



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for February 5th

21 Jan - Eric King's Partner Interviewed on The Final Straw

The Final Straw Radio recently released an episode featuring an interview with Eric's partner.

MORE:

This interview gives great insight into everything that's been going down with Eric over the last few months and how it effects him and his family. The episode also features an interview and update by A-Radio Berlin on the Mapuche caravan in so-called Chile. Listen at bit.ly/2HLINJM

January 25th - Eric's communication restriction is dangerous to ALL political prisoners

Why is this communication ban between Eric and his wife important to ALL political prisoners?

The communication restriction is obviously important because it is not only illegal and super harmful for a prisoner to be cut off from their family. This adds to the trauma Eric and his family has experienced and that is very purposeful. However that is not the most problematic & DANGEROUS aspect of this situation.

One of the reasons given by USP Leavenworth is communication is restricted because it "THREATENS THE ORDER AND SECURITY OF THE INSTITUTION". Eric's wife is a member of his support crew and the point of contact regarding needs Eric has, communications to be shared with community, and action Eric wishes the community to take. Along with most of the letters that Eric sends specifying what help he needs going missing or delayed, the phone block makes it near impossible to support Eric.

The institution and BOP has successfully taken a political prisoner and isolated him from his support people due to perceived "security risks". If we allow this to happen to one federal political prisoner we are opening the door to allowing this to happen to all federal political prisoners. Eric's current situation is the "canary in the coal mine" right now for the safety of political prisoners. It is urgent that we use all resources and courses of action against the BOP and USP Leavenworth to show them we will not permit this to happen.

We ask that folks keep an eye out for various email and online blitzes. If folks have legal contacts they can share for civil or constitutional suits we would love to be connected. Any resources at all are appreciated. We ask that folks continue to call into both the regional office and USP Leavenworth. And share as much as they can with your local community if you can find a way to show Eric solidarity or effective action calling out the BOP please do so. Get creative.

January 25th - Inspector General online form submission in support of Eric

We would like as many people as we possibly can to report the assault and communication restriction. It takes 5 minutes and can be done online. forms.oig.hhs.gov/hotlineoperations/report-fraud-form.aspx

If we can flood their inboxes over the weekend they will have to read it at least once and hopefully it can catch someone's attention.

Sample complaint to submit:

I am writing in reference to Eric King 27090-045. He has not only been assaulted and tortured by BOP staff but he is now being illegally kept from communicating with his family.

On December 1st when Eric attempted to make his one allowed phone call a month he dialed his wife and found the number was restricted. Since then he and staff at USP Leavenworth have made numerous

requests to inquire as to why her contact has been restricted. According to BOP policy there is a process that needs to be followed when restricting a spouse's communication and FCI Leavenworth and Florence is in direction violation of that. Not only have they failed to notify Eric of such restriction they have failed to show that proper procedure was followed.

Both the Wardens and SIS offices at FCI Florence and FCI Leavenworth are in violation of the BOP/DOJ program statement OPI: CPD/CPB NUMBER: 5265.14

As there was no incident report written or delivered to Eric the following procedure was not followed

This means the prison violated section 541 subpart B

(2) Where there is no incident report, the Warden:

(i) Shall advise the inmate in writing of the reasons the inmate is to be placed on restricted general correspondence;

(ii) Shall give the inmate the opportunity to respond to the classification or change in classification; the inmate has the option to respond orally or to submit written information or both; and P5265.14 4/5/2011 Federal Regulations are shown in this type. Implementing instructions: this type. 12

(iii) Shall notify the inmate of the decision and the reasons, and shall advise the inmate that the inmate may appeal the decision under the Administrative Remedy Procedure.

(d) When an inmate is placed on restricted general correspondence, the inmate may, except as provided in §§ 540.16 and 540.17: 28 §§ CFR 540.16 and 540.17 refer to Sections 8 and 9, respectively, of this Program Statement.

(1) Correspond with the inmate's spouse, mother, father, children, and siblings, unless the correspondent is involved in an violation of correspondence regulations, or would be a threat to the security or good order of the institution; The word "spouse" includes a common-law relationship which has previously been established in a state which recognizes this status. In states that do not, a common-law relationship is not considered "immediate family." For determination of applicable state laws, consult the Regional Counsel.

The warden immediately needs to remove the calling restrictions on Eric's wife. And we request that the BOP, office of inspector general and the DOJ begin an investigation of illegal actions taken by Lt Wilcox, the staff and warden at FCI Florence and now FCI Leavenworth. Below are details of the assault and torture that resulted in Eric's transfer and time in the specialized housing unit.

USP Leavenworth has notified Eric he will not receive medical care as long as he is striking and he has been taken off the list to receive glasses. He has been on the list for about a year and a half at this point and currently has no glasses and this is not only a safety risk but makes it near impossible for him to communicate by mail.

August 17th 2018

At FCI Florence Lieutenant Wilcox attacked Eric without provocation on August 17th and then he was assaulted by 5 guards in the hallway outside Lieutenant Wilcox's office on camera as he lay limp on the floor while officers beat him kicking his head and stomach ribs and chest. He was then held in a 5 point restraint bed for 7 hours in his own urine and blood without proper medical attention. The restraints have resulted in nephropathy in his wrists still to this day are numb and this suggests he is permanently injured. As well as any brain injury which an MRI will be perused to show this could be causing his increased migraines and dizziness. He was denied medical attention both at this point and for the next 6 days before he was moved to USP Leavenworth. After the torture on camera in the 5 point restraint bed Eric was transferred illegally to USP Florence without any authorizations from the Grand Prairie Texas OR any management variable which has resulted in already one denial of transfer since the staff at FCI Florence has failed to provide any transfer documents or reports as to why this transfer ever happened. He was held in a

cell clogged with someone else's feces and tortured with strobe lights overhead for 4 days. Medical made an attempt to visit Eric and was turned away by the guard outside his cell which again was captured on camera. He was not given any medical attention while in Colorado. Nor was he given access to his lawyer which was both requested by him and his Lawyer many times both to FCI Florence and USP Florence even during the time in which he was coerced and forced to sign a statement. Told by SIS he will not be able to speak with his lawyer until he signs. And even after the promise he was still denied access to his lawyer. Eric was then again without authorization from the office in Grand Prairie to USP Leavenworth while he is still held under the jurisdiction of the warden of FCI Florence. FCI Florence has taken away his ability to visit his family at USP Leavenworth.

A motion to preserve all video outside lieutenant Wilcox's office, the room Eric was held in a 5 point restraint and outside his cell at USP Florence so all video destroyed will be an apparent effort to destroy evidence of his assault and torture.

File to attach: supportericking.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/5265_014.pdf

22 Jan - Leonard Peltier Statement Regarding Nathan Phillips incident in DC

If you've paid attention to the news lately, you surely saw the group of high school-aged young men, in Washington DC for a protest against reproductive rights, mocking a Native American elder. Below is Leonard Peltier's statement on the event.

