

PLAIN WORDS



An Anarchist Black Cross Federation Publication

SUMMER 2010

“The work isn’t done for the glory, but because we believe in Mutual Aid” - Boris Yelensky

Issue #2



15 YEARS
OF
SUPPORT
FOR
POLITICAL
PRISONERS
AND
PRISONERS
OF WAR

What is the Anarchist Black Cross Federation?

The Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) began shortly after the 1905 Russian Revolution. It formed after breaking from the Political Red Cross, due to the group's refusal to support Anarchist and Social Revolutionary Political Prisoners. The new group, naming itself the Anarchist Red Cross (ARC), began to provide aid to those Political Prisoners who were refused support by the PRC.

In the early decades, the organization had chapters throughout Europe and North America. These chapters worked together to provide assistance to prisoners only in Russia. Soon other groups, such as the Latvian Anarchist Red Cross, emerged to provide aid in other Eastern European countries. Armed with the ideas of *mutual aid* and *solidarity*, these groups worked tirelessly to

provide support to those who were suffering because of their political beliefs.

In 1919, the organization's name changed to the Anarchist Black Cross to avoid confusion with the International Red Cross. Through the 1920s and until 1958, the organization worked under various other names but provided the same level of support as the other groups working as Anarchist Black Cross.

After 1936, the ABC expanded its aid to places such as Greece, Italy and Spain.

In 1958, the organization collapsed but reemerged in 1967 in London, England. Once again ABC chapters spread throughout the globe providing support for imprisoned comrades. Sadly, by the end of the 1970s only a handful of ABC chapters still existed.

In the 80s, however, the ABC began to gain popularity again in the US and Europe. For years, the ABC's name was kept alive by a number of completely autonomous groups scattered throughout the globe and supporting a wide variety of prison issues.

In May of 1995, a small group of ABC collectives merged into a federation whose aim was to focus on the overall support and defense of Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War.

Various groups have since merged in numerous networks throughout the globe working on various prison issues. The Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF) has continued its mission to focus on the aid and support of Political Prisoners. We take the position that PP/POWs demand our top priority. We strive to continue with the same dedication and solidarity to our fallen comrades as those before us have shown.

Introduction:

“Crucially important to maintaining the anarchist integrity of this organization is the fact that Branch Groups and Support Groups are freely autonomous to take on whatever initiatives they can to further the Unity of Purpose of the ABCF. So long as these initiatives do not contradict any preexisting agreements (Tactical Unity) that have been made by the ABCF, it is not necessary for all groups to approve of and/or agree with programs, projects or work of other ABCF collectives.” [from the ABCF Constitution and Structure]

The following definitions are used to describe the below terms whenever they appear in the ABCF Update or any other ABCF literature.

Political Prisoner (PP): A person incarcerated for actions carried out in support of legitimate struggles for self determination or for opposing the illegal policies of the government and/or its political subdivisions. [Special International Tribunal on the Violation of Human Rights of PP/POWs in U.S. Prisons and Jails, Dec. '90]

Prisoner of War (POW): Those combatants struggling against colonial and alien domination and racist regimes captured as prisoners are to be accorded the status of prisoner of war and their treatment should be in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August, 1949 (General Assembly resolution 3103)

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Passing of Comrade Smitty

Comrade Marc Smith aka Smitty is now resting with the ancestors. It was his wish that his remains be turned into ashes.

Memorial Celebration of his Life is being planned, will keep you posted. In the meantime condolence cards and donations should be sent to The BPP Commemoration Committee c/o Yasmeen Sutton 112-50 Northern Blvd Suite 2-D Corona, New York 11368

Checks & money orders should be made out to Mary Smith, his widow. Keep her in your prayers; she lost a dear grandson & 2 days later her husband.

Pawlak Has Been Released

Michael Pawlak has been released from prison while he is awaiting trial. Pawlak is an anarchist from Poland who was arrested in Greece on December 6th, 2009 during the demonstrations for the one-year since the murder of Alexis Grigoropoulos by police and the uprising that followed. He is accused of attempting to make explosives, an allegation that is both unsubstantiated and based on circumstantial evidence. No news on when that trial will begin. We will report any news that comes up regarding his case.

Sundiata Give Ten Year Hit

It was bad enough that New Afrikan Prisoner of War, Sundiata Acoli was denied parole in April, but has just received a letter from the parole board that the three-person panel just gave him a ten year hit. This means, for those who do not know, is that he will not go in front of the parole board for another decade. The standard hit is about three years. And since Sundiata is nothing short of a model prisoner, one would have to conclude that the hit was a combination of political repression and pressure from the police unions.

Mutulu Moved Within ADX

Please be advised that Mutulu's new address is as follows:

Dr. Mutulu Shakur #83205-012
USP Max, DB Unit, Cell 214
P.O. Box 7000
Florence, CO. 81226-8500

Please note that his 60 birthday is approaching on August 8..

Asheville 11 Court Update

On Friday the 16th eight of the eleven had a court appearance. They were all given continuances and have a new court date set for Sept. 30th. The rest of the eleven will appear in court on July 30th. They are also expected to receive a continuance until

Sept. 30th.

On May 1, 2010 eleven people were indiscriminately arrested in downtown Asheville, North Carolina.

They were held on \$65,000 bail each and some for nearly five days. All eleven have been charged with 10 misdemeanors and 3 felonies.

So far, all of the eleven's charges have remained in District Court. This will only be the case for a short time longer. In the state of North Carolina, all felony charges are handled by the Superior Court on a state level. Sometime in the next few months, the eleven's charges will be reviewed by a Superior Court Jury. This jury is called a "grand jury" but is NOT the same as a grand jury that defendants would be called to testify. This jury will be a grouping of people from the state of North Carolina who will review the case and make a recommendation on which of the eleven's felony charges will be brought to the state superior court.

We will keep you updated on any changes in court dates, or venues. Thanks for all your continued support.

AETA 4 Court Update

On July 12, 2010, Judge Whyte ruled to dismiss without prejudice the indictment of the AETA4 because the indictment does not specify the criminal conduct alleged to have been committed by the four defendants. The government still has the option to re-indict if they wish.

The AETA 4 were indicted for conspiracy to commit animal enterprise terrorism. Charges against the AETA 4 include protesting, chalking the sidewalk, chanting and leafleting -, and the alleged use of "the Internet to find information on bio-medical researchers." These actions are clearly and traditionally protected by the First Amendment.

The Department of Justice brazenly calls these young activists "terrorists" under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA). Passed by Congress near the end of the Bush administration, the AETA aims to suppress speech and advocacy by criminalizing activities protected by the First Amendment, including protests, boycotts, picketing and whistleblowing.

The scheduled July 19 court appearance of the AETA4 has therefore been canceled. We'll keep everyone posted to any new developments.

Reykjavik 9 Court Update

The Reykjavik 9 are nine protesters who in December 8, 2008, entered the Icelandic Parliamentary building to demand that their politicians resign. The action was done as part of the growing movement that developed after the economic collapse of the country. Though legally allowed to enter,

the nine were arrested and charged with endangering the autonomy of the parliament. (No Joke!) They are currently on trial and each face a possible 16-years in prison.

Due to summer holidays, however, the Reykjavik Nine's court proceedings are expected to draw on till winter, with the next session scheduled for August 17th.

Polish Anarchist Arrested

Renata Zelazna is a Polish anarchist who is being charged with the ridiculous accusation of attempted murder of a police officer. The incident began after Zelazna had complained about the noise from a nearby demolition site. After one of the workers almost hit her with his machine and another pushed her down in response to her complaint, Zelazna responded by throwing mud at them. They then called the police.

Zelazna went up stairs to complete her dinner when the police arrive. As they entered, she had a knife in her hand that she was using for cutting. They announced they were arresting her for destroying the machine. Perceiving her knife as a threat, they peppered-sprayed her and hog-carried her to the police car. Meanwhile, they illegally searched her apartment. She is now charged with attempted murder of a cop. Zelazna is not a political prisoner but still needs our support as a comrade. for more info, contact: sefsefe@hotmail.co.uk

FBI Talks to Former Member

We have received news that a former member of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation was contacted recently by the FBI. The contact was brief with the agents asking some questions about ABCF activities. The member answered questions by being brief and vague when giving answers. While the organization is above-ground and only engages in "legal" activities, we should not have to remind activists, current or former, that providing even the most basic and public information should be avoided. Simply put: Don't engage.

However, we must be clear that this person's integrity is not in question and the person immediately reported the incident.

It should be noted that this visit, while more than likely unrelated, took place only six months after ABCF member and former Prisoner of War, Ojore Lutalo, was arrested for alleged bomb threats. Lutalo was on a train coming back from visiting with members of the LA chapter, when other passengers were offended by the revolutionary nature of his phone conversation.

Other passengers reported alleged threats that were never made, even connecting him to al-Qaida. Ojore was then detained by the FBI's Colorado Joint Terrorist Task Force. All charges were eventually dropped after witnesses recanted their allegations when questioned.

