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Updates for June 30th

16 Jun - Delbert Africa has Passed

MOVE's Minister of Defense Delbert Africa moved on Monday night, June 15th, at home surrounded by his MOVE family.

MORE:

This past January, Bro. Delbert was released after 42 years of imprisonment. Imprisonment never broke his revolutionary spirit. May his revolutionary spirit live on in us as we continue the fight against a racist, oppressive and corrupt system.

We love and miss you Bro. Delbert...Rest Easy!

June 16th - Delbert Africa, MOVE member released from prison in January after 41 years, has died

by Mensah M. Dean (*Philadelphia Inquirer*)

Delbert Africa, a longtime member of MOVE who was released from prison in January after serving 41 years for his part in the group's 1978 clash in Powelton Village with Philadelphia police, has died.

Africa, 73, died at home in Philadelphia Monday surrounded by family and fellow MOVE members, Pam Africa, a MOVE member, said Tuesday.

He died of prostate and bone cancer, said his daughter, Yvonne Orr-El, who was among a handful of speakers at a news conference during which she and others alleged that he did not receive medical treatment in prison for 18 months after first noticing symptom.

"Had my father received the treatment he needed, the healthy, strong, smiling, humorous, sarcastic man that I called my father would still be here today," Orr-El, of Chicago, said standing in front of a MOVE-owned home in the 4500 block of Kingsessing Avenue.

"What happened to Delbert was just another example of George Floyd. Delbert was deliberately, methodically, calculatedly murdered by prison officials," said his MOVE sister, Janine Africa. "When he came out here to these doctors and hospitals on the streets, they even said that the prisons did a lot of wrong things to Delbert."

A spokesperson for the state Department of Corrections said she could not discuss a specific inmate's medical care, but said that, in general, "DOC officials provide medical care that is in line with community standards."

Pam Africa said Africa would be remembered as "an uncompromising, revolutionary, freedom fighter who fought for the lives of all."

Delbert Africa was one of nine MOVE members imprisoned for the 1978 clash. After being released in January he said he looked forward to reuniting with the surviving MOVE members to continue the work of challenging what he called an unjust criminal justice system.

Yvonne Orr-El, the daughter of Delbert Africa, in Southwest Philadelphia speaking at a Tuesday, June 16, 2020 news conference announcing her father's death.

"I want to keep on pushing the whole front of fighting this unjust system. I want to keep on pushing it and do as much as I can in my time here," he said.

MOVE was created in 1972 by West Philadelphia native Vincent Leaphart, who called himself John Africa and preached an ideology centered on black revolutionary ideas and back-to-nature philosophies. The members considered MOVE their religion, adopting anti-technology and anti-government beliefs while taking on issues ranging from police brutality to animal rights.

In 1978, after a year of legal wrangling between MOVE and the city, police raided MOVE's Powelton Village home. Firefighters flushed the house with fire hoses, and police violently removed people. In the end, one shot and killed Officer James Ramp. Eighteen police officers and firefighters were hurt.

Delbert Africa maintained that he did not fire a gun that day, but was charged with third-degree murder and eventually sentenced to 30 to 100 years in state prison.

After surrendering with his arms outstretched, a moment captured in a harrowing black-and-white *Philadelphia Inquirer* photograph, he was beaten by officers, he recalled.

"I'm unconscious, and that's when one cop pulled me by the hair across the street, one cop started jumping on my head, one started kicking me in the ribs and beating me," he said in January. "Their excuse later on is they thought I was armed. I was naked from the waist up."

Consuewella Africa speaking at a news conference in Southwest Philadelphia June 16, 2020 held to announce the death of MOVE member Delbert Africa. She is pointing to pictures of the MOVE group's house that was destroyed when Philadelphia police dropped a bomb on the building in May 1985.

He added: "Nothing could have been done differently to stop and curtail that assault by the police on us. It wouldn't have stopped."

In 1980, MOVE relocated to the 6200 block of Osage Avenue, and quickly came into conflict with neighbors, who complained to the city about trash, loudspeaker speeches and suspicions of child abuse and neglect in the house.

On May 13, 1985, the city flew a helicopter over the group's home and dropped a bomb that left 11 people dead, including John Africa, as well as Delbert Africa's 13-year-old daughter. In addition, 61 homes were destroyed by the bombing and the resulting fire and the incident became international news.

Pam Africa said that while Delbert Africa had less than six months of freedom at the end of his life, it was time well spent.

"He had a full six months on the street, because he was very well loved by everyone. When he was in the hospital, people wrote him letters. When he came home from the hospital he came with letters from doctors and nurses. They knew who he was. He was respected," she said.

June 18th - National Jericho Statement in Honor of Delbert Africa

The National Jericho Movement and all its Chapters and Affiliates send its condolences and respect to our MOVE family, friends, and comrades of Comrade Delbert Africa. We celebrated the release of Delbert in January of this year only to be saddened by his passing from preventable cancer six months later. The 1978 iconic symbol of resistance where Delbert stood before police storm troopers at Powelton Village has emboldened revolutionaries and activists to this day. And now his passing will do the same.

Delbert, please know that through your life we have drawn strength, mustered courage, and drilled down on our determination to free all Political Prisoners!!!

Loved, missed, and never to be forgotten!

Delbert Africa, one of the MOVE 9, died on Monday, June 15, 2020.
He was 74.

June 19th - Prison Radio: Delbert Africa: Father, Comrade, Teacher, and now...Ancestor

"Oh my god--Heartbreaking. Heartbreaking... Like the brotha from Angola--released days before death. A strong soul; a great soul..." - Mumia Abu-Jamal

One of the hardest things to do is tell a person who has been down for decades, that someone they are close to has died. It is heartbreaking. You just have to be so raw and open and honest, and just be with the pain, and the wave of sadness. There is no ok way to say it. Delbert Africa has passed...

Father. Comrade. Teacher. Elder. And now, Ancestor. We come together to mourn the passing of our beloved Delbert Africa. Surrounded by love and family, Delbert Africa passed in the comfort of his home on Monday, June 15th, 2020.

Africa is just one of the many victims of the continuous domestic war on Black revolutionaries fighting for safety and liberation. Africa was a member of MOVE, the group of Black revolutionaries who were arrested 40 years ago. In 1978, the police sieged MOVE's headquarters in Powelton Village, Philadelphia and in 1985 they dropped a bomb on MOVE'S house, killing five children and six adults. Delbert Africa became an icon of the siege on MOVE for his moving conviction in the face of State violence. He was officially released on January 18th of 2020.

At the MOVE organization's press conference to address Delbert Africa's passing, Janine Africa detailed the calculated targeting and violence Mr. Africa experienced from prison officials. "They wanted to kill Delbert. They didn't want Delbert to come out here and be strong. And we're saying that what happened to Delbert is no different than what is doing done by the police to Black men and women all across America today."

"Had my father received the treatment he needed," Yvonne Orr-El said, "the healthy, strong, smiling, humorous, sarcastic man that I call my father would still be here today."

Delbert Africa has been an inspiration to revolutionaries fighting police terror, animal exploitation, and anti-Black racism. His audio channel on Prison Radio imparts us all with words of wisdom, apt analyses of our political realities, and determination to see this through.

There is nothing more terrifying to this State than a Black revolutionary daring to actively put notions of freedom into practice. Delbert Africa stared this terror right in the eye for decades, refusing to perish through the hands of the murderous State. May we continue to honor his legacy, strength, and desire that all Black people are free from their chains.

16 Jun - Kamau Sadiki Sent to Outside Hospital

Brother Kamau Sadiki has been transferred to Augusta University Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia.

MORE:

Kamau underwent vascular surgery to address a severe and ongoing infection in his left foot and leg. At this point Kamau is asking for prayers from everyone. Hopefully he will be treated humanely. More detailed info to follow.

