

# paper match.

true tales of resistance from denver and beyond.



fall 2009



# Greetings and solidarity from Denver Anarchist Black Cross!

In your hands you hold the first issue of Paper Match, a quarterly magazine detailing the work and politics of Denver Anarchist Black Cross, and other radical projects in the Denver area. We hope you find our magazine informative, and that you will become involved directly, or support us in some capacity.

In this issue, we focus mostly on prisoner support, interpersonal issues, and how they affect the broader struggle. In the future, we plan for this magazine to take on other issues regarding movement defense, such as queer resistance, family & childcare support, accountability, mental & physical health, privilege, gender issues, race, and work, only to name a few. We would love for you to take part!

Here's a little of what DABC has been up to since we formed.

The Denver Anarchist Black Cross was founded in June, 2009 by anarchists in Denver and Boulder to create a project and organization that would contribute to the defense of the plethora of social movements active in Denver and beyond.

Like most Anarchist Black Cross chapters, the Denver chapter of the ABC has had a major focus on supporting political prisoners and prisoners of (class) war. Starting in August, Denver ABC has been hosting regular political prisoner letter writing nights. Held every first Wednesday of the month at 6pm at the 6th Ave United Church of Christ, the letter writing nights have gathered dozens of people from the Denver area to write to prisoners and start to build a strategy of support.

In September, DABC organized a local version of the national Running Down the Walls 5k benefit run for political prisoners. Over a dozen runners raised nearly \$500 for the Anarchist Black Cross Federation's Warchest, a collection of funds that provides political prisoners in the United States with monthly stipend payments. RDTW was our first major project as a collective, and proved to be an amazing way to kick things off.

In October, DABC was formally accepted as a member collective of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation, an organization of ABC chapters active across the United States and Canada collaborating to provide consistent support to the over 100 political prisoners in North America.

Also in October, Denver ABC established our Mutual Aid Fund, a pool of money to support members of social movements that are in dire economic need. We envision this money going to help pay rent, hospital bills, court fines and legal fees, childcare costs, and pay for food, clothing, or school supplies.

We held a major fundraiser for the Mutual Aid Fund on Haymarket Day, November 11th. The Martyr's Ball was held at the Mercury Café in downtown Denver. Dozens of participants wore costumes to commemorate fallen freedom fighters from various struggles and movements and danced the night away. The event will surely be an annual fundraiser.

In November DABC also announced the creation of the Anarchist Babysitters Club, a project that aims to keep parents, families, and children actively engaged in social movements and revolutionary work. The Babysitters Club will work to provide free childcare during movement events and meetings and also help provide activities that promote the participation of children and young people in our struggles for liberation.

DABC has been actively engaged in the campaign to free Dr. Mutulu Shakur, a black liberation political prisoner being held in Florence, Colorado for his lifetime of dedication to revolution and the struggle for self determination for black people. Dr. Shakur faces a parole hearing at the end of November, and we are working hard to try to support his efforts at attaining freedom, including writing letters to the parole board, organizing educational events, and publishing his writings.

It's been a busy six months, and the struggle continues. If you want to get involved or support our work in any way, you can contact us at [denverabc@rocketmail.com](mailto:denverabc@rocketmail.com). Be sure to check out our blog, updated daily with important news about attacks against our movements, and the defenses we are mounting.

In love and solidarity.  
Denver ABC Crew November 2009



# State Repression News

Stay up to date with us on our blog at [denverabc.wordpress.com](http://denverabc.wordpress.com)

## Jalil Muntaqim denied parole

from [freejalil.com](http://freejalil.com)

Jalil Muntaqim had a parole hearing Tuesday, November 17. He was just denied parole today, November 18, 2009.

In a brief report from him by phone he noted that the board was courteous, saying that his record showed improvement and a good attitude. They noted his exemplary record, but still, they denied him parole.

Jalil thanks everyone who wrote letters of support and says he will appeal the decision.

His next scheduled parole hearing will be in June 2010.

## Carrie Feldman and Scott DeMuth jailed for refusal to cooperate with Grand Jury

November 18th, Minneapolis-based activists Carrie Feldman and Scott DeMuth refused to testify in front of a grand jury in Davenport, Iowa, and were found to be in contempt of court. They were immediately handcuffed and hauled off by U.S. Marshalls. According to District Judge John Jarvey, who presided over the contempt hearings, both will remain incarcerated until they agree to testify. The state can lock them up for the duration of the

grand jury—another 11 months.

For reasons all too familiar and valid to anyone who has followed the escalation of Green Scare repression, both Carrie and Scott refused to cooperate with the grand jury by providing information about themselves and their comrades. We stand in solidarity with them for refusing to be complicit in their own persecution. We will stand with them every day until they are free.

## Russian Anti-Fascist Murdered

from [LibCom](http://LibCom)

Monday the 16th of November, 26 year old anti-fascist Ivan "Vanya Kostolom" Khutorskoy was shot to death at the entrance to his home at Khabarovsk street in the east side of Moscow; according to some information with two shots to his head.

Vanya was a great figure in the Russian anti-fascist movement, and I am sure many people will write down their memories of him in the days, months and years to come. But as of today most of his friends are too angry and too shocked, at the loss of this friend and comrade.

## Dr. Mutulu Shakur parole hearing moved to Dec. 2

There is still time to make your voice heard on the matter of Dr. Mutulu Shakur's Parole.

