



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for December 10th

19 Nov - Toni Chavero Begins Hunger Strike in Solidarity with Marcelo Villarroel

Spain: With some delay, Abolition Media received a letter from Toni Chavero, who has been transferred from Estremera to Aranjuez, both prisons located in Madrid.

MORE:

via La Zarzamora

In his letter, Toni denounces the “low intensity” repressive situation to which he is being subjected. To make him explode and make him end up in isolation. Retention of personal belongings, packages returned with a disgusting and trashy reasoning, retention of money and other tasks typical of these savage bastards, to make daily life more difficult. In addition to the struggle, he maintains on a personal level, in addition to actively and passively denouncing every swear against him or close comrades, Toni asks us to make public this statement that we publish below in which he announces a new hunger strike that began last Friday the 15th, in solidarity with Marcelo Villarroel, for his immediate release. It is the third hunger strike that Toni has started, in solidarity with his imprisoned comrade in Chile.

It states:

In view of the forecast of my protest calendar, for the unwavering support and solidarity with anti-authoritarian prisoners around the world, I return on this occasion to support once again Marcelo Villarroel, kidnapped by the terrorist state of Chile under the military laws of Pinochet, the genocidal dictator. I am forced, once again, to vindicate the kidnapping in which our comrade is being held. Despite what happens to me in this infected pit to which I have been brought, Marcelo's kidnapping is the main reason why I start my hunger strike. To make visible the situation of Marcelo Villarroel, kidnapped under obsolete laws when they are interested, making them valid when they are not. Prevailing in a state of law without rights, the world upside down for Marcelo. Laws that are enforced by a state of genuine terrorists/legislators.

If you were in the Spanish State, Marcelo, they would have you under the law of vagabonds and thugs, they would apply the law of escapes, the shitty Francoists would want to give you a vile garrote. Like the damn Boric, disguised as a progressive, because they are the real terrorists, comrade. We are only guilty of being anarchists and libertarians, guilty of loving. We are proud to be guilty, irretrievable. Irretrievably aware of our condition as human beings. Marcelo, from this cage you will hear a cry for freedom. Marcelo, a comrade, a cry of rebellion.

On Friday, November 15, I begin the hunger strike, I don't know how long, because there are not enough walls or barriers to separate our brotherhood. There are no distances that silence our voices, comrades on the lines, in the prison or in the street, on the barricades, from outside and from within, demanding your liberation, telling the corrupt Chilean State that enough is enough. That's enough.

From this cage I have sent letters denouncing your situation, for cooperating with your kidnapping, to the Chilean embassy in Madrid and they will have to listen to us in silence because this reason cannot be refuted. There are no arguments. From Iberia we shout for your release. Free Marcelo, you bastards!

For a society without cages, comrade. Here we are, a heartbeat away.

AS LONG AS THERE IS MISERY THERE WILL BE REBELLION! MARCELO VILLARROEL A LA KALLE NOW!

24 Nov - Realities behind the arrest of Nikos Romanos

Greece: This is an attempt to provide information and context for those outside Greece concerning the recent state abduction of anarchist Nikos Romanos.

MORE:

On 31 October, 2024, an explosion in the Athens neighborhood of Ampelokopoi killed the comrade Kyriakos X and severely injured the comrade Marianna M.

They were both in an apartment where an explosive device detonated, knocking out one wall of the building. The state claims they were planning to detonate a bomb elsewhere and that it exploded prematurely. Both Kyriakos and Marianna are anarchists, respected participants in the movement.

The press in Greece is owned by a handful of old families who control most of the remaining greek assets—those that haven't been sold off to foreign investors. The Greek mainstream media exists to disseminate state narratives, and it immediately began slandering the victims of the explosion as well as engaging in wild speculation—such as that the israeli embassy was the intended target. Whether or not that's true, it is true that israeli mossad agents came to assist the Greek police in their investigations. Since the explosion, the state has made additional arrests of people it claims are somehow connected to the apartment and its lease, sublease, etc.

As the Greek press promoted the propaganda of the state, there commenced activity in some cowardly corners of the left to distinguish the more "guilty" of those accused from the others. This is the question of who to tar with the labels of "anarchist" and "terrorist" — thereby assumed to deserve repression— vs. who is really "innocent."

The anarchist movement itself, both in Greece and internationally, has rejected such division and remained strong in solidarity despite a chilling increase in repression. There were multiple support gatherings outside the hospital where Marianna was held under guard and when, shortly after her second surgery, she was transferred to Korydallos prison, comrades also gathered there. Kyriakos has been honored with actions, banners, marches, events and memorials, and will remain a beloved comrade forevermore. There has been no "disavowal," no step back.

