

# Break the Chains

Newsletter of the Break the Chains prisoner-support group - Issue #18/Spring 2004



Inside this issue: *The Problem with Anarchist Ego* by Jeff "Free" Luers; *Raise The Fist: January 24* by Sherman Austin; *Gender Violence & the Prison Industrial Complex* by Incite! & Critical Resistance; *Surviving Abuse Inside Oregon's Prisons* by Tori Nevarez; *What Constitutes a Political Prisoner? – The Ongoing Suppression of American Indian Activism* by Lawrence Sampson, Native Youth Movement's *Statement on Anna Mae*, and much more!

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Break the Chains prisoner support group was formed in 2001 to deal with the increasing level of police and state repression directed at the growing anti-capitalist movement on the West Coast. As the repression intensifies, it is more important than ever to support those individuals who have been kidnapped by the state due to their beliefs and actions. While it is important to support political prisoners from around the world, we believe it is necessary to focus our energy and limited resources on those imprisoned in our own region. Although we are primarily an anarchist collective, we are not limiting our support to anarchist prisoners alone. Freedom fighters, eco-defenders, class warriors and individuals who have been framed or wrongly imprisoned for self-defense, all deserve our solidarity. Our goal is to provide financial, emotional, and other forms of support, to our comrades and allies in prison - or facing imprisonment - in our own region. This includes corresponding with prisoners, raising funds through benefits and other means, and spreading awareness by publishing their written works and facts on their situations. We also organize public events such as conferences, forums, lectures, and demonstrations against racism, patriarchy, imperialism, state repression, and the prison system; and for equality, freedom, self-determination, and revolutionary struggle.*

(This mission statement is outdated and is currently under construction. Please bear with us until a revised document is completed.)

Contact information:

**BREAK THE CHAINS**

**PO Box 12122**

**Eugene, OR 97440**

Website: [www.breakthechains.net](http://www.breakthechains.net)

General email: [breakthechains02@yahoo.com](mailto:breakthechains02@yahoo.com)

Women's Committee:

[breakthechains03@yahoo.com](mailto:breakthechains03@yahoo.com)

## ORDERING INFORMATION

Subscriptions to this newsletter are free to all prisoners in California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and to women prisoners of any state. One-year subscriptions to the newsletter are \$6 to other prisoners, and \$12 to people on the outside. Individual copies are \$2 postage paid. Please contact us for information on how to order back issues or copies in bulk. Checks [made out to "Break the Chains"], and well-concealed cash, can be sent to the address above. We also accept payments in postage.

Welcome to issue #18 of the *Break the Chains* newsletter. There has been a flurry of activity lately. Our collective membership has more than doubled since the last issue. We're grateful that former prisoner Thomas Tripp, who was released in November, has joined our ranks on the outside. As BTC grows we're able to broaden our focus. Here's an overview of some of our recent activities:

### Correspondence Projects

We are finishing up the next edition of the Prisoner Correspondence Project. There will now be one pamphlet for general prisoner correspondence, and another pamphlet for women prisoners who would prefer to hear only from other women. We'll have the pamphlets available for the Annual Anarchist Book Fair, held in March in San Francisco, CA. Everyone who submitted their bio for this project will receive a copy.

### Political Prisoners Birthday Project

We are compiling the birthdates for US political prisoners. The information is going to be placed on a calendar on the Break the Chains website. We will notify supporters by email when a prisoner's birthday is approaching, requesting that people send cards or gifts depending on each prisoner's wishes.

### Women's Committee

BTC has signed on to the Incite!/Critical Resistance statement on Gender Violence and the Prisoner Industrial Complex. Check it out in the centerfold. We look forward to more correspondence with women at Coffee Creek so that we can be even more effective at supporting and assisting them in their struggles. We continue to do support work for CA political prisoner Sara Olson and we hope to do more support for CA women prisoners in the future.

### Support for Jeff "Free" Luers

Members of BTC recently wrote a sign-on statement supporting Free in his appellate process. The statement clearly outlines why Free is a political prisoner, why his sentence is unjust, and why progressive-minded people should demand that his 22+ year sentence be drastically reduced. So far, over 100 people have signed on to this statement, including Mumia Abu-Jamal, Chellis Glendinning Rita "Bo" Brown, Christine "Chrystos" Smith, Howard Zinn, Stan Goff, William Blum, and other academics, authors, and activists. View the statement yourself at <http://freefreenow.org/signon.html> or write to us for a copy.

