



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for March 27th

13 Mar – Terror in Portlandia

The FBI conducted a three-year investigation, dubbed "Seizing Thunder," into a animal-rights and environmental "terrorists" in the Pacific Northwest that devolved into widespread—and seemingly pointless—surveillance of activists for no apparent reason aside from the fact that they were anarchists, or protested the war in Iraq, or were "militant feminists."

MORE:

How the FBI Monitored Crusty Punks, ‘Anarchist Hangouts,’ and an Organic Farmers’ Market Under the Guise of Combating Terrorism

I first came across the name "Seizing Thunder" several years ago while rifling through the FBI's investigative files on the Animal Liberation Front. The ALF records obliquely referenced the evocatively named investigation, which I requested via the Freedom of Information Act just for kicks. Last month—after three years—the FBI returned nearly 500 pages (it held back 784).

It turns out that Seizing Thunder, which was based out of the bureau's Portland field office, was one of several investigations into animal rights and environmental activists nationwide that the FBI eventually merged into Operation Backfire, a wide-ranging probe of ALF and the Earth Liberation Front. Backfire concluded [in 2006 with the indictments of 11 activists for arson and other "acts of domestic terrorism."](#) including a notorious 1998 destruction of a \$12 million ski lodge in Vail, Colo. The Portland portion seemed to focus primarily on gathering general intelligence on activists who used tree-sitting and other monkey-wrench tactics to fight old-growth logging in the Pacific Northwest.

What makes Seizing Thunder interesting, however, is how easily the agents slipped beyond investigating actual federal crimes and devoted considerable resources to tracking political activists with no apparent criminal intent.

Seizing Thunder was opened in 2002 to target members of the "Animal Liberation front (ALF), Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and an anarchist group called the Red Cloud Thunder, all whose members are inter-related and they openly claimed several major arsons," according to the files. The investigation involved physical and video surveillance, warrants for phone taps, and cooperation with local police departments in Portland and Eugene, Ore. But the feds quickly dropped the pretense of tracking organized groups and quickly began surveilling people simply for identifying themselves—or for being identified by informants—as anarchists. The memos read like artifacts from the Red Scare:

- [July 19, 2002](#): "On [redacted], the source observed a [redacted] Oregon license plate...parked at [redacted], a known anarchist hangout."
- [August 8, 2002](#): "The source observed the following vehicles in the vicinity of [redacted], a major hangout for the anarchist and [redacted]"
- [September 19, 2002](#): "On [redacted] the source observed [redacted] vehicle, Oregon license plate [redacted] parked at [redacted] one of the hangout for anarchist...."
- [October 18, 2002](#): "On [redacted] the source was questioned as to the [redacted] anarchist travelling to [redacted]."

"The anarchists were dressed in black"

What sort of federal crimes were all these anarchists getting up to, aside from the thought variety? The records, which document the FBI's extensive cooperation and intelligence-sharing with local police departments in Eugene and Oregon, show that agents [collected intelligence about an anarchist march](#) that was being planned to protest U.S. policy in the Middle East:

On [redacted] at approximately 2:30 p.m., the source visited [redacted]. The source did not observe any anarchists. The source walked [redacted] to view their bulletin board. Most of the ads on the bulletin board were for individuals looking for roommates.

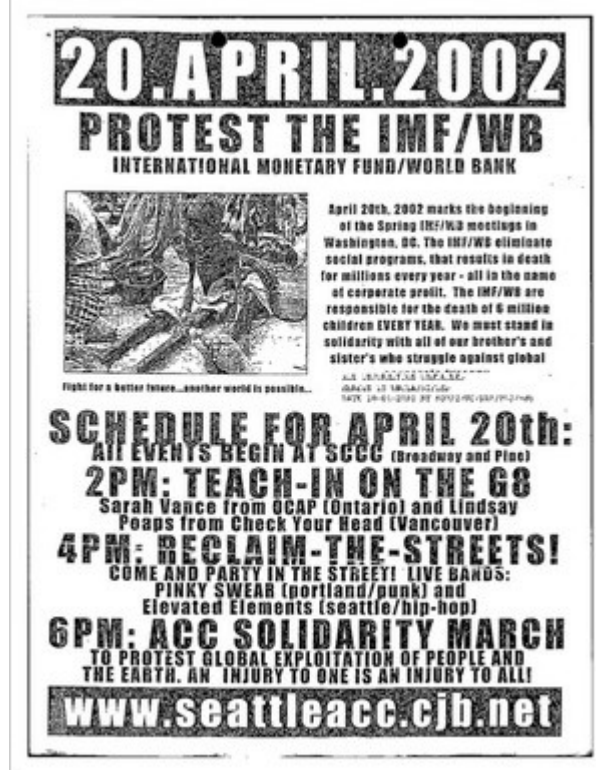
On [redacted] the source attended [redacted]. The source visited [redacted] where the source met two unknown anarchists at [redacted]. The anarchists were dressed in black and were in their early 20s.... The source stated the anarchists are planning a protest to "Reclaim the Streets" on April 20, 2002, in Portland, Ore.

Here's how the Associated Press covered that crucible of terror and violence:

About 700 people marched through downtown Saturday in a peaceful protest against U.S. support of Israel in the Middle East crisis. There were no arrests and no altercations, police said.

The Pinky Swear Riot

Another FBI source passed along a warning of a similar anarchist plot to gather on the streets of Eugene just two days later to protest the International Monetary Fund. The feds quickly passed along the warning to the Eugene police department, [thereby averting a bloody riot, by the FBI's lights](#):



[Redacted] identified [redacted] a mass protest/riot planned by the Eugene anarchist where on 4/22/02 they attempted to "take over the street" and cause havoc during the rush hour. The Eugene Police Department was immediately notified and they called in numerous officers for this unexpected protest/riot. EPD was prepared for this problem and prevented a major riot. EPD expressed their appreciation for this information as it may have resulted in major damages of businesses and property, similar to that of a riot in June 1999 where \$150,000 of property destruction occurred.

I can't find any record of any news organization covering this narrowly averted riot. A flier for the riot included in the file reads: "2 p.m.: Teach-in on the G8.... 4 p.m.: RECLAIM-THE-STREETS! Come and party in the street! Live bands: Pinky Swear (Portland/Punk) and Elevated Elements (Seattle / Hip Hop)."

Chasing Subaru

Another high point of the file shows [agents conducting surveillance](#) on the Grower's Market, a "[not-for-profit food-buying club for buying organic and natural foods](#)" in Eugene, and then literally tailing two random Subaru Legacys (naturally!) to a political rally. As the redacted memo recounting the excursion makes clear, *the agents had no idea who they were following, or why*.

The interviewing agents conducted a physical surveillance in the vicinity of The Grower's Market located at 454 Willamette Street in Eugene, Oregon. This surveillance was conducted as a result of [redacted]. During the surveillance the following observations were made:

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 11-03-2010 BY 60322/UC/SR/PLJ/AB

ASCII

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 08/20/2002

The interviewing agents conducted a physical surveillance in the vicinity of The Grower's Market located at 454 Willamette Street in Eugene, Oregon. This surveillance was conducted as a result of [redacted] b7C

[redacted] During the surveillance the following observations were made:

0930 Surveillance instituted in the vicinity of the Grower's Market located at 454 Willamette Street, Eugene, Oregon.

1100 A gray Subaru Legacy bearing Oregon license plate [redacted] with unknown individuals left the area of the Grower's Market followed by unknown passengers in a red Subaru Legacy bearing Ohio license plate [redacted], a purple Geo Metro bearing an Oregon special license plate [redacted] and a gold Chevrolet Malibu bearing Oregon license plate [redacted]. These vehicles were followed south on Interstate-5. b6 b7C

1120 The four vehicles with several unknown occupants arrived in Cottage Grove, Oregon. After arriving in Cottage Grove the occupants of the vehicles parked at a shopping complex to pickup other unknown individuals.

1130 The four vehicles with several unknown occupants left Cottage Grove and were observed driving south bound on Interstate 5 toward Myrtle Creek, Oregon.

1230 The four vehicles with the unknown occupants exited Interstate-5 at the Myrtle Creek, Oregon exit. The occupants parked along the edge of the highway, exited their vehicles and were no longer observed.

1233 The unknown occupants of the four vehicles were observed driving north on Interstate-5 toward Roseburg, Oregon.

1236 The occupants of the four identified vehicles exited Interstate-5 at exit 112 and proceeded north on Highway [redacted]

Investigation on 08/19/2002 at Eugene, Oregon

File # 100-47226-77 Date dictated 08/20/2002

100-47226-77

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

0930: Surveillance instituted in the vicinity of The Grower's Market....

1100: A gray Subaru Legacy bearing Oregon license plate [redacted] with unknown individuals left the area of the Grower's Market followed by unknown passengers in a red Subaru Legacy bearing Ohio license plate [redacted], a purple Geo Metro bearing an Oregon special license plate [redacted]. These vehicles were followed south on Interstate-5.

