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Updates for June 19th

4 Jun - After 47 Years Behind Bars, Will Jalil Muntaqim Go Free?

Jalil has been inside long enough. It's time for him to come home.

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by Messiah Rhodes (*The Independent*)

It all started the night of May 21, 1971. Two police officers, Waverly Jones and Joseph Piagentini, were fired upon while walking to their patrol car at a housing project near the Macombs Dam Bridge in Harlem. Jones died instantly from a gunshot to his head. Piagentini, who was shot 13 times, died en route to the hospital. Today nothing marks the location of the shooting, but in the 1970s, it was among a string of cop killings that garnered the attention of J. Edgar Hoover and even President Richard Nixon, who told his FBI director "not to pull any punches" in going after the black militants believed responsible.

Working with the NYPD, the FBI launched operation NEWKILL, casting a nationwide dragnet to track down members of the Black Panther Party's paramilitary offshoot, the Black Liberation Army (BLA), which had issued statements claiming responsibility for the deaths of Jones, Piagentini and other officers in their war against the United States government.

After a shootout with police in San Francisco, two young men — Anthony Bottom and Albert "Nuh" Washington — were arrested on August 28, 1971 for the killings of Jones and Piagentini. Nearly two years later a third accomplice, Herman Bell, was arrested in New Orleans. They became known as the "New York Three" and in 1975 were convicted of first-degree murder, weapons possession and conspiracy.

'I am an example of what was going on during the 1960s and '70s leading out of the Civil Rights movement.'

In 2000, Washington died in prison from cancer. On April 27 of this year, Herman Bell was granted parole. Anthony Bottom, who later changed his name to Jalil Muntaqim, is the only member of the New York Three remaining behind bars. Just 19 years old when he was apprehended, Muntaqim was a member of the BLA, but he'd already been politically active years before that. An activist with the NAACP's San Francisco chapter, he joined the Panthers after Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968.

"I had a job at California human resources as a social worker and I worked with them getting people employment," Muntaqim said, recalling the era in which he was radicalized during a recent interview conducted at the Sullivan Correctional Facility, a maximum security prison in upstate New York. "At the same time, I was engaged with the Black Panther Party and their operations."

Since his arrest, Muntaqim has spent the past 47 years behind bars. The 66-year-old has done time at Attica and Sing Sing in New York and at San Quentin in California, among other prisons. His case represents a turbulent era in the United States, when the government actively suppressed nonviolent movements as well as their militant counterparts, including the Weather Underground, Puerto Rico Liberation Front, the American Indian Movement and the BLA.

"We got close to a real revolution in this country," Muntaqim said. "I am an example of what was going on during the 1960s and '70s leading out of the Civil Rights movement."

Since entering prison Muntaqim has been a tireless advocate for radicals such as himself who are serving decades-long prison sentences, helping to run an organization he formed called the Jericho Movement,

which raises awareness of their plight. In terms of his own case, he has repeatedly been denied parole since he became eligible in 2002, although his last parole assessment classified him as a low-risk inmate.

Until recently, the New York State Board of Parole could deny parole solely based on the severity of a prisoner's past offense, even if he or she was deemed to have been rehabilitated and a low risk to society if released. Under new regulations, the parole board is now required to give much greater weight to an applicant's record while incarcerated and the likelihood they can be reintegrated into society.

In Bell's case, the parole board cited his exemplary prison record and his apology for his role in the killings of the two police officers. "There was nothing political about the act," Bell told the parole board in March. "As much as I thought [so] at the time, it was murder and horribly wrong."

Muntaqim has also garnered praise for his conduct behind bars and will go before the parole board the week of June 11. Stung by Bell's release, the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and its political allies are clamoring for Muntaqim to remain behind bars and point to his continued identification as a political prisoner as a sign of his lack of penance for his crime.

An organizer, writer, poet and educator, Muntaqim has twice received commendations for quelling tensions and preventing prison riots. He has written three books while incarcerated and, in 1994, graduated from SUNY New Paltz with a B.S. in Psychology and a B.A. in Sociology. These days, he focuses on educating the inmates around him, teaching classes in poetry, sociology and history.

He has also dedicated himself to his Muslim faith. "Prison is not easy," Muntaqim said, explaining how Islam helped him mature over the years and find peace. However, he has refused to entirely renounce his revolutionary views, which, he believes, is the reason he continues to be locked up. His political convictions have also gotten him into hot water in prison. He spent four months in solitary confinement at Attica beginning in December 2016 because authorities were not happy about the content of one of his classes.

"They came to my cell and took me to the SHU [Secure Housing Unit]," Muntaqim said. "I was teaching a black history class for about two months straight. I started from 1861 and I was bringing it up to 1960s. So during the 1960s naturally I have to talk about the Black Panther Party. That was one of the biggest things going on in this country at the time. I was bringing a comparison to the Black Panther Party and street organizations, particularly the Bloods. The [prison] administration was not happy about the fact I was making that kind of comparison. So they took my narrative and turned it into something completely different. They put me in the box, saying I was trying to organize the gangs or something."

Meanwhile, as aging radicals such as Oscar López Rivera, Herman Wallace, Herman Bell and others are finally released from state and federal prisons, Muntaqim hopes the New York State parole board will set him on the path to freedom so he can continue the work he began in prison on the outside.

He already has plans for what he will do when he's free. Going to federal prison at the age of 19, Muntaqim was separated from his soon-to-be newborn daughter. At the age of 66, he has yet to spend time with her, his granddaughter or his great-granddaughter outside of prison.

He wants to be involved in community gardens and to take part in forming a community center where young people can learn computer skills, especially coding. He also has a few history lessons he would like to impart to the next generation.

"Some of us on the inside need to come out," Muntaqim said. "We have a voice that needs to be shared."

4 Jun - Running Down the Walls 2018: A Reportback

If you weren't able to join us, but still want to support, donations can be made at paypal.me/nycabc

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Running Down the Walls (RDTW) 2018 was a success in building relationships, feeling the solidarity of running as our imprisoned comrades did the same, and raising funds for the ABCF Warchest and the Revolutionary Abolitionist Community Bail Fund which works to bail people out that are incarcerated at Riker's Island.

We arrived early to claim our spot, hoping to stake our rightful claim to the commons that is (should be) Prospect Park. Unfortunately, due to the food circus we refuse to name that operates its melee disguised as an overpriced food truck parade, we were nudged out of our usual spot and forced to set up across the path. Originally surly with the hall monitor employed by the unnamed food circus who snitched on us, the consensus at the end of the day was that we enjoyed the new location.

The course was the same as last year, one single loop around the park which amounts to just about a 5K distance. Typically we start the run off by playing a recording by Jaan Laaman but because he was moved this year and could no longer send the recording, he instead submitted a handwritten statement that we read aloud along with solidarity statements from Hanif Bey, David Gilbert, and Eric King.

Although it was a bit cooler this year, participants admitted that they were relieved to save some sweat enduring the course. We had printed bib numbers for the participants. The flipside of the bib numbers had information about NYC ABC and guidelines for writing to prisoners, making it both a memento and a useful reminder to write to folks.

We were thrilled to have three former political prisoners join us in biking, running, walking, eating, and hanging. It was lovely to have folks there from various groups that do political prisoner support including NYC Jericho Movement, the Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar, the Northeast Political Prisoner Coalition, and Eric King Support Crew to name a few. Additionally we were happy to share space with folks from other local organizing groups including NYC Anarchist Book Fair, Black and Pink, Friends of the Island Academy, Rojava Solidarity NYC, The Base, the Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement, Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council, Pop Gym, and Books through Bars, among others.