BTC and Friends of Free will be putting on a major event in support of Free here in Eugene on June 12, commemorating the 3<sup>rd</sup> year since he was given his outlandish sentence for setting fire to 3 SUVs to protest the destruction of the environment. Former political prisoner and MOVE activist Ramona Africa has agreed to come and speak and organizing is underway.

## International Platform Against Isolation

The second annual Symposium of the International Platform Against Isolation, was held in Florence, Italy, on the weekend of December 19-21. Prisoner support and human rights activists from around the world converged to discuss how to fight state repression and improve the living conditions of political prisoners. Break the Chains was invited to participate in the symposium but we were unable to attend for financial reasons. We supported the efforts of the International Platform Against Isolation (IPAI) by writing our own statement of solidarity with IPAI, and by asking North American political/politicized prisoners to issue statements of support for the symposium and/or to hunger strike on the weekend which the symposium was held. Over a dozen prisoners responded to our call to action by writing solidarity statements and/or fasting. The solidarity statements will be published in the magazine *Isolation*, the annual publication of the IPAI. The third annual IPAI Symposium will be held next December in Greece and some of us plan to attend.

## Indigenous Solidarity

In December we showed the movie *Keepers of the Fire*, which documents the role women have played in various Native struggles in Canada and the US, at a benefit for Canadian Native rights activists.

In February, members of the newly formed Oregon chapter of the Native Youth Movement came to Eugene for a BTC-sponsored fundraiser for NYM activist Hawk, who's facing time for his involvement in protecting Native lands in British Columbia. Three NYM-produced documentaries were shown about their struggles against the Sun Peak ski resort. Be sure to check out the NYM essay on Anna Mae Aquash in this issue of our newsletter.

We consider solidarity with First Nations revolutionaries to be of tremendous importance and this is reflected in our support work for American Indian prisoners Teewahne Sahme and David "Looks Away" Scalera here in Oregon, Eddie Hatcher in North Carolina, Byron Chubbuck in Kansas, and others.

**This work is overwhelming at times but we're making a serious effort to build a solid prisoner support/anti-repression organization and are happy with some of our recent gains. In addition, we feel that the Break the Chains conference in August of 2003 helped broaden interest in prison issues and prisoner support on the outside. We are networking with more people than ever and are looking forward to a busy summer!**

For those of you on the inside who would like to support our work, please consider donating stamps or writing a piece for the newsletter. For our readers on the outside, please consider making a financial contribution, subscribing to the newsletter or purchasing a copy of *Chrystos' Fire Power* from us - proceeds benefit Break the Chains and prisoner support work.

**In solidarity,**

**- BTC Editorial Crew**

## BTC MAILORDER

We finally have a catalogue of literature available. Most of the literature is of the anarchist, prison abolitionist, and anti-imperialist variety. We sincerely apologize to those who previously requested our catalogue but did not receive one. Some of our literature is free to prisoners. Most items are cheap. Though no one's request will be denied, please send us a few stamps when ordering if you can.

## PEN-PAL PROGRAM

We publish a pen-pal manual, complete with contact info and short biographies for prisoners looking for correspondence - and an introductory essay for those on the outside interested in corresponding with prisoners - on an annual basis. The 2004 pen-pal manual is available from us upon request for free (or a small donation). Write to the Pen-Pal Committee, care of Break the Chains, for more info.

## A few friends & allies

### Prison Art Project

PO Box 31574

San Francisco, CA 94131-0574

Website: [www.prisonart.org](http://www.prisonart.org)

They publish the wonderful Prison Art Newsletter, which is free to prisoners, and they sell prisoner arts and crafts over the internet. Contact them if you'd like to receive their newsletter, or if you want to sell your arts and crafts over the internet.

### Howl for Freedom

(Friends of Jeff Luers)

PO Box 3

Eugene, OR 97440

Website: [www.freefreenow.org](http://www.freefreenow.org)

This is the primary support group for eco-defense political prisoner Jeff Luers, AKA Free, who's serving an outrageous 22-year prison sentence for burning three SUVs to protest the destruction of the environment. Stickers, publications, and other literature about him are available through them and us.

## Prison Abolition Conference

August 13 through 15, 2004-  
University of Illinois, Chicago  
Let's network and build support for  
our incarcerated brothers and sisters!