Since the tragedy in Ampelokopoi state repression against those suspected of being "anarchists" has become more aggressive, although this is consistent with an ongoing trend since the pandemic. What we have seen now are not new tactics but an increase in frequency: police actions such as stopping and searching people around the neighborhood Exarcheia, early-morning "preventative detention" of targeted individuals (people considered politically prominent) on the days of demonstrations and marches, and an increase in surveillance of those the greek state has a grudge against, including by parking unmarked cars with surveillance equipment in front of their homes.

Few people in the anarchist movement here have been under as heavy surveillance, long-term, as the comrade Nikos Romanos. He was a friend of the anarchist Alexis Grigoropolous, and witnessed Alexis' murder by police on 6 December 2008. Since that time Nikos has been arrested and accused of many crimes, along with accusations of involvement with the direct action group Conspiracy of Cells of Fire.

Because Nikos is a living witness to the shameful conduct of the state, he has been labeled a terrorist by politicians and the mass media many times over. Of their many accusations, however, the only crime the judiciary has ever pinned on him is a bank robbery, for which he served a prison sentence. During the time he was imprisoned, Nikos went on hunger strike for 31 days to (successfully) demand access to education, something he was entitled to under law but which the state had refused him. His steadfastness in this matter inspired solidarity actions throughout Greece and internationally, and is still well remembered.

Again, there are few people in Greece as relentlessly surveilled as Nikos, which made it all the more absurd that he was arrested on 18 November and accused of unspecified involvement in the explosion, on the basis of the state claiming to have discovered a single fingerprint from him on a trash bag "found" in the destroyed apartment.

Some or all of the above you may already know. The purpose of this piece is to contextualize the arrest and repression of Nikos in Greece's overall economic collapse and the scandals of the Greek state's ruling party,

New Democracy, as well as to condemn those who respond to the greek state's abuse of Nikos with gleeful excitement (because they anticipate spectacular resistance) and those who promote state narratives about Nikos, including the lie— proven to be a lie in court! — that he was involved in the group Conspiracy of Cells of Fire.

Nikos has been put through hell by the state for nearly his entire life, from the horror of watching his childhood friend murdered in front of his eyes to years of repression, intimidation, violence, false accusations and imprisonment. Anyone who repeats the state and state-media slanders about Nikos, using buzzwords like "terrorist" or breathlessly associating him with guerrilla groups he wasn't involved in, is promoting the state's narrative and serving the greek state's agenda.

On 22 November, the state used the flimsy pretext of the fingerprint to imprison Nikos more or less indefinitely, pre-trial, furthering the outrage. Even some of the right-wing TV talking heads were at a loss to explain this, which only provides (additional) evidence that the supposedly impartial judiciary of Greece is no more than a weapon of the ruling class, in this case of Prime Minister Mitsotakis and New Democracy.

Nikos is being held under article 187A, an antiterrorism statute passed by the "progressive" socialist government previous to new democracy. The excuse for 187A at the time was that it was necessary to prosecute Golden Dawn, a neo-fascist organization— but it wasn't used for that. Instead, we see in the detention of Nikos the penal code's true purpose. All state tools of "anti-extremism," including those that claim to be protection from fascists or to repress the far right, will end up used against anarchists.

Article 187A, which applies to terrorist organizations, states that a terrorist organization must be at least three people. So, we have the martyr Kyriakos, the injured Marianna... and because the state needed a third, like magic, they discover a bag with a fingerprint and kidnap Nikos.

Prime Minister Mitsotakis went and toured the site of the explosion personally, a bizarre and cynical media circus, and then pulled a true Reality TV stunt: he announced that a benevolent construction company (also, of course, owned by one of Greece's ruling families) would be providing free reconstruction of the building to give the other residents homes again.

The recent imprisonment of Nikos is likewise a stunt, but a cruel, barbaric stunt using a man's life and freedom to try and score political points. Not only has New Democracy been delegitimized by scandals— to name just a few: a mass-casualty train crash directly caused by austerity and privatization, deliberate mass drownings of immigrants, and being caught using illegal israeli spyware

to monitor political rivals— but the economy of Greece is collapsing. Rent in most cities is unaffordable relative to wages, the healthcare system is being stripped for parts, and the schools are in shambles.

The abduction of Nikos Romanos is a provocation by the ruling party towards the anarchist movement, timed immediately after the anniversary of the Polytechnic uprising and just before the anniversary of the police murder of Alexis. Mitsotakis wants to focus attention on the anarchists, because his coalition of neoliberal austerity privatizers is losing ground to a growing fringe far-right. Arbitrarily imprisoning a high-profile anarchist (and thus perhaps triggering a response) is perfect red meat for the kind of reactionary droolers who have been lately abandoning the technocratic soft-authoritarianism of new democracy for more overtly fascist political parties.

We can see the heavy hand of the Greek state in not just conventional media, but social media. Shameless, ignorant, parastatal parasitic "extremism" experts parrot the lies of Nikos' involvement in matters he was acquitted of, reactionaries and liberals casually refer to Nikos as a "terrorist," and Facebook auto-bans Nikos' name, much as it did the name of the revolutionary Dimitris Koufontinas during his 2021 prison hunger strike.