MORE:

I just saw the incident taking place in Washington, DC in which a demonstration between the white Make America Great Again (MAGA) representatives and a Native Elder singing a religious song took a horrendous turn. There were threats and insults by the young punk wearing the red M.A.G.A. hat while an Elder, who happens to be my long time AIM friend and comrade Nate Phillips, was singing a religious song. Now, I see the media and folks changing it around like it was the Native Elder's fault.

Let me explain to you what the song's history is.

The Northern Cheyenne People gave this song to the American Indian Movement as an honor song in 1972 after the 71-day occupation of the Wounded Knee massacre grave site, which is now a memorial site, owned by a white person ... can you believe that?

Wounded Knee is a sacred area for the LAKOTA people, where over 350 Elders, men, children, and women with unborn babies still inside of their bodies were slaughtered. There are documented accounts of soldiers who opposed the killing of babies, however there were Cavalry soldiers riding their horses around the massacre grounds waving their swords with dead babies on them. The Lakota had disarmed themselves, given up their weapons of stone tomahawks, bows and arrows and hand thrown spears to the 7th Cavalry and raised the white peace and American flag, after an agreed truce between them.

The leader of the Lakota Band of Natives was a peace Chief named Bigfoot. The Cavalry was heavily armed with portable cannons, rifles, steel bayonets and knives and pistols. The 7th Cavalry soldiers were under orders of their commanding officers. After the captives had been fed and convinced they were safe, and the babies began to quiet down, and sleep under their now warm robes, they did not see or hear what was about to happen.

The Cavalry, like thieves AND RAPISTS in the DARK of night, surrounded them with those DEADLY Weapons. Early that next morning on Dec. 25th (Isn't that their Christian God Jesus' Birthday?) after feeding the Natives their last breakfast meal, they began to slaughter them, killing all who could not somehow escape.

A couple decades earlier this same Army of rapists of girls and boys, and murderers of defenseless peoples surrounded a band of peaceful Northern Cheyenne at Sand Creek and committed the very the SAME MURDEROUS ACT, AFTER FIRST APPROACHING THEM UNDER BOTH FLAGS 'the AMERICAN and WHITE FLAG'!!! When the Natives were given the flags, they were given a promise that if they exposed and flew these flags the Army would never attack them.

Yet over a dozen soldiers were GIVEN MEDALS OF THE HIGHEST HONOR awards THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT has to BESTOW. Their soldiers and civilians received these awards for this act of genocide, and called it a great victory of war. Today they call it "Make America Great Again"!

So, a decade or so later, BELIEVING IN THEIR OWN B.S. PROPAGANDA THAT THESE WERE VICTORIOUS BATTLES, these same murderers with dozens of their traitors again attacked the Crow scouts during a religious ceremony, the Sundance, at the Little Big Horn or Greasy Grass Creek. This was what we Natives named it.

Only this time Crazy Horse and many other young powerful war leaders (we call SHIRT WEARERS of the Lakota Nations) and their allies the Cheyenne were at the camp guarding the people, armed only with stone tomahawks, bows and arrows against superior weaponry. They defended and wiped out Custer AND his band of MURDERERS and RAPISTS OF CHILDREN, HELPLESS ELDERS, WOMEN AND BABIES.

On their way back to camp the young heroic Cheyenne warriors made up the song, now known as the AIM song, and rode into camp singing it, and the women and men joined in and the whole camp began to sing it.

The song says Thank you to the great Spirit for allowing our young men to be brave AND courageous to FIGHT OFF AND TO PROTECT the young children THE WOMEN, UNBORN BABIES, THE ELDERLY WOMEN and MEN, AND OUR LEADERS. Singing THANK YOU Great Spirit for giving us the strength to SAVE OUR Children WITH THE BRAVERY YOU GAVE US. Thank you for showing us your Love for our Peoples. We pray you give us peace with these people who only want war and to kill our Nations/Peoples. This is the meaning behind the words of the Aim song.

So, this young man stood there acting like he was making fun of our religious leader, and smirking like he was superior to him. Someone should have been there to remind him about the over twenty-five children in the Catholic School on the Navajo Nation fifteen or so years ago. Not to mention the high numbers of evil crimes done to us in the past hundred years! Hundreds of Native Children had been raped and the priests responsible received as punishment a transfer to another church.

Most of the Indian Boarding schools even had THEIR OWN GRAVE YARDS, some with as many as 200 unmarked graves! This is what those kids were demanding, to return to those days when to them America was great.

22 Jan - True Animal Liberation by Walter Bond

Here's the latest from animal liberation prisoner Walter Bond.

MORE:

Animals are inherently better than human beings. To clarify, when I say 'Animals' this is merely shorthand for 'all life upon the planet, minus us'. And by 'inherently better' I mean collectively, and most of the time individually, more important to the healthy functioning of the Planet than we are. Animals are far more civil, much more intuitive, and far less wicked and worthless than the human race.

My position within Animal Rights has always been, and forever will be consistently 'extreme.' If you want a bunch of moralism and ethics read some Gary Francione or Peter Singer. I am a misanthrope and so is my stance as pertains Animal Liberation. Animals' lives must be exalted and protected at all costs, whatever it

may take! And for decades this is what disorganizations like the Animal Liberation Front, Animal Rights Militia and others have done under cover of darkness and clandestinely.

The Animal Liberation Front was started in England in 1976, or thereabouts. It was formed originally out of another group called the 'Band Of Mercy' that was no less concerned about Animal Liberation but was not willing to go quite as far as the ALF. In short, the ALF had no concern for the law. If rescuing an Animal entailed trespassing on private property, burglary or property damage, so be it. At first the ALF had an office and was centralized. This made it an easy target for law enforcement, and soon ALF members were going to prison. This is when a brilliant turn in organization occurred. The ALF decentralized and made the terms of affiliation thus:

1. Anyone who is Vegan or vegetarian, that
2. Liberates Animals from places of harm or causes economic damage to those that profit from Animal exploitation, and
3. Causes no harm to a human or Animal.
4. Has the right to consider themselves a part of the Animal Liberation Front.

This had some rather far reaching affects geographically and well into the future. First off, this disorganization made it impossible for a centralized authority to ever stop the group. The worst they can do is grab a small group or individuals that have holes in their security. But since each ALF cell is autonomous and clandestine no two cells even know of each other's existence making it impossible to snitch, even if compelled to do so. The government here in America displays much misdirection portraying the idea that subversive, top down organizations, are the threat. This is largely a ruse to get activists who otherwise would go underground and become a problem to law enforcement to remain in their crosshairs.