15 Years of the Federation *by Neil*

“Being in the ABCF isn't easy.” This was the opening line to an early ABCF pamphlet, and was entirely true for a variety of reasons... not the least of which were our own mistakes and oversights! But there was a small group of us, determined to do what it took to sustain an anarchist organization that would materially support class war political prisoners and prisoners of war, without emphasis on size or appearance. In fact, we expected to be unpopular when we penned the original proposal to federate. We wondered if anyone would join, and joked around about the type of criticisms and counter proposals others would hurl in our general direction in attempts to discourage us from moving forward, or others from joining. In other words, we knew this was exactly the type of organization we wanted to be part of!

I'm sure some of our critics thought so, but those of us who comprised the original ABCF didn't set out to illicit negative reactions (of which we received many). It's just that in the few years between when I had helped to start NJ Anarchist Black Cross in early 1992, and when the Anarchist Black Cross Federation was formed in mid 1995, not a single thing I had been a part of was met with much enthusiasm (with a few very important exceptions). Prior to the formation of the ABCF, we saw clear indications of the type resistance with which we would eventually be met. For example: I recall as clearly now as when it happened, sitting on a stoop in Philadelphia in 1993 with other anarchists who wanted to talk to us. They warned us that the anarchist community was going to want to know what we had to say about what it means for anarchists to be working together with other groups of people like the Black Panthers? No lie; if you can't imagine that right now, consider this was years before anyone I knew had a cell phone, or an email address!

Equally as fresh in my memory is what I was thinking when I was asked that question. Being 20 years old at the time, my reaction (which I tried to keep to myself) probably reflects what would become the resilience the ABCF has come to represent. I don't remember exactly what I said when asked what we would say to other anarchists when they wanted to know what we thought it meant to us to work with groups of people like Black Panthers. What I actually said sits in the shadow of what I thought and felt like saying; “I could care less what you think, you figure out what it means to you, I've got crap to do.”

Our mission seemed simple to us: What we wanted to do was help political prisoners and prisoners of war. Period. At 19 years old, I was ignorant to their existence. It was Ray Luc Levasseur of the United Freedom Front, himself a political prisoner at the time, who introduced me to them. My reading a letter from him is a story in itself and changed the direction of my life. Those details are likely still available on the ABCF's website. It was plain to see that not much effort was being put into working directly with these prisoners to meet their daily needs. We were utterly unaware of what this means to someone in high security prisons, or the more harsh control units. Helping to provide this support was at the center of everything and our sole motivation.

Some of the prisoners we supported were anarchist and anti-authoritarian but most were not. It's important to note that I and those closest to me were not interested in specific political differences we may have had with some prisoners. What we knew is that they sacrificed and endured more than my still teenage brain could understand in their efforts to help create a more tolerant and tolerable world. Yes, some important details of their ideals differed substantially from ours. The fact that some were sitting behind bars for decades as a result of doing completely legal activist work-very much like what many of us were doing- was serious personal incentive. We weren't sure what we were going to do, but we kept talking and kept our ears open. Often when we came up with ideas,



Herman Bell (center) and members of ABCF

we asked the prisoners for help developing them. We listened to the ideas prisoners had, and did what we could to incorporate them into our lives and work.

To that end, in June of 1994 (Pre-ABCF) NJ ABC helped organize a general ABC conference along with a number of other pre-existing, loosely affiliated, autonomous ABC groups. NJ did what we could to include guests, themes and speakers, all of which were a prelude to what we wanted to see ourselves be involved with in the future. Although the conference enjoyed a moderate level of success, what kept it from being really successful was the lack tangible results or concrete planning. Our small NJ group felt much more satisfied with the results, because even though at the time we didn't have specific plans to propose an ABCF, the '94 conference was the first stepping stone toward moving in a direction that interested us. More people were becoming open to the idea of working alongside groups of others. Groups contemporary anarchists were not accustomed to being around. We strongly felt the anarchist communities discomfort and unwillingness to work with other progressive/revolutionary people and groups was center of it's isolation and stagnation.

One example of collaboration between our membership and the prisoners we support is the Warchest program. In late 1994, NJ ABC was meeting in Newark, NJ with some of the members from the loosely affiliated ABC groups that helped organize the '94 NYC conference. Sitting at the table of some deli near the bus station where we would soon catch a bus back to Paterson, the Warchest was born. With no foresight, without much thought and not having previously run it by anyone else, I suggested the 6 or 7 of us there contribute a small amount of money each month to help financially support Ojore Lutalo, an anarchist POW that we were all writing. We quickly agreed to the idea. A day or so later I ran the idea by Ojore and some of the other prisoners.

One thing led to another and before long, prisoners were asking people they knew to help and more people were contributing money. On the inside, prisoners were helping to decide what other prisoners were most in need of the money. This quickly moving, fluid experience provided us with ideas and tools we would soon use to build the foundation of the ABCF. This spur of the moment

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Lynne Stewart Sentenced to Ten Years in Prison

by Jeff Mackler, West Coast Director of the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee

The full force of the U.S. criminal “justice” system came down on innocent political prisoner, 30-year veteran human rights attorney and radical political activist Lynne Stewart today, July 15, 2010.

In an obviously preprepared one hour and twenty minute technical tour de force designed to give legitimacy to a reactionary ruling Federal District Court John Koeltl, who in 2005 sentenced Stewart to 28 months in prison following her frame-up trial and jury conviction on four counts of “conspiracy to aid and abet terrorism,” re-sentenced Stewart to 120 months or ten years. Stewart will serve her sentence in Danbury, Connecticut’s minimum security prison.

The jam-packed New York Federal District Court chamber observers where Koeltl held forth let out a gasp of pain and anguish as Lynne’s family and friends were stunned – tears flowing down the stricken and somber faces of many. A magnificent Stewart, ever the political fighter and organizer was able to say to her supporters that she felt badly because she “had let them down,” a reference to the massive outpouring of solidarity and defiance that was the prime characteristic of Lynne’s long fight for freedom.

Judge Koeltl was ordered to revisit his relatively short sentence when it was overturned by a two-judge majority of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Judges Robert D. Sack and Guido Calabresi ruled that Koeltl’s sentence was flawed because he had declined to determine whether Stewart committed perjury when she testified at her trial that she believed that she was effectively operating under a “bubble” protecting her from prosecution when she issued a press release on behalf of her also framed-up client, the blind Sheik Omar Abdel Rachman. Rachman was falsely charged with conspiracy to damage New York state buildings.

Dissenting Judge John M. Walker, who called Stewart’s sentence, “breathtakingly low” in view of Stewart’s “extraordinarily severe criminal conduct” deemed the Second Circuit’s majority opinion “substantively unreasonable.” Walker essentially sought to impose or demand a 30-year sentence.

The three-judge panel on Dec. 20, 2009 followed its initial ruling with even tougher language demanding that Koeltl revisit his treatment of the “terrorism enhancement” aspects of the law. A cowardly Koeltl, who didn’t need this argument to dramatically increase Stewart’s sentence, asserted that he had already taken it under consideration

in his original deliberations.

Government prosecutors, who in 2005 sought a 30-year sentence, had submitted a 155-page memorandum arguing in support of a 15-30 year sentence. Their arguments demonstrated how twisted logic coupled with vindictive and lying government officials routinely turn the victim into the criminal.



Stewart’s attorneys countered with a detailed brief recounting the facts of the case and demonstrating that Stewart’s actions in defense of her client were well within the realm of past practice and accepted procedures. They argued that Koeltl properly exercised his discretion in determining that, while the terrorism enhancement provisions of the “law” had to be taken into consideration, the 30-year-prison term associated with it was “dramatically unreasonable, overstated the seriousness” of Stewart’s conduct and had already been factored into Koeltl’s decision.

Stewart’s attorney’s also argued convincingly in their brief that the Special Administrative Measure (SAM) that Stewart was convicted of violating by releasing a statement from her client to the media was well within the established practice of Stewart’s experienced and mentoring co-counsels- former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and past American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee president Abdeen Jabarra. Both had issued similar statements to the press with no government reprisal. Clark was an observer in Koeltl’s courtroom.

As worst in such matters, government officials refuse defense attorneys visiting rights with their clients until an agreement

on a contested interpretation of a SAM is reached. Indeed, in Stewart’s case when the matter was brought to then Attorney General Janet Reno, the government declined to prosecute or otherwise take any action against Stewart.

But Koeltl, who had essentially accepted this view in his original sentence, reversed himself entirely and proceeded in his erudite-sounding new rendition of the law to repeatedly charge Stewart with multiple acts of perjury regarding her statements on the SAM during her trial.

Koeltl took the occasion to lecture Stewart regarding the first words she uttered in front of a bevy of media when she joyfully alighted from the courthouse following the judge’s original 28-month sentence. Said Stewart at that time, “I can do 28 months standing on my head.” A few moments earlier Stewart, with nothing but a plastic bag containing a toothbrush, toothpaste and her various medications, had stood before Koeltl, who had been asked by the government to sentence Stewart to a 30 year term, effectively a death sentence for Lynne, aged 70, a diabetic recovering breast cancer victim and less than excellent health.