Most folks had left by 6:00 pm and those who stayed did so to help clean up and transfer everything to the cars. So the event went as scheduled, almost to the minute.

Knowing the history of the run and the imprisoned comrades with whom we ran in solidarity elevated Running Down the Walls 2018 to an even more inspiring level.

And that's how we get down (the walls).

4 Jun - J20 Case Updates

The case brought by the US Attorney against protesters mass-arrested opposing President Trump's inauguration suffered several more losses early this month.

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On Monday morning, federal prosecutors moved to dismiss the remaining charges against 3 defendants who had been scheduled to go to trial that same day. Additionally, jurors in the second inauguration protest trial, who began deliberations on Friday, June 1, delivered a partial verdict on Monday, announcing that they had found defendant Cathseigh Webber “not guilty” of all charges.

While Webber’s acquittal was announced this morning, the other three current trial defendants have not received a verdict from the jury and still face sentences of up to 60 years in prison. The remaining defendants – Michael Basillas, Seth Cadman and Anthony Felice – are each accused of participating in property destruction during the anti-Trump protest march, although no witnesses have identified them.

The government’s case against Basillas, Cadman, and Felice relies entirely upon arguments made by prosecutors, who claim that each defendant’s appearance can be correlated with clothing details, such as zippers and sunglasses, in videos analyzed by DC Police Detective Gregory Pemberton. The alleged identification of the three protesters has been heavily contested by defense counsel, who described the alleged evidence as merely “blurry pictures of someone who is dressed similar to everyone else.”

Last week DC Superior Court Chief Judge Robert Morin sanctioned the US Attorney’s Office for hiding up to 69 evidence recordings from defendants and making false statements to the court. Judge Morin told prosecutors they could no longer use undercover video taken of an inauguration protest planning meeting by the right-wing “entrapment” media group Project Veritas.

The same day Morin announced his sanctions, Assistant US Attorney Ahmed Baset announced his officer was dropping all charges against the June 4 trial group, and was dropping all felonies against another trial group that had been scheduled for May 29 (remaining charges against these defendants were dropped on Monday, June 4.)

Morin also forbade the prosecution from using their theory of a “conspiracy to riot” in two trial groups (whose cases have since all been dismissed). His ruling is believed to apply to other inauguration defendants still facing charges, although the implications of Morin’s ruling have yet to be fully litigated in trial readiness hearings for the remaining cases. As of this writing, 47 defendants remain indicted and face charges stemming from the DC police mass-arrest of the “anti-capitalist, anti-fascist” march during Trump’s inauguration.

June 6th - Federal prosecutors lose another case in the #J20 witch-hunt

by Alan Pyke (*Think Progress*)

Federal prosecutors continued their losing streak Wednesday in the ongoing mass trials of anti-Trump protesters arrested in Washington, D.C. on Inauguration Day.

Jurors found another defendant, Seth Cadman, not guilty on six felony separate charges including conspiracy to riot and multiple counts of malicious destruction of property. Jurors further refused to convict Cadman of lesser misdemeanor versions of two of the destruction of property charges tied to smashed windows at a Starbucks and a Bank of America branch.

Cadman stood hand in hand with his two co-defendants, the trio giving each other little squeezes each of the eight total times the foreperson answered “not guilty” to the judge.

But the panel was deadlocked on a seventh charge, “engaging in a riot,” after several days of deliberations. Judge Kimberly Knowles declared a mistrial on that charge, which prosecutors may still pursue if they choose later this summer.

Wednesday's defeat is a more significant setback for the prosecution than prior acquittals. This trio of defendants are the first who the government said it could prove individually broke windows or scrapped with police on the day. The jury did not believe the government's evidence that Cadman had struck out in anger on January 20, 2017.

Supporters and attorneys for the acquitted man celebrated in the hallway outside Courtroom 203. But two others in this trial group — and more than 40 additional people whose trials have not yet begun — remain in legal limbo in the case.

It's been a dramatic two weeks for the high-profile #J20 trials. Last Thursday, lead prosecutor Jennifer Kerkhoff revealed she had hidden more than 60 separate recordings of a pre-protest training camp from both the court and the defense attorneys in the several separate cases, prompting another judge to dismiss the government's conspiracy case with prejudice. Ten of the defendants the government had claimed it could prove were key conspirators were suddenly free to go that day.

The pending trials scheduled for later in the summer and fall will likely be affected by Kerkhoff's withholding of video evidence, though exactly how remains to be seen. Judge Knowles said Wednesday that she would wait for "Chief Judge Morin [to] tell me how to proceed" ahead of a future-scheduled hearing on the remaining misdemeanor charge jurors could not resolve.

Earlier Wednesday, the attorney for one of the defendants on whom jurors have yet to reach consensus sought a mistrial across the board in light of concerns that the panel might feel pressured to rush their deliberations.

A juror reported Wednesday morning that she had grown anxious about how long deliberations are taking because she has plans to travel outside of D.C. on June 8th. She had notified the court of that scheduling issue during jury selection, and received repeated assurances that she could go ahead with her plans. In the note, she reported that she has since invested further significant sums in preparing for the trip, and would face a serious financial loss if the court forced her to cancel her trip. She asked the court for "one final assurance" that she'd be allowed to travel regardless of the status of the case.

The concerned note came from the same juror who announced before deliberations began that she had googled the phrase "jury nullification" after seeing graffitied instructions to do so in a courthouse bathroom. The note prompted one defense lawyer to move for the juror to be replaced with an alternate, which would force the jury to begin deliberations from scratch. The judge disagreed.

Either side could credibly fear that the situation might prejudice the eventual outcome of the currently-deadlocked panel. If the time-pressured juror is currently a holdout — for either a conviction or an acquittal — then her perception that she needs the case to wrap up fast could give her reason to cave to the other jurors even if she still disagrees with them.

No jury poll has been conducted to date, sources said, so it is impossible to know either the nature or the size of the disagreements that have deadlocked the jury since Tuesday afternoon.

June 6th - Cop Who Wore Pro-Police Brutality T-Shirt at J20 Trial Was Previously Accused of Police Brutality

by Sam Adler-Bell (*The Intercept*)

When officer William Chatman, of Washington's Metropolitan Police Department, walked into the atrium of the D.C. Superior Court on May 21, heads turned. A few minutes earlier, he had testified in the trial of four people accused of rioting in downtown Washington during Donald Trump's inauguration; it was the

second trial group to face a jury. In accordance with Metro Police rules, Chatman had pulled another “cover shirt” over his uniform after concluding his testimony.

Chatman is a big man, thickly built and broad-shouldered, with a slight paunch and shaved head. What caught the attention of those assembled in the courthouse, however, was not his imposing size, but the text on the back of his off-white T-shirt. Under an image of a nightstick enlaced with a pair of handcuffs, it read, in capital letters, “Police brutality ... or doing what their parents should have?”

“I was absolutely horrified,” said Andy Switzer, a former defendant from Philadelphia whose charges were dismissed in January, “that a police witness would have the gall to wear that shirt in a courthouse, immediately after offering testimony about brutal police behavior. It’s startling.”