What caper were these Subaru-driving terrorists getting up to? Well, after meeting up with a "private bus," also with unknown individuals on board, they drove to Roseburg, Oregon:

1406: The bus and three vehicles were observed parked on the west side of Main Street, south of Oak Street, in a free parking area. The occupants of the vehicles were observed to be carrying protest signs and musical instruments and walking north on Main Street toward the South Umpqua National Bank.

1409: The occupants of the bus and three vehicles were observed protesting outside the South Umpqua National Bank located at Main and Washington streets in Roseburg,

Oregon. Officers from Roseburg Police Department and the Douglas County Sheriff's Office were observed monitoring/video taping the incident.

1417: Surveillance discontinued.

"The Anarchists and homeless groups have united"

The Seizing Thunder agents weren't just worried about enviro-anarchy—they also warned of a dreaded anarchist-homeless alliance that threatened to build a "homeless camp." From a [November 2002 memo](#):

Source advised that the Anarchists and homeless groups have united in the effort to establish a "homeless camp." Source stated that the homeless community has accepted the assistance of the Anarchists in the area of publicity and community outreach.

And don't forget the menace posed by punk rock as performed by anarchists. This memo shows that the bureau's Los Angeles office [kept tabs on the Alternative Gathering Collective](#), "an anarchist group in Los Angeles that organizes anarchist punk music concerts, many of which are fundraisers for animal liberation and environmental extremist groups and causes."

Review of [redacted] found that the AGC sponsored a benefit show for the Long Beach Food Not Bombs (FNB) on 2/5/2005. The concert was held at the Homeland Cultural Center, 1321 Anaheim St., Long Beach CA with the bands Sin Remedio, Ciril, Degrading Humanity, Life in Exile, Lechuza, Civil Disgust, S.O.U.P., and One Side Society.

Finally, an [October 2002 memo](#) warns agents that Lady Anarchists can be a whole mess of trouble:

Source advised that the females of the anarchist's movement are in leadership positions in Eugene, Oregon. These females are described as being very feminist and militant.

Other hilarious moments involve agents [snooping on nature hikes](#), investigating the [serious federal crime of keying cars](#), and unwittingly [letting a warrant for a phone tap expire](#).

A History of Political Surveillance

Sadly, it shouldn't come as a surprise to anybody paying attention that the FBI spent much of the 2000s following people simply because they harbored forbidden political beliefs. Last year, Austin, Texas activist Scott Crow decided to see if the FBI was keeping tabs on him, so he FOIAed his file. He got back an astonishing 440 pages of surveillance records and other documents, [according to the New York Times](#). Crow, an anarchist, has never been charged with a federal crime.

In 2010, the FBI's inspector general issued [a report finding that the bureau had overstepped its bounds](#) in investigating political and advocacy groups. The bureau's Pittsburgh office, the report said, had conducted surveillance on an anti-war rally as a "make-work" assignment for a bored agent and then "provided inaccurate and misleading information to Congress and the public" about the incident. It also found that "in several cases" of surveillance aimed at Greenpeace, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and other groups, the FBI's stated bases for the investigations were "factually weak" and demonstrated "little indication of any possible federal crime as opposed to a local crime."

A [2003 inspector general audit](#) of the bureau's intelligence gathering and sharing capabilities took note of the increasing emphasis on domestic counterterrorism investigations aimed at "criminal activities associated with animal rights, environmental, and anti-abortion extremists, as well as by certain social protestors" as opposed to, you know, al Qaeda. The report diplomatically suggested that the FBI's counterterror resources should be reserved for combating actual terrorism: "To the extent that the FBI seeks to maximize its counterterrorism resources to deal with radical Islamic fundamentalist terrorism, WMD, and domestic groups or individuals that may seek mass casualties, we believe that FBI management should consider the benefit of transferring responsibility for criminal activity by social activists to the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division."

The bureau obviously didn't listen. It should be noted that the 11 people eventually indicted in Operation Backfire actually had committed serious crimes worthy of federal investigations. Though the documents are heavily redacted, it appears from context that at the very least one of them—Chelsea Dawn Gerlach, who participated in the Vail arson—was a target of Seizing Thunder.

I asked the FBI who, if anyone, was eventually charged based on information developed via Seizing Thunder, and what federal crimes the bureau suspected unidentified Subaru drivers, militant feminists, and frequenters of "anarchist hangouts" of committing. A spokeswoman did not immediately respond.

14 Mar - Oakland police keep track of "anarchists"

Oakland Police Department's internal communications about the Occupy Oakland movement, which the San Francisco Bay Guardian obtained through the California Public Records Act, reveal interesting patterns of what officers deem important to note about protesters.

MORE:

Officers' reported observations of the crowd generally concern activity, movement, and sometimes mood. However, there are also mentions of the perceived political affiliations of protesters. In an Oct. 24 briefing, a plainclothes officer, having strolled through the encampment, reports that "the group is diverse, made up of persons including self proclaimed anarchists, labor unions, long term homeless individuals, special cause supporters and others."

But by Nov. 2, it seems, all other categories fall away and officers seem interested in reporting on only one perceived type of protester: anarchists.

Police make several reports in the notes of where and when they've noticed "anarchists" or "anarchist behavior."

In activity logs reporting "major events" throughout Oct. 25, police include anarchist sightings in that category. In the afternoon, there is "black block (sic) spotted, approximately 12."

When protesters briefly occupied the Travelers Aid Society building on Oct. 25, police reported “10 anarchists on the roof and inside.”

In an afternoon planning meeting Nov. 3, an officer describes the scene on the streets: “there have been reports that there were 5000 people with relatively no injuries. There seem to be people dressed in regular clothing displaying anarchist behavior.”

A press release from Nov. 2 also states that "the Oakland Police Department has identified a small group of anarchists roaming through the crowds. OPD is focused on preventing illegal activity while affording the majority their rights to assemble and march."

It seems that those officers reporting on the crowd equate anarchists with illegal activity, and believe they can identify adherents to anarchism based on appearance and behavior.

Anarchism is a political ideology, and not illegal. Yet officers apparently count out individuals that they perceive as anarchists.

While popular stereotypes associate illegal activity such as vandalism with anarchism, many who identify with anarchist principles have not broken laws in that fashion. In fact, these documents imply that police may be associated with another illegal activity; targeting some of those they protect and serve based on political belief.

15 Mar - Peter Hopperton Released From Prison

He was released from jail the morning of Thursday, March 15th, after serving 107 days in custody. We've also included Guelph ABC's March, 2012 G20 repression update.

MORE:

We now have our beloved Peter Hopperton back in wind blowing, bird chirping, love filled reality! He was released from jail the morning of Thursday, March 15th, after serving 107 days in custody.

A big thank you to everyone who sent letters, postcards, reading materials. Word on the street is that Peter has a huge garbage bag of letters, that was too large to carry home!

Also, a reminder that we still have comrades in jail. These friends still needs funds: we have a total fundraising goal of \$3000 in 2012. Please consider donating to Guelph ABC.

The Update:

Introduction

It has been one and a half years since the leaders of the twenty richest nations and their commercial and financial interested convened in Toronto for a glamorized photo-op. In June 2010, the G20 Summit took over and militarized the core of Toronto, Canada's largest city, and saw a week of protests, actions and mass arrests.

In the lead up to the summit, police from different municipal, provincial, federal policing and intelligent agencies formed the G20 Joint Intelligence Group to network and coordinate the state repression surrounding the G20 Summit. This included a number of tactics, including twelve undercover operations which led to the arrests of over twenty people on conspiracy charges.

During the weekend, militant actions were called by the Southern Ontario Anarchist Resistance (SOAR) and by a number of autonomous anarchist and indigenous groups. On June 25th, a break-away demonstration was called by SOAR called “Get Off the Fence”. This action saw a five hundred plus anti-capitalist bloc wreak havoc on Toronto's financial and shopping districts, followed by generalized rioting throughout the core for hours following the demo.

What we have compiled here are some updates about anti-authoritarians and anarchists who have been facing serious criminal charges following the actions of people in the streets, and in meetings prior to the summit. Many of these cases are still open and there are many other people who have been convicted and are serving sen-

tences who aren't tied to anarchist networks. We hope this will shed some light on what has happened since the riot.

G20 Main Conspiracy Group

www.conspiretoresist.wordpress.com (G20 main conspiracy group)

www.boredbutnotbroken.tao.ca (Mandy Hiscocks Prison Blog)

Twenty-one people were charged with being part of the G20 main conspiracy group, the crown alleged that there were upwards of fifty other co-conspirators who were never indicted. These charges stemmed from a one and a half year infiltration operation undertaken by OPP officers Bindo Showan and Brenda Carey.

The undercover started infiltrating anarchists in Guelph in 2008, and later spread the operation to Kitchener-Waterloo, Toronto and other communities in Southern Ontario. There were other undercover operations in Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal and upwards of a dozen police infiltrators.

By the time the case reached its preliminary hearing, charges were dropped against three defendants and one defendant received a suspended sentence in a plea resolution negotiated independently. In November, the remaining seventeen came to a plea resolution that saw charges of eleven of the defendants withdrawn and six agreed to pleading guilty and serving varying prison sentences.

The Convictions

The sentence lengths listed are before taking into account pretrial custody, house arrest, etc. Most people will serve about half of their sentences listed here.

