

# SUPPORT MARIE MASON



Marie Mason is serving the longest prison term of any environmental activist in the US. In February 2009, she was sentenced to almost 22 years in federal prison for two acts of property destruction in Michigan in which no one was injured or killed. She damaged an office connected to GMO research and destroyed a piece of logging equipment.

Mason's case is one of the most egregious in the Green Scare, the name given to the prosecution of environmental and animal liberation activists who have received vastly inflated sentences, and publicly and legally labeled "terrorists" – though no one has been hurt in their acts of economic sabotage.

Some prisoners are kept in special Communication Management Units (CMUs) to isolate them from their families and supporters. In August, 2010 Mason was transferred to a special wing of a Texas prison that has restrictive policies regarding communication that are similar to the CMUs, although not quite as severe.

Mason is a loving mother of two and has been an activist for over 20 years. Like Earth First!'s Judi Bari, she is from a generation of radicals who worked to link the environmental and labor movements by stitching together groups such as Earth First! with unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

When not raising her children, working with local environmental groups or with her union, she was a journalist for magazines such as the *Fifth Estate*, recorded a neo-folk album with fellow Earth First!er Darryl Cherney in 1999, and worked with numerous charitable groups.

Mason was snatched on by her then-husband, Frank Ambrose. After spying for the FBI on activist groups for two years, Ambrose filed divorce papers the day she was arrested. Based on his testimony, Mason's son was later arrested for a misdemeanor charge dating back to when he was a teenager. The FBI also raided Mason's mother's

house, seized private papers from her daughter, and intimidated an ex-partner at his workplace.

In return for Mason accepting a plea bargain, the prosecution asked for 15–20 years. However, the judge sentenced her to 22 years, declaring she had violated the "marketplace of ideas" with her actions. He stated that her "case is not about a prosecution for holding political viewpoints." But exactly the opposite is true. Mason received a 22 year sentence only because she was an environmental activist whose actions disrupted "the marketplace." The average sentence for murder in federal court is 22 years; the average sentence for arson is seven.

Mason's extraordinary sentence is a result of post-9/11 legal changes. Acts of sabotage have been redefined as "terrorism." Judges now treat eco-saboteurs, who honor the sanctity of life, the same as those who seek to massacre thousands of people. These laws are being used disproportionately to punish anarchists, radical environmentalists, and animal liberation activists. Domestic terrorism prosecutions are almost never used against the assassins of abortion doctors, or against those who commit homophobic, racist or anti-Semitic hate crimes.

Supporting Marie Mason does not mean agreeing with her acts. The fear-mongering tactics and outrageous sentences of the Green Scare are threats to environmental and animal liberation politics in general. Defending Marie Mason and the other Green Scare prisoners is part of countering the government's attempts to repress these movements as a whole.

Being incarcerated is extremely expensive for the families of prisoners, and donations are needed to pay for Mason's legal expenses, to buy vegan food from the prison commissary, to make phone calls from jail, and to help pay for visits from her family.

Your support is needed to support Mason and to help beat back the Green Scare.

## for more information:

[www.supportmariemason.org](http://www.supportmariemason.org)  
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## to write Mason:

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## to donate:

Checks or MO's made out to "Support Marie Mason" at:  
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