Contact Human Action Community Organization,  
South Side Citizens' Coalition, 16028 W. Halsted,  
Harvey IL (708.339.7902) or South Chicago ABC  
Zine Distro, PO BOX 721, Homewood IL 60430.

# *The Problem with Anarchist Ego*

## By Jeff "Free" Luers, March 1, 2004

It seems that more and more anarchist publications are becoming breeding grounds for self-promoting pompous drivel; Perpetuating a cycle of discord not only among fellow anarchists, but others who could be our allies if only our heads weren't stuck so far up our asses.

The problem is not so much a lack of ideas as it is a superiority complex. It is so easy to turn on those we disagree with because their view of a utopian society isn't like ours whereas it is much harder to actually challenge the state.

Anarchists, leftists and activists of various sorts all seem to have one thing in common these days: the ability to direct their energy at one another rather than focus their collective energy on the source of all our misery.

How easily do we forget? This is exactly what the state wants us to do - fight amongst ourselves. All the bickering has made us a stagnant and ineffective farce. We are so busy criticizing each other that we fail to challenge the state or even attempt to create an alternative, relegating ourselves to obscure political theory and unintelligible banter. Perhaps, most shameful of all: we fail to criticize ourselves.

I was very disappointed to read an article recently printed in *Green Anarchy*, "The left-handed path of repression". It was a case in point of how easy it is to completely dismiss others, and fail to even address an important issue - likely, because (gasp!) they were critical of anarchists, perhaps even the author of said article.

I happened to live in Eugene at the time the author refers to as when the "leftist emotional plague swept through the Eugene anarchist milieu..." I had a unique privilege to be accepted by all the different factions and circles of the Eugene activist scene. Thus, being able to drink beer and have discussions with the group of women and men that challenged the rhetoric and sexism inherent in the Eugene anarchist scene at the time and then going off to party with the "hardcore" anarchist element - which I'm sure still includes some members of the GA collective. The ability to not be labeled by either side as "the enemy" gave me a unique perspective on the situation and also forced me into the mediator role on occasion.

There are 3 sides to every story - A, B and the truth.

Without getting into names or details, I was very involved with various elements of resistance in Eugene. Most organizing was done by a handful of white men with some rare exception. These men were outspoken and had a very dominant presence - which I don't necessarily believe is a bad trait.

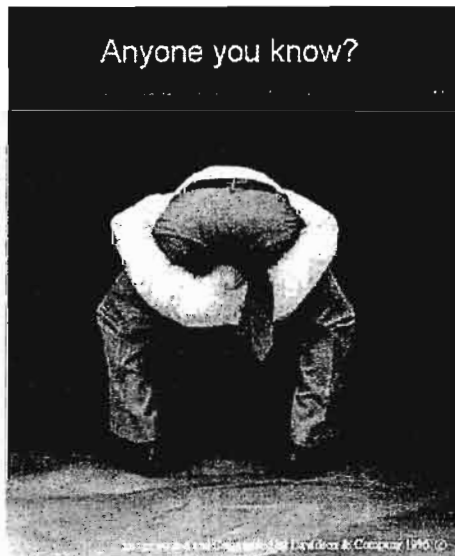
On the other side, there was a group of women and men who were tired of the one-way slant of these men. They sought to focus attentions on issues of sexism, racism and other community issues. Let's be realistic - in a predominately white college town with a large activist community centered in the heart of the poor district and largely organized by a small handful of white men, the conditions are ripe for sexism, racism and elitism.

The issues these women and men raised were legitimate issues, echoed by me on more than one occasion. But, of course, there was bullshit coming from both sides, which created a dramatic season of Eugene 90210. But, progress was made, a couple of worthless pricks were run out of town, people grew and suddenly a community was trying to evolve. Women were empowered, men were frightened and nothing would ever be the same.

The allegations flew with cries of sexism from one side and allegations of infiltrator and provocateur from the other. Then, BAM, heads collided and we were left with an ineffective bunch of disorganized, dis-unified factions. Once again, the state is left standing.

I'm still in contact with both sides of this feud. Not a lot has changed over the years. It is disheartening and sad for such an advanced and amazing group of people to be disabled by in fighting. Sometimes, I think I'd rather live in prison than go back to Eugene.