Letters and calls of support can be sent to his attorney:

Teri Thompson, Attorney at Law  
TERI THOMPSON, LLC  
1745 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314  
Office: 770.413.3931  
Facsimile: 888.329.7330

## Wave of occupations on California campuses meets fierce state repression

from [occupyca.wordpress.com](http://occupyca.wordpress.com)

Since the day after the University of California Board of Regents approved a 32 percent increase in fees that are the equivalent of tuition, occupations of classrooms and buildings and student walkouts have occurred at UC Santa Cruz, UC Berkeley, CSU Fresno, UC Davis, City College of San Francisco, Napa Valley College, San Francisco State University, UCLA, and CSU Fullerton.

On the Berkeley campus, at least 40 students took over a classroom building, Wheeler Hall, barricading themselves on the second floor. Hundreds of students surrounded the building, huddled under umbrellas, tarps and plastic, chanting slogans like: "Fee hike! We strike!"

SWAT Teams raided the building, arresting dozens. Nearly 100 students have been arrested since Wednesday. 🇺🇸

# take part in paper match!

now accepting submissions for our winter 2009-2010 issue.

Paper Match needs your input! We are now seeking open submissions for our Winter '09-'10 issue. The subject will be Birth & Parenting and how they relate to radical struggle. The deadline is January 21st, and the word limit is 2000.

Please email your submissions to:  
[denverabc@rocketmail.com](mailto:denverabc@rocketmail.com)



# **D**o Political Prisoners Exist Within the United States?



*political prisoner- any prisoner whose case has a significant political element: whether the motivation of the prisoner's acts, the acts in themselves, or the motivation of the authorities. This category embraces prisoners of conscience as well as people who resort to criminal violence for a political motive.*

*-Amnesty International*

*"Regarding political prisoners, the United States stands out in the world not so much for having them, as for being so vengeful in continuing their incarceration while denying their very existence."*

*-Dan Berger*

*When the word political prisoner is mentioned in the US we typically do not think of our own prison population, which has now reached 2.1 million, the largest in the history of the world. Instead, we think across the ocean to political dissidents in Iran being rounded up and locked away or human rights activists in Burma being held by a military junta. Sometimes we think back to the past- to Nelson Mandela and apartheid South Africa for example.*

*And yet, not only do we have dozens of political prisoners in the United States, we also deny them more rights and imprison them longer than many other nations. Just behind the veneer of democracy and justice lies one of the most vengeful and repressive legal systems in the world. When we work towards social justice in this country, the prison population and political prisoners in particular must be at the forefront of that work.*

*Throughout history, the US government has targeted and repressed people working towards a more equal world, especially those that call into question or directly challenge the established power structures.*

*One example that can still be felt to this day was the FBI's COINTELPRO program.*

## **COINTELPRO**

*The story of the Civil Rights Movement is a gripping one. We know of those who participated in the Montgomery Bus Boycott and of Dr. King's inspiring "I Have a Dream" speech. Some of us were even around during that time. We all can conjure up the images of police dogs attacking marchers and other examples of racist police repression, but much of our collective memory of just how vicious and extensive the government's repression of those fighting for dignity and equality has been wiped clean.*

*In the words of then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, the Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO for short) was intended to "expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" the activities of dissident political organizations. The FBI overwhelmingly sought out and targeted groups and individuals working towards black liberation, women's rights, and those of the left in general. These ranged from more radical folks such as Malcolm X and Black Panther Huey P. Newton to more moderate activists such as Dr. Martin Luther King. The scope was extremely wide and affected all of those working for social justice, as MIT professor Noam Chomsky explains,*

*"COINTELPRO was a program of subversion carried out not by a couple of petty crooks but by the national political police, the FBI, under four administrations...by the time it got through, I won't run through the whole story, it was aimed at the entire new left, at the women's movement, at the whole black movement, it was extremely broad. Its actions went as far as political assassination."*

*One extremely vicious example was when the FBI infiltrated Chicago Black Panther Party. drugged party party leader Fred Hampton, raided his apartment, was shot in bed and then shot again point blank in the head by police. This is just one of the many stories of how the government intentionally sowed distrust, framed activists and even killed leaders of these movements.*

*In April, 1971 COINTELPRO was officially terminated for its unconstitutional practices. The final report on the program conceded that "The Government has often undertaken the secret surveillance of citizens on the basis of their political beliefs, even when those beliefs posed no threat of violence or illegal acts on behalf of a hostile foreign power."*

*Despite this admission, there are many victims of COINTELPRO who still sit behind bars. People such as wrongfully imprisoned American Indian activist Leonard Peltier, who was targeted by COINTELPRO for his work on the Pine Ridge reservation and whose trial was riddled with bias, suppressed evidence and has now spent over 30 years in prison as a result. There are others such as Mutulu Shakur, another victim of COINTELPRO who was an acupuncturist, civil rights leader and father to Tupac*

Shakur who had no physical evidence linking him to any of the crimes he was committed of and yet was found guilty on all eight counts and is now serving 60 years. There are dozens of others who are still serving 30, 40, 50 year even life sentences for the government's illegal program whose aim was to subvert the work of those fighting for social justice.