There is a parallel to the case of Tasos Theophilou, an anarchist-communist who was sentenced to 25 years in prison for a bank robbery he didn't commit. Tasos also was falsely accused of membership in Conspiracy of Cells of Fire (despite not sharing their ideology), and the state's evidence against him was the anti-terrorism task force claiming they found his DNA on a hat near the bank— although the hat in question wasn't in the list of items collected and photographed at the scene of the robbery.

Although Tasos' conviction was eventually overturned and he successfully sued the state for his five years of false imprisonment, the government and its media parrots defamed Tasos for years based on these false accusations. After all, he's an anarchist!

There are many more instances and incidents I could invoke here, but I hope that this helps establish that:

- the arbitrary imprisonment of Nikos in the wake of an unrelated tragedy is a sick political game by the state, and
- those who accept and repeat the Greek state's lies about Nikos are de facto agents of state repression.

Let us reject not only the continued abuse of Nikos Romanos and other prisoners by the state, but the state's narratives and slanders.

As has been said elsewhere, "May Athens get the December it deserves"

26 Nov - Illustrated Guide Version 17.10 Uploaded!

nycabc.wordpress.com/2024/11/26/guide_17_10

MORE:

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

28 Nov - Leonard Peltier's Day of Mourning Statement + Updates

I am honored that you still hold me in your thoughts, believe in me, pray for me, and want to hear my words.

MORE:

It has been over 400 years since the settlers set out to civilize us. They began by taking our blood, our children, to Spain. We were the first slaves in this "great nation," built on stolen land, with stolen lives and stolen labor.

The king and queen of Spain fell in love with our children and tried to end the slavery of American Indians. The colonizers used every loophole they could find. They did not want to give up the stolen labor of our people. They moved on to the stolen lives of our Black brothers and sisters, torn from their homelands.

Our blood, our sweat, and our pain will forever bind us.

The intent of the colonizers has always been total domination.

When they could not control us, they killed us. They began with diseased blankets, bibles, bullets, and lies they called treaties.

Words are sacred. Our people know this, just as we know that Mother Earth herself lives and breathes through us.

The words of the colonizers mean nothing, and their sacred pieces of paper mean less. Their 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty promised us an end to their wars against us and gave us the womb of Mother Earth, the Black Hills.

They took our sacred land, and the genocidal fervor of the Imperialists continues to this day. Their tactics have changed, but they want to see us annihilated as a People and steal what remains of our traditional land.

Sitting Bull said, "Possessions are a disease with these people." They take. They ravish Mother Earth. It will never be enough because they are hollow.

They have an insatiable thirst for possessions and vengeance. I ask myself why they hate us so. Perhaps they know we do not need possessions. Our spirit cannot be broken because we are all one. We are born of Mother Earth, woven with love, dignity, and a freedom they cannot comprehend.

Though they have entombed me in concrete and steel, I am a free man. They rounded up our people and put us in concentration camps they call reservations – we remain a free people.

The true shackles are those caging the souls of those who oppress us.

Perhaps they know.

Their pitiful attempts to crush us turn back on them and take their humanity. With every attempted "conquest," they lose more of their spirit. Those who seek to oppress believe they are winning something. I ask them to open their eyes and look hard at what they think they have won.

We. Will. Endure. They cannot take the sacred fire we carry.

Do not let them take our children.

They started with Boarding Schools. Now, it is the insanity they call government. They want to govern us out of existence.

Give your children tradition, education, artwork, something to turn to besides the disease of drugs and alcohol that infects our reservations. Prayer is action, my friends.

Tell your children WHO WE ARE with every word you speak and every move you make. We are the First People. Mother Earth births us, fires the blood that runs through our veins, and then takes us back into her womb. They can never take that from us.

I have been warning for five decades now of the threat we face from the oppressors. Fascism has spread through those who have taken power and is staining the earth blood-red.

What I stated in 1982 stands true. The forces of liberation must and shall come together to fight as a united front in unity of the four colors.

I am proud of my heritage. I take pride in our people. Even when they believe they have stripped us of everything, we know the ground beneath us is ours to stand on, holding the blood and bones of our ancestors. We are rich in tradition in a way the settlers cannot perceive.

Perhaps they know. Perhaps they hate us because we exist within the forces of Nature. They have no dominion over the wind.

We must not alienate those who stand on the right side of history. We all bleed red.

We MUST stand together in solidarity to defeat the forces that would see all of us in shackles.

And – I am still in prison.