Unfortunately, the problem is not limited to this one instance. It continues to play itself out in all of our politics. Green vs. Red. Anarchism vs. Leftism. So, I'm going to point out what I thought was obvious: It's a big world. So big, that not one of our political leanings has the solution for everyone, everywhere. At some point, if we actually succeed in our goal of smashing the



state, each of us is going to have to decide how we want to recreate our communities. I'm sure that with a world as diverse as ours, each of our communities will be different.

However, there is something standing in the way of all this, and it isn't some red commie, lefty liberal or green caveman. It is a big, well armed, well organized, powerful and deadly state. I hope that faced with this reality, we will find better uses of our time. We are going to have to learn to agree to disagree because it is going to take all our collective efforts to stop this machine and bring down the beast.

We have a long way to go with so much at stake. If our publications actually focused on tactics, alternatives, what works, what doesn't...If we worked on building bridges instead of burning them...?

I suppose this article, like so many dreams will simply become another "what if..." That's too bad because I'd really like to see us accomplish change and not just dream about it.

I'm not sure what the future holds. I don't even know when I'm getting out of prison. My sentence, much like our collective future, depends on what you do. It gets said over and over again, but we seem to all have thick heads. Only you can change things. Every single one of us has the power and ability to bring change but too often, we don't recognize our own power or we allow it to be misdirected.

We have to start in our own communities and build from there. It isn't going to work from the top down. We have to learn to work together as a diverse community and build from the bottom up. How can we hope to smash the World Bank and bring the G8 to their knees if we can't get along long enough to do it?

If we are not willing to fight together, if we are not willing to fight for each other because she's not an anarchist or because his god is different or simply because we disagree about something, then we don't have anything worth fighting for. Our revolution can't be about politics anymore. It has to be about life. It has to be about living to the fullest, sharing joy, about building and bring together sustainable communities founded on equality, freedom and respect. If that talk doesn't start with you, who's it going to start with?

**Jeff Luers**

#13797671, OSP,  
2605 State Street  
Salem, OR 97310

### **Support Camilo "Slingshot" Viveiros!**

Camilo Viveiros is a longtime social justice activist facing time for allegedly assaulting a Police Commissioner at a Republican National Convention three years ago. In the past Camilo has been involved with environmental campaigning, housing issues and community gardening in Philadelphia, New York and Boston, MA. He really needs your support. For more info e-mail [friendsofcamilo@onebox.com](mailto:friendsofcamilo@onebox.com)

## **Jeff "Free" Luers: Letter to the Total Liberation Fest**

We are spiraling toward our destruction as war, poverty and environmental crisis claim lives directly throughout the world. Never before has the human race been confronted by so many threats and they are each of our own making. Haven't you noticed the strange weather patterns, that power has become completely centralized in the hands of a dangerous few, and that they are building more and more prisons to make room for you?

The elite are riding the backs of the poor. It is our sweat and blood that makes their profits-so they can have the finest life has to offer. Meanwhile, it is our water and soil they are polluting, our neighborhoods that they build their incinerators to burn their toxins. It is our family members they imprison and we are the recruiting grounds for their war. We are always the first to suffer and the first to die. We are fighting for the right to live. Make no mistake this is no game-the consequences are real. A war has started-one that is not of our making. We can fight or we can lose. That is your choice.

The rich and the powerful have already declared themselves the winners. They are splitting the spoils and counting their money. Waiting, watching and ready. Hidden behind the walls of their gated communities protected by metal detectors, bodyguards, armies and weapons of unimaginable destruction. They are the most protected group of people to ever walk the earth. But they live in fear because when the lights go out, when darkness falls, they know they are the target.

They have built a system so finely tuned, so delicate that one loose bolt, one slipped belt, one disgruntled worker can bring it all to a standstill. A handful of fanatics brought the world's most powerful economy to its knees. One overloaded circuit shut down the entire northeast for days. One computer virus, one saboteur, one lone gunman, one whistle blower and all it could come crashing down.

One person can be the difference. Stand up and be counted.