### **Green Scare**

Of course, government repression and surveillance based off of people's political beliefs did not stop with COINTELPRO. "The No. 1 domestic terrorism threat," says John Lewis, a top FBI official, "is the eco-terrorism, animal-rights movement." This despite the fact that not a single person has been injured by any of the actions taken out by groups such as the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front. In the Green Scare authorities have repeatedly linked labels such as "terrorist" and "extremist" to non-violent environmental and animal liberation activists, in hopes of capitalizing off of the current fear around terrorism. Like COINTELPRO, the FBI has used illegal activity on behalf of the environment and animals as a pretext for broad sweeping acts of surveillance, infiltration, intimidation and entrapment of those involved in the environmental and animal rights movement, regardless of their actual involvement or connection to underground activities.

Those found guilty of vandalism, animal liberation or sabotage have received disproportionately long sentences based not on the crime itself but the political beliefs guiding the acts. Charges such as "animal enterprise terrorism" have been used to stiffen the sentences for non-violent activists. The SHAC 7, were charged under this act and were not even charged with breaking windows or releasing animals, but simply running a website that supported such acts.

Others have been victims of entrapment, in which FBI informants did not work undercover to prevent violent acts from transpiring, but instead aiding and badgering activists into plotting acts. Eric McDavid is now in prison for 20 years for conspiring to destroy cell phone towers after an FBI informant struck up a romantic relationship with him, gave him bomb making recipes, and prodded him into action.

### **Prison Abuse**

Once in prison, political prisoners continue to feel the heavy-handedness of the government. Things like mail, medical attention and visitation rights are continually denied or reduced because of their political convictions. Prisoners are shipped to facilities far from their families and support systems even if other facilities are available nearby. Prisoners, even those with impeccable behavior records have restrictions to facilities and services.

Possibly the most dehumanizing and restrictive aspect of many political prisoners' lives is the extreme lengths of isolation they are placed in. Those imprisoned for their convictions of justice continue their work inside prisons, mentoring younger prisoners, resolving gang disputes, organizing towards prisoner rights and working as jailhouse lawyers are just a few of the actions political prisoners will take to continue the fight that landed them in prison to begin with. This activism is a threat to the authorities and because of this many prisoners face harsh restrictions to other prisoners.

Many political prisoners are placed in higher security prisons, despite their clean record and lack of violent threat to other prisoners. They are instead placed there to restrict the contact they have with others, both within prisons and with the outside world.

Some prisoners such as animal rights activists Daniel McGowan are sent to what are called Communication Management Units (CMUs) which severely restrict phone calls and visitation rights. Communication to the media is also monitored more closely and more strictly regulated.

Many political prisoners, again despite clean prison records, are housed at Florence Supermax Prison. Florence has been described by a former warden as "a clean version of hell." Prisoners are held in solitary confinement their entire stay. They must stay in their 7ft by 12 ft cell for 23 hours, with one hour of exercise alone in a concrete chamber. Officials claim that the prison is for the most dangerous of criminals, but in this case they are also the home to many who are imprisoned for their political convictions, not for their risk of violence to other prisoners. It is an attempt to continue to silence these individuals voices and break their spirits.

### **Demanding Freedom for Political Prisoners**

In many countries, "Truth and Reconciliation Commissions" are carried out, in which people's politicized and unjust trials and sentences are re-examined, oftentimes with amnesty granted. In the US the mere existence of political prisoners is denied, allowing those incarcerated for their beliefs to continue to face the heightened abuse and repression they experience. When we compare how political prisoners are treated here to those in other countries we see that even some of the most notorious governments rival the US in the way that the political dissidents are treated.

When we work towards a better world we must place those who have come before us and who are serving time for doing that same work. Their incarceration is a loud and undeniable testament to the viciousness of the criminal justice system and intolerance for political opposition carried by the government. Whenever the opportunity, we must raise up the many cases of state repression and FBI witch hunts, of unjust trials and extreme sentences, of prison abuse and censorship. We must do so not only for those inside, but for the rest of us because if it can happen to them it can happen to anyone. ✚

# Martyr's Ball

ON NOVEMBER 11TH, DENVER ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS HOSTED THE FIRST MARTYR'S BALL, A NIGHT OF REMEMBRANCE AND CELEBRATION FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR A RADICAL CAUSE.

THE NIGHT WAS AN AMAZING SUCCESS, AND IT WAS DECIDED TO BE AN ANUAL EVENT.

PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENT WENT TO FUND THE DABC MUTUAL AID FUND.

MANY THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO CAME OUT TO THE EVENT, OR SUPPORTED IN ANY WAY.





THE  
POLITICS OF PRIORITY

EPISODE 1 - CONFIDENCE

*"With Friends Like These, Who the Fuck Needs COINTELPRO?"  
- Propagandhi*



**A** nightmare, or rather daymare, has been visiting me regularly lately. I see the social and environmental crisis we presently see ourselves in climaxing in the not so distant future. Mass food shortages, unemployment, war, and unrest all come to a head. At the definitive moment of the confrontation between the people and the machine, instead of boldly taking back land and freedom, our popular movements impotently whimper away.

Some of us didn't show up because we heard our ex's would be there with their new partner. Others didn't even get the call to show up because they were dismissed as not "cool" enough. Some people who did show up were there only to fight comrades who have been "talking shit." Whatever reasons people had are irrelevant because we lost everything and it is our own fault.

The punch-line of this horrific vision is this: we lose everything not because we weren't courageous, smart, or strong enough to shut down the machine but rather we were too disempowered by being torn down by one another.

What are the barriers keeping us from building a unified movement? It is true that the police, prisons, the FBI, and other violent repressive mechanisms are a severe threat to our movements. It is also true that there are many internal, self-created threats.

