



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for September 3rd

19 Aug - 'Little Guantánamo' Gets Bigger

Two secretive prison units that used to almost exclusively house people said to be connected to terrorism have expanded by nearly 80 percent in 15 years, and a new unit is on the way. Formerly incarcerated people say they have been used to punish dissent.

MORE:

by Nausheen Husain, Aly Panjwani, and Haley Moreland (*The Nation*)

Months after being incarcerated for his role in one of the biggest American whistleblower cases in recent history, Daniel Hale suddenly went silent. Hale's family and friends, who had been in regular contact with him after his 2021 trial, didn't hear from him for several days. The judge in his trial had recommended that he go through a mental health treatment program in North Carolina, and be placed somewhere near his support network in Virginia, according to sentencing documents from his case. His friends and attorneys were baffled at his disappearance until another incarcerated person found a way to tell them he'd been transferred.

Then Hale's friend, Noor, received a call from a federal prison in Marion, Illinois.

"The first thing he says to me," she recalled, "is, 'Don't say anything, don't say anything. Just listen.'"

Hale told Noor, who asked to be identified by her first name only, that he had been transferred to a Communication Management Unit (CMU) in Marion. He gave her the basics: At the CMU, their calls would be live-recorded and all his communications would be closely monitored; she couldn't put him on speaker phone because the call would be cut; he'd be able to speak to her that day for only 15 minutes, and he needed all their friends' phone numbers so that he could try to get them approved as contacts; he wasn't allowed to give her messages for other people.

Noor had spoken to Hale a number of times after he was sentenced to almost four years in prison for leaking classified documents about the US drone program and its civilian casualties. But most of those calls had taken place while Hale was in county jail, awaiting a prison placement. Now that he was in the federal prison system, it was clear that everything would be different.

After the call, Noor started researching CMUs. She quickly learned that the units, sometimes called "Little Guantánamo" or "Guantánamo North," were originally built to house people the federal government alleged had connections to international terrorism. The units, located as separate sections within two federal prisons in Marion, Illinois, and Terre Haute, Indiana, consist of single cells where people are held in isolation and subjected to intense surveillance and monitoring. People in CMUs have much less access to the outside world because of their status. They have extra limits on visits, phone calls, e-mails, and even postage mail. They can communicate only with approved contacts, and all communication is meant to be monitored.

Noor, who has been friends with Hale for more than a decade, said she didn't know why someone whose crime involved no violence would be placed there.

"I don't know the extent to which they were monitoring Daniel," Noor said. "But maybe, they were like, Let's teach him a lesson, and make sure that he isn't able to use his voice again."

Hale's case stands out among the hundreds of others who have been incarcerated in CMUs. The federal government quietly opened the two CMUs in 2006 and 2008 under a cloud of secrecy. There was no public hearing beforehand, and no apparent guidelines on the criteria authorities would use for placement in the units. When the CMUs opened, 70 percent of those incarcerated in them were Muslim men, who made up just six percent of the overall federal prison population at the time. This statistic was so startling that it became a key part of at least two separate lawsuits filed against the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) in 2009 and 2010 regarding CMU conditions and due process. Both cases were eventually dismissed because plaintiffs settled out of court or were released from the units, rendering their cases moot.

In addition to the critiques of CMUs as an Islamophobic manifestation of the US "War on Terror," advocates have raised concerns that the units are often used to punish those who have expressed a strong opposition to American foreign policy—as Hale did so publicly.

An investigation of BOP data by *The Nation* and *The Appeal* now suggests that the federal government is expanding its use of CMUs, including with plans to build a new unit at a facility in Maryland. According to the most recent data, obtained by public records request, the number of people incarcerated in CMUs between 2007 and 2022 has increased 140 percent. Although the proportion of Muslims incarcerated in the units has decreased over time, that is largely due to the growth in the overall population. As of 2022, Muslims still made up 35 percent of the total CMU population. As of 2023, Muslims still made up 35% of the total CMU population.

Noor, who works as an organizer in Washington, DC, said she is worried that CMUs will increasingly be used to incarcerate whistleblowers like Hale, who have been prosecuted for exposing violent US policies.

Hale served in the Air Force and was stationed in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2013. It was there that he would experience what he called in a letter to the judge in his case "the most harrowing day of my life." In 2012, a drone strike that he and his superiors deployed hit not only a man they were tracking, but also his wife and their two daughters, only 3 and 5 years old, resulting in the death of their eldest.

Two years after this incident, Hale leaked classified documents about the US drone program to a reporter. The resulting investigation, published by *The Intercept*, revealed the shocking number of casualties caused by drone warfare, and the flawed methods the government used to identify targets. Hale said his role in the strike on this family and his participation in the drone program pushed him to release the documents.

"The determined fighter pilot has the luxury of not having to witness the gruesome aftermath," Hale wrote in the letter, "but what possibly could I have done to cope with the undeniable cruelties that I perpetuated?"

In July 2021, more than two years after his arrest, a federal judge sentenced Hale to 45 months in prison for violating the Espionage Act. He was released earlier this summer.

Hale did not respond to e-mails regarding this investigation.

In January, the BOP inked a \$2.8 million contract with Virginia-based construction company PROCON International to convert a medium-security prison in Cumberland, Maryland, into a CMU. PROCON CEO Aziz Elham confirmed the conversion project in a text to *The Nation* and *The Appeal*, though neither he nor a BOP spokesperson would give further details. It remains unclear how many CMU cells the unit will contain, or if this is meant to be an additional unit or a replacement for existing units in the two other BOP facilities. In 2019, a federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, was scheduled for a mission change to become a CMU. According to the BOP, the change was never implemented.

An expansion of the CMU program may have always been the plan. According to a 2020 OIG audit of the BOP's abilities to monitor incarcerated people, the agency had intended to establish up to six CMUs in order to better monitor "terrorist inmates." The report, which, among many other aspects of monitoring, criticized the BOP's list of who is or is not considered a "terrorist," said that CMU equipment is

“insufficient for BOP staff to perform adequate monitoring of certain terrorist inmate conversations.” The audit consisted of interviews with BOP staff and was conducted to “prevent further radicalization within inmates.”

In response to early scrutiny—including from members of Congress—over the high population of Muslims in CMUs, the BOP opened up public comment periods in 2010 and again in 2014. In 2015, the agency finally defined its policies for CMU placement, stating that connections to international or domestic terrorism were key justifications.

But internal BOP documents obtained by *The Nation* and *The Appeal* via public records request show that, despite recent criticism that the BOP is not even effectively monitoring those it has already incarcerated in CMUs, the agency has widened its criteria for CMU placement over time. CMUs are going from housing “almost exclusively” people judged by courts to have a connection to international terrorism to housing “any inmate who requires a greater level of communications monitoring.” The change in purpose of these units has resulted in some bloating, which has seen some people incarcerated in the units, like Hale, who the government admits have no ties to terrorism or even violence.