The shirt, which was photographed by a defense attorney, may violate D.C. police rules that prohibit officers from wearing clothing that contains language “of a social, economic or political nature that might be considered as an advocacy statement, or which might create controversy.” A D.C. officer was disciplined in October 2017 for visiting the same courthouse wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with the name of his police unit, the Grim Reaper, and a pre-Christian cross favored by white supremacists.

Asked about Chatman’s choice of attire, D.C. police spokesperson Hugh Carew told The Intercept, “We are aware of the photograph and our Internal Affairs Bureau is investigating.”

Before donning his infamous T-shirt, Chatman had offered key testimony for the J20 prosecution. Chatman narrated the events of January 20, 2017, as Assistant U.S. Attorney Jennifer Kerkhoff played police body camera footage for the jury — images of black-clad protesters wreaking havoc along 13th Street. A member of the Civil Disturbance Unit, Chatman rode behind the marchers on a Harley-Davidson 883 motorcycle during the protest. Throughout his testimony, he referred to the defendants as “rioters,” even after Judge Kimberley Knowles sustained a defense objection to that term. “These are experienced rioters,” he said at one point, after the judge’s ruling.

It “seemed as if there were people in charge” of the group, Chatman testified. They were issuing “commands” to fellow marchers: “‘Let’s go, break that, grab that, get this’ — things of that nature,” Chatman explained. His testimony is central to the prosecution’s argument that J20 protesters were a well-organized and purposeful group, consistent with the legal definitions of “riot” and “conspiracy” — a novel approach used by the government to indict hundreds of people on felony charges for the alleged criminal acts of a select few.

In a week of high courtroom drama, Chatman’s T-shirt may have seemed like a sideshow. The government’s case against the J20 defendants continues to unravel. The first tranche of J20 defendants was found innocent by a jury, and shortly thereafter, charges against 129 other protesters were dropped. Last week, a judge sanctioned prosecutors for failing to turn over some 69 recordings of potentially exculpatory evidence to the defense, a violation of pretrial discovery rules. Judge Robert Morin prohibited prosecutors from using those videos as evidence in two upcoming trials and forbade the government from pursuing “conspiracy” charges against defendants in those trial groups. In response, prosecutors dropped all charges against an additional 10 defendants.

Yet the prosecutions have continued: Forty-six people still face charges. Last Thursday, a jury began deliberating in the case against defendants Anthony Felice, Seth Cadman, Casey Webber, and Michael Basillas; this week, jurors acquitted Webber on all charges and Cadman on all but “engaging in a riot,” on which the jury was deadlocked, prompting Knowles to declare a mistrial for that charge. The jury has yet to

reach a verdict for the others. The government's case in this trial, too, relied on video evidence — recorded by the far-right Project Veritas media group — that Morin deemed inadmissible in the upcoming trials.

Amid this confusion and prosecutorial malfeasance, the T-shirt story epitomized another budding theme of the J20 case: The government's reliance on police witnesses with apparent proclivities toward extreme politics — and, in Chatman's case, a past brush with accusations of police brutality.

"These cases were always about right-wing police and prosecutors following Trump's lead to go after left-wing protesters using a broad theory of liability," said Mark Goldstone, an attorney for multiple J20 defendants. "So it's no surprise that a police witness would express such political hostility."

"What is surprising," Goldstone added, "is the stupidity of an officer showing up in court wearing that shirt."

Defendants and their supporters have repeatedly accused D.C. police of excessive force during the inauguration protest. A report issued by D.C.'s Office of Police Complaints, on February 27, 2017, details a litany of violent acts committed by police on January 20, 2017, including "indiscriminately" deploying stinger grenades, pepper-spraying crowds without warning, and manhandling protesters engaged in civil disobedience. In response to the initial report, the D.C. City Council appropriated \$150,000 to conduct an independent investigation of police conduct on January 20.

Chatman featured in some of the violent incidents that day. During cross examination on May 21, Chatman admitted to driving his motorcycle into a protester but denied that it was intentional. "He turned to block my path and we met," Chatman said.

"They were nudging people with their motorcycles to push us forward. Treating us like animals," said Jennifer Armento, a defendant who was acquitted in the first trial. "It was horrifying." Armento felt she couldn't stop running, even as she began to suffer an asthma attack brought on by exhaustion, tear gas, and engine fumes.

Chatman's decision to wear a T-shirt endorsing police brutality is especially brazen given his own history. Between 2008 and 2016, Chatman was involved in litigation over allegations that he and another officer assaulted a Maryland family — including two minors — during a Caribbean Carnival parade.

On June 28, 2008, Rosena Rudder, her husband Roger, and their 5-year-old daughter were walking alongside the Carnival parade on Georgia Avenue in Washington, D.C. The Rudders were accompanied by Roger's sister, Noverlene Goss, and her own 15-year-old daughter.

The yearly parade is a joyous occasion for the Rudders, who are Trinidadian. According to court documents, their group momentarily left the sidewalk to go hug some costumed family members. As they wove their way back to the side of the road, Rosena told *The Intercept* in a phone interview last week, they came across Chatman, in his police uniform — sans T-shirt — who told them sternly to get back on the sidewalk.

"I said, 'Okay, we're moving.' But the streets are literally packed. You can't just beeline for the sidewalk," Rosena said, "And I had my little girl to keep track of."

A few moments later, Rosena said, Chatman stepped in the group's path again and said, "Get to the sidewalk" — this time more aggressively. "As we tried to move around him, he got in my face. I could literally feel his breath. I stepped back and said, 'Don't touch me; we're going.'"

This, Rosena recalled, set Chatman off; he shoved her and she fell to the ground.

“It was out of nowhere,” Rosena said. “My first thought was, ‘Where is my daughter?’ My second thought was, ‘We’re going to lose the baby.’” Chatman had no way of knowing that Rosena was two months pregnant at the time — she was not showing and herself had not yet learned that she was carrying triplets. (Her three sons were born in good health seven months later.)

Roger Rudder told The Intercept he saw Chatman pull his hand back, as if to hit Rosena on the ground. “All my life, I’ve never felt powerless. But in that moment, I did,” he said. “It felt like there was nothing I could do right. Nothing I could have done to prevent it from escalating. That was his job.” The blow was never delivered.

Chatman isn’t the only police witness to find himself in hot water since the beginning of the J20 trials. Officer Michael Howden, who testified in the first trial, was overheard on body camera footage saying, “I’m fairly accustomed to that sort of rioting ... herding people through Barry Farm when they’re rioting, when they’re out of control.” Barry Farm is a predominately black, heavily policed public housing development in the Anacostia area of Washington.

The lead investigator in the J20 case, Detective Gregg Pemberton, also betrayed political bias against Black Lives Matter and left-wing protesters. “You know what I haven’t heard in a while?” one of Pemberton’s tweets from April 2017 reads, “‘Police shootings of unarmed black youth.’ Did they run out of funding for their false narrative?”

Pemberton also liked a tweet by controversial Wisconsin Sheriff David A. Clarke which read, “America is upside down. Cops under attack threatens the rule of law. That is the aim of the leftist goons. Push back before it is too late.” Pemberton testified in December that a “cottage industry of people who just want to make money ... gum up the works” for “genuine activists.”