How many times has someone not shown up to a meeting because they did not feel wanted? How many times has someone not shown up to an event because no one was considerate enough to give them a ride? How many more times will an organization disintegrate because of jealousy and ego? It is probably safe to assume that thousands of these little acts, accumulating over the years, has been far more destructive to liberation efforts than guns have been.

There is so much going against us as it is: Police, prisons, military, the work week, and rent. With these overwhelming factors to deal with, why would we want to make it harder on ourselves than it needs to be? The only possible way we are going to rise above the current dismal situation is going to be if every single one of us is confident in themselves. Any lapse in confidence will only lead to the downward spiral of our movements. Eradicating the abusive tendencies internally to our movement and cultivating healthy self-confidence is a battle that needs to be fought with utmost urgency.

One afternoon at the afterschool program I work at the kids were being especially mean to each other. When name-calling and crying reached a pinnacle, my supervisor pulled a team-building exercise out of a book. The exercise correlated meanness to others with poisonous arrows. Once you get hit by a poison arrow, you get infected and start shooting others with poison arrows. Before you know it, everyone is infected with mean-spiritedness. After the exercise, the children's behavior dramatically turned around and they were kind, compassionate, and patient with one another. Seeing the behavior of the children dramatically change from abusive to healthy compassion made me think about my own organizing work.

The movement-building I have currently been involved in is saturated with poisonous arrows. Time and again I have experienced both sides of the situation, either saying awfully abusive things about people or having them said about me. Lately it has been a daily experience of mine to act as a diplomat to different groups engaging in poison arrow wars against each other. The immediate consequences of comrades acting awfully towards other comrades have been obvious and terrible. Simple projects have been paralyzed, support to people in need has been choked off, and many stressful things have had to be handled alone instead of together. I hope I never have to see the long-term consequences of such behavior, I would imagine it will look frighteningly similar to my nightmare.

The self-confidence of the people fighting the same struggle as you is ultimately more important than propping up our ego's with the humiliation of those people. I recognize that there are obviously situations where people in the movement need to be isolated and put in check. Distinguishing between setting aside petty ego trips and confronting abusive situations is a topic I hope to cover in the next issue of Paper Matches. To conclude, I would just like to point out that as long as our words continue to hurt us, the State will not have to even worry about breaking our bones. 🗡️

# Dr. Mutulu Shakur

an interview **conducted by** Daniel Burton-Rose

*Int:* You've done a lot of organizing around African-American history and awareness since you entered prison. How has that played out?

*Shakur:* Let me say this. The situation that we're talkin' about now is a part of a litigation. And the litigation has to do with First Amendment violations, false information which effects the liberty, interest, as well as a right to petition government for relief. A part of my political history, and commitment to the struggle of Black people, encompasses the struggle for human rights. When I was captured, tried, and was convicted, nothing in my personal life altered in my defense of myself. You follow me? And therefore when I became a prisoner and was sent to federal prisons, I felt then an obligation to be conscious about what human rights activities as well as what responsibilities I had to a younger population of Black prisoners, Latin prisoners and the like, who made up the majority of federal prisoners. And so we began to try to connect the Black community-the larger community, the cultural community, the educational community--to the prisoners so that the changing atmosphere of the American population through the political machinery, against prisoners, against rehabilitation, in support of recidivism and the like, would run up against some kind of resistance.

And so we began to put forward culture as one of the means to bring together members of the Black community inside of the prisons, for prisoners who were involved in many fratricidal [contradictions], behavior modification that was detrimental not only to the prisoners, not only to the prisoners and their families, but also to the orderly running of an institution. And so we began to be about bringing culture, bringing educational structure, different but paralleling whatever was available within the federal Bureau of Prisons, and particularly in Lompoc, paralleling whatever educational structure they had set up.

The philosophy at that point when I began my sentence at Lompoc seemed to be ambivalent towards--I should say there was a different mindset than exists today, in terms of whether rehabilitation was an objective of the Bureau of Prisons [the BOP has since officially dropped rehabilitation as a goal]. And it was in the policy of the Bureau of Prisons that existed a guideline that governed the behavior and the inclusion of community participation in various programs that effect the culture, religion and education of prisoners. So in order to do these things we had to follow these guidelines.

And so we did that. And over the course of my five-year imprisonment at Lompoc, we were able to at least two to three times, sometimes four, bring in outside community representatives and various cultures, and very artistic presentations, as well as workshops and forums that we believe effected those prisoners and that community. We had the support of the 100 Black Men of Santa Barbara, we had the support of the Phi Delta Kappa, we had the support of the NAACP Image Award folks, we had the support of the New Afrikan People's Organization, we had the support of various Muslim organizations, as well as the support of the various cultural groups around the area. As well as the academic area--we were able to enlist Black history instructors, and you know, get aids for the programs we were doin'.