17 Jun - A Statement from the Cleveland Anarchist Black Cross

The newly reformed Cleveland ABC (CABC) has released its first statement.

MORE:

The Cleveland Anarchist Black Cross (CABC) is a collective dedicated to revolutionary anarchist struggle. Our primary focus is direct material aid to prisoners captured in the social war. We are absolutely opposed to capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and the police/surveillance state.

It is our aim to offer solidarity to those arrested in Cleveland in the midst of the recent uprising, in the form of material aid, revolutionary literature, legal aid, and helping to facilitate an ongoing commitment to social revolution.

Beyond this focus, however, it is imperative that we speak clearly about obstacles faced by the broader movement of which we are a part. Our vision is not merely to provide commissary, letters, and literature to prisoners. Our vision is nothing short of revolution. In the pursuit of this vision, the CABC positions itself as a participant in the local struggle, on both sides of the prison walls.

For years various "criminal justice reform" groups have pursued the same tactics without substantive results. Now in this time of pronounced social upheaval various self-imposed "professional organizers" and "activists" are attempting to continue their pursuit of futile tactics, to the detriment of the people of this city.

It is among the roles of revolutionaries to call out these efforts to defang the people and co-opt genuine rebellion.

As participants in the local struggle, the CABC perceives a serious lack of anarchist organizing and analysis in the Cleveland area. As part of our efforts to address this, beyond organizing around prisoner support and raising awareness of anarchism, we will be releasing statements addressing what we see as the potentials and pitfalls of the present moment.

A major aspect of this work is an unyielding critique of the nonprofit industrial complex, careerists and opportunists of all stripes, liberalism, a pathological commitment to nonviolence, and the "professional organizers" and "activists" that so often stifle genuine revolutionary activities in favor of "optics" and "dialogue" with the representatives of the local political machine.

17 Jun - North Carolina 'Ag-Gag' Law Aimed At Suppressing Whistleblowers Struck Down By Federal Court

A federal court declared an "ag-gag" law in North Carolina unconstitutional and barred the state government from enforcing key parts of the law against journalists or whistleblowers.

MORE:

by Kevin Gosztola (*Shadowproof*)

Judge Thomas Schroeder concluded the state's Property Protection Act violated the First Amendment and removed multiple provisions from the law, leaving parts that did not target speech intact.

North Carolina was the fifth state to have their "ag-gag" law struck down by a federal court.

"Ag-gag laws" are essentially corporate-backed farm secrecy statutes that are intended to suppress and criminalize speech about industrial agricultural production. They are especially designed to discourage employees from taking photos or recording video that may expose abuse or misconduct.

On June 3, 2015, the North Carolina General Assembly overrode a veto by the governor and passed the Property Protection Act, which amended the law to provide a "civil remedy for interference with certain property rights by creating a civil cause of action for the owner or operator."

It empowered the attorney general and chancellors of state universities, where animal research and experiments are conducted, to file civil lawsuits that could result in steep fines—\$5,000 for each day a “violator” committed offenses.

The law was challenged by a coalition of organizations, including People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Center for Food Safety, Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), Farm Sanctuary, Food and Water Watch, Farm Forward, the Government Accountability Project, and American Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).

As a coalition, the organizations claimed the law would discourage them from “employment-based undercover investigations to document and expose animal abuse” or inhibit their ability to collect information from whistleblowers and investigators that could be incorporated into their advocacy work.

ALDF told the court it was prepared to conduct undercover investigations at state-owned facilities, but preparations were “thwarted” by the passage of the law.

Similarly, ASPCA halted the funding of investigations in North Carolina because they feared they would be targeted and held liable.

Each of the organizations highlighted ways the law undermined their ability to produce content that was central to their missions because the law prevented information from reaching them.

The federal court in North Carolina acknowledged one key difference between the law and many of the other “ag-gag” laws that have been deemed unconstitutional. However, because it empowered private citizens or entities to bring lawsuits did not mean it satisfied constitutional guidelines.

As Schroeder described, the law empowered the state government to “identify speech—or in some cases conduct that includes speech”—and enforce the prohibition against this speech. IT was the University of North Carolina Chancellor or the North Carolina Attorney General, who would represent targeted state agencies.

It is also likely that the law was struck down because it had no discernible purpose outside of discouraging undercover investigations. North Carolina has a trespass law to protect private property, and the judge was presented with zero evidence to show that the trespass law was deficient.

“The ASPCA is proud to have been a part of this lawsuit and applauds the court’s decision, which is a huge victory for farm animals and the fight to create a more humane, transparent food system,” ASPCA stated. “Ag-gag laws are unconstitutional and have no place in our society.”

Yet, the victory came a week after the Iowa state legislature passed its third “ag-gag” bill. It was tucked into legislation that was drafted to deal with the impact of the coronavirus.

“The latest bill would create a new crime, ‘food operation trespass,’ for anyone who enters a location without permission where a ‘food animal’ is kept or where meat is sold or processed,” *The Intercept’s* Alleen Brown reported.

The first Iowa “ag-gag” law was declared unconstitutional, and the second Iowa law was challenged in federal court.

Altogether, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, North Carolina, and Utah have each seen their “ag-gag” laws defeated by lawsuits brought by organizations impacted by them.

North Carolina also is notorious for its pig farms, which can smell like decomposing bodies if waste is illegally sprayed.

For years, according to residents, “North Carolina regulators shielded the identities of polluting farms, burying public complaints against them and leaving those who lived nearby with few avenues for redress.”

A law like the one struck down is the kind of law that helps North Carolina coverup the impact of agribusiness on the environment in communities throughout the state.

“Studies show that consumers are concerned about the welfare of farm animals, due in part to undercover videos showing horrific conditions and abuse of animals on factory farms. Big Ag should focus on shifting to more humane farming systems instead of seeking to punish those who expose the cruelty currently happening on farms,” ASPCA concluded.

17 Jun - Questions in the Face of Counterinsurgency

As the rebellion that has rocked the US and spread internationally approaches a full month, the counterinsurgency strategy being used to pacify it has become well defined.

MORE:

by Peter Gelderloos (*It's Going Down*)

Police repression and vigilante violence from the outside, and rumors of agent provocateurs to divide the movement from the inside. But another method of internalized, soft counterinsurgency has also been omnipresent: the use of liberal identity politics to spread the idea that fighting back against a racist society is in itself racist. This practice was already well developed by the time of the Michael Brown rebellions in 2014, making use of white allies to put all their power and privilege behind the ostensible leaders of oppressed communities. Though leadership in any community, and for any larger group, tends to be a complicated question, self-identified allies tend to support the leaders appointed and legitimized by the media, leaders who hold positions of power within some of the institutions that help make up this white supremacist society.

In other words, standard allyship means empowering reactionaries, business leaders, politicians, wealthy cultural leaders, and social media influencers. It also tends to leave Black and brown people fighting on the frontlines more isolated and more vulnerable to repression and police violence, despite making the claim that white people physically fighting racists and racist institutions puts racialized people in danger.

Numerous critiques of this kind of ally politics already exist, such as “Accomplices Not Allies” and “A Critique of Ally Politics”.

Nonetheless, liberal identity politics have been deployed effectively across the country, pacifying the revolt in specific places and at specific moments in time. The rebellion is still ongoing, but its momentum has certainly been reduced by this practice.

How it has been used and how we have responded is a conversation that I think needs to happen in every city. In fact, I think it's a conversation that needs to happen globally, given how the anti-police, anti-racist rebellion has resonated with people in countries across the world, and in those same countries, the media and would-be movement leaders are rolling out US-style liberal identity politics and pacifism in a desperate attempt to stay ahead of the curve. What we are witnessing is the development of a repressive technology in real time.

My goal with this article is to simply contribute some questions to that conversation, knowing that the answers have to come from the streets, they have to come from our collective practice.