Erik Lankin – 8 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief. Sentence began on November 28th 2011. Erik was released on January 26th 2012.

Adam Lewis – 6 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief. Sentence began on November 28th 2011. Adam was release on February 5th 2012.

Peter Hopperton – 8 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief. Sentence began on November 28th 2011. Peter was released on March 15th, 2012.

Leah Henderson – 14 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief. Sentence began on December 20th 2011. Leah is scheduled for release in June, 2012.

Alex Hundert – 18 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief, and one count of Counselling to Obstruct Police. Alex hasn't begun to serve his sentence yet.

Mandy Hiscocks – 18 month sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief, and one count of Counselling to Obstruct Police. Sentence began on January 13th 2012. Mandy is scheduled for release in December 2012.

Jaggi Singh – Received a suspended sentence for one count of Counselling to Commit Mischief of 12 months probation. Jaggis probation began on June 21st 2011.

Leah Henderson

Vanier Centre for Women
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655 Martin Street
Milton, Ontario
L9T 5E6 Canada

Amanda Hiscocks

Vanier Centre for Women
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Robin Henry

Robin was the first G20 defendant to be convicted of two counts of Mischief Over 5000 dollars and one count of Masked with Intent for breaking windows at a Starbucks and Bell store.

Robin served nine months under strict bail conditions before his sentencing. In March 2011, Robin was sentenced to one year house arrest, followed by two years probation, a 5000 dollars fine and three hundred plus community service hours. Robin is currently serving his sentence in London, Ontario.

Ryan Rainville

On December 5th, 2011 Ryan Rainville received a conditional sentence of four months under house arrest, followed by four months curfew and then one year probation. Ryan had plead guilty to three counts of Mischief Over 5000 dollars for using a red and black flag and a hammer to destroy Toronto Police cruisers during the G20 riot. He also plead guilty to a Breach of Peace.

Ryans sentence took into account the ninety-six days he spent in the Toronto Metro West Detention Centre and Maplehurst Correctional Complex following his initial arrest on these charges. Ryan fought and won a trial where he contested charges of Assault Police with a Weapon and Obstruct Officer. These charges stemmed from accusations that a police cruiser Ryan had damaged was occupied.

On December 20th 2011, a member of the G20 Investigative Team came to his home at Sagatay Men's Residence to serve him with an appeal of his sentence. The State believes Ryans sentence was too light. It is clear that Ryans pride in his convictions and anarchist values have led them to target him in an attempt to send a clear message to other anarchists, that our politics and bodies will be criminalized if we do not fall in line.

Before his sentencing, Ryan had served over three months in prison, eight months under house arrest and five months of a restrictive curfew. He is currently serving his sentence for these charges of four months house arrest, four months curfew, followed by a year probation. It will be three years after the original event before Ryan is free of these charges.

Ryan's appeal hearing is scheduled for this spring.

GABC has just released a zine of Ryan's statement to the courts before his sentencing.

Girr Rowley

Girr was arrested in November of 2010 by the G20 Special Investigation Team for his alleged participation in the black bloc action. He was placed under house arrest in Rockwood, just outside of Guelph. He eventually had his conditions reduced to a curfew.

Following his preliminary hearing, he plead guilty to one count of Mischief Under \$5000, one count of Masked with Intent and one count of Public Nuisance. He was convicted on February 3rd, 2012 and is currently serving a nine month sentence. This is his first conviction.

Greg Noltie-Rowley

Maplehurst Complex
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Kelly Pflug-Back

Kelly has been presented in the media as the “ring leader” of the black bloc action. She has faced some of the harshest repression. She spent two months in prison, before being released to house arrest with her parents. Kelly currently has a curfew and a lengthy non-association list which includes upwards of a hundred people. Kelly was charged with thirteen counts including Mischief Over 5000 dollars, Conspiracy, Obstruct Police, Assault Police With a Weapon and Intimidation of a Justice System Participant. Kelly has had some of these charges dropped, currently she is facing seven counts of Mischief over 5000 dollars. Kelly has plead guilty and is awaiting sentencing. The Crown is looking for upwards of 2 years.

George John Horton Norabuena

George is facing nine charges for allegedly participating in the black bloc. George was arrested in Peterborough by the local police in on September 28th 2010. He was then transferred to Toronto by the G20 Investigation Team. George was denied bail and spent a week in the Toronto West Detention Centre, before being released.

George was originally charged with Assault Police Officer, Intimidation of Police Officer, Obstruct Police Officer, Masked with Intent, Weapons Dangerous, Possession of Stolen Property under 5000 dollars, and three counts of Mischief under 5000 dollars.

In Mid December 2011 George pled to three counts of Attempted Mischief Under 5000 dollars and one count of Disguised with Intent to Commit a Crime. The Crown dropped the possession of stolen property and weapons dangerous charges.

George has been in trial for the past two months for the remaining charges of Assault Police Officer, Intimidation of Police Officer and Obstruct Police Officer. These charges are related to the attack on the Police Scout Car 766 at the beginning of the breakaway march. Nicholas Cote and Ryan Rainville both had their charges dropped from the attack on the squad car.

Georges trial will have it's closing arguments and sentencing in March. The Crown is seeking nine months in prison for George.

Jae Muzzin

Jae Muzzin was arrested for breaking two windows at the Toronto Police Headquarters during the Get Off the Fence demo. Jae plead guilty to two counts of Mischief Over \$5000 and Common Nuisance. The crown originally was asking for 1 year of jail.

Jae took a plea deal and was sentenced on February 17th, 2012 to an intermittent sentence of 60 days, to be served on 10 consecutive weekends. His Sentence will be finished by late April. Jae was also ordered to pay restitution of \$2,500.

Jae is currently serving his weekend sentences at Mimico Correctional Centre.

Byron Sonne

Guelph ABC is not currently in contact with Byron or his support group.

On June 22th, 2010, Byron Sonne was arrested in his home in Forest Hill north of Toronto in relation to the G20 Summit. The police created a media spectacle of his arrest, making him out as some “bomb wielding terrorist” to justify the massive expenses of policing the meeting of the richest countries of the world.

Originally, Byron was arrested on six charges ranging from explosives to intimidating of a justice participant by threats. Byron was held without bail for total a total of 330 days. In February, Byron had four of his charges dropped and is currently in trial for the remaining two charges of Possession of Explosives for an Unlawful Purpose and a Counselling offence.

Byron Sonne's trial resumed Monday March 19th and is expected to run everyday until April 5th at Ontario Superior Court (361 University Ave). This will be his sixth week of trial. While many charges were dropped after the preliminary inquiry, Byron still faces charges of possession of explosive substances and counseling the commission of mischief that was not committed.

Byron is a hacker and internet security consultant arrested June 22nd 2010. Byron was denied bail for eleven months following his arrest and still faces extensive restrictive bail conditions including nonassociation with many people and those who belong/belonged to AW@L, SOAR and the TCMN. (If you think this might be you, please wait until his lawyer is present before talking to him).

Break the isolation of the legal system and express your support and solidarity with Byron by dropping into court during these next 3 weeks of trial.

More information about his case at <http://freebyron.org>

Julian Ichim

Julian Ichim, one of the original G20 Main Conspiracy Group defendants who had his charges dropped was charged with six counts of Disobey Court Order in relation to a number of posts on his personal blog. He is now facing federal offences before the courts.

In these posts, the crown alleges that Julian violated a publication ban around the G20 Main Conspiracy Group case by writing about his personal experiences with two undercover operatives. The publication ban was put in place in part to conceal the names and identities of undercover officers Brenda Carey (undercover identity: Brenda Dougherty) and Bindo Showan (undercover identity: Khalid Mohammad), but has since been rescinded due in part to the continued outing of these operatives on the internet.

Julian's trial is scheduled for mid-March.

Dan Keller

Dan's house was invaded and he was arrested on August 25th 2011 by the OPP Anti-Racketing Branch. He was charged with one count of Defamatory Libel and one count of Council Assault for allegedly posting information on a Kitchener-Waterloo activist website, www.peaceculture.org about the identity and whereabouts of G20 undercover operative Bindo Showan (Khalid Mohammad). Dan's pre-trial is scheduled for February and the crown is seeking two and a half years.

15 Mar - Anti-COINTELPRO demonstration at Nebraska State Capitol for the Omaha Two

Several dozen demonstrators spread a 80 foot banner across the entrance to the Nebraska State Capitol on Tuesday, March 15th in behalf of the Omaha Two. Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa (formerly David Rice) are serving life sentences at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in Lincoln for the 1970 murder of an Omaha policeman.

MORE:

The Omaha Two were convicted after a COINTELPRO-tainted trial where Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover had ordered evidence withheld from the jury. Poindexter and Mondo were leaders of Omaha's Black Panther affiliate chapter and targets of Hoover's [clandestine war of counterintelligence](#) against domestic political activists.

Serving 41 years in prison, the Omaha Two are among America's longest-held political prisoners.

The capitol steps demonstration was organized by Ben Jones of the Anti-Oppression Art project. Jones used Facebook to help recruit people to help hold the giant banner.

Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa continue to maintain their innocence for the murder of Larry Minard, Sr. on August 17, 1970. Minard and seven other Omaha police officers were lured to a vacant house by an anonymous 911 call about a woman screaming. Instead of a woman, police found a booby-trapped suitcase filled with dynamite which exploded in Minard's face as examined it.

J. Edgar Hoover ordered the FBI crime laboratory to withhold a report on its analysis of a recording of the 911 call. Omaha police had sent the tape to Washington to determine the identity of the anonymous caller. The unknown caller presented a problem in making a case against the two Black Panther leaders.

For a year prior to the bombing, Paul Young, the Special Agent-in-Charge of the Omaha FBI office had been

under pressure from Hoover to eliminate the Black Panther leadership. After the Omaha Two trial in April 1971, where the jury never got to hear the voice of Minard's killer on the 911 tape, Young was rewarded for his role in the case with a transfer to head the Kansas City FBI office.

Ivan Willard Conrad, the FBI laboratory director, talked with Hoover about the unusual request to withhold information since it involved the death of a policeman. Hoover told Conrad to withhold a report on the identity of the caller which Conrad noted on the COINTELPRO memo about the tape. Hoover never publicly acknowledged his role in the frame-up.

The Omaha Two are on the agenda Saturday at the [Left Forum](#) at Pace University in New York. The title of the panel discussion is Remembering Our Comrades and is one of the opening sessions.

16 Mar - Justin Solondz Sentenced to Seven Years

Operation Backfire/Green Scare defendant Justin Solondz has been sentenced to seven year for his role in Earth Liberation Front actions. We've pasted a corporate news article about the sentencing as well as points of correction made by the Earth First! Journal.

MORE:

Justin Solondz, 32, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Tacoma to seven years in prison for his role in the 2001 arson at the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture. Damage in the fire was estimated at more than \$6 million.

Solondz pleaded guilty in December to charges of conspiracy and arson under a plea agreement with federal prosecutors, who agreed to recommend the seven-year prison sentence. The defense also sought a seven-year term.

A former student at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Solondz was arrested last July 6 in Chicago after his expulsion from China, where he had been serving a prison term for selling drugs.

Prosecutors said that Solondz built a firebomb in a "clean room" behind a home in Olympia, transported it to Seattle and served as the getaway driver the night of the arson.

The firebomb was planted in the office of UW professor Toby Bradshaw at the Center for Urban Horticulture. Bradshaw was targeted because the arsonists wrongly believed he was genetically engineering trees. Damage from the arson was estimated at more than \$6 million.

Last June, Solondz's former girlfriend, Briana Waters, pleaded guilty to charges of arson, conspiracy to use a destructive device, possessing an unregistered destructive device and the use of an explosive device in a crime of violence in connection with the arson.

Two other women, Lacey Phillabaum and Jennifer Kolar, pleaded guilty to the UW arson and were sentenced to three and five years, respectively.

Also charged in the UW arson was William C. Rodgers, who committed suicide in an Arizona jail in December 2005.

Solondz was indicted in Washington state and California in 2006. The FBI issued a \$50,000 reward in late 2008 for information leading to his arrest. At the time, the FBI said he might be in Canada, Europe or Asia.

He surfaced in Dali, a Chinese city popular with Western tourists, using a phony Canadian identification and an altered appearance. He was arrested in a drug investigation in March 2009 and was sentenced to three years in prison.

EF! Journal Editors' note and correction: Bradshaw was indeed involved with genetic engineering of poplar trees at the time of the arson, which is plainly clear from the [University of Washington website](#): "Toby Bradshaw, a research professor in the department of Botany, is just one of many UW professors using genetic

modification in their research...”

The Seattle Times article’s allegation that the “arsonists believed, mistakenly, he was genetically engineering trees” is an outright lie perpetuated by industry PR machines. The dispute was only a minor technical matter between the language of the ELF communique and the quote by Bradshaw himself—the ELF alleging that he was engineering trees for commercial release, Bradshaw claiming that his research would never leave the lab.

Meanwhile, the massive push by biotech lobbyists continues with the assistance of lackeys like Bradshaw at their service, as does the battle to stop GE trees from spreading across the world (including the US.) Just ask groups like the [Global Justice Ecology Project](#) about [AborGen](#).

16 Mar - Scores Arrested as the Police Clear Zuccotti Park

Spring has arrived and occupy folks nationwide are getting back in the parks and on the streets. In NYC, on the six month anniversary of the first OWS, scores of folks were arrested in NYC. We’ve included articles on that as well as reports from other cities.

MORE:

Scores of Occupy Wall Street protesters were arrested on Saturday night as police officers swept Zuccotti Park in Lower Manhattan and closed it.

Dozens of demonstrators sat down and locked arms as officers moved in about 11:30 p.m. The protesters chanted “we are not afraid” as the police began pulling people from the crowd, one by one, and leading them out of the park in handcuffs.

The operation occurred after hundreds of people had gathered in the financial district to observe the founding of Occupy Wall Street six months ago. Earlier, protesters had embarked upon a winding march, after which police officers made initial arrests of about a dozen people near the park.

By 11:30 p.m., as police officers massed on Broadway, a commander announced that the park was closed. Those inside shouted back that the park was obliged through an agreement with the city to remain open. The commander then announced that anyone who remained inside would be arrested and charged with trespassing.

After clearing the park, police officers and private security guards began placing a ring of metal barricades on the park’s perimeter, as those who had been arrested were placed inside a city bus.

At one point, a woman who appeared to be suffering from seizures flopped on the ground in handcuffs as bystanders shouted for the police to remove the cuffs and provide medical attention. For several minutes the woman lay on the ground as onlookers made increasingly agonized demands until an ambulance arrived and the woman was placed inside.

By 12:20 a.m., a line of officers pushed against some of the remaining protesters, forcing them south on Broadway, at times swinging batons and shoving people to the ground.

Kobi Skolnick, 30, said that officers pushed him in several directions and that as he tried to walk away, he was struck from behind in the neck. “One of the police ran and hit me with a baton,” he said.

Earlier that afternoon, as protesters gathered under blue skies while carrying banners and signs, the day was in some ways reminiscent of the first time the Occupy protesters gathered in mid-September. Just after 1 p.m., brandishing placards with messages like “Take back government from corporations,” the crowd left Zuccotti Park headed south on Broadway, chanting the now familiar slogan “We are the 99 percent.”

When the first protesters set foot in the financial district six months ago, few people imagined what would follow, including a two-month encampment in Lower Manhattan, similar camps in cities across the country and critiques of corporate greed becoming part of the national dialogue.

The movement was mainly quiet during the winter, but organizers said they were aiming for a springtime resurgence.

“It’s just a reminder that we’re here,” Brendan Burke said, as the crowd marched past the [New York Stock Exchange](#). “It’s an opportunity to remind Wall Street that we aren’t going anywhere.”

In several respects, Saturday’s march was similar to the inaugural one. The crowd was small but spirited and marched past the bronze sculpture of a bull at Bowling Green, which had served as a mustering spot for the first march. Marchers were accompanied by police officers on foot and on scooters who at one point blocked access to Wall Street, [just as they did on Sept. 17](#).

And, as they did that day, the marchers made sudden turns that appeared to surprise the police and walked along Wall Street for at least a brief time.

At one point, several demonstrators stood on the steep steps of Federal Hall and chanted “1-2-3-4, I declare class war.”

Later, members of the group ignored orders from the police to remain on sidewalks and flowed onto parts of Exchange Place and Beaver Street. Later, on Broad Street, a deputy inspector turned to a sergeant and said, “We got to start collaring some.”

For the next 30 minutes or so, things remained calm as marchers stuck to the sidewalks and entered Zuccotti Park.

But then, just after 2 p.m., police officers began telling a large group of protesters that they could not stand on the sidewalk on a stretch of Liberty Street. Officers pushed the crowd until more than 100 protesters on the sidewalk were pressed against a wall that borders the park.

Then the police began grabbing and arresting people, taking into custody at least half a dozen. Officers surged into the crowd, dragging protesters toward the street, as people yelled objections.

“They were grabbing people randomly,” Zachary Kamel said, adding that his girlfriend, Lauren DiGoia, had been arrested while dancing on the sidewalk.

One sergeant grabbed a woman wearing a green shirt by the bottom of her throat and shoved her head against the hood of a car. A moment later, another officer approached and forcefully pressed her head against the car before placing her into the back of a police truck.

Over the next few hours, protesters conducted meetings inside Zuccotti Park and held a dance party fueled by a saxophone and a battery of drums. Sporadic moments of tension also arose.

At one point, the police arrested a handful of protesters on Cedar Street near Trinity Place. A few moments later, near Cedar Street and Broadway, a police captain pushed a man by the shoulders for almost a block, then released him when a crowd loudly demanded to know whether the man was under arrest.

The man, Charlie Gonzalez, 31, said that the captain had told him he was not permitted to stand on the sidewalk.

About an hour later, the same captain pushed another man several hundred feet east down Cedar Street, about a block from Zuccotti Park, and briefly detained him.