The BOP has not published comprehensive data about who has been incarcerated in CMUs over time. To get a better picture of the CMU population and how it’s changed, *The Nation* and *The Appeal* created a database with the convictions, nationalities, and certain case details for those previously or currently incarcerated in one or both of the units. An analysis of this database of almost 200 people, which reporters continue to build, shows certain trends: about one-third of the individuals in the database have no alleged affiliation with a terrorism group. This is in line with the 2020 OIG report, which criticizes the BOP for being unable to correctly identify those with a “known nexus to domestic or international terrorism.”

One-third of individuals in our database were arrested within the four years after 9/11. (Because the database was compiled partially with the help of advocates who work with those targeted by War on Terror policies, the data may be skewed toward Muslims and those who have been accused of having connections to foreign terrorist groups, whether or not those accusations were true.) The database also sheds light on law enforcement’s controversial use of informants and sting operations, as two out of every five CMU detainees in this database were arrested after being targeted by these sorts of tactics. These strategies have been criticized by Human Rights Watch and others for preying on the vulnerable, including youth, individuals with mental health issues, and undocumented people, and for encouraging their targets to commit acts that would be categorized as crimes. Sting operations and the use of FBI informants have increased after 9/11 and have resulted in many people being labeled “terrorists” who did not actually engage in any violent acts.

The label of “terrorism” has accumulated racial meanings over time, and has been used to justify state violence, writes race and terrorism scholar and Carleton University professor Atiya Husain. The US government and federal courts have expanded this definition in the post-9/11 era to target charities and speech, and as a tool to wield state power against those that come into the government’s disfavor. Mentions of “terrorism” in this database or in our investigation refer only to the US government or federal courts’ interpretation of terrorism.

A 2015 program statement says CMU designation is “non-punitive” and that referrals to a CMU can come from a counterterrorism unit, as part of a person’s sentencing computation, or from other law enforcement agencies. Beyond mentions of terrorism, the document states that someone can be designated to a CMU if there is “a substantial likelihood” that they will engage in illegal activity through communication, or that they will contact their victims. It also contains more open-ended criteria for designation based on “any other substantiated/credible evidence of a potential threat to the safe, secure, and orderly operation of prison facilities, or protection of the public, as a result of the inmate’s communication with persons in the community.”

Despite pending FOIA requests, the BOP has yet to release documents with additional information on people incarcerated in CMUs, including their underlying convictions and official justifications for placement in the units. In snapshot data obtained from the BOP last year, the highest share of people incarcerated in both CMUs each year had been convicted on charges categorized as “Fraud/Bribery/Extortion” or “Miscellaneous.” The only outlier year was 2007, when 11 out of the 44 people detained in the Terre Haute CMU had been convicted on “Weapons/Explosives” charges. “National Security” offenses are consistently at the bottom of the list for frequency each year.

A BOP spokesperson denied a request for an interview on the agency’s use of CMUs, stating that the office does not “interpret or research the data received through FOIA requests.”

One of the frustrating aspects of CMUs is that it’s difficult to predict who could end up in one, said Kathy Manley, an attorney who has been working with clients held in the units since they opened. She also said she’s not surprised by the expansion of CMUs beyond their initial use primarily to punish Muslim detainees.

“One of the things that always happens is that they’ll target a particularly hated group of people for new repressive projects,” said Manley. “Muslims convicted of terrorism or sex offenders—nobody cares about them, so we can take away some of their rights and say that it’s for national security purposes.”

Once established, she added, “we can keep expanding those norms through the rest of society.”

Manley has worked with clients in prison, some within CMUs, for more than 15 years. She said clients complain about arbitrarily being thrown into solitary confinement with no disciplinary charges filed, being moved between units at Marion and Terre Haute or transferred to the supermax prison for no clear reason, or being threatened with a transfer to a CMU if they want to challenge a disciplinary charge. One of Manley’s clients sued the BOP after he got sick following a stint in “the hotbox,” a particularly hot area of the Terre Haute CMU, which does not have air-conditioning. Another client swallowed a razor blade out of frustration at not being able to transfer out, she said.

Earlier this year, Manley and another Coalition for Civil Freedoms attorney had been denied legal calls with CMU clients. BOP officials told her they couldn’t connect them unless they had an imminent court deadline, and that the attorneys could visit instead.

The lack of communication from within CMUs also means the outside world has less information about the conditions and treatment of those inside.

Rachel Meeropol, former attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights, the civil rights organization that filed the 2010 lawsuit challenging CMUs, said the program’s nebulous placement criteria makes it ripe for abuse. She and other civil rights advocates have expressed concern that dissent is increasingly being categorized as “terrorism” for the BOP, and the CMUs are an example of this bloating.

“These units exist out there in a way that is very open to abuse in the future, and can be used against any politically unpopular group that comes into particular disfavor,” she said. “The way we saw them used against Muslims...it can be used in this way as a political prison.”

Environmental activist Daniel McGowan first heard about CMUs in 2007, as he and his legal team attempted to fight a federal terrorism enhancement tacked onto his case. While he ultimately lost this battle, resulting in a seven-year sentence for conspiracy and arson, the terrorism enhancement did not immediately land him in a CMU.

While incarcerated at FCI Sandstone, a federal prison in Minnesota, McGowan worked on a Masters degree in sociology and regularly wrote blogs and papers criticizing the US prison system. He knew the BOP was watching him closely, both for his writing and the stream of mail and visitors he received from the outside.

One day in 2008, without any notice, McGowan was told to pack up. The guards didn't tell him where he was going until he was on the bus—"Marion," they said. "Terrorist unit."

The BOP cited McGowan's writing as proof of his continued support for "radical environmental terrorist groups." CMU transfers tend to be "a fly-by-night affair," said McGowan, which allows the BOP to ship people off to these restrictive facilities with very little recourse. He spent much of the next four years in CMUs at both Marion and Terre Haute. In 2013, after McGowan's release from prison to a halfway house, he wrote about his experiences with CMUs in a piece for *HuffPost*. McGowan says he was arrested at his halfway house and briefly jailed after publishing it.

The use of CMUs to punish critics of the United States has always been a cornerstone of the program, activists and formerly incarcerated people say. Many Muslims have landed in CMUs after speaking up against War on Terror policies, or indicating belief in certain Islamic principles.

Relying on broad policies for Muslims specifically was the original basis of the program since its inception, said University of Colorado law professor Wadie Said. The BOP established the units in response to criticism for allowing three men convicted of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing to send letters in Arabic, to outside contacts. These letters, some of which were sent to "members of a Spanish terror cell," according to a 2006 report from the Office of the Inspector General about the incident, were perceived to be a security threat. Because of this incident, the report recommended that BOP consider applying special administrative measures, including enhanced surveillance, for anyone convicted of terrorism-related crimes, among other surveillance methods.

To Said, author of a 2015 book on terrorism prosecutions, the presentation of CMUs as a necessary response to "dangerous terrorists" follows a trend of sweeping, overbroad policy responses from the post-9/11 era.

"The thing about the terrorist angle is that it's always an opening to put in place a holistic policy," said Said. "Some guy tried to blow up a plane with his shoes, now we have to take off our shoes. Not individual, not more focused. Everyone is now affected."

