

We Never Sleep

Newsletter of the Anarchist Prisoners' Legal Aid Network

December 2001/ January 2002 - Vol. 2 No. 8



Anarchist Prisoners' Legal Aid Network
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"We Never Sleep was the name of a 'zine put out by former prisoner Paul-X, who worked to bring news from prison to the community before taking his own life when the pressures outside prison became unbearable. The name reflects our nature and resolve as anarchists."

APLAN Outside Support News

We hope you find this issue to be worth the wait! It has been a busy few months for the outside support group – the changed political climate has placed new demands on us, while we continue to work ahead on day-to-day network activities and to build a steadier base for the prisoner network.

The outside support group is very much interested in building up our prisoner legal contacts at this time. A "Legal Roundtable" is not included in this issue of the newsletter, as the circumstances of a number of contacts have made its inclusion infeasible. We would still love to work with anyone who has some legal experience to share, and still want to hear from those who have specific legal questions they would like answered. With a bit of luck and plenty of hard slog, we'll get the "Roundtable" idea going again soon! Contact us if you think you can help the work along.

Last issue, we presented some difficult questions before the group:

1. What is the position of APLAN to prisoners charged with rape, sexual assault and other such crimes?
2. Does this apply equally to those who claim innocence or rehabilitation?
3. What should the network do to prevent entry of those who act or have acted contrary to network beliefs and goals? Do we need to send them a survey? What about requesting face-sheets, references from other prisoners or anarchist groups, or other documentation?

We're grateful for the responses we received. We are delaying putting forward any sort of provisional statement on this issue for one more issue, so that others may make their voices heard. We want to work towards some sort of understanding on this issue within the network, but realize that it's more important to do things properly than to rush.

Next issue, we hope to look back at APLAN's performance in 2001 – what we did well and what we could do better. APLAN outside support will try to bring forward some honest evaluations of our activity, and ideas about where to go from here. We hope some network members will share their thoughts on this, too. We will also be updating our mailing

list, and sending out questionnaires with our next newsletter.

Finally, we are still inviting prisoners to write about resistance to prisons, anti-repression struggles, and anarchist political prisoners and prisoners of war, for inclusion in materials to be distributed at the "Tear Down the Walls" conference for US political prisoners, being held at the end of March... So send 'em on!

A personal note from Dave Negation:

From this issue on, I plan to step aside as the primary editor of this newsletter, allowing a committee to take the task on. It seems important that the newsletter becomes more of a collective responsibility, and that skills are shared and developed within the outside support group. I will still help as I can with the newsletter, but plan to focus on other activities within APLAN over the coming months, such as catching up on mail and helping to develop resources for network members. To all who have kept me inspired and active as I've put together these pages – thank you!

Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin Speaks in Portland

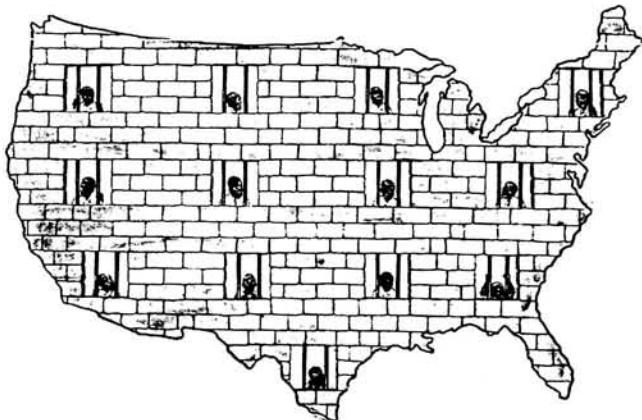
On October 23, members of APLAN outside support brought former anarchist political prisoner Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin to speak in Portland. Lorenzo, who spent 15 years incarcerated, spoke on the importance of a widespread international prisoner support movement, the current political climate following September 11, and the necessity of a mass community organizing movement.

Lorenzo shared his personal stories as well as his political analysis and opinion. His talk was inspiring, interesting, and of great impact. Following the talk a lively questions and answers session took place. The event was very well attended and raised a good deal of money, half of which went to our comrades Matt and Petey in Santa Cruz.

Lorenzo on September 11th:

"...Well, our time of mourning has to be tempered with the cold understand that we have to look out for our interest, not the Pentagon's or Wall Street's. We regret the thousands of deaths of people who died in the process at the World Trade Center, but we know it is Washington's fault this happened... The real

terrorists are in the Pentagon, the executive boardrooms on Wall Street, and in the White House, where they have always been”



Free Matt, Free Petey

Animal liberation activists Matt Whyte and Peter Schnell were arrested last January in Santa Cruz, CA for the alleged possession of materials that could be made into "destructive devices". Both were released last February on bail and federal charges were filed against them. As of October 15 the two pled guilty to possessing incendiary devices (consisting of empty gallon jugs, candles, gasoline and matches). They confessed their intention to use the devices to disable trucks in a dairy distributor's parking lot. Both took plea bargains and are looking at a minimum of 12-14 months for Matt and 33 for Petey.

They face a maximum of 10 years and a \$250,00 fine. Matt and Petey will be sentenced on January 28, 2002. Funds are needed as well as wide spread support. For more info please contact santacruztwo@hotmail.com. Remember these are our brothers, our comrades, our friends. Their freedom depends on our ability to act. If not now, when? If not you, who?

Santa Cruz 2 Defense Fund / PO Box 917 / Santa Cruz, CA 95061 (USA)

Free and Critter Updates

Jeffrey "Free" Luers was moved on September 18 to Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem from Two Rivers Correctional Institution. His co-defendant Craig "Critter" Marshal was moved to Pendleton and then a few weeks later

moved again to Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario. Free and Critter's supporters say, "Is this game of "musical jails" being played to keep them from receiving consistent mail and visits, to confuse their supporters, to keep them from accomplishing their minimal goals, to stop them from making friends, or to test them out with different jail informants?"

Craig Marshall #13797662 / SRCI / 777 Stanton Blvd. / Ontario, OR 97914 (USA)
Jeffrey Luers #13797671 / OSP / 2605 State St. / Salem, OR 97310 (USA)

Also, Free requests that letters be sent to Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber about his case and his outrageous sentence of 22 years. Write to:

John Kitzhaber, MD / Governor of the State of Oregon / State Capitol Building / 900 Court Street NE / Salem, OR 97301-4047 (USA)

Ruckus Gets Three Years

Robert Middaugh, AKA "Ruckus", has been sentenced to three years in a California State Penitentiary, charged with assaulting a police officer during the 2001 May Day police riot in Long Beach, California. During a "Reclaim the Streets"-like action, approximately 200 protesters – many in a large anarchist black bloc – were attacked by police. Over 100 people were arrested.

On Ruckus's day in court, the prosecutor threw everything he could at Ruckus, charging him with assault on a police officer, refusal to comply with a police officer, conspiracy to commit a crime, and riot. These charges totaled in 14 years and ten months. Ruckus was already on probation from an earlier incident where he was charged with assault on a police officer and was given a strike under the California "Three Strikes" Law. With the most recent charges, Ruckus was looking at 16-17 years in prison, plus another strike against him. Judge Richard Romero guaranteed Ruckus that he would be in prison for 3-4 years whether or not he was convicted for the May Day event because of his parole violation.

With no other option, Ruckus took a plea. The courts dropped most of charges except the parole violation and the assault charge on the police officer. He was given three years each for both charges and these sentences were to run concurrently. In addition, he was given his second strike. When released, if he is convicted of another strike, he is facing 25 years to life.

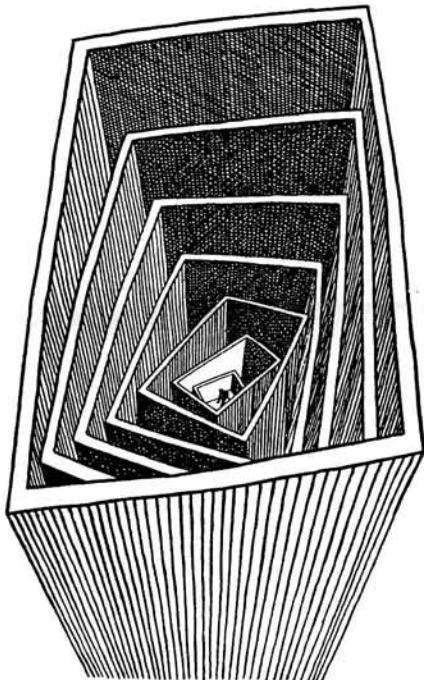
Ruckus is presently in the Los Angeles County Jail and is awaiting transfer. Support this comrade – he has been an active member of the LA community for many years.

Rob Middaugh #6859467 / PO Box 86164 / Los Angeles, CA 90086-0164 (USA)

Most of those arrested from May Day faced less serious charges than Ruckus and “pleaded out” with one year of probation. Six others still await trial. Many individuals working on this case, including the lawyers themselves, have reported police harassment as they worked to help those facing charges.