Autonomy + Reparations

The first question for me is how do we take anti-racism and anti-colonialism beyond protest and self-defense? How do we combine radical practices of autonomy with a radical vision of reparations?

Unfortunately, many white radicals have been buying into hip theories that downplay racism as a mere question of identity. If Black and Indigenous radicals cannot trust the commitment of white radicals to directly attacking racism and dismantling the legacies of oppression, the liberals have a huge advantage in imposing their safe solutions and peaceful photo-ops.

Looting is an effective means of wealth redistribution, but what do we do beyond the fleeting moments of the riot? What do we do when we are able to take over space and hold it for days, or weeks? At that moment, the questions of land, wealth, and power become unavoidable, and if we have no answers, we are setting a hard upper limit to our capacities for rebellion. Autonomous zones and communes are beautiful, empowering experiences, but a commune on stolen land is just a colony if it is unable to address the racist legacies of the society it is rebelling against.

Relations, Riots, Revolutions

Effective solidarity is based on relationships between people in struggle. Riots and insurrections are certainly magical moments in which the divisions between people slip away, rebels can break out of their categories and support one another, creating a temporary community of care and joy. But that community comes to a quick end. The kinds of relationships across lines of race and other forms of oppression, that are needed to support long-term revolutionary movements, do not spring up overnight.

On the contrary, when anti-racist relationships are superficial, it favors the kind of activism that is legible to the most privileged, particularly the college-educated, meaning that all resources and all legitimacy remain concentrated among NGOs and formal leftist organizations that are trying to fix a racist system rather than destroy it.

How do we form the kinds of relationships we need?

Pacifism = Disarmament

This next question is largely being solved by circumstances, but I will include it anyway, because it is vital not to underestimate the power of the media to make people forget something they learned just last week.

How do we keep movements from disarming themselves?

In the Oscar Grant and Michael Brown rebellions, liberals disarmed the movement in part by spreading the idea that rioting endangered those who were most at risk of police and state violence. This discourse rode the coattails of a version of privilege politics that sees oppressed people as particularly fragile, which is, of course, completely twisted. Because this discourse operated primarily on people with more social privilege, it actually took those people out of the line of fire, out of the subsequent prosecutions, leaving those who remained more exposed in the streets and with fewer resources and less attention during the repression that inevitably followed.

In the current rebellion, it has become clear that those who disarm the movement make it much easier for fascist vigilantes to come in and kill or attack people. Simultaneously, being peaceful provides absolutely no protection against police, something we have seen again and again and again.

People are learning this lesson on their own, but the State and the media will always inject pacifism right back into the heart of our movements.

On the one hand, we need to make sure there is a place in these struggles for peaceful protesters who are solidaristic, and on the other hand make sure that pacifiers are every bit as despised and unwelcome as snitches.

Radical vs. Liberal views of Anti-Racism

Liberal identity politics, in contrast to radical resistance against the multiple, overlapping forms of oppression that exist in our society, is ultimately about turning oppressed people into demographics to be exploited for power struggles within the dominant institutions. It is about representation. To be represented, a people must be simplified, they must be homogenized, borders must be drawn around them to determine who has membership and who does not, and then that entire body must be further disciplined, bribed, and silenced until they accept the political views that belong to their representatives. In practice, liberal identity politics see identities as immutable and sacrosanct, rather than historical, shifting, and entangled. In practice, they will do everything to keep those identities, and the oppressions they represent, in place.

The liberal view has all the resources, all the bullhorns, all the platforms. Even in the midst of a rebellion that is very much an indictment of the failed history of liberal anti-racism and reform, the liberals have managed to dominate the discourse.

How can we effectively change the conversation around racism, oppression, power, and change?

Yannick Giovanni Marshall, referring to the George Floyd rebellion, cites what Frantz Fanon wrote regarding the duty of the “middle class, colonized intellectual” to have an ambiguous position regarding violence and to try to calm down the rebellion: “they have the power because they are so close to the institutions of white supremacy themselves.”

In response, he recommends that we “not allow the liberals to blend in.” It is vital to talk about these rebellions as radical Black uprisings against racial capitalism.

It is not a question of simply talking more about class, and definitely not retreating to the implicitly racist workerism that has characterized many white anti-capitalist movements, past and present. Rather, we need to make it impossible to talk about racism and capitalism as forms of oppression that can be separated. We need to spread the awareness that—through the ongoing process of colonialism—these forms of oppression were created together.

So how do we communicate theory and an awareness of history in a way that spreads throughout society? I do not have the answer (to this or any of the other questions I am posing), but I suspect that we need to fully integrate the answer in our own minds and practices, and to also remember that actions speak louder than words.

Leftist Populism

Direct democracy is prone to manipulation and obstruction. We have known this since the Occupy! movements and the plaza occupations in 2011, but we have not thought of effective solutions. In part, this is a consequence of left populism. Too many radicals have been seduced by marketing strategies, believing we will be stronger if we can sell the masses on attractive ideas. This only sets us up for failure down the road.

Who doesn't like democracy? How could it not be a good strategy to tell people that revolution just means more democracy and better democracy?

Classical democracy was a governing system that accompanied a militaristic slave economy. Modern democracy is a bourgeois project integral to capitalism and fully compatible with colonialism. Yes, there are other histories of alternative democracies, but every single one of them is fraught with problems of

nationalism and centralization, and every single one of them can be traced back to an initial moment of leftist populism, trying to sell the masses an easy solution, going back to Lenin's original, cynical claim to "democratic centralism."

Democracy is central to the white supremacist imagination, so it seems a little strange to insist on pulling down Columbus statues while we still maintain loyalty to that concept.

When we take over space, mass central assemblies will be unable to achieve the revolutionary organization of that space, they will be unable to address deep-seated, multigenerational problems like white supremacy and patriarchy, and they will be especially prone to bureaucrats, manipulators, demagogues, and authoritarians. We already know all of this.

How do we develop effective forms of decision-making in which there is no central ground? How do we create solidarity without unity, coordination without centralization? There have been many experiences with pluralistic organization combining affinity groups with platforms with encuentros, or a dual organization based on overlapping, redundant assemblies, some organized according to a territorial logic and the others according to a functional logic, like neighborhood assemblies and infrastructural/economic assemblies. But these experiences have not been adequately theorized and communalized throughout our movement.

These are some of the questions that need to be addressed. If this conversation expands now, exponentially, we might be able to defeat the counterinsurgency and keep this rebellion growing. If we do not, the conversation is still just as vital, because none of these problems or conflicts are going away any time soon.

17 Jun - Eric King Update

We start with something Eric wrote a couple of months ago regarding the Bureau of Prisons' COVID-19 response and follow up with a report on ANOTHER brutal assault he received from a guard. Without coincidence, this is happening as he is under a prohibition from receiving mail, books & magazines, and calls (other than legal calls).

MORE:

COVID-19 Response

They aren't doing testing here, they aren't doing shit really. No hand sanitizer, no mask, no 'social distancing', the tiers and showers aren't being cleaned even semi-daily, we still only get 3 showers a week and only 1 hr outside a day, typically super early in the gloom or rain. Medical staff told me they can't even order tests! They have to refer it to a doctor, who then refers it to Regional, who then reviews it and decides whether to test or not. Bureaucracy at its finest. They will let us die in the name of justice, blame it on the virus and move right along enslaving, business as usual.

Things here have been boiling a bit and almost went off today. There have been guards going out of their way to make things difficult, lying through their teeth, talking so reckless, small things that build and build. So today during our cell rotations (every 21 days we rotate cells) we just decided to slow burn them and not participate. It's not much of a stand, but it gave us a chance to say "no" to these pig bastards and blow off a little steam.

We ended up moving cells, they will move you one way or another, but it felt good to air our grievances and make the day cops look like clowns who can't handle the basic task of cell rotating. Here soon it could have been something much worse, so letting the small aggro out now was a good stress relief.

