

Updates for December 6th

22 Nov - Renewed Support Needed for Grand Jury Resister Jordan Halliday

It seems like forever ago that Jordan Halliday was first called to a Grand Jury which he resisted. He was approached by the FBI in 2008 regarding local mink farm raids in Utah. He refused to cooperate with the FBI and was told he would face a subpoena to testify in front of a grand jury. Six months later the FBI followed through, Subpoenaing both Jordan and another 'activist' who chose to testify. Jordan chose to resist the grand jury in protest due to its abusive and archaic nature. He was then imprisoned for civil contempt of court, later released and charged with criminal contempt of court, which his attorney has been appealing for years. If his latest appeal is not heard, he will be going back to prison for an additional 10 months, this is on top of the 4 he already served. With a total of 14 months and 3 years probation, he will be serving more time than the individuals he was called to testify against, who were convicted under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act. Jordan is also the first dissident in decades and only the 3rd known case to be convicted of "criminal contempt of court" after already serving time for "civil contempt of court."

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Grand juries are called when the government lacks evidence to indict an individual for a crime. Witnesses are subpoenaed to testify before the grand jury in hopes of providing evidence to the prosecution. Little is known about these secretive proceedings, because all information is considered sealed and classified. A witness that is called before a grand jury is not allowed to have a lawyer present with them in the grand jury room.

In recent years activists have seen an increase in subpoenas to grand juries. These subpoenas are often used to harass and intimidate legal above-ground activists, like Jordan feels is the case, in his situation. The prosecutor can ask any question and if you refuse to answer or if you lie, you could be held in contempt of court or perjury. With no lawyer present for the witnesses, prosecutors can often ask for information not relevant to a crime in hopes to harass, intimidate or 'fish' for information, in a secretive manner which many consider a modern day witch hunt. Jordan said he was mainly asked information about his friends, family, and general life and refused to answer any of them.

Jordan refused to answer any of the questions he was asked, the 3 times he was subpoenaed. He was incarcerated after his second appearance for "civil contempt of court". He eventually was granted immunity. Yet still refused to cooperate and stayed in jail until the term of the grand jury expired 4 months later. Upon release he was indicted with "criminal contempt of court", and was released on pre-trial pending trial, eventually he took a non-cooperating plea deal, and was sentenced to 10 months plus 3 years probation under the guidelines low-end range for "obstruction of justice", which has a 10-16 months recommended range. He was ordered to report to the federal custody early January, 2011. Although he was able to stay out on a release pending his appeal, just days before he was due to present himself.

Jordan and his lawyer filed an appeal arguing that a guideline range for "failure to appear" which has a 0-6 month recommended range, was more fitting for Jordan, who still to this day claims he has no knowledge of any illegal underground activity or actions. In fact the individuals Jordan was allegedly called in to testify against, have both already been indicted, convicted, sentenced and have served their time already, without the help of a testimony by Jordan.

On November 15th, 2011, Jordan's attorney argued their final arguments before the court of appeals in

Denver, Colorado. Jordan says he felt a bias and hostility from the beginning and although his lawyer did an excellent job, felt the judges already had their minds made up. Jordan's lawyer also said he wasn't very optimistic about the outcome. It typically takes 3-6 months before a ruling comes back.

Although we remain optimistic that Jordan might still win his appeal and get the low-end sentence of 0 months, we are also confronting the reality that he is more likely going back, than staying out. With the possibility of prison coming soon for Jordan. We have decided to start accepting donations again. Currently he is now only around \$350 in legal debt, although we will continue collecting donations in case of incarceration. If Jordan wins his appeal and doesn't end up having to serve any additional time, we will be distributing the remaining donations to other political prisoners and activists in need.

You can donate by PayPal by visiting "supportjordan.com", or you can send a donation or letter of support to:

Jordan Halliday
Post Office Box 601
West Jordan, Utah 84084

Jordan needs our support now more than ever. Let him know he hasn't been forgotten in this long period of legal battles.

We are all proud of Jordan. Please re-post this to as many places as you can. He needs our support.

-Jordan's Support Committee

22 Nov - G20 charges dropped against 11 as 6 plead guilty

Tonight, we're focusing on three of the Canadian G-20 arrestees as they just started prison sentences, and will focus on the others as they go in. A lot has been written about their case, including a very good analysis that breaks down how they were infiltrated and how their group solidarity helped them take minimal damages. We've included many of those articles, as well as court statements, below.

MORE:

G20 Main Conspiracy Group Statement

November 22, 2011 — As people across Turtle Island look towards the global wave of protests against the austerity agenda, the memory of the 2010 G20 protests in Toronto looms large as both inspiration and caution. We are seventeen people accused by the state of planning to disrupt the leaders summit - the prosecutors call us the G20 Main Conspiracy Group.

This alleged conspiracy is absurd. We were never all part of any one group, we didn't all organize together, and our political backgrounds are all different. Some of us met for the first time in jail. What we do have in common is that we, like many others, are passionate about creating communities of resistance.

Separately and together, we work with movements against colonialism, capitalism, borders, patriarchy, white supremacy, ableism, hetero/cis-normativity, and environmental destruction. These are movements for radical change, and they represent real alternatives to existing power structures. It is for this reason that we were targeted by the state.

Although these conspiracy charges have been a big part of our daily reality for the past year and a half, we have been slow in speaking out collectively. This is partly because of the restrictive bail conditions that were placed on us, including non-association with our co-accused and many of our close allies. In addition, those of us who did speak out have been subjected to a campaign of intimidation and harassment by the police and prosecutors. We are writing now because we have decided to resolve our charges to bring this spectacle to an end.

The state's strategy after the G20 has been to cast a wide net over those who mobilized against the summit (over 1,000 detained and over 300 charged) and then to single out those they perceived to be leaders. Being accused of conspiracy is a surreal, bureaucratic nightmare that few political organizers have experienced in this country, but unfortunately it is becoming more common. We can't say with any certainty if what we did was in fact an illegal conspiracy. Ultimately though, whether or not our organizing fits into the hypocritical and oppressive confines of the law isn't what's important. This is a political prosecution. The government made a political decision to spend millions of dollars to surveil and infiltrate anarchist, Indigenous solidarity, and migrant justice organizing over several years. After that kind of investment, what sort of justice are we to expect?

We have not been powerless in this process; however any leverage we've had has not come from the legal system, but from making decisions collectively. This has been a priority throughout, particularly in the last several months, as the preliminary inquiry gradually took a back seat to negotiations for a deal to end it. The consensus process has been at times a heart-wrenching, thoughtful, gruelling, disappointing, and inspiring experience, and in the end, we got through it together.

Of the seventeen of us, six will be pleading and the eleven others will have their charges withdrawn. Alex Hundert, and Mandy Hiscocks are each pleading to one count of counselling mischief over \$5,000 and one count of counselling to obstruct police, and Leah Henderson, Peter Hopperton, Erik Lankin, and Adam Lewis are each pleading to a single count of counselling mischief over \$5,000. We are expecting sentences to range between 6 and 24 months, and all will get some credit for time already served in jail and on house arrest.

Three defendants in this case had their charges withdrawn earlier and one has already taken a plea to counselling mischief over \$5,000 that involved no further jail time. This means that out of twenty-one people in the supposed G20 Main Conspiracy Group, only seven were convicted of anything, and none were convicted of conspiracy. The total of fourteen withdrawals demonstrates the tenuous nature of the charges.

This system targets many groups of people including racialized, impoverished and Indigenous communities, those with precarious immigration status, and those dealing with mental health and addiction. The kinds of violence that we have experienced, such as the pre-dawn raids, the strip-searches, the surveillance, and pre-sentence incarceration happen all the time. The seventeen of us have moved through the legal system with a lot of privilege and support. This includes greater access to "acceptable" sureties, and the financial means to support ourselves and our case. While the use of conspiracy charges against such a large group of political organizers is noteworthy, these tactics of repression are used against other targeted communities every day.

There is no victory in the courts. The legal system is and always has been a political tool used against groups deemed undesirable or who refuse to co-operate with the state. It exists to protect Canada's colonial and capitalist social structure. It is also deeply individualistic and expensive. This system is designed to break up communities and turn friends against each other.

Within this winless situation, we decided that the best course of action was to clearly identify our goals and needs and then to explore our options. Within our group, we faced different levels of risk if convicted, and so

we began with the agreement that our top priority was to avoid any deportations. Other key goals we reached were to minimize the number of convictions, to honour people's individual needs, and to be mindful of how our decisions affect our broader movements. Although we are giving up some important things by not going to trial, this deal achieves specific goals that we weren't willing to gamble.

Our conversations have always been advised by concern for the broader political impacts of our choices. One noteworthy outcome is that there are no conspiracy convictions emerging from this case, thus avoiding the creation of a dangerous legal precedent that would in effect criminalize routine tasks like facilitation. Taking this deal also frees up community resources that have been embroiled in this legal process.

We emerge from this united and in solidarity.

To those who took us in while on house arrest, to those who raised money for our legal and living expenses, to those who cooked food, wrote letters, offered rides and supported us politically and emotionally throughout, thank you.

To those in jail or still on charges from the anti-G20 protests, to political prisoners and prisoners in struggle, we are still with you.

To communities and neighbourhoods fighting back from Cairo to London, from Greece to Chile, in Occupied Turtle Island and beyond, see you in the streets.

Peter Hopperton's Statement to the Court

I have plead guilty to co-writing a callout entitled, Get off the Fence - a call to go beyond. It was a letter to the many passionate people across the country who share our values of equality, free co-operation, and solidarity with people in struggle, inviting them to participate in a march. In this letter, we posed some questions, and now, a year and a half after the G20, I feel drawn to reflect on them again.

We wrote,

“Will we accept that the elites take away our city and give us back a tiny scrap in which to exercise our freedom? Will we be content to wave a banner, listen to a speech, and go home believing that our voices have been heard?”

This question has been answered in a thousand ways since the day of my arrest, in millions of voices both here and around the world. They have answered No, we will not be content with empty gestures. While I was on house arrest, I spent a lot of time reading the news, watching the way the austerity policies advanced at the Toronto G20 lead to massive resistance in France, then in England, then South Korea and Spain and Italy and Greece.

Like many around the world, I was riveted as the people of Egypt and Tunisia rose up to overthrow their governments, and I watched them inspire the people of Wisconsin, then people all across the United States to take back space and make for themselves the decisions that affect their communities.

When we wrote, “We will take back our city from these exploitative profiteers, and in the streets we will be uncontrollable,” many chose to hear only a call to chaos and destruction. But to hear only this is to miss something important. The larger significance of this feeling is more in line with the question posed by the freedom fighters of Tahrir Square: Once the streets are controlled by the people, what next? In Cairo, they organized neighbourhood assemblies to protect their communities and feed their residents; they gathered

freely to discuss, to make proposals, and ultimately, to offer some compelling alternatives to the system they had previously lived under.

It is the same question the occupy movement asked in Oakland and New York City once they were in control of the squares there: once we have taken back this space, how do we go about creating freedom? It is a question powerfully answered by the people of Grassy Narrows and KI, who, in a struggle that is often life-or-death, managed to take back land from exploitive profiteers while nourishing their cultures and communities.

These are just some of the people and communities who, while I was on house arrest, were not content to just go home. They refused to settle for scraps of freedom.

Locally, many people made the same choice. In Toronto, it has looked like challenging the manufactured budget crisis at city hall that is being used to further attack the most marginalized people of this city. In my city of Hamilton, people are organizing together to confront bad bosses and landlords, to monitor the police in our neighbourhoods, and to maintain community education projects. In my life, it looked like the outpouring of support and generosity that came as the exuberant mobilization against the G20 flowed into a longterm commitment to supporting its prisoners.

The prosecution that lead to my conviction was deeply political from the beginning, and so I believe it's important to emphasize the wider story of movements for social transformation of this past year and a half. My going to jail is just one small part of this overwhelming current. But there is a personal level to this too. Because of this political prosecution and this political conviction, I may never see my Grandfather again. He is an American who lives in Florida, he fought in the second world war and is now ninety-five years old and can't travel himself. Up until these charges, I visited him at least once a year, but now it is at best uncertain if I will be able to cross the border again.

The pain of being separated from our loved ones by borders is felt by an increasing number of people as the federal government moves to further restrict immigration. In this context, my situation is not extraordinary. But when telling the story of the G20 Main Conspiracy prosecution though, I want to remember the perspective of a 95 year old veteran who is missing his grandson. I want to honour all the walks we won't be taking, and all stories that I now will not hear.

I am going to jail today. I have plead guilty and do not contest this. But I remember that whatever happens in the court is not the most important story. Even as this prosecution draws to a close, the truly important stories are ongoing, playing out among allies in liberated spaces everywhere, and in the hearts of my family and the people who care about me. It is those stories I will carry with me as I leave the courtroom today.

Adam Lewis' Statement to the Court

The truth is indeed stranger than fiction in this case. The truth is that my guilty friends and I, as well as my former co-accused are not purveyors of "chaos and mayhem" as we have been made out to be by the crown and the media. The truth is what occurred on the 26th of June 2010 was not just a so called "riot" but it was also a day of massive repression by various police and security forces. It was a day that showed us, and continues to show us, that the police are not accountable to anyone but themselves and the protection of systems of injustice. The truth is the criminalization of dissent is far too well known in these times.

There is also another truth. The truth of imagining a better world. Imagining a society of people who are committed to helping one another, to building strong and vibrant communities, to creating justice for and by themselves. A better world where people live with respect, hope and dignity, not one of fear, uncertainty and

shame. The truth is this is the better world I am committed to creating.

I am committed to creating this better world from a variety of perspectives and forms of action. I myself have been involved in political work for many years at this point, from letter writing and meetings with MPs and other politicians, to street marches, information and educational nights, bookfairs and beyond. I also tie my academic work as a university student into this work, thinking about how we might create the world we wish to see in all facets of my life. Apparently daring to dream is a dangerous affair.....

The truth is that I am proud of the organizing I have done, the conversations I've had, the friendships I've made and the commitment to social and political change and the resistance that so many have made part of their daily lives. This doesn't mean that we all haven't learned a lot along the way, but there is one truth that will stay with us forever. The truth that people everywhere are waking up to the glaring injustices that exist in this world and are doing something about it. Everywhere people are recognizing their own power and demanding change in a myriad of ways. I still believe that this is the way to foster change and create a better world.

I have accepted a guilty plea in this case, but I must affirm that I still do not believe that organizing to create something better in a world rife with injustice should be any crime at all. I want to affirm that creating something better is possible and that we all must take up this work in every aspect of our lives. We will have different ideas and take different actions, but there must be space for us all to dream and imagine what we ourselves might want to see in this world.

The fiction that exists is that there is only one way to act, to think, to hope and to imagine. The fiction that somehow property is more valuable than the health, well being and physical security of human bodies. The fiction that this society is one of equality, justice and respect. I am not interested in keeping this façade alive. I am unwilling to believe that society as it stands now is NOT in a chaotic state or that chaos only exists in the protest actions of those who work for change. I am interested in something better.

And so I stand before you today, guilty and ready to accept punishment for the beliefs, actions and dreams that I have. I acknowledge that my experiences have been influenced by the privileges that I have as an individual with a variety of social positionings and avenues of access available to myself. My experience is somewhat unique in this regard. But this also means I have some responsibility to act. To work toward change. To imagine something better and commit to a life of action.

So yes indeed truth might seem stranger than fiction, but it is something worth fighting for.

"I pledge allegiance to the world, nothing more, nothing less than my humanity. Until the last lock breaks none of us are free..." - Strike Anywhere

Call For Support From Guelph ABC

On November 22, 2011, six of our friends pled guilty to counselling charges for organizing to disrupt the Toronto G20 summit in June, 2010. Erik Lankin, Adam Lewis and Peter Hopperton began serving jail sentences of 3-5.5 months on November 28, 2011. Leah Henderson expects to be sentenced to 10 months on December 20, 2011. Mandy Hiscocks expects to be sentenced to 16 months on January 13. Alex Hundert expects to be sentenced to 13.5 months, but a date has yet to be set.

To read the collective statement of the G20 Main Conspiracy Group, individual statements of co-defendants, and statements read to the courts, visit: <http://conspiretoresist.wordpress.com>.

Guelph Anarchist Black Cross is providing some of the support for these comrades. We are fundraising money to facilitate meeting the everyday and immediate needs of comrades facing jail and of their support

networks. Specifically, we will be putting money towards: sending letters and reading materials to those incarcerated; transportation costs for family, friends and supporters visiting them; collect phone call bills; canteen; rent money when they get out; and storage for their belongings. We need help providing funds for this material support.

Here's how to donate to the Guelph ABC G20 Support Fund:

1. paypal: guelphabc@riseup.net or click the button on this site
2. Deposit cash to the following TD bank account: Transit # 00182, Institution # 004, Account # 00185228263.
3. Write a cheque or money order to Guelph ABC with G20 in the memo line. Mail to the post office box below.

Letters to comrades in jail is encouraged, to help them stay connected to struggles and communities, and to break the isolation inherent in prisons.

It is possible that folks will be moved between jails during their incarceration. We will try to keep their addresses updated on our website. You can also send letters to the address below and we will forward them. When writing letters, remember that they will be read by prison guards.

Guelph ABC
Post Office Box 183
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 6J6
Canada

Check back for regular updates and more information.

If you have any questions, concerns, or want to know more about what we do, please don't hesitate to email us: guelphabc@riseup.net.

Your support and solidarity is deeply appreciated. Most importantly, keep up the struggle.

In solidarity with anarchist prisoners worldwide, and all prisoners fighting for freedom.

Toronto G20 Main Conspiracy Group: The Charges and How They Came To Be

On November 22, 2011, [six of the defendants in the main conspiracy case stemming from the 2010 G20 protests in Toronto pled guilty](#), while the other eleven had their charges dropped. The defendants just issued a [collective statement](#) emphasizing that they emerge from the court case "united and in solidarity."

Now that the case is closed, it's possible to speak freely about the campaign of infiltration and repression that produced it. We've received this analysis from comrades in Canada who are eager to pass on the lessons from this experience; the document offers valuable insight into how infiltrators managed to penetrate anarchist communities and which vulnerabilities they exploited. This concludes our comprehensive coverage of the 2010 G20 protests, which has also included an [overview of the events and issues](#), an [eyewitness account](#) from the riots, a [review of the legal fallout](#), and even a [benefit album](#).