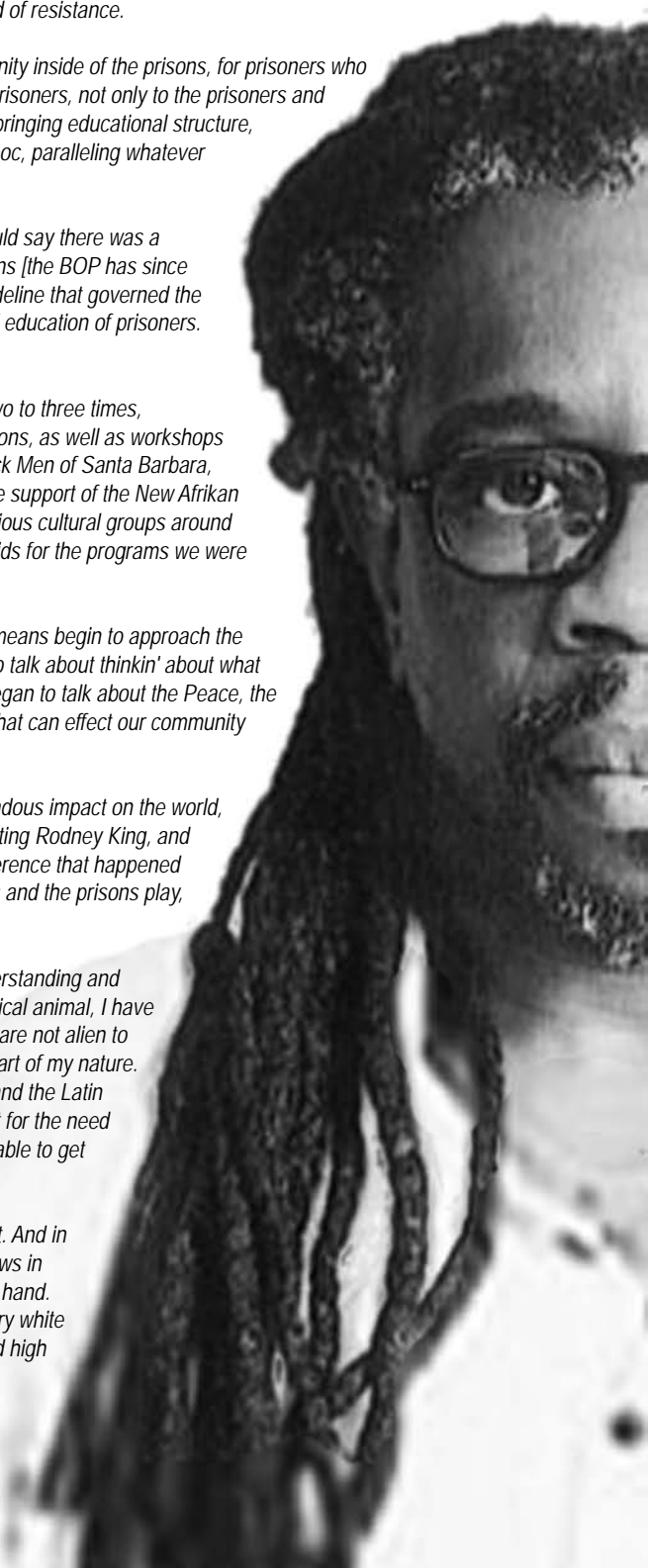
That process began under the Black Culture Workshop. And so we were quite successful in using that as a means begin to approach the various fratricidal groups inside the prisons, street organizations and the like, to begin to talk about Peace. To talk about thinkin' about what they had done to the community, how destructive their continued fightin' within the community was. So we began to talk about the Peace, the Peace Treaty, and the peace within the prisons, and working together around community and prison issues that can effect our community internally and externally [to the prison].

The period that we were in Lompoc also was the Rodney King period. The Rodney King period had a tremendous impact on the world, obviously, but clearly on the west coast. And so the pre-trials and trials of the officers accused of brutally beating Rodney King, and then the end results, in the verdict in favor of the police, and then the subsequent riots or rebellions or belligerence that happened within the community of Los Angeles, that even moreso called for an understanding of what role these gangs and the prisons play, and the whole disproportionate amount of Black and Latin prisoners in these prisons.

And so in exercising our First Amendment right in terms of talking and speaking and trying to get some understanding and putting these things into context within the prisons as well as within the political context. Obviously I'm a political animal, I have a political ideology, I have political goals and objectives. Now these political ideologies, goals and objectives are not alien to the Bureau of Prisons or to the Justice Department or for that matter to the judge who sentenced me. It's a part of my nature. But we felt that it was important in making the analysis .that brutality is sanctioned by the Black community, and the Latin community, because of the view that the gangs' violence against ourselves and our community gives support for the need of more repressive police laws and actions, you follow me? And so buildin' off of that we were able we were able to get them to understand within that context their error, you follow? And so we were able to do a lot of good things.

In the midst of that we had an "angry white male backlash"--I guess that's what the Republican Party called it. And in that period the angry white male backlash also lended its support to industrialized prison industry, creating laws in prisons that would just be about the development of labor of economic enrichment of Wall Street, on the one hand. On the other hand, they used Law and Order like they have used Law and Order from time on to get the angry white male elected. The way the campaigns were run--hard on crime, low on support of community resources, and high on new laws overturning the ability of criminals to have fair trials.

And so that impact brought forward in the legislation in the Congress these new crime bills, the mandatory sentences, RICO and the like. I think before I left Lompoc gangs had begun to be indicted under RICO, and so what was initially developed for high finance crime was initially was now at the very low rung of the ladder. And so this was becoming an educational tool.



Along with this came an attitude, long prevalent within the Bureau of Prisons, for the right, or the more anti-rehabilitation, the more fascist, the more arrogant and abuse-of-power element in the Bureau of Prisons and prison system in general in America, began to take. Swap amenities within the prison system. And so they would take one example out of a million non-examples as a basis to change laws, to alter how prisons were run. With those laws came more and more cutting away of the access of the community to the prisons and the prisoners. And also came along with that the limiting of the access to the legal law library, the legal access machinery to overturn convictions. Along with that came recreational changes, you know, weights and television, various sundry things.