For additional information contact:

Los Angeles Anarchist Black Cross
PO Box 3671 / Anaheim, CA 92803-3671 (USA)
LA_blackcross@hotmail.com or
Blackcross@disinfo.net



Against Patriarchy Conference

Radicals in Eugene, Oregon will host the second “Against Patriarchy” conference from January 25th – 27th 2001. Members of the APLAN outside support collective will attend this gathering and hope to put forward prisoner perspectives. We are interested in exploring issues of prison as a patriarchal (male-dominated) institution, women in prison, prison rape and related topics. Written contributions from prisoners will be compiled and distributed at the event. If you wish to get involved around this event, please promptly send your texts to us.

From www.mumia2000.org website (edited):

Struggle Overturns Death Sentence

Next Step: Free Mumia!

By Monica Moorehead and Larry Holmes

U.S. Federal District Judge William Yohn, in a 272-page ruling issued on Dec. 18, threw out the death sentence for Mumia Abu-Jamal that resulted from his 1982 trial. But Yohn upheld Abu-Jamal's conviction on charges that he shot Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner.

There can be no question that lifting the 1982 death sentence – a concession wrested by the worldwide movement in support of Abu-Jamal – is a painful, bitter pill for the cops and judges in the court system in Philadelphia to swallow. They want to kill Abu-Jamal. And had it not been for the movement, he would be dead.

The continued frame-up of Abu-Jamal has generated massive rallies, marches and direct actions – from San Francisco to Paris. For years demonstrations in the U.S. and around the world have demanded freedom for this gifted Black journalist who has never stopped being the “voice of the voiceless.” And twice, mass protests stopped the clock at the 11th hour when Abu-Jamal was to have been executed.

Yohn's ruling comes on the heels of a Dec. 8 police attack on a peaceful march of more than 1,000 in Philadelphia calling for justice in Abu-Jamal's case. Several activists were injured in the cop riot and six face multiple felony charges.

Across the U.S. and all over the world Abu-Jamal is renowned as a political prisoner, framed up on a murder charge because of his political beliefs. In fact, a man named Arnold Beverly has confessed on videotape that he – not Abu-Jamal – shot Faulkner. Yet Beverly's testimony has not been heard in a court and Abu-Jamal remains on death row.

Judge Yohn was assigned to Abu-Jamal's case in October 1999. He was charged with determining whether Abu-Jamal should have an evidentiary hearing. Such a hearing would have allowed suppressed evidence to finally be heard and entered into court record that could prove Abu-Jamal's innocence. This would have included the Beverly confession and the testimony of witnesses who describe being coerced by police to lie for the prosecution in the initial trial.

But Yohn's ruling denies Abu-Jamal the right to any evidentiary hearing. And the judge's

decision ignores the fact that police and prosecutorial misconduct at the 1982 trial was so blatant that it obliterated the possibility of any kind of fair trial for Abu-Jamal. It doesn't overturn the unjust first-degree murder conviction. And it doesn't open the door for long-suppressed evidence to be heard.

Yohn threw out the death sentence based on his findings that instructions to the 1982 jury were flawed. The judge concluded that information was withheld from the jury that could have led to a different sentence. According to a Dec. 18 Associated Press report, Yohn ordered the state of Pennsylvania to conduct a re-sentencing hearing within 180 days. A re-sentencing hearing could result in life imprisonment for Abu-Jamal. Or it could impose the death penalty again.

An appeal by either the prosecution or the defense, however, could lead to an overturning of Yohn's decision.

Abu-Jamal's lawyers plan to seek a new trial for Abu-Jamal. They are appealing Judge Yohn's ruling to a federal appeals court (Associated Press, Dec. 19). Philadelphia District Attorney Lynn Abraham said her office would appeal the lifting of the death sentence.

The dangerous part of Judge Yohn's decision is that it no doubt will be used in an attempt to close the book on Abu-Jamal's case. It aims to cover up the sham trial in 1982 and the conspiracy to suppress evidence that could have proved his innocence, and to keep Abu-Jamal in jail for the rest of his life.

The unyielding movement to save Abu-Jamal's life has exerted pressure on the legal and political institutions of racist repression that have been trying to legally lynch Abu-Jamal because of his revolutionary, anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist beliefs.

For more information, contact:
International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal / PO Box 19709 / Philadelphia, PA 19143 (USA)
Tel: 215/476-8812 Fax: 215/476-7551
icffmaj@aol.com www.mumia.org

Donations for those facing charges after the December 8th police riot in Philly may be sent to:

Philadelphia Direct Action Group / PO Box 40683 / Philadelphia, PA 19107 (USA)

Make checks payable to "PADG" and specify "December 8th Legal Fund" in the memo line.

International Anarchist Black Cross News

Houston

On October 2nd, the Houston chapter of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation left the Federation and established itself as an independent organization. In its communiqué on this departure, the Houston group stated its intention to remain a collective and to continue on its tradition of community activism and education work. The new Houston organizing group was involved in the production of a "New Draft Proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network", reprinted in this newsletter. The Houston group may be contacted at:
PO Box 667233 / Houston, TX 77266-7233 (USA)

Ph: (713) 595-2103, ext. 7585

Email: may19x@yahoo.com [Ernesto Aguilar]

Brighton

Brighton ABC now has a new postal address. Letters may now be sent to:

Brighton ABC / PO Box 74 / Brighton / BN1 4ZQ / UK

They are also keeping their old address as a backup, which can be used by prisoners who can't write to PO boxes:

Brighton ABC / 6 Tilbury Place / Brighton / BN2 2GY / UK

Brighton ABC have also moved their website. It is now located at www.brightonabc.org.uk
Their email remains the same:

brightonabc@email.com

Melbourne

Anarchist Black Cross – Melbourne also has a new postal address:

ABC Melbourne / PO Box 300 / East Brunswick / Victoria 3057 / Australia

New International Campaign to Free Ali Khalid Abdullah

A new international coalition has been formed for the purpose of working to support and free political prisoner, Ali Khalid Abdullah. Ali Khalid Abdullah is a New Afrikan anarchist who has been in prison in Michigan for 12 years on charges relating to his attempts to shut down a major drug dealer. While in captivity he founded the Political Prisoners of War Coalition, and has been extremely active in struggles to aid and educate other prisoners and oppressed people in general. He has also written extensively on various subjects relating to history, revolutionary theory, and social critique,

and has remained a steadfast opponent of patriarchy, heterosexism, racism, environmental destruction, and capitalism despite repression and marginalization.

Since imprisoned, Ali has been denied for parole 5 times for reasons that have never been explained or justified by the Michigan parole board. He is up for parole again in February 2002 and is in some serious need of (and deserves) solidarity, mutual aid, and loving support.

For more information on Ali, his writings, and what you can do to help him, please contact the following address. Funding is especially needed.

International Campaign to Free Ali Khalid Abdullah c/o Pushing Forward / 2716 SE 21st Ave. / Portland, OR 97202 (USA)
freeali@disinfo.net

A web page is in progress:
www.angelfire.com/dc/freeali/

To contact Ali himself:
Ali Khalid Abdullah #148130 / Thum Correctional Facility / 3225 John Conley Drive / Lapeer, MI 48446 (USA)

From Antiprison (edited):

Chris Plummer Granted Parole – Out in January

After more than 8 years of imprisonment, Christopher Lee Plummer has been granted parole in Texas. Chris was placed in prison on a 15 years sentence for an anti-fascist action in Houston, Texas.

While imprisoned he faced severe repression by both the state and nazi gangs in the prisons. Several attempts on his life were made, resulting in permanent injures that will effect him forever. Much of his time in prison was spent in solitary confinement for his efforts to organize prisoners and fellow anarchists. During his 4 years stay in solitary the prisonrats went so far as to accuse him of attempting to smuggle a pistol into the prison. The state went all out to

stop him. After more than ten times of being turned down for parole he has finally been approved for release on 1 / 2002.

Chris will be facing huge difficulty when he is released, will need all of our support and solidarity. While he has many friends and family it will take large amounts of money to secure an attorney to represent him while on parole. He feels that if he does not have an attorney to stand by him, he will certainly be sent back to prison for any minor violation. One of the conditions that he has had to comply with for release is 'super intensive parole' this means that he will be placed on a monitor and will have to report in person twice a week, this type of parole is normally reserved for sex offenders and murderers.

Chris asks that folks work to raise funds for his release over the next few months. The movement needs to support this dedicated anarchist political prisoner. This is the crucial time.

If you can offer any help, please contact **Rebecca Plummer** / PO Box 101 / Austin, TX 78767 (USA)

From ELP North America:

Long Island Activist Charged with "Terrorism" Relating to Earth Liberation Front Actions

Activist Connor Cash, who was charged with ELF actions several months ago, was officially charged with "providing material support to terrorists" on September 27th.