Intro

It has now been almost a year a half since the mobilizations against the G20 in Toronto. Six of the seventeen people who had been accused of conspiracy for being the masterminds behind the riots - the ringleaders of anarchy, the generals and lieutenants of the black bloc, the Board of Directors of mayhem - have plead guilty to a lesser charge.

This brings to a close the story of the G20 Main Conspiracy Group. So far, this story has gone largely untold, though there have been many rumors. It's known in a general way that the people who coordinated logistics, transportation, and networking with other cities all got arrested. This has created fear among those for whom the G20 demos were their first brush with protest culture, and even among some more experienced organizers who find themselves thinking twice about stepping forward.

That fear has left people uncomfortable stepping up to roles at Occupy actions and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the real lessons of the Main Conspiracy charges go unexamined.

This report tells the story of those charges, knowing that any telling now will be incomplete. Hopefully, this will make space for others to share their experiences, and finally bring to light what seventeen people have been dealing with for the last year and a half.

The Filthy Back Story

The G20 was an unprecedented event in Southern Ontario for the scale of its security. The state spent more than a billion dollars on security for the event, more than five times the amount spent on any of the previous G20 summits. A large swath of downtown was surrounded by a security fence, with the roads leading in guarded by militarized checkpoints. In the two weeks leading up to June 26, 2010, police patrolled downtown in squads of ten or more. There were 18,000 police brought into the city from all across the country. Apart from these swarms of thugs, the normally bustling streets of Canada's largest city were eerily empty.

Meanwhile, several hundred million dollars of that big one billion went into a multi-year intelligence operation co-ordinated between several policing bodies. In the early days of January 2009, at the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) headquarters in Oshawa, the first meeting of the 2010 Joint Intelligence Group (JIG) took place. This meeting included representatives from the OPP, the federal Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP - equivalent to the FBI), CSIS (equivalent to the CIA), and local law enforcement from Toronto, Kitchener, and several other cities.

At this first meeting, they decided that "criminal leftist extremists are likely to attempt to disrupt the leaders summit." This immediately posed a question: who were these criminal leftist extremists? At least one law enforcement project in Southern Ontario was already working on this question. Travis Wilks, a Guelph police officer who became part of the OPP Hate Crimes and Extremism Unit, was tasked with spying on anarchists in Guelph.

Wilks' project would become central to the investigation. But first, from intelligence gathered at previous mobilizations and events, the JIG came up with a short list of people known to them as criminal leftist extremists and placed them under intense surveillance. By mid-January of 2009, about a half dozen people's homes were being surveilled, sometimes around the clock. Their movements were monitored, and anyone they interacted with was investigated as well. In their intelligence reports, these people were deemed "suspects," and the people they seemed to work with became "persons of interest" and were investigated further.

Yes, there was a list of people suspected of being threats to the G20 being compiled more than a year before the summit, in January 2009.

The people targeted at this early point were singled out for their long-term commitment to social and ecological justice struggles in the region. They were not targeted because it was suspected that they were doing something illegal, but rather because they had been involved in this work for many years, sometimes several decades, and were well-connected in our movements.

Travis Wilks' Obsession

Along with beautiful rivers, an agricultural college, and close proximity to highway 401, Guelph is known for its vibrant anarchist movement. In particular, it is famous for having the largest number of Earth Liberation Front actions of any city in North America. Travis Wilks was assigned to spy on anarchists in Guelph after one particularly famous incident in fall of 2008.

There had been a squat in the woods on the old prison grounds in Guelph for a number of years, and it had been taking on an increasingly political character. After the squatters began pouring concrete to build the foundation of a permanent home, the city posted an eviction notice. The woodsquat crew responded by marching from the squat to downtown, where they nailed up eviction posters of their own in city hall and the local police station, giving those institutions until September 6 to get out of town. It was mostly a joke and no plan was made for the 6th, but a police vehicle was torched that night. No claim of responsibility was ever made, but the front page of the local paper made it clear that it was being blamed on pesky woodsquatter anarchists.

From September 2008, spying on anarchists in Guelph became Travis Wilks' full time job. Any time political graffiti went up in town, he was there fingerprinting the site. He kept a file of anarchist propaganda and writings released in the city. He knew where the various collective houses were, and personally drove by them almost every day, sometimes even going out of his way on his days off to check in. He spied on people's mail, he kept records of who rode which bike, and he called internet service providers to get access to the browsing history of people's workplaces—presumably, their home connections were already monitored.

Basically, Wilks was a creep. And his creepiness did not go unappreciated by his superiors. When the JIG kicked into gear in January, he was one of the first people they contacted. Suddenly, the personal vendetta of one small town cop was transformed into a multi-million dollar intelligence-gathering operation. With a dedicated crew of six officers, he increased the number of houses he surveilled, made lists of who attended what meetings, who they lived with, and what other work they did. With this information, he guided the two undercovers (UCs) provided by the JIG, who called themselves Brenda Dougherty (real name Brenda Carey) and Khalid Mohammed (Bindo Showan), to infiltrate two different but overlapping groups. These groups were the Guelph Union of Tenants and Supporters (GUTS) and Land is More Important than Sprawl (LIMITS). We'll talk more about the tactics used by these undercovers later.

Enter SOAR

Brenda and Khalid spent the next year participating in various projects in Kitchener, Stratford, and Guelph, working with the loose network of anarchists and anti-authoritarians from about eight of the small cities to the east and west of Toronto. These communities had been developing links of friendship and solidarity for the past several years by collaborating on social but confrontational actions that built relationships through the experience of struggle.

In the years before the G20, cooperation between these cities represented a substantial increase in capacity for anarchist movements in the region. For instance, summer of 2009, this network organized the occupation

of the proposed Hanlon Creek Business Park site, taking and holding a construction site for a month and effectively stopping work for that year. It also demonstrated a significant degree of coordination in protesting against the Olympic torch traveling through Southern Ontario, in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and others resisting the winter Olympics on the west coast.

The formation of the Southern Ontario Anarchist Resistance, or SOAR, in February 2010 was an attempt at formalizing this network for the purpose of organizing against the G8 and G20 summits. Both Brenda and Khalid were already well-embedded in organizing and so were able to participate in SOAR from the beginning. Anarchists from Toronto increasingly got involved with SOAR, and by the end of March of 2010, it was based in the big city and was working closely with the Toronto Community Mobilization Network (TCMN).

The TCMN was intended to be a hub for organizing against the G20. The TCMN did not plan any actions itself, but its Action Committee attempted to co-ordinate actions called by others to ensure a separation of time or space between actions implying different risk levels.

SOAR announced three actions to take place on June 26 and 27, and began meeting bi-weekly, with its working groups meeting more often. This is hardly a detailed analysis of SOAR's organizing, but in short, SOAR:

planned a confrontational march called Get Off the Fence to break off from the big labor march on June 26. This was presented as a continuation from the labor march, which intended to march in a circle, beginning and ending in the designated protest zone several kilometers from the fence.

planned a roving dance party called Saturday Night Fever for that night.

called for an autonomous day of direct action of the 27th to disrupt delegates attempting to reach the convergence space inside the security zone.

held three spokescouncils and one large consulta meeting.

participated in the completely open TCMN Consulta, and met with reps from the Canadian Labour Council.

They also held a large meeting with representatives from NGOs, labor groups, and community organizations. Many of these groups decided to support the Get Off the Fence march as an alternative to marching in a circle, and the consensus from there was to trust SOAR to organize the march safely and responsibly, having heard their concerns.

The Big Day Arrives

On Saturday, June 26, five days into an exciting and powerful week of mobilizations, less than twelve hours after the last spokescouncil meeting, the JIG conducted two home raids against organizers with SOAR, kicking in their doors with guns drawn between 4:30 and 5 am. Alex Hundert, Leah Henderson, Mandy Hiscocks, and Peter Hopperton were among the first of more than 1100 people who would be brought to the makeshift detention center on Eastern Avenue over the weekend. This detention center was a film studio rented by police and filled with cages and small trailers. The treatment of those arrested during the G20 is now infamous and this detention center is the subject of a class action lawsuit.

Most of the G20 Main Conspiracy Group were arrested over the weekend, with a few others being picked up over the weeks that followed. Notably, David Prychitka and Jaroslava Avila were not arrested until September. Most of those arrested spent between ten days and three weeks in jail. One accused, Erik

Lankin, spent three months in jail after being denied bail.

It is worth noting that with only one exception, everyone denied bail from G20 related arrests was denied for mental health reasons. People with more obvious mental health needs were systematically brutalized by the guards at Maplehurst Prison, and some would ultimately spend more than a year in jail before having their charges withdrawn.

The one exception is Byron Sonne, a hacker and security expert who was arrested on June 22 and was accused of making bombs after police gathered any chemical they could find in his house into the kitchen and called in their bomb specialist, who looked at the pile and concluded, “Sure, you could make a bomb out of that.” As of this writing, Byron Sonne is out of jail, but still faces charges. Those denied bail for mental health reasons are all out of jail, and it is believed that their charges have been withdrawn.

In the afternoon of the 26th, however, undeterred by the tales of armed goons running cars off the highway to arrest their occupants or leaping from vans to tackle people off bicycles—just two of the ways that other “ringleaders” were pre-arrested—people took to the street en-masse. A contingent gathered for Get Off the Fence march, grouping around the black flags as indicated in the callout.

The plans for the march went no further than gathering. As accurately reported in the CrimethInc. [Eyewitness Report](#) on the G20, SOAR’s process failed to produce a specific plan for the march, and the spokescouncil the night before had simply agreed that “the plan is not to have a plan.” In an inspiring show of courage, about 1000 people broke off the big march, some of whom participated in a black bloc.

The breakaway escaped an attempted kettle at King and Bay, forcing police to retreat, then moved north on Yonge street where a bunch of storefronts were smashed. Several police cruisers were also set on fire during the march in what has become the symbol of that day. SOAR’s stated goal of humiliating the security apparatus and making the powerful think twice about ever having one of their parties here again appears to have been a success.

Following Get Off the Fence, the veneer of free speech was torn away in favor of full-on martial law. All other demos for the rest of the weekend were completely shut down by the outrageously brutal conduct of the 18,000 police brought in for the summit. It was in the designated protest zone at Queens Park and outside the detention center where the most intense police violence and largest mass arrests took place. With all this brutality, within twenty-four hours of Get Off the Fence the media were forced to abandon their script about bemoaning the broken windows in the face of the massive public outcry by the literally thousands of people who had been attacked by police.

In all, 1100 people were arrested, 330 were charged, over a hundred were accused of conspiracy, 20 were accused of being ring leaders, and now six are pleading guilty to counseling. 24 people have already pled guilty to their charges. Several others still face charges for property destruction during Get Off the Fence. One lone police officer, Babek Andalib Goortany—Officer Bob as his fellow officers apparently call him—is facing charges for assaulting protestors. The financial cost of the G20 continues to grow, as the preliminary inquiry against the Main Conspiracy Group was costing, in a conservative estimate, \$50,000 per day for the month it went on.

So What’s the Deal with These Charges?

The Three Pillars

In some ways, the G20 Main Conspiracy Group charges are exceptional; in others, they are predictable. Police use pre-emptive arrests, trumped-up conspiracy charges, and routine violence and surveillance against many communities in the Greater Toronto Area, with Muslim and Black communities being the preferred targets of the past decade. There have been conspiracy charges used against anarchists in Canada in the past, including the Germinal case after the FTAA in Quebec city in 2001 and the OCAP conspiracy the same year.

What makes the Main Conspiracy case stand out is its sheer scale. There were originally twenty people charged, along with more than a hundred accused of being the “foot soldiers,” stemming from the work of eighteen undercover police officers in more than a dozen different groups starting almost two years in advance. This represents an extreme escalation of repression, and it was explicitly targeted at three overlapping sectors of the resistance: anarchists, indigenous solidarity organizers, and migrant justice organizers. These are the three pillars that hold up the crown’s case.

The first pillar, anarchists, is the most obvious, considering the group in question is called SOAR. As mentioned above, anarchists in Southern Ontario have been slowly but surely building connections with each other, learning together and becoming stronger. That said, the anarchist movement in this area remains small, relatively young, spread out, and not especially visible. But it has been growing, and in the past decade in particular, anarchists have been central to some exciting social struggles.

Some of these struggles to which anarchists have contributed their energy, analysis, and tactics include the Red Hill Valley protests in Hamilton; the woodsquat and anti-development conflicts in Guelph; the movement against prison expansion in Kingston; organizing against gentrification and surveillance in Peterborough; industrial showdowns in Windsor; fighting runaway sprawl in London; creating youth social space in Burlington; resisting the criminalization of poverty in Kitchener; Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, No One Is Illegal, and Anti-Racist Action in Toronto; and the Ontario Common Front and the Days of Rage across the region.

The other two pillars of the crown’s theory are less obvious, but perhaps more important in explaining these charges. Anarchists involved in solidarity with indigenous sovereignty struggles came under surveillance far more intensely than did other anarchists. This is likely because of the ever-increasing resources dedicated to repressing First Nations Peoples in the past two decades. Since the Oka crisis in 1990 and Ipperwash in 1995, the struggles of First Nations Peoples for land, health, and sovereignty have become steadily broader and more powerful, inspiring people throughout the region.

In particular the group AW@L, Against War at Laurier, was targeted for their solidarity work, with almost half of their members charged with conspiracy. Starting off as a student group at Laurier University in Kitchener/Waterloo, AW@L was banned from campus for direct action against military recruitment. They then moved to downtown Kitchener where they started a community center, the Kitchener-Waterloo Centre for Social Justice. Early in its existence, AW@L developed a strong commitment to anti-colonial struggles, and worked to built alliances with First Nations in struggle across the province along with many other groups in different cities.

The anarchists involved in solidarity with indigenous struggles who were targeted by the JIG were primarily working with people at Six Nations, Tyendinaga, and Grassy Narrows. People at Six Nations had reclaimed land from the cities of Caledonia and Brantford, fending off the police and racists who attacked them along the way. Tyendinaga is a reservation known for its self-governance, direct action, and active solidarity with other First Nations; in the years leading up to the G20, they were preventing attempts by the Canadian state to install a fancy new police station on their land. Grassy Narrows is in Northern Ontario, and people there

have been holding blockades against clear-cut logging, resource extraction, and the poisoning of their land and water for many years.

The third pillar of the crown's narrative is the migrant justice movement, one of the most dynamic and effective urban struggles in Canada of the past decade, with the group No One is Illegal (NOII) taking an inspiring lead. NOII is most active in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, and it is no surprise that the JIG picked a key organizer from each city to throw into the conspiracy case: Jaggi Singh, Syed Hussan, and Harsha Walia. However, this pillar of the state's conspiracy narrative was the quickest to collapse - they simply didn't have the evidence to make NOII fit into their evil league of criminal leftists, even by their own flimsy standards. Harsha's charges were dropped at her bail hearing, and those charges were considered so outrageous that she was allowed to walk straight out of the prisoner's box and into the body of the court. Jaggi plead guilty to counseling on June 21, 2011 after an unsuccessful attempt to have his no-demonstration condition removed. He was not sentenced to any additional time in jail. Hussan's charges are being withdrawn as part of the plea deal to resolve the Main Conspiracy charges.

Canada is currently carrying out a historic crackdown on the rights of migrants, particularly targeting refugees and people deemed by the state to be "illegal." An army of bureaucrats in Ottawa is currently rewriting the policies to reflect the edicts of the Conservative government, but enforcement agencies have not waited for the ink to dry to intensify their attacks on targeted communities. NOII has been successful in keeping immigration enforcement out of women's shelters and schools, and has managed to overturn several deportation orders, which has left the state eager to find ways of harassing them and their allies.

A Crime in a Single Conversation: What's a Conspiracy?

As the seventeen defendants wrote in their statement, "The government made a political decision to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to surveil and infiltrate anarchist, Indigenous solidarity, and migrant justice organizing over several years. After that kind of investment, what sort of justice are we to expect?" There is no victory in the courts, and it's well-known that in Canada that conspiracy charges are among the most difficult to defend against.

There are two basic elements of a conspiracy. One is an intention to agree to commit an illegal act, and the second is an agreement or plan to commit that act. That's all. Unlike in the United States, there need be no acts taken in furtherance of the conspiracy; any such acts are just used to prove the existence of the agreement. A conspiracy can take place in a single conversation, and it remains a conspiracy even if, in later conversations, the people decide not to do it.

The two main undercover agents from the G20 Main Conspiracy case were in place for a year and a half each, and took detailed notes on thousands of conversations. At trial, the defendants might successfully demonstrate that ninety-nine out of a hundred meetings or chats did not constitute conspiracy, but the crown only has to convince the judge or jury once to secure a conviction. These odds are clearly stacked against the defense.

In addition, the police have the only written record of events. As UC Khalid repeatedly said in court, his mission was to look for evidence of illegal activities. This means that anything not about illegal activities would not have been written down. The narrative of a year of just about anyone's life told in such a way could justify conspiracy charges. Apart from testifying oneself—and one would surely be less credible than a cop, and less consistent than a notebook—it is impossible to add anything to this narrative, so the defendants were forced to situate themselves within the police's version of events.

Canadian conspiracy law was first developed to deal with striking workers in the early part of the 20th century—look into the Winnipeg General strike of 1919—but it soon fell into disfavor and was seldom used. In

the early nineties, conspiracy law was revived and rewritten to target biker gangs and mafias, and it quickly became a weapon to target so-called “street gangs” composed of young people of color. In recent history, it has been a deeply racist branch of law, used to go after entire social circles as a form of collective punishment. Now, once again, nearly a hundred years after these laws were first written, they are being used to target anarchist organizing.

And Just What Exactly Are They Accused of Conspiring To Do?

The co-accused shared three main charges: conspiracy to assault police, conspiracy to obstruct police, and conspiracy to commit mischief over \$5000. In a general way, what the crown is alleging is that the defendants planned to disrupt the G20 summit and create chaos in downtown Toronto. The specific charges are the means by which they intended to do so: attacking police, de-arresting protestors, destroying property.

One interesting point that the crown made is that, in all the tens of thousands of pages of disclosure, the defendants never discuss whether or not to disrupt the G20 and interfere with the security operation. They only talked about how to do it. From there, the crown believes that this means the agreement to disrupt predates the formation of SOAR. This is an interesting premise and is worth examining.