Again, I send my love and blood as a prisoner of war within the belly of the beast to those who continue the struggle.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse

November 29th - Amnesty International Calls on Biden to Free Peltier "Before It's Too Late"
via *Democracy Now!*

With just weeks left in President Joe Biden's term, we speak with Amnesty International USA executive director Paul O'Brien, who has written to the outgoing president urging him to "change course on critical human rights" before the end of his term in office. One of his key demands is for Biden to free Indigenous activist Leonard Peltier, who has been imprisoned for decades and repeatedly denied parole. Peltier recently turned 80 and has always maintained his innocence for the 1975 killing of two FBI agents in a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation. His conviction was riddled with irregularities and prosecutorial misconduct. "It's time to give him a chance to spend his last days with his family and with his community," says O'Brien. "He's been incarcerated as long as Joe Biden has been in national politics."

From Amnesty International: Ask your two Senators and your Representative to sign on to Senator Schatz and Representative Grijalva's letter to President Biden urging clemency for Leonard Peltier. You can contact your Representative and Senators by email, phone and/or by going to their local office. Look them up at **congress.gov**

The staff of your Senators can contact Caroline Ackerman: **Caroline_Ackerman@indian.senate.gov** The staff of your Representative can contact Qay-liwh Ammon: **Qay-liwh.Ammon@mail.house.gov**

Ask your friends, family and social networks to contact their Senators and Representative Let us know if you take action so we can keep a tally and use the number of action takers in our campaigning: email **campaigns@aiusa.org**

Read more about Leonard Peltier's case and why he should be free: **amnestyusa.org/campaigns/free-leonard-peltier**

December 4th - Chairman of Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen. Schatz, on Senate Floor Calls for President Biden to Pardon Leonard Peltier

by Neely Bardwell (*Native News Online*)

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, spoke on the Senate floor late today to renew his calls on President Biden to pardon Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist convicted of murder in 1977 following a controversial investigation and trial, which many civil rights leaders and legal experts have called unjust, including the U.S. Attorney who prosecuted the case.

Since 2022, Schatz has repeatedly led colleagues in calling on the president to grant Peltier clemency.

Earlier this week, December 1, President Biden pardoned his own son, Hunter Biden who faced sentencing this month for federal tax and gun convictions after stating previously he would not. This comes as Biden's presidential term quickly comes to an end. Now, activists continue the call for Biden to do the same for Peltier.

Schatz addressed the U.S. Senate floor to argue Peltier's case for clemency, saying he deserves "grace and mercy", and his conviction was made with little evidence.

"Peltier is now 80 years old and has been in prison for 50 years. He is in declining health, experiencing vision loss and other illnesses...And so even if you believe that he did in fact commit the crime, surely now the time is to let him spend whatever remaining days he has at home to die with his family. He's done his time. He's of old age and in poor health. This is what clemency is for. This is what mercy is for. He poses little threat to society. If there was ever a case that merited compassionate release, Leonard Peltier's is it."

Peltier was arrested in 1975 for his alleged involvement in the murder of two FBI agents in a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. One witness whose statements were used at trial, said she was told to lie and say she was in a relationship with Peltier and that she had witnessed him shoot the agents. She later recanted that statement, saying, "I was forced into this, and I feel very awful. I just wish that Leonard Peltier would get out of prison".

Schatz explained that according to reporting, a juror who on day two of the trial professed her prejudice against Native Americans, was allowed to remain on the panel and later went on to find Peltier guilty.

The US attorney who prosecuted the case, James Reynolds, wrote in a letter that Peltier had served his sentence on "the basis of minimal evidence, a result that I strongly doubt would be upheld in any court today."

In the same letter, Reynolds said "I write today from a position rare for a former prosecutor to beseech you to commute the sentence of a man who I helped put behind bars with time and the benefit of hindsight, I've realized that the prosecution and continue to incarceration of Mr. Peltier was and is unjust. We were not able to prove that Mr. Peltier personally committed any offense on the Pine Ridge Reservation."

29 Nov - After 21 Years, Daniel San Diego Is Kidnapped By Police

As has been widely reported, Daniel San Diego was arrested this week in Wales, 21 years after he was named as a person of interest in two bombings at companies connected to the notorious animal research laboratory Huntingdon Life Sciences.

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

At this moment, we would like to be clear that Daniel has not been charged with, nor convicted for these actions and is therefore, as far as society is concerned, innocent until proven guilty.

While he has been wanted by the FBI for two decades, he has never escaped custody and has not been 'on the run'. He has seemingly chosen not to talk to an organization that labelled him as significant a threat as Bin Laden (who they famously assassinated in his own home).

We would encourage everyone to respect Daniel's position at this time, and to avoid speculation, or praising/critiquing him for actions he may have played no part in.

November 30th - 'It's a sleepy little place': disbelief in north Wales after arrest of US terror suspect

by Hannah Al-Othman (*The Guardian*)

Maenan, in north Wales, is not a place where very much happens. But earlier this week armed police descended on this tiny settlement, leaving neighbours in "disbelief".

They learned that a man they had sometimes seen near his home on the outskirts of the woods was in fact one of the FBI's most wanted men.