Connor was previously charged with arson and vandalism for a series of actions claimed by the ELF last year in Long Island.

Cash is accused of aiding ELF activists when he drove them to unspecified Suffolk County sites where acts of vandalism and arson were committed, and of buying the gasoline used to set fire to five homes under construction in Mount Sinai in December.



He already could be sentenced to up to 40 years in prison if convicted of the arson charges. The additional count could add another 10 years in prison.

Such a lengthy sentence would be unlikely under federal sentencing guidelines, however.

The government claims it is coincidental that an anti-terrorism statute was used against Cash so soon after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. This seems to be the first example of the government using the WTC attacks to further increase repression on the Earth liberation movement.

For more information see:
<http://www.longislandrevolt.org>

Or contact:
Connor Cash Support Committee c/o Long Island Animal Defense League (ADL) / PO Box 1117 / Huntington, NY 11743 (USA)
(631) 340-4708
freeconnorcash@yahoo.com
longislandadl@excite.com

Sundiata Acoli in Isolation Since September 11th

Following the attacks of September 11th, many political prisoners in the US federal prison system were thrown into isolation, and denied access to their lawyers. Those who were held incommunicado for near to (or over) two weeks include anti-imperialist Marilyn Buck, United Freedom Front prisoners Ray Levasseur and Richard Williams, and several Puerto Rican *independentistas*. Sundiata Acoli, a Black liberation political prisoner, has still not been released from isolation! It was October 24th when he was finally able to speak to his lawyer, after almost a month and a half of being denied access to her. The Bureau of Prisons is attempting to terrorize and repress its political prisoners, and has singled out Sundiata for even worse than the others – one of whom describes being held incommunicado as a “nightmarish experience”. It is a clear priority to do what it takes to prevent the BoP from refusing basic rights again, and to organize to get Sundiata into general population. Sundiata has requested that letters be sent on his behalf to Attorney General John Ashcroft and to Federal Bureau of Prisons Director Kathleen Hawk Sawyer:

Attorney General John Ashcroft / US Department of Justice / 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW / Washington, DC

Email: AskDOJ@usdoj.gov [and indicate for Attorney General in subject]

Kathleen Hawk Sawyer / Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons / 320 First Street, NW / Washington, D.C. 20534

Also, Sundiata would welcome contact:
Sundiata Acoli (s/n squire 39794-066) / USP Allenwood / PO Box 3000 / White Deer, PA 17887 (USA)
For more information:
www.afrikan.net/sundiata



USA PATRIOT Act Signed into Law

Paving the way for more government intrusion and terror, Bush jr. signed HR 3162, the USA PATRIOT Act, into law on October 26th. The “Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act” (this act’s full title) consolidates gains previously made by the federal government against the populace, grants the state more power in several areas, and narrows the already limited field of constitutionally-protected civil liberties. Immigrants in particular will be negatively affected by the passage of this act. Some noteworthy features of the USA PATRIOT Act are below:

- **“Terrorism” Redefined:** The USA PATRIOT Act has created a new crime of “domestic terrorism” – activity in the US involving acts dangerous to human life that

violate either US law or state law. These acts must appear to be intended:

1. to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;
2. to influence the policy of a government by force or coercion; or
3. to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping.

The act also includes in its definition of "terrorism" the use of "a weapon or other dangerous device to cause substantial damage to property", even when damage causes no risk of injury. The "domestic terrorism" category is substantially broader than previous definitions of terrorism, and could include some marginally confrontational, non-violent protest and activism.

- **Detention of Immigrants:** Detained immigrants certified by the Attorney General as risks to national security are required to be charged with a criminal offense or immigration violation within seven days. Those not deportable for terrorism but with an immigration violation could be *detained indefinitely* by the Attorney General following a finding of "reasonable ground to believe" the individual was involved in terrorism, or activities posing a threat to national security or the safety of the community. While a "case review" would occur every six months, the state is never required to prove their allegations in any rigorous manner, as is supposed to occur in criminal trials or deportation hearings – nor is it bound to provide these trials or hearings themselves at any stage.
- **Guilt by Association:** The Secretary of State is permitted to designate groups that have ever engaged in "violent" activities as a terrorist organization. Non-citizens who are members of these targeted groups can then be detained and deported by the government.
- **Secret Surveillance:** The USA PATRIOT Act amends the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which allowed the FBI to perform secret searches and surveillance to obtain "foreign intelligence information", so that the FBI is now allowed to perform these actions to obtain evidence of a crime *without demonstrating probable cause*. Also, FBI agents can apply to any FISA court or

federal magistrate for an order requesting books, records, documents or other items to be produced by a person or business. The order must be issued upon application – and without judicial discretion – in cases where the materials are claimed to be for a foreign intelligence investigation.

- **"Sneak and Peek" Search Warrants:** In any kind of case, "sneak and peek" authorization may now be issued for searches for any kind of physical or electronic evidence. In "sneak and peek" searches, notification of the search is delayed. In order to obtain a warrant of this sort, which allows police to search a person's property, the government needs only prove that an investigation *may be* jeopardized if immediate notice is given. The "Sneak and Peek" tactic is nothing new, but its use may now become more common, as it is subject to less limitation.
- **Telephone and Internet Surveillance:** The FBI may now wiretap and obtain a list of numbers called without the requirement of probable cause. On the Internet, the FBI may now capture address information, without any real guarantee that the actual content of communications will remain confidential.
- **Domestic Spying by CIA:** The USA PATRIOT Act has placed the CIA in charge of leading intelligence gathering within the US. Law enforcement is permitted to share sensitive information gathered in investigations, including wiretaps and Internet captures, with the CIA. No court order is required. The CIA may then share this information with other agencies, including foreign governments.
- **Financial Privacy:** Banks are required to report "suspicious activity" to law enforcement agencies and the CIA; this is not limited to terrorism. The CIA and other federal agencies have access to individual credit reports in secret. Notification is not given and judicial review is unavailable.
- **Student Privacy:** Law enforcement may now obtain a wide range of student information without demonstrating a suspicion of wrongdoing. Student data collected for statistical research under the National Education Statistics Act (NESA) was previously strictly confidential; now, a court order to tap NESA data is available in cases where the government asserts it is relevant to an investigation.

Sources: "What the USA PATRIOT Act Will Do" and "Things You Should Know About the USA PATRIOT Act" fact sheets

So Much For "Attorney-Client Privilege"...

The attacks of September 11th have also served as a pretext for the federal government to attack the "Attorney-client privilege" of federal prisoners suspected of ties to "terrorism". This "privilege" is one of the most basic civil rights of "political" and other prisoners. What follows is the text of 28 CFR Parts 500 and 501. It has already been implemented, without observance of the legally mandated period of public review and comment. The original regulation is from 1997, but the amendment is recent, and can be found in the Federal Register.

National Security; Prevention of Acts of Violence and Terrorism; Final Rule

"...In addition, in those cases where the Attorney General has certified that reasonable suspicion exists to believe that an inmate may use communications with attorneys or their agents to further or facilitate acts of violence or terrorism, this rule amends the existing regulations to provide that the Bureau is authorized to monitor mail or communications with attorneys in order to deter such acts, subject to specific procedural safeguards, to the extent permitted under the Constitution and laws of the United States.

Finally, this rule provides that the head of each component of the Department of Justice that has custody of persons for whom special administrative measures are determined to be necessary may exercise the same authority to impose such measures as the Director of the Bureau of Prisons."

Those wishing comment on this to government officials should contact:

Rules Unit, Office of the General Counsel /
Bureau of Prisons, HOLC Room 754 / 320 First Street, NW / Washington, DC 20534 (USA)
Sarah Qureshi / Office of the General Counsel, Bureau of Prisons
Phone: (202) 307-2105.

The Attorney General, and the director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, may also be contacted – see the article on Sundiata Acoli.

Anarchist Groups on "Terrorist" List

Greek and Italian anarchist groups were included in a December 5th list of thirty-nine organizations on the USA PATRIOT Act's "Terrorist Exclusion List". These groups were designated as "terrorist" by US secretary of state Colin Powell, in consultation with attorney general Ashcroft. The anarchist groups included on the list are "Black Star", "Anarchist Faction for Overthrow" and "Revolutionary Proletarian Nucleus". The state intends to exclude from the US those seen as "supporters" of these groups, and to deport those already here. Ominously, a government press statement noted "This round of Terrorist Exclusion List designations is by no means the last."

Source: Dec. 6th Press Statement, Philip T Reeker, Deputy Spokesman Washington, DC



News in Brief

Barry Horne Dies on Hunger Strike

Animal liberation prisoner Barry Horne died on hunger strike December 5th in a hospital in Worcester, England. He had been on hunger strike since the summer. Barry had been sentenced in December 1997 to eighteen years imprisonment, having been convicted of arson and attempted arson relating to a nationwide animal liberation firebombing campaign. In 1998, he had survived a 68-day hunger strike in protest against vivisection.