Koeltl dutifully followed the lead of the Second Circuit judges, who feigned outrage that Stewart could possibly appear joyful that her life was spared despite 28 months in prison. Koeltl insisted that Stewart’s remark was essentially contemptuous of his sentence and insufficient to convince Stewart of the seriousness of her “crime.” Lynne’s argument that while she fully understood that 28 months behind bars, separating from her “family, friends and comrades,” was a harsh penalty, she was nevertheless “relieved” that she would not die in prison. Koeltl needed a legal brick to throw at Lynne’s head and ignored her humanity, honesty and deep feeling of relief when she expressed it to a crowd of two thousand friends, supporters and a good portion of the nation’s media.

The same Judge Koeltl who stated in 2005, when he rendered the 28-month jail term, that Lynne was “a credit to her profession and to the nation,” clearly heard the voice of institutionalized hate and cruelty and responded in according with its unstat-ed code. “Show no mercy! Thou shall not dissent without grave punishment” in capitalist America.

Lynne was convicted in the post-911 generated climate of political hysteria. Bush appointee, Attorney General John Ashcroft, decided to make an example of

her aimed at warning future attorneys that the mere act of defending anyone whom the government charged with "conspiracy to aid and abet terrorism," could trigger terrible consequences.

On July 15 Judge Koeltl made the decision of his career. Known for his meticulous preparation in such matters, and already having enraged the powers that be with his "light" sentence of Stewart, he bent full tilt to the reactionary political pressures exerted on him by the court hierarchy. He had the option to stand tall and reaffirm his original decision. The "law" allowed him to do so. He could have permitted Lynne to leave prison in less than two years, recover her health, and lead a productive life. His massively extended sentence, unless overturned, will likely lead to Lynne's demise behind bars – a brilliant and dedicated fighter sacrificed on the

alter of an intolerant class-biased system of repression and war.

Courage is a rare quality in the capitalist judiciary. For every defiant decision made, usually driven by a change in the political climate driven forward by the rise of mass social protest movements, there are thousands and more of political appointees that affirm the status quo, including its punishment of all who struggle to challenge capitalist prerogatives and power.

Lynne Stewart stands tall among the latter. We can only hope that the winds of change that are stirring the consciousness of millions today in the context of an American capitalism in economic and moral crisis keeps the movement for her freedom alive and well. The fight is not over! What we do now remains critical. Lynne's expected appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court cannot be written off as

absurd and hopeless. What we do collectively to free her and all political prisoners and to fight for freedom and justice on every front counts for everything!

Write to Lynne at:
Lynne Stewart 53504-054
MCC-NY 2-S
150 Park Row
New York, NY 10007

For further information call Lynne's husband, Ralph Poynter, leader of the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, at 718-789-0558 or 917-853-9759.

Send contributions payable to:

Lynne Stewart Organization
1070 Dean Street
Brooklyn, New York, 11216

Herman Bell Denied Parole Yet Again

Herman Bell, of the 'New York Three' and 'San Francisco Eight' cases, has been denied bail for the fourth consecutive time.

Herman Bell was arrested and charged in 1973 with the killing of two New York City police officers two years earlier in 1971. Also arrested for the crime were Jalil Muntiaqim, Albert Nuh Washington and Gabriel and Francisco Torres. The two brothers were later acquitted for lack of evidence. The other three, Muntiaqim, Washington and Bell were found guilty of first-degree murder, weapon possession and conspiracy despite evidence shown to be inconsistent, fraudulent, and based on perjured testimonies. They became known as the New York Three.

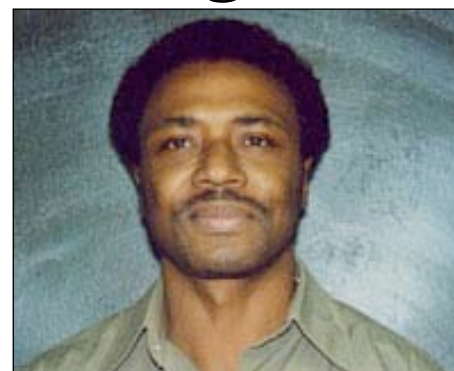
In January 2007, Bell and seven other former Black Panthers (known as the 'San Francisco Eight') were charged by a joint state and federal task force, with the political assassination of a San Francisco police officer in 1971. Similar charges were brought against several of the accused in 1975, but a California judge tossed out the charges, finding that they were based on

statements made after police in New Orleans tortured them for several days employing electric shock, cattle prods, beatings, sensory deprivation, plastic bags and hot, wet blankets for asphyxiation.

On June 29, 2009 Herman Bell pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter of the police officer. Muntiaqim, also charged with the action, pleaded no contest. Charges against four others of San Francisco Eight were dropped. (Francisco Torres still faces charges.)

As part of the agreement, Herman Bell would be sent back to New York, be placed on probation for five years and would serve no additional time.

Since his imprisonment, Bell has had an impressive record. He has received both a B.A. and M.A. and has been a coach for football and basketball coach (bring prisoners together.) He had dedicated his time mentoring and tutoring other prisoners and has received paralegal and HIV-counseling certificates. He is also one of the founders of the Victory Garden Project, an alternative food program that helps disenfran-



chised people develop their own sources of organic food. In addition to his excellent record, Bell had three job offers and was able to provide letters of recommendations for parole from three San Francisco Supervisors.

He was told to come back in 24 months, at which time he will be 64 years old. Herman Bell has a wife, children, grandchildren, 9 siblings and a community of friends and comrades awaiting his freedom.



Carlos Alberto Torres Freed But Needs Help

In July of this year, Puerto Rican independista and Prisoner of War, Carlos Alberto Torres, was released from prison. Torres served 30 years in U.S. prisons for his commitment to the independence of Puerto Rico.

At 57 years old, he will relocate to Puerto Rico immediately, where he hopes to establish a ceramics studio, to continue the craft he developed in prison, and to live selling his pottery and teaching ceramics.

As you can imagine, he is starting off with very little facing a huge- and wonderful- adjustment. He faces almost immediate basic expenses, such as dental care, the need for a used truck to transport ceramics and ceramic supplies and

of course, housing.

The National Boricua Human Rights Network is raising funds to help the comrade settle in. They are asking for supporters to pledge their support to Carlos Alberto Torres with a donation:

1) You can donate through their site at: <http://boricuahumanrights.org>

2) Or make a check out to NBHRN and write "CAT reentry fund in the memo." Mail to National Boricua Human Rights Network, 2739 W. Division St, Chicago, IL 60622, c/o Michelle Morales

Marilyn Buck Released After 25 Years

Marilyn Buck, a political prisoner in the U.S., was released on July 15, 2010 from the federal prison medical center in Carswell, Texas, according to her support group, Friends of Marilyn Buck. She is paroled to New York. As of the writing of this article, no further details about her release have been made available.

Life-long commitment to anti-racism & anti-imperialism

Marilyn Buck started her commitment to fighting against racism and U.S. imperialism as a student activist in the 1960s, when she was a member of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) at the University of Texas. There she organized against the Vietnam War and against racism, and she was one of the women who helped make women's liberation a central part of SDS's politics. In the 1970s Buck worked to support revolutionary anti-imperialist movements around the world, while also actively supporting the Native American and Black liberation movements within the U.S.

Despite great personal suffering, including decades in jail, Buck maintained her commitment to anti-imperialist and anti-racist politics, including supporting those fighting against imperialism and for national liberation.

Decades in prison

Marilyn Buck spent four years in prison in the early 1970s, allegedly for helping Black revolutionaries buy firearms. After she was furloughed from jail, she went underground to resume her political activism against U.S. imperialism and in support of Black liberation. She was captured again in 1985, and has been in prison ever since. At that time



she was accused of actions such as helping Black revolutionary Assata Shakur successfully escape from prison in 1979, as well as conspiracy in the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Senate building in response to the Reagan administration's

invasion of Grenada, which had a leftist government at the time.

With her capture in 1985, Buck became part of the Resistance Conspiracy trial. This was a prominent trial in the 1980s against seven white anti-racist and anti-imperialist activists who were accused of conspiring "to influence, change and protest policies and practices of the United States Government concerning various international and domestic matters through the use of violent and illegal means." They were accused of supporting armed Black revolutionaries within the U.S. and accused of a series of bombings of U.S. government and military buildings in protest of U.S. foreign policy in Central America and the Middle East. Buck received an 80-year sentence in the case.

While in prison, Buck became a prolific writer of political articles and poetry. She wrote, "The trials, those years of intense repression and U.S. government denunciations of my humanity had beat me up rather badly. Whatever my voice had been, it was left frayed. I could scarcely speak. For prisoners, writing is a life raft to save one from drowning in a prison swamp. I could not write a diary or a journal; I was a political prisoner. Everything I had was subject to investigation, invasion and confiscation. I was a censored person. In defiance, I turned to poetry, an art of speaking sparsely but flagrantly."

To send funds to Marilyn to help get re-established. Contact her support organization at the following address:

Friends of Marilyn Buck c/o Legal Services for Prisoners with Children,
1540 Market #490
San Francisco, CA 94102
Email: fombuck@yahoo.com

The Bruce Seidel Red Star Retirement Fund Donates to Marilyn Buck

When former George Jackson Brigade (GJB) member and political prisoner Mark Cook was released from prison in 2000, after having survived 24 years behind bars, Seattle's progressive community raised nearly \$8,000 in cash for him. They were also able to give him a car, which he drove for years, and got him the job that he still works at today.