June 24th - Eric assaulted by guard at FCI Englewood

On June 18th Eric was taken into the showers while shackled, and attacked. The guard took the metal detection wand and swung at his each of Eric's ankles. As Eric would lift his leg to avoid being hit, this officer would swing at the other. The guard then picked Eric up and dropped him on his head onto the

concrete in the shower. He woke up after losing consciousness for 10 seconds thinking they were pouring water on his face, but it was his own blood.

Eric was transported to Swedish Medical Center and was given six stitches and diagnosed with a moderate to severe concussion. The hospital would not give him the results of the scan or release them to his family or lawyer because they told him “he is government property.”

The reality is folks have been fighting for over a month to be able to get an expert in to assess Eric. We believe he is suffering from a traumatic brain injury resulting from officers at FCI Florence kicking him in the head for five minutes in August, 2018. We were hopeful that we would get help for him and see where he is at with the mixture of trauma and brain injury he has been struggling with. His memory and many other aspects of his life have been affected. Officers at FCI Englewood know this. They knew that we were trying to get a medical expert in related to head injury concerns...and then they dropped him on a concrete fucking floor on his head in the bathroom while shackled up.

This all follows a situation with evidence of his case manager out of FCI Englewood attempting to make a deal with a “white power” prisoner to attack Eric. The prisoner did not cooperate. This information was turned over to the court before they denied Eric’s transfer to another facility. What the prosecutor chose to do with this evidence—evidence that a crime was committed at FCI Englewood, was to run and tell the prison. Within a week both Eric and the other prisoner received disciplinary write-ups (“shots”) for alleged assaults. Both for water both in separate areas of the prison.

The guard who attacked Eric was the same guard who claimed Eric assaulted him with a drop of water. They attempted to refer the case to the FBI for prosecution but less than a month ago the FBI released the case back the prison. The guards attempt to have him charged criminally fell flat.

The reality at this point is Eric is not safe in Bureau of Prisons (BOP) custody. Over the past two years at five different prisons, the BOP has established a pattern of housing white supremacists in cells, close to Eric on the same tier, in an attempt to have Eric attacked.

When Eric returned from the hospital, he discovered his entire tier was attacked and pepper sprayed after Eric was taken away. He was denied the ability to contact his attorney and family and it was only on his weekly allotted 20 minute legal call that any of this news came out. Last week, the prison also denied Eric the ability to consult counsel when he had an appellate deadline. The pattern of BOP intervention in his ability to fight his case continues...

The US Marshals need to move Eric to non BOP Facility.

The North Central Regional Office NEEDS to open an investigation into this officer, as well as the ones that may have been standing by watching. When Eric asked for one to be opened he was denied. The prosecutor needs to drop this fucking case.

We are very hesitant to ask for folks to call in and advocate for Eric because the last time this happened, a year and a half ago, his phone privileges were taken away. But at this point Eric needs folks help.

J Sheehan is the Director of prisoner operations for the US Marshals. The ONLY entity that can choose to move Eric out of FCI Englewood right now and their phone number is 703.740.8400.

An officer at the BOP North Central Regional Office gets to decide if the BOP will investigate this *criminal* attack. Their phone number is 913.621.3939.

Eric’s prisoner number is 27090-045

Eric can not receive letters

Eric can not receive books

Eric can not receive magazines

Eric can not call his family

Eric is completely isolated at the whim of the DOJ right now and need folks to help keep him safe.

17 Jun - Kings Bay Plowshares Activists Face Up to 20 Years in Prison

Interview with Mark Colville, one of seven Kings Bay Plowshares defendants.

MORE:

by Melinda Tuhus (*Between the Lines*)

Listen to the full interview at bttonline.org/6-kings-bay-plowshares-anti-nuclear-weapons-activists-face-up-to-20-years-in-prison

On June 8, 80-year-old peace activist Liz McAllister was sentenced for her part in the Kings Bay Plowshares action on April 4, 2018, in which 7 Catholic activists poured their own blood and hammered on equipment after breaking into the Kings Bay nuclear submarine base in St. Mary's, Georgia, the largest such base in the world. April 4 was chosen as it was the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

On Oct. 24, 2019, all seven Plowshares members were found guilty in federal court on charges of trespassing, the destruction of property and conspiracy. McAlister had already spent 17 months in prison before the trial, and was sentenced to time served, plus three years' probation and a collective \$33,000 in restitution, which the group has vowed not to pay. Of the six remaining participants, one, Jesuit priest Father Steve Kelly, has remained in the maximum security Glynn County Detention Center, where all of them were once incarcerated. The defendants face more than 20 years in prison.

Between The Lines' Melinda Tuhus spoke with Mark Colville, one of the seven Kings Bay Plowshares. Here, he talks about the federal government's plan for sentencing – whenever it occurs – and ways in which the prosecution has cracked down on peaceful protesters trying to avert nuclear disaster.

MARK COLVILLE: The rest of us are awaiting sentences. The six remaining folks – all of us have asserted our right to be sentenced in person before a judge with the public present. So now essentially the dispute becomes, when is it going to be safe to be in a Georgia courtroom?

Georgia, of course, for anyone who's paying attention to the spread of the pandemic – Georgia's governor is one of the more ignorant in the nation that has made very bad decisions about reopening – canceling restrictions about social distancing; the restaurants and salons have been opened way prematurely, which means that as far as I've been following the science of this, it's important to me because I'm facing federal prison where a lot of people are getting infected and dying.

We're scheduled now for sentencing on June 29 and 30, and none of us to my mind really thinks that it's either safe to travel to Georgia or be in a Georgia courtroom at this point. And, of course, I always need to add when I'm talking about this that people should carry in mind the absurdity of ordering people to federal prison by videoconference because it's not safe to be in a courtroom. There's a certain morbid irony in that to me.

I'll speak for myself. I'm trying to get another continuance on the sentencing because, you know, I might have pissed off the government, but I don't think it deserves a death sentence. Whether you sentence me now or three months from now when it might be a little safer, really doesn't make any difference to the government.

From the get-go in this case, there's been a certain public posture that the government and the prosecution and the probation office have taken, and that is that they want to be as punitive as possible and as unreasonable as the law allows. That was evident in Liz's sentencing as well. There were motions that were

summarily denied right up front when the sentence was pronounced. The two significant arguments we had about sentencing, both of which have bumped all of us up to a higher sentencing category. In other words, we are subject to doing more time – because, number one, the court refuses to grant us any leniency based on the notion that we accepted responsibility for our actions. That’s typical of any sentencing in federal court: If the probation department in their investigation makes the determination that you have sufficiently accepted responsibility for your action, you’re supposed to get some points taken off your evaluation of sentencing, which makes it so you have a less harsh sentence. Of course, the way the courts normally function, and apparently the way they have functioned in this case, whenever anybody refuses a plea bargain and takes something to court because they think they’re right, they automatically do not get credit for accepting responsibility. In other words, exercising your rights as a citizen is to the court – after you’ve been found guilty – they look back on that and see it as an avoidance of responsibility.

The other significant thing – they call it risk of death – and this is something they I guess just came up with in the federal system, and that is that our actions amounted to risking the lives of ourselves, or personnel on the base. Just an absurd notion, especially when we’re talking about weapons of omnicide that could end the whole of creation in about a half hour.

20 Jun - On the Black Leadership and Other White Myths

The following maintains what corporate media & white liberals call “the Black leadership,” does not exist.

MORE:

by We Still Outside Collective (*Ill Will Editions*)

Let’s be serious: what they are talking about is nothing more than a figment of the white liberal imagination. That is, if these so-called Black leaders even exist at all, then they can only be found shucking and jiving in a “woke” white person’s head.