Poland – Anti-fascists Charged

In Bialystok, Poland an anti-fascist activist is facing serious charges after participating in fight, when nazis attacked an "antifa" crew. 18-year-old Slawomir "Lapa" Lapinski is charged with assault with dangerous item and grievous bodily harm. As he was on probation for another assault on nazi, he is facing a serious threat of serving few years in prison. You can send messages of support to him, which will be translated from English, via soja2@poczta.onet.pl Funds are also needed.

In another recent case, this time in Warsaw, three punks were sentenced to 3 – 5 years of prison for the alleged assault and robbery of three nazi skinheads. A fourth defendant was cleared of charges and remains free. Contact the above email address for more information.

Turkey – Six Anarchists Arrested

6 anarchists who the Turkish government claims are members of Upak Anarchist Autonom have been arrested and will be judged in State Security Court – SSC (Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi – DGM). SSCs are special courts which were established for revolutionary

leftists and Kurdish militants; this is the first event in Turkish anarchist history that a group of "anarchists" are being sent to SSC. They are said to be members of an illegal organization; the reason for the arrests is simply an anarchist leaflet they distributed in a trade union demonstration on December 1st.

Eduardo Garcia Free!

Spanish anarchist Eduardo Garcia was released under parole on October 22nd after a year in jail. Even though the media, the police and the judges have tried by any means to charge him with the mailing of letter bombs to journalists, and despite the several hearings he has had in court, the evidence against him remains nil. Eduardo will still need to go to court in the future; the frame-up against him is not completely finished. For more information, contact cruznegra@alayam.com

Nikos Maziotis Released

After serving only 3½ years of what was originally a 15-year sentence, Greek anarchist Nikos Maziotis has been released! His sentence had been shortened to 5 years earlier in 2001.

Prisoner Notes

Due to space and other considerations, we are currently unable to print everything we receive for **We Never Sleep**. We intend to build the newsletter as a legal resource, publishing legal information, queries and advice. We also prioritize prison news and updates, as well as items relating to anarchist organizing and to the prisoner network. If we do not print an item, we will note its arrival in the "also received" section and make copies available upon request. As we wish to get this newsletter to those who need it, we may not publish items likely to cause institutional mail rejections. We also prefer if disputes between network members are discussed directly between the relevant parties. Comment is always welcome on editorial decisions. Views printed in the Prisoner Notes section are those of the individual contributor and not necessarily those of the network as a whole (or of the outside support collective). Please clearly mark "For We Never Sleep" on everything intended for publication in the bulletin. - Outside Support Collective

From Ali Khalid

Abdullah:

Our Struggle is Global Prisoners are Fighting Back

Revolutionary greetings –

The repression against politically and socially active prisoners has become an international struggle that knows no borders or boundaries. Our fight is one that calls on the powers that be to listen and for the general public (non-incarcerated persons) to take heed.

Many prisoners are fighting back with the only thing they have – their words and their voices. These acts of struggle are to be commended and respected by the many. For

many of us who dare speak out or stand up in the only way we can (our words) are being crushed under the heels of repression and disregarded by the masses who could help uplift us, as we try to encourage you to remain positive and strong.

The prisoners in the FIES prisons in Spain have shown a determination and defiance in the face of adversity unmatched by none and equal to the comrades in the Turkish prisons who have resigned to *sacrifice* their lives by *death hunger strikes* in order to draw the world's attention to their plight and the plight of all prisoners who are being treated with inhumanity and indifference.

We have many prisoners right here in the United States who are also suffering all kinds of psychological and emotional tortures in Control Units, Special Housing Units, Isolation Units and on death row.

Like the comrades in the FIES and in the Turkish prisons, we prisoners must be decisive. We must make a decision as to what we plan to do and what we will do, because the conditions in which we suffer isn't going to get better but worse, since the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center (the symbol of kapital) and the Pentagon (the symbol of Amerikan militarism). If we are going to find and salvation, if we are going to find any comfort, then it must come from *our* role as activists. It must come from our voices collectively exposing the brutality and the hardships in which we live, and set the course to a better and just world by holding our respective political leaders accountable, as well as those not incarcerated. Not by violence or destructive measures – we see that these measures are not profitable and are to be applied only in an effort of self-defense. But, we must show them that we are humane and that their actions are not humane, and the win the people's support to this end.

Time isn't promised to any of us, so we must make use of the time we have now by being there for one another and supporting one another, and helping each other. If you are able to do that, even if it is a promise kept to another, then we can prevail no matter how hard the task is.

In the trenches... – Ali Khalid Abdullah
November 2001
Ali Khalid Abdullah #148130 / 3225 John Conley Drive / Lapeer, MI 48446 (USA)

out of segregation in this new place last week - straight into three-day lock-down - just my luck! I've had a lot of petty "nickings" (internal kangaroo courts), a lot of hassle with my mail and have had my legal papers and property withheld from me for several months. The lack of legal papers at a crucial time in my appeal has made things very difficult. Nonetheless I've been very busy politically, and have been trying to get several new initiatives off the ground. One of these is a solidarity initiative in support of the Turkish prisoners on hunger strike, and the struggle of the Spanish-F.I.E.S. prisoners. Political prisoners across Europe have launched similar initiatives, and since the start of monthly action here we have been joined by over 30 Irish Republican prisoners, and by Belgian political prisoner Geert Wneymans. I hope that APLAN prisoners in the US will also consider joining us, while the action is very modest it has meant a lot to the Turkish comrades, and it's also a good way of building consciousness within prisons.

Thank you for the copy of "The Defiant", which I eventually received after a successful legal intervention (one of many this year). My campaign has just put out a new book called "In the hands of the Enemy", a project which also took up a lot of time.

Apologies to anyone whose been waiting on a letter from me. I have a lot of legal work I need to get on with urgently, but I'll try to get on top of my mail backlog ASAP.

Always in struggle - Mark

Prisoner-activists Mark Barnsley and John Bowden (HMP Bristol) have issued the following statement:

Solidarity with the Turkish Prisoners

On 30 June 22 year old Zehra Kulaksic died following 221 days without solid food. She was the fifth person to die on the hunger strike being staged by TAYAD (the Association of Families and Friends of Political Prisoners) in solidarity with Turkish political prisoners. Her death brings to 53 the total of those who have either died on the death fast or were murdered by the state in its vicious onslaught against protesting prisoners on 19 December 2000. The

From Mark Barnsley:

Dear Comrades,

Revolutionary greetings! Sorry that I've not been in touch for a while, but for the past three months I've been in segregation again, and it was not possible for me to write. 2001 has been another difficult year overall -four different prisons, four different seg units, five months segregation, and a lot of shit in between. I got

prisoners are continuing their protest against the regime's attempts to destroy them by confining them to isolation cells in the new F-type prisons.

Call for International Solidarity

Many of you will be following the courageous life and death struggle currently taking place in the Turkish prisons. In the FIES units of Spain (equivalent to our CSC units) prisoners have recently launched an initiative in support of the Turkish prison struggle and in support of their own 3 demands. This initiative, which is supported by prisoners in France, Greece and by Basque and Kurdish prisoners, is in the form of a hunger protest on the first Saturday of each month. The three demands of the FIES prisoners are as follows:

1. An end to the FIES units
2. An end to "dispersion", whereby prisoners are moved away from their families
3. The release of all terminally ill prisoners, and those who have spent more than 20 years in prison because of their political beliefs and militant attitude.

In solidarity with our comrades in the Turkish prisons and those fighting for justice throughout the world, we propose the launch of an initiative along the same lines as the Spanish prisoners; a food strike on the first Saturday of every month. Since the Whitemoor and Parkhurst escapes of 1994 and 1995, there has been a concerted attempt to crush the British prison struggle once and for all; a war of attrition the state has all but won. By making this simple act of solidarity we are taking the first step towards renewing the struggle and asserting our humanity and our defiance.

Like the FIES prisoners, we are proposing three reasonable and achievable demands of our own:

1. A minimum of one hour's daily exercise in the open air. It is appalling that at a time when prisoners are once again being locked two and three to a cell, the statutory allowance of daily exercise has been reduced to only half an hour.
2. The right of all prisoners to wear their own clothes. Twenty years after Bobby Sands and his comrades died on hunger strike, the right of prisoners to wear their own clothes is still not enshrined in the prison rules. Because of this, governors regard the wearing of civilian clothes as a "privilege" which can be withdrawn at any time. This is increasingly happening with prisoners placed on "basic."

3. The abolition of compulsory prison work. We are currently seeing the growing exploitation of prisoners' labor by private companies and by the state. If prisoners choose to work in return for remuneration, they should have that choice – but compulsory work is nothing less than slavery.