Those in authority in law enforcement know that the pyramid hierarchy is the easiest to infiltrate. Every group of this type is seeking capable people that are disciplined and intelligent. They are also seeking material resources to better legitimize the group. In short, they are trying to become the new authority group. And it just so happens that the FBI, ATF and private corporate interest groups are teeming with the exact type of person and finances that every one of these 'revolutionary' groups are chomping at the bit to receive. This all makes for a perfect storm whereby infiltration, diversion and drag netting the movement, any movement, is a cinch!

Disorganization stops this in it's tracks with the added and positive effect of being instantly unpopular with the vast groups of activist types that cling to Animal Rights as a cause for purely personal and pathological reasons. Since everything the ALF does is above the law not very many cling-ons will be willing to live anonymous lives doing physically difficult activities in the dead of night. Whilst being largely vilified by those that make a buck off of Animals suffering like every other scam charity. There simply isn't any of the bells and whistles that this type of piece-of-shit would find self serving.

The move to decentralize also became the rise of the ALF in various countries, very rapidly. Having a simple set of easily translatable criteria allowed for quick adaptation by A.R. activists everywhere. It also showcases the power of an 'action only' affiliation as opposed to an ideology or purely membership approach. So much of what passes for Animal Liberation today is of the same symbolics that plagues and saturates all activist movements. Joining groups, lobbying governments, fighting for cage space, protesting generally, shenanigans for media attention, petitioning, Educating/entertaining, and on and on ad infinitum.

Busy work for the activists acts as a pressure valve for frustrations channeling them into safe outlets for the system. The problem that sincere activists often face is the material fact that despite these efforts none of these indirect forms of resistance are effective in any tangible way to Animals lives, today, in the present, now. Instead, everything becomes theoretically effective in an imagined future. For example: maybe someone will watch our new program about elephants being abused in the circus, and then they will become concerned and compassionate and then, they (not us) won't stand for it anymore. And then they (not us), will save these elephants or shut down the circus, whatever it may take! And of course since the

busy work is legal, safe, and can be stopped at anytime by the individual without consequence (because it's not having a real world impact) it attracts the worst types of fakes, phonies, scam artists, lazy and pretentious people that you can name.....Anyway.

The ALF being an extra legal outfit makes use of an aboveground. This legal wing is not in physical contact whatsoever with those breaking the law to save Animals. But they do the legal work that the underground often cannot do without risk of capture. Things such as passing communiqués explaining why an action occurred, explaining the reasons for true Animal Liberation, whatever it may take. And often combating regressive voices within the movement itself. Outside of this grassroots and international disorganization of the ALF and groups like the ALF is another form of direct action for Animals in the form of sanctuaries, so let's talk about them a bit.

'Sanctuary' may be a flowery sounding word, invoking feelings of tranquility and security but this is reserved for the Animals alone. In the world of Animal Liberation running a large preserve for wayward and rescued Animals is fraught with difficulties, hard physical labor, constant financial concerns, movement politics and much, much more. Small to medium sanctuary owners are the unsung heroes of Animal Liberation. They often do not have the resources to take on all the Animals thrust upon them and at times have to make hard decisions on which Animals to accept, or reject, so as not to become culprit to playing silent partner to Animal abusers or whole industries of abuse that seek to don the mantle of 'compassionate' by 'retiring' their Animals after having done 'their duty to humanity', or simply sending them off to sanctuary to make room for more.

Sanctuary workers have to care for Animals that have been through hell on earth. Not a fake hell invented by religious wing nuts but the real hell of human use and abuse. To work for, or own an Animal Sanctuary is to constantly become attached to Animals, actually get to know them as individuals, only to watch them die early of the very complications that brought them to your care. And when other fair-weather activists have come and gone back to the city to pat themselves on the back for mucking a barn or petting all the Animals, the people that really keep an Animal sanctuary operational never get a break, no days off, no vacations and no travel. Their lives, efforts and dedication is in the help of actual Animals. When we speak of Animal Liberation let's remember that we are talking about the real world work, within or without the law, that saves Animals or stops their suffering now!

We live in a time of identity. We live in a pretentious age where everyone feels entitled to all the praise while simultaneously lacking all the substance. We live in the era of the adult infantile consumer shitbag that thinks their wish is societies command. But I will tell it plainly. Animal Liberation is NOT giving speeches at gala events. Animal Liberation is NOT compassionate gluttony and Vegan cheese. Animals Liberation is NOT being in a band or being an artist. Animal Liberation is NOT writing or reading books. Animal Liberation is NOT an anarchist, feminist, socialist theoretical critique. Animal Liberation is NOT your 'enlightenment' by studying Buddha, Krishna or any other so-called eastern solutions. Animal Liberation IS saving Animals from places of harm, confinement or danger, and/or, stopping people from harming, killing or selling Animals, real ones, in the present.

It really is embarrassing to have to elaborate this point, which should be obvious but has been made elusive by so many fame seekers and careerists. Once upon a time the ALF and the Animal sanctuary world had a symbiotic relationship. This makes perfectly logical sense. The ALF used to be involved in extensive live Animal liberations, mainly in the 80's and 90's, and often needed friendly relations with animal sanctuaries to have somewhere to take and house liberated Animals. Unfortunately, these more complex and involved actions have fallen out of circulation in the underground as less and less capable and serious people have come to replenish the ranks. Equally unfortunate is that more and more of the large sanctuaries have sold out to moneyed interests and would probably be the first ones to call the cops if anyone showed up in the middle of the night in a ski mask with a van full of Animals. Solidarity abounds everywhere where superficiality reins king. But when it entails sharing the risk? Well, then, there's always a good excuse to turn your back on those that really need it.

So because of this, and a thousand other reasons, I am taking the misanthropic position from here on out. And that means looking at these issues and Animal Rights with new eyes. And it will not be so much through the eyes of the Animal lover as it is the perspective of the human hater!..... Four legs, good. Two legs bad.

So let's dispense with the humanitarian concerns and not just the ALF and affiliates, but of the whole Animal Rights movement as well. If we are to keep consistent in our concern for Animals over people, and we realize that at least 90% of the human race is the problem. Then let's go ahead and elaborate the basic criteria that even qualifies any of us to be worth the air we breath.

25 Jan - How a California officer protected neo-Nazis and targeted their victims

Court hearings reveal investigator in stabbings of leftwing protesters pursued criminal cases against anti-fascists but advocated no charges for armed white supremacists.

MORE:

by Sam Levin (*The Guardian*)

The testimony of a California police officer leading the inquiry into a series of stabbings at a neo-Nazi rally indicated that he targeted leftwing activists and victims rather than focusing his investigation on armed white supremacists.

The officer, Donovan Ayres, a 12-year-veteran of the California highway patrol, admitted he pursued information on the political affiliations and online activity of leftwing activists and victims. He testified Tuesday as a key witness in the state's ongoing case against three anti-fascist activists charged with assault and "rioting" during a brawl between neo-Nazis and counter-protesters at the state capitol in June 2016.