Although the crown does not need to prove an explicit agreement to disrupt the G20 and interfere with the security—this can be understood from the tactical discussions—in order for their crazy theory to float, all the defendants, along with the dozens of unindicted co-conspirators, need to have a common unlawful motive. The crown says this unlawful motive was common among all of these different people before any of them had ever met to discuss it in SOAR. But SOAR’s only basis of unity was that one be an anarchist from the area who had worked in the movement enough to be vouched for.

The crown’s theory, then, is that having anarchist values constitutes an unlawful motive, that organizing protests around those values is a conspiracy, and therefore that any jokes made in the pub about fighting cops become a crime. This is nothing new, of course. In this case, explicit anarchism and the planning of a march route combined with a bunch of diligently noted jokes and boastful statements were enough to lead to charges.

Let’s not become indignant at this latest lifting of Canada’s democratic veil to reveal the naked force beneath. The legal system is a weapon that is used against anarchists and any group that poses a threat to the social order. Rather than outrage, let’s focus on the many lessons to be gleaned about how to organize more safely in the future. The goal of this text is to lay out a few of them, and provide enough information for other communities to draw their own conclusions.

Why Haven’t I Heard about All This Already?

The use of conspiracy law against the G20 mobilizations is just an extension of the exceptional security that surrounded the G20 as a whole. It is as glaring an indication of the state’s illegitimacy and impunity as the security fence, the detention center, and the mass arrests. Why then have the Main Conspiracy charges been so much less talked about?

The No-Demo Condition

Since the Main Conspiracy charges were laid, the state has very successfully harassed and pressured anyone who spoke out about this case into silence. The defendants especially have been targeted for even simply describing the charges in public. They have been under extremely restrictive bail conditions, including the

infamous no-demo condition; non-association with their co-accused and an indefinite number of others; and house arrest. The legal matters have also been covered by a publication ban. We'll look at each of these factors in turn, but the end result is that people were scared to spread information, defendants could not take a lead on raising awareness, and reliable information was impossible to come by.

The principal tool used to silence the defendants has been the bail condition that reads: *Do not attend or participate in the planning of any protest or public demonstration*. It is fondly referred to as the no-demo condition. This condition is tremendously broad, and replaces the Clarke condition (after John Clarke of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, a defendant in the OCAP conspiracy case) that simply prohibited one from attending any illegal protest. It represents a serious escalation in the state's use of bail conditions to silence defendants before trial, preventing them from mounting campaigns to raise awareness and gain support. Crown attorneys have attempted to impose this condition on at least one other anarchist since the G20.

The police in Toronto, under the leadership of John Vandenheuvel, used this as an opportunity to harass and bully defendants with complete impunity. One defendant was pulled over while driving home from a private fundraising event for the legal defense fund. Although the event was invitation-only and very successful, she was threatened with arrest if she ever did anything like that again.

Out of the defendants, Alex Hundert was the most persistent and most public in denouncing the charges, and early on he was singled out for intense repression. While on house arrest, he was invited to speak on a panel at Ryerson University about the criminalization of dissent at the G20, and he attended the event with a surety in compliance with his bail conditions. His remarks are available on [Youtube](#). When he arrived home afterwards, he was [arrested for violating what has come to be known as the "no-demo" condition](#).

At his bail hearing for the breach charges, the crown pushed for a new condition that read "No expressing of political views in the company of others." Alex refused to sign and so returned to jail. But that night, he was taken from his cell by guards and confronted by higher-ups in the prison who threatened him with indefinite solitary confinement if he didn't sign the conditions immediately. Surrounded by these brutal thugs, Alex decided to sign the paper. He was then kicked out of the jail in the middle of the night and had to walk home.

Alex immediately wrote an article about his experience and the new condition. Three days later he was re-arrested, this time for allegedly writing down the license plate of the crown attorney's car while leaving a bail review hearing where the crown was trying to harshen his conditions. He was charged with intimidating a justice system participant, and spent about two months in jail before managing to get bail again.

Although Alex dealt with this repression bravely, all this harassment did serve to keep the other defendants from taking similar risks. Some defendants found that they were able to continue organizing in the ways they had been before, as long as they didn't talk about the G20. They could either keep organizing and stay quiet about the G20, or talk about the G20 and risk so much heat coming down that they wouldn't be able to do anything at all. Or so the choice appeared. This meant that although most of the defendants stayed politically active even while on house arrest, they didn't speak up about the conspiracy charges.

Don't Even Look at Them

For criminal charges in Canada, it's routine that co-accused are only let out on bail if they agree to sign a condition that they won't associate or communicate with each other. In political circles, these conditions are routinely ignored: some people with non-association conditions have even been arrested together again without being charged for breach of bail. Maybe it was the knowledge of the surveillance they'd been under for years, or maybe it was the huge sums (up to \$150,000) pledged by their sureties for bail, or maybe it was

trauma from the experience of arrest and prison, but from the beginning, the Main Conspiracy Group decided to take their non-association conditions very seriously.

The rest of the movement took them seriously too, generously organizing to help accommodate these conditions once the defendants had some freedom of movement back. But there was another non-association condition too. This one read: non-association with any member of SOAR or AW@L. Some defendants also had non-association with members of NOII.

It would be difficult to overstate the amount of fear and trauma among activists in Southern Ontario after the G20, with anarchists and their close allies most affected. The newspapers were full of wanted lists, dozens of their comrades were in jail, the streets were still full of police, and the courtrooms were packed with prisoners from the G20 trying to get bail. It didn't take long before everyone knew that SOAR was considered a criminal organization, and as the Main Conspiracy Group began to get out on bail, that it was considered to have "members."

Just a few weeks before, hundreds of people were involved in planning actions against the G20 through SOAR. It never had formal members - anyone known and trusted by those present on a given day could show up and take on tasks. It was not open, but it was by no means closed. It had a core of perhaps two dozen people who were most consistently involved, but even this was fluid, with people stepping in and out depending on their other commitments. In the days following the G20, however, a line was drawn through the movement: member of SOAR or not member of SOAR, anarchist criminal or just plain anarchist.

It's not that people distanced themselves from SOAR, necessarily. It's that lovers were scared they would be prevented from seeing their partners, roommates wanted their friends back, siblings risked being kept apart. People just kept quiet. They kept their heads down and waited for the storm to pass. Many of them were waiting for some kind of statement to appear, some website about "Free the G20 Twenty" or whatever the Main Conspiracy Group would be called. But that never happened - the defendants couldn't even go outside or speak to each other - and so SOAR and AW@L went from being inspirational groups to being vaguely shameful subjects that people avoided talking about too much.

This condition meant that it has taken a very long time for the defendants to reconnect with people. Some interpreted non-association with SOAR and AW@L to mean no one, because neither group still existed and SOAR never had members. Others played it safe and kept clear of any face they recognized from a meeting. Some activists in the area are still unsure whether defendants consider them to be members of a forbidden group - it's not like they can just call them up and ask.

House arrest doesn't take much explanation. For the better part of a year, the defendants were not allowed outside unless in the company of a surety (one of the people who bailed them out). Since most people only had two or three sureties, and these were often parents, the options for leaving the house were extremely limited.

The defendants never took a solid lead on organizing politically around their own case, and neither did anyone else. There was some organizing support for people on house arrest or in jail, and some fundraising to get folks through the prelim, but the big push back against the charges never appeared. For some defendants, this absence of political momentum was the biggest factor in deciding to plead guilty rather than continue on to trial. Without political momentum around the case, the charges felt like a political inconvenience rather than an opportunity or site of struggle. This is not to blame anyone, but it hopefully explains why ending the charges quickly seemed to the defendants like a good choice on a political level.

Miscellaneous Harassment

Apart from the factors relating to the bail conditions of the defendants, there were a few other instances in which the police intimidated the broader movement out of getting too curious about the Main Conspiracy charges.

One of the co-accused, David Prychitka, who was arrested three months later than the others, was finally picked up just two hours after attending an event in Hamilton denouncing the criminalization of dissent at the G20. The police had his address, so they could have arrested him at any time, but only finally did because he was starting to make a fuss. It had been known by some since early July that there were still two more warrants on this case, so David's arrest meant that one more arrest was still pending—Jaroslava Avila was arrested on September 29, 2010. But many did not know this, and simply saw a local activist ambushed and arrested by OPP officers outside of a restaurant in Hamilton after a day of protest.

The OPP also sent an agent to the people who run anarchistnews.org to pressure them to remove a link to the website Snitchwire from their page. Snitchwire is a hub for news relating to undercover police and informants in political movements, and both Brenda and Khalid were featured on it. Officer Vandenheuevel had been unsuccessful in convincing blogspot to take Snitchwire down, so he contacted local police in the United States to go to the homes of the A-News crew and order them to remove the link.

On August 25, 2011, journalist Dan Kellar from Kitchener was arrested two days after he made a blog post describing his experiences with the undercovers, and referring to details from the Snitchwire posting. He was charged with threatening a police officer and released on the condition that he remain a kilometer away from either of the UCs - which conveniently prevented him from attending the preliminary inquiry that began two weeks later.

Keep It Out of the Papers

Since the earliest days of bail hearings back in June 2010, the legal proceedings against the Main Conspiracy Group have been covered by a publication ban. These bans are common in Canada, and are issued all but automatically if a defendant requests it. In this case, if any defendant requested a ban, it would be applied to all of them, as the evidence was the same.

The standard publication ban prevents anything brought up in court from being published in any way until the ban is lifted, either by the charges resolving, the beginning of a proper trial, or the order being struck by a judge. When the ban was originally requested by a lawyer for the defense, the defendants had not yet had any opportunity to discuss, having just been arrested that morning. The media were into their seventh hour of filming police cars burning while making fearful noises, and in that moment it seemed best that they not be given a group of ringleader-scapegoats to tear into.

Publication bans are useful to defendants and are commonly issued because of the recognized bias that exists in bail hearings and preliminary inquiries. A bail hearing is presided over by a Justice of the Peace who is not a judge and is usually not even trained as a lawyer. Instead they are “pillars of the community”: former cops, school principals, and famous athletes. They are notoriously conservative and unpredictable, and by routinely denying bail, they are responsible for about sixty percent of all people incarcerated in Canada. So much for presumed innocence. In a bail hearing, the crown prosecutor has nearly unlimited leeway to make any claim about the defendant without needing to back it up. Evidence cannot be meaningfully challenged; all the defense gets to do is present reasons why the accused person should be released.

The prelim is a little better. A preliminary inquiry is a hearing at which the crown has to demonstrate that all of the elements of the charges are present in the evidence. If they can demonstrate at least some evidence on each element of each charge that, if believed, might reasonably result in a conviction, then the accused is

committed to trial. Typically, one doesn't make a serious attempt to avoid committal. Rather, the defense uses the prelim as a chance to get a clear sense of the crown's case, identify its weaknesses, and get their witnesses to commit to positions so as to prepare for trial. Again, the crown's threshold is very low, and it's not an even playing field.

When the prelim came around, many of the defendants wanted a publication ban again. This time, it seems to have been largely because there didn't seem to be the political momentum present to meaningfully shape the narrative in the press. So again, the ban was requested and it was passed.

This is by no means intended to fault their decision. But these bans did contribute to the absence of awareness and information around the case. The fact that it was illegal to share information about the case publicly ended up creating a lot of fear and contributed to stifling what little discussion was going on, especially in the context of the ongoing harassment of those who spoke out.

The publication ban was sought as a form of self-defense against a system that tries politically important cases in the media before they reach the courts, shaping the narrative in the public's eye to such a degree that the verdict becomes certain. For an example of this, look at Nyki Kish, convicted of second-degree murder with hardly any evidence after a multi-year media feeding frenzy about "scary, violent panhandlers" and the passage of the controversial Safe Streets Act. But that's another story...

Cut Their Names from Your Memory

In addition to the standard publication ban sought by the defendants, the Crown put in place a far more exceptional, dangerous, and far-reaching ban. With less than a day's notice to the defendant's lawyers, the Crown presented at the prelim a proposal for a publication ban on anything to do with the identity of the two key undercovers, Brenda and Khalid.

This ban was quashed at the request of the crown when the defendants entered their pleas, on November 22, 2011, but not before at least one activist was charged under it. The crown said it was because the ban had already been breached and now the information is so public that the ban is irrelevant.

This was of course not a worry the crown had two months earlier. The real reason is likely that the assistant to the main crown in this case leaked information covered by the ban to a national newspaper, apparently in an effort to discredit the co-accused. He was quickly found out though, and the crown opted to simply quash the order rather than risk being humiliated by charges of abuse of process.

It is lucky that the crown messed up in such an obvious way; if they hadn't, the ban would have been active indefinitely. For two months, it was illegal for anyone, anywhere, to publish the real names of the UCs, their pseudonyms, their images, or "any details that might serve to identify." This prevented the former roommates of these scumbags saying that they lived with an undercover cop. It prevented any of the hundreds of people who Brenda and Khalid interacted with from saying that this person who once gave them a ride, sat across from them at a meeting, or took them out for drinks, was in fact a police officer.

Unlike the regular publication ban, it reaches beyond the walls of the courthouse to criminalize the sharing of the personal, lived experiences of hundreds of people. Throughout the entire prelim, Justice Gerald Lapkin went along with any proposal the crown attorney had, be it to double security or assign an armed guard to sit beside the witnesses. So when asked to pass a historically far-reaching publication ban that was definitely outside of his powers as a prelim judge to order, he complied without asking any questions. For anyone present in the courtroom, it was easy to see Justice Gerry just didn't care, only looking up whenever the crown mentioned someone talking about breaking windows.

In a rare show of generosity, Gerry did add that people needed to be warned of the ban before they could be arrested for breaching it. However, when being warned, offenders would be handed a copy of the order with—if you can believe it—the details of what they are not allowed to report on blacked out.

From mid-September to the end of November, there was a ban on linking to the [Snitchwire posts](#), or reporting on the undercovers or the substance of the case. A music video by [Test Their Logik](#) was banned because it contained a picture of the UCs, as was an issue of *The Peak*, an independent magazine out of Guelph that talked about infiltration of the Hanlon Creek Business Park occupation.

Even talking about the existence of the ban was illegal; if the crown hadn't screwed up, this report itself would be illegal.

Undercovers, Surveillance, Snitches, and More

Infiltrate Everything

It has been proven that the police had at least seventeen long-term undercovers infiltrating a wide variety of groups in the years leading up to the G20. These groups included Greenpeace, the Council of Canadians, Common Cause Ottawa, Mining Justice, the Toronto Community Mobilization Network (TCMN), la Convergence des Luttes Anti-Capitaliste (CLAC), and even the Law Union of Ontario's activist defense body, the Movement Defense Committee (MDC), among others.

Some might wonder why the police would bother infiltrating the MDC and the Council of Canadians. They did it for basically the same reason that they attacked all the people sitting on the grass in the designated protest zone while the confrontational march tore up Yonge street. The problem for them is not a matter of separating the bad protestors from the good protestors: all protest is undesirable in the eyes of the police. It has violent elements and pacifist elements, but the police see those elements as part of a single whole, and it is that whole that they aim to break.

The police are happy to stay away from those who will fight back against them, preferring to attack those who are unwilling or unable to defend themselves. A breakoff march like Get Off the Fence only exists in the context of a larger mobilization, so the police tried to end that mobilization as quickly as possible. The police have tried to paint the violence in Queens Park as the actions of a few bad cops, the result of a breakdown in the chain of command, but this is clearly a lie. Using their undercovers, they initiated a similar strategy in these groups years in advance, seeking to undermine and disrupt all protest.

Even when they couldn't find evidence of "illegal" protest activity, undercovers could still cause a great deal of damage. To give just two examples, undercovers among the medic collective of the TCMN absconded with most of the medical supplies, and an undercover in la CLAC directed the buses arriving from Montreal on the Friday night preceding the G20 to unload their passengers in the wrong part of town. There were also cops in the TCMN working to block consensus on diversity of tactics, cops in the MDC using information meant to help protestors with their legal defense against them (leading to the charges against Kelly Pflug-Back), and cops in Greenpeace trying to talk young people into committing crimes.

It doesn't matter if you aren't doing anything illegal. If there are cops in your group, you are at risk, and if you tolerate their presence you are putting other people in the movement at risk.

The Tale of Brenda and Khalid

Of course, the Southern Ontario Anarchist Resistance was also infiltrated. The cops who called themselves Brenda Dougherty and Khalid Mohammed operated in different ways, targeted different people, and entered

SOAR through different routes, but both were ultimately successful in gathering huge amounts of information to use against anarchist organizers. We'll look at them each in turn.

“Brenda Dougherty” [Brenda Carey]

Brenda was the more experienced undercover, having done numerous prior operations relating to prostitution, gambling, and organized crime. On her first day on the job, she ordered some PETA t-shirts on the internet, watched *V for Vendetta*, and bought a Ward Churchill book - no joke. She dressed colorfully, had a friendly smile, and liked to wear her politics on her shirts, buttons, and patches, as if proclaiming with the stickers on her laptop that she was certainly not a cop.

She was perhaps in her mid-forties, and her backstory was extremely effective at shutting down any questions about her life. She claimed to have been born in Victoria, British Columbia, and then to have moved to England in her youth. She moved back to Canada to flee her abusive relationship, and moved to Guelph to try and get back on her feet. Fear of pursuit by her abusive partner meant that she was typically guarded about details of her life. Guelph is a community that takes support for survivors of sexual and intimate-partner violence seriously, and so she was never questioned any further than she offered about her past, and was in fact welcomed into a collective house there when she needed a place to stay. Of course, she only wanted to live there to get closer to one of the people she was targeting.

It's worth noting that at a certain point, she attempted to change her story to make it more radical. One person describes a moment in the summer of 2009 when Brenda mentioned having been involved with the Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty campaign in England. She said she left the country when her friends started getting arrested for arson attacks against companies linked to HLS. The person hearing this story was surprised that she was sharing it with someone she just met, but never passed it on to anyone else until much later.

Brenda wormed her way into people's lives through the Guelph Union of Tenants and Supporters (GUTS), a radical anti-poverty group in Guelph that had recently been involved in some high-profile actions in that city. In March 2009, as they were getting to know Brenda, their main project was a weekly meal serving downtown, and they were pleased to find someone who would show up reliably, work tirelessly, and always volunteer to wash the dishes.

