intercessory prayers. She specifically liked St. Euvigis.

Mourning Dove

I was able to run at 7:00 a.m. one day before I entered quarantine and got in just more than 5 miles which was the fifth day in a row I have run at least 5 miles. It's still only an hour out each day, but better than it was. I am still amazed that I have been living with just one working eye, and I did not realize it ... Now I do! That morning there was a skunk on the compound as I was at Rec, and often at rec, including this day, there was a dove cooing so beautifully on the prison fence just below the barbed wire. It was in the morning, but it was not a "morning" dove so to speak. It led to a conversation with my fellow inmates about doves; is it a "Mourning Dove" as per its coo of lamentation or a "Morning Dove," because it's most often seen (by me) in the morning? Many guesses among us until a guy with a bird guide and another with a very good dictionary settled the matter. I had guessed correctly. The dove was on the fence for about 10 of my 18 laps, and I looked forward to the coos each circuit.

Happy, Calm Luddite

Without phones or an internet search engine, we rely heavily on almanacs and dictionaries in order to get answers. It's a circa 1980s environment (except we do have email). I also have not heard the radio or listened to music since my arrival almost 6 months ago. I see the 5 TV screens in the multi-purpose room, but can hear nothing because I don't have a radio that tunes in for the audio. What is strange is when I am reading and all of a sudden, several men (or many men) all laugh or scream at once, startling me and I have no idea why. Of course, it's in response to the TV! Sometimes the noise is unbearable and I have to leave the room for a while. I am happy to say I have done fine with my half year as a Luddite ... I have also spent the last 6 months in a very calm state of mind unlike any other time in my life. I go most days being relatively quiet; almost never raising my voice for any reason (maybe not at all). It's a new experience for me.

A Poem for Our Times

CRUCIFIXION LUNCH

A Poem by Alex Charns

Pass me the Body of Christ.

Amen.

Pass me the Blood of Christ.

Amen.

The Last Supper came first. Crucifixion later.

Without His death and resurrection, we have no Mass. No Paschal meal.

Today, the empire nailed Jesus to an ICBM. Plowshares try to free Him with their hammers and their blood. Dents in the metal. Jesus cries out. Deus Vult; peace not war. Missiles into grain silos. Jesus into grain.

This has been the longest period in my adult life I have not been to Mass or received the Eucharist. Paz de Cristo.

Homeward Bound

On August 24, my anticipated release date, the prison is only giving Mary and me 10 hours total to get to the halfway house in Raleigh (550 miles away), which allows almost no time to stop to use the bathroom or get gas. It's like everything with the Bureau of Prisons, anxiety unnecessarily added to the lives of the captives; even your journey home is rife with suffering and worry. I asked for an extra 2 hours and my case manager and the unit secretary both said it comes down "from above." Everyone passes the buck. No surprise. The road from Purgatory to Garner will be a quick drive!!! I plan to stop in Lisbon (nearby) to get ice cream for the trip!!! John and Julie, I hope to see you for a quick hug and a picture!!! Thanks for all the Love and Support from all of you.

30 Jul - FBI investigating 41 cases of eco-sabotage in Washington

The FBI is investigating incidents against railways and rail lines. As always, please read corporate media with a critical eye...

MORE:

by Christian Spencer (*The Hill*)

Since Jan. 19, 2020, the FBI in Washington state has been investigating at least 41 incidents of eco-sabotage, specifically direct action against railways and rail lines connected to oil production.

In one instance on Dec. 22, a train was derailed and caught on fire in Custer, Wash., near the Canadian border, *The Guardian* reported.

This was regarded as the most serious eco-sabotage incident in recent memory, with the damage resulting in 29,000 gallons of crude oil being spilled and the evacuation of 120 people, the National Transportation and Safety Board reported.

During that time, about a dozen eco-sabotage incidents took place.

On Nov. 28, two women — Samantha Brooks and Ellen Brennan Reiche — were arrested for allegedly placing a "shunt" on railway tracks near Bellingham, Wash. A shunt is a wire that stretches between the tracks and mimics the electrical signal of a train, which causes oncoming trains to engage their emergency brakes, *The Guardian* reported.

Causing oncoming trains to engage their emergency brakes is dangerous for those carts with explosive materials onboard.

On July 9, Brooks pleaded guilty to violating Title 18 of the US Code, which penalizes terrorists who attack and direct violence against railroads, whereas Reiche pleaded not guilty for the same charges and faces trial on Aug. 30.

Both of them face up to 20 years in prison.

The saboteurs were acting on the behalf of the Indigenous people of the Wet'suwet'en territory in northern British Columbia because they wanted to stop the construction of the Coastal Gaslink pipeline.