Ayres was tasked with investigating the violence that erupted at the event, including the stabbing and beating of at least eight anti-fascist protesters. But his testimony in a packed courtroom earlier this week, along with hundreds of pages of reports he wrote, have revealed the officer's acquiescence to the neo-Nazis and the way he repeatedly advocated they not face any criminal consequences.

Ayres told the court that he filed a search warrant to access the Facebook accounts of the leftist protesters and anti-fascists, but chose not to seek equivalent information about neo-Nazi suspects – an extraordinary move for a law enforcement leader investigating far-right violence. He also resisted describing the political affiliations of individual men on the neo-Nazi side.

"It's extremely troubling that a police officer wouldn't [seek] to get all the information available about all the actors involved in the violent episode," said Mike German, a former FBI agent and expert on the far right who reviewed some of Ayres' documents for the Guardian. "Law enforcement should always look at who has a history of violence ... The victims of the most egregious violence were counter-protesters."

The CHP and the prosecutors declined the Guardian's request for a comment. Officer Ayres did not respond to multiple inquiries.

The 26 June 2016 rally in Sacramento was organized by two white supremacist groups: the Traditionalist Worker party (TWP) and an affiliated California entity, the Golden State Skinheads. The event attracted a mass of leftwing counter-protesters from around northern California.

Ayres was assigned to a "tactical team" positioned on the roof of the Capitol. From there, he witnessed the chaotic melee between the protesters and counter-protesters below, which resulted in at least eight stabbings and dozens of other injuries.

After the event, Ayres and other CHP officers began interviewing anti-fascists who were stabbed, meeting some of them at the hospital. Ayres also began his inquiry into their political backgrounds.

Police seek ‘AntiFa’ and ‘Black Lives Matter’ records

Three months after the stabbings, the CHP wrote search warrants for the Facebook accounts of anti-fascists. The agency was seeking information on “several hundred protestors” who “illegally assembled ... with the stated messages to prevent Traditionalist Worker’s Party from exercising their rights to assemble and speak their message”, it said.

The protest groups include “AntiFa” and “Black Lives Matter”, CHP wrote in the warrant, adding that it was seeking “private messages”, “metadata”, “friend” lists, information about past and future events and other material about people linked to antifa and protest pages.

Ayres also conducted extensive surveillance of the political activities of the anti-fascists, digging up some protesters’ ties to Native American and Chicano groups.

Ayres wrote up more than 120 individual reports on everyone present at the capitol on 26 June. For anti-fascists and counter-protesters, the language was generally the same: the activists were “rioting” and threatening the free-speech rights of the TWP. “The message to commit violence against the ‘Nazis’ was clear,” he wrote in the reports, recommending they all be prosecuted.

Ayres, however, concluded he could not determine if the white supremacist men he identified were “solely responsible for any specific injuries”. That includes men who he determined, based on video evidence, were holding knives. For over a dozen of them, there was not enough evidence of any crimes, he wrote.

Sean Wurzburg, a TWP affiliate, Ayres wrote, was “observed holding what appears to be a folding blade knife in his right hand when he initially engaged with” a counter-protester. He continued:

Moments later they are observed rolling in the bushes ... and Wurzburg was seen making some downward thrusting motions. [The protester] sustained a stab wound to the ... abdomen. There is insufficient evidence to determine if Wurzburg is solely responsible for the wound that [the protester] sustained. What is known, is that Wurzburg and [the protester] were in physical confrontation, Wurzburg had what appeared to be a folding knife in his hand [and] during the fight Wurzburg is seen making downward thrusting motions before they separate.

“I was unable to specifically place Wurzburg as solely responsible for any specific injuries on those protestors who were known to be injured,” Ayres concluded, saying it was “unknown if Wurzburg committed any crimes”.

Ayres’ separate report on this stabbing victim said the victim “aggressively tackled Wurzburg, taking an advantageous top position after taking Wurzburg to the ground near the bushes”, and that after the confrontation, the victim “collapsed due to a stab wound”.

Ayres recommended the victim be charged with 13 separate criminal offenses, including “assault with a deadly weapon (flag pole) and battery on Sean Wurzburg”; conspiracy; false imprisonment; brandishing a weapon; participating in a riot; inciting a riot; participating in an unlawful assembly; possessing a prohibited weapon; disturbing the peace; wearing a mask or disguise to evade police, unlawfully carrying a banner “exceeding thirty inches”; carrying a flag pole handle that was “greater than one-fourth inch in thickness”; and carrying “prohibited signs”.

Wurzburg declined to comment when reached by phone.

Similarly, Ayres wrote that the TWP affiliate Derik Punneo “possessed a lawful knife, came under attack from the protestors and defended himself from the attacks”. Ayres summarized:

Punneo had a knife in his right hand at some point during Event ... [and] was in the immediate area of [a counter protester, who] did suffer from numerous stab wounds; Punneo was in the immediate area of [Yvette] Felarca and Felarca suffered cuts to one arm; Punneo had close physical interaction with [another counter protester] on two separate occasions (within a moment of each other) and [this counter protester] did suffer a large gash across his left upper chest; a knife, similar to the one Punneo was holding ... was located in the bushes.

Ayres concluded: “I was unable to specifically place Punneo as solely responsible for any specific injuries on those protestors.”

Ayres recommended no charges for Punneo but did urge a litany of felony charges against the three stabbing victims. The CHP later interviewed Punneo in jail after his arrest for an unrelated allegation of domestic violence. One man on the white supremacist side is now facing charges, but not for the stabbings.

Punneo could not be reached for comment.

German, the former FBI agent and a Brennan Center fellow, said Ayres’ language was alarming: “That word ‘solely’ is carrying a lot of water to try to protect these people from responsibility.”

Ultimately, Ayres did not recommend charges for any of the far-right men for the stabbings. Ayres did recommend criminal charges against all 100 counter-protesters he identified, including eight stabbing and beating victims and those not accused of any violence.

Prosecutors ultimately chose to charge three anti-fascists: Yvette Felarca, a 48-year-old Berkeley teacher and well-known leftwing organizer, & two indigenous activists, Michael Williams, 58, & Porfirio Paz, 21.

Paz and Williams stand accused of committing assaults with “sticks”. Felarca is facing a charge of felony assault “by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury” for an encounter with Nigel Walker, a demonstrator who showed up at the rally carrying a flag with what Ayres described as a “white power, white nationalist type symbol”. Walker taunted and provoked anti-fascist activists, Ayres recalled, waving the flag and shouting, “Antifa, here I am!”

Shaky footage presented by prosecutors shows the five-foot-tall Felarca bumping into Walker, briefly shoving and prodding him, and grabbing his backpack as a crowd surrounded them. Other protesters begin confronting Walker, and a police officer threw Felarca to the ground.