These are the three demands that we propose. We ask that all militant prisoners, all those who have not been crushed by state repression, all those not bought off by the arse-lickers' charter of the Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme, all those who have an instinct for solidarity and the courage to stand up against oppression, support this proposal. Our numbers may be few but they have the potential to grow. Spread the word. Support the protest. The fight-back starts here.

– Mark Barnsley and John Bowden.

For more information, email:
barnsleycampaign@hotmail.com
www.freemarkbarnsley.com

Letters of solidarity to John and Mark:

John Bowden / HMP Bristol / 19 Cambridge Road / Bristol / BS7 8PS / UK

Mark Barnsley WA2897 / HMP Whitemoor / Longhill Road / March, Cambs / PE15 OPR / UK

[A new book, In the Hands of the Enemy, containing writings by Mark and his supporters, is now available from:

Justice for Mark Barnsley / PO Box 381 / Huddersfield / HD1 3XX / UK]

From Chris Bellender:

[12/07] I just got to general population today here at Oregon State Penitentiary. Free and Rob are here, though I have yet to see them as I am on restrictions still. But it is good to know that there are some good comrades here.

A few people sent me shout outs in the last newsletter, which, due to my stint in segregation, I was unable to respond to. Thanks for everyone's encouragement and support, and cheers to you all.

I can't wait for the next WNS, nor can I wait to get the pen rolling again and write something worthy.

From OSP, in revolution – Chris
Chris Bellender #11934625 / OSP / 2605 State Street / Salem, OR 97310 (USA)

From Free (Jeff Luers) :

I think it is important for us to know about the people involved as prisoners in APLAN. Just like in any other campaign I've worked on – direct action or otherwise. It is vital to know who you can and can't trust.

I don't want to see APLAN get used or abused. The whole reason I got in that fight out at TRCI was because a guy cam into my unit claming to be a "Eugene anarchist". He tried to be my friend and use me as a reference. He is a rapist. I produced the paperwork that blew his cover. We ended up fighting over it.

I personally want nothing to do with a rapist, rehabilitated or not. But that's my own bias / prejudice.

We should do background checks on people we want to be part of APLAN. The easiest way to do that would be for members to be sure of who they are passing APLAN onto. I'm sure most new members were turned on by other members. Let's ask them to supply references or be open about why they're in.

This may not be the best resolution, but it is a start. I'll even go first. Many of you might know me or know of me. I am currently serving 22 years - For multiple counts of arson and bomb charges. My acts were a part of the Earth Liberation Movement(s).

Thanks for all the support you have thrown me and others – Free
**Jeffrey Luers #13797671 / OSP / 2605 State St.
/ Salem, OR 97310 (USA)**

From Jason Hayes :

I must pick up the ball where my brother left off on the misconceptions of anarchy (Mike Lane, WNS Sept / Oct. 01).

I know a guy here in the "Snake Pit" who says he hates anarchy. When asked why, he didn't even have any rhetoric to spout off at me. I was rather depressed by that.



Now this is an ex-Navy person, who was given 317 months of a robbery he didn't commit – Some patriot.

I tried to put it in terms that anybody should be able to understand, and it went something like this...

Anarchism is the belief that *all* systems of government, by their very nature, are fucked. The concept of having somebody my grandparents' age, in a mansion four thousand miles away, telling my children how they can or can't live is preposterous. Every man and woman should have the right to live and die in the way they see fit... without having a bunch of old swindlers and hypocrites tell blue-suited bullies how to rain on their parade. *That* is how that

word "freedom" is supposed to be. It doesn't have to be bedlam in the streets.

Maybe I should say it "didn't" have to. Freedom is a birthright, but sometimes you have to fight or die just to take back and protect what is yours already. We all do our little part, and hopefully our grandkids will have a better future... if we make it happen.

No human has the right to rule me, my family, friends... even my enemies. But how do I explain that to the sheep known as "society"? How do you show the moronic

masses that they don't have to put up with Bush, or any fat-cat politician?

I will probably die without getting those two questions answered. But I will be sure to leave a mark in many minds. I got less time for fighting with a cop than I got for selling drugs – Hmmm....!?! Like I said, sometimes you must fight to get back what is rightfully yours, however you can fight. Write the media, organize demonstrations, [...] chain yourself to a tree, call your comrades with encouraging words, mail out 'zines... Everybody lace up your boots, take to the streets, and do your part.

Revoltingly – J-Rok

Jason Hayes #11507807 / SRCI / 777 Stanton Blvd. / Ontario, OR 97914 (USA)

From John Two Names:

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

Osiyo (Hello) – I want to say *thank you* to all of you that have sent cards, letters, and caring words to my mother at this time in her life. Indeed this rape was an act of vicious in nature. Like most rapes, however, this one was not for sexual release, but one of asserting and proclaiming power over a female. It was their way of trying to intimidate her into silence; to make her feel like it was her fault. In essence it was to “put that Indian bitch in her place,” as I’ve heard they told her.

Like the torching of her home, a few years ago, the pigs have not taken this investigation serious at all. This crime happened in broad daylight, yet no one has been questioned to see if they may have saw something. Like the time her home went up in flames, the people that did this will not be looked for. “She’s just an Indian.”

Many have expressed their concern for my mental / spiritual wellbeing. I am fine to answer: Yes, my thoughts of vengeance do play in my head, but it does not cloud my thinking. I would love nothing more than to meet the perpetrators of this violence. This is natural. I don’t dwell on those 3 individuals demise though. It’s the system that supports and encourages people to dominate and exploit others that I want to kill. I am fine, and like my mother, we will survive, we will fight, and we will overcome.

Once again, Wado for all the kind words. I love each and every one of you. Remember – they can’t get us all! Keep fighting!

In struggle – John Two-Names
Andy Riendeau (John Two Names) #193786
C-3-6T / Staton Correctional Facility / PO Box
56 / Elmore, AL 36025-0056 (USA)

From Thomas Tripp:

Comrades –

As you may know, on 28th February 2001, seven comrades and I engaged in the take-over for two hours of a housing unit at Two Rivers prison in Umatilla (Oregon). The motivations for the eight of us to participate in this action were varied. For some, it was pure retaliation; for others, merely a release of prison angst. Contrary to what that state organ, **The Oregonian**, has said, none of us are white supremacists. I have already enumerated my reasons for participation in WNS (Vol. 2) #5/6. However, they can be summed up as: the cutting

of the education programs at Two Rivers, racial / religious discrimination against Native American prisoners, and abusive, disrespectful guards.

For my participation in this action, I was served on 12th October with a three-count indictment, originated by the grand jury of Umatilla County. I have been charged with the following: riot and criminal mischief I – both Class C felonies carrying up to five years apiece – and possession of a weapon by an inmate – an un-classed felony that carries up to twenty years in prison. My case number is CFH010242 – DA #386092 and my arraignment is scheduled for 23 October, by way of video court. I did not come to prison as a political prisoner, but it seems that the Umatilla County DA is preparing an attempt to create one in me.



I cannot speak for my comrades, as the Oregon Department of Corrections has separated us by putting the seven of them in Inmate Management Units at Salem and sending me here to Ontario (this separation could be because of my politics). I would, however, like to request the assistance of APLAN, the outside support group and anyone else in the radical community who is interested and has the available time and resources, in creating a legal defense fund. I have no family on the street that I can reliably turn to for help of this magnitude, so I am turning to all of you – my comrades in the struggle. [*Outside collectives interested in helping with this, please contact APLAN outside support*] I am currently ten months from release, and after three years in prison, I can almost *taste* freedom. Some may chide me for being stupid enough to engage in such an action when I was so close to the gate – and they may be right – but I personally do not see it that way. Rather, I feel that I was bold enough, in the courage of my convictions, to demonstrate physically my refusal to adhere to – and my fight against – the dictates and *very existence* of the uniformed enforcers of this

perverse social "order". I ask all of you to help me to continue that fight.

I know nothing of creating a defense fund – or even if it is possible in my case – but I greatly fear being left in the hands of a public "defender" who is in no way interested in me, my case, or in seeing me leave prison any time soon. The charges I am faced with are not as serious as, say, murder. *However*, these charges, along with a fascist prosecutor – judge combo (who will most likely stoop low enough to use the events of 11 September to their advantage) stand poised to steal away a large chunk of my immediate future. Knowing nothing of the rules and strategies governing their bureaucratic chess game, I am in no position to defend myself against such thievery. For an adequate defense I will need interested, professional help, and the capitalist-commodity system being what it is, to obtain that help I will need the assistance of APLAN and revolutionary comrades everywhere. [...]

Please contact me if you can help me – any support you can give will be greatly appreciated.