Now Mark wants to give some of his good fortune to other progressive political prisoners who are being released from prison. Most of these men and women have served twenty, thirty, and even 40 years or more on the inside.

The Bruce Seidel Red Star Retirement Fund is a small step toward providing financial help to those comrades coming out of prison. Mark has placed \$10,000 into escrow. Another former GJB member has donated \$3,000 to the fund. This money will initially be paid out to political prisoners and POWs being released at a rate of \$100 for every year they've been confined. \$2,000 was donated March 13th at the Sparks Fly event in Oakland supporting the upcoming release of political prisoner Marilyn Buck. Several thousand dollars more were also raised for Marilyn at Sparks Fly.

If the money in the Bruce Seidel release fund also increases, so too will the amount paid out to the comrades being released. The fund is overseen by former imprisoned comrades of the George Jackson Brigade, including Ed Mead, Mark Cook, Bo Brown, and Janine Bertram.

To support the growth of this fund or to alert them of the release of political prisoners contact:

Bruce Seidel Memorial Fund
P.O. Box 69586
Seattle, WA 98168

Running Down The Walls 2010



“Running Down the Walls While Running Up the Sun”

On Saturday, August 7th, 2010 at 10 a.m., the Los Angeles Anarchist Black Cross will host a 5k run/walk/jog/bike around the bustling sports fields of South Gate Park in South Gate Los Angeles. This run/walk/jog/bike is designed to raise much-needed funds for the ABCF's Warchest program, and Corazón Del Pueblo.

We are attempting to reach the goal of \$3,000 with the run. Funds will be divided between the two programs:

ABCF Warchest:

The ABCF Warchest program is now almost 16 years old; funds for the Warchest are divided and distributed through monthly stipends to political prisoners who receive little or no financial aid. Prisoners use this money to cover the basic necessities of everyday living. Funds have been used by prisoners to pay for stamps, shoes, clothes, as well as assisting their families with what little they can.

Corazón Del Pueblo:

Corazón del Pueblo is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit collective, and community cultural center, that promotes peace, social justice and cultural understanding through the arts, education and social action.

Official Runs:

The ABCF is a Federation of ABC chapters that span across the country and is holding two official Running Down the Walls runs. Both New York and Los Angeles will be holding official runs on the morning of August 7th. In Sync with each other and other solidarity runs, we will collectively pound the pavement with our feet and bike tires as we exhibit our strength and stamina

as examples of our tireless effort to free our imprisoned comrades.

Solidarity Runs:

Every year, prisoners and supporters of political prisoners organize solidarity runs with Running Down the Walls. Last year, we had runs in Albuquerque (NM), Arcata (CA), Ashland, (OR), Bellefonte (PA), Boston (MA), Denver, (CO), Elmore (AL), Inez (KY), Los Angeles (CA), Marion (IL), New York (NY), USP. Navosta (TX), Pelican Bay (CA), Phoenix (AZ), Sandstone (MN), Tucson (AZ), and Toronto, Ontario. In LA we raised just over \$1,000 with funds being distributed between the ABCF Warchest, Romaine Chip Fitzgerald Homecoming Fund, and Ojore Lutalo's Homecoming Fund. This year we hope to expand the amount of runs in prisons and other cities, as well as, increase the amount of funds raised for community projects. This year we hope to have even more runs in cities, towns, and prisons all across North America.

Support the Struggle:

We must remember that many of those arrested in the past or present are not far from us. Many of them were and are community and labor activists, queer, and environmental activists; people who decided to speak out against various forms of oppression and paid the price of their freedom for their actions. We must remember that any one of these people could have at one time stood beside us in a demonstration, at a speak-out, or even at an organizing meeting. At any given moment it could be us who finds ourselves in this situation, so it is imperative that we ensure that a strong enough community of support exists for

these people as well as ourselves. The strength of our movement is determined by how much we support our fallen comrades. As Anarchist and former POW Ojore Lutalo say, "Any Movement that does not support its political internees, is a sham movement." So please help us, help them! Help us, help you!

Why August 7th:

We chose the date of August 7th as the day to run down the walls to commemorate the life of revolutionary Jonathan Jackson who on August 7th was killed in an attempt to free the Soledad Brothers. On August 7, 1970, Jackson brought guns into the Marin County Court house during the trial of James McClain, William Christmas, and Ruchell Magee. Jonathan Jackson demanded the release of the Soledad Brothers as he and the three prisoners took the Judge and four others hostage. As Jackson and the others entered his van in an attempt to leave, the authorities open fired on the van, killing Joanathan Jackson, James McLain, William Christmas and Judge Harold Haley. Ruchell Magee was injured but survived the onslaught and remains in prison to this day.

Registration fees: \$12 preregistration; \$15, the day of the run. (Make checks out to Tim Fasnacht)

Or for paypal:

Log in to your PayPal account and send your donation online to the email address "timABCF@aol.com" (Tim Fasnacht). Make sure to add in the notes section that your donation is for RDTW 2010. If you'd prefer to stay anonymous or are donating in the name of an organization, let us know.

For more information contact:

Los Angeles ABCF Branch Group
PO BOX 11223
Whitier, Ca 90603
Web: www.abcf.net/la
Email: la@abcf.net



Running Down the Walls 2010

When: Saturday, August 7th,
2010, 10 am - 2 pm

Where: South Gate Park,
9615 Pinehurst Avenue,
South Gate, CA



Three Anarchists Arrested in Ottawa

Three anarchists have been arrested in connection to a May 18th firebombing of a Royal Bank branch in Ottawa, Canada. The three men (Matthew Morgan-Brown, 32, Claude Haridge, 50, and Roger Clement, 58) are being accused of being associated with the Fight for Freedom Coalition - Ottawa, a group that claimed responsibility for the attack. The three men are well-known with the anarchist community and have been active for many years.

Roger Clement and Mathew Morgan-Brown have both been charged with arson causing damage, possession of incendiary material, using explosives with intent to cause property damage and mischief. Claude Haridge, on the other hand, was not given charges related to the actual bombing but rather was charged with careless storage and handling of ammunition.

In addition to the charges mentioned above, the investigation has also led to charges for another action at another Royal Bank branch on Feb. 1. In this incident two individual damaged windows and ATMs with rocks and a hammer. Both Clement and Haridge have been charged with mischief in relation to this incident.

None of the men have made any statement claiming participation in the actions or involvement in the FFFC-Ottawa.

The group, Fight for Freedom Coalition - Ottawa, seems to have entered the scene

this year with no report of activity prior to these incidents. The group stated in a communiqué that the act was done in protest of Royal Bank Canada sponsoring the 2010 Olympics. The group stated that the land used in the Olympics was stolen indigenous land that was never legally ceded to colonial British Columbia.

Indigenous organizations, like the Native Youth Movement, have called for the boycott and cancellation of the Olympics, raising issues of continued occupation of land stolen from indigenous communities and the destruction of the land and life for exploitation, profit and the promotion of Manifest Destiny.

Ottawa police are claiming through public statements that they used an undercover police officer to infiltrate an Ottawa-based anarchist group and, with his help, were able to track the suspects and their getaway car within hours of the plot. They stated that they set up surveillance within 3 hours of the explosion, yet had no knowledge of the firebombing rather they had, over two years of undercover work, won the friendship of the suspects. Despite these claims, the police waited 30 days before arresting the accused.

Within two weeks of the arrests, the three men had their bail hearings. Haridge was released on bail with strict guidelines on his movement, whereas, Matt and Roger

are still being detained at Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre, where they are only allowed two short visits per week. This cuts them off from their wide support networks during this difficult time as they are facing serious charges.

We encourage you to write letters of support to them. Please tell them that you are with them and support their immediate release.

Their mailing addresses are:

Joseph Roger Clement
Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre
2244 Innes Road
Gloucester, ON K1B 4C4

Matthew Morgan-Brown
Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre
2244 Innes Road
Gloucester, ON K1B 4C4

For more information on support:

Ottawa Movement Defense
207 Bank Street
Suite 453
Ottawa, ON
K2P 2N2

Email:
ottawamovementdefense@gmail.com
Phone: 613 304 8770

Free Our Friends! Community Update on G20 Detainees

by the Direct Support Committees of the G20 Detainees

While G20 leaders met behind a steel cage and a 1-billion dollar Fortress Toronto operation, we witnessed an unprecedented coordinated police operation in the city of Toronto. Police brutality against protest participants, journalists, legal observers, medics, and random passersby came in the form of indiscriminate arrests, beatings, pepper spray, rubber bullets, police horse charges, illegal searches and seizures, and extended arbitrary detentions. While in custody, people were forced into steel cage cells with up to 40 people per cell; made to sleep on concrete floors with open bathrooms; denied food, water, toilet paper, and sanitary products; subjected to sexual harassment, threats, humiliation, and intimidation; and refused access to medical attention, phone calls, and legal counsel.