Paris Coleman, the prosecutor on the case, argued the felony wasn’t about the “actual pulling” of the backpack, but the fact that Felarca knowingly “dragged” Walker to harm’s way: “She knew what was going to happen,” Coleman said.

Paz, Williams and Felarca were engaged in a free speech protest, their lawyers have said, and maintain that the neo-Nazis attacked them.

A judge ruled Friday that the cases against the three anti-fascists could move forward, but agreed to downgrade Paz’s assault charges from a felony to a misdemeanor.

‘Thanks for protecting white supremacists’

Ayres’ hours-long testimony during the hearing this week provided new insight into the officer’s thinking, with remarks that at times sparked laughs and jeers from the crowd of anti-fascists supporting the protestors facing potential prison time.

On the stand, Ayres declined to refer to TWP organizers and supporters as Nazis, and judge Stacy Boulware Eurie noted he seemed to be showing “hesitation” with the characterization.

“That language wasn’t used in my assessment,” Ayres said.

Instead, he called them the “permitted party”, since TWP had obtained a permit to hold the event.

Ayres also resisted describing the political affiliations of individual men on the neo-Nazi side, even though he extensively documented their white supremacist paraphernalia and TWP ties in his reports. He said

“unknown” and “I don’t recall” when asked about the beliefs of numerous men, including Jonathan Jordan, a man who, according to Ayres’ own report, attended with the TWP and did the “Hitler salute”.

Ayres also admitted in court that he utilized a wide range of sources for footage of the event during his investigation, including neo-Nazi and white supremacist websites. Defense lawyers criticized the questionable sourcing, and eventually, the judge said she, too, was “concerned about the authentication of the video” of Felarca and Walker.

Ayres also detailed his observations on the day of the rally. He explained that he worried about Walker.

“He was by himself, and this was a concern for me,” Ayres testified. “I tried to call out to him to tell him not to enter, that it wouldn’t be safe.”

Ayres described the anti-fascists’ flags as weapons – a “club/stick” with a flag “attached” to it – “emblematic of anarchist beliefs” and direct evidence of their violent criminal offenses. But when asked if he considered Walker’s flag attached to a long stick to be a weapon, Ayres said no.

The defense lawyers questioned whether the officer, from his vantage point on the roof, was able to observe key conflict moments involving the protesters facing prosecution.

“I could not see what was directly beneath me,” he said.

When questioned about the Facebook warrants, Ayres admitted he did not send similar search warrants for TWP Facebook accounts, but he did not elaborate on his reasoning.

“This officer had real trouble being neutral,” the defense attorney Linda Parisi told the court at the end of Tuesday’s four-hour hearing. “The people he is seeking to protect are people who engage in hate ... white supremacists, white nationalists, Nazis.”

The Sacramento case follows controversies across the US in the last two years over the way law enforcement has dealt with violence between white supremacist and anti-fascist groups. Civil rights activists have accused law enforcement departments in Portland, Berkeley and Washington DC of aggressively investigating and prosecuting anti-fascists who oppose the growing far-right movement. Authorities have disproportionately targeted the left, critics say, even though white supremacists have perpetuated mass shootings and other deadly attacks.

Coleman, the prosecutor, argued it didn’t matter whether Ayres was “believable or unbelievable”, and that he called the officer to court for the purpose of authenticating a video.

As Coleman exited the hearing, an attendee had a message: “Thanks for protecting white supremacists.”

25 Jan - Philly DA’s Office appeals judge’s ruling on Mumia Abu-Jamal

The Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office on Friday appealed a judge’s ruling that convicted cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal should be allowed to reargue his appeal before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

MORE:

by Chris Palmer (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*)

The decision is the latest development in the long-running post-conviction saga of Abu-Jamal, 64, a former Black Panther and sometime radio reporter serving a life sentence for the Dec. 9, 1981, shooting death of Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, 25, at 13th and Locust Streets.

The District Attorney’s Office did not comment beyond filing its notice of appeal.

Judith Ritter, an attorney for Abu-Jamal, said in an email that she was “very disappointed” by District Attorney Larry Krasner’s decision.

“Krasner’s appeal only risks delaying our opportunity to make our case to an appellate court untainted by bias,” Ritter said.

Common Pleas Court Judge Leon Tucker ruled last month that Abu-Jamal could reargue his appeal before the high court because former Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille — who previously served as Philadelphia’s district attorney — did not recuse himself when Abu-Jamal’s case came before the court.

Tucker denied an argument by Abu-Jamal that Castille had “personal involvement” in the prosecution.

Abu-Jamal’s case has moved slowly through the appeals process, which has frustrated Faulkner’s widow.

John McNesby, president of the Philadelphia police officers' union and a frequent Krasner critic, said Friday that the district attorney’s decision to appeal was “the right thing to do.”

“Good,” he said when told of the decision. “I applaud them for doing that.”

25 Jan – Int’l Day of Solidarity with Trans Prisoners & Marius Mason’s Birthday!

January 22nd was the 4th Annual International Day of Solidarity with Trans Prisoners. The idea for a day of solidarity with trans comrades locked in the prison system came from Marius Mason, an Earth First!er and trans prisoner being held at FMC Carswell, in Texas, and the coordination of events surrounding the day is led by a team of trans prisoners.

MORE:

In their own words:

“This annual event is being lead by trans prisoners and their supporters from around the world. It is a chance for those on the outside to remember those behind bars, give real solidarity and support and raise awareness about issues facing trans prisoners. It is a chance for those on the inside to have a voice and organize together. As queers we know the terror of scrutiny, disgust and isolation; we have all be denied the ability to live our lives. For trans people in prison, those problems are doubled by the physical and emotional restraints of a literal cage. For decades, early queer activists showed active solidarity and support for their imprisoned brothers and sisters – they wrote letters, had marches, and demanded not just that they be treated with respect and dignity, but their total and unconditional release. Queer and trans prisoners organized with each other & the outside world. Join us in reviving that tradition.”

In the hustle and bustle at the *Journal* these days, we neglected to post about this very important day, and for that, we apologize. However, tomorrow is still Marius’s birthday, and we’re sure that he would greatly appreciate a birthday card or letter.

He loves to hear about people’s projects, what they’re reading, sensory information, animals, daily life, political thoughts. Even brief postcards, especially if they are sent regularly, help him feel connected. You can also send in printed out copies of articles, which helps him keep up to date on the world. Thank you for your ongoing support of Marius and all who struggle for earth and animal (human & nonhuman) liberation!

25 Jan - “Nutt” Begins 14-Day Sentence for Monopod Action

From March to May of last year, for 57 days, Nutty lived on a tiny cot atop a tall monopod, blocking MVP’s access to the top of so-called Peter’s Mountain in the Jefferson National Forest.