Daniel Andreas San Diego, 46, was arrested on Monday by officers from Britain's National Crime Agency (NCA), supported by North Wales police. Describing him as an "animal rights extremist", the FBI said he is alleged to have been involved in the bombing of two office buildings in San Francisco, California, in 2003.

San Diego kept very much to himself, his neighbours said, and they knew very little about him. But they did not suspect for a minute that the reason he always stayed close to his remote rural home was because he was allegedly hiding out from the FBI.

“I’ve never seen him at all,” a neighbour said. “He never goes out, the car is always on the drive, it never moves.”

In Maenan, where only a few hundred people live – the majority of them Welsh speakers – most people only knew that “an American man” had moved into the house by word-of-mouth. He is believed to have been living under an assumed name.

The FBI had offered a reward of up to \$250,000 (£200,000) for information leading directly to his arrest and considered him “armed and dangerous”.

The agency said the first alleged bombing was in August 2003, with two explosions an hour apart on the campus of a biotechnology firm. A month later a nutritional products company was bombed.

Now, 21 years later, he is facing extradition, after he was apprehended more than 5,000 miles away, in the settlement of Maenan, between Conwy and Betws-y-Coed.

San Diego is believed to have been living for around a year or two in a house on the edge of the woods, many twists and turns away from the main road, high up along a steep, barely surfaced country track. He may have been living in Wales for several years. He is believed to have been working – although in what field is not clear.

In Maenan, neighbours said they knew a “single American or Canadian man” had moved into the house which they said looked “well kept” from the outside.

The house is right at the very end of a track, where most homes appeared to be holiday lets. The glass patio doors look out on to nothing but rolling countryside and the valley below.

On Wednesday, the building he had supposedly been living in was empty, but from looking through the windows it had clearly been recently occupied. Men’s clothes hung on a drying rack, a wetsuit had been hooked from the top of the glass doors, while a plate, fork, and mug discarded on the sofa indicated that the occupant had perhaps left in a hurry.

Nobody in this remote corner of rural Wales said they saw or heard armed police swarm the house on Monday. Nor did they really know anything about the man who had been living there.

Others had seen him in the woods but had never spoken to him, or really given him a second thought, until they recognised San Diego’s picture on the news.

“My partner saw him, a bit of a way up there,” said David Hughes, owner of the Maenan Abbey Hotel on the main road. “It’s quite remote, you would never be able to find him, it’s quite a way off the main road.”

His partner had been walking his dog around four weeks ago when he had seen San Diego in the woods, he said, later recognising him from his picture on the news.

“I just feel a bit of disbelief really,” Hughes said. “It’s a sleepy little place, and you don’t expect things like that to happen here.”

“It’s not even a village, it’s a parish,” he added. “There’s 20 different addresses that all share the same postcode.”

In the biggest nearby town, Llanrwst, a pretty place on the River Conwy, dotted with antique shops, cafes, and pubs, nobody knew anything of San Diego at all.

Although it is less than three miles away, news of his arrest had not reached Llanrwst. "If someone here knew about it, we'd all know," said one man, sipping a pint of lager at the bar of the Pen Y Bryn pub.

"There's remote areas everywhere," he added. "You could drive five minutes anywhere from here, and you're in the middle of nowhere."

"It's a good choice of place, I suppose," his friend added. "There are worse places to hide."

December 4th - FBI fugitive found in Wales appears in court

by BBC

One of America's most wanted men who was arrested in north Wales last week has appeared in court.

Daniel Andreas San Diego, 46, was detained in Maenan, Conwy after an operation backed by counter terrorist police and North Wales Police.

He was wanted by the FBI for allegedly bombing two office buildings in San Francisco in 2003.

Mr San Diego appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London via video link from HMP Belmarsh on Tuesday, wearing a grey tracksuit, and spoke only to confirm his name and date of birth.

He will next appear in court on 31 December.

Before his arrest last week, Mr San Diego, born in Berkeley, California, was on the run for 21 years.

The FBI previously said he had "ties" to an animal rights extremist group and there was a reward of 250,000 US dollars (£198,000) for information leading directly to his arrest.

On 28 August 2003, two bombs exploded about one hour apart on the campus of a biotechnology corporation in Emeryville, the agency said.

Then, on 26 September 2003, one bomb strapped with nails exploded at a nutritional products corporation in Pleasanton, according to a wanted poster issued.

Mr San Diego appeared at the U.S. district court in July 2004 over his alleged involvement, the FBI said.

29 Nov - DA Brings New Bogus Charge Against Jack Mazurek

In a desperate attempt to continue to repress the movement against cop city and its alleged participants, the state has thrown another charge at Jack stemming from the raid on his house in February.