Isn’t it interesting how progressive whites seem to have a direct line of communication with Black leaders, while everyone else in the street fails to suffer from the same delusional schizophrenia? What’s all the more odd is that the voices that they hear from these magical negroes always manage to say the same things: “Everyone should peacefully protest on the sidewalk, because unmediated Black rage makes others uncomfortable.” “Don’t strike back at that cop even if he wants to kill you and everyone you love.” “I know the manager follows Black kids from aisle to aisle, but still, his store shouldn’t be looted.” In other words, the message relayed from the sounds on repeat in a white liberal’s head is to end Black revolt and conduct civil disobedience in a manner that is appropriate for Karen and Ethan, not Jamal and Keisha.

It is worthwhile to note that Black people, themselves, never refer to any mythical Black leadership. This is because we know, full and well, that all of our leaders, since Martin and Malcolm, have been killed. Even our potential leaders, like Trayvon and Tamir, are gunned down before they can share with us their vision. What’s more, if they are not brutally murdered, then they are locked away forever with Sundiata, Mutulu, and Mumia. That is, we know that if you speak with truth and move against oppression, then the only way to avoid the pig’s bullet or penitentiary, the modern-day cracker’s whip or plantation, is to go on the run like Assata Olugbala Shakur! In fact, any Black person that says otherwise should be exposed for what he or she is: a poverty-pimp!

After half of a century without a figurehead in the front, Black youth have shown the whole country that they are more than capable of setting their own path and directing their own initiatives. They have demonstrated to us a dynamism that can never be reduced to a homogenous mass following any one authoritative voice. Paradoxically, it is the entire spectrum of the Black revolt in the streets that can be identified as leaderless “leaders,” since they have shown everyone else what it means to free yourself.

To paraphrase James Baldwin’s still apt observation, we Black people are more aware of the inner workings of our pale-face antagonists than they are of themselves. Consequently, the diagnosis of woke whitey’s psychological condition is quite simple: this James Earl Jones, Carl Winslow, or Rafiki from the

Lion King voice, which bellows off the walls of their skull, is a defense mechanism against their inability to completely repress their own white superiority complex. What's also abundantly clear is that the only way to fully work through this hang up is to gain even a small percent of the courage of a Black adolescent and overcome their white guilt with a fist, a stone, and a Molotov cocktail.

21 Jun - Call for Week of Solidarity With Anarchist Prisoners

Call for International Week of Solidarity With Anarchist Prisoners 2020, 23–30 August

MORE:

A new decade has started on this planet. With the rise of right-wing movements and the slow decline of social democracy, we are looking into coming years of intense struggle with the state and capitalism. There are already many anarchists sitting in prisons for taking on this fight—forgotten or ignored by liberals and human rights NGOs for “violent” actions.

Quite often anarchists do get solidarity from parts of the society from which they come. After all who can support one better than their own fellow humans trapped in the same misery of exploitation. However, we believe that responsibility for those facing repression in different parts of the world should not be only on the shoulders of local communities, but of international anarchist movements. Through our collective actions we can not only more widely diffuse the resources that are available, but also keep the fires burning in the chests of those imprisoned through autonomous revolutionary love and direct actions!

This is a call for you to act in solidarity with imprisoned anarchists all around the world. From the 23rd of August 2020—the day of execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, you can do everything, limited only by your imagination. Put some of that vast imagination into action to make people feel your energy and show our collective strength in revolutionary struggle!

21 Jun - Revealed Sick-Call Requests From a Federal Jail Show People Desperate for Medical Attention Amid the Pandemic — and Waiting Weeks to Get It

A federal judge last week denied a request by people held in a federal jail in Brooklyn to order officials to improve their efforts to prevent a coronavirus outbreak in the facility.

MORE:

by Nick Pinto (*The Intercept*)

The incarcerated people had alleged a level of medical neglect at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn that rose to the degree of unconstitutional cruel and unusual punishment. They sought a temporary injunction ordering jail officials to improve medical care and disease prevention at the jail, as well as appointing a special master empowered to oversee those changes.

Judge Rachel Kovner ruled against this request, finding that the people held at MDC Brooklyn had failed to show that jail officials had displayed “deliberate indifference to a substantial risk of serious harm,” the legal standard for a constitutional violation in this sort of case. Kovner acknowledged deficiencies in medical care at the jail but concluded that “the facility’s aggressive response to a public health emergency with no preexisting playbook belies the suggestion that these apparent deficiencies are the product of deliberate indifference on the part of prison officials.”

“Petitioners have not established a clear or substantial likelihood that prison officials have violated the Eighth Amendment through deliberate indifference to substantial risks of serious harm at the MDC,” Kovner wrote. “They are therefore not entitled to the extraordinary relief they seek: a preliminary injunction at the outset of this case that would release hundreds of prisoners and subject many aspects of the facility’s operations to judicial control.”

Kovner did find that the Bureau of Prisons had spoliated evidence — that is, knowingly destroyed evidence relevant to the lawsuit — when it persisted in an evidently longstanding practice of shredding the requests

for medical care submitted on paper slips by people held at the jail. Homer Venters, an expert in correctional medical care who inspected the jail on behalf of the incarcerated people bringing the lawsuit, had pointed to this destruction of medical records as part of a systemic effort on the part of jail officials to track the incidence of Covid-19 among the patients in their custody, calling it "especially egregious and intentionally designed to avoid knowing the extent of the outbreak and providing the necessary care."

"The fact that the MDC engaged in the destruction of evidence during the litigation is unprecedented finding against a BOP facility," lawyers for the incarcerated people wrote in a statement on the ruling, "one that should stand as a reminder to other prison officials that they are not above the rules."

In her ruling, Kovner found that the evidence before her "suggests that the MDC's sick-call process and the related isolation determinations are falling short." Shortly after denying the request for a temporary injunction, Kovner granted a request by *The Intercept*, which had intervened in the case seeking to unseal 210 medical requests — mostly submitted digitally through the jail's online medical request system, though some on handwritten slips of paper — which had earlier been submitted as evidence in the case. The Bureau of Prisons, through its lawyers in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York, had fought to block the disclosure of the medical requests, arguing that even with identifying information like names and inmate numbers redacted, the disclosure would still violate the medical privacy of the people in its custody. Kovner dismissed this objection and permitted the medical requests to be refiled publicly with names and identifying information redacted.

The picture painted by the now-public sick calls is a grim one. The full collection of medical requests revealed in the filing show just how desperate some of the incarcerated people became.

"i have a serious health problem and it can turn into life threatening if it doesnt get taken care of," one person wrote in a March 4 medical request. "i was suppose to see a speaciliest at my last jail i was at the rash is coming all over my body again and im also having chest problems and wen i piss the last 2 times blood came out." Three weeks later, the person's request had evidently gone unanswered: "im still having the health prblom its getting worse wen i seen the nurse i was told nothing is going to happened untill i got to the jail im going unfurtuntllay its not going to be for a while i would like to get treated its getting worse i cant sleep at night without having alot of pain the rash is all over my body it burns it itches im having hard time breathing its a life threatening problem if theres nothing that can be done here i dont kno what to do."

Some of the requests referenced the coronavirus pandemic, not just related symptoms. "im feeling very sick and ive been throwing up bad couth i have had a fever i would like to see some one about this do to the sickness that is going on please," an incarcerated person wrote.

"I have a serious cough problem which causes me to bleed," another person wrote in Spanish on March 17. "This is the third time that I have requested medical attention, which as of this date is being denied."

"i need a asthma pump iev been asking for almost a month and i be having trouble breathing," an incarcerated person wrote on March 17. Five days later, evidently nothing had changed, and he wrote again, this time in capital letters: "I NEED AN ASTHMA PUMP ASAP."