As Indigenous rights and the climate crisis become intertwined, activists are mobilizing direct action, such as blockading railways and other critical infrastructure, even if it means conducting strategies that prompt terror.

In the early 2000s, the Justice Department regarded apparent "eco-terrorism" as the top domestic terrorism concern, according to *The Intercept*. So much so, one senator even said it ranked higher "over the likes of white supremacists, militias, and anti-abortion groups."

Steven Beda, assistant professor of history at the University of Oregon, said the recent sabotage reminded him of Earth First.

As Changing America previously reported, Earth First is a radical eco-saboteur group that, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, vandalized logging equipment, destroyed logging roads and spiked trees in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in Montana.

"A lot of these things were meant as a form of psychological warfare ... especially with tree spiking, to make loggers so afraid that they don't want to go to work," Beda said.

For some groups, climate activists were once considered opponents to some Indigenous communities; *The Guardian* cites GreenPeace opposing the Inuit seal hunt as one example. But now the intersection of environmental protection and Indigenous rights are at the forefront of many activist groups.

On Jan. 7, 2020, the Wet'suwet'en nation called for solidarity from Indigenous and non-Indigenous people after a judge granted an order against its community members. The Wet'suwet'en tribes were already raided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who were authorized to use lethal force against them.

"Light your sacred fires and come to our aid as the RCMP prepares again to enact colonial violence against Wet'suwet'en people," they said in a statement. They asked that people act peacefully.

People protested in the streets and blockaded on the rail lines, halting trains for weeks and prompting layoffs of VIA Rail employees.

On Jan. 22, an anonymous anarchist posted on a blog that the mass protests had inspired them to sabotage trains in Washington state, saying, "This simple action can generate enough confusion in the system to cause big slowdowns and bureaucratic delays."

It is their objective to disrupt economic activity, calling BNSF, the largest freight railroad in North America, "a primo target for blockages and slow downs," the *Guardian* reported.

"If the RCMP raids Wet'suwet'en territory, we will shut down the supply lines where we stand," the poster wrote.

1 Aug - M4BL: Welcome to Black August 2021

Join us this Black August as we acknowledge and commemorate the countless freedom fighters who sacrificed their freedom and lives in the struggle for Black liberation.

MORE:

by Movement for Black Lives

Black August was started in California prisons in the 1970s by Black freedom fighters to honor the lives and deaths of Black political prisoners killed by the state, bring awareness to harsh prison conditions, and to highlight the radical tradition of Black resistance against anti-Black state violence and systemic oppression. You can read more about the history of Black August [here](#).

Building Black power in the United States is a long-term project—245 years to date. From enslaved Africans to today's organizers in defense of Black lives, Black people have faithfully organized and challenged white supremacists' conditions of domination and assimilation. In doing so, we advance our efforts toward liberation and self-determination for Black communities. And, we lose folks along the way. Countless named and unnamed freedom fighters have been murdered, exiled, or unjustly persecuted by the state for their beliefs and disappeared into cages, never to be seen again. We honor their sacrifices and express appreciation for their contributions.

Today, organizers and activists face increasing surveillance, harassment, and prosecution. Just last year more than 300 activists across the country were targeted by the Trump administration and unjustly prosecuted with federal charges. Local policy makers have introduced more than 80 pieces of legislation that limits our ability to organize and build power for ourselves, putting the lives of organizers and activists in jeopardy. Additionally, many cities collude with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force to surveil and trap organizers and impose harsh, life-altering sentences.

Every Black August we honor freedom fighters and political prisoners who put their lives on the line to defend the self-determination and political power of Black communities. We remain in service to the legacy of Black resistance, and extend a deep bow of gratitude to all who have sacrificed for us so we may be more free.

Help us commemorate Black August by:

- Signing petitions urging all charges be dropped against protestors and political prisoners such as this one for Sundiata Acoli;
- Demanding the freedom of all political prisoners currently incarcerated
- Write or visit political prisoners and fundraise on their behalf
- Demanding a full investigation into all allegations of police and federal agent violence;
- Demanding an end to Operation Legend and militarization of police;
- Demanding all law enforcement agencies including ICE and CBP stop arresting protestors
- Organizing for passage of the People's Response Act to invest in community safety and the BREATHE Act to divest from and end militarized policing.
- Abolish the Joint Terrorism Task Force

August 1st - 2021 TRIBUNAL: Black August Is Here

There is so much going on from comrades near and far. We wanted to share a couple and in particular help release this Prequel Video for In the Spirit of Nelson Mandela Campaign/AKA the 2021 Tribunal Against the United States for Crimes Against Humanity. Learn more at spiritofmandela.org or info@spiritofmandela.org and WATCH THE VIDEO at player.vimeo.com/video/581690920

Root and Branch (fka iwoc nyc) is a member organization of In the Spirit of Mandela Campaign, and a couple of comrades in particular have been holding it down there. Please stay tuned for more. The next event will be August 18th, at 8:30PM entitled "Fulfilling our Mission: Youth Against Genocide". It will be online and accessible that way. Stay tuned for more.