For Muslim men incarcerated in the CMUs, the risk of being punished for being "too radical," with little explanation of what that actually means, is ubiquitous. This was the consistent throughline between Asif Salim's case, incarceration and CMU detention.

When Asif Salim was incarcerated in a New Hampshire federal prison just miles from Mount Washington, he was put in solitary confinement for three months. Salim, who is Muslim, said prison officials told him he was being punished for having a book called "The End of the World: Signs of the Hour, Major and Minor." He hadn't faced any disciplinary actions before or after that, and at the time, he had no idea how long he'd be held there. Salim said BOP staff were concerned about his educational influence among the prison's Muslim community, which was also a reason given for his later transfer to a CMU.

Salim was convicted in 2018 of "concealment of funds used to support terrorism." The charges stemmed from a \$2,000 check he'd sent to a friend in 2009, which he said was for his fishing supply business. Salim wasn't arrested until 2015, and the government alleged the check from 2009 was part of a conspiracy to eventually send \$22,000 to Anwar Al-Awlaki, the Yemeni-American preacher who was placed on the U.S. terror watch list in 2010, and subsequently killed in an American drone strike the next year. A fact that was not contested by either side was that Salim had had no contact with Al-Awlaki nor anyone in a terrorist organization, and he has denied participating in any kind of criminal activity. The case relied heavily on emails between Salim and three friends and, in an attempt to dismiss the case, his lawyers clarified that out of 18 emails where Salim was included, he was blind carbon-copied (BCC'd) on most of them with no comment from him. The government dropped their initial indictment and Salim, facing pressure at the time,

eventually agreed to a plea deal on concealing funds with a sentence cap of eight years. He was sentenced to six years.

In solitary, Salim said, counterterrorism unit officers visited him and asked what they should be doing with “people like him.” He told them they were engendering further contentiousness between incarcerated people and the BOP, rather than trying to heal the situation. When they asked him what he thought about American foreign policy, he said he knew not to reveal any specific opinions.

About a month later, Salim was transferred to the CMU in Marion. His “Notice to Inmate of Transfer” document stated that he was being moved because BOP officials were worried he’d share his “radical perspective of Islam” with other incarcerated people.

Salim said the process of being transferred to a CMU was particularly frustrating because he wasn’t told until after he got there why he was being sent, and he was not given any opportunity to dispute any of the claims made against him within it before his transfer. He called the document “an arbitrary, unilateral declaration about me that could not be challenged.”

“The document mentions my alleged ‘illegal activities’ more than once,” he said. “If this was the case, why wasn’t I given a disciplinary shot [internally, by the BOP] or even a new charge [from the FBI]?”

The notice mentions an appeals process, but formerly incarcerated people and advocates have noted that the chances of getting out via appeal are very low, according to court documents from the 2010 lawsuit against the BOP regarding the units. Lawyers in that case said the lack of process for giving detainees prior notice regarding their transfer nor a meaningful appeals process “establishes a situation ripe for abuse through retaliatory and discriminatory designation.”

Kifah Jayyousi, who was incarcerated in a CMU for five years, appealed his placement and was denied, in part because of a sermon he made calling the units “concentrated Muslim units,” and encouraging fellow CMU detainees not to become informants. During his time at the CMU, he was not allowed direct contact with his children. Every interaction took place through the phone and plexiglass.

Communication from CMUs to the outside world is extremely limited. According to the 2020 OIG report, each detainee is allowed up to eight hours of no-contact visiting time per month and two 15-minute live-monitored phone calls per week. During holiday months, they are supposed to get an extra 15-minute phone call per week. During visits, parties are separated by a wall of plexiglass. Phone calls can only take place with approved contacts. E-mails can also be limited to two per week, at the discretion of the warden. Those held in CMUs are also some of the very few people living in BOP special housing units who have limits to postage mail: They are allowed to send six pieces of paper, double-sided, to one contact once per calendar week.

Visits could be cut short at the discretion of wardens or security monitors, and were available depending on the situation in the unit on a given day, according to former CMU detainees.

In comparison, a person incarcerated in a general population unit like FCI Pekin is technically allowed up to 40 hours of visitation per month. They also get 300 phone minutes every month—more than twice as much as CMU detainees receive most months. People in general population units also typically get access to classes and activities, both of which are limited to those in CMUs.

Jayyousi’s daughter, Sara, now 28, said her father’s incarceration in a CMU had caused lasting damage to his mental health and their relationship, even after his release in 2017.

“Trauma just doesn’t disappear the way that you’d think it would. Not even with time,” she said. “When he did come out, it wasn’t like some kind of celebration or anything like that. It was him dealing with his PTSD from being in the CMUs.”

The BOP argued in 2015 that its policies limiting communications between incarcerated people and the outside world passes the “Turner test,” a set of factors used to determine whether a prison regulation violates an incarcerated person’s rights. But Terry Kupers, a psychiatry professor at the Wright Institute who studies prison conditions, said that CMUs, like the more widely discussed solitary confinement cells, have a uniquely detrimental effect.

“A lack of communication with people outside of CMUs coupled with secrecy on the part of the BOP can be damaging to an inmate’s mental state,” said Kupers, who is also a Human Rights Watch consultant.

Several studies have shown that maintaining relationships on the outside is critical to one’s ability to transition back to normal life after incarceration. The conditions of CMUs actively undercut those goals.

“We’re still stuck on two opposite sides of plexiglass, and that’s just how it’s going to be,” Jayyousi said of her father.

When Asif Salim wanted to speak to his mother in Pashto from the CMU, he had to register the phone call and language a week ahead of time. The conversation would be allowed only if a translator was available. If they drifted into a different language, the call would be immediately cut. On at least one occasion, Salim said, BOP staff deleted e-mails containing the Arabic word *inshallah*, an extremely common phrase amongst all Arabic-speaking and Muslim people, meaning “God willing.”

In May, Salim convened with civil rights advocates at Atlanta’s Masjid Maryam, an Islamic center where he is a member. As part of a series of panels organized by the Coalition of Civil Freedoms, speakers encouraged the community to support Muslim political prisoners and remain vigilant against law enforcement incursions. They drew a line between post-9/11 surveillance and more recent efforts to target students protesting what many scholars are calling a genocide of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel, often by concocting supposed ties to Hamas, which the United States deems a “foreign terrorist organization.” The group explained that these tactics have landed politically active Muslims in prison—and from there, into CMUs—and that knowing how to avoid them is crucial to advocacy work.

Earlier this year, *The Intercept* reported that the Department of Homeland Security was working on college campuses to fight what the agency referred to as “foreign malign influence.” Investigative reporter Ken Klippenstein reported that Congress has pressured the FBI to use informants in their monitoring of anti-war protests on campuses, mirroring tactics used after 9/11 to target and often entrap protesters, and particularly Muslim students.

The similarities between today’s environment and the post-9/11 era have been clear to Jayyousi, who said she’s been mistrustful of the federal government since her father’s arrest.

“You can’t talk about where you’re from. You can’t talk about what you support or what your religion is, or your background, your cultures, because it’s too dangerous,” she said.