"This is gunna be the last message i send to medical pertaining my left ear," someone wrote March 23. "ive been in pain for 11 days already and now im feeling like im getting a fever and medical hasnt sent me down to check on me and now im feeling worse then ever and we been locked in for two day and ive been in a lot of pain now i have a fever im not sending anymore messages to u guys anymore this shit is incredible."

"i have had a persistant cough that just wont get better," another wrote on March 28. "i also have been sweating off and onn randomly... not sure what its from but ive written you about a week ago about it and still havnt been seen.. i hope this isnt the virus symptoms."

On March 29, another person wrote: "i been caughing for a month waiting on sick call when im I going to see the DOCTOR? Not feeling good!"

In another submission for medical help on March 26, the requestor noted that it had been at least a month since he first requested medical care for headaches and still hadn't received any response. "I NOW HAVE A COLD THAT I CAN'T GET RID OF FOR THE LAST 4-5 DAYS," the person wrote. "MY MAIN CONCERN IS THE HEADACHES . I NEED TO SEE SOMEONE ASAP. I BEEN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE FOR A MONTH NOW AND STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN A RESPONSE."

"still having difficulty breathing," another person wrote April 6. "allergy and asthma. what else do i have to do communicate this problem?"

"i have a back pain and chest pain," another entry on April 10 said. "please i would like to get checked i cant breath well my whole body be hurting please i would like to be checked i have 12 days telling staff and no one do anything for me."

"I put one sick call in to no avail," someone wrote on April 13. "I am having trouble breathing and getting good oxygen. I wake up having breathing issues and go to bed with he same. I had lung surgery in 2006, and my capacity so compromised as it is. I was referred to psych, and not taken seriously by the doc. I am NOT a whiner and there is an issue here. Could it please be addressed or at the least well documented that I tried? Thanks for your time and consideration."

Though Kovner denied the request for a temporary injunction, the lawsuit alleging unconstitutional conditions at MDC Brooklyn is still before her court.

In the days since the ruling, the deaths of two people in custody at MDC Brooklyn under circumstances evidently unrelated to Covid-19 have come to light. Jamel Floyd died June 3 after being pepper-sprayed in his cell by corrections officers. On June 10, it was reported for the first time that Kenneth Houck had died in custody May 19 under unclear circumstances.

21 Jun - Jalil Muntaqim Back at Sullivan, Recuperating from Covid-19

For months, public health experts, faith leaders, Congress members, and hundreds of others have warned NYS officials that the prisons are potential death traps in the COVID-19 pandemic.

MORE:

Recognizing this, a New York State judge on April 27th ordered Jalil's temporary release from Sullivan Correctional Facility in Fallsburg, NY, based on his extreme vulnerability to the virus. Jalil is 68 years old and suffers from serious chronic health conditions that can make COVID-19 deadly.

However, NYS Attorney General Letitia James, acting on behalf of NYS DOCCS Commissioner Anthony Annucci, appealed the ruling, blocking Jalil's release and forcing him to remain in prison. Just as we feared, Jalil, who was ordered released a month ago, eventually contracted COVID-19. Jalil became ill on May 22nd and was taken to Albany Medical Center on May 25th.

On May 28th, while Jalil was hospitalized, the Appellate Division, Third Dept. heard oral arguments from Jalil's attorney Nora Carroll and DOCCS attorney Frank Brady.

Thanks to Jalil's supporters, various articles about this case were written.

On June 4, 2020, the Appellate Division, Third Department issued a decision regarding Jalil's habeas petition, originally granted by Judge Stephan Schick of the Sullivan County Supreme Court. The lower court's decision was reversed and the petition dismissed. We are free, as the decision acknowledges, to file a new writ, but this sets a terrible precedent statewide and also ends this lawsuit.

Jalil is currently back on his block at Sullivan, and has been doing some exercises in the yard. He is recovering slowly and was glad to get a much-needed food package from NYC Jericho.

Jalil informed us that his request for medical parole was denied. He received notification of this on May 30th. He requests that we continue our campaign to Governor Cuomo for commutation of his sentence.

23 Jun - Supporters seek 'benevolent release' for Ed Poindexter, say it would help heal racial wounds

As always, read this corporate news article with a critical eye as the author is clearly biased against Ed Poindexter and has been writing about this case for years.

MORE:

by Paul Hammel (*Omaha World-Herald*)

A group of supporters of Ed Poindexter, convicted in the booby-trap killing of an Omaha police officer 50 years ago, made an emotional appeal Monday to release him from prison to promote healing and because he's near death.

Poindexter is black and was a member of a Black Panther-like group that railed against police conduct; Officer Larry Minard was a white married father of five children who died after touching a suitcase full of dynamite in 1970 amid one of the worst periods of racial strife in Omaha's history.

But backers of Poindexter, a model prisoner who is suffering from diabetes and other health problems, said that after serving 50 years behind bars, he's paid his debt to society.

"A benevolent release will go a long way in mending some of the racial divisions in our community by saying, 'Ed, enough is enough. And Godspeed,'" said Preston Love Jr., a North Omaha leader, to members of the Nebraska Board of Pardons.

Members of the board — Gov. Pete Ricketts, Attorney General Doug Peterson and Secretary of State Bob Evnen — thanked the seven people who testified on Poindexter's behalf during the public comment period of their meeting but took no action; there was no pending application before the board.

But Ricketts, who said he had already discussed the case with Love, suggested that the group make an application for a compassionate medical release that the board could consider later, perhaps at its next meeting in two months. He also suggested that they follow Love's suggestion to reach out to Minard's family and the Omaha police.

"That's a good place to start that conversation," the governor said.

Others, including members of the Minard family, say that the judicial system has more than once affirmed their convictions and that claims that they were framed were "completely ridiculous."

But backers of Poindexter said the recent death of George Floyd during an arrest in Minneapolis, and the recent attention to racial inequities in the judicial system, make it a good time to again review his case.

Monday's presentation was organized hurriedly by Dr. Diane Topolski, an Omaha physician who said recent events prompted her to delve into cases of what she saw as "systemic racism" in Nebraska. The case of Poindexter and Rice stood out, she said, in her research and talks with lawyers, journalists and community leaders in Omaha.

"My conclusion is that Ed did not receive a fair trial in 1971 and was wrongly convicted of a crime in which he had no involvement," she said.

At 75, Poindexter is at increased risk of death if he were to contract COVID-19 and is no longer a threat to society, she said. A pardon would not mean that he is innocent, but would show compassion, show that he's paid his debt to society, and would allow a very frail inmate to live out his final days outside of prison, the physician said.

"I hope you appreciate the sense of urgency associated with this decision," she told board members. "You are Ed's last hope."

Author Michael Richardson, who worked in North Omaha at the time of the bombing, maintained in a book last year that Poindexter and Rice were framed by federal and local law enforcement officials.

The book says that the prosecution's star witness, Duane Peak, lied on the stand and that law enforcement planted evidence.

Peak, then 15, testified that he was acting at the direction of Rice and Poindexter when he loaded a suitcase with dynamite, planted it in a vacant North Omaha house and called police to report a woman screaming there. But in 2007, a voice expert who analyzed a tape of the phone call said it was "highly probable" that the deep voice on the call was not Peak, who was granted immunity for his testimony.

The Nebraska Supreme Court ultimately rejected a request for a new trial. After Richardson's book was published, Ricketts and Douglas County Attorney Don Kleine both rejected requests to reopen the case.

In 1974, U.S. District Judge Warren Urbom overturned the convictions of Rice and Poindexter, ruling that police had illegally searched Rice's home. But their convictions were later reinstated on appeal.

In 1993, the State Board of Parole recommended that Rice's life sentences be commuted by the Pardons Board to a period of years, a needed step to become eligible for parole. The Pardons Board rejected this.

23 Jun - Leonard Peltier June Update

We want to share with you two major events happening for Leonard: Sunday June 21st and Friday the 26th, the 45th year since the attack on the Jumping Bull's land.