These meals were cooked in the kitchen of one of the busiest collective houses in town. By hanging around there and encouraging gossip, Brenda quickly got to know the social and political layout of the anarchist community in Guelph. Gossip was one of Brenda's favorite tools for gathering information. She encouraged people to vent their frustrations to her, to talk to her if they were feeling sad, and she was never above dropping bits of information gleaned from others in order to provoke those feelings. In the winter of 2009-2010, the Guelph community was experiencing a large and serious internal conflict that took up a lot of energy. Between trips to Toronto, Brenda spread rumors and invented lies to make the situation worse, all while offering people rides in to the next SOAR meeting where she could build up cases against them.

She took exhaustive notes on who was making out with whom and who was angry at whom. As a result of her work, the state now knows quite a bit about some of the fault lines in Guelph and the surrounding communities. We need to keep in mind that years from now the state might try to play on un-mended divisions to pressure us into incriminating our former comrades even if we're no longer active in the movement. There's a recent case out in Vancouver where American prosecutors exploited old divisions in the American Indian Movement to convict John Graham for a murder that occurred more than thirty years ago. It's likely that Guelph was initially targeted on account of the large number of anti-police and anti-development arsons there, and we can expect that those investigations are still slowly moving along even as

these charges come and go.

There is some confusion around how exactly Brenda became a part of SOAR. It doesn't seem that anyone vouched her in, yet she was present even at early visioning meetings in Guelph, more than a month before the name SOAR was first uttered. It seems that she was simply "around" when these early meetings were announced. She was then able to show up unchallenged as the meetings began to involve more people, and was just grandfathered in when the group decided to call itself SOAR and adopt a loose vouching system. She also had a car and would offer people rides to meetings, so she was usually seen arriving with someone trusted, diffusing concern from the group, while the people she travelled with thought someone else had vouched her in.

She even made it into the spokescouncil meetings, which Khalid was never able to do. SOAR had issued a callout inviting people to organize themselves into affinity groups, and then one representative from any affinity group that could be vouched for was invited to attend the spokescouncils. Brenda simply faked having an affinity group. When one person questioned her as to whom she was working with, Brenda got defensive, chiding the comrade for bad security culture.

On June 25, 2010, Brenda wore a concealed recording device into the final spokescouncil meeting. As anyone present that night knows, it was probably one of the top ten most unpleasant anarchist meetings of all time, and after several hours of discussion, all that could be agreed upon was not to have a plan. Armed with this knowledge that there was no plan, Brenda's superiors ran off to whatever corrupt judge was awake at that hour and got themselves a whole stack of warrants that they moved on immediately.

"Khalid Mohammed" [Bindo Showan]

Khalid appeared on the scene rather earlier than Brenda, back in November 2008. He attended a film screening in Guelph about debunking myths around the Vancouver Olympics. A few months later, he reappeared, regularly attending meetings of the group Land is More Important than Sprawl, or LIMITS. LIMITS was organizing against the construction of a business park on a tributary of the Hanlon Creek and some of the last old growth forest remaining in Guelph.

During this period, Khalid stood out for his habit of taking people off to one side and trying to get them to talk about "doing whatever it takes" to make sure the business park didn't happen. He often invited people (who were assigned to him as targets) to come have drinks with him in order to have such conversations. This kind of sketchy behavior set off alarm bells in Guelph.

At first, people approached him politely and told him that talking about illegal activity at LIMITS was unsafe and unwelcome, but he didn't stop. By June 2009, Khalid was considered to be a cop by anarchists in Guelph and their close allies in a few other cities. When the occupation of the Hanlon Creek site began in July, Khalid was deliberately excluded.

But he was never publicly outed, nor was he explicitly disinvited from anything. At the occupation, he was simply told that he was making people uncomfortable on the site, and was put in charge of bringing things in from town. Khalid had a large white passenger van that he was always quick to offer; his story was that he worked for a property management company and had to travel around a lot.

Meanwhile, on the site, another conflict was brewing. This is a delicate thing to talk about. There was one person in particular - let's call him person X - who went out of his way to lie and bully to keep Khalid involved in anarchist organizing. He is definitely not a cop, and this is not intended to be any sort of callout or denunciation of person X. But it is impossible to tell the story of Khalid's involvement in the G20 Main Conspiracy investigation without talking about how this person's behavior sheltered an undercover cop and

is now contributing to people going to jail. In writing about him, we are relying wherever possible on people's own experiences with him during this time rather than on Khalid's notes about him.

Since his arrival on the occupation site, person X had been taking pleasure in exaggerating sectarian differences and bragging about his organizing experience. When those at the occupation decided to exclude drugs and alcohol from the site, this person used it as an opportunity to single out some of the main organizers of the occupation for bullying, arguing that this decision showed how privileged and disconnected the organizers were. Because he was using drugs and alcohol at the time, he spent a lot of time off the site, and he began catching rides between Guelph and the Hanlon Creek with Khalid.

Both Khalid and person X are people of color, while the occupation was predominately white. This person talked with Khalid about how he shouldn't worry about being excluded, that it was just a bunch of privileged white kids. The Hanlon Creek occupation and the anarchist movement in general definitely have a lot of issues around race and racism, and it's completely likely that both Khalid and person X have grievances from that action that anarchists could learn from. Our failure to effectively address racism in our movements creates cracks that cops and snitches can exploit, which is also an element of this story. The distinction we'd like to make, though, is the difference between trying to deal with an issue and engaging in divisive shit-talk in order to silence people.

Khalid began buying person X drinks, and three weeks later this person was telling organizers in Kitchener that Khalid was his trusted friend. Based on doing a couple of banner drops together and going together as Khalid pretended to buy illegal cigarettes from other OPP officers, this person publicly claimed that he and Khalid had done illegal actions together, and that therefore Khalid was trustworthy.

At this point, being basically excluded from Guelph anarchist organizing, Khalid turned his attention to AW@L. Here he found a different political culture that was easier to infiltrate. The Guelph anarchists generally avoided forming organizations, preferring to work on projects together informally on the basis of friendship. AW@L on the other hand was a formal organization with a list of members and a regular meeting space that would actively recruit new members. AW@L emphasized making it easy for people to get involved in political organizing and direct action, holding frequent protests, leafletings, banner drops, discussions, and film screenings. Many of their events and meetings were completely open to the public, while even the events that were members-only were still relatively easy to access if one was willing to make the time commitment of becoming a member.

This more participatory political culture unfortunately also came with a less well-developed security culture, and bravado about willingness to carry out illegal actions and jokes about killing cops were generally accepted. Khalid of course happily made notes of all these comments for a solid year, all of which the prosecutors were equally happy to read back in court.

It's important to note that although AW@L is accused of planning offensive violence, they have always been a group that practices non-violent direct action as an effective way of gaining attention and achieving goals. They also encourage collective self-defense against police aggression through time-honored protest tactics like reinforced banners and de-arresting. AW@L has been cast by the crown as some sort of terrorist group complete with a training camp - a weekend of swimming and brainstorming at a cottage - but this is a gross distortion of the inspiring role that AW@L played in this region for the years it was active.

As Khalid set about buying people drinks, fishing for incriminating comments, and pushing for more militant tactics, it was inevitable that word from Guelph would eventually make it to the folks in AW@L. Person X caught word of the rumors and called up Khalid to reassure him that he would take care of everything. This person then embarked on a small campaign of class- and race-baiting against all the white middle-class kids

who fake being radical, silencing those trying to out his good buddy Khalid.

These polarizing personal attacks around race and class meant that not only was Khalid not challenged at that time, he in fact became immune from further scrutiny in the group. AW@L created an internal story that Khalid was firmly vouched for and that people had met the young daughter he was always claiming to have. AW@L in turn vouched Khalid into SOAR, and when they split into affinity groups for the mobilization, he was in one of them. People from Guelph saw this, didn't feel comfortable speaking up about it again, and largely stayed out of SOAR.

Eventually, someone in AW@L got ahold of Khalid's cell phone and saw something suspicious enough that they confronted person X about it. Rather than acknowledge a mistake, person X simply claimed that he had never vouched for him. On June 12, just a few weeks before the mobilizations against the G20 were to begin, Khalid was finally kicked out of the organizing. A feeling of dread settled onto those who had been closest to them, but it seemed too late to do anything about it.

Khalid was involved in the Get Off the Fence working group of SOAR. He kept quiet and didn't contribute much but always kept notes. He was generous with money, always taking people out to dinner and encouraging them to have another drink on him. He would gladly go hours out of his way to shuttle people around in his big white van. He had access to cheap photocopies and a lamination machine. He would always check his watch when someone said something incriminating, so he could note the time later. He would slip away to the washroom to send text messages to his handlers. He says he only had four months of training before joining the OPP, and this was his first undercover assignment.

Surveillance Teams, Spin Teams, Watch Your Back

The defendants are said to have received about twenty thousand pages of disclosure from the state, supposedly all of the evidence against them. Much of this consists of reports by more than a hundred different officers involved in surveillance at different times, starting with Travis Wilks in 2008 and intensifying as the clock ticked closer to the last weeks of June 2010. This is not intended to be an exhaustive summary of the surveillance that occurred; rather, it highlights some of its more interesting aspects.

In the early days of this investigation, surveillance in Guelph and Kitchener was focused on a small number of people, less than a dozen, that police already considered to be criminal extremists. Some of these were singled out, designated Suspects, and placed under heavy surveillance. Anyone a Suspect spent much time with became a Person of Interest, and everyone they met was considered an Associate. Persons of Interest were investigated and followed around, and if they seemed involved in political organizing, they became Suspects as well.

This work was carried out by surveillance teams, usually two officers in a car. If the targets were riding bikes, the car would circle the block to keep them in sight. If they were walking, often one of the cops would get out and follow on foot, especially in Toronto where it's easy to disappear into a subway. They would follow people into restaurants or stores.

For the most part, the notes they made were banal and un-descriptive, but knowing the movements of their targets became important later on when they would go actively looking for specific people to see what they were up to. Some people were filmed going to and from work every day for a month at a time. Some people were placed under extremely overt surveillance every day starting in May 2010 as an intimidation tactic. Surveillance teams typically kept eight-hour shifts, after which they would turn the spying over to a new pair.

They built up a database on license plates associated with political radicals, and ran all the passports and immigration data of the owners of these cars. If they were unsure where a Suspect lived, they would

sometimes begin surveillance on his or her family, or call relatives asking if the Suspect was there, then hanging up after receiving an answer. This practice landed them a couple of humorous red herrings.

Particularly interesting were the Spin Teams. There were many two-person surveillance teams active during June 2010 in Toronto, but these were supplemented by a smaller number of six-person spin teams. These teams would simply wait in areas where suspects were being surveilled, standing ready to arrest them at a moment's notice. They were looking for things like shoplifting, postering, even jaywalking. Their purpose was to keep key organizers off the street by burdening them with charges and bail conditions in the days before the G20.

In addition, wherever Brenda or Khalid went, there was cover team nearby with a minimum of two officers and sometimes as many as eight. These cops were there to attack anyone who threatened or challenged the identity of the undercover. Something to be mindful of.

Facebook and Email Bleed Intel

One of the other main contributors to the size of the disclosure is the huge amount of online material collected. Both Brenda and Khalid spent a lot of time on Facebook and email. They especially used these as opportunities to get additional information about Persons of Interest. If they were missing someone's last name, odds are it was attached to an email account. If they were missing someone's date of birth, didn't have a current photo of them, or wanted a better picture of who is in contact with whom, they often turned to Facebook.

No one expects Facebook to be private, but even seemingly benign information can be useful to the police. The simple act of having a friends list or linking to political articles gives undercovers information about how to target and befriend you. If they know what your interests are, they can more easily pass as experienced, legitimate activists when talking with you. As well, several people had huge swaths of their Facebook pages read back to them in court, with every time they ever clicked "like" on something anarchistic being used as evidence of a pattern of anti-social behavior.

Remember - you are not the client of your email provider or of Facebook: you are the product they offer to their advertisers. They don't care about you, and they are trying in every way to harvest information about you. They encourage you to share information about yourself with others, including police, so that they can sell details of your relationships and networks. The structure of these technologies itself - not just how you use them - works against good security practices. [Emphasis added]

Security Lessons from this Debacle

Defeat Fear and Paranoia with Accurate Information and Practical Protections

One of the key consequences of the G20 Main Conspiracy case is the fear it has spread within activist communities and movements for social and ecological justice in Southern Ontario. People at meetings for Occupy actions hesitate to join the logistics committee because many of the people who did that work for the G20 were charged with conspiracy. Routine tasks like facilitation and taking minutes, as well as the entire idea of security culture, have been criminalized in this prosecution. Many people, especially those for whom the G20 in Toronto was their first experience with organizing, are worried that taking on these roles will get them into trouble.

This fear has been fed by the limited information available about the real basis of the G20 Main Conspiracy prosecution. In describing this case, the defendants and their supporters have focused on the relatively harmless and popular aspects of what the defendants are alleged to have done, like organizing buses,

childcare, convergence spaces, trainings, and sending callouts.

This framing of the issue is propaganda aimed at gaining the support of more liberal activists, building a narrative around the criminalization of dissent. It is also a relatively safe narrative while the legal process was in motion. There is no room for truth while facts are being tried before the court, as any rumors or explanations in our movements are liable to become evidence. But by framing the charges around routine tasks, we erase the real reasons why these specific individuals were targeted with conspiracy charges, as opposed to the hundreds of other people doing similar work.

Remember, in the buildup to the G20, all protest was seen as undesirable. One tool the state and media use to discourage protest is creating a divide between “good”/legitimate protest and “bad”/illegal/illegitimate protest. We are encouraged to turn against each other on the basis of tactics, and our movements then self-police to marginalize those advocating any tactic the media considers “bad.” Once those people are pushed out, all that remains is the most easily managed group with the demands that are the least threatening and easiest to satisfy. This split led to the largest march on the Saturday of the summit being permitted, planned in consultation with the police, and centered around a protest pen several kilometers from the summit.

The 20 people who were accused of conspiracy are among those who pushed most persistently, eloquently, and successfully for respect for a diversity of tactics in the buildup to the G20. They worked to support the permitted marches while also planning more confrontational events, and they were very public about the work they were doing. These organizers met with unions, hosted mass meetings, tabled large conferences, and engaged in debate and discussion for months. This made them the perfect combination of threatening and visible.

The police are not as concerned with preserving order at summits as they are with preserving the image of themselves maintaining order. For this reason, they are likely to snatch at the lowest-hanging fruit so they have a prize to show, rather than risk climbing the tree. In retrospect, it was clear that planning protests with SOAR was riskier than preparing to smash windows, but those who came prepared to smash windows largely took their security more seriously than did SOAR.

Some argue that one of the key roles of aboveground movements is to push tactics considered “fringe” into the mainstream where they become available to more people. Advocating a respect for diversity of tactics and popularizing more confrontational actions is very important work, but we need to be clear that it puts a giant bulls-eye on our heads. The organizing that SOAR and the TCMN did for the G20 was very effective, but maybe next time we can keep the people doing it out of jail.

The Role of Posturing and Shit-Talk

Because the state is not yet in a position to make it outright illegal to organize a march without the consent of the police, they needed to find another reason to arrest the Main Conspiracy Group. This meant that much of the evidence presented against them centered around jokes about violence and belligerent comments made by defendants and the people around them over the space of a year and a half.

For instance, at a meeting to make banners for a march against the Olympic torch, the notes taken by the undercover cop did not focus on the logistics of the march. They focused instead on someone joking that they love the smell of gasoline fires and that they want to collect spark plugs because of how well they shatter windows. The crown’s strategy was to make it appear that this is what the meetings were about, that it was actions like this that were being planned. Never mind that the jokes being made varied wildly from meeting to meeting—someone saying “kill whitey” became a plan to murder all non-Indigenous people, for instance. Remember, a conspiracy can happen in a single conversation, even if it’s renounced later.

We can look at this in a little more detail. The kinds of comments that the Crown chose to exaggerate can broadly be broken into two groups: posturing and shit-talk.

Posturing is bragging, bravado, boasting, macho aggressive humor, and so on. In this case, people made a lot of remarks about how much they wanted to fight police, sometimes getting into (admittedly hilarious) detail about what they would like to do to them. Particularly, AW@L had a culture of one-upping each other with this sort of bravado. Focusing on remarks like that meant the Crown could rework a weekend at the cottage swimming, drinking, and brainstorming about the G20 into some sort of terrorist training camp.

Posturing also includes outright lying. This comes up most tellingly around the way that people fabricated stories about how well they knew Khalid. The appearance of having good security culture became more important than actually having good security culture, which led to people inventing stories about themselves or those close to them having met Khalid's non-existent daughter. It also led person X to exaggerate how well and for how long he'd known Khalid, while boasting about all the cool illegal stuff they'd done together.

A culture that tolerates this kind of posturing is a culture that makes it very easy for police to enter and remain in a group, and also for Crown attorneys to present meetings as something they weren't. Of course, they could have done that anyway, and it's not the fault of these groups that they were targeted; but there's no reason we should make it this easy for them.

The second category is shit-talk. The prime example here is the way that person X used class- and race-baiting to shut down any challenges to Khalid's presence. This person would also often insult people behind their backs, and in this he was unfortunately far from alone. In Khalid's notes, we can see the way that shit-talk educated the police about the fault lines in our movements and communities, giving them convenient gossip to whisper into someone else's ear. It also directly did the cops' job for them by undermining trust and exaggerating differences, breaking down communication and reducing our ability to work together.

It cannot be emphasized strongly enough how counterproductive and unacceptable this sort of attention-seeking shit-talk is. Both Brenda and Khalid engaged in this sort of gossipy sniping under the direction of their superiors, but plenty of people do it without being paid by the state. Remember, you do not have to be a cop to do a cop's job, and if someone is doing a cop's job, they are not safe to organize or hang out with.

Shit-talk and posturing are not harmless. They put the person saying these things and those around them at risk. There are people in jail right now because of stupid jokes and bragging. Let's take this as an opportunity to re-examine the cultures within our movements.

One dynamic that emerged is that some of the organizers perceived as most experienced led the way with the shit-talk and posturing in SOAR meetings and elsewhere. Other organizers who felt less connected tolerated these behaviors and did not challenge them. Perhaps they thought that if they weren't talking about sketchy things themselves, then they were still "not doing anything illegal"...