And so the education process was becoming, you know, more and more intense. Because not only were you in an atmosphere movin' from where you could teach and try to have some impact on these prisoners, the atmosphere changed so belligerent internally and so repressive that leaders-people who had positive influence, influence that did not violate any Bureau of Prison regulations--were taken and put in isolation, segregation and control units in order to isolate them from the population, whereby leaving a void in constructive leadership, leadership that could give some aid and assistance to a lost population, a lost element, who were being shipped in by the thousands under this new crack law, and who under the mandatory sentences weren't receiving any type of initiatives for good behavior, you follow me. And so we began to be put in hole, began to be segregated from the population of federal prisons.

And so that's my story. That's where this litigation that I'm involved with comes into play. Along with the fact that I'm a political person. Along with the fact that my beliefs are adverse to the United States position on Black people, and in particular to the Bureau of Prisons' strategy of how to maintain Black people in the docile position within these prison systems, where they will have no impact. You have any questions, 'cause I can go on and on.

**Int:** Yeah. I've heard from several white political prisoners who've been in since the '70s that it's tougher for them now than it used to be, that they aren't afforded the same respect and given the same space they used to be. Are you feeling that as well? What's it like being a political prisoner these days, especially in the Black prison community? Do you get much respect as an elder?

**Shakur:** Well, [laughs] it is true that the element of prisoners that are coming in are not necessarily criminals. They have committed criminal acts but they have not been worldly. They have no sense of their community, their nation, their role in it, the history of their struggle, you know, that gave them the rights that they had to commit whatever criminal act, or put them in a position to resist those criminal acts. And so you have what we consider a more apolitical element of prisoners cornin' in to the prison, And so a political prisoners who does not continue to be about their values and principles and morals, concerning the struggle for human rights and dignity, would become isolated and lumped into a whole [group] of oldtime prisoners. [prisoners doing a lot of time]. And so you have to distinguish yourself by your principles and your morals, and by followin' through with what your commitment is. But outside of that I think that issue of political prisoners--or political persons for that matter, no matter where you are, inside the more restricted prison or outside in the broader community--the political person has not received their respect or credibility because it has been as a result of COINTELPRO, we have to say that it was quite effective, and that it has taken the sting out of political organizing and political mass movements. Now mass movements must be based on religious elements rather than purely political objectives.

And so we are going through a metamorphosis. .And at some point because the contradictions haven't changed it will come back , I have no doubt on that. I see the signs of that everyday. We have a responsibility to--repression breeds resistance, or at least the need to understand what's goin' on. I think a lot of that same element that is apolitical is also naive about what they had anticipated their rights to be within the context of their government and as citizens. And so that naive element will also be a motivating factor to determine why was it gotten from what they thought it was, to where it is today.

**Int:** Have you felt much support from outside, or from the hip-hop movement at all?

**Shakur:** I have to admit that my base is not purely political. It is political but my base is service oriented. I spent many years treating drug victims with acupuncture and healing people. That's what I do, that's what I do better than I do anything else. I spent many years organizing around housing and welfare rights and around prisoners' rights and the like. I didn't just fall from the sky. And so my base of support comes from many brothers and sisters--and others, white, Black, Green or whatever--who have had experience with me and understand my genuine commitment to human rights as well as my commitment to my political prisoners. And so I'm lucky in that way, for now, up until now. That my patients, my students-I've taught acupuncture for years I have many students across the country, in all classes--and my political comrades in terms of housing, and welfare rights, and international support for various countries that were under apartheid or alike. We've done a lot of work in those areas so people consistently demonstrate concern for us.

On the other hand we've also enjoyed the youth. Part of the massbased work has been liberation schools and teachin' children, camps for people. We have the New Africa People's Organization, we have the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, we have the December 12th movement, the John Brown Anti-Klan movement, and a lot of student organizations, they know of our work they know of our consistency. I'm not no celeb, or that kind of thing [laughs], but on fundamental work and fundamental commitment I think that people genuinely understand that I've tried to be about that, with my errors and my mistakes and the like. But they have been based upon trying to do, as opposed to not do.

**Int:** Tell me a little more about how you came to be imprisoned.

**Shakur:** The state claims I was involved in the expropriation of armored trucks, and the liberation of political prisoners.

**Int:** Involving Assata?

**Shakur:** Yes. And being responsible for [freed] political prisoners who were underground. And I was convicted of all

of those charges, and I am serving 60 years on those charges. Me and my co-defendant Marilyn Buck. Who happens to be a white woman, anti-imperialist. And so that's what my case is about. I can't say that anybody gets a fair trial, but we are involved in overturning that conviction and re-establishing the political motives behind the frame-up.

*Int:* Is there anything else you want to talk about?

*Shakur:* I would like to talk about the hip-hop nation. As you know my son was murdered, assassinated in Las Vegas, [on] September 13th, 1996. And I think that I have an obligation to always speak about the impact that Tupac and the hip-hop nation have on the growing development of the youth. Everything has its positives and its negatives. I believe that the void of the independence movement or the political movement was created, the natural response would be for an aggressive, belligerent youth development. Without a political leadership, that youth development would go in various directions. I think that whatever you might say about my son and other rappers, there was never a loss for political analysis within the context of his music. There was never a loss for political understanding within the context of his movement. There was also what we would call the street reality. But the fact that a lot of people are now awakened to a certain reality, can put it in a cultural context, is the reflection of most suppressed people's first stage of awareness. That the culture speaks for the base of the people. And Tupac, Biggie Smalls, Paris, and other rappers--the Ghetto Boys and the like--speak to that.