Many were beaten and brutalized, leading to serious injuries and hospitalization. According to an article authored by resident physicians of the Toronto Street Medics, "All of the serious injuries we treated were inflicted by the police. While violence against property received a great

“Make no mistake, if these politically motivated charges against organizers are not defeated, police will seek to use them against organizers in all sectors of our movement.”

deal of coverage, violence against people - broken bones, cracked heads and eyes filled with pepper spray - has yet to feature prominently in any mainstream media. Our teams of medics witnessed and treated people who had been struck in the head by police batons, had lacerations from police shields and had been trampled by police horses.”

Over the weekend, there were 1090 arrests, of whom 113 were released without charges on the street, 714 were held for breach of the peace and released within 72 hours, and 263 released with pending

charges.

Around 20 people still remain in custody. While the exact numbers and charges of some of those still being held in detention are unclear at this time, we know that 17 people are facing a variety of trumped up and politically-motivated allegations including conspiracy.

At the time of writing (July 9), four have been released with stringent bail conditions including house arrest; one was denied bail; and others are awaiting bail hearings over the next 1-2 weeks.

These seventeen people are our friends. They come from towns and cities across Ontario and Quebec and are respected and committed activists for a multitude of causes such as environmental justice, women's rights, economic justice, antiwar, Indigenous rights, queer and trans liberation, and migrant justice. They envision and embody worlds rooted in love, justice, freedom, and self-determination. They are also known in their communities as legal workers, students, animal lovers, childcare providers, and academic researchers. Many

were targeted and arrested, including at gunpoint, in pre-emptive raids before the protests even began.

We remain steadfast in standing by our friends. Targeting organizers is intended to weaken our thriving social and environmental justice movement, to isolate effective and vocal community activists, and to criminalize dissent against the violent policies of the G20 that perpetuate environmental degradation, militarization, labor exploitation, theft of Indigenous land and resources, and misery for the world's majority. This escalating attack on certain

individuals and groups is intended to intimidate and silence us all in our various movements and communities across Canada. Make no mistake, if these politically motivated charges against organizers are not defeated, police will seek to use them against organizers in all sectors of our movement.

A recent Toronto open letter against police state tactics with prominent signatories calls for a full campaign to defend the civil rights of those facing excessive charges. The Asian Canadian labor Alliance – Ontario Chapter is demanding

the immediate release of all detainees still being held, and an end to the persecution and daily criminalization of Indigenous, migrants, and marginalized communities.

We encourage our allies to build on this growing solidarity within our diverse social movements to free our friends and demand that charges be dropped against all G8/G20 arrestees, and to keep organizing for liberation for all people, especially those who daily bear the brunt of police, state, and corporate oppression.

They cannot jail our hearts.

G8/G20, They Few, We Many: Solidarity with the Toronto Arrestees

June 2010 brought thousands upon thousands of dedicated activists to the streets of Toronto to protest and confront the G8/G20, as “world leaders” conspired to further destroy our communities and the world around us for the sake of power and profit. Residents of Toronto and activists from all over Canada and the world were met by an army of police officers with a budget of \$1 billion to fund their campaign of repressive violence, fear and intimidation. This campaign was designed to sweep the streets of anyone daring to speak out against the destructive policies perpetuated by the G8/G20 and to scare people away from organizing resistance to these policies.

Not content with attacking people in the streets and arresting nearly 1100 protesters, the Canadian government also attacked the very ideas of community and organizing by arresting 17 prominent community organizers from around Canada and charging them with conspiracy. Those who have been released from jail face harsh bail conditions that prevent them from associating with people in their communities and from exercising their rights to organize and voice their dissent. This attempt at breaking soli-

arity amongst and with the accused must not and will not be successful.

Around two years earlier and 1300 kilometers to the west, the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota experienced similar repression and attacks by the state during the 2008 Republican National Convention. Prior to the convention, police preemptively arrested eight anarchist organizers, now known as the RNC 8, through a series of raids and targeted grabs. During the convention, the police attacked thousands of protesters who had taken to the streets, ultimately arresting 818 people.

In July 2010, the RNC 8 and their supporters are still gearing up for trial, still fighting back against the state's attempts to disrupt our organizing and resistance. The state initially charged the RNC 8 with conspiracy “in the furtherance of terrorism,” but our resistance exposed the political motivations behind these charges and forced the prosecutor to drop them. Our organizing will continue to support the RNC 8 as they endure a trial that could last up to two months. Our solidarity will continue to defend not only these eight defen-

dants, but the rights of all of us to associate with each other, organize with each other, and resist the policies that aim to destroy our communities and our world.

The parallels between our experiences over the last two years and those of people fighting back in Toronto are clear. We are all part of the same struggle for a better world. We are all affected by state repression. And we all face the same enemies regardless of which side of which artificial border we find ourselves on.

We stand in solidarity with everyone struggling against state repression in Toronto. We denounce the Canadian government and all its agents for their violence in the service of the rich and powerful.

And as local organizers are left to deal with any summit's aftermath, it is important to remember that we are still many, and the state still consists of but a few self-proclaimed leaders. By leveraging our collective power, all of us can take direct control of our lives and defend all those facing government attack.

With love and solidarity,
The RNC 8 Defense Committee

The Belgrade Six Are Free!

In June, the Belgrade High Court acquitted a group of six anarchists because of the prosecution inability to prove its case. The six were accused of causing general danger by throwing Molotov cocktails at the Greek Embassy.

The judge decided that they were free and innocent, declaring, “The basis for acquittal is the legal, not political. It is not proven that the accused committed the crime.” The judge went on to explain in a brief explanation that there is no evidence that Ratibor Trivunac, Tadej Kurepa, Nikola Mitrovi, Ivan Savi, Sanja Dojki and Ivan Vulovi caused a general risk throwing three Molotov cocktails at the

Greek Embassy.

Members of the Belgrade Six, who were all part of an organization called the Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative, were originally indicted for international terrorism, but this was later changed. The group spent more than half a year fighting the charges before they were thrown out.

“The trial has confirmed what we already knew, that this country kidnapped us for political reasons and kept us in jail for 6 months. For total of six of us we have been in prison more than 1,000 days,” said Tadej Kurepa.

“They showed us now 'we can keep you 6 months without any evidence', which is

seen in court, the only thing they were not allowed to do because it is so clear that there are no grounds. They didn't dare at the end to condemn us, but they did what they wanted - they kept us 6 months in jail with no contact with friends. What they didn't achieve is to break our organization”, said Trivunac.

The first next steps of Anarcho-Syndicalist Initiative will be publishing of the book in which shall be, according Ratibor Trivunac, find all documents from the trial. As he says, it will show that the trial against them was politically motivated.

Greek Anarchist Nikos Maziotis Goes on Hunger Strike

Nikos Maziotis, an anarchist and member of the Greek guerrilla group, Revolutionary Struggle, has gone on hunger strike. Maziotis and six others were arrested in April after a series of raids in Athens and charged with membership of the organization.

Revolutionary Struggle emerged in September 2003, targeting courthouses, banks and police stations. In 2006, the group attempted the political assassination of the Cultural Minister and less than a year later claimed responsibility for a rocket-propelled grenade attack against the U.S. Embassy in Athens. The group escalated its attacks in 2009 after the police murdered Alexandros Grigoropoulos, a 15-year old anarchist, on December 6, 2008. The murder also caused a rebellion that lasted more than three weeks before being squashed.

On March 10, 2010, Athens police engaged in a shootout with members of the Revolutionary Struggle, who were attempting to expropriate a vehicle. Lambros Fountas was shot and killed during the con-



frontation. The other alleged member of the group was able to escape. Further investigation lead police to the other members of the group.

After their arrests, three of the six sus-

pected members of Revolutionary Struggle - Nikos Maziotis, Panayiota Roupa and Costas Gournas have publicly accepted "political responsibility" for the actions of the group. Sarantos Nikitopoulos, Vangelis Stathopoulos and Christoforos Kortesis have denied membership in the organization and have stated they are being railroaded because of they are anarchists and support their comrades.

Maziotis has been labeled the leader of the organization by the media. He was sentenced to 15 years in jail in 1999 for having planted a bomb outside the Development Ministry two years earlier. The bomb did not go off and Maziotis's fingerprint was found on the device. He admitted in court to planting the bomb. On appeal, his sentence was reduced to five years but he served just over three before being released.

On July 17, supporters of Nikos received a letter from him declaring his intentions to go on hunger strike. Below is the letter he sent out explaining to reasons for his actions.

FREQUENTLY USED

Acronyms/ Terms

ABCF: Anarchist Black Cross Federation - anti-authoritarian federation of ABC groups who support and defend PP/POWs.

ABC-BG: Branch Group - ABCF group with more responsibilities than a SG.

ABC-SG: Support Group - ABCF group with fewer responsibilities than a BG.

AIM: American Indian Movement - above ground revolutionary organization of Native Americans.

Anarchism: Free or libertarian socialism. Anarchists are opposed to government, the state, and capitalism. Therefore, simply speaking, anarchism is a no government form of socialism. Types of anarchists include: Anarcho-Communist, Anarcho-Syndicalist, Autonomist, Collectivist, Individualists, and Mutualists.