In defiant solidarity – Thomas Tripp
Thomas Tripp #12032560 / SRCI / 777 Stanton Blvd. / Ontario, OR 97914 (USA)

From Jonathan Vandersloot:

To APLAN and We Never Sleep on the issue of rape, gender violence, sexual assault, and the position APLAN on this subject – Based on my own opinions, it's not an easy question to answer. And how do you place yourself in the position to answer those questions not knowing or understanding why a person would or could do something like this or participate in acts against humanity like this? As everyone knows they are so many different circumstances or these names things. Innocent? Guilty? Statutory? At one end of the stick it says no, these types shouldn't be a part of the network; but am I being discriminatory? On the other end I want to say yes, casting people out doesn't build unity. Support is support and picking and choosing is oppression. It is pretty much impossible to give a definitive answer to these questions. The only definite answer, I, myself have is on child molesters, pedophiles, and any crime against children, any type of forced rape.

I am not a "basher" of these so-called people, but I do not involve myself with them, nor judge them. I don't know their story(s) nor

do I want to know. I myself believe that everyone has the capability and capacity to do an evil act. It's nature. But what gives someone the idea to carry out such a gross act? To take away the innocence of a precious child to me is the ultimate, wrong, sin, whatever you want to call it. The same with forced rape on women. What gives anybody the heartless and ill will to force anyone into anything against their will – everything anarchism is against, everything I'm against.

What should the network do to prevent entry of those who act or have acted contrary to network beliefs and goals? My question would be under our desired beliefs and ways in a "free" society, how would deal with these issues in a desired society would apply to how to deal with this. These are just my own feelings on this subject, maybe my thoughts are right and maybe they're not. I once read that it takes a good comrade to tell you your faults. Any constructive criticism or dispute of my opinions is welcomed. I have a free and open mind.

With this, I'll leave it here for now with a small message for my comrades in Oregon to let you all know that a comrade from Montana has been transferred to Oregon on a detainer. His name is Weasel – Mike Lane. He's a good friend of mine. If any of you happen to run into him send him my greetings. With much respect and love for Humanity, that's all for now.
Jonathan Vandersloot #44917 / PO Box 916 / Shelby, MT 59474 (USA)

From Jerome White-Bey:

I received the APLAN We Never Sleep newsletter and I wish to answer the three questions on behalf of the Missouri Prison Labor Union and our members [...]

I am not innocent of the crimes that landed me in prison, which are robbery and murder. Though I did not personally kill anyone, I was present when this crime was committed so I am equally guilty according to the legal system, so in regard to the question:

I.) What is the position of APLAN to prisoners charged with rape, sexual assault and other such crimes?

"We recognize the inherent dignity and inalienable rights of all members of the human family and the principle that the recognition and adherence of said rights is the basis of freedom of all humans and requisite to peace in the world." As a group this is very easy to say but as an individual it is very hard to put into practice,

because no one loves the rapist, those who sexually assault, or commit other such sick-minded crimes. However as an anarchist political prisoner my position is clear. We are all rapists. We have all committed sexual assault, etc. We are all the guilty and the victim. We are living in a capitalist society and as a result we are all sick all over. We can reach the rapist, the murders, the robbers and sick-minded. For someone reached me and now I realize the real crime I committed was when I failed to stand up against the injustice. Our position is clear comrades.

2.) *Does this apply equally to those who claim innocence or rehabilitation?*

Innocence or rehabilitation would be nice!

3.) *What should the network do to prevent entry of those who act or have acted contrary to network beliefs and goals? Do we need to send them a survey? What about requesting face-sheets, references from other prisoners or anarchist groups, or other documentation?*

We should send all prisoners and non-prisoners questionnaire sheets and we should not extend support to anyone or group whose actions are contrary to the network's beliefs and goals. I also believe we should try to teach more on the real *anarchists* in America. Comrade, I love APLAN and the work it is doing. APLAN is my second love, next to MPLU and we have been faced with the same problems. I understand there are no easy answers to these questions. We are at war against a sick capitalist society and we cannot turn our backs against those who are really victims of the injustice capitalist society.

In Struggle / Solidarity – Jerome
Jerome White-Bey #37479 / Jefferson City
Correctional Center / PO Box 900 / Jefferson
City, MO 65102 (USA)

From Joe Zabick:

Every day we evaluate people by their interaction with us. Should there be some "special criteria" or privileged state of mind in dealing with prisoners, convicted criminals? Should they be categorized according to their crime?

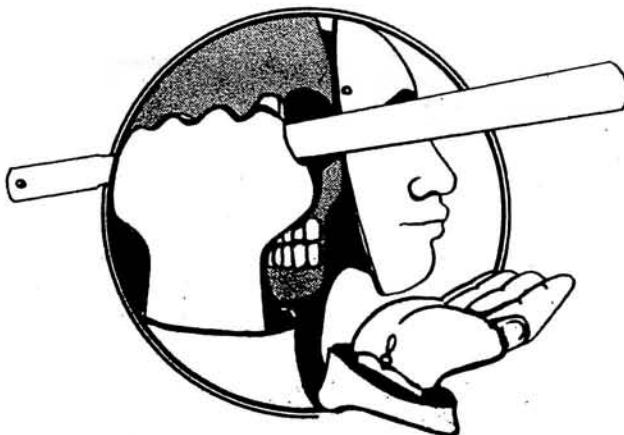
A person who commits a crime, or is accused of doing so, is *not* defined by their crime – their crime is *not* their master-status.

The anarchist community and activist communities suppose to, among other things, offer people ideas to unclog mental constipation. Many individuals prior to their imprisonment never had a chance to assess themselves or the society they were immersed in; they had no exposure to ideas and concepts such as offered by anarchist / activist communities. Many take this time in prison to re-evaluate and perhaps build themselves with new ideas and concepts. Many may have very well committed terrible acts against their fellow human beings at one time. This is now; should they in their possible search for meaningful ideas for a way of life be cut off, ostracized, or labeled, categorized by the very people who claim the want of abolition of all forms of oppression?

I deal with hearts and minds, with human beings and this prison is my daily reality.

Tell me how the very nature of your proposal is not bourgeois, reactionary and objectifying?

Joe Zabick #668361 / Rt. 3 Box 9800 / Dayton, TX 77535 (USA)



Also Received:

Rick Romanoski wrote to thank those who sent him reading materials, especially the legal resources. He is having trouble communicating with some people because of regulations concerning prisoner-to-prisoner correspondence.

Rick Romanoski #955280 – SHU / Wabash Valley Correctional Facility / PO Box 1111 / Carlisle, IN 47838 (USA)

New Draft Proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network

Introduction

Former Black Panther, political prisoner and a longtime anarchist revolutionary named Lorenzo Komboá Ervin wrote "A Draft Proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network" in 1979. The ABC movement was one of those organizations instrumental in helping see Komboá free, and Komboá spoke passionately for the development of a united movement around issues of incarceration and prisoner support. In the 1990s, these ideas were a catalyst in helping many ABC groups find focus. His ideas, while written years ago, embody principles that define our movement:

The stated purpose of the Anarchist Black Cross Network is to actively assist prisoners in their fight to obtain their civil and human rights, and to aid them in their struggle against the State/Class penal and judicial system. The prison system is the armed fist of the State, and is a system for State slavery. It is not really for "criminals" or other "social deviants," and it does not exist for the "protection of society."

It is for State social control and political repression. Thus it must be opposed at every turn and ultimately destroyed altogether. The abolition of prisons, the system of Laws, and the Capitalist State is the ultimate objective of every true Anarchist, yet there seems to be no clear agreement by the Anarchist movement to put active effort to that anti-authoritarian desire. We must organize our resources to support all political/class war prisoners if we truly wish to be their allies, and we must give something more than lip service.

Organizing against the enemy legal and penal system is both offensive and defensive. It is carried on with individuals, groups and among the masses in the community. We must inform the people on a large scale of the atrocities and inhumanity of the prisons, the righteousness of our struggle, and the necessity of their full participation and

support. We must organize our communities to attack the prison system as a moral and social abomination, and we must fight to free all political/class war prisoners.

Since Lorenzo Komboá Ervin wrote those words, he has stated in recent lectures support for uniting with all prisoners, understanding the profound gulfs of race and class as they relate to incarceration, and of anarchists taking a stronger role in putting prison abolition, incarceration and criminalization on the global agenda of resistance.

The network proposal is the result of several dialogues over the last six months. Among the questions that arose was perhaps the most critical one, "in considering criminal injustice, rates of incarceration, racial disparities, the spirit and nature in which laws are applied and, of course, our collective analysis as people concerned about increasing repression, class warfare of haves against have nots, and for a freer, more just society... what is political? And aren't we waging a common struggle, despite the 'single issue' work?"

What is political about the injustice system, how laws are applied, who goes to jail and how bias factors into that?

What is political about the factors that play into "crime" and how sanction is applied?

And are we, as revolutionaries, little more than collaborators in genocide if we do not stand up? This understanding is not so much a critique of terms such as "political prisoner," but of analyzing the politics of prisons, social control, law, sexism, racism and power. For years, the ABC and anarchist movements have grasped how each of these issues profoundly affects the lives of people, and have acted in the interests of freedom by building resistance. This must continue.