At the Atlanta events, speakers encouraged parents to talk to their kids about how to safely protest war and advocate for Palestine without falling prey to informants or FBI officials looking to connect young people to US-designated foreign terrorist groups. The masjid was filled with people after Friday prayers who listened intently and laughed at the panelists’ jokes about how Muslims are often too friendly to police and FBI officers: “Don’t invite them in,” one panelist joked. “Don’t offer them chai or laddoos.”

Salim has firsthand experience with law enforcement’s history of targeting students.

While attending Ohio State University from 1998 to 2005, Salim became aware that the FBI was surveilling him after he participated in campus events around the time of then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s visit to the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in East Jerusalem, which drew global backlash. As part of

the school's Muslim Students Association, Salim said he and other MSA members had set up tables on campus to talk to people about Islam, which, because of the timing, other students interpreted as part of the political protests. After the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, Salim said FBI agents began to visit his home.

Salim now has four kids, age 10 to 16, and he said he tries to frame what happened to him as a part of a much longer historical thread. On the Atlanta panels, he compared the relationship between US authorities and pro-Palestinian protestors to the one between Pharaoh and Moses—or Fir'aun and Musa in the Qur'an.

"Fir'aun said about Musa, 'He is trying to cause mischief and corruption on Earth,' when indeed, Fir'aun himself was actually Mr. Corruption," said Salim. "That was then, and nothing has changed. They still paint us as the corrupters and mischief-makers, when in fact, they are the corrupters and mischief-makers."

23 Aug - Bristol man was recalled to prison after visiting an anarchist social centre

England: Toby Shone's arrest by counter-terrorism police surveilling the BASE centre in Easton shows the state's escalating clampdown on political dissent.

MORE:

by Tom Anderson (*The Bristol Cable*)

Members of Easton-based anarchist social centre BASE recently discovered that they're being monitored by counter-terrorist police, after a man was recalled to prison after attending one of its events.

Toby Shone was initially arrested on terrorism and drugs charges in November 2020, as part of a wider police operation named Op Adream. Police believed Toby was the editor of the 325nostate.net anarchist website, which they said contained material that encouraged terrorism.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) also found psychedelic drugs during the raid on his home and charged Toby with terrorism and drugs offences. He denied all charges, and on the eve of Toby's court case, the CPS indicated it was dropping the terrorism allegations against him. It offered no explanation for the sudden change of heart.

Toby was convicted of possession and intent to supply Class A and B drugs, and sentenced to three years and nine months in prison. Despite not being convicted of any terror offences, Toby's supporters say he was – and is being – treated like a terrorist in prison. When he was released, in December 2022, it was under heavy restrictions and monitoring by the multi-agency National Security Division (NSD), which manages terror cases.

Last September he was recalled to prison after being arrested by armed police acting on the orders of Counter Terrorism Policing South West (CTPSW). The grounds for the 46-year-old's arrest were that he hadn't complied with his probation licence conditions when he was released part way through his prison sentence.

Police say he breached his conditions by attending a letter-writing event at BASE, and using a phone that wasn't registered with his probation officer. Toby said he did not submit details of the phone he was using as many of his comrades had already been spied on by undercover police and didn't want them to be subject to further surveillance.

Legal papers served to Toby showed BASE was under ongoing surveillance and monitoring by CTPSW, and that police officers had compiled 'evidence' about events being held at the Easton social centre.

BASE members, in a collective statement, said they were shocked to hear of Toby's recall to prison and to find out that they were being monitored:

“There is a suggestion that there is some shadowy criminal anarchist group behind BASE so that the cops can expand their fantasy of ‘anarchist terror’ where a social centre is somewhere that people become groomed and radicalised and where glorification and funding of terrorism are rampant,” it said.

“Back in the real world, BASE is a much-loved and long-standing autonomous social centre that hosts community dinners, bike workshops, [and] talks on a diverse range of topics from social justice and prisoner solidarity to environmental and cultural topics.”

BASE also ran a community mutual-aid project during the Covid pandemic.

Treated like a terrorist

Toby’s case is one of the only prosecutions of anarchists under modern terrorism legislation in the UK, and he’s been hounded by counter-terrorism police for over four years. How and why he was sent back to jail, at HMP Garth, 170 miles from his home, is a story campaigners say highlights the British state’s attempts to silence people with oppositional political views.

The 325 website and publication publishes reports of direct action, discusses anarchist political thought, and makes calls for solidarity with anarchist prisoners, and the anarchist movement more broadly.

In an interview with a US-based anarchist radio station, Toby explained that the case against him hinged on the idea that 325 encouraged terrorism, and made a tenuous link between content on 325 and a Greek armed Marxist-Leninist group called November 17th, which is proscribed as a terrorist group here in the UK. This enabled them to utilise terrorism legislation.

In an era of ever-increasing state surveillance and a renewed crackdown on our right to protest, Toby’s case shows how far the state is willing to go to silence dissent

Kat Hobbs, Netpol

Toby’s supporters say he has been persistently treated like a terrorist in prison. He spent the first year on remand, before his court case, in Category A prisons in Wandsworth and Belmarsh. He was denied visits by his lawyers for the first six weeks of his imprisonment, and he wasn’t shown the evidence against him for many months.

Prior to his release, police tried to impose a Serious Crime Prevention Order (SCPO) on him. If granted, the SCPO would have imposed tight restrictions on his freedom for five years after his release, and could be renewed indefinitely. It would have restricted who he could meet, as well as his use of tech security tools like encrypted messaging and virtual private networks (VPNs).

Toby’s lawyers, however, were able to successfully contest these restrictions at a court hearing in May 2022.

Prison authorities have, for a long time, been restricting Toby’s communication with the outside world. Letters and emails sent to and from prison are routinely censored.

He has been unable to receive several books and other publications through the post, despite the fact that the right for prisoners to be sent books has been hard fought for. In autumn 2022, anarchists held a noisy demonstration outside HMP Parc near Bridgend over the restrictions, and the prison moved Toby to a segregation cell as a result.

We spoke to Sarah*, a friend of Toby’s, about the effects this censoring of mail and isolation is having on Toby and those close to him.

She said prison authorities had even stopped a birthday card that Toby had sent to his elderly parents from getting out during his sentence. Sarah said the intention was to “demoralise him and disable Toby’s perception of support” from his family, friends, comrades and the anarchist movement in general. According to Sarah, “this is a stated goal in probation paperwork”.

“This is a politically motivated decision that extends beyond Toby and reveals the authoritarian nature of the state we are living in at this time. His recall for attending an anarchist social centre makes it clear that somewhere like BASE is considered a threat to ‘national security’,” Sarah added.

Sarah has been stopped at UK borders under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act as part of the ongoing Operation Adream and interrogated about her ideas, relationships and personal life. She said the restrictions and surveillance on Toby’s communications mean she “censors her language, ideas and feelings” to avoid being removed from his agreed contact list and having her written communications censored by the prison authorities. She told us that everything she says to Toby is “being analysed, which feels intrusive and uncomfortable”.

Silencing dissent

Kat Hobbs is part of the Network for Police monitoring (Netpol), an organisation monitoring the escalation of police powers in the UK. She told the Cable the use of terror charges against Toby for holding anarchist beliefs could be a harbinger of things to come.