Commander Keith DeVille, who oversaw the police response to the J20 protest, admitted on cross-examination to joking that Raoul Wallenberg — a World War II-era Swedish diplomat credited with saving thousands of Jews’ lives, who has a street named after him in Washington — was “the one that got away,” apparently mistaking the diplomat for a Holocaust survivor. DeVille denied that he was homophobic despite warning fellow officers to watch what they said around a new colleague who was gay. DeVille was also disciplined by the department for complaining about having to call a transgender co-worker by her preferred name.

These kinds of right-wing sympathies are not uncommon among police officers, says Alex S. Vitale, a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College. “Too many police in the U.S. remain committed to a ‘thin blue line’ view of the world, in which they see themselves as the only social force capable of holding civilization together.”

“This worldview,” Vitale said, “justifies the use of violence to control suspect populations, because that is the only thing ‘those people’ will understand.”

After the incident with Chatman in 2008, the Rudders pursued several legal avenues.

“I know that if any other dude had put his hands on my wife, it wouldn’t have been a question,” Roger Rudder said. “But I actually had to second guess stepping in front of my wife.” For a split second, Roger

imagined the consequences, for himself and his family, if Chatman were to respond “the way police sometimes do in this country” to a perceived threat.

According to the Rudders, when Roger stepped between Chatman and his family, all hell broke loose. Police surrounded them, pulling them apart. Chatman tackled Roger. Rosena said another officer pushed her daughter to the ground and handcuffed her 15-year-old niece. Their court complaint narrates the same sequence of events.

In bystander video recorded just after the incident that was provided to The Intercept, at least six cops can be seen surrounding Rosena and her sister-in-law. Roger is pressed face down on the ground, two cops on top of him. Moments later, he is perfectly still, handcuffed on the pavement in a white shirt and black sweats. In the foreground, their 5-year-old daughter, wearing a pink tank top and blue-jean shorts, stretches to see what is happening to her mother.

“At some point, they also hit my sister-in-law and she fell,” Rosena said. “I remember we were able to look into each others’ eyes as we lay on the ground. I just thought, ‘What is happening?’”

According to Rosena, officers eventually pulled her up and handcuffed her. Before she was put in a patrol car, Rosena remembers a female officer threatened her: “I am going to put [your daughter] so far in the system you’ll never find her.”

“Powerless,” Roger again told The Intercept. “If I had to use one word, that would be it.”

The Rudders were arrested and eventually charged with misdemeanor assault on a police officer. They pled no contest and had to participate in a diversion program for first-time offenders. A few months later, the Rudders decided to file suit against Chatman and Shannon Williams, the female officer who allegedly threatened to put the Rudders’ daughter in “the system.”

The suit didn’t get far, dismissed in 2010 on primarily procedural grounds; their lawyer had failed to file their tort claims within the statute of limitations and unnecessarily conceded their constitutional complaints. In 2012, the Rudders appealed and won the right to refile their claim. In 2016, the parties finally agreed to a settlement of a few thousand dollars. Neither the department, nor Chatman or Williams, admitted any wrongdoing, having denied in earlier court filings that the violent encounter constituted assault and battery, excessive force, or false arrest. The Metro Police declined to comment on allegations against the officers.

Neither of the Rudders feels that justice was served.

“When this happened, we really had it in our hearts that we wanted to make an impact,” Roger Rudder said. “I’m sure everyone who has police brutality occur to them or their loved ones feels the same way. It’s just unfortunate that the avenues to make an impact are so few.”

“By the end of it, we were exhausted,” Rosena Rudder added. “It’s frustrating. Not only because no one was held accountable, but to hear that he” — Chatman — “is still out there doing the same thing. It’s just so sad.”

“By wearing that shirt, he’s saying he’s untouchable,” Roger told The Intercept. “The system allows him to feel that way. That’s a dangerous mindset.”

A week after Chatman testified for the prosecution in the J20 case, defense attorneys entered photos of him wearing his police brutality shirt into evidence and called him to the stand, this time as a defense witness.

On cross examination, Kerkhoff, the federal prosecutor, sought to downplay the seriousness of the message on Chatman's shirt.

"Is that a tongue-in-cheek comment on the perception that officers are constantly engaged in police brutality?" Kerkhoff asked.

"Yeah, tongue-in-cheek, meaning that it's comedy," Chatman replied.

In follow-up questioning, defense attorney Rich Gallena struck an incredulous tone. "So, the shirt is a joke?" he asked.

"It is typically a joke," said Chatman.

"So, you think police brutality is a joke?"

"Not at all," said Chatman.

June 8th - IWW Call for June 25th Actions in Solidarity with J20 Defendants

For over a year, the US has been pressing felony charges—including "riot," "inciting a riot," and "conspiracy to riot"—against protesters who were arrested at the inauguration of Donald Trump. After a revelation that they had been withholding evidence from the defense, federal prosecutors dropped all charges against 10 defendants last week, including against members of our union. Today, the second J20 trial ended in a mistrial for three defendants and full acquittal for a fourth.

The state is reeling from this defeat, and lashing out like a wounded animal as it retreats. 44 defendants are still awaiting trial. The hour is late; the time to act in their defense is now. We are calling for an international day of action in solidarity with the J20 defendants on Monday, June 25th.

From the beginning, the J20 case has represented an escalation of the state's attempts to criminalize revolutionary politics. The Riot Act is an archaic law with a racist history, once used to repress and attack the black liberation movement in the US, which has not been used in Washington, DC since the Matthews case of 1968. Its application against protesters today signals the beginning of a wave of state repression comparable to the Red Scares of the 1920's and 1950's. Despite not even being present on Inauguration Day, an IWW member had his door kicked in and his house raided by police, before being slapped with the same charges as other protesters. We live in an era when fascists and white supremacists can attack us in the streets without legal consequence, but antifascists face over 60 years in prison for a demonstration.

If you live in the US, organize a demonstration outside your local DOJ building. If you live in another country, organize a picket of a US embassy. Call a 1-day solidarity strike at your workplace. Do whatever you can to raise the profile of our courageous comrades who are facing down the forces of reaction. The more scandal an action produces, the better.

June 13th - Second J20 Trial Ends with No Convictions, Prosecutor Hiding Evidence

by Jude Ortiz (*National Lawyers Guild*)

Much has happened in the J20 (inauguration conspiracy) case since the NLG wrote about the first J20 trial in November 2017. Let's start from the latest developments and work our way backwards: the second trial ended with either acquittals or mistrials on the charges for each of the defendants, a presiding judge threw out the conspiracy charge as a sanction for the prosecutor hiding evidence, the prosecutor dismissed all charges against two trial groups in an apparent attempt to avoid sanctions, and the prosecutor got caught hiding 69 recordings from the defense. This was all in the course of about three weeks—a period that came

months after the prosecution entirely lost the first trial last year and subsequently dropped charges against more than 100 defendants.

If your head is already spinning because of this list, that's because an incredible amount of significant legal developments have been crammed into these cases. For in-depth information about the cases and ways to be in solidarity with the remaining defendants, follow Defend J20 Resistance and stay up-to-date on their blog.