BLA: Black Liberation Army - revolutionary Black clandestine formation formed to defend the Black community and the BPP, inactive since the '80s.

BPP: Black Panther Party - above ground Black revolutionary group seeking Black political power, disbanded in the mid-'70s.

FALN: *english translation:* Armed Forces of National Liberation - revolutionary clandestine group fighting for Puerto Rican independence.

FC: Federation Council - decision-making body of the ABCF.

MOVE: Not an acronym, the name of an organization based in Philadelphia whose members are committed to the teachings of John Africa. Their belief is in "life."

PC: Prisoner's Committee - rotating body of 5 PP/POWs on the ABCF's FC.

PP/POWs: Political Prisoners and/or Prisoners of War. (See page 1.)

Self-Defense: The legal act of protecting one's life or the life of another with the idea/purpose of self-determination and independence. Armed self-defense is relative to the ABCF, specifically in the U.S., in that as the organization grows, so too grows the need to protect ourselves from the armed aggressor of the state, right wing, and other ideological opponents. (Firearms training as preparation for self-defense are legal activities within the confines of the U.S.)

Self Determination: The right by virtue of which all peoples are entitled freely to determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic cooperation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of their own means of subsistence.

SDS: Students for a Democratic Society - left student group founded in the '60s.

The Update: This is a quarterly publication of the ABCF.

WUO: Weather Underground Organization - first the Weathermen, later known as the WUO, evolved out of the SDS as an underground formation of primarily white anti-imperialist revolutionaries from the student movement.

(The Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF) produces the Revolutionary Political Dictionary with these and other expanded definitions of political terms. Available from Los Angeles ABC for \$1 and two 43 cents stamps.)

“The treatment reserved by the state for the imprisoned revolutionaries and its political enemies is standard: Revanchist actions, sadism, physical and psychological violence, disrespect toward human dignity, indifference for health, for bodily integrity, for human life itself.

Because the security of the state and the regime, the denial of freedom is above all - above life itself and “human rights”.

[Actually they continue to deny AND provide freedom. Even our blinders are provided.]

For the state officials, the political and financial elite and the rich, “human rights” only concern themselves and their class-alike.

They do not concern the people, the poor, the impoverished, the workers, the unemployed, the veterans of work, the migrants, those digging through the garbage of street markets to eat.

Nor do they concern the imprisoned - social- prisoners, the vast majority of which comes from the poor, popular classes and

the lives of which is worth absolutely nothing for the system.

And of course, [human rights] do not concern revolutionaries or political prisoners either, for which the system has always attempted their physical and ethical extermination.

In this context, my partner and comrade Panagiota Roupa and myself, both of which are members of Revolutionary Struggle, are denied the right of prison visits thanks to the attorney of the prison of Korydallos, who rejects “for security reasons” my visit to the maternity clinic “Alexandra” to visit my partner, who will bring our son to the world - the youngest political prisoner of the greek “democracy”.

She is also rejecting for the same “security reasons” my application to visit the female prisons of Korydallos, as my comrade is unable due to her condition to visit the male prisons herself, as it is supposedly customary until now.

Demanding, therefore, the “obvious”, as a partner and father to visit my partner-

comrade and our sons, I am going on hunger strike from July 15th in order for my following two demands to be met:

1. To be transferred for a visit to the maternity clinic “Alexandra” on July 25th, in order to visit my partner Panagiota Roupa and our son, since the childbirth has been planned with a Caesarean for July 24th, while she will remain in the clinic for a few days after that and

2. That it is me who gets transferred for visits to the female prisons for the first period after the childbirth due to the unavoidable inability of my partner and our son to move.

As much as the repressive mechanisms believe that by imprisoning us they will get done with us, they are wrong. Either inside, or outside prisons the struggle for us is a matter of honor and dignity; it will continue.

Revolutionary struggle continues.
NIKOS MAZIOTIS”

Atenco Prisoners Free!

The twelve Mexican political prisoners seized in the aftermath of the 2006 Atenco uprising have been released following a sensational high court ruling. Judges ruled that not only was there no evidence to sustain the prosecution’s case but also that the charges the twelve faced – organized kidnapping – didn’t even exist in Mexican law.

The victory was celebrated by activists in Mexico and around the world who have relentlessly campaigned for justice over the last four years. Outside the courthouse, Trini del Valle, wife of one of the prisoners,

Ignacio del Valle, told the gathered crowd from the Popular Front in Defense of the Land (FPDT) and the Justice and Peace Committee for Atenco, “I see tears of happiness in the eyes of my compañeros and I would like to say thank you to everyone, thank you to the Mexican people and international solidarity. The federal and state governments are not invincible!”

The announcement of the ruling led to an impromptu town festival, while hundreds of locals and activists established a vigil outside the prison holding Ignacio del Valle Medina, Felipe Álvarez and Héctor

Galind. There, they waited for the release of the prisoners behind a giant banner proclaiming “Welcome, compañeros, to your town”.

As the High Court judges assembled on Tuesday 29th June, international campaigners staged solidarity demos in Spain, Germany, the US, New Zealand and Britain. In London, activists from across the UK assembled outside the Mexican embassy and leafleted passers-by while blasting out Mexican revolutionary tunes

Dirty Protest Begins Again in Ireland for Political Status

The following communication was released from the Irish Prisoners of War held captive in Maghaberry jail. The words speak for themselves and we encourage others to support these comrades in their demand for political status.

“After having exhausted every other avenue available to us, we the POWs have been forced to engage in a protest to bring about an end to the degrading and inhuman conditions we find ourselves being subjected to.

“Our protest began after Mass on Easter Sunday when we secured the recreation room and erected barricades to prevent the screws [prison warders] from gaining access. We held this position for two days with upwards of 200 screws plus RUC in riot gear taking up positions around the area we had seized.

“Prison officials (accepted in consulta-

tions) in which we agreed to hand back control with the understanding that within 48-hours further negotiations would take place within the aim of resolving our concerns. The prison service reneged on their promise of negotiations, to no surprise to ourselves.

“Since then we have refused to participate in degrading strip searches and have been covering the observation flaps on our cell doors. Since then we have wrecked our cells in response to the search team removing a POW to the boards, where he was handcuffed to a steel bed and had his clothing cut off.

“We then had to pour urine under our cell doors to get rid of it, as we have been locked down for 23 hours a day.

“In our efforts to resolve the protest we have met with the prison governors and found them uninterested to discuss in any detail the issues concerning us. We have

also met with seven delegations of the so-called Justice Committee, which comprises members of PSF [Provisional Sinn Féin] and the SDLP [Social and Democratic labor Party]. A further meeting was held with the Prison Ombudsman but to no avail.

“Having once again exhausted all avenues to us we feel the option left to us is to step up our protest.

“We call upon our families, comrades and supporters to organize again and step up their efforts outside with protests, letter-writing campaigns, leaflet drops and all other appropriate actions to highlight our plight.

“We salute your efforts to date and know we can rely on you in the future. For our part, on Sunday, June 13, 2010 we will commence a Dirty Protest.

“PRO Republican POWs
“Maghaberry jail.”



New York City ABCF Branch Group

ABCF-NYC is currently four members strong and we hope to add a member soon. We recently spent time working on how we treat each other within our collective, and in the course of that work we developed an internal anti-oppression policy. We are also actively engaged in addressing sexism and other forms of oppression outside of the collective.

Since our last report, members of the ABC have been able to visit Daniel McGowan, David Gilbert, Herman Bell, Jalil Muntaqim, Maliki Shakur Latine, Robert "Seth" Hayes, and Sekou Odinga. A request from a Sekou Odinga supporter inspired us to try to organize a system to ensure regular food packages for NY State POW's who want them through collaboration with other NYC prisoner support groups. This initiative is in its beginning stages.

In other projects on the horizon, we hope to soon launch an Anarchist Defense Fund to lend bail and emergency legal funds to anarchists detained on political charges as necessary. We also plan to begin distribution of the catalog of pamphlets by, for and/or about prisoners that we just produced after a few years of collecting material for it. We are still in the process of soliciting artwork to include in updated editions or first-time publishing of some of the essays.

The collective collaborated with the Peoples' Law Collective of NYC to educate activists about their rights during a period of active political grand juries in NYC. We are collaborating with Family and Friends of Daniel McGowan on a campaign against the Communication Management Units in Marion and Terre Haute. We co-hosted a workshop with the Malcolm X Grassroots

Movement's Political Prisoner Committee at the NYC Anarchist Book Fair on PP/POW support and movement repression. We also participated in a few fundraisers with NYC Books Through Bars.

As always, we have been hosting Political Prisoner Letter-writing Dinners on alternating Tuesdays in Brooklyn. We provide a vegan meal, an introduction to writing prisoners, information about a featured pp/ pow or group as well as pens, paper, envelopes, and stamps. The Holiday Card Writing Party co-hosted with Resistance in Brooklyn was a success again this year and we are looking forward to Running Down the Walls.