MORE:

Today, Nutty appeared in court, and pled guilty to ‘Blocking a Forest Service Road or Gate’. The prosecutor was asking for 30 days, but Federal Judge Ballou sentenced her to 14 days in prison. Tomorrow, she will turn herself in to serve the sentence. Directly before her sentencing, this is the statement she made to the courtroom:

“As long as there have been laws, there have been circumstances that call on us to break them. As pipeline work approached the mountain, I judged that circumstances made it necessary to take a stand.

The Mountain Valley Pipeline does not exist in isolation, and neither does any other pipeline. They are being built at the culmination of hundreds of years of enclosure and theft and colonization. Each new fossil fuel infrastructure project is a step further along the path of rampant and unnecessary environmental devastation, another aspect of humanity’s dangerous alteration of the systems life on earth relies on.

MVP claims that this pipeline isn’t just an attempt to extract profit from the destructive processes of fracking. They claim it’s in the public interest. But we don’t need pipelines. We need the freedom and the space to build a world without them. We need breathable air and drinkable water and wild places.

When they began their project MVP said they’d be done in 2018. Right now on Peters Mountain, there’s a swath of felled trees that breaks apart the canopy and cuts for miles through streams and wetlands and sensitive forest. But the broken trees are still shading the ground as seedlings grow in their place, and there is not a single piece of pipe buried or section of trench dug. No matter the consequences, I cannot regret the part I played in that.

I want people behind me in this courtroom to know that we can be stronger than the fear of legal consequences and police actions. I was neither the first nor the last to set my body in the path of MVP’s destruction. Threatening or jailing us cannot hide the harms the pipeline brings, and will not erase the urgent need for resistance.

Thank you to all the friends who came here today. That is all I have to say to this court.”

28 Jan - Court Finds Systematic Constitutional Violations by California DOC

On January 25th, a federal judge found that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is systemically violating the due process rights of prisoners.

MORE:

The judge ruled that CDCR is violating the Constitution by relying on unreliable and even fabricated confidential information to send California prisoners to solitary confinement. The court also found CDCR is using constitutionally flawed gang validations to deny people in prison a fair opportunity for parole.

As a result of evidence submitted by the prisoners' legal team, the judge extended by one year the terms of an historic settlement agreement to end indefinite solitary confinement in California prisons, including a provision allowing monitoring by plaintiffs' counsel.

"The purpose of the settlement was to eradicate constitutional violations related to CDCR's use of solitary confinement. Unfortunately, California is still violating our clients' fundamental rights to due process. This ruling is an opportunity to remedy those continuing violations," said Senior Staff Attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights Rachel Meeropol. "It also sends a clear message to CDCR and California's new governor: until the constitutional violations end, the courts will be watching."

Under a 2015 landmark agreement, nearly 1600 prisoners were released from isolated Security Housing Units (SHU) and CDCR agreed to substantially reform the process by which prisoners were placed and held in the SHU. Prisoners are no longer sent to SHU based solely on gang affiliation—often established on the basis of extremely insubstantial evidence—but only due to specific and serious rules violations.

The judge's decision underscored the serious problems in California's old gang validation system and the way it continues to impact prisoners:

"Plaintiffs have provided the court with ample evidentiary examples that demonstrate that the CDCR's old process for gang validation was constitutionally infirm (for example, because CDCR's interpretation of the word 'activity' also included something described as, 'non-action piece[s] of evidence'). As a result, prisoners' validations were sometimes based on as little as...having received correspondence (regardless of the content) or artwork, a birthday card, or other possessions from a validated gang member...or for the artwork they possessed (such as art containing Aztec or Mayan images)...Plaintiffs also provide evidence from a number of class members' parole transcripts in support of the contention that gang validation is a highly significant, if not often a dispositive factor in parole

consideration, and that when prisoners dispute their validation at their parole hearings, Commissioners consider the challenge itself to constitute evidence of dishonesty and a manifestation of a lack of remorse or credibility."

"Now that a judge has determined that California's gang validation system is deeply flawed, the Parole Board must immediately stop relying on these old validations and give our clients a fair chance to earn release," said Carol Strickman of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children.

The judge's decision also focused on how California distorts confidential information, describing one disciplinary case where "the potentially exculpatory part of the [confidential informant's] account was never disclosed, and instead it appears to have been replaced by an inculcating statement that the [confidential informant] never uttered;" another case where a "prisoner was told that the evidence against him included two confidential sources . . . however, according to the underlying confidential memorandum, there were not two sources, there was only one, and that person stated that he did not witness the event in question;" and many more, leading the judge to conclude that "time and again, the shield of confidentiality for informants and their confidential accounts is used to effectively deny class members any meaningful opportunity to participate in their disciplinary hearings."

Lead counsel at the Center for Constitutional Rights, Jules Lobel, explained, "CDCR relies extensively on confidential in-custody informants, even though the California legislature and experts around the country recognize they are often unreliable. We hope this decision will provide momentum for California and other state prison systems to take steps to ensure that this type of unreliable evidence is not used to send people in prison to solitary confinement.

Ashker v. Governor of California was originally filed by prisoners who had been isolated in the SHU for more than a decade based on alleged gang affiliation. The lawsuit followed coordinated hunger strikes in 2011 and 2013 by over 30,000 prisoners statewide. On the third anniversary of the settlement agreement, former SHU prisoners published a statement marking their progress and highlighting work that remains in order to fully remedy their unconstitutional conditions.

30 Jan - Prisons Are Building Databases of Inmates' Voice Prints

Roughly six months ago at New York's Sing Sing prison, John Dukes says he was brought out with cellmates to meet a corrections counselor.

MORE:

by George Joseph and Debbie Nathan (*The Intercept*)

He recalls her giving him a paper with some phrases and offering him a strange choice: He could go up to the phone and utter the phrases that an automated voice would ask him to read, or he could choose not to and lose his phone access altogether.

Dukes did not know why he was being asked to make this decision, but felt troubled as he heard other men ahead of him speaking into the phone and repeating certain phrases the counselors had given them.

"I was contemplating, 'Should I do it? I don't want my voice to be on this machine,'" he recalls. "But I still had to contact my family, even though I only had a few months left."

So when it was his turn, he walked up to the phone, picked up the receiver, and followed a series of automated instructions. "It said, 'Say this phrase, blah, blah, blah,' and if you didn't say it clearly, they would say, 'Say this phrase again,' like 'cat' or 'I'm a citizen of the United States of America.'" Dukes said he repeated such phrases for a minute or two. The voice then told him the process was complete.

"Here's another part of myself that I had to give away again in this prison system," he remembers thinking as he walked back to the cell.

Dukes, who was released in October, says he was never told about what that procedure was meant to do. But contracting documents for New York's new prison phone system, obtained by The Appeal in partnership with The Intercept, and follow-up interviews with prison authorities, indicate that Dukes was right to be suspicious: His audio sample was being "enrolled" into a new voice surveillance system.