MORE:

After 10 months, the DA has decided to charge Jack with felony drug possession for mushrooms that were allegedly found on the property during the raid. Anyone who knows Jack knows the irony of this and that he has been sober for over a decade. Nevertheless, on November 7th, Jack was forced to turn himself in to Fulton County Jail and spend the night in jail before being bonded out again on this new charge. We see Jack's charges for what they are, a desperate attempt to instill fear in communities engaged in struggle. We remain committed to supporting Jack on his continued journey to fight his case and send our love to all of those on this journey with us. Please continue to talk about Jack's case, table at events, and donate to help pay for Jack's legal fees: givebutter.com/tLAvDE

30 Nov - They Got 60 Days in Jail for Protesting Israel's Largest Arms Maker — and Say That's a "Huge Victory"

After trying to block production at an Elbit factory in New Hampshire, the Palestine solidarity activists are calling for more, better direct action.

MORE:

by Natasha Lennard (*The Intercept*)

In mid-November, four young women will start two-month jail sentences for an action attempting to halt operations last November at a weapons factory in Merrimack, New Hampshire, operated by Elbit Systems, Israel's largest arms manufacturer.

It could have been far worse for the Merrimack 4, as the women are called by fellow activists. New Hampshire prosecutors had originally charged them with multiple felonies carrying sentences up to 37 years — an extreme overreach given that the defendants were alleged to have engaged in trespass and minor property damage at the facility.

After a drawn out process, the New Hampshire attorney general's office eventually dropped the felony charges and the co-defendants pleaded guilty to misdemeanor criminal mischief and criminal trespass. Alongside jail time, they received a 24-month suspended sentence and a stay-away order from every Elbit Systems facility, including 6 factories. The Merrimack 4 are not worried about 60 days in jail. Or, as two of them told me, they keep their situation in perspective.

"I've talked with friends from Palestine who've been arrested and interrogated and tortured in prisons," said Calla Walsh, 20, a co-founder of Palestine Action U.S. She contrasted her own sentence with the Israeli practice of detaining Palestinians indefinitely in "administrative detention" without trial: "At least we know how long we'll be in for."

The activists' concern, rather, is that the wrong lessons will be taken from their cases. What they don't want is for movement participants to look at their sentences and shy away from escalation and direct action. There remains, they said, an urgent need to shut down the production and circulation of arms deployed in the ongoing atrocities against Palestine and Lebanon.

The action in November last year, less than two months after Israel's war on Gaza started, was part of a campaign, under the banner of Palestine Action U.S., where autonomous groups around the country targeted Elbit for demonstrations. In Merrimack, activists blockaded the road leading to the Elbit facility, threw red paint on the building's facade, broke several windows, and released green, white, and red smoke flares from the roof — Palestine's national colors.

"I think our action, when it happened, was seen as illogical and dangerous. And the more that the genocide has gone on and the more that the movement in the U.S. has grown in militancy, especially with the student encampments," said Walsh, "I think our action has only become understood as more logical and reasonable and righteous, while also acknowledging we did not engage in these tactics perfectly."

"We don't want anyone to replicate what we did," Walsh told me. "We want them to learn from it and whatever they're going to do, do it more effectively than us."

Rupturing Supply Chains

Questions of strategy and tactics hang heavily over a movement that, a year into Israel's U.S.-backed genocide, is run through with desperation. Efforts like the "Uncommitted" movement to put pressure on Kamala Harris's presidential campaign have, while impressive in garnering numbers, extracted no concessions from the Democratic nominee.

Gaza solidarity encampments on campuses, although powerful in their politicizing and radicalizing effects, were swept away with violent police raids, with participants facing unprecedented campus repression.

Countless mass marches, boycotts, and open letters calling for a ceasefire and an end to U.S. complicity have been met with silence, if not outright disdain. Money and arms continue to flow, without conditions, to Israel's expansionist campaign.

It is only reasonable that activists would search for ways to directly rupture the supply chains on which Israel's war machine runs.

Paige Belanger, 33, an herbalist and co-founder of Palestine Action U.S. and one of the Merrimack 4, said, "Most of the response in the United States was an emphasis on these nonviolent, peaceful protests that were really toothless calls to those in power, to somehow appeal to their morality and change the way that weapons were imported into Israel to commit genocide on the Palestinians."

Consequences

For the Palestine Action U.S. founders, the need for escalation and direct action was and remains clear.

"There's no peaceful protest that's going to appeal to the fascist morality enough to change it and create a better world for us," said Belanger.

Walsh and Belanger helped found Palestine Action U.S. in mid-October last year, as Israel's campaign of collective punishment was already well under way. Palestine Action U.K. — which shares no organizational structure with the decentralized U.S. movement — had already been active since 2020, with the aim of dismantling Israel's weapons trade in Britain.

There have been successes. In England, Elbit shuttered its facilities in Tamworth, Oldham, and Leicester, as well as closing its London offices after repeated protests, vandalism, and short-term occupations led to expensive damages and ever greater security costs.