From country to country and state to state, figures are staggering, but the facts remain the same: Third World/indigenous/people of color and the working class and poor are forced into existences in which communities are gentrified; in which they are targeted over race and class or worse if they are "illegal" immigrants or refugees; health care, child care, food and rents go out of reach in costs; and their "choices" are nothing more than setups to lock them away. Public policies target youth in systematic and institutional ways that hinder the realization of

human rights. Racist and discriminatory institutions and organizations, such as the police, prisons, and border controls and police target people, particularly Third World/people of color and immigrants, via public policies. Revolutionaries who speak out and fight against the conditions of society are imprisoned or killed. And we are expected to stand by until they come for us, if they haven't done it already.

What follows is a new proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network. It reconsiders and adopts many of Komboa's old ideas, as well as makes practical suggestions for building an anarchist network of independent groups united in fighting incarceration, repression and injustice worldwide. Many of the European ABC comrades have already taken the initiative to start the building process of this network, so the idea is not new. This effort is merely to put an explanation to a tendency that is already developing and will continue to grow.

Purpose

The Anarchist Black Cross Network should be a decentralized and egalitarian network of organizations committed to the original ideals of the Anarchist Black Cross movement -- of seeing prisons and the poverty, racism and genocide that accompanies them to be symptoms of a social order whose last days are near. The proposed purposes of the ABC Network are:

- **To unite the many autonomous prisoners, activists and organizations working for prisoner support, defense and freedom in a decentralized, anti-authoritarian fashion.** There has been some fractionalization of the struggle, for various reasons, over the years. Certain groups defended certain prisoners, while paying lip service to others. Certain activists stayed focused in a particular issue, but didn't have the resources to get involved elsewhere. The purpose of the ABC Network should not be one of waging battles over differences, but of finding ways to unite us in a way that is still decentralized and anti-authoritarian. Whether you do work around earth liberation prisoners, "social prisoners," those recognized internationally as political prisoners, anti-colonial/independence prisoners, juvenile injustice, refugee/immigrant criminalization, the roots of prisons (i.e. poverty, capital, racism, et al.) should only be important to an ABC Network as far as how the unity of many groups that truly see 'an injury to one is an injury to all' can help your work. The job of

a network, clearly, is not to change a group's current work, but to be a compliment to the work already being done.

- **To serve as a clear and easy-to-use communications tool for activists, prisoners, organizations, families and supporters around issues related to the movement.** If it is to be effective, the ABC Network must primarily serve as a communications and working base for prisoners, community people, activists, groups (i.e. autonomous ABC groups and anarchist, prisoner, liberation, freedom, justice, anti-colonial/independence and/or issue-oriented community groups, etc.) and others who engage in activities consistent with the basic spirit and vision of the ABC movement. So often, groups and organizers change, prisoners are transferred, new campaigns start and old campaigns end. This would be an effort to facilitate communication around varied issues -- from the latest transfers, to disbanded collectives to international support efforts and so on.
- **To support, discuss, learn from and engage one another around the Defense and Freedom activities we engage in.** As state repression increases, more and more activists are facing fines, prison time, detention without charge, etc. for speaking out. Refugees/immigrants are being criminalized over race and class. Prisoners who were incarcerated for explicitly political acts are being denied parole again and again. Prisoners who went to prison for "social crimes" are coming to consciousness about the true nature of incarceration. And prisons will continue to be built in the name of law and order. These are issues 'regular' people are aware of and which activists are often fighting around in a regional, sometimes isolated, way -- not necessarily by choice, but because all-around support needs to improve. As those familiar with anarchist prisoner Ali Khalid Abdullah's "Where Was the Support for Lorenzo Komboa Ervin and the Chattanooga 3?" will recall, one of our major issues is around unity. The ABC Network is aimed at getting prisoners, community people, activists, groups (i.e. autonomous ABC groups and anarchist, prisoner, liberation, freedom, justice, anti-colonial/independence and/or issue-oriented community groups, etc.) and others learning from each other, communicating and working together

around the various campaigns, and finding ways of educating each other with our experiences in a clearer, yet anarchist, way.

- **To connect with a movement that understands the "single issues" are part of a much larger movement for freedom, and to work actively to see that struggle grow globally and in all communities.** On the surface, fighting for political/class war prisoners, supporting earth liberation prisoners, challenging juvenile injustice, political repression, dealing with criminalization of communities marginalized by the state (such as refugees/immigrants, the homeless and the working class/poor), the death penalty and race/gender disparities in incarceration seem like a mix of issues. In reality, most anarchists and others see these are part of a campaign by the state to attack communities and people. The ABC Network should be part of a movement that understands we all wage a common struggle.

Clearly, a network could take on more goals, but these are merely a start.

Goals

The ABC Network should serve to support collectives around the work they currently do rather than coordinate a set of tasks for collectives in which to participate. Tasks that most community people, activists, groups (i.e. autonomous ABC groups and anarchist, prisoner, liberation, freedom, justice, anti-colonial/independence and/or issue-oriented community groups, etc.) and others engage in already, and which affiliates of the ABC Network should serve to help with via strength in numbers include:

Defense and Freedom Work of the Network

Defense work involves meeting the needs of the prisoners: whether those needs stem from the daily oppression of the prisons, police, courts or the intense repression by State/Class authorities of prison organizers. Prison support by ABCs meets these needs in many ways:

1. Forming outside support groups on a local and national basis in order to ensure prisoners' defense and survival from enemy attack and from inhuman prison conditions.
2. Organizing defense committees on behalf of prisoners framed or railroaded through the Capitalist courts for their political and social beliefs or prison organizing.

3. Organizing support for activists jailed for their outside work and/or repression by authorities.
4. Securing Anarchist and other revolutionary materials for prisoners to read, and fight for their right to receive this literature if prison officials try to ban or prohibit such literature for any reason.
5. Organizing emergency response calls, letters, faxes and email to continually contact "corrections" and other authorities about the treatment of prisoners.
6. Organizing legal defense funds to raise funds for legal fees and to assist prisoners and outside activists and groups.
7. Organizing correspondence for people to write to prisoners and find out about prison conditions and to show their solidarity and human concern, and observers to go into the prisons, visit the prisoners, investigate their complaints, question the officials and monitor the prison for violation of prisoners' rights.

Freedom work means directly challenging the existence of prisons and this work also involves actively campaigning against prison conditions, and propagandizing the actual cases of political/class war prisoners (i.e. prisoners jailed for specific political reasons and those who have become politically aware of the reasons for their oppression while in prison, as well as victims of frame-ups) to the largest possible audience.

Some protest activities many prisoner support, anti-prison and ABC groups engage in today:

1. Linking up the struggles against criminalization and imprisonment with associated social ills: poverty, homelessness, hunger, gentrification, racism, racial/cultural profiling, anti-refugee/immigrant actions, privatization, globalization, the drug war and many other issues.
2. Exposing the fallacy of the Capitalist system of cops, laws and prisons being for the protection of society or as a social necessity.
3. Educating the community, prisoners and others about the class/racist nature of the prisons and the legal system and how to fight against it;
4. Holding protest rallies, marches and street demonstrations in support of prisoners' rights and against the repressive actions of State/Class authorities.
5. Writing press releases and holding news conferences for the Third World/people of color, alternative and radical news media (and sometimes the Capitalist news media)

- 6. appearing on television and radio news and/or talk shows to discuss prisons.
- 7. Organizing and/or participating in coalitions with poor people's movements, prison support, Third World/people of color, Women's rights, Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender, Church, Left-wing, and other diverse groups, so as to win them over and to integrate the prison struggle into the general movement for social change.
- 8. Assisting prisoners in getting parole, probation or a pardon by demanding their freedom when they become eligible for parole or are seeking executive clemency.
- 9. Working against the death penalty and exposing it as an instrument of racial genocide and class and political repression.
- 10. Demanding the freedom and amnesty of political/class war prisoners, and the abolition of prisons. Especially demand the immediate release of prisoners who have served unnecessarily lengthy sentences.

Any ABC Network that forms should encourage, but not mandate, a diversity of tactics as suggested here and more. The network's proposed communications purpose could certainly also be utilized to help build unity around regional cases and tactics (i.e. demonstrations at consulates, etc.).

Structure and principles

The ABC Network should foremost intended to accomplish the goals above among the many autonomous groups that are doing the grassroots, day-to-day work around campaigns, prisoners, criminalization and liberation. What unites us are the principles mentioned by Komboa -- of struggling to expose injustice, corruption and oppression; supporting prisoners who (consciously or unconsciously) are combatants against the state; providing advice and support to activists who put their bodies on the line in defense of freedom and revolution; and seeing our continued activism, campaigns, etc. in the larger picture of prison abolition and revolutionary change -- as well as our own experiences in creating conditions for change. There should be no "party line" of the ABC Network. As anarchists, we believe in building a culture of resistance rather than legislating it. How you or your group conducts your effort must solely up to you, although you may want to link up to some activists and resources, work through ideas, learn together and help in others' campaigns. But regardless, how you

organize your group must still up to your local conditions and membership.