MORE:

On Sunday 6-21 our friend and supporter Mia Feroletto published a speculator edition of "New Observations" magazine, including over 40 of Leonard's paintings and articles by Chase Iron Eyes, John Fusco and other friends of Leonard's.

New Observations Magazine is proud to showcase the art of Leonard Peltier in Issue #135, The Pine Ridge Reservation: Prisoner of War Camp #344. Over forty of his paintings have been included in the magazine ranging in subject matter from children, Native American elders, horses and buffalo, to his life in prison. An extraordinary story of the history and culture of Indigenous people is woven together depicting joys and happiness, pain and sorrow of life on and off the reservation. Leonard's gifts as an artist are unmistakable.

New Observations Magazine has been published since 1985. Leading members of the contemporary art and thinking communities have contributed their work from the beginning to share with us their perspective on a wide range of subjects. This issue contains articles from Chase Iron Eyes, Charmaine White Face, Cindy Catches, Dana Thompson, Joanna Malinowska, John Fusco and many others as well as stunning photography from Keri Pickett, John Willis, Mitch Epstein and the Insight Photography Project and their work with Lakota youth on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Episode 1 of the new podcast series "LEONARD: Political Prisoner" will premiere on Friday, June 26. Season 1 features interviews with Edgar Bear Runner, Kevin Sharp, Jean Roach, Chase Iron Eyes, Milo

Yellow Hair and more. New episodes will be released once a week on Fridays. Currently the podcast is available on Spotify, Soundcloud and Buzzsprout. It will be coming soon to Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Stitcher and more. Please check **whoisleonardpeltier.info** for an audio teaser on the podcast.

25 Jun – U.S. Expands Assange Indictment To Criminalize Snowden Assistance

The United States government expanded their indictment against WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to criminalize the assistance WikiLeaks provided to NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden when staff helped him leave Hong Kong.

MORE:

by Kevin Gosztola (*Shadowproof*)

Sarah Harrison, who was a section editor for WikiLeaks, Daniel Domscheit-Berg, a former spokesperson, and Jacob Appelbaum, a digital activist who represented WikiLeaks at conferences, are targeted as “co-conspirators” in the indictment, though neither have been charged with offenses.

No charges were added, however, it significantly expands the conspiracy to commit computer intrusion charge and accuses Assange of conspiring with “hackers” affiliated with “Anonymous,” “LulzSec,” “AntiSec,” and “Gnosis.”

The computer crime charge is not limited to March 2010 anymore. It covers conduct that allegedly occurred between 2009 and 2015.

Prosecutors rely heavily on statements and chat logs from Sigurdur “Siggi” Thordarson and Hector Xavier Monsegur (“Sabu”), who were both FBI informants, in order to expand the scope of the prosecution.

In March, Judge Anthony Trenga dismissed the grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, that was investigating WikiLeaks. U.S. Army whistleblower Chelsea Manning, who refused to testify before the grand jury, was released from jail after spending about a year in confinement for “civil contempt.” She was still ordered to pay \$256,000 in fines.

Activist Jeremy Hammond, who was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his involvement in the hack against the intelligence consulting firm Stratfor, refused to testify as well. Trenga ordered his release, and he was transferred back into the custody of the Bureau of Prisons.

Prosecutors accuse Assange and other WikiLeaks staffers of engaging in “efforts to recruit system administrators” to leak information to their media organization.

WikiLeaks Openly Displayed ‘Attempts To Assist Snowden In Evading Arrest’

“To encourage leakers and hackers to provide stolen materials to WikiLeaks in the future, Assange and others at WikiLeaks displayed their attempts to assist Snowden in evading arrest,” the indictment declares.

It notes Harrison (“WLA-4”) traveled with Snowden to Moscow from Hong Kong, leaving out the part where the State Department revoked his passport and trapped him in Russia.

During an interview for “Democracy Now!” in September 2016, Sarah Harrison said WikiLeaks understood Snowden was in a “very complex legal and political situation” and needed “some people to assist with technical and operational security expertise.

“I went over there, as the person on the ground in Hong Kong, to help him, not only for him, himself, because he had clearly done something so brave and deserved the protection, I felt, but also for the larger objective to try and show that despite [President Barack] Obama’s war on whistleblowers, that actually there was another option.”

Harrison added. “At the time, the Obama administration was intent upon putting alleged source Chelsea Manning into prison for decades—as she is now in prison for 35 years—and we really wanted to try and show the world that there are people that will stand up, there are people that will help. And *The Guardian*, for example, did not give any additional help to Edward Snowden as a source, as a person there, and we wanted to show there are publishers that will help in these scenarios.”

Prosecutors note WikiLeaks booked Snowden on “flights to India through Beijing” and Iceland as examples of how Assange engaged in an alleged conspiracy.

At the annual Chaos Computer Club conference in Germany on December 31, 2013, Assange, Appelbaum, and Harrison participated in a panel discussion called, “Sysadmins of the World, Unite! A Call to Resistance.” (Assange appeared via video.)

The indictment criminalizes Assange’s speech in support of Snowden & future whistleblowers & twists his words into an example of WikiLeaks “encouraging” the “theft of information” from the U.S. government.

Prosecutors even omit particular words to make the message Assange shared seem more nefarious than an endorsement of radical transparency.

From the indictment:

...Assange told the audience that “the famous leaks that WikiLeaks has done or the recent Edward Snowden revelations” showed that “it was possible now for even a single system administrator to...not merely wreck[] or disabl[e] [organizations]...but rather shift[] information from an information apartheid system...into the knowledge commons...

But here is the full quote:

...And we can see that in the cases of the famous leaks that WikiLeaks has done or the recent Edward Snowden revelations, that it’s possible now for even a single system administrator to have a very significant change to the—or rather, apply a very significant constraint, a constructive constraint, to the behavior of these organizations, not merely wrecking or disabling them, not merely going out on strikes to change policy, but rather shifting information from an information apartheid system, which we’re developing, from those with extraordinary power and extraordinary information, into the knowledge commons, where it can be used to—not only as a disciplining force, but it can be used to construct and understand the new world that we’re entering into.

Assange encouraged young people to “join the CIA. Go in there. Go into the ballpark and get the ball and bring it out—with the understanding, with the paranoia, that all those organizations will be infiltrated by this generation, by an ideology that is spread across the Internet. And every young person is educated on the Internet.”

“There will be no one not exposed to this ideology of transparency and understanding of wanting to keep the Internet, which we were born into, free. This is the last free generation,” Assange added.

The government presents this message as evidence that WikiLeaks solicits government employees to steal classified information. However, what Assange did was appeal to young people to help the public address a crisis of corruption in government by forcing transparency at a time when the government abuses the classified information system to conceal waste, fraud, abuse, and other illegal actions.

Appelbaum is singled out for saying Harrison “took actions” to protect Snowden, and “if we can succeed in saving Edward Snowden’s life and to keep him free, then the next Edward Snowden will have that to look forward to. And if we look also to what has happened to Chelsea Manning, we see additionally that Snowden has clearly learned.”

This is a fairly innocuous observation numerous people in the news media, including this author, have shared. It means if whistleblowers do not believe they will be punished with decades of prison or forced to

flee their home country then we will have more whistleblowers because they will not believe it so dangerous to come forward.

At no point does the Justice Department attempt to connect the alleged “recruitment” of “hackers” or “leakers” to an actual individual, who heard these words and acted upon them.

Of course, the Justice Department refuses to accept the public benefit that came from Snowden’s disclosures. He still faces an indictment for allegedly violating the Espionage Act, which is why he remains in Russia, where he obtained asylum in 2013.

On May 6, 2014, the indictment alleges Harrison “sought to recruit those who had or could obtain authorized access to classified information and hackers to search for and send the classified or otherwise stolen information to WikiLeaks by explaining, ‘from the beginning our mission has been to public classified, or in any other way, censored information that is of political, historical importance.’”