“In an era of ever-increasing state surveillance and a renewed crackdown on our right to protest, [Toby’s case shows] how far the state is willing to go to silence dissent,” she said.

The use of repressive charges against anarchists is nothing new. In 1997 three editors of Green Anarchist and two people linked to the Animal Liberation Front were prosecuted and jailed for three years for the publication allegedly having incited others to commit criminal damage. They were later released and their convictions overturned. In Toby’s case, prosecutors dialed things up significantly by making allegations of terrorism.

And in 2017 Joshua Walker was charged with possessing terrorist information for downloading the Anarchist Cookbook, a manual with instructions for making weapons. He was later cleared.

“We have known for a long time that intrusive police surveillance targets left movements, and the ongoing ‘spy cops’ inquiry keeps exposing how far the police are willing to go,” said Kat. “BASE social centre will not be the only place under surveillance for sharing leaflets and serving vegan food. For someone to face prison time for joining a letter-writing session with friends is chilling. Netpol stands in solidarity with Toby Shone.”

BASE said Toby’s treatment shows that state repression of our movements will only increase, and that Toby is likely to not be the “last of us to be locked up for our politics. As long as places like BASE are used by people engaged in shared radical politics, they will continue to be sites of surveillance, repression and draconian policing. We stand with Toby not only for the sake of his freedom, but for the sake of all of ours as well!”

“Toby’s case shows us clearly that we in the UK do not have the right to freely organise with others”.

The Cable contacted the Ministry of Justice for comment on Toby’s case. A spokesperson said: “Offenders released on licence are kept under close supervision and will be recalled to prison if they break the rules”. They declined to comment on the disruption to Toby’s mail into and out of the prison. We also contacted CTPSW, but received no response.

This lack of a substantial comment from either authority is indicative of a lack of transparency over the actions of the police and prison service.

23 Aug - 2024 June 11th Reportback

Over \$2500 was raised for Marius Mason this year!

MORE:

Thank you to everyone who took part in meeting our fundraising goal, which was the first time since the pandemic started that we have been able to! Everything you do for June11th lets our comrades know that they are never alone.

Here are some report-backs that we received, which is a small representation of all that happened for June 11th this year: june11.noblogs.org/post/2024/08/21/2024-reportback

August 25th - Write to Marius Mason

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

Marius Mason is an anarchist, environmental and animal rights activist currently serving nearly 22 years in federal prison for acts of property damage carried out in defense of the planet. After being threatened with a life sentence in 2009 for these acts of sabotage, he plead guilty to arson charges at a Michigan State University lab researching genetically modified organisms for Monsanto. 12 other acts of property damage were included in his plea deal. No one was physically harmed in these actions. At sentencing the judge applied a so-called “terrorism enhancement,” adding almost two years to an already extreme sentence requested by the prosecution. This is the harshest punishment of anyone convicted of environmental sabotage to date.

Marius is a multi-talented artist and writes poetry as well as paints. You can check his art at supportmariusmason.org/art

You should write a letter to Marius, tell him about your day, or about a walk in the woods, or whatever else. Those letters are small cracks in the prison walls that bash through repression and allow prisoners like Marius to feel the outside world.

1 Sept - Vegan Aid to Prisoners

Russia: Vegan Peredachki (VP) is an organization that supports prisoners in so-called Russia, who have problems maintaining their veganism while in prison (and in other types of custody of the Russian state).

MORE:

via *UNOFFENSIVE ANIMAL*

It involves prisoners, often convicted on trumped-up charges, who have undergone torture and are in prison for long periods of time, living in appalling conditions. Among the prisoners supported by the VP are anti-fascists, anarchists, political activists, people who have criticized the Russian government in various ways. VP provides various types of support to prisoners, such as vegan food, medicines, vitamins and clothing. VP also offers moral support to prisoners in various ways. Like writing letters, and supporting their families.

VP’s operations depend on private donations, also from abroad. More information about ways to donate, and how to support prisoners in other ways, writing letters, can be found on VP’s website,

“Vegan Peredachki emerged on February 24, 2022, with a primary focus on offering aid to protesters detained overnight. Recognizing the complete absence of vegan food and essential supplies for detainees, we expanded our mission beyond protests...”

1 Sept - Miami Anti-Abortion ‘Fake Clinic’ Tied to Far Right

On the night of July 3, 2022, just nine days after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, a group of anonymous vandals approached a nondescript building in Hialeah, Florida, covering one of its walls with graffiti.

MORE:

via *Unicorn Riot*

It read: “If abortions aren’t safe, then neither are you” and “Jane’s Revenge.”

More than nine months later, federal prosecutors announced that two pro-choice activists in Florida had been charged with federal crimes for the graffiti on that and two other South Florida targets. Two months later, prosecutors arrested two more activists, alleging they’d also participated.

The spray-painted building houses a so-called “Pregnancy Help Clinic” run by the conservative Christian nonprofit Heartbeat of Miami. The federal charges hinge, in part, on the question of whether it provides “reproductive health services.”

Whether it’s a legitimate clinic or, as some allege, a “fake clinic,” one thing is certain: Heartbeat of Miami is tied to the wider far-right and the January 6, 2021, pro-Trump attack on the U.S. Capitol.

“Fake Clinics”

If the Heartbeat of Miami doesn’t exist to provide reproductive health services, then what does it do?

“These anti-abortion centers that are sometimes called ‘crisis pregnancy centers,’ exist all across the country in every single state,” said Max Carwile, Programs Director with the Abortion Access Front. “There are many, many fake clinics, as we like to call them, that exist for the sole purpose of lying about abortion and other reproductive health care services, to try and push a religious agenda and harassment onto potentially pregnant people.”

The Abortion Access Front runs a campaign called Expose Fake Clinics to spread information about the growing influence of these facilities in the U.S.

According to Carwile, such anti-abortion centers are not medical facilities and frequently don’t provide any legitimate medical services at all. While some facilities, such as Heartbeat of Miami, claim to provide ultrasounds, others provide only those services that are available over the counter for anyone at the local drug store—such as pregnancy tests and STD testing.

“The vast majority do not provide medical services or have medical personnel,” said Carwile.

“Occasionally, they’ll have an ultrasound technician who’s on call or somebody with some sort of medical credentials like a dentist who’s on their board. So they can say that they do have medical professionals as part of their team. But we know that that’s not the same thing as, say, an actual OBGYN medical doctor providing care in an actual OBGYN office.”

But if they aren’t medical clinics, then what are they? “Fake clinics” are part of an ascendant national strategy of the religious and political right-wing to advance an anti-abortion agenda. They do not exist to help anyone, Carwile says. And as actual abortion clinics continue to close across the country, the number of anti-abortion facilities calling themselves “clinics” continues to grow.

“There are roughly around six to seven hundred real abortion clinics remaining in the United States,” explained Carwile, “but somewhere around 3,000 fake clinics around the entire country. They greatly outnumber actual abortion clinics, because since most of them are not actual licensed medical facilities, it’s much easier for them to start up and just rent building space.”