What we're hopin' is that the street organizations become much more aware of what their actions have done to create an atmosphere of fascism, that is an excuse to repress the whole community. And as they mature from that stage to another, stage, that they keep their organizational capability and understand their responsibility to rectify the things that they have created. And that we love them and they are us. And we have a responsibility for the errors as well as for the victories. But we want unity, we want more study, we want more analysis in their music, and we want to dance and party too! 'Cause ain't no party like a thug-like party. [laughs.] From their perspective. And if we understand what the thuggery is, and the history of thuggery, as opposed to the United States [government's] analysis, we might understand what we're talkin' about. But as far as that is concerned, I feel more aligned with the energies of the youth than with the defeatism of the elders. I feel more a part of it because it was what I'm around. Seventy percent of the population in these prisons are under thirty. And so those who are over thirty and under forty have grown up inside these prisons. They have no perspective of adulthood. So I have an obligation, I have a lot of love and I have a lot of respect for what I've learned and what I've been able to share, and what I've been able to see manifest from those experiences. So we say aim high and go all out. 🇵🇸

*Here is a list of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War currently being held in Colorado for a national list, please contact [denverabc@rocketmail.com](mailto:denverabc@rocketmail.com)*



**DR. MUTULU SHAKUR**  
**#83205-012**  
**P.O. Box 8500**  
**Florence, CO 81226**

*In March 1982, Dr. Shakur and 10 others were indicted by a federal grand jury under a set of U.S. conspiracy laws called "Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization" (RICO) laws. These conspiracy laws were ostensibly developed to aid the government in its prosecution of organized crime figures; however, they have been used with varying degrees of success against revolutionary organizations. Dr. Shakur was charged with conspiracy and participation in a clandestine paramilitary unit that carried out actual and attempted expropriations from several banks. Eight incidents were alleged to have occurred between December 1976 to October 1981. In addition he was charged with participation in the 1979 prison escape of black liberation fighter Assata Shakur, who is now in exile in Cuba.*



**JAMIL ABDULLAH AL-AMIN**  
**#99974-555**  
**USP Florence ADMAX**  
**P.O. Box 8500**  
**Florence, CO 81226**

*Jamil is also known as H. Rap Brown, who came to prominence in the 1960s as chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Justice Minister of the Black Panther Party. He is perhaps most famous for his proclamation during that period that "violence is as American as cherry pie", as well as once stating that "If America don't come around, we're gonna burn it down". He is currently serving a life sentence for homicide.*



**LARRY HOOVER**  
**#86063-024**  
**Florence ADMAX**  
**P.O. Box 8500**  
**Florence, CO 81226**

*Larry Hoover is a former gang member and street level black liberation organizer currently serving concurrent sentences resulting from a prison uprising in 1978.*



**GRANT BARNES**  
**#137563**  
**San Carlos Correctional Facility**  
**PO Box 3 Pueblo, CO 81002**

*Grant Barnes was active in the Denver anarchist movement. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison for setting several SUVs on fire in the Denver area in an act of environmental and class based sabotage.*

## Denver ABC Statement on the Colorado Democratic Party Headquarters Incident originally posted on the DABC blog, Sept. 23rd, 2009

**O**n August 24th, eleven windows at the Colorado Democratic Party Headquarters were purposefully broken. The media quickly took up the story, but only within a narrow framework that couldn't explain the incident. As members of the Denver Anarchist Black Cross, we would like to offer a practical analysis of why someone might take such action against the Democratic Party.

The first question asked by the media, understandably, was why this was done. Unfortunately, the question was framed as all political questions are framed in our society—right or left? Whoever smashed the windows could either be a “Republican thug” attempting to intimidate the Democrats, or a Democrat provocateur trying to soil the image of the Republicans. After all, we do not want to exist in an oppressive world of either/or that dissects our freedom and happiness.


To frame the issue in the same old Democrat/Republican binary is to once again assume that those are our only options. This framework dismisses or simplifies the experiences of the vast majority of people. People have diverse understandings of the world, and unique desires and goals that do not fit perfectly into political party boxes. In the end, the framework failed as the suspect was identified as an anarchist, a “fan of no party.”

The political system was not the only binary imposed by the media coverage of the incident. Blog, radio, and newspaper reports all grappled to identify the gender of the arrested suspect when reports from the police came into conflict with communication from the individual's friends. In the confusion, some reports claimed there had been two different people arrested. The media eventually reported that the arrestee is transgender.

Again, the attempts to understand the suspect in terms of simple binary categories was disrupted. The urge to pigeonhole the suspect into binaries—right or left, male or female—leads us to ask why. A person does not have to identify as a Republican or Democrat or even as male or female to feel the direct impact of foreign and domestic policies coming from politicians and bosses across the country.

Every day we are reminded of a long list of grievances we have with both of the major political parties. Many of those who mobilized to replace the previous political order with a fresh one promising “change” and “hope” have been left with nothing but a sour taste in their mouths. Wars overseas have not ceased but rather escalated. The trade agreements and economic strategy that put us into this recession are not being repealed but rather strengthened. Single payer health care has evaporated as even being a possibility and instead replaced with a health care package that only pleases the insurance companies. Over and over again, the vast majority of Americans have been sold out by the Obama administration.