It Doesn't Matter that You Don't Think You're Doing Anything Illegal

Many of the defendants on the G20 Main Conspiracy charges were organizing more publicly and with less caution than they usually would have. The scale of the demonstrations they were seeking to pull off involved reaching out beyond their circles of trust and becoming very visible. They were able to justify this to themselves because they did not believe they were doing anything illegal.

And most likely they were not. But that didn't matter. This case demonstrates that it's not the legality of your organizing that will determine whether you are targeted by the police: it's how successful your organizing is, how easy a target you are to gather information on, and if it's politically opportune for the

state to strike.

SOAR was a network of anarchists, anti-authoritarians, and other radicals from more than ten cities, with alliances across the continent. They set public and ambitious goals that they had the capacity to follow up on, goals that were printed in huge letters across the front page of a national newspaper. Destabilizing SOAR and the longer-term network that gave birth to it became a high priority for the JIG. As we have seen, the law was only one of the tools used to attack SOAR and many other groups that mobilized against the G20.

The law is a weapon and nothing else - and it is not our weapon. Perhaps it will occasionally cut in a way we approve of, but let's not confuse this with justice, and let's not pretend the hand that wields it is neutral. Groups that believe they have nothing to hide make the easiest targets, and the state's agents are skilled at creating the story they want to find. Good security culture practices are necessary for ALL political organizing.

Explicit Security Culture Norms Based on Circles of Trust

Some of the security culture practices used by SOAR and other anarchists in the buildup to the G20 worked very well, but others didn't work at all. On one hand, the affinity group model and the form of the spokescouncils meant that the undercovers were unable to say for certain if many of the defendants were even in affinity groups, let alone who was in their groups. The infection was unable to spread between cells. On the other hand, because the spokescouncils were infiltrated, the representatives sent by affinity groups could be targeted. This was because of a crucial failure of the vouching system.

Brenda was able to hang around the meetings unchallenged, even entering spokescouncils at which other people's vouches were actively being checked, because everyone assumed someone knew her. People who had been involved in ousting Khalid from Guelph found themselves organizing with him again, albeit reluctantly, based on his being a member of AW@L, even though in some cases they knew the other people in AW@L even less well than they knew him.

The idea of formal vouching within SOAR met with resistance at first and was never implemented consistently at SOAR meetings. This made vouching at the spokescouncils meaningless, since people already organizing with SOAR could vouch people in without ever having been checked themselves.

Many of the people in SOAR were organizing together for the first time. Each group or community brought to the table their own expectations around security culture, but often only knew of others as "the Toronto crew" or "the Guelph anarchists." This sort of loose knowledge was enough for people to come together to brainstorm what actions they would be interested in or to release a callout announcing them. However, this more general sort of conversation quickly gave way planning the specifics of large actions, including soliciting others to take on roles in those actions.

In that transition, an important line was crossed. It should have involved a serious re-examination of security practices and the creation of some sort of group norm to replace the hodgepodge of different expectations. Remember, *it doesn't matter if you aren't doing anything illegal*. It is important to be able to organize openly and to involve new people in planning demonstrations, but few would argue against the fact that some organizing is best done behind closed doors. The line for what is safe to do fully in the open is always shifting, and in this case, people did not err on the side of caution.

The appearance of security culture to the outside (formal vouching at spokescouncils) was emphasized more than good security inside (actually knowing the people one is working with) because of the way SOAR operated. In a bit of magical thinking perhaps motivated by the hostility resulting from previous attempts to oust Khalid, SOAR chose to assume that it had not been infiltrated already and tried to build a security

culture from there.

Here, it is worth comparing SOAR's organizing to that of another anarchist demo organized independently for Sunday June 27, Fireworks for Prisons. This event was promoted as a confrontational march to the Don Jail, Toronto's most infamous prison. The rumor was that, in spite of the hype around SOAR's actions, it was to be the most exciting action of the weekend. FwFP was shut down completely by a tremendously heavy onslaught of police - helicopters, snipers, and snatch squads hiding in residential yards - before the group even gathered. However, none of the organizers of this march were ever charged. FwFP also held spokescouncils involving dozens of affinity groups, but these were apparently never infiltrated.

This reflects a fundamentally different approach to organizing. In this view, organizing that risks repression is best done within our circles of trust. We all have people in our lives whom we know very well - we know where they grew up, what organizing they've been involved in in the past, we know their families, what schools they went to, their passions, their fears, their strengths and weaknesses. If you were to map out the relationships between everyone you know, drawing strong bonds of trust where they exist, you would reveal a web of long-term relationships cemented with political affinity. This is your circle of trust.

There might be some people who you know only a little bit, and some who hang around your social circle that you don't know at all. By comparing your circle of trust with those of your close friends, it might become clear that some people are not well-known by anyone. It's not a question of excluding these people, but of deliberately and purposefully trying to get to know them better, with the goal of broadening your circle of trust.

Expanding a circle of trust takes a lot more than simply announcing a meeting and working with whoever shows up, but it is far safer. There are strengths and weaknesses to both models. It was not possible to shut down the Get Off the Fence march by the time June 26 rolled around, not even by pre-arresting almost all the core SOAR organizers: too many people were already involved. Fireworks for Prisons never happened, but the networks formed around it remain strong, and its organizers have been able to spend the last two years scheming ever better actions.

What Does All This Mean for People Organizing Now?

What's the Precedent?

This plea deal does not set a strong legal precedent. Pleading to making a target list for direct actions, writing callouts, facilitating meetings, or even just speaking at them does not make those things illegal. A plea has little weight as a precedent because the facts have not been tested; they've just been agreed upon by the defendant's lawyer and the crown.

Likewise, pleas are very specific. For an action to count as counseling, for instance, the person either has to intend for whomever they're talking with to commit a crime, or to be reckless as to the unjustified risk that they might. In pleading, the defendants concede this aspect, but it would take a trial to establish intent or recklessness for someone else, even if the material facts were the same.

It's also generally understood within the legal system that the courts, prisons, and the whole injustice apparatus are designed to pressure people to plead, often to an offense different than the one they're charged with. If the defendants had the option to go on trial for the charges of "counseling" that they're pleading to, they'd probably win. But they don't have that option - if they opted for a trial, the charge against them would remain conspiracy.

Once you're in the court system on charges like these, all the real decisions have already been made. The

meaningful precedent from this case was established back in 2008: multi-year intensive policing against activists is now politically justifiable in Canada. The policing of the G20 risks becoming the new norm for political repression.

Here are some of the things that the G20 Main Conspiracy case *is* a precedent for:

- Investigations against activists beginning several years before the target event.
- Dozens of infiltrators used against every part of a social movement.
- Using conspiracy charges to cast a wide net over many activists while naming ringleaders from among them.
- Conspiracy to commit an inchoate (not specific) offense - the defendants here are not accused of planning specific acts themselves, but rather of planning to disrupt the summit and create chaos in downtown Toronto. This gives the crown a lot of flexibility and options as to how they make their case.

It's also good to remember that the state knew relatively little about the lives and relationships of anarchists and their friends in Southern Ontario before this investigation. Now they know quite a lot, and we only know some of what they know. It will probably take them a lot less time to zero in on the real targets of their investigation next time around. The Hate Crimes and Extremism Unit of the OPP has also been gathering data in parallel to the conspiracy investigation; for instance, they released a report about "hate crimes" aimed against police in the Hamilton area, with anarchists as the main subjects.

We know there will be a JIG established for the 2015 PanAm games based in several cities in Southern Ontario, including Hamilton and Toronto. In the next couple of years, this intelligence and policing process will begin again, and we need to be ready.

The Difference Between Caution and Fear

This essay has focused a lot on what the police and prosecution did well around the G20 Main Conspiracy Case. This is not always the most empowering perspective. It risks contributing to the TV cop show narrative in which the police are some sort of force of nature with unlimited resources that can shut you down every time. So far in Southern Ontario, this paranoid perspective is the one that's really gotten around, sometimes coupled with the absurd notion that the entire black bloc at the G20 was an elaborate police provocation. This is the perspective of fear, and fear is our worst enemy moving ahead.

Remember that when we talk about this case, the only police tactics that come up are the ones that worked. The huge majority of the work the cops did led to nothing, and even the things that did work only penetrated shallowly into our networks. The police are not unbeatable. They are not even very smart.

Throughout this investigation, the police were significantly encumbered by their awkward intelligence structure, which meant that information gathered by one policing body in one city was not necessarily shared with any others. Police are also rigidly hierarchical, with information only flowing up. This means that the cops spying on your house have very little idea of what they're seeing or of what might be important to the investigation. These two factors contribute to a competitive climate in which poor co-operation or even outright antagonism between different policing agencies is the norm.

Our goal here is to temper fear with accurate information and encourage caution, not paranoia, in future organizing. As much as becoming paralyzed by fear is not a useful response, it's also silly to "refuse to be intimidated" and just continue with the same organizing habits as before. We believe there are some crucial and simple lessons to be drawn from the story of the G20 Main Conspiracy case. This text does not tell the whole story, but it brings parts of it into the open and makes way for more sharing and discussion.

We hope that in the future, some more detailed reports and analysis of SOAR's process can emerge, as well as some stories about how the seventeen co-accused worked together, supported each other, and made decisions. There are also many less-told stories about people accused of property destruction, some of whom have dealt with the worst repression but in relative isolation. Then there are the dozens of defendants who were not part of our movements in an organized way before the G20, and whom we haven't gotten to know since. There are people in jail for burning cop cars whose names most of us have never even heard.

What are the experiences of the media collective from the G20? The medics? The hundred people from Quebec who were brutally raided on Sunday June 27, 2010 just for being a hundred people from Quebec? As more and more charges resolve, the veil over these stories will begin to lift and many opportunities for learning will emerge. Although the G20 summit in Toronto occurred a year and a half ago, its legacy is only just beginning.

22 Nov - Ronald Bridgeforth Pleads No Contest to 1968 Shooting

As we mentioned last time, more than four decades after jumping bail, Ronald Bridgeforth, a 67-year-old college counselor, walked into a Redwood City courtroom Thursday, November 10th and said he planned to accept punishment for opening fire on South San Francisco police officers in 1968. He plead no contest on November 22^d and is out on bail until his February 3^d sentencing. At sentencing, he will receive between one and fifteen years in prison.

MORE:

A 67-year-old man who fled before he could be sentenced more than four decades ago for [shooting at South San Francisco police](#) finally admitted to the crime in court Tuesday morning.

Ronald Stanley Bridgeforth pleaded no contest in San Mateo County Superior Court to one count of assault with a firearm on a police officer, District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said.

Under 1969 sentencing guidelines, Bridgeforth could face between one and 15 years in prison, according to Wagstaffe. Prosecutors have yet to decide what penalty they will seek.

“In our book there is a presumption that prison is where that person belongs, but we'll keep an open mind until we see the pre-sentence report,” Wagstaffe said.

Bridgeforth, who turned himself in two weeks ago, admitted to firing at officers outside a South San Francisco department store in 1968. He and two other men had tried to use false credit cards to buy toys and clothes for youth the group had been organizing in San Francisco's Fillmore district during the civil rights movement, according to his attorney Paul Harris.

Harris has said his client wanted to correct a one-time “aberration” in his life and be a positive example for his sons.

No officers were hit, and Bridgeforth was arrested trying to escape. But before Bridgeforth could be sentenced in 1969, he disappeared.

According to Harris, Bridgeforth had recently been teaching at a community college in Michigan under an assumed name.

A separate charge against Bridgeforth, for his alleged involvement in the 1971 fatal shooting of a San Francisco police sergeant, was dismissed after Bridgeforth turned himself in on the South San Francisco case.

Bridgeforth is out of custody after posting \$25,000 bail. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 3.

Ronald Bridgeforth lived under radar for decades

For four decades, he lived an alternative life, with a name that wasn't his own, keeping secret a criminal past. In August, the 67-year-old counselor decided it was time to surrender.

Ronald Bridgeforth and his wife slowly packed their Michigan home, where they had lived for 35 years, giving away personal belongings and donating a majority of their books to local libraries and museums. They resigned from their jobs: he, a licensed therapist and faculty member at a community college; she, a professor of English composition and literature.

Hand in hand, they boarded a flight to the Bay Area.

Today, Bridgeforth plans to plead guilty to assault on a police officer with a deadly weapon. Fearing a lengthy prison term, he skipped out on bail shortly after pleading no contest to the 1968 crime. According to his attorney, Bridgeforth faces one to 15 years in prison.

He sat down with The Chronicle shortly after turning himself in to authorities this month to describe how he created his life as Cole Jordan, the mild-mannered Michigan college therapist, and what led him back to the Bay Area to once again become Ronald Bridgeforth.

Bridgeforth's mother was 15 when she gave birth to him in Berkeley. The first six years of his life were spent with his grandparents in Arkansas, until his mother married and moved the family to the Los Angeles area. His mother became a pharmacist; his stepfather was a mechanic.

"It was a good family," he said. "I was nurtured." Describing himself as an "athletic nerd," Bridgeforth said he played the violin and varsity football and "never got in any trouble."

Finding a place to fit in

After graduating in 1962, he decided to attend Sterling College, a small Presbyterian school in Kansas where he was one of only two black students. He attended classes there for a year and a half, but felt isolated. He didn't fit in.

So halfway through his sophomore year, he transferred to Knoxville College, a predominantly African American school in Tennessee. "I saw myself in everyone around me," Bridgeforth recalled. "I wasn't an oddity."

It was there that 19-year-old Bridgeforth met a recruiter from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and agreed to work the summer of 1964 registering black voters in Mississippi.

"I did not have a real understanding of the politics of the South," he said. "When my mother found out, she was terrified."

That summer stretched into a full year with the committee. He dropped out of college. During that time, he said his work led to being threatened by mobs, vigilantes and being unfairly targeted by police officers.

"People risked their lives to vote," he said. "It wasn't safe. You could disappear in Mississippi."

Ron Carver worked under Bridgeforth with the committee and considered him a mentor. One day, Carver remembered, he gave his car keys to his friend in front of a state trooper, who then arrested Bridgeforth on a trumped-up charge of stealing Carver's car. That was the life he led in Mississippi as a politically involved black man, said Carver, who now lives in the Washington, D.C., area and is a consultant for labor, environmental and human rights organizations.

"He was brave. He was a leader," Carver said. "He helped empower the black community of Starkville, Miss."

Back to Bay Area

Bridgeforth transferred to the committee's San Francisco office after a year in Mississippi. But once he was back in the Bay Area, Bridgeforth drifted away from the student group. He worked part time for the longshoremen's union. He also joined the Independent Action Movement, a volunteer community service group that he said helped to improve schools through literacy programs.

Then came the day that would forever change his life: Nov. 5, 1968.

Police were called to a White Front discount store on El Camino Real in South San Francisco on a report of a customer arguing with store employees. Bridgeforth admits he was trying to buy toys and clothing for kids in the community with a stolen credit card.

Bridgeforth said he panicked when police arrived. According to prosecutors, he took a handgun out of his pocket and led the store manager and two police officers to the front of the store. He had jumped into a waiting car with two other men when a third police officer arrived and blocked the getaway car's path.

Authorities said Bridgeforth opened fire, hitting the car but none of the officers, who returned fire. Bridgeforth was shot in the foot, his getaway car crashed, and the men were arrested.

"It was incredibly reckless, stupid and dangerous," he said last week. He called the incident "an aberration in my life."

Prison looms

At the time, he would have been subjected to indeterminate sentencing, which stipulates a range of time served in prison as decided by the parole board instead of the courts. Faced with the possibility of a lengthy prison term, Bridgeforth decided to run.

"The politics of the Bay Area were really volatile," he said. "I left because I didn't want to go to jail for the rest of my life." When Bridgeforth jumped bail, he left behind an arrest warrant that would haunt him for decades.

After he fled San Francisco, Bridgeforth assumed a new identity as Cole Jordan in New York.

He acquired a fake passport and moved to Dakar, Senegal. Although he said he didn't know anyone when he arrived, he met a group of Americans and followed them to Gambia. Once there, Bridgeforth was accepted into the family of a woman in her late 40s, Yai Sainabu, and he relaxed into the indigenous culture. Bridgeforth remembers spending most of his days reading history and philosophy books in the local library, where he said he felt safe.

But after two years, he decided to return home.

"They treated me like family, but America is where I wanted to be," he explained. "The answers I sought

were not there. This is my home.”

Back to America

Bridgeforth returned to California in 1971, bouncing between Los Angeles and the Bay Area. He was apprehended by police that winter while driving in the city with an old friend. Bridgeforth declined to say why he was arrested in that case.

Officers released him an hour later before they realized he was a fugitive. After the close call, he moved to Atlanta, where he was joined by a friend he would later marry. His wife, Diane, did not want to reveal her last name, nor would Bridgeforth say what or when she knew about his criminal past.

After saying goodbye to his mother at the pharmacy where she worked, Bridgeforth cut off all ties with his mother and younger sister, who had been subjected to police and FBI questioning on his whereabouts. In order to live as Cole Jordan, he needed to leave his past behind, he decided.

“The fact that I assumed a new identity placed restrictions on what I could do,” Bridgeforth said. “You make certain decisions and you pay certain prices.

“It was a kind of self-imposed prison,” he said. “Not being in jail is not the same as being free.”

Settling down

After getting married in Atlanta, Bridgeforth moved his family north and settled in Michigan. He worked as a welder and custodian while earning his bachelor’s degree from Wayne State University. In 1993, he graduated with a master’s degree in counseling. In 1998, he joined the faculty at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, Mich.

“I was better at that than anything I’d ever done,” Bridgeforth said. “I was given a chance at Washtenaw to rewrite my life, and I worked hard.”

One of his former students, Kelly Mendenhall, said Bridgeforth transformed her life when she met him in 2000. Once a depressed college dropout, she credits Bridgeforth with motivating her to re-enroll and said he guided her through college.

“He was at every ceremony clapping and cheering for me,” she said. “And at graduation, when I walked down the aisle with a gold honors cord around my neck.” Mendenhall is now the director of a community center for at-risk youth in Ann Arbor.

Although he kept his past a secret while living in Georgia and Michigan, Bridgeforth’s family was involved in the community, he said.

The couple participated in school-based parent support groups and developed after-school programs. He coached a youth basketball team and sponsored student groups, such as the African American Men for [Education](#) and Success and the African American Humanities Club.