In this most recent trial (the M14, for May 14, group), four defendants went into the trial facing a slew of felony and misdemeanor charges adding up to more than 60 years in prison. While not all defendants faced the exact same charges, the misdemeanors included conspiracy to riot, engaging in a riot, assault on an officer, and resisting arrest; the felonies included inciting a riot and five counts of property destruction. The prosecution went hard against these defendants, particularly since they were alleging that three of the four of them had broken windows. Despite these efforts, the jury fully acquitted one defendant, acquitted on all charges for one defendant except for being deadlocked on misdemeanor engaging in a riot, acquitted one defendant of the assault on an officer charge and deadlocked on the rest, and deadlocked on all charges for the remaining defendant. The judge declared mistrials on all the deadlocked charges, so the prosecution has until July 11th to decide if they want to re-file the charges. Or they could cut their losses after their second defeat at trial and drop these politically motivated charges.

Let's look at how all this came about.

As with the first trial last year (the N15, for November 15, group), the prosecution was relying heavily on the conspiracy count, Pinkerton liability, and the aiding and abetting elements of the property destruction counts to argue to the jury that all the defendants were guilty of everything. The prosecution was further relying on the idea that defendants staying with the anticapitalist/antifascist march after windows started getting broken, and then getting mass arrested by the DC police, proved that all the defendants incited the so-called riot.

The N15 trial ended in full acquittals for each of the six defendants. In other words, the jury did not buy the government's theory that attendance at a protest means that people are engaged in a conspiracy or are legally culpable for any criminalized acts that allegedly occur at that protest. This was a great victory for those defendants and their co-defendants with trials scheduled throughout 2018, as well as a strong blow to the prosecution's draconian case. Yet many questions (and great risk) remained for the defendants still facing charges as 2018 began. Would future juries think the same? If so, would they apply that logic to people the state was alleging broke windows? More than 200 people had been arrested on inauguration day and ultimately slapped with blanket charges, facing more than 60 years in prison. In January, the prosecutor suddenly dismissed without prejudice charges against 129 of the remaining 188 defendants, leaving 59 facing the full brunt of the state's repressive attack and the full weight of the uncertainties of going to trial.

The M14 trial group became the first trial of 2018 after another series of strange legal wranglings caused the March and April trial groups to be rescheduled. Both this trial and the N15 trial relied heavily on a video of a Disrupt J20 planning meeting prior to the inauguration—a video surreptitiously recorded by one of the several Project Veritas operatives who had infiltrated multiple protest planning meetings. Project Veritas is a far-right “investigative” organization that has become infamous for its unscrupulous attempts at conducting sting operations against groups and individuals they disagree with.

Over defense objections, the video was admitted into evidence at both trials and authenticated by an undercover DC cop. This undercover testified that the meeting included breakout groups for many social justice issues and that he did not report any plans of violence to his superior after infiltrating the meeting.

Nonetheless, the prosecution stressed that this video established a criminal conspiracy that every defendant joined when they attended the march. (This narrative immediately shifted when the prosecution's evidentiary violations surrounding the Project Veritas videos came to light in pretrial hearings for other trial blocks; at that point, the prosecution pivoted to claims that a conspiracy was actually formed on the streets of DC during the march itself.)

The prosecution also stressed, at different times and to various extents, that they had handed over to the defense the entirety of this video and that it was the only one obtained from Project Veritas. While the M14 trial was happening—and after the jury in that trial had watched this video—pre-trial motions filed by defendants in upcoming trials led to the prosecution admitting that they had edited out a portion of the video that included the operative saying that the protest planners didn't know about the “upper echelon” stuff, with the clear implication that this person was talking about illegal activities.

But that's not all: they eventually had to admit that they only recently provided the defense with an additional 69 (yes, nearly 70!) Project Veritas recordings (66 videos and three audio recordings). They also could not provide the judge with a reason for why they had not included these videos with the mountain of discovery that had been shared with the defense over more than a year of pre-trial proceedings.

Needless to say, the court did not look kindly on the prosecution hiding evidence from the defense and misleading the court. As the extent of the prosecution's malfeasance was becoming clear, they suddenly filed to dismiss without prejudice charges against all the defendants in the June 4th trial—some of whom were alleged planners of the protest, and thus of the alleged conspiracy. They also dropped the felony charges against the May 29th trial block, leaving them facing a few misdemeanors each; these misdemeanors were dropped over the weekend prior to their trial date as well.

These sudden dismissals without prejudice showed the extent to which the state's case was crumbling. Yet this went even further when the judge dismissed with prejudice the conspiracy charges and ruled that the prosecution would no longer be able to rely on Pinkerton liability in its prosecution. The judge said that this sanction applied to all the defendants, but the dockets of the remaining defendants have not yet reflected this through dropped conspiracy charges. Some defendants have filed motions to have the sanctions applied to them as well. Pre-trial hearings start up again later this month, so there will likely be many more significant developments in the near future.

All these revelations and sanctions were happening on the third floor of the courthouse while the M14 trial kept going on the second floor. The jury even went into deliberations with the known Project Veritas video in evidence—even though they were the only ones at that point who did not know that this video was the keystone in the prosecution's evidence-hiding scandal. An obvious question that arose was whether those four defendants were getting a fair trial with that video still in evidence. Sensibly, the defense petitioned for mistrials. But the judge held off on ruling on whether there were mistrials or not until after the jury came back with its verdicts.

Even the process of learning the verdicts was bizarre in the M14 trial. The jury notified the judge several times that they were deadlocked on the charges and not likely to reach consensus. Interspersed with these jury notes was one juror telling the judge she had seen a sticker in a bathroom in the courthouse that said “google jury nullification.” She reported that she then did exactly that, and then went on to discuss it with the other jurors. Later, another juror told the judge that he had seen on his Twitter feed commentary about the trial that reinforced his doubts about the prosecution's credibility and competence, although he remained able to be impartial as a juror.

After each note, the judge told the jury to keep deliberating. So the jury kept deliberating, and kept deliberating. They came back fairly quickly with full acquittals for one of the defendants, who was basically just alleged to have been present that day. This victory was encouraging and a relief for defendants and supporters alike, but left the remaining three defendants hanging. Over the next few days, the jury came back to say they were acquitting one defendant of all charges except for a misdemeanor they were deadlocked on. Mistrial on the deadlocked charge. The next morning, the jury came back with an acquittal on one charge for one of the three remaining defendants, and the note that they were deadlocked on the remaining charges for that defendant. The judge quickly declared a mistrial on the deadlocked charges. The next morning, the jury came back to say they were acquitting one defendant of all charges except for a misdemeanor they were deadlocked on. Mistrial on all the deadlocked charges. Several hours later, the jury said they were also deadlocked on all the charges for the final defendant. Mistrial on all charges!

These mixed victories for the defendants are more strong blows against the prosecution, but the fight is far from over. The prosecution has until July 11th to refile charges. In the meantime, the next trial group is scheduled to go to trial on June 25th. More trials are scheduled for July through October, so this saga is ongoing. The June 25th trial will be the first one to include testimony from the FBI agent who the prosecution was finally able to get admitted as an expert witness about the black bloc tactic—after a vague attempt to introduce an expert witness last year and a failed attempt to get a witness who would only testify under a pseudonym earlier this year. Now is the time to gear up for the next round of support and solidarity for the J20 defendants, such as participating in the day of solidarity called for on June 25th!

8 Jun - Eric King Update and Poem from a time in the S.H.U

Last week, Eric was thrown into the hole and his cell was trashed.

MORE:

Among other things, a bunch of letters went missing and were destroyed. He is now out of the hole and wants to let folks know that if you wrote him in the weeks leading to the 1st of June he lost your letter and that you should reach back out if you would like.