In Solidarity,
NYC Anarchist Black Cross
ABCF-NYC

15 Years of ABCF (Continued from page 3)

proposal at a NJ deli, sparked by the idea that a few bucks from a few people would not be missed by any of us, but could help someone who had given so much and yet had next to nothing, grew into a program which has lasted over 16 years and has supplied dozens of political prisoners and prisoners of war roughly \$60,000 (and counting).

Soon afterward plans we had been developing with help from prisoners, primarily Ojore Lutalo, Sundiata Acoli, Sekou Odinga, Ray Luc Levasseur, Jaan Lamaan came together in the form of a proposal to create a more tightly organized group of ABC collectives who specifically wanted to provide material support and raise awareness about Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War. We were as specific as we were vague. I think what was so different about what we set out to do was how explicit and focused we were in what we wanted to get done (support a very specific type of prisoner), yet how undefined and vague we were about who we were ideologically. Most of the larger anarchist groups (small as we all were/are) at that time spent what seemed like a great bulk of energy and time debating process and organization; theorizing theories and trying to figure out how ideas work without having actually done much aside from put out newspapers. I admit that I am over simplifying things greatly. Even if I weren't (and I know I am), there is great importance to this type of work. I will also admit I didn't want to have much to do with it. Like I said, "I have crap to do." The ABCF was our way to do it and much to our surprise, the ABCF was created in May of 1995 at a weekend meeting in Washington DC attended by several groups from the east coast and one individual supporter who was not even in an ABC group... yet! (Love you Tim!)

We were literally in disbelief that everyone in attendance agreed to join the Federation. In all honesty, some of the verbiage of our proposal was included and written in such a way as to startle and scare a few of these groups away! But even they joined. Naturally, it couldn't have been something we were involved with if there wasn't at least some degree of mud slung our way. There was a highly critical counter proposal to our proposal from at least one existing ABC group, and a letter of protest written by one known and recognized anarchist prisoner who would be excluded from collective support because he was not in prison for political acts. Oh well.

Not six months later, the Federation faced what to this day I

consider to be its closest call with collapse. By this time, NJ ABC went on a road trip through Chicago, Milwaukee and Minneapolis talking to other groups about the ABCF and seeing if they wanted to join. Some did, some did not. We were all surprised, but pleased at the unexpected and sudden growth of our new group. Knowing the other groups, and the individuals who were in the groups, we thought they did not want to go in the direction our proposal put the ABCF on. We wanted a narrow focus on supporting only those prisoners who were in prison as a result of their political activities prior to being in prison. We wanted to stay away from ideological debates about the things like capital punishment and prison abolition. Our intent was collectively agreeing on doing the work we all wanted to do, and allowing autonomy on issues we disagreed on, so long as they did not contradict one another. Observing the much wider range of work most of the other groups had been involved in to date, we did not think many of the groups would agree with this more restricted theme. Yet they joined and for a moment we thought we were wrong. We weren't wrong.

No sooner had the other groups joined and agreed to the spirit and intent of the ABCF did they set about to change it. The biggest problem for those of us who liked the ABCF for the direction it was headed, and what posed the greatest danger to what the ABCF is, and all it has done over these years, was the very thing outsiders and insiders viewed as our success-our size! Early in our existence, we were not large, but were much larger than we'd thought we would be. Sounds great? Not always... All of the groups that we were so surprised joined now outnumbered the (very) few groups we initially anticipated joining. I still sometimes wonder if this was their intent all along. It's possible I suppose, but the series



Jalil Muntaqim (center) and members of ABCF

of events which followed lead me to believe it was all just an amazing coincidence and example of our inexperience.

In October of '05, less than a half year after the formation of the ABCF we were forced to hold an emergency meeting in Oberlin, OH. Faced with a larger number of groups who wanted to change the direction and focus of the group, the few of us who had hopes of making the ABCF something different wondered what we would do to hold onto our original vision. Sitting in the parking lot of a movie theater after watching Halloween VI, we began to discuss what would become our stand. We were never alone. I'm not sure it would have made a difference if we were; but the fact that there were other groups, all who helped develop and support the idea, was a great source of motivation. In addition to groups like Lancaster ABCF and Jacksonville ABCF, the vocal minority who urged us to stay the course and remain firm were the political prisoners and prisoners of war we were in touch with. Their encouragement alone was enough for us to be filled with certainty in the face of much greater opposition. This lesson has followed me my entire life.

Five of us from NJ and Jacksonville ABCF drove west crammed in a small car. Each of us arguing over who would sit on the hump in the back seat! We showed up to the meeting the night before and decided not to stay in the crowded college house local supporters provided. We found a cheap motel and piled out of the car to cram into a tiny hotel room. If you can believe it, we still weren't entirely sure what we were going to do to maintain the current direction of the ABCF. I don't think we slept at all. Most of us stayed up most of the night talking about ideas. I'm not sure where it came from, but in those few hours in the early morning before the meeting, we locked it down.

ABCF members showed up to the college classroom the next morning. We had set aside more than ten hours a day over the next two or three days to bring this all to a conclusion. Everyone was prepared for a long weekend. Some of the people who had shown up we had never met and we immediately got the feeling they were hostile to what we were trying to do. We sat down and got to work. The opposition had the numbers to change everything our small faction had proposed. In reality and in perspective, it really wasn't a lot. But to us it was everything. The Warchest Program. The Update. A new and innovative concept to build the groups from.

They had the numbers to take it all, walk away and leave us few to start from scratch. If I had to tell you the strategy we used to do what we did, I couldn't. If I could, I wouldn't. But I will tell you it was beautiful. In a matter of a few hours, somehow, we convinced the majority to walk away and leave it all with a minority. And they did. If we thought we were amazed and surprised when everyone joined, it paled in comparison to how we felt when they walked away. Unbelievable.

Late in the 1990's a small number of ABCF members formed the Tactical Defense Caucus (TDC). The TDC hoped to raise awareness about self defense for progressive individuals and groups.

On July 4th, 1998, shortly before the formation of the caucus, Lin Neborn (age 24) and Dan "Spit" Shersty (age 20), two members of Las Vegas Anti Racist Action, were set-up, brought to a desolate area of the Nevada desert, shot and killed with shotguns by racists. Lin and Dan were not killed by coincidence, they were deliberately and specifically selected because of their anti-racist organizing.

This event made some ABCF members start to ask questions. It didn't take long to discover Lin and Dan's murders were far from being an isolated incident. Similar incidents have occurred to activists throughout history.

A few ABCF members had already had some small experience learning to employ martial arts and firearms for the purpose of self defense. Their wish to share this skill with others so that people might be better prepared should they face a similar encounter caused some to "freak". I believe that is the appropriate descriptive

word. The level of speculation, assumption and emotion even the mention of firearms caused in people was alarming. That's worth repeating. It was alarming.

The TDC was not looking to arm the masses or start the next armed front. It simply hoped to raise awareness about completely lawful options available to interested people for their own safety.

This was another step into new territory and another effort which was met with vicious opposition (both internal and external). The organization soon settled internal differences using the anti-authoritarian process developed in the ABCF constitution. External were more difficult.

The TDC persisted (at least at that time) and offered classes in pistol, shotgun and rifle to dozens of activists over the next 5 years. In addition, TDC encouraged people to seek out and get martial arts and other forms of self defense training. They made connections with other activists who were involved with and able to teach self defense techniques. Equally as important as the actual work done by the caucus was their daring to ask the question and bring up uncomfortable but important issues.

While discussing the TDC with the prisoners we were supporting, Ojore Lutalo came up with a quote which was widely used; "Security is not optional". Again, as fiercely as we believed in and espoused personal and political freedom, the ability to protect one's self from violence is an individual responsibility we can not gloss over. I believe that to this day.

The TDC has been dormant for more than 6 years, but it's short existence turned a new page and gave a voice to an important issue which, to that point, was largely ignored. The work of the TDC is referenced to this day by members of the activist community who wish to openly discuss issues of self defense.

This could go on and on with stories and events we faced in the first ten years or so of the ABCF. It was never easy. There have been death threats, whole groups formed with the intent of making us look bad, other groups sending what amounts to spies to hang around us and make reports, ridiculous mistakes on our part, attempts to marginalize and question if we do anything at all, while at the same time trying to say what we are doing will destroy the anarchist movement. The Director of the FBI named us specifically as a domestic terrorist group in front of congress, other anarchists calling for public condemnation and alienation of the ABCF, members serving time in jail for their participation in legal protests, phone calls from the FBI, roadside stops set up for an ABCF member by local police and FBI, an FBI informant trying for three years to join the group and/or encouraging an ABCF member to commit felonies. Through it all we have resisted temptation to go astray and overcome each adversity in time. Each of these could take a page or more to explain and would be well worth the space.