His wife earned two master’s degrees, in educational psychology and English composition, and taught at both the high school and college levels. They raised two sons and said they worried about basketball games, PTA meetings and summer camp.

Decision to give up

Once he decided to surrender, Bridgeforth Googled his real name for the first time in years. He was shocked

to find out that he was listed on the FBI's Most Wanted list for the 1971 murder of a policeman in San Francisco, a crime he says he did not commit. Sgt. John Young was shot and killed at the Ingleside police station, purportedly by members of the Black Liberation Army, a violent offshoot of the Black Panther Party.

Although he acknowledges being impressed by the Black Panther Party's rhetoric and community programming efforts at the time, Bridgeforth maintains he was never a member of the Black Liberation Army.

The two men who were with Bridgeforth during the 1968 shooting were arrested in 2007 for the Ingleside homicide. Charges against them were ultimately dropped. Last week, state prosecutors announced they would not proceed with charges against Bridgeforth in that case.

That leaves only the 1968 case.

Bridgeforth said he and Diane discussed surrendering to authorities several times over the years. Each time, they decided against it, saying they wanted to give their sons a normal childhood.

Now those boys are in their 30s. They never knew about their father's past until recently, when Bridgeforth said he had to address some legal problems in California.

"My sons didn't ever know their families," he said.

That included his sons' 81-year-old grandmother, who Bridgeforth discovered was still alive after an Internet search turned up her name on meeting minutes from community organizations.

"I really thought I had lost my mother, and she thought she lost me," he said.

23 Nov - ProLibertad Kicks off New Fundraising Campaign

ProLibertad, an organization working for the freedom of Puerto Rican political prisoners, just launched their "Friends of ProLibertad" initiative. The "Friends of ProLibertad" is a network of supporters that will help ProLibertad reach their goal of \$5000 for 2012. Below is their solicitation letter.

MORE:

Dear ProLibertad Supporter,

New ProLibertad t-shirts...new protest banners...new campaign posters...as we begin this holiday season, we are thinking about how we can broaden the movement to free our Puerto Rican Political Prisoners in the new year!

With every new year comes a sense of much possibility. We are sure this coming year will be a powerful and decisive time for our work to free Oscar Lopez Rivera, Avelino Gonzalez Claudio and Norberto Gonzalez Claudio; we are beginning to do all of the necessary planning to make this happen.

A minimum donation of \$25 from our supporters will help us purchase a new campaign banner for protests and activities; print new high gloss brochures for distribution; re-launch a professional website; make an updated campaign t-shirt; and cover the costs of the venues we use for public activities.

For 17 years, ProLibertad has worked diligently to build the movement to free the Puerto Rican Political Prisoners with the support of our contributors. As we enter this holiday season and new year, we have high hopes of modernizing our outreach tools, creating new fund-raising opportunities and creating a network of support that will help us reach that inevitable day when Oscar, Avelino and Norberto walk free in their

homeland, Puerto Rico.

Your support means so much; it helps us make freedom happen. Your support will reunite Oscar, Avelino and Norberto with their families and friends. These Prisoners of Colonialism have suffered enough and it is time for them to come home!. They should not have to spend any more holidays and New Year's Days behind the prison walls of this empire.

Thank you in advance for your donation. We look forward to sending you regular updates on our work and seeing you at our activities in 2012.

Sincerely Yours,
The ProLibertad Freedom Campaign

Please send your donation of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$200, or whatever you can! Please endorse all money orders or checks to IFCO/ProLibertad, write "Friends of ProLibertad" in the memo section, and mail it to:

IFCO/ProLibertad
418 West 145th Street
New York, New York 10031

23 Nov - A Message From Jaan Laaman

As we told you a couple of nights back, Jaan Laaman recently lost his son. NYC ABC and many others sent notes and letters of support. Recently Jaan sent out this message:

My friends, my family – I wanted to say a few words to you tonight, Nov. 23rd – my son's birthday. I did indeed have many thoughts and memories of this day, 30 years ago – of Ricky being born, of bringing him to our home, from the midwife's house in Dorchester, where he actually came out to join us, for not a very long time. Of his sisters watching him arrive, along with a few other people -- of taking him home and introducing him to sodur – our dog (doberman), who sensed immediately that this new little person was so very special and loved. -- and on this day, here, 30 years later, my son's ashes were buried in a cemetery in Malden (MA) – near/very close to his grandmother Ida. People tell me the service at Sacred Heart church was nice and good things were said -- it was a rainy very cool day in Boston all day today, but it stopped raining, people said just before the service was over and not for the next hour, as people drove to the cemetery and the burial was conducted. About 35 people then went to Kowloon restaurant up on Rt 1 -- one of Rick's favorite spots -- I remember it myself -- fancy and good Chinese food. So this day is about done – I feel about done myself. I've received many cards and thoughts from all of you and other people -- haven't really responded much, but I do want to thank everyone for their words and thoughts -- they have all been appreciated -- with love – dynamic peace and justice jaan

Please write to Jaan at this difficult time.

Jaan Karl Laaman #10372-016
USP Tucson
Post Office Box 24550
Tucson, Arizona 85734

24 Nov - Commit to Year End Donations For Political Prisoners and Their Supporters

With the year coming to a close, it's a great time to make donations to our political prisoners. Below is the Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee's solicitation letter, as well as that of the Jericho Movement. And don't forget: NYC ABC is distributing the Certain Days calendar, so talk with one of us if you want to buy one (or several).

MORE:

From LPDOC:

With your help, our accomplishments this year include outreach to 70+ labor unions, 500+ Members of Congress, and numerous solidarity organizations; recognition of Leonard Peltier's plight on the floor of the United Nations; a public statement on Leonard's conditions of confinement by Amnesty International; a rally at USP-Lewisburg against solitary confinement; an historic partnership with the National Congress of American Indians; and much, much more.

The fight for Leonard Peltier's freedom is reaching a critical stage. The Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee (LPDOC) is in need of supplies, equipment, postage, funds for travel, etc., to achieve our goals during the coming year. Please send a donation today to help support Leonard's bid for freedom.

Your \$10, \$25, or \$50 donation will go a long way towards helping us reach our goals for 2012. Support our legal strategies concerning parole; a transfer so that Leonard can be closer to home and family, as well as have access to quality health care; Executive Clemency; Leonard's conditions of confinement; etc. Help us in our efforts to lobby Members of Congress to gain their support for Leonard's freedom, as well as for hearings on the "Reign of Terror" and other issues related to the Peltier case. With your help we will galvanize support for Leonard's freedom.

We accept checks and money orders made payable to the LPDOC. Please send your donation to LPDOC, Post Office Box 7488, Fargo, North Dakota 58106. If you prefer, you may make a secure donation via credit card by visiting our Web site at www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/index1.htm. Point to and click on the Donate button at the top of our home page. You also may pledge to make a monthly or quarterly donation in the amount you choose at <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/donate.htm>.

Or consider a purchase for yourself or as holiday gifts for friends and family:

- High Quality Giclee Reproductions of Peltier Artwork (See www.LeonardPeltierArt.com);
- Lithographs (See <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/lithos.htm>);
- Merchandise (Visit <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/shop.htm>);
- Original Paintings and Studies by Leonard Peltier (See <http://www.whoisleonardpeltier.info/paintings.htm>).

As always, what you do matters. Your contributions of time, energy, and funds help to keep Leonard's hope for freedom alive.

On behalf of Leonard and the growing LPDOC family (now over 140 chapters strong worldwide), thank you for standing with us to help free an innocent man.

Let's bring Leonard home!

From Jericho:

Warm revolutionary greetings!

Jihad Abdulmumit, and Paulette D' auteuil, co-chairs of the National Jericho Amnesty Movement, are asking for the first time for your financial support. As 2011 is coming to an end, you have the opportunity to make a contribution and receive a tax deduction for the last time this year, which will help us continue our struggle and fight to free our political prisoners and prisoners of war.

Jericho has been representing political prisoners in the US for over 14 years. And our fight is for the freedom of hundreds of people who dared to stand up for peoples' basic human rights and dignity from the 1960s to the present. Their stories are actually a part of all our lives; because of their work in the past, we are motivated and compelled to pick up their work for our children and future generations. .

It has been a significant year, and with our limited resources we have been able to visit and provide food packages for our New York prisoners; and some of us have been able to visit, when permitted, federal prisoners as well. But with your support we can expand providing material aid to our prisoners and their families.

This letter is a call to help us build a fund that supports our work for our political prisoners. It is also a call to awaken and enliven our communities to share some responsibility in these increasingly difficult efforts and times, as our freedom fighters, aging through time, but still active and working inside, because the reality of our time has changed little if not worsened since their incarceration. It is a matter of immense historical significance to not abandon those who gallantly fought against overt racism, unfettered exploitation, social injustice, and political repression.

We do not take lightly this fundraising call to action, and respect everyone's hard earned dollars. Please be encouraged to know that a contribution of \$5, \$10, \$25 or more makes a big difference and goes a long way, and directly supports all efforts to free our political prisoners. No Jericho staff or steering committee member receives any pay.

You can help the National Jericho Amnesty Movement continue pushing forward by making a donation today...

Please send your contribution as a check or money order made out to IFCO/Jericho,

And send to Jihad Abdulmumit, 9406 Lockberry Ridge Loop, Richmond, Virginia 23237

IFCO is our 501(3)(c) fiscal sponsor. Therefore, all contributions will be tax-deductible.

As National Jericho Co-Chairs, and all our political prisoners and prisoners of war, we would like to thank you in advance for any contribution you can make.

In Solidarity,

Jihad Abdulmumit and Paulette D' auteuil Jericho Co-Chairs

<http://thejerichomovement.com>

28 Nov - Organizing For Lynne Stewart Resentencing has Begun

There will be a hearing and an appeal of the change of Lynne's sentence from 28 months to 120 months on the 29th of February in Federal Court at 500 Pearl Street. If you are interested in being in the court, please notify Ralph Poynter. His e-mail address is: ralph.poynter@yahoo.com.

Supporters plan to Occupy Foley Square from the night of February 28th 2012 thru the hearing date of the 29th. Please stay in touch. And, of course, spread the word. Pass it on, pass it on.

28 Nov - Why Environmentalists Should Stand With Bradley Manning

It's great when we see cross-movement solidarity with political prisoners. This article draws connections between political prisoner Bradley Manning, anti-war, and environmental movements.

MORE:

If you had free reign over classified networks for long periods of time... and you saw incredible things, awful things... things that belonged in the public domain, and not on some server stored in a dark room in Washington DC... what would you do? ... say... a database of half a million events during the Iraq war... from 2004 to 2009... with reports, date time groups, lat-lon locations, casualty figures... ? or 260,000 state department cables from embassies and consulates all over the world, explaining how the first world exploits the third, in detail, from an internal perspective?

This quote is attributed to PFC Bradley Manning, a 23 year-old intelligence analyst for the U.S. military who was stationed in eastern Baghdad until his arrest last May. It comes from an internet chat log turned over to the FBI by hacker Adrian Lamo, famous originally for his internet activism against large corporations. In these chat logs Bradley allegedly discussed his role in leaking hundreds of thousands of classified documents to WikiLeaks.

PFC Manning's case has already drawn the attention of most major news sources, with mixed coverage. On the positive side, he was just nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and was the [UK Guardian reader's choice](#) for the award. Undoubtedly, more Americans will hear of him as the year progresses.

But what should the public think of this undeniably complicated case? And why does discussion of PFC Manning belong here on an environmental blog? I will attempt to answer both of these questions shortly, but first allow me to introduce myself.

I currently work as an organizer for Courage to Resist, a non-profit that supports GI War Resisters facing various sorts of legal and political challenges. However, I organized for environmental justice throughout college and I even spent four months interning at RAN.

Courage to Resist is the fiscal sponsor for the Bradley Manning Support Network, an international movement involving a broad range of organizations and activists. We have taken up the cause of PFC Manning because he is the most prominent GI Resister of our time, and we believe the handling of his case will set a precedent for other government and military whistleblowers. Not only that, but the outcome of PFC Manning's trial will have a significant influence on the future of our democracy, and the work of those advocating for social change in particular, RAN being no exception.

What we know about PFC Bradley Manning prior to his arrest is that he was a young idealistic man from a working class background. According to a gay rights activist with whom Manning had conversations, Bradley followed his father's footsteps in joining the army because he had dreams of attending college to study Physics, but did not have the financial resources. Smart, technologically adept, openly queer (a friend once said Bradley credited his participation in anti-DADT marches for sparking his interest in other political issues), he also took the perspective of a world citizen. Although he wished the Army was more friendly to diversity, he hoped that through his service he could spread democracy, and save both U.S. and Iraqi lives.

Because of his technological skills, he was given the job of Intelligence Analyst stationed in Eastern Baghdad.

At the beginning of his deployment, he told friends and family that he was happy and proud of his position. It was some time during his deployment that his views began to change. Insight as to why comes from the chat logs attributed to him:

i think the thing that got me the most... that made me rethink the world more than anything... was watching 15 detainees taken by the Iraqi Federal Police... for printing "anti-Iraqi literature"... the iraqi federal police wouldn't cooperate with US forces, so i was instructed to investigate the matter, find out who the "bad guys" were, and how significant this was for the FPs... it turned out, they had printed a scholarly critique against PM Maliki... i had an interpreter read it for me... and when i found out that it was a benign political critique titled "Where did the money go?" and following the corruption trail within the PM's cabinet... i immediately took that information and *ran* to the officer to explain what was going on... he didn't want to hear any of it... he told me to shut up and explain how we could assist the FPs in finding *MORE* detainees... everything started slipping after that... i saw things differently... i had always questioned the things worked, and investigated to find the truth... but that was a point where i was a *part* of something... i was actively involved in something that i was completely against...

Several months after that incident took place, Bradley Manning was charged with releasing the documents now known as the Collateral Murder video, Iraq War Logs, Afghan War Diary, and U.S. Diplomatic Cables (which included [one document](#) which is being credited with the Obama Administration agreeing to withdraw all troops from Iraq).

The revealed information describes thousands of secret actions of top U.S. State Department and military officials, as well as officials from other governments around the world. Actions that fit into a historical pattern of how wealth and big business influence U.S. relations abroad, but that run contrary to the public image most politicians strive to present. The information he is accused of releasing has been cited in over a third of New York Times editions of the past year. The revealed documents give us tremendous insight into what it truly means to call the United States a world power.

Many environmental organizations, RAN being a prime example, recognize that the immense power of modern multinational corporations is a major threat in the struggle for a just and sustainable world. Beholden to their shareholders and their bottom-line above all else, these corporations stoop to promoting lies about how ethical their operating processes are, debunked by groups such as RAN. They also use their immense financial resources, with larger spending power than many small countries, to influence public policy through backroom lobbying.

Here are some examples of the sorts of environmental crimes revealed through the documents Bradley Manning allegedly gave to WikiLeaks, crimes which have been blogged about by Greenpeace, RAN, and other similar organizations:

- [The 2010 BP oil disaster could have been predicted and prevented.](#) It turns out BP had a massive oil blowout in Azerbaijan in 2008 that was very similar in cause and consequence to their blowout in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010.
- [The Fukushima nuclear disaster could also have been avoided.](#) The disaster is now ranked more severe than Chernobyl, due to contamination. Japan was warned two years ago that their nuclear power plants could not withstand a major earthquake.
- [The U.S. used spying, threats, and promises of aid to gain support for the Copenhagen Accord.](#) The Copenhagen Climate Accord of 2009 has been criticized by environmental groups across the board, because it is not legally binding and does not commit countries to agree to a

binding successor to the Kyoto Protocol. Additionally, although the United States has the highest per capita carbon emissions in the world, the Accord allows us the lowest target for emissions reductions of any industrialized nation, at 17%.

- [Peru's government has secretly admitted that 70-90% of its mahogany exports were illegally felled.](#) Home Depot, Lowe's and Lumber Liquidators have all confirmed they use the timber in their products. The loggers pose a grave threat to uncontacted Murunahua Indians who could be wiped out by diseases brought by outsiders or face inter-tribal warfare if they are pushed off their lands.
- [An Indonesian governor believes that the Indonesian Military keeps more troops in Papua New Guinea than it admits to in order to facilitate illegal logging operations.](#) Additionally, a senior official for Freeport mine, Indonesia's largest taxpayer, admitted that average Papuans see few benefits from the extractive industries' revenues.
- [Several countries, including the United States, are preparing to fight over Arctic oil.](#) While President Obama publicly declared a commitment to protecting the Arctic's unique ecosystem and Indigenous culture, State Department correspondence reveals an alarmingly different story.
- [A U.S. diplomat warned the Obama administration about significant environmental impacts stemming from Canada's controversial tar sands oil production program.](#) This contradicts public statements from the State Department that attempt to downplay the environmental impact of the tar sands.
- [The U.S. government conspired with Biotech companies to force genetically modified organisms \(GMOs\) on the European Union.](#)
- [In correspondence with U.S. officials, the oil giant Shell claimed that it had inserted staff into all main ministries of the Nigerian government,](#) allowing it secret insight and political influence in the oil-rich Niger Delta.
- [Chevron executives worked in tandem with U.S. officials to avoid paying \\$18.2 billion in court-ordered damages](#) after the energy giant acquired Texaco, which had dumped billions of gallons of waste in Indigenous areas.

Looking at this evidence, I conclude that we cannot create a sustainable world for ourselves and fellow living beings without government and corporate transparency and accountability. And we cannot have transparency and accountability of powerful systems without whistleblowers like PFC Bradley Manning.

When Adrian Lamo asked PFC Manning what he hoped to accomplish as a result of the leaks, he allegedly said "hopefully worldwide discussion, debate, and reforms... I want people to see the truth... regardless of who they are... because without information, you cannot make informed decisions as a public." It will be nothing short of a tragedy for our democracy if a young, conscientious whistleblower who has exposed so much of the dirty underbelly of foreign diplomacy between powerful economic interests goes to prison for life to prevent the American conscience from being challenged with the truth. The truth that a world led by neoliberal policies and corporations cannot create a more just future. The truth that it's up to us, as American citizens, to hold our leaders accountable and organize ourselves persistently until we create the world we want to see.