It is one of the clearest indications that the “conspiracy” charge is a not-so-subtle effort to criminalize the journalism of an adversarial media organization that the United States has spent the last decade working to destroy. At no point in this statement does Harrison ask any specific persons to steal information.

If what Harrison did—and by association, Assange supported—is a crime, then there are countless news media organizations which pride themselves on publishing documents they obtain from sensitive sources that must worry about potential prosecution if they boast about their work in a public setting.

Conspiracy Charge Depends On Statements From Paid FBI Informants

The section of the indictment on Assange’s alleged role in “conspiring” with “hackers” mentions a “Teenager,” who Assange met in Iceland. This individual is Sigurdur “Siggi” Thordarson.

As Wired Magazine reported, “When a staff revolt in September 2010 left the organization short-handed, Assange put Thordarson in charge of the WikiLeaks chat room, making Thordarson the first point of contact for new volunteers, journalists, potential sources, and outside groups clamoring to get in with WikiLeaks at the peak of its notoriety.”

Thordarson was fired from WikiLeaks in November 2011 after the media organizations discovered he embezzled about \$50,000.

After the FBI asked to talk with him in person following his termination, Thordarson “begged the FBI for money.” Agents initially ignored his requests, but eventually they paid him \$5,000 for “the work he missed while meeting with agents” in Alexandria, Virginia, where the grand jury investigation was empaneled.

In 2013, WikiLeaks stated, “Because of requests from people close to him and his young age [Thordarson] was offered the opportunity to repay the stolen funds, which amounted to about \$50,000. When it became clear he would not honor the agreement the matter was reported to the Icelandic Police.”

Thordarson apparently embezzled funds from several other organizations in Iceland that were not related to WikiLeaks. The Icelandic authorities process charges of embezzlement.

“It has materialized that the individual has engaged in gross misrepresentations of different types to obtain benefit from a range of parties,” WikiLeaks added. “We will not identify him by name in light of information that he has recently received institutional medical treatment.”

“In light of the relentless ongoing persecution of U.S. authorities against WikiLeaks, it is not surprising that the FBI would try to abuse this troubled young man and involve him in some manner in the attempt to prosecute WikiLeaks staff. It is an indication of the great length these entities are willing to go that they

will disrespect the sovereignty of other nations in their endeavor. There is strong indication that the FBI used coercion and payments to pressure the young man to cooperate,” WikiLeaks contended.

Hammond was the target of an FBI operation. As Dell Cameron previously reported for the *Daily Dot*, chat logs, surveillance photos, and government documents showed it was Monsegur who introduced Hammond to a hacker named Hyrriya, who “supplied download links to the full credit card database as well as the initial vulnerability access point to Stratfor’s systems.”

According to Hammond, he had not heard of Stratfor until Monsegur brought the firm to his attention. Monsegur transferred the details for at least two stolen credit cards.

In December 2011, Monsegur gave “AntiSec” or the group of hackers targeting Stratfor access to the private intelligence firm’s systems. He pushed Hammond and others to “unknowingly transfer ‘multiple gigabytes of confidential data’ to one of the FBI’s servers. That included roughly 60,000 credit card number/records for Stratfor customers that Hammond was charged with stealing,” according to *Daily Dot*.

Anthropologist Gabriella Coleman wrote in her book, *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous*, that AntiSec went to the WikiLeaks internet relay chat server. Monsegur was largely unaware. A deal was made to provide files from Stratfor to WikiLeaks.

“When talking to WikiLeaks,” Hammond recounted to me, “they first asked to authenticate the leak by pasting them some samples, which I did, [but] they didn’t ask who I was or even really how I got access to it, but I told them voluntarily that I was working with AntiSec and had hacked Stratfor.” Soon after, he arranged the handoff. When Sabu found out, he insisted on dealing with Assange, personally. After all, he told Hammond, he was already in contact with Assange’s trusted assistant “Q.”

Thordarson was “Q.”

According to Hammond, Monsegur attempted to entrap WikiLeaks by suggesting the organization pay him “cash for the leaks.” But WikiLeaks already had the documents they planned to publish.

The U.S. government had a deadline in June 2019 for submitting an extradition request. It seems improper to add these substantial details to the request, especially since a one-week hearing was already held.

While the conspiracy charge includes sensational claims of collaboration with hackers, it is no less of a political charge than the seventeen Espionage Act offenses Assange faces for publishing information.

The additional sections in the indictment represent an attempt to give the illegitimate prosecution a greater veneer of criminality. Unfortunately, it does not take much to scrape it off and expose the contempt for press freedom that still lies behind this vindictive prosecution.

25 Jun - Families fear ‘nursing home’ coronavirus outbreak at upstate NY prison for older inmates

A state plan to move more than 100 older inmates to a prison in the Adirondacks has relatives and advocates worried the lockup could become a deadly “nursing home”-like location if coronavirus spreads there.

MORE:

by Noah Goldberg (*New York Daily News*)

The state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision announced in May that it would transfer inmates 65 and older to the Adirondack Correctional Facility, between Saranac Lake and Lake Placid.

More than 50 older incarcerated people have been sent to the prison, according to data seen by the *Daily News*.

“My brother is not in the greatest health,” said Darlene MacKenzie, whose 64-year-old brother Edward, convicted of kidnapping in Nassau County in 1994, is at the Adirondack prison.

MacKenzie fears her brother could contract COVID-19 at the prison. “My greatest fear is they don’t even test them. It would probably spread at Adirondack,” she said.

“If just one COVID-19 case enters Adirondack, it creates a moral crisis that could be fatal to every person in the population,” a group of 77 advocacy organizations said in a letter to Gov. Cuomo and state legislative leaders.

“It also threatens to replicate the public health crisis experienced in nursing homes across the state,” said the letter. Roughly 6,000 nursing home patients in New York have died of COVID-19.

The medium-security Adirondack prison once housed adolescent offenders. The state has re-purposed the prison to handle an older population, and the teenage offenders have been moved elsewhere.

Adirondack currently houses 60 inmates. It could hold up to 150, the Corrections Department says.

Of the 52 older inmates at the prison as of June 20, 54% are black and 55% have already served at least 15 years in prison, according to data seen by *The News*.

Advocacy groups called on Cuomo to grant clemency to all the prisoners the Corrections Department plans to move to Adirondack — or to at least make them eligible to go before the Parole Board.

A state Corrections Department spokeswoman said inmates at Adirondack will be safer because few COVID-19 cases have been reported upstate.

June 25th - RAPP Statement on Cuomo Adirondack Plan

Governor Cuomo is creating a prison nursing home that amounts to a ticking time bomb and potential public health catastrophe for incarcerated older New Yorkers, their families, prison staff, and the outside local community. Just two days ago, a federal prison less than one mile down the road from Adirondack Correctional Facility reported five new COVID-19 cases. If just one single COVID case makes its way into Adirondack, the impact will be devastating and fatal.

Locking up older and sick people who have already served decades in prison serves no public safety benefit, keeps families apart, costs millions of dollars, and promotes the systemic racism that the whole world is rising up against in this very moment. This is clear, and the Governor should act immediately by granting clemency to every person incarcerated at Adirondack. If the Governor doesn’t step up, then State Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie must take immediate action by passing Elder Parole and Fair and Timely Parole to ensure that everyone at the facility has a fair and meaningful opportunity for release before it’s too late.

27 Jun - Compassionate Release Denied For Marius Mason

To quote Paul L. Maloney, the judge deciding Marius’ fate: “...regardless of the severity of the infection, only one inmate at Danbury has died from COVID.”

MORE:

Marius request for compassionate release has been denied, despite testing positive for COVID, being over 50, having underlying medical conditions, and serving the majority of his sentence. How many more people have to die, Judge Maloney?