Below is a poem written while EK was at CCA Leavenworth, now three years ago.

I am pacing in my cell
My skin is still on fire from the pepper spray
that I was bathed in 8 days ago
No clean clothes have been provided, no shower either
I am scared because I don't understand the process
or the noises, or the smells
Don't understand why they aren't giving me a shower
or a fucking towel, or fucking toothpaste
My jaw still hurts, my eyes won't stop watering
It hurts to swallow anything
I am pacing my cell letting ever pig know
that if they open this door I am attacking
If they have the gall, I will provide everything else
8 days ago I charged into a group of COs
fist swinging, refusing to let them disrespect my cell mate
I didn't make it far, multiple cans emptied onto my face
Punched, kneed, slammed down
A knee on the back of my throat, a CO grabs my hair

and lifts up my face, while another pulls my hair back
and eyes open
to ensure I get the full affect
This is my 2nd time in seg here...this time will last 10 months
I will be stuck in a cell with no lights
Served spoon sized portions of food, be denied medical care
I will meet some of my best friends and I will fall in love
My spirit will enlarge and my rage at the system will deepen
I received my property a full 3 weeks later
My first shower came 10days after the spraying
skin still has burn spots
I am pacing my cell, waiting.

10 Jun - MOVE: 40 Years Later

*August 8th, 2018 will mark forty years of the Move 9 having been unjustly imprisoned for a crime they did not commit. **Since the time of the following, we've received amazing news—Debbie Africa was released June 16th!** As we have more details, we will relay them.*

MORE:

From the day they were arrested on August 8th, 1978, during their trial, the day after they were each sentenced to 30-100 years, during the ten years of the parole process, and the 40 years of being unjustly imprisoned, MOVE has always maintained their innocence and their innocence has always shown during this whole forty year period. The reason that they have remained in prison all these years is the same reason why they went to prison in the first place—because they are committed MOVE members.

On March 13th, 1998 Merle Africa died in Pennsylvania prisons under mysterious circumstances after being unjustly jailed for twenty years. On January 10th, 2015 Phil Africa died under mysterious circumstances in Pennsylvania prisons after spending 30 plus years unjustly jailed. Rather than grant parole, or release MOVE, this system and its officials will rather see MOVE die in prison. While Pennsylvania makes strides in repairing the issue of mass incarceration, one of the biggest taints in Pennsylvania's history of mass incarceration and injustice has not been repaired and that is the issue of the MOVE 9 as it relates to their release from imprisonment.

The Parole Board has pushed the issue of remorse being shown, but the question that we want to ask is has the Parole Board shown any remorse to the children and grandchildren of the MOVE 9? The fact that several of the MOVE 9 have grandchildren, some even great grandchildren, that they have only been with on a prison visit is heart wrenching. Where is the remorse from the Parole Board over the fact that children were torn from their parents arms forty years ago and forced to have a relationship with their parents only through phone calls, letters, and occasional visits which may have lasted only three hours.

On August 5th, 2018 we are asking people to join us for an Afternoon of Resistance For the MOVE 9. First, at 10:00am join us for Running Down The Walls—a 5k run organized for the MOVE 9 by our brothers and sisters from the Philadelphia Anarchist Black Cross. That will take place at Fairmount Park. Then at 3:00pm join us at the Mastery Shoemaker High School, located 5301 Media Street for an afternoon panel on MOVE that will feature Ramona Africa, Pam Africa, Professor Walter Palmer, Karen Falcon, and others.

Then Later that evening at the same venue we will be holding our Framed In America concert. Acts are still being confirmed and so far we have The Raw Life Crew, Dell P, Seraiah Nicole and Eli Capella, Jasiri X,

and a surprise Headliner. We look forward to seeing everyone on August 5th. We are still encouraging people to sign our petition aimed at the United States Justice Department at causes.com/campaigns/92454-free-the-move-9

11 Jun - Statements For June 11th

June 11th, the international day of solidarity with long term earth & animal liberation and anarchist prisoners, just passed. We've compiled some statements written by prisons.

MORE:

Marius Mason

Thank you for coming together again to support all the long-term anarchist prisoners. Your support and encouragement are the life breath for anyone trying to keep heart and soul together while spending so many years away from the inspiration and motivation that our committed communities of resistance provide. It seems like the longer I am away, the more those memories seem necessary to me, feeding my spirit with the knowledge that a new world is possible.

I want to wish my comrades in the Earth First!, IWW, animal rights and native sovereignty movements many victories, as well as to extend my love and hope to the good friends struggling for queer and trans rights. My blood pumps still because you live and fight. I want to send a wild wolf howl to all the anarchist buddies and friends yet to be met who have sent me their stories, their love and their vision describing a world without hierarchy. I see through your eyes and dream with you.

My life is small here, though still bigger than it was in my old constricted Unit. I have met many, many wonderful people and so many new trans friends. Yet I have such limited capacity and I have been feeling my age and some age-related health problems...but I continue to advocate for my request to complete my medical transition. I am discouraged that the TEC (which decides cases like mine for the BOP) has NOT met yet, though I had been told by staff here that my case would be heard this past week. I will keep our community informed as to how that process continues to unfold. It is a long arc towards justice, but with your help and support. Surely, all trans prisoners asking for medical relief will be vindicated.

I feel like it is so hard now to contribute meaningfully to creating the world that we dream of so passionately. I find that it is difficult to follow the news of our campaigns in the free world to defend the water, to protect our animal brothers and sisters, to demand a society that is not built on hate and exclusion but rather built on love and inclusion...But I am committed to supporting my fellow prisoners here, and try to do that work with integrity, offering comfort and support in both their day to day hurts and troubles and in their/our long-term goals for dignity and ultimately – freedom. I am so much stronger because I know that you are with us, helping us to persist until that day of freedom comes. You have my ever-lasting gratitude for carrying me through these long seasons of waiting.

I am forever in your debt. Stay strong, do right, be brave. I am so proud to call you my family.

Jeremy Hammond

A raised fist to all those behind bars who maintain their dignity in the face of a system that dehumanizes and exploits us! Our steadfast commitment to our collective vision of a free society is more resilient than any prison they've ever built; even after all their iron bars and concrete walls crumble to dust, we will remain standing strong together.

A raised fist to all those in the world writing letters, sending books, marching in the streets or putting in all-nighters! Your words and actions have a ripple effect that reaches even those of us the system has

attempted to bury. You remind us that we are all part of something bigger than any of us individually: that when one of us falls, others will pick up where you left off, and the struggle continues.

Reflecting on this year's theme of sustainability and burnout, I consider how we can stay positively engaged despite the stresses and hardships of an oppressive society. Whether one is imprisoned, warehoused like cattle in the most minimal conditions allowed by law, or whether one lives in the so-called "free world" competing for survival in their financial rat race, we are all struggling under an authoritarian power structure and an economic system we had no role in creating and which offers us no future. I can understand how, in the face of a seemingly overwhelming military force, headed by the most blatantly corrupt corporate fascist to date, the odds may seem against us, and as a result, some can become jaded or burnt out.

Not a day goes by that I don't say to myself that prison is fucking terrible and no one should have to live like this. Not for one second, however, do I regret my actions that have brought me here. Fully aware of the potential consequences of my illegal activities, I decided that it was better to risk everything to change an unjust society than to become comfortable within its cage. We can't foresee every card that life deals, every betrayal or unfortunate circumstance; I've made mistakes and tactical blunders, and have taken some losses along the way, but I still believe in the power of direct action and hacktivism. The key to overcoming these challenges is staying focused and active, and constantly evolving oneself to confront new circumstances while staying true to our principles.