The Hialeah facility is one of a network of clinics run by the nonprofit Heartbeat International, one of the largest networks of anti-abortion “clinics” in the country. The group boasts on its website that it “serves over 3,000 affiliate locations.”

The website for “Pregnancy Help Medical Clinics,” which is operated by Heartbeat International and appears to be a different website for the same Florida facilities, includes stock photos of young, female medical professionals — a young doctor with a stethoscope around her neck, a medical professional in scrubs, smiling at the camera. But the facilities operated by Heartbeat don’t appear to require any medical staff to operate.

Heartbeat of Miami did not respond to a request for information on what services its Hialeah facility offers, but according to their website, the facility offers ultrasounds, testing for sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy tests, sonograms, and “education.” Pregnancy and STI testing, of course, are available to anyone over-the-counter, and ultrasound and sonogram technicians are not required to be licensed in Florida.

The group claims that its facilities “are licensed with medical personnel and support staff,” but does not specify in what way those personnel are licensed. None of the services the facility claims to offer on the website require licensure.

Their website’s language defines their mission in terms of a patriarchal, homophobic version of Christianity rather than medical science, professing that “only God, through faith in Jesus Christ, can forgive, cleanse, and transform people” and “the role of women as child bearers is ordained of God.”

One of their listed “Core Values,” “The Soundness of Sexual Purity, Marriage & Family,” states that in “a healthy society,” marriage should only be “between a man and a woman.”

In a June 30, 2024 Facebook post, Heartbeat of Miami Clinic Director Jeanne Pernia announced that a baby delivered by a mother who visited Heartbeat of Miami died shortly after birth, while still celebrating that the parents had been prevented from seeking an abortion.

Heartbeat of Miami Leadership Links to January 6 & ‘Stop The Steal’

Heartbeat of Miami President Martha E. Avila described the spray-painting of Heartbeat’s building as the work of “pro-abortion terrorists.” Avila’s career background is in customer service and technical support for airlines and she does not claim to have any medical background at all.

In 2019, then-President Trump hosted Avila at the White House for a Hispanic Heritage Month Reception where she gave a brief speech declaring that “one day, abortion will be unthinkable in our country.”

Heartbeat of Miami President Martha E. Avila described the spray-painting of Heartbeat’s building as the work of “pro-abortion terrorists.” Avila’s career background is in customer service and technical support for airlines and she does not claim to have any medical background at all.

In 2019, then-President Trump hosted Avila at the White House for a Hispanic Heritage Month Reception where she gave a brief speech declaring that “one day, abortion will be unthinkable in our country.”

Avila frequently posts social media pictures from Miami-area GOP events. She has also been the featured guest of a group that supports the January 6, 2021 attack on Congress. A July 2022 event hosted by the America First Patriots Club lists Avila as a speaker alongside Drew Montez-Clark, a 2020 election denier and 2022 candidate for the U.S. House seat for Florida’s 20th District.

Other speakers hosted by the America First Patriots Club since its founding in 2021 include alt-right troll Laura Loomer, anti-vaccine activist Shannon Kroner, and “Stop The Steal” organizer Scott Pressler. Photos

from official America First Patriots Club events posted to the club’s currently-defunct website show some attendees posing in QAnon shirts.

Martin Sergio Bermudez, a member of Heartbeat of Miami’s board of directors, maintains close ties with the Miami Proud Boys, frequently posing in photos with members online.

Bermudez has posted pictures of himself with extreme right personas like “meme maker” Logan Cook (‘Carpe Donktum’), disgraced former student journalist Andy Ngo, and far-right conspiracy theorists Laura Loomer and Jack Posobiec. (Both Loomer and Posobiec are proteges of Florida-based longtime right-wing movement architect and political stunt artist Roger Stone, whom Bermudez also posed with.)

Bermudez also proudly posed with national Proud Boys leaders Enrique Tarrio and Joseph Biggs, who are currently serving 22 and 17 years in federal prison, respectively, for their roles in leading the January 6 attack to overturn the 2020 election.

One photo Bermudez posted to Facebook in February 2020 denounced those “from the Republican side” who were “throwing shade” on him for associating with Proud Boys leader Tarrio, who he counts among “fellow patriots who I consider friends.”

Social media photos indicate Bermudez attended the January 6, 2021 “Stop The Steal” rally in D.C. that led to the attack on Congress; it is unclear if he was in the crowd that broke into restricted Capitol grounds to stop the electoral count.

Facebook pictures posted by Martin Sergio Bermudez, as well as other images, document his presence at the January 6, 2023 ‘Stop the Steal’ rally that led to the attack on Congress that attempted to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

Bermudez’ Twitter feed is heavy on bigotry, pro-Trump memes, tough-on-crime machismo, and occasional Bitcoin boosterism. He’s also a fervent supporter of El Salvador’s right-wing president Nayib Bukele, a self-described “dictator” implementing an anti-democratic agenda denounced by human rights advocates; Bermudez aggressively promotes his side business selling “Bukele 2024” hats.

Bermudez’s posts on X (formerly Twitter) showcase a taste for eccentric low-quality memes one might find amongst right-wing baby boomer Facebook groups, such as digitally altered images of an aged Greta Thunberg smoking a cigarette or Joe Biden soiling his pants. Some posts feature a more bizarre sexual tack — he once tweeted a Batman “boner alert” GIF in reply to a news update about Bitcoin in El Salvador — and in one 2023 exchange he responded to an insult from another X user by photoshopping an actual cropped photo of a scrotum onto the Twitter user’s face in their profile picture.

He’s also posted anti-vaccine content and far-right antisemitic conspiracies about “globalists” and George Soros; in one tweet he attacked Human Rights Watch Americas Deputy Director Juan Pappier as a “Soros puppet” for criticizing Salvadoran President Bukele.

Other posts of his dehumanize LGBTQ+ people as “disgusting” and “satanic” child predators, and maliciously misgender trans people, call for “straight pride” or suggest gay men “stop the spread of monkeypox” by wearing diapers.

Another meme he posted expressed a desire for “throwing communists out of helicopters,” echoing a popular far-right meme paying tribute to Chilean military dictator Augusto Pinochet, whose regime murdered ~3,200 people and tortured ~20,000 in a campaign to repress political dissidents.

Some posts by Bermudez flirt with overt racism, bashing “BLM” or claiming discrimination against white people exists in the USA by citing alleged “black on white crime.” Others embrace it outright: a July 2023 tweet echoed white nationalist talking points demonizing “brown people at the border,” while one

particularly racist meme he shared in February 2022 advertised “Free Crack Pipes” for “Black History Month.”

No Comment!

Heartbeat of Miami did not respond to requests for comment on the organization’s connections to the far-right. Avila and Bermudez are likely not the only affiliates of the organization to promote far-right activity, public Facebook posts indicate.

Giselle Perez, a member of Heartbeat of Miami’s Board of Directors, shared discredited claims denying the 2020 election, favoring the January 6 insurrection, and spreading “globalist control” COVID-19 conspiracy theories that echo antisemitic tropes. Raisa Schubert, another board member, shared posts demonizing transgender people and immigrants as well as conspiracy videos featuring Alex Jones of Infowars. Schubert also posted content from British anti-Muslim demagogue Douglas Murray alongside a video from ‘Jews for Jesus’ claiming to have found Jesus’ teeth.