Meanwhile, the occupants of the vandalized Democratic Headquarters play their part, along with the adjacent art galleries, of gentrification in the Denver neighborhood of Lincoln/La Alma, raising property values and displacing low-income people of color from their community. The justifiable anger that comes with being sold out might be one explanation for why it was easier to raise legal money for the alleged vandal than for the Democrats to raise money to replace their windows.

As the contradictions between reality and the promises of the Obama administration widen, anger will continue to grow and be expressed in many ways. The visions we have for our communities and our lives will not be realized by viewing our world through a system of binaries. We know that we should not be limited to two answers to each question, nor limited to the same old questions. Our goal is to build and defend social movements that can operate beyond these binaries so we can all open the scope of possibility in our lives, explore beyond either/or answers, and pose questions never asked on the 10 o'clock news. 

# getting involved in denver

here are a few denver-based radical projects in need of your support

## **Denver Anarchist Black Cross** 2298 Clay Street

The Denver Anarchist Black Cross exists to contribute to the defense, internally and externally, of social movements struggling against oppression and for self-determination. The Denver ABC is affiliated with the Anarchist Black Cross Federation, a collection of ABC chapters across North America that are engaged in support for political prisoners and prisoners of war.

## **P&L Printing** 2298 Clay Street

P&L Printing is a worker-owned collective print shop in the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Denver. P&L has been providing printing to local radical and revolutionary organizations for the last 30 years.

## **Derailer Bicycle Collective** 411 Lipan Street

The Derailer Bicycle Collective is a free, non-profit, collectively run community bicycle shop on the west side of Denver. Derailer offers free parts, frames, use of tools, and knowledge in repairing or building up just about any kind of bike for any kind of person. The shop is open to everyone, however priority is placed on people from the neighborhood and those with few options.

## **EI Centro Humanitario** 2260 California Street

EI Centro Humanitario promotes the rights and well-being of day laborers in Colorado through education, job skills and leadership development, united action and advocacy. The goals of EI Centro are to develop a sense of community and self sufficiency among workers and to foster worker ownership over EI Centro.

## **Denver Fair Food**

Denver Fair Food is a comprised of community members in and around Denver who work in partnership with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a grassroots human rights organization of farmworkers working to end modern-day slavery and sweat-shop labor conditions in Florida agriculture. Through an alliance of Denver residents and Florida workers, DFF seeks to transform the purchasing practices of the corporate food industry in order to advance the human rights of farmworkers at the bottom of corporate supply chains. Check out their blog at: [denverfairfood@blogspot.com](mailto:denverfairfood@blogspot.com)

## **'Til It Breaks**

'Til it Breaks is a Denver based insurrectionary anarchist periodical that focuses on the interweaving of theory and action. 'Til it Breaks runs an often updated blog with news from the frontlines of the social war at: [itbreaks.wordpress.com](http://itbreaks.wordpress.com)

## **Denver General Membership Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World**

The Denver GMB of the IWW is the local branch of revolutionary anti-capitalist workers union, the Industrial Workers of the World. They meet sporadically. For more information, you can email: [breadandroses@msn.com](mailto:breadandroses@msn.com)

## **Bread and Roses Workers Cultural Center**

Bread and Roses Workers Cultural Center is housed in the upstairs of P&L Printing at 2298 Clay. Bread and Roses seeks to help contribute to the celebration of working class culture. Bread and Roses displays art, passes along working class history in stories, books, music, poetry; honors our heroes and heroines; and helps prepare for a future where work will be a matter of creativity and cooperation, not the drudgery and exploitation it is now. Bread and Roses aims to develop harmony between life and work, with the method being to identify and promote such endeavors by working people in their everyday lives all around us, all around the world.

## **4 Winds Survival Project** 215 W 5th Ave

The 4 Winds Survival Project is a project and space dedicated to contributing to and continuing the legacy of resistance by indigenous peoples in the Americas. The Project has played a key role in organizing native based resistance in Denver and has served as a home to the Denver American Indian Movement and other indigenous projects.

*Do you participate in an organization or project that you want to list in Paper Match? Email Denver ABC at [denverabc@rocketmail.com](mailto:denverabc@rocketmail.com)*



## 2010 Certain Days Calendar

**\$12**

42 full color pages of prisoner artwork and writings. This years theme is "Indigenous Resistance". Proceeds will support Robert Seth Hayes, David Gilbert, and Herman Bell as well as the efforts of Denver Anarchist Black Cross to support prisoners and radical movements nationally.

## Martyr's Ball Screen Printed Poster

**\$15**

19x28 Three color screen print featuring martyrs John Brown, Phoolan Devi, and Geronimo. Signed and numbered by the artist, and limited to 30. Proceeds benefit Denver Anarchist Black Cross.



## King's Candy Freelines

**\$3**

Delicious Pecan Prelines made by Robert King, a former Black Panther wrongfully imprisoned for 31 years. Proceeds from each 4 oz. bag of freelines benefit the Angola 3.

## 2010 Slingshot Organizer \$6 sm \$10 lg

It's about time you got organized. comes in pocket sized small, or spiral-bound large, and a variety of colors. Proceeds benefit the P&L infoshop project.

**To buy, email [denverabc@rocketmail.com](mailto:denverabc@rocketmail.com) or visit us at P&L Printing, 2298 Clay St.**



**this is where it all ends.**