According to the U.K. network, four U.K. companies, including property managers and employee recruiters, cut ties with Elbit following Palestine Action pressure. In the U.S., a sustained campaign of weekly protests at Elbit's offices in Cambridge, Massachusetts, forced the company to end its lease there.

The risks for activists are hardly negligible. In August, four activists in Scotland were jailed for 12 months, and one for 14 months, for throwing smoke bombs and engaging in low-level property damage at a weapons equipment factory in Glasgow.

The FBI has reportedly opened an investigation into Palestine Action U.S., even though the network is not a formal organization, and functioned rather as a banner for autonomous actions and an online platform for sharing news. (As of August, the Palestine Action U.S. platform announced that it would be reconstituting itself as a "propaganda front" renamed Unity of Fields.)

Walsh, who lives in Cambridge, also faces further felony charges, along with another Merrimack co-defendant, Sophie Ross, and other activists for their involvement in a protest last October 30 against Elbit's Cambridge location.

"I'm facing a felony from that day for allegedly throwing an egg," said Walsh, "a charge that's been dragged out for a year."

"A Huge Victory"

The shuttering or temporary disruption of a small number of weapons facilities may seem Pyrrhic victories when participants face arduous and expensive legal processes, as Israel's genocide continues unhindered

and Elbit makes its profits. Elbit CEO Bezhalet Machlis told Reuters that the company's sales goal of \$7 billion by 2026 would be reached "much earlier" because of military demand.

The anti-genocide movement is on the back foot at a time when nonviolent protest camps on college lawns are deemed grounds for police raids. New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu called the action against Elbit — a multibillion-dollar weapons firm — an act of "antisemitism" and "hate"; no opposition to Israel's actions appears exempt from such perverse demonization.

Prosecutorial overreach is also rife, as it has been in the efforts in recent years against the Black liberation uprisings, and the related movement to stop the construction of police training compounds in Atlanta and elsewhere. Hefty and groundless charges are thrown at activists, draining movement resources and chilling solidarity efforts, only to be dropped or reduced over time, as in the Merrimack case.

"We initially were facing these extreme charges, 37 years with five felonies. And the plea that we've agreed to at this point is no felonies, pleading guilty only to misdemeanors and 60 days in jail," said Walsh. "I look at our plea as a huge victory and want to impart that to everybody: We face this kind of repression, but they weren't successful in that tactic in putting us in jail for decades."

No effort by the Palestine solidarity movement has so far been successful in ending the Israeli assault on Palestinian and Lebanese people, but militant direct action has not been attempted in great numbers. This is no time to leave tactics on the table.

"Petty vandalism is obviously not a means to an end," Walsh noted. "I think the goal of any action is to create the next level of action that is possible."

4 Dec - Casey Goonan Reaches Plea Deal

The person accused of firebombing a UC Berkeley police vehicle this year has reached a plea deal, according to court documents filed late Tuesday.

MORE:

by Katie DeBenedetti (KQED)

Casey Robert Goonan, 34, previously pleaded not guilty after being indicted by a federal grand jury in July on two arson charges and a third for possession of an unregistered firearm.

U.S. Senior District Judge Jeffrey White ordered that Goonan appear for a change of plea hearing next month after defense lawyers and the U.S. attorney's office filed a joint status report Tuesday saying Goonan had agreed to plead guilty to one of the charges. Goonan will plead guilty to damaging property used in or affecting interstate commerce by fire, in exchange for dropping the other two charges.

Goonan is accused of lighting Molotov cocktails under the university police vehicle in June, as protests over the war in Gaza took hold of UC Berkeley's campus and others throughout the country. They were arrested on June 17 in connection with four arson attacks — including the firebombing of the vehicle — that took place at UC Berkeley that month. Before Goonan's arrest, anonymous pro-Palestinian activists took credit for the incidents on social media.

Tuesday's report also indicates that the parties expect Goonan to admit to involvement in other "arsons and attacks," including one on the Oakland federal building that also occurred in June, as part of their change in plea. Initially, Goonan faced state charges in Alameda County before federal prosecutors took over the case.

In an affidavit unsealed ahead of the grand jury hearing, FBI special agent Tiffany Speirs said she had probable cause to believe that Goonan "used several destructive devices — Molotov cocktails — to damage and destroy a parked University of California Police Department vehicle."

Security footage showed a person matching Goonan's description exiting the passenger side of a car that had a license plate associated with them. They set down a reusable shopping bag — which was later found to have six Molotov cocktails in it — under the fuel tank area of a marked UCPD vehicle, Speirs said.

Shortly afterward, a witness reported seeing a person use a "blow torch style lighter" to ignite an object near the rear tire of a police vehicle, and days later, the vehicle the suspect exited was found outside Goonan's mother's home in Pleasant Hill.

The criminal complaint also alleges that Goonan later returned to document the aftermath, posting the photos online with the headline "Student Intifada." The U.S. attorney's office declined to comment.