I need to end at some point. I was asked to write something about what it was like starting the ABCF and if I thought it would make it 15 years. Abso-freaking-lutely. In 2001 while on an ABCF trip to Arizona, I sat down with a long time anarchist activist who was surprised we were still around after 6 years. He asked me if I thought the ABCF would always be around. My immediate answer was yes. As long as I was around and even if it were only me, there would be an ABCF. The truth is I haven't been an active member of the ABCF in more than five years. I have not been to a meeting in probably nearly 8 years. The fact that after 15 years the ABCF continues on, even after all its founding members are gone and is still on the difficult path we set back then says a great deal. The fact that there are other members, unknown to those of us who started the group, who feel as strongly about its mission as we did says a great deal. More than anything, it says that the work we set out to do then is still needed. Political prisoners and prisoners of war, due to the circumstances their sacrifice require, continue to need assistance to meet simple, daily needs. Who will help? If not you, who? If not now, when?

Until all are free.

\$60,000 Raised Through the Warchest Program!

SUPPORT THE ABCF WARCHEST

The ABCF has initiated a program designed to send monthly checks to PP/POWs who have been receiving insufficient, little, or no financial support during their imprisonment. PP/POWs requesting funds complete an application of financial questions. When the ABCF has collected sufficient funds to send out another monthly check, the applications are reviewed by a rotating body of PP/POWs called the Prisoner Committee, who make a judgement on which applicant is in the most financial need. There is also an emergency fund designed to immediately send checks to those PP/POWs in need of one-time or emergency assistance.

Founded in 1994, the Warchest has provided consistent and reliable financial aid, serving a much-neglected comradely function. Since its inception, the ABCF has raised over \$60,000 with just this one program. All funds raised go directly to the political prisoners, for which the program is designed. Despite our success, our comrades are still in dire need of funds. Endorse this program by giving a monthly or one-time donation to increase the number of prisoners being supported monthly. A financial report is published that documents all money received and the prisoner it was sent to. The prisoners' addresses are also printed so that endorsers may write and hold us accountable.



Send cash, checks or mos made to TIM FASNACHT to:

Philly ABCF • P.O Box 42129 • Philadelphia, PA 19101 • timABCF@aol.com

FUNDS IN	2009	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
LA ABCF	2110	0	10	200	0	0	0
PHL ABCF	600	50	50	50	50	50	50
EZE, NJ	200	0	0	0	0	0	0
TORONTO ABCF	500	0	80	0	0	0	0
JAX ABCF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NJ ABCF	0	0	0	0	25	0	45
NYC ABCF	750	60	60	60	60	60	60
Denver ABCF	0	400	0	0	0	0	0
ALBQ ABCF	84	0	0	0	0	10	10
PAC	140	0	0	0	0	0	0
LA RDTW	310	0	0	0	0	0	0
NYC RDTW	650	0	0	0	0	0	0
TORONTO RDTW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pelican Bay RDTW	250	0	0	0	0	0	0
Portland RDTW	175	0	0	0	0	0	0
WEST. MASS. RDTW	107	0	0	0	0	0	0
ANON	135	0	0	0	0	0	0
AARON VIDAVER	0	0	0	500	0	0	0
T. SHIROSAKI	0	0	0	100	0	0	0
BEN BROWNING	0	0	0	161	0	0	0
CHRIS S/IN	24	0	0	0	0	0	0
JIM M/PHILLY	107	0	0	0	0	0	0
JOHN/ARIZONA	20	25	20	20	0	0	0
TED HEXTER	0	0	0	0	10	0	0
JAGUAR PRESS	0	0	0	0	40	0	0
ENRIQUE/SPAIN	36	0	0	0	0	0	0
HENRY/SPAIN	35	0	0	0	0	0	0
ANGEL CASTRO	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUZY SUBWAY	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
DAN SHALLEY	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHANE ANDREW	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	6468	535	220	1091	185	120	165

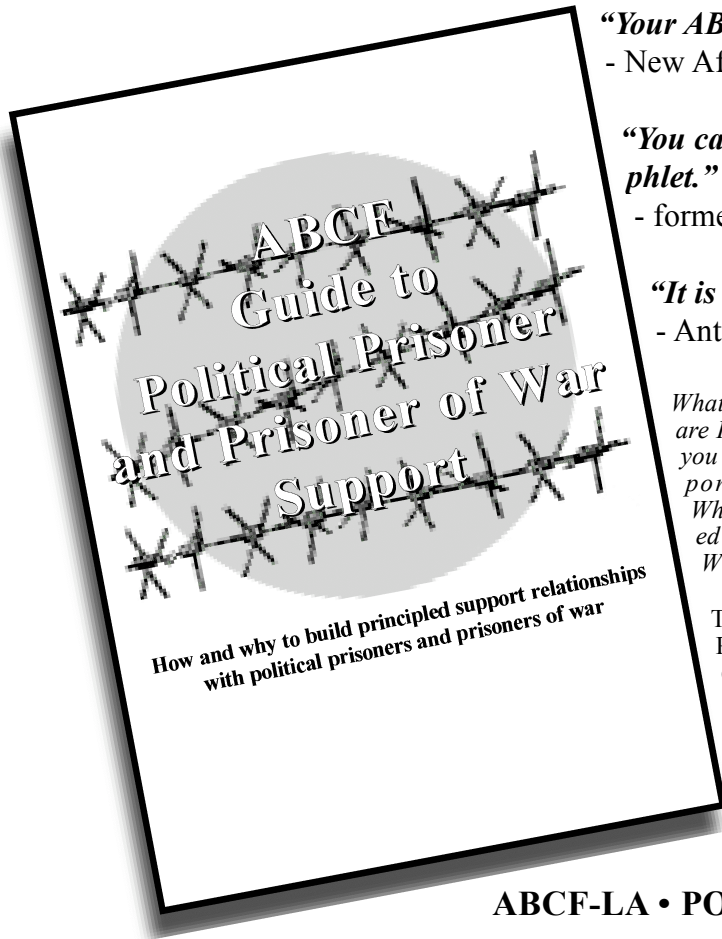
FUNDS OUT	2009	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
SEKOU KAMBUI	360	30	30	30	30	30
RUSSELL SHOATZ	360	30	30	30	30	30
JOSEPH BOWEN	360	30	30	30	30	30
HANIF BEY	360	30	30	30	30	30
HERMAN BELL	360	30	30	30	30	30
SEKOU ODINGA	360	30	30	30	30	30
RUCHELL MAGEE	360	30	30	30	30	30
ALVARO HERNANDEZ	360	30	30	30	30	30
MALIKI LATINE	360	30	30	30	30	30
TSUTOMU SHIROSAKI	360	30	30	30	30	30
VERONZA BOWERS	360	0	0	0	0	0
ABDUL AZEEZ	50	0	0	0	0	0
OJORE LUTALO	0	1000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,700	1300	300	300	300	300

FUNDS IN	
1994	351
1995	3860
1996	4143
1997	3544
1998	7643
1999	5814
2000	3514
2001	5290
2002	2873
2003	1785
2004	UNACC*
2005	4439
2006	3268
2007	4312
2008	3448
2009	6468
2010	2316
TOTAL	62948

FUNDS OUT	
1994	120
1995	2796
1996	4308
1997	4588
1998	6412
1999	5191
2000	4544
2001	4637
2002	4320
2003	1300
2004	UNACC*
2005	2620
2006	2880
2007	3471
2008	3750
2009	3700
2010	2500
TOTAL	57137

FUNDS REMAINING: \$5274

(*Funds unaccounted for due to unreported funds from Jacksonville ABCF)



“Your ABCF Guide to PP/POW Support is great, PERIOD!”

- New Afrikan POW Sundiata Acoli

“You can see many of our concerns addressed in this pamphlet.”

- former Puerto Rican POW Carmen Valentin

“It is extremely well thought out and put together.”

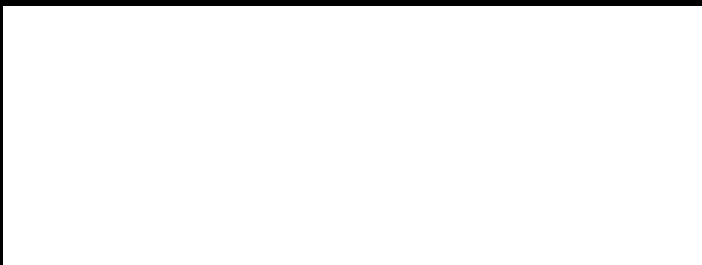
- Anti-Imperialist PP Tom Manning

What's the ABC? What's the ABCF? Who are Political Prisoners? Who are Prisoners of War? Where are they? Why make a criteria? What do you mean by 'documentation' and how do I get it? What kinds of support do Political Prisoners need? How should I go about my work? What can PP/POWs get in prison? What do I need to know if I want to visit? Can I bring them food packages? What about clothes? What do you mean by 'principled support'? How do I get involved?

This is a practical guide compiled by Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War themselves, based on concrete history and work experience. It will help answer all of the above questions and more. The ABCF guide to PP/POW includes definitions that were democratically agreed upon at an international tribunal, specific procedures for obtaining documentation on PP/POW's, information on visiting, phone contact, food/clothing packages, and the working policies of the ABCF in our work to support PP/POW's. Send \$1 and two stamps to:

ABCF-LA • PO Box 11223 • Whittier, CA • 90603

**LA-ABCF
Branch Group
PO Box 11223
Whittier, CA 90603**



“This work is not done for glory, but because we believe in mutual aid.”