On Monday last week the Military finally announced that after 18 months of incarceration, Bradley's first day in court will be held on December 16 in the Washington D.C. area. The Bradley Manning Support Network is organizing a demonstration on December 17, which is also Bradley's birthday, and there will be solidarity actions taking place around the world. Please visit our bradleymanning.org for more information.

30 Nov – Senate Approves Bill that Allows Military to Imprison U.S. Citizens, Without Charge, As “Terrorists”

The U.S. Senate voted to maintain provisions in a bill that would allow the military to apprehend U.S. citizens, including those on U.S. soil, without charge, and hold them indefinitely if they are labeled as terrorists. President Obama has threatened a veto, but we’ll see. Needless to say, this has broad implications for the generation of whole new population of political prisoners.

MORE:

The vote comes after attempts by the American Civil Liberties Union and others to strip the massive National Defense Authorization Act of these components. An amendment by Senator Mark Udall of Colorado failed by a 61–37 vote.

[Udall warned](#) “these proposed changes would require the military to take on a new responsibility as police, jailors and judges — jobs for which it is not equipped and which it does not want. These changes to our laws would also authorize the military to exercise unprecedented power on U.S. soil.”

Why is this so dangerous? As [Shahid Buttar of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee](#) said pointedly:

“We have courts in America to check executive power. Impartial judges limit over whom the state may exercise its coercive power to deny freedom. We don’t trust prosecutors to make those decisions, because we presume innocence. Being considered ‘innocent until proven guilty’ is a bedrock constitutional norm, a cornerstone in the edifice our Founders constructed to defend freedom from the potential tyranny that Levin & McCain casually invite.”

Supporters of the provisions, including [Senators Carl Levin \(D–Mich.\) and John McCain \(R–Ariz\)](#), say the bill only targets al–Qaeda (the unspoken rationale, of course, is that we are to believe that anyone accused of being associated with Al–Qaeda is not entitled to a fair trial). Yet they go on to note “the administration has *broad authority to decide who is covered by this provision and how and when such a decision is made.*”

As [Sen. Lindsey Graham \(R–S.C.\) said](#): “The enemy is all over the world. Here at home… They should not be read their Miranda Rights. They should not be given a lawyer…”

There are plenty of excellent blog posts out there right now dissecting the minutiae of the bill (a great starting point is my former colleague [Chris Anders’ analysis for the ACLU](#)).

The point that I think needs to be emphasized, though, is how this fits into the bigger political picture. This bill is a concrete manifestation of what is often a quite nebulous topic — the erosion of our fundamental rights and liberties. In that context, there are two concepts that cannot be emphasized enough:

- 1) This bill is a reflection of a **parallel legal system** that has been created for those deemed “terrorists.” It is about “apprehension” rather than “arrest.” It is “indefinite detention” rather than “fair trial.” Those who are labeled as terrorists are stripped of their basic rights and ushered through a separate legal system, where they have no power to challenge their designation, all in the name of national security. This parallel legal system may share similar features, but it is not about fairness — it is a spectacle of democracy. This parallel system is not new. It exists in [Communications Management Units](#), Guantanamo Bay, designer terrorism laws like the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, grand jury witch hunts, and more. This is, however, a radical expansion of that trend.
- 2) That parallel system, **by definition, lacks checks and balances on government power.** We are told that this is why a *separate* set of laws is needed for terrorists: the existing checks and balances are too burdensome.

Yet, no agent of the state could ever openly say “give us more power Power POWER without accountability!” We have to be reminded that, as Levin and McCain have feebly retorted, this is “only” about Al-Qaeda.

As a result, we have two competing messages. Politicians say out of one side of their mouth: “Trust us, this is just about those evil, evil, terrorists of Al-Qaeda. No one else has anything to worry about.”

Out of the other side of their mouth, they say: “Well, the threat of terrorism is fluid, and we need the broad authority to expand the scope at any time.”

Which one do you believe?

[Contact your senators](#) to register your opposition, and [contact the White House](#) to urge a veto.

30 Nov - Sundiata Acoli Transferred Again

Long-term political prisoner Sundiata Acoli has been transferred and, after being held at MDC Brooklyn, is now at FDC Philadelphia. Word has it that he will be transferred about 150 miles away from NYC, but until that is confirmed, he can be reached at:

Sundiata Acoli #39794-066

FDC Philadelphia

Post Office Box 562

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19105

30 Nov - More Than 200 Arrested at Occupy LA Eviction

As more information becomes available that nationwide ~~military maneuvers~~ #Occupy evictions have been coordinated by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), along with local mayors, we see ever more brutal attacks on folks in these encampments. The latest action came against folks in Los Angeles, including one of the founders of Occupy the Hood. We've pasted a couple of relevant articles below.

MORE:

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In a massive show of force, 1,400 police officers, some in riot gear stormed the Occupy Los Angeles camp early Wednesday, driving protesters from the park and arresting more than 200 who defied orders to leave. Similar raids in Philadelphia led to 50 arrests, but the scene in both cities was relatively peaceful.

Police in Los Angeles and Philadelphia moved in on Occupy Wall Street encampments under darkness in an effort to clear out some of the longest-lasting protest sites since crackdowns ended similar occupations across the country.

Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck praised the officers and the protesters for their restraint and the peaceful way the eviction was carried out.

Officers flooded down the steps of City Hall just after midnight and started dismantling the two-month-old camp two days after a deadline passed for campers to leave the park. Officers in helmets and wielding batons and guns with rubber bullets converged on the park from all directions with military precision and began making arrests after several orders were given to leave.

There were no injuries and no drugs or weapons were found during a search of the emptied camp which was strewn with garbage after the raid. City workers put up concrete barriers to wall off the park while it's restored.

The raid in Los Angeles came after demonstrators with the movement in Philadelphia marched through the streets after being evicted from their site. About 40 protesters were arrested after refusing to clear a street several blocks northeast of City Hall, Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey said. They were lined up in cuffs and loaded on to buses by officers. Six others were arrested earlier after remaining on a street police that police tried to clear.

"The police officers who were involved in this operation were hand-picked for this assignment," Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter said. "They're highly trained and disciplined and showed a tremendous amount of restraint and professionalism in carrying out this morning's operation."

Ramsey said he would have preferred to evict the protesters without making arrests, but some refused orders to clear the street and had to be taken into custody. He said three officers sustained minor injuries. Protesters reported some injuries, but none appeared serious.

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa raised public safety and health concerns in announcing plans for the eviction last week, while Philadelphia officials said protesters must clear their site to make room for a \$50 million renovation project.

Defiant Los Angeles campers who were chanting slogans as the officers surrounded the park, booed when an unlawful assembly was declared, paving the way for officers to begin arresting those who didn't leave.

In the first moments of the raid, officers tore down a tent and tackled a tattooed man with a camera on City Hall steps and wrestled him to the ground. Someone yelled "police brutality."

Teams of four or five officers moved through the crowd making arrests one at a time, cuffing the hands of protesters with white plastic zip-ties. A circle of protesters sat with arms locked, many looking calm and smiling.

Opamago Cascini, 29, said the night had been a blast and he was willing to get arrested.

"It's easy to talk the talk, but you gotta walk the walk," Cascini said.

Police used a cherry picker to pluck five men from trees. Two others were in a tree house — one wore a crown and another taunted police with an American flag.

In Philadelphia, police began pulling down tents at about 1:20 a.m. EST after giving demonstrators three warnings that they would have to leave, which nearly all of the protesters followed. Dozens of demonstrators then began marching through the streets and continued through the night.

Ramsey said breaking up the camp in the early-morning hours helped minimize any disruption to businesses and traffic.

"We acknowledge the fact that we are going to have to leave this space but in another sense this has been our home for almost two months and no one wants to see their home taken away from them," Philadelphia protestor Bri Barton, 22, said before police began clearing out the camp.

"Whether or not we have this space or work in the city is nowhere near done," she said.

The eviction overall appeared to have been carried out without any significant scuffles or violence.

Later Wednesday morning, workers used front-end loaders to scoop up tents, trash and other debris and dump it into trucks to be hauled away, while others swept the plaza clean.

Demonstrators and city officials in both Los Angeles and Philadelphia were hoping any confrontation would be nonviolent, unlike evictions at similar camps around the country that sometimes involved pepper spray and

tear gas. The movement against economic disparity and perceived corporate greed began with Occupy Wall Street in Manhattan two months ago.

The Los Angeles officers staged for hours outside Dodger Stadium before the raid. They were warned that demonstrators might throw everything from concrete and gravel to human feces at them.

"Please put your face masks down and watch each other's back," a supervisor told them. "Now go to work."

The officers came from a wide range of specialized units within the force, including the bomb squad, and the arson unit. Scores of officers in hazmat suits also were sent in to deal with potentially unsanitary conditions in the park.

Before police arrived in large numbers, protesters were upbeat and the mood was almost festive. A protester in a Santa Claus hat danced in the street. A woman showed off the reindeer antlers she had mounted on her gas mask.

30 Nov – Phoenix Protesters Attacked, Arrested During Shutdown ALEC Action

Dozens of protesters were attacked by police with pepper spray and eight were arrested in a day of action against the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). On November 30, starting at 8am, hundreds marched and converged on the Kierland Westin Resort and Spa in Scottsdale, where ALEC held its annual "States and Nation Summit."

MORE:

Eight people were arrested at the action at the resort where the ALEC summit took place on November 30. Sixteen were arrested at the [action at SRP](#) December 2nd, including 5 who locked down in the building. One more was arrested at the First Friday march also December 2nd. All have been released as of 2pm on December 3rd.

On Friday Dec.2 at the march through downtown Phoenix, a kid named Branson was snatched from the crowd of protesters during the initial pepper spray of the crowd, and placed under arrest. Branson was then brutalized by police who left him with cuts on his body and abrasions on his face. The police also pepper sprayed Branson once he was cuffed and in the back of the police car, completely unable to defend himself. The unwarranted pepper spraying left him with chemical burns on the areas of his body that had open sores from the brutal arrest. Branson is being charged with 2 counts of aggravated assault on an officer. His bond is \$2800.

30 Nov – Good news regarding Eddie Conway

Eddie has passed the first step in the parole process. He was pleased that he DID NOT receive a set-off – meaning they tell him to come back in a year or more. The commissioners basically said that after he has a risk assessment (psych review) they would recommend parole. There's more information on the remainder of the parole process below.

MORE:

The parole process for people serving a life sentence consists of four steps – 1. the first hearing (he just had that today), 2. the risk assessment (if they plan to recommend parole), 3. the person then goes before a larger group of commissioners 4. then if they also recommend parole it then goes on to the governor. Eddie said that the two commissioners pretty much told him that they would advocate for his parole when it comes

to the larger group of commissioners. He asked me to convey his thanks to everyone who supported him, and he is pleased with the outcome. now we have more work to do! we will be instructing folks about what they can do to gain his release. And remember, we are not accepting "no parole."

2 Dec - Update on Kellie & Victor

Good news and not so good news for the two folks facing thirteen years for allegedly trying to free mink in Iowa. Kellie and Victor got married last week, but as of yesterday, only have \$900 between them for legal fees. Their support crew is trying to raise \$10,000 in the next month to insure they can afford adequate legal support.

MORE:

Congrats to Victor and Kellie for tying the knot! Victor and Kellie got married last week, and so now Kellie Marhsall is officially Mrs. Kellie VanOrden. They are celebrating their honeymoon in Sioux City, Iowa playing Rummy in their little apartment and playing in the snow before they have appear for their trail next month.

On the not-so-bright-side of things...Victor's lawyer ran through the retainer, and now needs another retainer in order to continue working on the case. Their legal funds account only has a sad \$900 in it which will be gone very fast considering their lawyers charge \$250 an hour.

Victor and Kellie have pleaded "not guilty" but the chances of all charges being dropped is slim to none. If convicted, the ideal situation would be that their plea agreement would consist of two of the four charges being dropped. If this is indeed what happens on January 24th, then they will be sentenced to approximately 12-18 months in prison. The longer their lawyers can work on the case the more likely their sentencing time will be drastically reduced (i.e. some of the charges will be dropped). Sitting in prison for 1 year versus 6 years can make quite the difference.

There is often a direct relationship between money raised and length of sentence, and so donating money is essentially "purchasing their freedom."

This is where you come into the equation; your help is needed more than ever. Please donate whatever you can to their legal fund today. Every penny counts!

Some ideas: throw a benefit show in your city, have a garage sale and donate all proceeds, throw a bake sale with any sugar and flour you have lying around, donate \$20 from your next paycheck, or even buy a t-shirt from us (they will be available very soon). If you are broke and can't spare any money, you could always write a blog article about the case to spread awareness. Please get active & help support your fellow activists any way you can. Even a simple post on Facebook can help because maybe one of your friends will end up donating \$50. Thank you to everyone reading this right now. Your support is sincerely appreciated by both Victor and Kellie.

GOAL: RAISE \$10,000

4 Dec - Walter Bond's Book Now Available

Always Looking Forward is Walter's 180 page collection of all his articles on Animal Liberation up though his sentencing date in Utah. It is available at supportwalter.org

7 Dec - CCR + Family and Friends of Daniel McGowan Panel Discussion + Raffle

WHAT: Panel discussion with Robert Meeropol, Will Potter and Jenny Synan with an introduction by Rachel Meeropol plus an *AMAZING* raffle

WHEN: 6:30–8:30, Wednesday, December 7th

WHERE: Community Church of New York (40 East 35th Street, between Park and Madison Avenues)

COST: Free entry; raffle tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5

On the sixth anniversary of the first wave of Operation Backfire arrests, including that of friend to NYC ABC Daniel McGowan, the Center for Constitutional Rights and Family & Friends of Daniel McGowan are hosting a panel discussion and raffle. The panel will discuss the Red Scare, the Green Scare, and ongoing repression of political dissidents in the United States. Tickets are available at supportdaniel.org/blog

Raffle prizes are being added daily, but currently include:

- Fingerless mittens, hand-knitted by Sarah Paul (mother of [Jonathan Paul](#), Daniel's co-defendant!)
- [Sparrow Media](#) Shirts: [One](#), [Two](#), and [Three](#)
- Membership and T-shirt from [Bluestockings](#)
- Books from [Crimethinc](#). ([Recipes for Disaster](#) and [Work](#))
- [Pie Any Means Necessary: The Biotic Baking Brigade Cookbook](#)
- \$75 worth of Books from [Justseeds](#)
- IFC Membership ([The Cineaste Plus One](#))
- [If A Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front](#) DVDs
- [Livescribe Echo 4GB smartpen](#) + 4-pack of Livescribe Dot Paper
- [BORF](#) signed limited-edition [Support Daniel print](#) (\$100 value)
- [Dr. Bronner's Holiday Gift Basket](#) (\$50 value)
- [Let Freedom Ring](#), edited by Matt Meyer
- [Eco-Warriors](#) by Rik Scarce
- Subscriptions to [Fifth Estate](#)
- [The Will of the Many](#) by Marrienne Maeckelbergh
- Books by Brian Tokar (“[Toward Climate Justice](#)” and “[Agriculture & Food in Crisis](#)“)
- 2012 [Justseeds/Eberhardt Press Organizers](#)
- Books from [Eberhardt Press](#)
- Books from [Combustion Books](#)
- Books from [Burning Books](#) (Buffalo, New York)
- [Green is the New Red](#) book donation and signed posters
- A pair of tickets to the [Spectacle Theater](#)
- Two gift certificates to [Book Thug Nation](#)
- 1 acupuncture session with Famous
- [Wind\(s\) from below: Radical Community Organizing to Make a Revolution Possible](#)
- [Team Colors](#) Posters
- 1/2 Gallon [Wilder Brook Farm](#) Maple Syrup
- DVDs from Whispered Media ([Boom](#) and [We Interrupt This Empire](#))
- Art by [Elektra KB](#)
- Support Daniel McGowan [T-shirt](#)
- [Support Daniel McGowan](#) Water Bottle

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- [Certain Days](#): Freedom For Political Prisoners 2012 Wall Calendar
- One year subscription to [4StruggleMag](#)

9 Dec - The Peoples Survival Program - Winter Clothing Drive

WHAT: "FREE CLOTHES FOR THE PEOPLE" clothes racks

WHEN: 12:00-6:00pm, Friday, December 9th

WHERE: Former BPP office (1969-1971); Southeast corner of 125th Street and Lexington Avenue

INFO: Bro. Shaka: 917.420.8662; shakashakur777@aol.com or Bro. Shep: 212.650.5008;

panthershepcat@aol.com

9 Dec - All Out for Mumia - 30th Anniversary of Incarceration and Frame-up

Buses leave NYC at 3:00pm

MORE:

WHERE: Constitution Center - 525 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. sharp -10:30 pm, (doors open at 7 p.m.)

HEAR: Cornel West, Immortal Technique, Ramona Africa, Vijay Prashad, Michelle Alexander (by video), Amina and Amiri Baraka, IMPACT Youth Repertory, African Drum and Dance Ensemble, Attorney Michael Coard

Pick up palm cards at Solidarity Center, 55 West 17th STREET, 5TH FLOOR, [\(212\) 633-6646](tel:2126336646) anytime after 2 p.m. weekdays

Call [\(212\) 330-8029](tel:2123308029) for bus tickets and other locations to pick up palm cards. Buses leave NYC at 3 p.m., \$20 roundtrip from 33rd Street and 8th Avenue.

NO TO LIFE IN PRISON, FREE MUMIA NOW!!!

No to the Racist Death Penalty, No to the Prison Industrial Complex, No to Police Terrorism, No to U.S. Wars at Home and Abroad, FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, OCCUPY WALL STREET

10 Dec - Art Benefit for René González

WHAT: Art benefit for René González

WHEN: 2pm-4pm, Saturday, December 10th, 2011

WHERE: Casa de Las Americas - 182 East 111th Street (between Lexington and 3rd Avenues)

COST: \$5-10 donation, no one turned away due to lack of funds

MORE:

On Friday Oct. 7th, Rene Gonzalez of the Cuban 5 was released on parole and returned to Miami, where Cuban 5's unjust trial took place! The Cuban 5 are five U.S. held political prisoners incarcerated for fighting against terrorism in the United States and Cuba.

Miami is a city full of right wing anti-revolutionary Cuban Americans who could harm Rene. He has not seen his wife in 13 years, has no family in Miami and is being forced to spend the next three years there to serve his parole, instead of going back home to Cuba.