In New York and other states, authorities are acquiring technology to extract and digitize the voices of incarcerated people into unique biometric signatures, known as voice prints. Prison authorities have quietly enrolled hundreds of thousands of incarcerated people's voice prints into large-scale biometric databases. Computer algorithms draw on these databases to identify the voices taking part in a call and search for other calls in which the voices of interest are detected. Some programs, like New York's, even analyze the voices of call recipients outside prisons to track which outsiders speak to multiple prisoners regularly.

Corrections officials representing the states of Texas, Florida, and Arkansas, along with Arizona's Yavapai and Pinal counties; Alachua County, Florida; and Travis County, Texas, also confirmed that they are actively using voice recognition technology today. And a review of contracting documents identified other jurisdictions that have acquired similar voice-print capture capabilities: Connecticut and Georgia state corrections officials have signed contracts for the technology (Connecticut did not respond to repeated interview requests; Georgia declined to answer questions on the matter).

Authorities and prison technology companies say this mass biometric surveillance supports prison security and fraud prevention efforts. But civil liberties advocates argue that the biometric buildup has been neither transparent nor consensual. Some jurisdictions, for example, limit incarcerated people's phone access if they refuse to enroll in the voice recognition system, while others enroll incarcerated people without their knowledge. Once the data exists, they note, it could potentially be used by other agencies, without any say from the public.

It's particularly alarming, they add, that the technology's use in prisons can ensnare people beyond their walls. "Why am I giving up my rights because I'm receiving a call from somebody who has been convicted of a crime?" asks Jerome Greco, a digital forensics attorney at New York's Legal Aid Society. Greco argues that the mining of outside parties' voice prints should require a warrant. "If you have a family member convicted of a crime, yet you haven't been, why are you now having your information being used for government investigations?"

The Spread of Voice Recognition Technology

Voice-print technology works by dissecting features that distinguish individuals' voices, such as their pitch. With this data, the program's algorithm generates a computer model of their vocal signatures, known as "voice prints," which can be stored in a database for comparisons with utterances recorded in the future.

In recent years, voice recognition technology has come to be associated with consumer offerings, like Amazon's Alexa and Apple's Siri, but the technology was originally developed for military and intelligence applications. Over a decade ago, as The Intercept reported, U.S. intelligence agencies were using voice recognition programs to identify the voices of Al Qaeda officials in their online audio postings.

Similarly, the algorithms and structure behind the prison telecommunications firm Securus Technologies' particular voice software, known as Investigator Pro, were developed in part through a \$50 million grant from the Department of Defense. The software was licensed to JLG Technologies, a company that Securus acquired in 2014. According to Securus's 2017 proposal for New York, the technology was developed because "DOD needed to identify terrorist calls out of the millions of calls made to and from the United States every day."

But it wasn't long before major prison technology firms, such as Securus and Global Tel Link, began marketing the technology to U.S. jurisdictions that were seeking to extract and store voice prints associated with incarcerated people in their systems. "IPRO [Investigator Pro] has a 10-year track record of providing

pinpoint voice accuracy capability country-wide in 243 states, county, and local correctional agencies,” notes Securus in the Pinal County contract.

The enrollment of incarcerated people’s voice prints allows corrections authorities to biometrically identify all prisoners’ voices on prison calls, and find past prison calls in which the same voice prints are detected. Such systems can also automatically flag “suspicious” calls, enabling investigators to review discrepancies between the incarcerated person’s ID for the call and the voice print detected. Securus did not respond to a request for comment on how it defined “suspicious.” The company’s Investigator Pro also provides a voice probability score, rating the likelihood that an incarcerated person’s voice was heard on a call.

Michael Lynch, an intelligence coordinator for the Alachua County Jail in northern Florida, confirmed that his county recently agreed to purchase Securus’s voice recognition program. Lynch said that the voice prints produced by the program will be permanently archived at Securus’s facility in Texas. He said the jail hopes the technology will address the problem of incarcerated people using each others’ personal identification numbers, or PINs. “The problem is inmates that are committing other criminal acts or contacting victims or witnesses and using other inmates’ PIN to do that,” he said in a phone call. “Voice [biometrics] will tell us who’s making the calls.”

Securus’s voice recognition program can also identify the voices of people outside prisons, both former prisoners and those who have never been incarcerated but communicate with people inside.

New York and Texas state corrections officials confirmed that their agencies retain the voice prints of formerly incarcerated people, like Dukes, allowing them to identify them by name if currently incarcerated people call them in the future.

And New York and Pinal County, Arizona, confirmed that their voice recognition programs can identify the voices of outside callers.

New York’s contract proposal with Securus states that outsiders’ voice samples can be used to “search for all other calls” in their recorded call database to find where those voices occur. In an email, New York prison officials confirmed that this program will give investigators the ability to extract a voice print from an outside caller and use it to “identify that a call recipient has participated in multiple phone calls.” They added that the program will not have names associated with outsiders’ voice prints.

In a statement, Pinal County Sheriff’s Office spokesperson Navideh Forghani also confirmed this outsider voice-tracking capability, noting that while their software does not identify non-incarcerated people by name, it can track “suspicious activities,” such as “multiple inmates speaking to one person on the outside on a reoccurring basis.”

With this technology, a press release for Investigator Pro notes, an investigator can now answer questions like, “What other inmates are talking to this particular called party?” and “Are any of my current inmates talking to this released inmate?”

Prisoners’ rights advocates worry that outsider voice surveillance technology could also be used to coordinate crackdowns against prison organizing campaigns.

“Using this technology to trace the voices of outside callers and flag those who speak with more than one person in a system, staff can use calls with outside organizers to quickly identify the incarcerated activist they support,” said Bianca Tylek, director of the Corrections Accountability Project, which works to curb the influence of commercial interests in the criminal justice system. Tylek noted that during the 2018 national prison strike, corrections staff routinely retaliated against incarcerated activists by using tactics like solitary confinement, job termination, and facility reassignment.

The Pressure to Participate

Advocates assert that corrections agencies have been building up large-scale voice-print databases with limited input from the public or from incarcerated people and their families. While some state corrections agencies have put out public notices to families about payment options for new phone systems, they seldom mention the voice-print databases, which are rarely discussed outside of industry conferences and internal talks with contractors.

“Every time there’s a new contract, there’s new surveillance, but they don’t say anything,” said Tylek. “I’ve never seen authorities post a public notice about new surveillance updates or tell families.”

Keeping their plans opaque has allowed authorities to quietly pressure incarcerated people into giving up their biometric data — or to enroll them without their knowledge. According to Securus’s 2019 Investigator Pro contract with Alachua County, Florida (which includes Gainesville), “Inmates will participate in a covert voice print enrollment process.”