Ethel C. Palaci, a counselor at Heartbeat of Miami’s clinics, posted that she was taking hydroxychloroquine as a “vaccine” to treat COVID-19, casting doubt on the quality of medical advice on offer to those who make their way through Heartbeat’s doors.

Fundraising Tour by Bigoted Aspiring Influencer

In February 2023, far-right YouTuber and social media personality Linda Catalina Cuadros posted a virtual tour of the Heartbeat of Miami facility, telling her audience that she was trying to raise \$10,000 so that the organization could open a new clinic. Later that year, Cuadros posted on Instagram that she’d raised \$2,248 for the facility after more than six months of fundraising.

The goal of the fundraiser was to help Heartbeat of Miami open a fifth facility in the Miami area. “There are no pregnancy clinics south of Kendall,” said Cuadros. “So any contributions helps.”

During the tour, Cuadros posed for photos with Avila and Bermudez.

Her relationship with Heartbeat of Miami seems to go beyond the single fundraising video — tweets by Bermudez feature her modeling his ‘Bukele 2024’ hats that he sells online, implying at least one business tie between Cuadros and Heartbeat of Miami’s Board of Directors.

Cuadros’ online footprint features a litany of anti-LGBTQ, anti-vaccine and pro-Russia propaganda, conspiracy theories, as well as racist and antisemitic statements. She also runs a business selling “affordable luxury jewelry” over the internet.

Cuadros co-hosts the podcast “Mostly Peaceful Latinas” with Isabella Rodriguez, who was likely in the crowd that entered restricted Capitol grounds during the January 6, 2021 attack on Congress; video Rodriguez posted to her Telegram was filmed from inside the crowd immediately outside Capitol entrances under siege. Rodriguez, also known as “redpillbabe,” has been a longtime QAnon influencer and also dabbles in ‘flat earth’ conspiracies.

Posts made by Cuadros to X/Twitter (she is the one who tweets from her and Rodriguez’ podcast account, according to the account’s bio) openly bash “homo[s]” for “unnatural behavior,” and refer to “blacks” as “uneducated minorities” while describing herself as “genetically superior.”

A post on Cuadros’ “wakeupwithlinda” Telegram channel warned her followers of “black racism,” adding that “they want us to be the slaves of the blacks.” (See our 2018 report about the false South Africa ‘white genocide’ message pushed by white supremacists.)

In addition to racism and homophobia, Cuadros' online posts feature antisemitism, bemoaning the perceived liberalism of "Blacks and Jews", and "having to walk on egg shells for a tiny minority," accusing Jews of feigning "perpetual victimhood". In September 2023, she tweeted "So Kanye was right" apparently referencing the rapper's public statements of backlash regarding antisemitic outbursts.

Another post on Cuadros' Telegram depicts killing antifascists by dropping them out of a helicopter in the "Pinochet helicopter rides" meme format generally used by alt-right fascists or other far-right groups to express their desires to murder their critics. The image also features Pepe the Frog, a figure often used as a fascist icon by neo-nazis against the wishes of its original creator. The group she specifically threatened was Miami Against Fascism, an anonymous anti-racist group and the first to publicly document Cuadros' antisemitism, racism and far-right connections.

The FACE Act

Despite all evidence that the Hialeah Heartbeat of Miami facility is primarily a political, and not a medical, operation, U.S. Attorneys chose to prosecute three Miami pro-choice activists with a statute specifically designed to criminalize attacks on abortion clinics: the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act. (A later plea deal in the case dropped these counts against all defendants.)

The FACE Act was created under the Clinton administration to respond to the rising number of increasingly confrontational anti-abortion direct actions that were taking place across the country at abortion clinics. The act prohibits, in part, "intentionally injuring, intimidating, or interfering with," any person "obtaining or providing reproductive health services." (UR briefly encountered Operation Rescue cofounder Randall Terry at Supreme Court protests in Washington, D.C. in 2022, a key player in attempts to block abortion access during the 1990s.)

The Miami cases appear to be the first time the FACE Act has been used against pro-choice activists. Since the Miami cases began, prosecutors in Ohio have also used the statute to bring charges against a 20-year-old pro-choice college student accused of spray-painting an anti-abortion "clinic" in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Heartbeat of Miami also filed a civil suit against the defendants in the Miami case, alleging damages and demanding compensation under the FACE Act. But while the anti-abortion far-right Christian group is leveraging the FACE Act to its benefit, it has publicly endorsed an anti-abortion group that is currently being sued for openly violating the same law.

Heartbeat of Miami's October 13, 2023, fundraising Gala ended with a speech from Father David Nix of Red Rose Rescue, a militant Roman Catholic anti-abortion group whose sole purpose is to carry out clinic invasions at actual reproductive health facilities. Nix and Red Rose Rescue openly describe their activities as illegal and predicated on the intention to interfere with medical procedures, but attempt to sugarcoat this in civil disobedience terminology seemingly appropriated from civil rights movements.

Founded in 2017, Red Rose Rescue's mission is to carry out what they misleadingly call "rescues" at abortion facilities by barging into and disrupting appointments with the supposed pretext of delivering non-consensual religious "counseling." Its members also often blockade clinics using tactics like bike-locking shut a clinic's security gate. The New York Attorney General sued Red Rose Rescue in federal court under the FACE Act "for invading reproductive health care clinics, threatening staff and clinicians, and terrorizing patients" and last month said they are pursuing contempt fines against Red Rose Rescue for continuing to harass Planned Parenthood clinics in violation of an injunction issued in the case.

Summer 2024: Defendants Plea Out

The cases against those accused of spray-painting the Heartbeat of Miami facility continued to move through the courts until the defendants pleaded out in June 2024. The U.S. Attorneys asserted that the Hialeah facility was a reproductive health facility in the plea agreements. In July 2023, attorneys for one of

the defendants filed a motion seeking to dismiss the case on the grounds that the Hialeah facility is not a “‘reproductive health services’ provider.” Crisis pregnancy clinics, the motion argued, “are non-profit organizations that are often Christian-affiliated and assert that they provide pregnancy testing and ‘counseling,’ but seek to intercept people looking for abortions.”

The motion draws on a civil case from the Eleventh Circuit, *Raney v. Aware Woman Center for Choice*, in which an anti-abortion activist, Meredith T. Raney, Jr, alleged that police officers had violated the FACE Act when they removed him from the entrance of an abortion clinic in Florida. Raney claimed to be offering counseling services to those entering the abortion clinic.

In that case, the Court ruled that Congress intended the FACE Act to differentiate between “trained professionals who work in credentialed facilities and unregulated volunteer counselors who are not attached to recognized providers of reproductive healthcare.”

Highlighting the “credentialed facilities” aspect of the case, the defense in the Miami case argued that the Hialeah facility does not qualify as a medical facility under the FACE Act. “If a facility or provider is not licensed or credentialed, and is not operated by trained healthcare professionals, it does not provide ‘reproductive health services’ under the plain language of the FACE Act,” the defense argued.