The ABC Network should do its work in a broad, nonsectarian manner. You should not have to be explicitly named an ABC group to join. Conformity to certain naming, uniform moral/"security" codes, focus, etc., all correctly criticized in previous work, cannot be part of a successful initiative. This is a fundamental difference between the proposed Network and previous initiatives -- having the involvement, input, comments, criticisms and efforts of local organizers, prisoners and groups is a necessity and privilege for an ABC Network to take shape. It is not a necessity or privilege for a network to form and communicate with activists... loose, unannounced networks are already happening. This is merely an effort to make it stronger and unite many around the ideas we're already struggling toward. Prisoners should be involved in discussions and with area collectives or those collectives supporting the particular prisoner. In many cases, collective-prisoner relations already are building, and everyone should seek to learn how those communications are coordinated and developed among groups. How prisoners feel about the development of the Network is critical to its success and they should be consulted about all of its facets.

Issues of racism and sexism are critical to deal with in the movement as a whole, and all groups should take genuine measures to involve women and Third World/indigenous/people of color in campaigns and, as often as possible, local groups -- not only by having their bodies around, but engaging minds and seriously taking those ideas/comments and criticisms to heart. Too often, male- and white-dominated groups have not made the efforts to broaden and involve other communities, or women's input has not been taken with the consideration and seriousness needed. Add to this the need to build stronger ties with women prisoners. This must be improved, and, ideally, an ABC Network can dialogue around strategies groups are utilizing to be more egalitarian in approach.

If we are to improve an ABC Network, hearing comments and criticisms should be a regular part of discussions. About every six months, affiliated groups with the ABC Network, activists, prisoners and others should be asked to give their comments, criticisms and suggestions for how to make the Network better, stronger and more helpful to each others' needs. While the purpose of this is not to develop "legislation," it is intended to get people regularly thinking about how we work together and how the Network stays relevant to our unity.

However, please know that the floor should be always open to raise comments/ideas/critiques, etc.

We must welcome these ideas, because discussion, debate and joint resolutions are how we become more effective.

Conclusion

In June 2001, Anarchist Black Cross groups from around Europe met in Ghent, Belgium. People from Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, France, Luxemburg, UK, Holland, Germany and Belgium agreed that a network of autonomous groups would be formed to further the aims of the ABC. In their post-conference statement, attendees concluded:

"We believe in the abolition of the prison system, but not only that, but the destruction of capitalism and all kinds of authority. We believe the struggle against the (in)justice system, as it is against capitalism, is international. Therefore recent attempts by European governments (e.g. Europol in Spain 2001) to criminalise the anarchist movement must be opposed by all revolutionaries. We respect the variety of ways people resist government violence and terrorism, and will support those incarcerated by the state. We strive to provide practical and material aid for class struggle prisoners and to encourage support for them."

The groundwork is already laid for an international ABC network to unite autonomous groups. In Europe, this network has already come into being. It is a network that respects the autonomy of each group to act within the different circumstances of their own local situations. It is a network urging support for political prisoners. And it is one that understands that support is only one part of our true struggle -- for freedom, revolutionary change and anarchy. Over the last 15 years, the Anarchist Black Cross and anarchist prisoner support movements have inspired new awareness in repression, of the need to work with those criminalized by society in an effort to build a more liberated world, and to develop tactics and strategies addressing prisons, law and social problems. The ABC movement was building on these efforts long before these issues got attention from the

mainstream media. Nevertheless, our struggle can continue to grow and see more victories. Many of these ideas restate Lorenzo Ervin's original draft proposal, although many ideas presented therein are worth supporting, such as an ABC conference (to potentially unite the North American section of the network, since a European conference happened in 2001) or a newspaper that reaches out to people on incarceration. Uniting the many prisoner-written zines into a "news service" of information could also be helpful. In addition, working with various forces to create ABC-oriented radio/Internet programming could also come together. Uniting our organizing to develop theory and strategy around crime, class and liberation is another possibility.

Comments / Criticisms / Interest

If you have comments, (any kind of) criticisms and/or suggestions to improve this proposal or are interested in dialoguing locally and possibly building a group or affiliating your own group, get in contact with the initiating group (Antiprison, Austin ABC, Houston organizing group) via email at abc-net@anarchistblackcross.org or via post at P.O. Box 667233, Houston, Texas 77266-7233, USA.

All comments, criticisms and/or suggestions received by January 31, 2002 will be compiled (we won't use your verbatim statements unless you ask) and an update to those interested. Get in touch.

*New Draft Proposal issued on 5 November 2001.
Anniversary of the 1862 death sentence for 303
Santee Sioux for taking part in a Minnesota uprising.
US President Abraham Lincoln commutes many
sentences, but 38 chose to hang at Mankato, singing
their death song on their scaffold.*

*Anniversary of the 1928 banana workers' strike in
Colombia against the United Fruit Company, in
which 1,000 workers were killed.*

*Anniversary of the 1916 Everett, Washington,
Massacre, in which seven Industrial Workers of the
World (IWW) labor activists are murdered by
Everett's police as part of a campaign to suppress
working class resistance.*

Revolutionary love and solidarity!



APLAN Publications

The following publications continue to be available through APLAN.

- **The Defiant – Prisoners in the Global Resistance** edited by Rob los Ricos and APLAN
This long-awaited pamphlet contains writings by anarchist prisoners Rob los Ricos, Harold Thompson, Mark Barnsley, Ali Khalid Abdullah and Shaka N'Zinga, as well as a reprint of Nikos Maziotis' "plea" to the Athens Criminal Court. **The Defiant** also features prisoner profiles and a lengthy contact / resource section.
- **The People's Voice** edited by Ali Khalid Abdullah
This pamphlet contains a wide variety of writings, many by prisoners. Some contents include information about the Political Prisoners of War Coalition, the struggle against FIES maximum-security units in Spain, October 22nd anti-police brutality events, the case of Siddique Abdullah Hasan and a reprint of "Watts 1965 – The Decline and Fall of the Spectacle-Commodity Economy".

Several prisoners also provide letters, commentary and perspectives.

- **New Afrikan Criminology Journal**

(**Introductory Issue**) by Abdul Olugbala Shakur

This pamphlet deals with how racist "bell-curve" theories have contaminated the media, white Amerika and institutions throughout the land. It spells out the damage this has done to New Afrikan communities, especially in the vastly disproportionate numbers of this community now incarcerated. The pamphlet debunks myths and traces solutions.

The Defiant and **The People's Voice** are available from APLAN for donations, on a sliding scale of \$3 - \$5 per pamphlet. **The New Afrikan Criminology Journal** is available for \$1. We seek distribution for these pamphlets – please get in touch if you would like a bundle to sell in your area.

Due to our current (poor) financial situation, we are asking for prisoners who want these pamphlets to send donations of stamps if they can. All our prices are "more if you can, less if you can't".

Some Useful Contacts:

The Defenestrator / PO Box 30922 / Philadelphia, PA 19104 / USA

(**The Defenestrator** is an occasional radical newspaper – free to prisoners on request)

Houston ABC / PO Box 667614 / Houston, TX 77266 / USA

Mutual Aid Legal Fund / PO Box 95616 / Seattle, WA 98145-2616 / USA

Northwest Anarchist Prisoners Support Network / PO Box 11331 /

Eugene, OR 97440 / USA

(Same address for **North American Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network**)

Political Prisoners of War Coalition / PO Box 554 / Lincoln, MA 01773 / USA

South Chicago ABC 'Zine Distro / PO Box 721 / Homewood, IL 60430 / USA

APLAN Statement

The Anarchist Prisoners' Legal Aid Network (APLAN) is a network of prisoners and their allies working to end the prison system. As anarchists, we strive for a better world, by ending class society and all other forms of domination. The global capitalist order has got to go! We recognize the eradication of white supremacy, patriarchy, homophobia and all other forms of oppression as crucial in this struggle. Internally, we work on antiauthoritarian principles. APLAN respects the autonomy of all oppressed people to self-determine forms of struggle and liberation.

APLAN supports ongoing action by and for anarchist prisoners, and against prisons. It is through our projects and our groups that we make our

anarchist vision a reality. We are no friend of the law, but support and facilitate litigation when useful. We recognize that many non-anarchists make valuable contributions towards an antiauthoritarian, anti-capitalist and anti-prison movement. Our resources are scarce, but we stand by these people. Our newsletter is open to their perspectives.

However, we also oppose the manipulation of grassroots efforts by authoritarians and reformists.

As opponents of white supremacy, patriarchy and authority, we refuse to work with people that promote oppressive viewpoints or behavior. Racists, misogynists and homophobes are not welcome in our network.

Those actively involved in anarchist projects within the prisons make decisions, and help guide and shape the network.