In Texas, state prisoners must enroll in the voice recognition program if they want to make calls. According to Jeremy Desel, a spokesperson for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Investigator Pro’s voice enrollment process is “the lock and key” to the Texas state prison phone system. Likewise, in Pinal County, Arizona, phone access is severely limited for prisoners who decline to enroll in the voice recognition program. “If inmates choose not to participate, they can still utilize the phone system but only to make phone calls to their attorneys,” said Forghani, the county sheriff’s office spokesperson.

In some cases, prisoners participate without even knowing, said Martin Garcia, a 33-year-old who is incarcerated at Sing Sing in New York.

“A lot of guys don’t know technology,” he said. “They’ve been in there so long, they’ve never heard of Google.” The voice enrollment procedure, he continued, is seen as “just another thing they follow to talk to their family.”

Garcia was upset to hear that Securus’s voice-tracking capabilities, as described in its approved contract with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, could mine prison call databases to identify which other prisoners outside callers had contacted. “Are they criminals just because they’re talking to someone incarcerated?” he said. “To me, you’re criminalizing relationships. Some people may be hesitant to interact with me if they could be put in a database.”

After being briefed by The Appeal and The Intercept about the program, New York State Assembly Member David Weprin publicly called on the state Department of Corrections to give incarcerated people more choice regarding the voice recognition program. At a Tuesday hearing, Weprin, chair of the Assembly’s Committee on Correction, asked the Department of Corrections’ acting commissioner, Anthony J. Annucci, to add a provision that allows incarcerated people with legitimate concerns about voice surveillance to “not be denied phone privileges.” Annucci did not immediately agree to the request, instead pointing out that people have the option to make unmonitored calls to their attorneys.

In a statement to The Appeal and The Intercept, Weprin said he is “concerned with the deployment and use of voice recognition software” in New York state prisons and will be working with his colleagues to further investigate the technology.

Building the Databases

The rapid, secretive growth of voice-print databases is “probably not a legal issue, not because it shouldn’t be, but because it’s something laws haven’t entertained yet,” noted Clare Garvie, a senior associate at Georgetown Law’s Center on Privacy and Technology. “It’s not surprising that we’re seeing this around prisons, just because it can be collected easily,” she continued, referring to biometric voice data. “We’re building these databases from the ground up.”

The scale of prisons' emerging voice biometric databases has not been comprehensively documented nationwide, but, at minimum, they already hold more than 200,000 incarcerated people's voice prints.

New York's Department of Corrections, which incarcerates just under 50,000 people, confirmed that approximately 92 percent of its population had been enrolled in the voice recognition system. State corrections authorities for Florida, Texas, and Arkansas, which hold about 260,000 prisoners combined, also confirmed that they are using Investigator Pro's voice recognition technology. Connecticut and Georgia's state corrections systems, which incarcerate roughly 13,000 and roughly 52,000 people, respectively, have also purchased Securus's voice-print technology.

The databases of recorded calls from which prison authorities could search for outsiders' voice samples could also potentially include millions of recorded calls for state and countywide systems. According to the design requirements New York's Department of Corrections gave to Securus, for example, the company must be able to record every call, archive all call recordings for a year, and maintain any calls flagged for investigative purposes "indefinitely" through the life of the contract, which ends in 2021. (In the documents, Securus estimated that 7 percent of prison calls made per year would total 1.5 million calls, suggesting that the call database could retain over 20 million calls.)

Greco of the Legal Aid Society says he understands the value of such monitoring capabilities, pointing out that incarcerated people do sometimes have to deal with other prisoners taking their PINs or threatening their families for money. But the extension of this technology into the monitoring of people outside prisons, and the lack of transparency and regulation of these new databases concerns him. If voice prints were shared with police, for example, they could try to compare them with voices caught on a wiretap, he notes, despite scientists' skepticism about the reliability of voice print matches for criminal prosecutions. New York State's Department of Corrections declined to answer questions regarding whether it would share the data with other agencies.

Either way, Greco said, there's cause for concern. "Once the data exists, and it becomes an accepted part of what's happening, it's very hard to protect it or limit its use in the future," he said.

That has implications far beyond prisons, argues Garcia, the man incarcerated at Sing Sing. "First you use this on the people marginalized in society, criminalizing the families of those incarcerated," he said. "But, especially in Trump's America, the sky is the limit with this."

2 Feb - Our Esteemed Elders Need YOUR Support!

Check out this fund raiser for our Jericho Movement comrades.

MORE:

The past few months have been busy for Jericho. We visited Political Prisoners, sent food packages, provided financial support to our Political Prisoners and those recently released, assisted their families, held film series & discussion groups, hosted evenings of open mics, end of the year celebrations, and participated in Running Down the Walls: 5k run.

We spoke at various events and attended rallies, protests and meetings in collaboration and solidarity. We worked on medical & legal issues to help fight for Political Prisoner's rights, to assist them in getting proper care and helping them maintain their dignity on their road to freedom.

All of our actions seek to educate, increase awareness, assist in ensuring human rights are not violated, and to provide resources for our Political Prisoners and their families.

It is because of people such as yourselves, who so graciously give of your time and donations, that we are able to do this.

As the new year is upon us, with much work to be done, we are asking for your donation.

Thank you in advance for safeguarding and extending the fight for justice, freedom and human rights. As you know, the obstacles to helping free our Political Prisoners are immense. Your financial support at this time is needed for Jericho's continued work and effectiveness.

Your Generous Contributions Help us Provide Real Support to our Political Prisoners!

There are two ways to make a donation:

1. Please make non-deductible donations to:

National Jericho Treasury

Mail to: "Jericho Treasury/Michael Alston"

Ashanti Alston

162 Miller Avenue

Providence, Rhode Island 02905

For tax deductible receipt, send donations to:

Alliance for Global Justice

Subject Line: Jericho

Mail to: Elane Spivak Rodriguez

Alliance for Global Justice

225 East 26th Street, Suite 1

Tuscon, Arizona 85713

2. Or Visit our website at thejerichomovement.com/donate and click our "donate" button.

17 Feb - SecuriTEA Time

WHAT: Meet up

WHEN: 1:00-3:00pm, Sunday, February 17th

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

COST: FREE

MORE:

MACC's monthly theory discussion will focus on Kropotkin. This event is primarily intended for folks already involved in MACC. For location details: maccmiop@protonmail.com

Readings:

Feel like we're in a bad episode of Black Mirror? Is Mr.Robot looking more like a documentary? Between the corporate, state, and civilian threats we face, talking about cybersecurity can be overwhelming and stir up a lot of difficult emotions. This social event from the CyPurr Collective hopes to provide a comfortable space to discuss these anxieties as well as current events in the digital world. Let's build up our digital-agency and form a critical understand the tech encroaching on our lives. All while enjoying delicious tea and snacks, of course.