That man, Yoni Miller, 19, said he was counting officers standing in rows near Broadway when the captain forced him to walk around a corner onto Cedar Street, then asked him if he was a terrorist or was planning any crimes.

Paul Moore, 25, said that he was videotaping the encounter when the captain asked him for identification and began pushing him away, telling him he was not permitted to document what was happening.

After nightfall, the number of people inside the park swelled to more than 500.

About 10 p.m., some of those in the park began a regimen of running and dancing that they called “spring training,” which they said was meant to prepare for coming demonstrations.

At 10:30, protesters sprung up a green tarp, folded over a piece of rope suspended from two trees near the center of Zuccotti Park. Security and police officers looked on from the perimeter.

St. Louis - Police evict and severely beat protesters occupying Compton Hill Reservoir Park

Last night close to 150 people from the occupy movement – ourselves, our friends, and comrades – took over Compton Hill Reservoir Park. Met with overwhelming police force intent on evicting the camp, protesters marched into the streets. Where they were met with batons, pepper spray and fists... at least 15 were arrested and three hospitalized, with severe facial injuries, concussions, staples and stitches in the head, and broken bones.

Unfortunately the cops’ brutish reaction to last night’s events does not really evoke surprise in us. As the armed thugs of the state and wealthy, they go about their business striving (though often failing) to thwart our attempts to escape our material conditions, even if only for a moment. We feel the state’s presence in our lives on a daily basis, both informing and enforcing our every move.

Nevertheless, we refuse to take a passive position in regards to last night’s events: we will not and cannot sit idly by as they carry on fucking with us. Our antagonism for the police is a bottomless pit, and we cannot easily let the images of our comrades bloodied faces pass from our memories.

If you desire something more than the mundane hellishness of everyday life, if you have any love for those who fight back:

SMASH ATTACK OCCUPY EXPROPRIATE BLOCKADE
TOTAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE ACCUSED!!!

Occupy Protesters Are Arrested at Union Square Park

Several protesters were arrested early Wednesday after scores of Occupy Wall Street demonstrators converged on Union Square Park in Lower Manhattan, the authorities said.

In all, six protesters were taken into custody after the hours-long face-off on a range of charges, including resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and obstructing governmental administration, according to a spokesman for the New York Police Department.

“They were blocking pedestrian traffic,” said the spokesman, who could not provide an estimate of the crowd’s size. “They were given a lawful order to disperse and when they subsequently refused, they were arrested.” The spokesman asked that his name not be used.

The police sweep prevented about 200 Occupy Wall Street protesters from sleeping in the park. Officers also seized books and other materials.

Commanders said that the books and other items were “unattended property” and could not remain on the sidewalk. Protesters claimed that the books were their property.

After a few moments of shouting back and forth, dozens of officers plunged into the crowd from two directions, shoving protesters and causing some to stumble backward and fall. Officers threw two people to the ground, including a woman who lay on her back for several minutes before an ambulance arrived to attend to her.

As protesters tried to help the injured woman, officers placed an additional line of metal barricades on a sidewalk south of the park.

A moment later, a protester darted forward and kicked a section, sending the linked barricades skidding a short distance toward the police. Dozens of police officers then rushed forward once again, pushing the barricades into the crowd, and forcing the protesters backward 40 feet or more.

Lopi LaRoe, an artist from Brooklyn, said that she was kneeling next to the injured woman when the police

surged into the crowd.

“The cops reacted without order,” she said. “It was scary.”

Officers made the first arrest at about 12:20 a.m. at the southeast corner of the park on 14th Street, the police said.

Hours later, at about 4:30 a.m., five more protesters were arrested opposite 4 Union Square South, the police said.

A spokesman for the New York Fire Department said it had no record of injuries in the clash.

Protesters had gathered in Union Square Park after the police closed Zuccotti Park — the site where the Occupy Wall Street movement first emerged last year — in Lower Manhattan on Saturday night.

In the following days, they established a presence in Union Square Park, distributing literature from tables and holding meetings. Small groups of protesters slept in a plaza at the southern end of the park. Some declared that a long-term encampment was in the making.

But around midnight on Tuesday more than 100 police officers arrived at Union Square, and a commander ordered the protesters from the plaza and onto the sidewalk along 14th Street. Then, as protesters chanted “Bloomberg, beware. Zuccotti Park is everywhere,” the police placed metal barricades around the plaza as protesters objected.

“Are they going to block off every single park we go to?” asked Faith Laugier, from Spanish Harlem.

About 200 protesters milled on the sidewalk. Some lay down wrapped in blankets. Others distributed books from plastic crates. At one point, some protesters pushed over the barricades ringing the plaza, which were quickly righted by the police.

At about 2 a.m., lines of police officers pushed through the crowd on the sidewalk, ordering those sitting or lying down to get up.

Later, the police seized crates of books. They also disposed of stacks of pamphlets and fliers that could be seen being dumped into the back of a sanitation truck parked on 14th Street.

By 5 a.m., however, the officers had withdrawn to the edges of the park and the protesters once again were free to stand or sit on the sidewalk along the north side of 14th Street. Soon, more than two dozen of them once again wrapped themselves in blankets and lay down to sleep.

On Wednesday morning, Norman Siegel, a longtime civil rights lawyer, said that he had received several phone calls overnight on Wednesday. He said that some public parks, including Union Square – with a long history of civil disobedience – have a 1 a.m. curfew, but that the police tend to enforce those rules selectively, which adds uncertainty and confusion about what rights apply for peaceful protest.

He said that the rules as applied to Zuccotti Park, a privately owned public space, were being applied inconsistently as well by the police.

“We’re getting into the spring and there needs to be a meeting between Mayor Bloomberg, the police and O.W.S. and civil rights lawyers,” Mr. Siegel said. “The cornerstone of a democracy is the right to protest. We need leadership of bringing people together. The O.W.S. people are not going to disappear, and the police are here, obviously. Why stay on a road to confrontation?”

He said the tension was building between the Occupy protesters and the police officers.

“We’re going to see more demonstrations,” he said, but city leaders must work to avoid the potential for violent confrontations. “The mayor seems to have a tin ear on this.”

19 Mar - Abdul Majid Letter on Assata situation

This is a letter sent from prisoner of war Abdullah Majid to the Amsterdam News.

MORE:

Mr. Townes,

I am writing you in regards to an article in which your name is appendaged to concerning a very dear and close comrade of mine (Assata Shakur), It appears from the content and tenor of the article that you obtained your information from the “usual official sources”? Or perhaps something regurgitated off the wire services? It is apparent that there was no in depth, investigative reporting done in order to provide your readers with an objective account of the events surrounding the sister’s forced exile. So I have taken the liberty to clarify a few facts in addition to making a few comments of my own for the record.

In the early morning hours of May 2, 1973, while traveling on the New Jersey Turnpike, Assata Shakur, Zayd Malik Shakur, and Sundiata Acoli were ambushed (driving while Black) by trooper Werner Foerster (and another trooper whose name escapes me at the moment). With guns drawn, the troopers ambushed their car ordering them out. While attempting to comply with hands raised, for no apparent reason one of the troopers opened fire on the three occupants, hitting Assata and Zayd who were seated in the rear seat of the car (killing Zayd instantly and wounding Assata) while their hands were still raised in the air.

Sundiata (who was driving) managed to exit the car without being hit by the fusillade of bullets entering the car. In the process of Sundiata exiting the car he encountered Foerster, who attempted to shoot him.

In the ensuing struggle over the gun, Foerster was shot in the face with his service revolver by his own hand. Sundiata was able to escape on foot but was apprehended a few days later. After emptying his gun into the vehicle, the second trooper fled the scene a short distance to the nearby barracks, leaving his partner behind and not immediately reporting what had just transpired to his superiors.

In fact, it was a civilian who first reported the incident to the Turnpike Authorities of what had taken place. Sister Assata was arrested and viciously beaten by the cowardly gestapos who converged on the scene while she lay bleeding from her gunshot wounds. And brother Zayd though mortally wounded, his body was desecrated by the “lynch mob” on the scene. Assata’s treatment at the hands of the racist, fascist judiciary and law enforcement agencies of the “Garden State” should have come as no surprise to anyone living in amerikkka. Her legal lynching was a foregone conclusion in a state ranking third in the nation as being saturated with racist, right-wing hate groups, in particularly it’s law enforcement agencies.

Sister Assata like any captured freedom fighter continued to struggle “by any means necessary” to liberate herself from enemy hands. Assata was eventually liberated from enemy hands with the help of her comrades and is now on liberated soil in Cuba (where she now resides to this day, teaching and educating others about the true conditions in amerikkka (Al Hamidullah). This criminal regime in New Jersey that has placed the bounty on this sister’s life needs to be exposed for who and what they are and represent. The continued domination and exploitation of peoples of color and the poor and oppressed of the world. And what about the Black politicians in New Jersey who are supposed to represent our interests? Why have they been so silent? Tha Black/New Afrikan Community should be appalled and outraged by the new developments in New Jersey. The fact that hard earned tax dollars are being squandered to pay for such a macabre act in their name! The assassination of a Black woman, mother, grandmother whose only crime was dedicating her life to the liberation of her people. How many hungry Black babies in New Jersey could be fed with that money?