Join The Popular Education Project to Free the Cuban 5 for our Artist benefit for Rene Gonzalez.

Compiled by NYC ABC

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Our goal is to raise money for his transition from prison to the outside.

Let Rene know that New York City loves him! Come out and enjoy this amazing afternoon of art, food, and film!

Poets:

Papoleto Melendez
Sandra Maria Estevez
Louis Reyes Rivera
Rafael Landron

Film:

Will the real terrorist please stand up by Saul Landau

16 Dec - Anarchism on Film (Spotlight on Anarchist Filmmakers) - Anthology Film Archives

From December 16th through the 23rd, Anthology Film Archives in Manhattan is presenting an anarchist film festival. According to them, This is an exhaustive, though by no means comprehensive, overview of various anarchist tendencies in narrative film. Here is Jean Vigo's seminal Zero for Conduct and Peter Watkins' monumental La Commune (Paris, 1871). This is a series that is sure to be pure bliss for anyone of an anti-authoritarian disposition.

MORE:

December 16-23

ANARCHISM ON FILM

Spotlights anarchist filmmakers and their longtime preoccupations: historical films that excavate a submerged anarchist history & films that synthesize an anti-authoritarian political impetus with innovative formal strategies

Although an entity called 'anarchist cinema' is almost impossible to define, anarchists with an interest in film have long been preoccupied with two interrelated strands: historical films that excavate a submerged anarchist history and films that synthesize an anti-authoritarian political impetus with innovative formal strategies. In this series, Jean Vigo's ZERO FOR CONDUCT perhaps best embodies the latter tendency. In addition, Peter Watkins's LA COMMUNE (PARIS, 1871) merges a powerful chronicle of the Paris Commune's anti-hierarchical legacy with a similarly egalitarian effort to democratize the film's casting and production process.

Other major directors adopt their idiosyncratic perspectives to matters of anarchist import: Alain Tanner's CHARLES: DEAD OR ALIVE combines the director's characteristic brand of playful leftism with an awareness of Switzerland's anarcho-syndicalist tradition while Pere Portabella's clandestinely shot EL SOPAR is a rigorous response to the execution of anarchist militant Salvador Puig Antich, the same man whose fate inspired Joan Miró's famous painting, "The Hope of a Condemned Man". Yvonne Rainer's JOURNEYS FROM BERLIN/1971 and Lizzie Borden's BORN IN FLAMES crystallize many of the concerns of both the burgeoning Anarcha-feminism of the 1980s and motifs popular with that era's experimental filmmakers.

Since a pedagogical imperative has always been an important component of anarchist theory and practice, many of the films in this series are especially intent on shedding light on little-known or misunderstood historical events – whether biopics or documentaries exploring the lives of heroes and martyrs (e.g., Giuliano Montaldo's SACCO AND VANZETTI; LIVING ON YOUR FEET, which profiles Cipriano Mera, an anarchist 'general' of the Spanish Revolution) or documentaries focusing on contemporary events (e.g., Razsa and Velez's BASTARDS OF UTOPIA). Željimir Žilnik's THE OLD SCHOOL OF CAPITALISM (a NY premiere) is both a mordantly funny example of anarchist pedagogy in the age of globalization and a film that inventively blends fictional and documentary elements with great finesse.

Organized in collaboration with Richard Porton, author of FILM AND THE ANARCHIST IMAGINATION (Verso), who will be here to introduce selected screenings. The series is co-presented by Cineaste Magazine, www.cineaste.com.

Special thanks to Richard Porton, Steven Fischler & Joel Sucher, Pere Portabella, Maple Razsa & Pacho Velez, Martin Scorsese, Željimir Žilnik, Kitty Cleary (MoMA), Helena Goma (Films 59), Jonathan Howell & Cindi Rowell (New Yorker Films), Paul Marchant (First Run Features), Sarita Matjevic (Playground produkcija), Mark McElhatten (Sikelia), Jonathan Miller & Livia Bloom (Icarus Films), and Daniel Wagner & Daniel Bish (George Eastman House).

To be screened:

Želimir Žilnik

THE OLD SCHOOL OF CAPITALISM / STARA ŠKOLA KAPITALIZMA

2009, 122 minutes, video. In English & Serbian with English subtitles.

This film is rooted in the first wave of workers' revolts to hit Serbia since the advent of capitalism. Desperate workers bulldoze through factory gates and are devastated to discover the site looted by the bosses. Eccentrically escalating confrontations, including a melee with workers in football shoulder-pads and helmets, and the boss and his security force in bulletproof vests, prove fruitless. Committed young anarchists offer solidarity, and take the boss hostage. A Russian tycoon, a Wall Street trader, and U.S. Vice President Biden's visit to Belgrade unexpectedly complicate events. Along the way, the film produces an increasingly complex and yet unfailingly lively account of present-day, up-to-the-minute struggles under the misery-inducing effects of both local and global capital.

–Friday, December 16 at 7:00, Monday, December 19 at 6:30, and Wednesday, December 21 at 8:45.

Lizzie Borden

BORN IN FLAMES

1983, 80 minutes, 16mm.

This provocative, thrilling, and still-relevant classic is a comic fantasy of female rebellion set in America ten years after the Second American Revolution. Embedded within the radical feminist underground, it follows the activities of the Women's Army, a powerful but loosely organized faction of female vigilantes and counterrevolutionaries, and two pirate radio programs trying to awaken the sisterhood and shake up the system. When the outspoken Black leader of the Women's Army dies in police custody, a united front emerges to take direct action and potentially dangerous measures.

–Friday, December 16 at 9:30 and Tuesday, December 20 at 7:00.

Valentí Figueres Jorge

LIVING ON YOUR FEET: THE STRUGGLES OF CIPRIANO MERA / VIVIR DE PIE. LAS GUERRAS DE CIPRIANO MERA

2009, 124 minutes, video. In Spanish with English subtitles.

LIVING ON YOUR FEET tells the story of the odyssey of Cipriano Mera, the bricklayer-turned-revolutionary who commanded the 4th army corps during the Spanish Civil War and defeated Mussolini's generals. Even after the war, returning to his life as a bricklayer, he remained firm in his objective: to kill Franco. This is the story of a free man who refused to die on his feet or live life on his knees.

–Saturday, December 17 at 2:00 and Friday, December 23 at 7:00.

Pere Portabella

EL SOPAR

1974, 50 minutes, video. In Spanish and Catalan with English subtitles.

In 1974, on the night the militant anarchist Salvador Puig Antich was executed, five former political prisoners – Angel Abad, Jordi Cunill, Lola Ferreira, Narcís Julian, and Antonio Marin – gather in a farmhouse to prepare a meal and make a film discussing the problems and issues arising from long prison terms. Portabella uses simple cinematic conventions to explore his subject: "You can't understand liberation if you don't begin with yourself."

&

Jean Vigo

ZERO FOR CONDUCT / ZÉRO DE CONDUITE

1933, 44 minutes, 35mm, b&w. In French with no subtitles; English synopsis available.

Vigo's eloquent parable of freedom versus authority is set at a boys' boarding school and undoubtedly echoes his own unhappy experiences as a child. Under the pressure of various civic groups the film was removed from screens several months after its release in 1933. It was branded "anti-French" by censors and was not shown again in Paris until 1945.

–Saturday, December 17 at 4:30.

Giuliano Montaldo

SACCO & VANZETTI

1971, 120 minutes, 35mm. In English & Italian with English subtitles. With Gian Maria Volontè, Riccardo Cucciolla, and Cyril Cusack.

One of the most shameful chapters in American history is captured here in the dramatic retelling of the true saga of two Italian immigrants and anarchists –Bartolomeo Vanzetti (Volontè) and Nicola Sacco (Cucciolla) – who were falsely accused, tried, and executed for murder. Composer Ennio Morricone collaborated here with singer Joan Baez, who wrote the lyrics for two songs she performs on the soundtrack.

–Saturday, December 17 at 6:30.

FILMMAKER PACHO VELEZ IN PERSON!

Maple Razsa and Pacho Velez

BASTARDS OF UTOPIA

2010, 54 minutes, video. In Croatian with English subtitles.

Three Croatian activists struggle to change the world. As children, they lived through the violent collapse of Yugoslavia. But now, amid the aftershocks of socialism's failure, they fight in their own way for a new leftism. Whether clashing with police or squatting in an old factory, they risk everything to live their politics. But as the setbacks mount, will they give up the fight? The film, shot during years of fieldwork with a Croatian anarchist collective, presents a portrayal of activism that is both empathetic and unflinching – an engaged, elegant meditation on the struggle to re-imagine leftist politics and the power of a country's youth. "Dramatic proof that the struggle for liberty is irrepressible." –Howard Zinn

–Saturday, December 17 at 9:00 and Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00.

Peter Watkins

LA COMMUNE (PARIS, 1871)

1999, 345 minutes, video, b&w. In French with English subtitles.

Compiled by NYC ABC

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The 72-day Paris Commune of 1871 remains a seminal event for the anti-authoritarian left. Despite its brevity and tragic demise (30,000 people were massacred by the French army), this experiment in direct democracy exemplifies the credo of the First International – “the emancipation of the working classes must be achieved by the working classes themselves.” Watkins’s film is less a traditional epic than a quasi-Brechtian invocation of the spirit of the Commune. A slyly anachronistic device – the turbulent events are covered by both the left-wing ‘Commune TV’ and the state-sponsored ‘Versailles TV’ – emphasizes the need for alternative media in the era of corporate hegemony.

–**Sunday, December 18 at 12:00. [Note: the film will be shown with one intermission.]**

Yvonne Rainer

JOURNEYS FROM BERLIN/1971

1980, 125 minutes, 16mm. With Annette Michelson, Amy Taubin, Vito Acconci, Cynthia Beatt, Ilona Halberstadt, Vernon Gabor, and Yvonne Rainer.

To explore the ramifications of terrorism, Rainer employs an extended therapy session – in which an American woman speaks to a series of psychiatrists – to evoke the daily experiences of power and repression.

“Rainer’s film questions duplicitous rehabilitation (psychiatric care/control), the efficacy of radicalism, and conflicted political and personal motivations. ... The collage essay technique of JOURNEYS parallels the investigation of these conflicts on a formal level.

She weaves the stories of 19th-century Russian anarchists; the staging of identity as it occurs in therapeutic analysis, writing a diary, or preparing a meal; and the fate of the Red Army Faction (Baader-Meinhof gang), which exposed the precarious and enforced nature of West German democratic freedoms in the 1970s.” –Konrad Steiner, kino21

–**Sunday, December 18 at 6:30 and Tuesday, December 20 at 9:00.**

Gordon Carr

THE ANGRY BRIGADE: THE SPECTACULAR RISE AND FALL OF BRITAIN’S FIRST URBAN GUERRILLA GROUP

1973, 60 minutes, video.

Produced in collaboration with the BBC, Gordon Carr’s documentary recounts the exploits and prosecution of the Angry Brigade, the British libertarian communist group responsible for a rash of property-targeted bombings between 1970 and 1972. The film covers the roots of the Angry Brigade in the revolutionary ferment of the 1960s, and follows their campaign and the police investigation to its culmination in the “Stoke Newington 8” conspiracy trial at the Old Bailey – the longest criminal trial in British legal history. Produced after extensive research – among both the libertarian opposition and the police – it remains the essential study of Britain’s first urban guerilla group.

–**Sunday, December 18 at 9:00 and Thursday, December 22 at 9:30.**

Alain Tanner

CHARLES, DEAD OR ALIVE / CHARLES MORT OU VIF

1969, 94 minutes, 16mm. In French with English subtitles. With François Simon.

Tanner’s first feature was among the films that put Switzerland on the world cinema map at the end of the 1960s. Today its appeal and energy remain undiminished. Tanner drew his subject matter from what he saw of the events of May ‘68 in Paris, which he covered for Swiss television. Unimpressed by the ideological pronouncements of the young demonstrators, he was struck more by the elderly people marching alongside them. The film is therefore a portrait of an old man who decides to abandon his comfortable, bourgeois way of life to live with a bohemian couple. There he rediscovers his freedom and joie de vivre.

–**Monday, December 19 at 9:00 and Friday, December 23 at 9:30.**

PACIFIC STREET FILMS EVENING

FILMMAKERS IN PERSON!

Steven Fischler and Joel Sucher founded Pacific Street Films in 1969 while studying under Martin Scorsese at NYU. While filming undercover agents who were suspected of showing up at protest rallies, Fischler and Sucher themselves were harassed, photographed, and arrested. This experience became the basis for their first documentary, RED SQUAD, completed in 1971. Since then, they have directed and produced a series of non-fiction films known for illuminating and exploring modern American social history.

RED SQUAD

1972, 42 minutes, video.

An investigative (but frequently humorous) documentary on the surveillance activities of the New York City Police Department’s Bureau of Special Services, known as the Red Squad.

“An original and important political film. ... This film is truth, this film is cinéma vérité, this film is ‘kino pravda.’ In a sense, RED SQUAD could be considered an ironical sequel to Dziga Vertov’s film, MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA.” –Jonas Mekas, VILLAGE VOICE &

FREE VOICE OF LABOR: THE JEWISH ANARCHISTS

1980, 55 minutes, video.

A dramatic portrait of immigrant life in the U.S. as seen through the eyes of the sweatshop workers who made up the Jewish anarchist movement between 1900 and WWI. The film includes interviews with participants in the movement, archival photos and newsreel footage, excerpts from old motion pictures, and Yiddish songs and poems.

–**Thursday, December 22 at 7:00.**

17 Dec - Send Love Through the Walls - Holiday Party with SSS, SB ABCF, RnB, & NYC ABC

WHAT: Send Love Through The Walls Holiday Card-Writing For Political Prisoners

WHEN: 3:00–9:00pm, Saturday, December 17th, 2010

WHERE: 263 Eastern Parkway, Apartment 5D (Direction Below) *phone:* 718.783.8141

COST: FREE (Donations to cover the cost of stamps greatly appreciated)

In what many prisoners have told us is their favorite event of the year, Resistance in Brooklyn and NYC Anarchist Black Cross again join forces to bring you the annual holiday card-writing party for U.S. held political prisoners and prisoners of war. This year, we're joined by Scientific Soul Sessions and South Brooklyn ABCF. This event is always a lot of fun, the food outstanding, the camaraderie lively, and the handmade cards flat out amazing. This year will be no different. So plan to bring your friends, your creativity, and a healthy appetite. We'll have updates on the pp/pow campaigns as well as paints, markers, crayons, and envelopes.

MORE:

Directions:

Getting to 263 Eastern Parkway is simple:

From the [2/3/4/5](#) or [Franklin Avenue Shuttle](#):

Franklin Avenue Stop:

Walk west on Eastern Parkway (away from Franklin Avenue, toward Classon Avenue). We're about half a block down on the north side of the street. When you go into the building, take the elevator to your left.

For more information, contact:

Resistance in Brooklyn- mmmsrnb at ige dot org

NYC Anarchist Black Cross- nycabc at riseup dot net

Scientific Soul Sessions— scientificsoulsessions.com

South Brooklyn ABCF-- sbrooklynabc at riseup dot net

28 Jan 2012 - Malcolm X Commemoration Committee Presents "One Struggle"

Pay Tribute to our Freedom Fighters & their Families for their decades of commitment & untold sacrifices to the struggle for Black Liberation, Self-Determination & Justice.

WHAT: The 16th Annual Dinner Tribute to the Families of Our Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War

WHEN: 3:00pm-7:00pm, Saturday, January 28th

WHERE: Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center - 310 West 43rd Street (between 8th & 9th Avenues, New York, New York 10036)

COST: Donation: \$40/advance reservations · \$45/at the door · Validated Parking \$10

All proceeds to benefit Political Prisoners/Prisoners of War represented at the Dinner!

MORE:

Dhoruba Bin Wahad, BPP/BLA & former PP/POW

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4 Feb 2012 - International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier

Yes, this is VERY EARLY, but we're encouraging folks to start planning their protests now. The Leonard Peltier Defense Offense Committee calls on supporters worldwide to protest against the injustice suffered by Indigenous activist Leonard Peltier. Gather on February 4, 2012, at every federal court house and U.S.

Compiled by NYC ABC

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embassy or consulate worldwide to demand the freedom of a man wrongfully convicted and illegal imprisoned for 36 years.

MORE:

Leonard Peltier is a Native American activist wrongfully accused in 1975 in connection with the shooting deaths of two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Government documents show that, without any evidence at all, the FBI decided from the beginning of its investigation to 'lock Peltier into the case'.

U.S. prosecutors knowingly presented false statements to a Canadian court to extradite Mr. Peltier to the U.S. The statements were signed by a woman who was forced by FBI agents to say she was an eyewitness. The government has long since admitted that the woman was not present during the shootings.

Meanwhile, in a separate trial in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Mr. Peltier's co-defendants were acquitted by reason of self defense. Had Leonard been tried with his co-defendants, he also would have been acquitted.

Unhappy with the outcome of the Cedar Rapids trial, prosecutors set the stage for Mr. Peltier's conviction. His trial was moved to an area known for its anti-Indian sentiment—Fargo, North Dakota. The trial judge had a reputation for ruling against Indians, and a juror is known to have made racist comments during Mr. Peltier's trial.

FBI documents prove that the U.S. government went so far as to manufacture the so-called murder weapon, the most critical evidence in the prosecution's case. A ballistics test proved, however, that the gun and shell casings entered into evidence didn't match. The FBI hid this fact from the jury. Mr. Peltier was convicted and sentenced to two consecutive life terms. According to court records, the United States Attorney who prosecuted the case has twice admitted that no one even knows who fired the fatal shots.

Leonard Peltier is 67 years old and in poor health. An accomplished author and artist, Mr. Peltier is renowned for his humanitarian achievements. In 2009, Leonard was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the sixth consecutive year.

Although the courts have acknowledged evidence of government misconduct—including forcing witnesses to lie and hiding ballistics evidence reflecting his innocence—Mr. Peltier has been denied a new trial on a legal technicality. Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, 55 Members of Congress and others—including a judge who sat as a member of the court in two of Mr. Peltier's appeals—have all called for his immediate release.

The Courts may not be able to act but Barack Obama, as President, can. Please join with us to free an innocent man. On February 4, 2012, tell Obama to grant clemency to Leonard Peltier.

Scheduled events will be announced and details provided at www.whoisleonardpeltier.info.