Possibly the greatest injustice as an imprisoned anarchist is the inability to participate in the movements that we were a part of. Often we would be completely unaware of how history is unfolding, if it weren't for the diligent efforts of the comrades out there who have kept us connected to our communities and informed of current news and analysis. Your work in this regard is much appreciated; knowing that people have our backs, gives us continued strength and inspiration. It brings a smile to my face every time I read a reportback or critical analysis, knowing that it is still going down out there. And as I complete the final stretch of my bid, I am preparing myself physically and mentally for my release, and look forward to joining you all.

See you in the streets!

Happy AmericanHorse

Happy June 11th to those in the struggle! This is Happy here and I am so grateful to be free from Morton KKKounty's corruptive imperialistic grasp! I would like to take this time to not only remember our friends/relatives/homies/comrades but to also take collective action today against the prison industrial complex by bailing those in need out. That is what I choose to do today with the bail that was given to me and returned upon my release, NOT IN CHARITY BUT SOLIDARITY. As an indigenous prison abolitionist I feel all prisoners are political due to the severe imposition of colonial statehood. So do what you can today with a firm stance against those who keep our relatives in the system! Much love to those who can't stand with us on the outside!

I was incarcerated by Morton KKKounty back in January and falsely charged with trumped up felonies due to my continued involvement organizing in the Standing Rock territory. Morton KKKounty has dropped all felony charges due to "lack of evidence" as well the supposed "victims" who are my relative and friend who refused to testify against me in general, but especially not in a courtroom ruled by fascist white supremacists; these fascist white supremacists are inherently vindictive, and also continuously harass and harm Water Protectors still going to court for their support in the NO DAPL struggle, and those who generally continue to exist in their ancestral homelands.

In Morton KKKounty Jail most of my fellow inmates were indigenous or people of color who were caught up in the cross-fire-struggle, or were just trying to get by in a colonial United Snakes of amerikka who stayed in the system due to the vilification by the mainstream media, which promotes the idea to the public that those who go to jail are automatically guilty, which defeats the States redirect of “innocent until proven guilty” and insinuates “guilty until proven innocent”. This then becomes an almost automatic guilty verdict in the realities of colonial kkkourt. Even the pretrial detention with the bail bond system that exploits the poor who have little to no money and cannot afford bail, then lose custody of kids or jobs and houses. The very things the court promotes as qualities or possessions of a good assimilated ‘citizen,’ and gains favor to the eye of the public ultimately becomes the things you lose before going to trial.

Most under privileged people are given public pretenders who are overburdened with cases, and they don’t have the capacity to care, so the ‘client’ just becomes a paycheck, and they feel forced to take plea deals that do not work or support the individual, and this alienates them from their families and ‘society’ by further incarcerating them in their own homes or tracking them with gps ankle monitors, increasing the odds of probation/parole violation. This type of ‘off location incarceration’ creates a stigma that makes it harder to survive in this colonial world, i.e. get a job etc. Many who are forced to take pleas due to pretrial detention are reminded of the treaties we as indigenous people were forced to take by ‘touching the pen’ in surrendering or face death.

Morton kkkounty and their mainstream media work together to vilify Water Protectors with tactics similar to COINTELPRO, which have been used against similar movements like AIM and the Black Panthers. These two forces working together against local activists and indigenous community is not unheard of and we must not believe the mainstream media or the redirect of the police on charges that are created as false narratives to detract support to our loved ones, and either cage or kill ‘activists’ they may not be able to easily cage or kill otherwise.

I hope today as we collectively put our minds together to take down these systems of oppression through conversation and the actual dismantling of the prisons to the bare minerals that comprise them, that we remember to love each other and continue to support all those oppressed by a colonial empire hell bent on hurting all those who resist domestic abuse, resource extraction, white supremacy, patriarchy and all things colonial.

11 Jun - Prison Abolitionists Rally for Human and Environmental Health at Pittsburgh Polluters’ Offices

On the heels of the 3rd Annual Fight Toxic Prisons Convergence, dozens of organizers, community members, and friends and family of currently- and formerly-incarcerated peoples marched through downtown Pittsburgh, making stops at the headquarters of EQT and ending at a power plant belonging to coal utility NRG Energy on the North Side.

MORE:

The demonstration concludes a weekend of lectures, workshops, and discussion about mass incarceration and its links to environmental health.

EQT Corporation, a major oil and gas company notorious for poisoning drinking water supplies across rural Appalachia, is one of the largest companies involved in fracking, with 793 active wells in Pennsylvania alone. They’re also one of the top ten worst polluters in the industry, according to a 2015 report published by the Natural Resources Defense Council. In 2012, EQT received several charges for water pollution and disturbance of waterways, and a \$1.1 million fine for poisoning drinking water supply sources through a shale pit leak at Rock Run in Tioga County, PA, and has received several other fines, violations, and complaints as well.

The march culminated in a rally at the NRG Energy Center calling attention to the health and human rights atrocities occurring at SCI Fayette, a state-run prison that currently houses 2,176 inmates. SCI Fayette was built in 2003, directly on top of a toxic coal ash dump that has been in operation for decades, receiving millions of tons of waste from coal processing companies, including NRG.

The inmate population of SCI Fayette, and the surrounding community of Labelle, PA, have reported alarmingly high rates of health issues linked to the ash that blows off the dumping site and into the surrounding air.

Richard Mosley, a member of Fayette Health Justice and Put People First PA and a former prisoner at Fayette, spoke to the crowd via telephone about his experiences there, including respiratory ailments and medical neglect. "I was admitted into the infirmary well over 10 times and at medical at least 40 times during my four years at SCI Fayette. My weight dropped down from 225lbs to 170lbs. I got so sick at one point that I kept a letter with me to send to my family in case I died."

Other speakers at the rally highlighted campaigns and organizations working alongside and on behalf of prisoners everywhere, including Shandre Delaney of Human Rights Coalition (HRC), a prisoner-led human rights organization based in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, PA. HRC was a local host of the Fight Toxic Prisons Convergence.

Speaking to the crowd, Ms. Delaney said "HRC believes that it is critically important that prisoners are treated with humanity in every aspect of their incarceration. A prison sentence should not become a death sentence because of the lack of healthcare or the access to legal remedy or complaint of their treatment."

HRC is involved in drafting legislation to end solitary confinement in Pennsylvania, as well as highlighting ongoing cases of abuse behind prison walls. They were also involved in co-producing a report on the toxic conditions at SCI Fayette with the Abolitionist Law Center, a legal advocacy nonprofit based in Pittsburgh.

More information about the Fight Toxic Prisons Convergence can be found at: FightToxicPrisons.org

12 Jun - RAM-NYC Bails A Captive Out Of ICE Custody

Report from ongoing organizing efforts by the Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement in New York and their Liberation Bail Fund, which received half of the money we raised at this year's Running Down the Walls.

MORE:

With humility and respect for the struggle against the US policy of ethnic cleansing, RAM-NYC is pleased to announce that this May our Liberation Fund has bailed a captive out of an ICE detention facility.