At the very least the Black and progressive members of the state legislature should introduce legislation to rescind this travesty of justice! And community organizers and activists should be in the streets educating and mobilizing the Black / New Afrikan community in ways to counter this act of terror perpetrated by the state. We must keep in mind the head negro down at the justice department has recently sanctioned these “mob hits” on amerikkkan citizens deemed to be “an enemy of the imperial empire”. In fact Leonard Pitts, a Black / New Afrikan commentator made some instructive comments in his nationally syndicated column (3/15/12) on the behavior of these negroes running amok down in Wash. D.C. of late.

It seems as though our community has fallen into a comatose and lethargic state in response to some recent political events of the last decade i.e. 9/11 and the first so-called Black president in “the big house.” First we were sidetracked by the event s of 9/11 with the “war on terror,” and secondly, we were hoodwinked by the u.s.a. white power structures installing a Black face in “the big house” to guard the master’s plantation in his

temporary absence. Remember we were at a very critical stage of our struggle for true genuine self-determination i.e. reparations for the Black / New Afrikan people in amerikkka for the past exploitation (slavery) and other human rights violations committed by this criminal govt. against Black / New Afrikans. We must purge ourselves of this stupor and regain our focus on the big picture (self-determination).

We can no more stand by silently and allow these racist thugs and negro collaborators in New Jersey to get away with this kind of cowardly act. Anymore than we can allow for them to choose our Afrikan heroines; Harriet Tubman, Queen Azinga, Sojourner Truth, Sandra Ji Jaga-Pratt, Winnie Mandela, Rosa Parks, Fanniema Lou Hammer (to name a few) that have put themselves on the front line in the service of Black / New Afrikan people's freedom.

Remember, freedom ain't cheap and it don't come easy!

19 Mar - René González is granted permission to visit brother in Cuba

In a massive victory for Miami Five campaign supporters, Rene Gonzalez has just received permission to travel to Cuba for two weeks to visit his critically ill brother Roberto in hospital.

MORE:

The US Justice Department had opposed his request in a submission to the court last week. However, the court chose to grant permission Monday 19 March on the condition that he returns to the US to continue his parole with two weeks of his departure.

A huge thank you to everyone who took the campaign action and wrote the the US government urging that this permission be granted.

This is a great victory for campaigners for the Five all around the world, but we must continue and redouble our efforts until Rene and his four comrades are allowed to return home for good.

20 Mar - The ex-FBI informant with a change of heart: 'There is no real hunt. It's fixed'

Craig Monteilh describes how he pretended to be a radical Muslim in order to root out potential threats, shining a light on some of the bureau's more ethically murky practices.

MORE:

Craig Monteilh says he did not balk when his FBI handlers gave him the OK to have sex with the Muslim women his undercover operation was targeting. Nor, at the time, did he shy away from recording their pillow talk.

"They said, if it would enhance the intelligence, go ahead and have sex. So I did," Monteilh told the Guardian as he described his year as a confidential FBI informant sent on a secret mission to infiltrate southern Californian mosques.

It is an astonishing admission that goes that goes to the heart of the intelligence surveillance of Muslim communities in America in the years after 9/11. While police and FBI leaders have insisted they are acting to defend America from a terrorist attack, civil liberties groups have insisted they have repeatedly gone too far and treated an entire religious group as suspicious.

Monteilh was involved in one of the most controversial tactics: the use of "confidential informants" in so-called entrapment cases. This is when suspects carry out or plot fake terrorist "attacks" at the request or under the close supervision of an FBI undercover operation using secret informants. Often those informants have serious criminal records or are supplied with a financial motivation to net suspects.

In the case of the Newburgh Four – where four men were convicted for a fake terror attack on Jewish targets in the Bronx – a confidential informant offered \$250,000, a free holiday and a car to one suspect for help with the

attack.

In the case of the Fort Dix Five, which involved a fake plan to attack a New Jersey military base, one informant's criminal past included attempted murder, while another admitted in court at least two of the suspects later jailed for life had not known of any plot.

Such actions have led Muslim civil rights groups to wonder if their communities are being unfairly targeted in a spying game that is rigged against them. Monteilh says that is exactly what happens. "The way the FBI conducts their operations, It is all about entrapment ... I know the game, I know the dynamics of it. It's such a joke, a real joke. There is no real hunt. It's fixed," he said.

But Monteilh has regrets now about his involvement in a scheme called Operation Flex. Sitting in the kitchen of his modest home in Irvine, near Los Angeles, Monteilh said the FBI should publicly apologize for his fruitless quest to root out Islamic radicals in Orange County, though he does not hold out much hope that will happen. "They don't have the humility to admit a mistake," he said.

Monteilh's story sounds like something out of a pulp thriller. Under the supervision of two FBI agents the muscle-bound fitness instructor created a fictitious French-Syrian alter ego, called Farouk Aziz. In this disguise in 2006 Monteilh started hanging around mosques in Orange County – the long stretch of suburbia south of LA – and pretended to convert to Islam.

He was tasked with befriending Muslims and blanket recording their conversations. All this information was then fed back to the FBI who told Monteilh to act like a radical himself to lure out Islamist sympathizers.

Yet, far from succeeding, Monteilh eventually so unnerved Orange County's Muslim community that that they got a restraining order against him. In an ironic twist, they also reported Monteilh to the FBI: unaware he was in fact working undercover for the agency.

Monteilh does not look like a spy. He is massively well built, but soft-spoken and friendly. He is 49 but looks younger. He lives in a small rented home in Irvine that blends into the suburban sprawl of southern California. Yet Monteilh knows the spying game intimately well.

By his own account Monteilh got into undercover work after meeting a group of off-duty cops working out in a gym. Monteilh told them he had spent time in prison in Chino, serving time for passing fraudulent checks.

It is a criminal past he explains by saying he was traumatized by a nasty divorce. "It was a bad time in my life," he said. He and the cops got to talking about the criminals Monteilh had met while in Chino. The information was so useful that Monteilh says he began to work on undercover drug and organized crime cases.

Eventually he asked to work on counter-terrorism and was passed on to two FBI handlers, called Kevin Armstrong and Paul Allen. These two agents had a mission and an alias ready-made for him.

Posing as Farouk Aziz he would infiltrate local mosques and Islamic groups around Orange County. "Paul Allen said: 'Craig, you are going to be our computer worm. Our guy that gives us the real pulse of the Muslim community in America'," Monteilh said.

The operation began simply enough. Monteilh started hanging out at mosques, posing as Aziz, and explaining he wanted to learn more about religion. In July, 2006, at the Islamic Center of Irvine, he converted to Islam.

Monteilh also began attending other mosques, including the Orange County Islamic Foundation. Monteilh began circulating endlessly from mosque to mosque, spending long days in prayer or reading books or just hanging out in order to get as many people as possible to talk to him.

"Slowly I began to wear the robes, the hat, the scarf and they saw me slowly transform and growing a beard. At that point, about three or four months later, [my FBI handlers] said: 'OK, now start to ask questions'."

Those questions were aimed at rooting out radicals. Monteilh would talk of his curiosity over the concepts of jihad and what Muslims should do about injustices in the world, especially where it pertained to American foreign policy.

He talked of access to weapons, a possible desire to be a martyr and inquired after like-minded souls. It was all aimed at trapping people in condemning statements. "The skill is that I am going to get you to say something. I am cornering you to say "jihad"," he said.

Of course, the chats were recorded.

In scenes out of a James Bond movie, Monteilh said he sometimes wore a secret video recorder sewn into his shirt. At other times he activated an audio recorder on his key rings.

Monteilh left his keys in offices and rooms in the mosques that he attended in the hope of recording conversations that took place when he was not here. He did it so often that he earned a reputation with other worshippers for being careless with his keys. The recordings were passed back to his FBI handlers at least once a week.

He also met with them every two months at a hotel room in nearby Anaheim for a more intense debriefing. Monteilh says he was grilled on specific individuals and asked to view charts showing networks of relationships among Orange County's Muslim population.

He said the FBI had two basic aims. Firstly, they aimed to uncover potential militants. Secondly, they could also use any information Monteilh discovered – like an affair or someone being gay – to turn targeted people into becoming FBI informants themselves.

None of it seemed to unnerve his FBI bosses, not even when he carried out a suggestion to begin seducing Muslim women and recording them.

At one hotel meeting, agent Kevin Armstrong explained the FBI attitude towards the immense breadth of Operation Flex – and any concerns over civil rights – by saying simply: "Kevin is God."

Monteilh's own attitude evolved into something very similar. "I was untouchable. I am a felon, I am on probation and the police cannot arrest me. How empowering is that? It is very empowering. You began to have a certain arrogance about it. It is almost taunting. They told me: 'You are an untouchable'," he said.

But it was not always easy. "I started at 4am. I ended at 9.30pm. Really, it was a lot of work ... Farouk took over. Craig did not exist," he said. But it was also well paid: at the peak of Operation Flex, Monteilh was earning more than \$11,000 a month.

But he was wrong about being untouchable.