The order filed Tuesday vacates Goonan's status hearing next week and sets their change of plea hearing.

8 Dec - Last Few Days To Order A T-Shirt or Artwork For Cara & Celeste's Fundraiser

Hey folks just a quick shout out to UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL'S fundraiser.

MORE:

We are selling t-shirts and art prints designed by super radical artists from across the globe to raise funds for Cara and Celeste. The pre-order only fundraiser will close down in 72 hours, so it is now or never!

Cara and Celeste were arrested in the vicinity of a fur farm that had been raided, where over 600 mink were released to freedom. They spent a few weeks until they managed to post bail and now they are preparing for a legal battle in court contesting many charges including felony eco terrorism.

Philly ABC has a fundraiser going and we would like to send as much money as we possibly can to it, so if you can afford it, please grab a tee or some prints to contribute! If you grab a print collection and a t-shirt in the same order, we will add a few stickers for free as a thank you. Please note that this is a preorder item only, which means they will only be sent once they are printed, so if you're ordering other bits from the website which are not marked as pre-order items they will ship together once the tees are ready!

Grab the tees and prints at unoffensiveanimal.is/product-category/mink-trial-solidarity

14 Dec - U.S. v. International Law at Home and Abroad

WHAT: Panel Discussion

WHEN: 2:00pm, Saturday, December 14th

WHERE: Zoom - contact nycjericho@gmail.com for link

COST: FREE

MORE:

From within U.S. prisons to Palestine, Haiti, Puerto Rico and beyond, the U.S. consistently violates International Human Rights Law with total impunity.

***Dahoud Andre will join us from KOMOKODA, the Committee to Mobilize Against Dictatorship in Haiti. He's also the host of Eritye Papa Desalin, a daily Haitian community radio program and the host of Haiti: Our Revolution Continues on WBAI.

***Benjamin Ramos of ProLibertad will speak on U.S. colonialism in Puerto Rico.

***National Jericho Chair & former BPP/BLA Political Prisoner: Violations of International Human Rights Law in U.S. prisons.

***Statement and video from U.S. Political Prisoner Xinachtli (Alvaro Luna Hernández) Xinachtli appears to hold the record of being the Native American political prisoner in the USA serving the longest time in solitary confinement, over 22 years.

15 Dec - Send Love Through the Walls

WHAT: Send Love Through The Walls: Holiday Card-Writing For Political Prisoners

WHEN: Sunday, December 15th, 2024 1:00-4:00pm

WHERE: Woodbine (585 Woodward Avenue, Queens)

COST: FREE (Donations to cover the cost of stamps greatly appreciated)

MORE:

In what many prisoners have told us is their favorite event of the year, Resistance in Brooklyn and NYC Anarchist Black Cross again join forces to bring you the annual holiday card-writing party for U.S. held political prisoners, prisoners of war, and prisoners of conscience. This event is always a lot of fun, the food outstanding, the camaraderie lively, and the handmade cards flat out amazing. This year will be no different, and will be organized both in person and virtually. So, plan to tell your friends and bring your creativity. We'll have updates on the pp/pow campaigns as well as art supplies, paper, and envelopes.

We do ask that folks be vaccinated and will be using the honor system.

This is a hybrid event and will have a zoom component for folks unable to make it in person. For the Zoom meeting information, contact Resistance in Brooklyn: **resistanceinbrooklyn.ows at gmail dot com**

For folks writing at home, here are some guidelines to follow to ensure your holiday card gets to the person you are writing:

GUIDELINES:

We recommend using the following guidelines to ensure your holiday card will get through the walls. The best bet for getting a handmade card through the walls is to either: print a design on plain computer paper or create a design on plain computer paper using blue or black pen only. Things have gotten very draconian and many facilities won't even allow crayon or colored pencil anymore. Card stock or greeting cards are not allowed in most facilities. You cannot use paint of any kind. You cannot enclose glitter or write with glittery gel pens or puff paint pens or stickers.

If you DO use some colorful artsy craftsy things to make a card on cardstock, simply photocopy it onto computer paper and send in the copy only.

You cannot include articles or anything else torn out of a newspaper or magazine. However, you can print that same article from the internet or photocopy it.

ON THE ENVELOPE:

Return address labels are no longer permitted in most facilities, nor stickers of any kind (aside from stamps). Write your 'to' and 'from' address neatly in blue or black pen.

For more information, contact:

Resistance in Brooklyn– **resistanceinbrooklyn.ows at gmail dot com**

NYC Anarchist Black Cross– **nycabc at riseup dot net**

21 Dec - Saxapahaw Prison Books Packing Party

WHAT: Packing Party

WHEN: 4:00pm, Saturday, December 21st

WHERE: P.I.T. - 411 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Saxapahaw Prison Books is hosting their regular book packing to send books to prisoners in Georgia.