In August, U.S. District Judge Virginia Hernandez Covington ruled against (PDF) the defense’s motion, agreeing with the prosecution that the ruling in the Raney case “did not imply, much less expressly hold, that credentialing and licensing were elements that must be proved beyond a reasonable doubt” for the FACE Act to apply.

The court also ruled that the question of whether or not the Hialeah facility offers “reproductive health services” was a “factual question for the jury,” but this became moot after the pleas were entered in June.

Three defendants in the federal criminal case took a plea deal in June 2024 to a single count of Conspiracy Against Rights (18 U.S.C. § 241) – so a jury will never decide whether the prosecution’s initial use of the FACE Act against pro-abortion advocates holds water or not. In the likely event the same charges are leveled against those who take direct action against “fake clinics” like Heartbeat in the future, it would set precedent for prosecutions against the reproductive justice movement for decades to come.

6 Sept - Women in Struggle

WHAT: SCREENING | PANEL | FUNDRAISER

WHEN: 7:00pm, Friday, September 6th

WHERE: MayDay Space - 176 St Nicholas Avenue, Brooklyn

COST: \$25 (suggested donation) | Supporter: \$50 | Advocate: \$100 | Expounder: \$150 | Exponent: \$200 | Patron: \$250

MORE:

Grassroots liberation movements globally share similar struggles. Join us for an evening at May Day Space to learn about the connections between the Palestinian resistance and the abolitionist movement in New York and across the country. We will screen *Women in Struggle* (2004, 56 min) a powerful film by Buthina Canaan Khoury that sheds light on the realities and resistance of Palestinian women imprisoned by the Zionist entity.

Following the screening, stay for a panel and teach-in with Jose Saldana (RAPP Director), Laura Whitehorn (RAPP Leader), and Leila Boutros (Samidoun NYC/NJ) about the connections between movements and why prisoners are central to the global struggle for liberation hosted by Release Aging People in Prison, Samidoun Political Prisoner Network, and Resource Generation NYC. The teach-in will not only link these movements historically, but also foster discussions on solidarity, shared tactics, and collective actions towards liberation.

Don't miss out on this special evening. There will be food and drink, community, and ways to get connected and plug in to organizing!

This Screening and Teach-in is a fundraiser for RAPP and Samidoun. At this moment, it is important to name that the landscape for funding criminal justice reform and abolition becomes increasingly challenging and unavailable in New York and nationwide, your contributions will help sustain our vital work. While the suggested donation for General Admission is \$25, at this time we ask that those who are able, please buy 2 or 3 extra tickets for our community to attend the screening. We are committed to making this event accessible to all and will reserve tickets for community members who wish to attend without donating.

Please email Christina Knowles at knowles.rapp@gmail.com to reserve a Community Ticket for this event.

12 Sept - Leonard Peltier Press Conference and Birthday Celebration

WHAT: Press Conference

WHEN: 5:00pm, Thursday, September 12th

WHERE: The People's Forum - 320 West 37th Street, New York

COST: FREE

MORE:

In a historic alliance, the Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier organizations have officially joined forces to convene the Pan-African Pan-Indigenous Collective.

The objective of the alliance is the mobilization of Mr. Abu-Jamal's and Mr. Peltier's international communities of support to leverage, evince, and catalyze the official support of nation-state(s) to advance the interests of both comrades in freedom and the anti-colonial struggle. The strength of this leverage is found in the current geopolitical climate seeded by the second and third waves of anti-colonial pan-Africanist and Indigenous struggle, in which a new wave is currently emerging as a bright dawn in both Africa and South America, in nations such as Burkina Faso and Venezuela. At the same time, the situation of Mr. Abu-Jamal and Mr. Peltier, who both represent the anti-colonial struggle, are in an urgent posture for which additional weight, focus, and commitment must be enlisted. The concentric circles of domestic and international strategies are extraordinarily strong, mutually complementing, and self-sustaining.

Honoring the movement, while initiating the next phase or wave of the anti-colonial struggle in the United Front Against Fascism, the Abu-Jamal and Peltier organizations seek the support of nation-states with similar aligned interests upon an Axis of Love and Unity as power—a power that has yet to fail. The Delegation holds the concrete objectives of (1) Requesting nation-states expression of concern regarding the incarceration of both men during the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), (2) Ambassadorships for both Mumia Abu-Jamal and Leonard Peltier, and (3) Their release to a sovereign nation-state, including tribes in North America, in the form of a potential prisoner exchange.

To initiate the work of the joint delegation from the Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal organizations, a press conference will be held on Mr. Peltier's birthday, September 12, 2024 at 5 pm during the 79th UNGA at The People's Forum in New York City. We invite organizations, entities and individuals to send delegates and messages of support to endorse this first of further steps to be announced.

12 Sept - Cafe Anarquista

WHAT: collective meeting/movie night

WHEN: 6:00pm, Thursday, September 12th

WHERE: Interference Archive - 314 7th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

Join @cafeanarquista's first open collective meeting and movie night at the Archive!

Cafe Anarquista's mission is to educate, agitate, and caffeinate by providing literature and beverages at protests to educate those new to activism. Cafe Anarquista is transitioning from a small affinity group to an open collective and you're invited to join in this process. Tim Lewis's 1999 movie "Breaking the Spell" will be screened, followed by a short discussion on the film and then begin the process of collectivizing Cafe Anarquista.

15 Sept - Running Down the Walls

WHAT: Running Down the Walls – 5k Run/Walk/Jog/Bike/Hang

WHEN: 2:00-7:00pm, Sunday, September 15th, 2024

WHERE: Prospect Park– Lincoln Road/East Lake Drive, east of the Terrace Bridge (directions below)

COST: \$20 registration, participants encouraged to get sponsors (includes vegan BBQ afterwards, with COVID precautions for serving!) Donate at paypal.me/nycabc venmo.com/nycabc or with the Cash App: \$NYCABC

MORE:

NYC Anarchist Black Cross (NYC ABC) is excited to announce Running Down the Walls 2024—the 25th Anniversary of Running Down the Walls since it was started by ABCF-LA. We are looking very forward to gathering as a community. For the last couple of years, we've had an amazing time and successful fundraisers. Please stay tuned to our website, sign up for our newsletter, and follow us on instagram (@nycabc) or bluesky (nycabc.bsky.social) for updates.

15 Sept - MACC Care Assembly

WHAT: Assembly

WHEN: 3:00pm, Sunday, September 15th

WHERE: PIT Records & Books, 411 South 5th Street, Brooklyn

COST: FREE

MORE:

SCHEDULE:

- o Self-defense class Muay Thai Martial arts training - no experience necessary, show up at 3 pm
- o Political education session
- o Care exchange & a community meal

What is the care exchange? As we sit down to share a meal we check in and exchange our requests and offers, in the spirit of mutual aid. Requests – do you need help with anything? Offers – do you have any skills, time, or resources to offer? This is a conversation to help facilitate building and maintaining relationships among us by identifying needs and sharing what we can in solidarity.

For COVID safety: Show a negative rapid test; free tests will be provided at the door.