Far from uncovering radical terror networks, Monteilh ended up traumatizing the community he was sent into. Instead of embracing calls for jihad or his questions about suicide bombers or his claims to have access to weapons, Monteilh was instead reported to the FBI as a potentially dangerous extremist.

A restraining order was also taken out against him in June 2007, asking him to stay away from the Islamic Center of Irvine. Operation Flex was a bust and Monteilh had to kill off his life as Farouk Aziz.

But the story did not end there. In circumstances that remain murky Monteilh then sued the FBI over his

treatment, claiming that they abandoned him once the operation was over.

He also ended up in jail after Irvine police prosecuted him for defrauding two women, including a former girlfriend, as part of an illegal trade in human growth hormone at fitness clubs. (Monteilh claims those actions were carried out as part of another secret string operation for which he was forced to carry the can.)

What is not in doubt is that Monteilh's identity later became public. In 2009 the FBI brought a case against Ahmad Niazi, an Afghan immigrant in Orange County.

The evidence included secret recordings and even calling Osama bin Laden "an angel". That was Monteilh's work and he outed himself to the press to the shock of the very Muslims he had been spying on who now realized that Farouk Aziz – the radical they had reported to the FBI two years earlier – had in fact been an undercover FBI operative.

Now Monteilh says he set Niazi up and the FBI was trying to blackmail the Afghani into being an informant. "I built the whole relationship with Niazi. Through my coercion we talked about jihad a lot," he said. The FBI's charges against Niazi were indeed later dropped.

Now Monteilh has joined an American Civil Liberties Union lawsuit against the FBI. Amazingly, after first befriending Muslim leaders in Orange County as Farouk Aziz, then betraying them as Craig Monteilh, he has now joined forces with them again to campaign for their civil liberties.

That has now put Monteilh's testimony about his year undercover at the heart of a fresh legal effort to prove that the FBI operation in Orange County unfairly targeted a vulnerable Muslim community, trampling on civil rights in the name of national security.

The FBI did not respond to a request from the Guardian for comment.

It is not the first time Monteilh has shifted his stance. In the ACLU case Monteilh is now posing as the sorrowful informant who saw the error of his ways.

But in previous court papers filed against the Irvine Police and the FBI, Monteilh's lawyers portrayed him as the loyal intelligence asset who did sterling work tackling the forces of Islamic radicalism and was let down by his superiors.

In those papers Monteilh complained that FBI agents did not act speedily enough on a tip he gave them about a possible sighting of bomb-making materials. Now Monteilh says that tip was not credible.

Either way it does add up to a story that shifts with the telling. But that fact alone goes to the heart of the FBI's use of such confidential informants in investigating Muslim communities.

FBI operatives with profiles similar to Monteilh's – of a lengthy criminal record, desire for cash and a flexibility with the truth – have led to high profile cases of alleged entrapment that have shocked civil rights groups across America.

In most cases the informants have won their prosecutions and simply disappeared. Monteilh is the only one speaking out. But whatever the reality of his year undercover, Monteilh is almost certainly right about one impact of Operation Flex and the exposure of his undercover activities: "Because of this the Muslim community will never trust the FBI again."

21 Mar - On the Left Side of History: Political Prisoner Imam Jamil Al Amin

As a SNCC leader in rural Alabama, he helped lay the foundation for what black political power currently exists

in the deep south today. This comes from the radio program Black Agenda Report.

MORE:

Imam Jamil Al Amin has been on the right side, really the left side of history a long time. As a college student in the early sixties he joined and eventually led SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the corps of fearless young people who risked their lives organizing freedom schools, cooperatives and registering voters in the violent, Klan-infested rural south. Summoned to a White House meeting with President Johnson at the age of twenty-one he fearlessly demanded federal action to ensure the safety of SNCC workers and ordinary African Americans, when older big time civil rights leaders present were too busy being grateful for a chance to meet with the president at all.

As a SNCC leader in rural Alabama, he helped lay the foundation for what black political power currently exists in the deep south today. Targeted by COINTELPRO and the FBI [5] for his advocacy of black political and economic power, self-defense and the eradication of drugs, he was arrested dozens of times. Congress even passed a law with his name on it, [6] specifically intended to lock him up. While serving a 5 year prison sentence in New York, he converted to Islam, and upon his release Jamil Al Amin moved to Atlanta in 1976.

In the same spirit that guided his earlier political and human rights work, he set about organizing and community building in Atlanta's West End. He studied languages and traveled to the West Indies and the Middle East, to India, Pakistan, and Africa. He taught, learned and led by example, becoming Imam Jamil Al Amin [7], an internationally acknowledged leader among US Muslims. Along the way, he started several small businesses including a grocery store and helped organize youth sports, anti-drug and anti-violence campaigns.

But once you earn the FBI's attention, you don't lose it. Surveillance and harassment of Al Amin continued the next quarter century [8]. When a West End drug dealer was shot in 1995, Atlanta police arrested him despite a good deal of evidence pointing in other directions, and had to release him when another man confessed to the crime.

“This week more than two hundred who hunger and thirst for justice gathered on the steps of Georgia's state capital to demand justice for Imam Jamil Al Amin, his return to Georgia for a new trial and his eventual freedom...”

In March 2000 two Fulton county deputies were shot in front of Imam Jamil Al Amin's home. The apparent shooter, one Otis Jackson fled to Nevada before turning himself in, and confessed his role to FBI interviewers [9] there. Georgia officials however, declined to request his extradition, and Jackson was pressured into recanting his confession. Al Amin was not allowed his choice of attorneys, was denied proper discovery or the chance to present evidence of his innocence at trial, and the jury pool purged of those most likely to recall his civil rights work of the sixties.

Blatantly framed, Imam Jamil Al Amin was sentenced to life in prison, where his false conviction, status as a prominent Muslim leader and forty years of work in the service of human liberation made him Georgia's most high profile political prisoner, though he was confined to a tiny cell 23 hours of every day [10]. In 2007, when local and international pressure began building in earnest for a new trial and his release from solitary confinement, Georgia prison officials spirited him away to federal custody 1400 miles away in the federal supermax prison at Florence, Colorado, a living tomb where conditions of enforced isolation and sensory deprivation are widely recognized as torture.

This week more than two hundred who hunger and thirst for justice gathered on the steps of Georgia's state capital to demand justice for Imam Jamil Al Amin, his return to Georgia for a new trial and his eventual freedom. “The next time we come back here,” declared Mauri Saalakhani of the Peace Thru Justice Foundation, “we can fill these steps, this street. We can. We must. And we will.” Brother Saalakhani is correct of course. We can and we must create the public pressure that ultimately leads to justice for our political prisoner Imam Jamil Al Amin. Only time will tell if we will. Instead retweeting and facebooking phony Kony2012 propaganda to

each other, we should be “raising awareness” of and demanding justice for Imam Jamil Al Amin. Let's make some of that happen.

21 Mar - Update on Antifascist Eric Desouza

Eric, along with two other comrades, was arrested at an Antifa action in Sacramento on Monday Feb 27, protesting neo-Nazis at the state capital. He has been charged with six different counts, and multiples of some. He recently pled guilty to a few charges and was immediately remanded. Here's his address:

**Eric Souza* X-4779436 48N2205
Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center
12500 Bruceville Road
Elk Grove, California 95757**

**NOTE: The state fucked up Eric's name and so, for now, folks have to send mail to him using the last name Souza instead of his real last name-- Desouza.*

23 Mar – Updates for Kellie and Victor VanOrden

Kellie was recently sentenced to 60 days (as opposed to the five years that her co-defendant/husband received). We're writing to Kellie tonight and have her address, as well as updates on their cases below.

MORE:

Kellie will be in jail for 2 months, yup only 60 days! She got insanely lucky considering that Victor has been sentenced to five years in jail for the same charges. That is indeed 30x the length of Kellie's sentence which is both bizarre and ridiculous. We're hoping that in May (which will mark three months of doing time), Victor will be able to apply for parole, and have his original sentence reviewed by the Judge.

On a more positive note, Kellie is very happy that her sentence is so short because she will be able to work while Victor's in prison, in order to help them both get back on their feet once he's out.

60 days in jail still sucks, so please help make it a breeze for her by sending a nice letter her way (please follow guidelines specified on a previous post for how to accurately write/address a letter to a political prisoner).

Kellie's address is:

Kellie Vanorden
c/o Woodbury County Jail
Post Office Box 3083
Sioux City, Iowa 51101

She cannot receive books so please do not send her anything from the Amazon wishlist, as it will get rejected/returned. Only Victor can receive Amazon books. Kellie can accept pictures and magazine/newspaper clippings that you include with a letter though! Pictures are a great way to lift spirits because it conveys the outside world which seems so unreachable when you're serving time.

Her commissary funds are currently \$0, if you would like to help out so that she can order some vegan food, please send her a money order (made payable to her KELLIE VANORDEN) and address it to the above stated address. Thanks!