We also want to give special attention to our comrades at Jailhouse Lawyers Speak who are working tirelessly to produce political education and actions for Black August and beyond. Beginning on August 21, the anniversary of Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion and going until September 9, the anniversary of the Attica Prison Rebellion here in New York State. Everyday comrades inside struggle in multiple ways, and JLS and comrades are highlighting that with days of action. Stay tuned for more, and check out this article for more context and information

In deep relation to this, we are awaiting information about actions for Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, a long held Black revolutionary and a leader in the Panther Solidarity Organization, as well as a part of In the Spirit Of Mandela Campaign and all around a mentor for many. The repression is nearly endless for revolutionary comrades inside, so please stay tuned for more details likely to come tomorrow (Monday).

August 6th - This Black August, Support Ruchell Magee and Remember His Fallen Comrades

Sign the petition to urge Governor Newsom of California to commute the sentence of the 82-year-old Ruchell, who's now been incarcerated for 58 years: actionnetwork.org/petitions/governor-newsom-free-82-year-old-prisoner-ruchell-magee-unjustly-incarcerated-for-58-years

August 7th - Black August Spirit of Mandela Webinar–Fulfilling Our Mission: Youth Against Genocide

"Each generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it." -Frantz Fanon

Register for our 4th Webinar of the Spirit of Mandela webinar series leading up to the International Tribunal!

We have a panel full of young revolutionaries and performances by amazing young artists. The webinar will cover the importance of youth carrying on the fight for the Freedom of Political Prisoners and the Self-determination of Black, Brown, Indigenous People and all oppressed People. Register at tinyurl.com/ismwebinar4

3 Aug - Official Leonard Peltier Merchandise Store

Welcome friends, colleagues, and supporters to The Official Leonard Peltier Merchandise Store

MORE:

"I am honored and pleased that Green Light has chosen to present some of my art work and will protect my images. They are the only company authorized by me to sell these items."

-Leonard Peltier

After 45 years of time spent without freedom, we believe we are getting close to welcoming Leonard back to us. Some of the world's great ambassadors have rallied to make this happen including Pope Francis and the Dalai Lama among many more, and we are grateful to each and every one for their support

As we hopefully approach this momentous occasion Leonard's supporters have initiated The Official Leonard Peltier Merchandise Store.

The line of goods gives you the opportunity to get Leonard's messages out to the world, while simultaneously supporting his freedom.

Leonard's initiatives of empowering people, protecting Mother Earth, and teaching world peace are what we've designed into.

Native colors and traditional designs, as well as fragments of Leonard's artwork appear throughout the line.

This campaign for Leonard Peltier will result in monies going into two funds. The majority of the money will be put into a trust for the use of Leonard Peltier to help him to reconstruct his life after prison if he is ever allowed to go home. The remainder will be used to cover legal expenses and the cost of running the International Leonard Peltier Defense Committee.

Shop the store at leonardpeltierstore.com

4 Aug - Political Prisoner buttons

Currently, there are two places you can get political prisoner buttons.

MORE:

Gender Enders are selling Gage Halupowski, Eric King and Bill Dunne buttons as fundraisers. You can buy them at genderended.com/category/buttons

Additionally, our friends at Burning Books sells a series of 9 amazing button packs complete with current and former political prisoners and politicized prisoners. Order at burningbooks.com/collections/other/products/political-prisoner-button-packs

“We’re excited to be carrying these political prisoner buttons from Blue Ridge ABC. They come in 9 different mix packs.

Each pack contains 6 buttons with the names, faces and in many cases support sites for U.S.- held political prisoners, a mixture of well-known and less famous, younger and older, from different movements. A great resource for starting conversations and spreading support.”

18 Aug - PP Letter writing event with Certain Days and Jericho NYC

WHAT: Political Prisoner Letter Writing Event

WHEN: 2:00pm, Saturday, September 18th

WHERE: The People's Forum, 320 West 37th Street (between 8th & 9th Avenues)

COST: FREE

MORE:

If possible, can you invite nyc people to this event using the facebook event invite feature. This is how you do that: facebook.com/help/mobile-basic/213851145302199 and the event page is at facebook.com/events/345049243870565/

Join NYC Jericho and the Certain Days collective in writing political prisoners at this free event. We will be giving short presentations and writing political prisoners: Leonard Peltier, Sundiata Acoli, Jessica Reznicek and Xinachtli. Materials will be provided.

Contact: nycjericho@gmail.com | info@certaindays.org