As this nation's racist war against people from Central and South America is at a fever pitch, Immigration and Customs Enforcement is at its greatest liberty to not only detain those who have crossed borders looking for reprieve from the devastation the US inflicted on their countries, but to also demand a ransom for their release in order to fight trumped up charges.

As we know, this is one example of the barbarism that the US government routinely inflicts on the most vulnerable: separating children from their families, shipping people off to detention facilities where they are sexually assaulted and forced into slave labor, and executing people crossing the border.

RAM-NYC stands with those who have risked everything to travel here and have become our neighbors, friends and comrades. As the US government's policies seek to dehumanize large swathes of people, we renew our commitment to creating a shared humanity, and fighting to destroy the conditions that wreak havoc on the world. The US government has made it clear that it is on a decisive, resolute path to totalitarianism and we will continue to stand with those resisting.

13 Jun - Native American water protector becomes first to be sentenced to time in federal prison for DAPL protests

Seven Native Americans face felony charges, while hundreds of others still face lesser charges for their role in the fight against the Dakota Access pipeline.

MORE:

by Alexandra Jacobo (*Nation of Change*)

Michael “Little Feather” Giron, a member of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, was sentenced to thirty-six months in federal prison this week. He is the first person to be sentenced to serious prison time for his role in the protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Little Feather has already spent fifteen months of his life incarcerated – time which will be credited to him as part of the sentencing – but still faces at least eleven months in prison. His legal team hopes that he will be released after eleven months to a halfway house.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney David Hagler, Little Feather was officially identified as one of the individuals that set fires that obstructed law enforcement during the last raids of the camp. In February, Little Feather took a non-cooperating plea deal rather than stand trial, and agreed to take responsibility for aiding a “civil disorder” in exchange for the prosecution agreeing to drop the charge of Use of Fire to Commit a Federal Felony.

The Water Protector Legal Collective explains that many of the defendants facing charges in relation to the events at Standing Rock take plea deals because a trial will mean facing a hostile jury pool. A defense-commissioned study last year by the National Jury Project found that a whopping 77 percent of potential jurors in Morton County and 85 percent in Burleigh County had already decided that the Standing Rock defendants were guilty. A motion for a change a venue for the defendants was denied.

You won’t see this story on the mainstream media. Although the big media outlets gave some coverage to the DAPL protests during the height of the movement, they have been notably silent since the last camps were raided fifteen months ago, despite the fact that seven Native Americans have been indicted for federal felony crimes and hundreds more have faced lesser charges.

Among the others that were charged, two, Red Fawn Fallis and Michael “Rattler” Markus have taken non-cooperating plea deals and await sentencing, and two others, Dion Ortiz and James “Angry Bird” White, are preparing for trial. The state of North Dakota has prosecuted 835 state criminal cases related to the DAPL protests, of which 325 have been dismissed or acquitted at trial and 235 are ongoing.

The felony charges against the seven Native Americans stem from the law enforcement raid on the water protectors camp on October 27, 2016.

The fight against the DAPL has been happening for over three years now. The pipeline, which cost nearly \$4 billion and transports oil across 1,200 miles, has already leaked several times. Despite the fact that the project was eventually greenlit, the fight of the water protectors and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has paved the way for protests against oil pipelines all over the country – and the world.

Meanwhile, the Standing Rock Sioux have filed a lawsuit against the Army Corps of Engineers for authorizing the construction of the pipeline, which they claim violates the Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

15 Jun - Help Needed for Oso Blanco!

Oso Blanco got an infection a couple weeks ago and needs YOUR help, as prison officials are ignoring his painful condition.

MORE:

Prison officials thus far will not provide medical assistance. Oso Blanco has gone through four tubes of over the counter medicine that has done anything. He believes it is a staph infection (or even MRSA). The last time his support crew heard from him he said it was now an OPEN HOLE and bleeding. And he still couldn't get medical attention. Also they will not give him a medical release form so supporters can discuss it with medical personnel.

Oso Blanco's small support team has been trying to help him by making calls and emails, but now they are very very worried about his health and are spreading the word further to help put pressure on them. If you don't like confrontation, then please email the addresses below or call regional. If you are cool getting into it with people at the prison then call there—they have been pretty rude to supporters, but they stay on the phone so let them have it! PHONE CALLS AND EMAILS DO MATTER. This has been proven time and time again to assist prisoners.

USP Victorville (where he is currently not receiving any help): 760.530.5000 (don't forgot this is Pacific time zone) or email VIM/ExecAssistant@bop.gov

Ms. Leen in medical is a major problem or ask to speak with the Assistant Warden of Programming. Oso Blanco has asked that supporters NOT speak with his counselor/unit manager.

We are also pressuring the regional office: WXRO/ExecAssistant@bop.gov or call 209.956.9700

Below is a sample email sent by a supporter.

Dear Ms. Mitchell,

I'm writing to you regarding my friend, Byron Chubbuck (#07909051), an inmate in your care at USP Victorville. It's come to my attention that he's had an aggressive and inflamed rash/infection for over a month and that prior to this he was cleaning up bird feces on work assignment at USP Victorville. In one area there is what appears to be a MRSA/staph infection that needs immediate attention.

As I'm sure you know, bird feces carries a variety of health hazards including fungal rashes, parasites, and allergic reactions. When cleaning, Mr. Chubbuck requested disinfectant and was told to get back to work. Once a rash is found, it needs to be properly diagnosed and treated or complications can arise.

Ms. Wolverton and the medical department at USP Victorville have repeatedly prescribed over-the-counter anti-fungal creams that have proven ineffective in treating the rash. It's not clear if any process of diagnosis has taken place. USP Victorville has also failed to provide HIPAA waivers for Mr. Chubbuck to sign to keep family and friends informed and has not responded adequately to our concerns.

As you know, FCC Victorville came under Congressional investigation in September 2017 because of inadequate budget and staffing and that medical was one of the areas understaffed and underfunded. This is particularly concerning since ICE is about to transfer 1600 immigrants to the FCC. Are thousands of people going to be exposed to bird feces, rash, infection and general medical neglect?

I trust that you will do everything to correct the situation at USP Victorville and ensure that Byron Chubbuck and others receive appropriate medical care. Thank you for the action you will take.

21 Jun - Metropolitan Anarchist Coordinating Council General Assembly

WHAT: General Assembly

WHEN: 7:00 pm, Thursday, June 21st

WHERE: Verso Books—20 Jay Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201

COST: FREE

MORE:

MACC assemblies are open to all anarchists, antifascists, anti-authoritarians and those interested in anarchist ideas and organizing so please invite your friends and share widely!

If you haven't attended before, these assemblies are an opportunity to get plugged in with MACC, its various committees and working groups, and other NYC based anarchist projects.

There is an orientation before the assembly starting at 6:30 PM for those interested in familiarizing themselves with MACC, the history, process and politics that underskirt general assemblies, and anarchist ideas.

As with all assemblies, we encourage everyone to come with ideas about what they would like to see for future campaigns or actions and what direction they'd like MACC to take in terms of building a more powerful, militant anarchist movement.

24 Jun - Anarchists Care About Books: Emergent Strategy

WHAT: Book club

WHEN: 4:00-6:00pm, Sunday, June 24th

WHERE: Bluestockings Bookstore—172 Allen Street, New York, New York 10002

COST: FREE!

MORE:

Come to discuss Emergent Strategy by Adrienne Maree Brown. Hosted by MACC.