HOW TO SEND COMMISSARY FUNDS AND E-MAILS TO VICTOR

Victor just sent me a letter requesting money for commissary if at all possible, because "it would really help soooo much." If you would like to send him some \$, please mail money or cashier check to:

**IDOL OFFENDER FIDUCIARY ACCOUNT
1550 L STREET, SUITE B**

FORT DODGE, IOWA 50501

(must include sender's name and address!)

or it can also be western union-ed.
info @ (www.doc.state.ia.us/default.asp)

If you would like to send Victor an email, it's really easy!
Head on over to www.corrlinks.com which is also called "O-mail" (which is short for Offender Mail). And click on REGISTER.

This is where you will have to sign up for an account which is free. The way it works is you find Victor on the system by click on ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT, and then MANAGE MY INMATE LIST.

Click on "Iowa" in the drop down menu of Correctional Agencies. Once you enter his Inmate# which is 6916264, you will see his name pop up. Choose friend as your relationship, and click Accept.

You will then have to add funds into your account (with a credit/debit card) by clicking on the RECHARGE icon on the main menu. The minimum amount is \$10 but this will last a long time since sending an email to Victor only costs 25 cents. It doesn't cost Victor anything to reply back to your email though, which is the neat part.

23 Mar - A year in county jail after 4 decades on the run

In an emotional and at times tense court hearing, Ronald Bridgeforth, who spent more than four decades on the lam, was sentenced Friday to a year in county jail for opening fire on South San Francisco police officers in 1968.

MORE:

About 30 supporters of Ronald Stanley Bridgeforth applauded after a hearing at which Superior Court Judge Lisa Novak said she had decided against imposing the maximum five-year sentence because Bridgeforth was taking responsibility for his crime and wasn't a danger to society.

Bridgeforth pleaded no contest to assault with a deadly weapon in November, 11 days after he left his life as "Cole Jordan," a therapist at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Mich., and turned himself in to San Mateo County authorities.

Bridgeforth admitted to firing on three South San Francisco police officers in November 1968 after trying to use a stolen credit card at a department store on El Camino Real, in what he described in court as a period of confusion in his life.

He pleaded no contest to the crime in 1969 but fled before his sentencing, cutting all ties with his family in California, including his father, who died while he was on the run.

Bridgeforth spent time in New York, Atlanta, Senegal and Gambia before settling in Michigan for 35 years. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees, got married, had two sons and, according to his family and supporters, lived a life of service counseling college students.

"I have worked tirelessly to remake myself into someone that my family and my community could be proud of," Bridgeforth said before being sentenced in Redwood City. "Today brings me closer to that goal."

Two former students flew in from Michigan to testify about how Bridgeforth had helped them.

One, Zachary Baker, said he met Bridgeforth six years ago, on the day he was planning to drop out of college.

He had just lost his job and was homeless.

Now he attends the University of Michigan and plans to become a social worker, he said. He tutors elementary school students in Detroit and has them add "future college student" to their names on all their work.

"Every person I help is a direct result of the influence Mr. Bridgeforth had on my life," Baker said. "Had he been in jail the day I needed help, my life would not be where it is today."

Prosecutors sought a longer sentence, saying Bridgeforth deserved it for committing a violent crime that endangered not only police but bystanders at the store.

Police Lt. George Baptista, one of the officers Bridgeforth shot at, said he had seriously considered quitting after the incident, fearing his infant son would grow up without a father.

"I've encountered a lot of violent people, but in my experience, Mr. Bridgeforth was the most violent," he said. "He is the only one who tried to kill me."

Prosecutor Karen Guidotti commended Bridgeforth for coming forward but said his timing had been calculated, as charges against him in the 1971 slaying of a San Francisco police officer had just been dropped.

Bridgeforth apologized to the South San Francisco officers in court Friday and called the shooting "a misguided and reckless act that endangered everyone's lives."

In passing sentence, Novak said Bridgeforth appeared to have "genuine" remorse and was truly rehabilitated.

She turned down the defense's proposed sentence of probation, however, saying, "Probation would not be appropriate for someone who shot at police officers."

In addition to a year in county jail, Novak sentenced Bridgeforth to three years' probation, 300 hours of community service tutoring at-risk youth and a fine of \$8,500.

Many of his supporters gathered outside the courthouse volunteered to raise the money to pay off the fine.

Bridgeforth's attorney, Paul Harris, said he had warned Bridgeforth before he turned himself in that he faced the possibility of a state prison sentence, but he could not be deterred.

" 'I want my two sons to be the man I am today,' " Harris said Bridgeforth told him, " 'not the boy I was back then.' "

31 Mar – 00s DAN(c)E Party

WHAT: Fundraiser for Dane Rossman, an anti-fascist comrade facing 20 years

WHEN: 9:00pm-4:00am

WHERE: 43 Wykoff Street, Brooklyn, New York

COST: Free party with suggested donation for food and drinks.

MORE:

Come have a vegetarian dinner cooked by Kevin Volk and stay for 2000s-themed sets from:

DJ Anti-Volk (garage, punk, no irony)

DJ Pussy Strut (top 40s, but mostly kiss from a rose)

ICEAGE NYC (that one cure album from 2004)

9 Apr - Never Alone Tour Hits NYC, Supporting Eric McDavid and Marie Mason

It's 2012. The world is ending. So what are we at Sacramento Prisoner Support and Marie Mason Support Crew gonna do? Go on an epic road trip to talk about prisoner support, of course! Because unless we actually make this the last year of their world, our comrades will still be in there the next.

MORE:

The nationwide Never Alone tour will be crisscrossing the country in April 2012, featuring the usual suspects speaking about long-term anarchist prisoner support. Focusing specifically on the cases of Eric McDavid and Marie Mason, the tour will mark the spots where the events of these cases unfolded, using multimedia presentations to bring the facts of these cases to light.

As well as raising awareness and support for Eric and Marie, the tour will also feature strategizing about how to more effectively grow a culture of resistance that can breach the prison walls and sustain long-term anarchist prisoner support, a security culture beyond 101 workshop (updated for 2012, now with extra tech!) and some awesome guest speakers. Truly, you won't want to miss this.

When our friends and loved ones are snatched from us and held captive by the state, we become all too aware that we are never alone. The eyes of the state are always upon us, attempting to silence our voices and still our hands. To keep us from doing the work we know must be done. We must act despite this.

Because we also know that it is imperative that our friends on the inside know that they, too, are never alone. That we will stand by them throughout their time in prison, and welcome them with open arms when they return. That the struggles they were involved in continue on, and that they are empowered to continue on in struggle from inside the prison walls.

And we know that we can't do this alone. We need the active support of our communities to give us the strength and courage to struggle for our friends and their freedom.

Our friends remind us of what is possible. They remind us that we don't have to wait for permission to do what we know is right. They remind us that we are not powerless. Like Marie and Eric, we are tired of watching all that we love be destroyed by all that we hate. We know what needs to happen.

We are in it for the long haul.

Are you?

Find out more about the tour: <http://neveralonetour.wordpress.com>
Questions? Trolling? Contact us at neveralonetour (A) riseup dot net.

About Marie Mason

Marie Mason is a loving mother of two and a long-time activist in the environmental and labor movements. In March 2008, she was arrested by federal authorities after her former partner, Frank Ambrose, turned informant for the FBI. Facing a life sentence if she went to trial, she accepted a plea bargain in September 2008, admitting her involvement in two acts of property destruction that occurred in 1999 and 2000 – damaging an office connected to GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) research, and destroying a piece of logging equipment. No one was injured in either act. On February 5, 2009, she was sentenced to just under 22 years. She is now serving the longest sentence of any "Green Scare" prisoner. Marie is currently being held in an incredibly restrictive unit at the prison in Carswell, TX. Other political prisoners, such as Lynne Stewart, are also housed there. For more information on Marie and her case, please visit <http://www.supportmariemason.org>.

About Eric McDavid

Eric McDavid was arrested on January 13, 2006 and charged with a single count of "conspiracy to damage and destroy property by fire and explosive." No action ever took place. Eric was arrested after being entrapped by a government informant, known as "Anna," who was paid over \$65,000 for her work with the FBI. Eric stood strong in the face of great repression and refused to cooperate with the government, choosing instead to take his

case to trial (even after both of his former co-defendants took a plea bargain and agreed to testify against him in court). After a trial riddled with errors, a jury convicted Eric in September 2007. Many of these same jurors later went on record making damning statements about the FBI. Two of them later submitted declarations to the court stating that they believed Eric deserves, at the very least, a new trial. Despite this, in May 2008, the judge in Eric's case sentenced him to an outrageous 19 years and 7 months in prison. Eric is now serving an almost 20 year sentence for what amounts to "thought crime." For more info on Eric and his case, please visit <http://www.supporteric.org>.

This tour is part of the collaboration for International Day of Solidarity for Long-term Anarchist Prisoners, June 11. <http://june11.org>

21 Apr - FREEDOM RIDE for the Cuban FIVE to Washington, DC!

WHAT: White House Rally for the Cuban 5

WHEN: 6:00am-11:00pm, Saturday, April 21st

WHERE: Freedom Bus Locations for Participating Boroughs To Be Announced

COST: \$5

MORE:

THE RALLY IN FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE IS PART OF THE "5 DAYS FOR THE CUBAN 5 IN WASHINGTON DC, INITIATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE CUBAN 5.