**Jeff "Free" Luers**

*(Editor's note: The Total Liberation Fest was held on the weekend of January 11-13 in Erie, PA. The Fest included lectures by former political prisoners Ramona Africa, Rod Coronado, Ashanti Alston, and others, and musical performances by a number of hardcore punk groups. Despite intense harassment from local authorities and the FBI, the event was a great success.)*

**A reply to Matthew Lamont's article "Government & the Prison System: A Mirror Image of Uselessness" by prisoner José Osuna**

I have to admit, Mr. Lamont did touch on some very good points, but I did not feel he was expressing a realistic image of the inmates themselves inside of these prisons, especially in the section of his article subtitled "The Belly of the Beast." But instead of sitting here and criticizing Mr. Lamont and the parts of his article that I feel were misrepresented, I will try to paint my own picture through words of my experiences within these walls and the manner in which they have affected me and molded me into the man I am today.

I am 31 years old, and I have been coming into the jail/prison system since the age of 18. I have been under the custody of the Calif. Dept of Corrections twice. My first term, I pulled a 5 year sentence, and this current term, I am giving them 8 years. During the course of both terms, I have done time all over the system, but mostly in Level 4 institutions and in the SHUs. I did a good stretch of my last term in Corcoran SHU, at the time when all the madness was going on there. I've been caught up in a lot of craziness over the years, but I choose not to get into any details about all that because I don't feel it serves a very useful purpose to do so.

Instead, let me tell you about some of the positive things that have happened to me within these most negative of places. One thing that Mr. Lamont got right was the uselessness of the system in and of itself. The only thing the system really offers anybody is time. Each man chooses what he does with that time.

I've been fortunate enough to have met many men of strong character within these walls who have opened my eyes to so much that I was ignorant of before. None of these men wore a badge, none of these men wore a cleric's collar, and none of these men was any of those volunteers that come in and stroke their own egos through their "volunteer" services such as AA or workshops. All the men that have had any type of positive impact during my incarceration were all men that wore the same prison uniform I wear.

Within these walls I have learned to have discipline in my life that I never imagined I could have. The system wants you to sit or lay in your cell, do nothing but watch TV all day and eat up all your commissary and care package food. As long as you are in that cell for the appropriate counts, that is all that matters to the system. Different comrades throughout the years have helped me find ways to put my time to good use.

The best way to do this has been through self-education. Reading! Everything from Marx to Chomsky, Subcomandante Marcos, Nietzsche, the old Roman, Marcus Aurelius, and

even some Machiavelli! I read every magazine I can get my hands on, and I subscribe to every newsletter I run across. Anarchy, socialism, capitalism, communism, imperialism, new world order, indigenous struggles, revolution—how can you choose, how can you know what to accept and what to reject if you don't educate yourself on all of it?!

That is one of the positive things you can do with the endless time this useless system gives you day after day.

As well as exercising my mind, I've discovered the satisfaction I can derive from exercising my body. No matter what your struggle, no matter what your cause, if you consider yourself a soldier for that struggle or cause, then your body is almost as important of a weapon as your mind. And by this I do not mean as a primary instrument to do violence, but as an instrument of survival. The system is better off when one is unhealthy—it literally profits from it! Daily exercise and moderation on the Top Ramen noodles and pork skins can go a long way in keeping you away from these institutional doctors and their \$5.00 co-payments for every medical visit!

It takes discipline to make time to read a couple of chapters of Bakunin instead of kicking back and watching the babes on the idiot-box, and, yes, it takes discipline to bust out a good workout instead of throwing a noodle-spread with the fellas, but your own self-discipline is one of the few things you have absolute control over within the system, so shouldn't you exercise it every chance you get?

In conclusion, I would like to say this: yes, the system is useless, but just because it is, you shouldn't be! Be useful to yourself, first and foremost, and whenever you can, be useful to the next man, especially in teaching him to be useful to himself.

**José A. Osuna #H86689,**  
CCI, PO Box 1902, 4A-1C-206  
Tehachapi, CA 93581

**Matthew "Rampage" Lamont:  
Statement of Solidarity with the  
Symposium of the International  
Platform Against Isolation**

My name is Matthew "Rampage" Lamont. I'm in Centinella State Prison in California for an alleged attempt to attack a neo-Nazi/fascist gathering with an incendiary device. I give my full solidarity to those comrades who continue to struggle in the darkest places and in the darkest of times. We are of many nationalities, but we share one thing in common – we understand the need for sacrifice. Keep strong my brothers & sisters in the prisons.

I also give my full solidarity to those participating in the symposium. You are our lifeline. Your support keeps us strong and your dedication let's us know that we are not forgotten. We pass our torch to you, the torch of sacrifice, so that our struggle will continue.

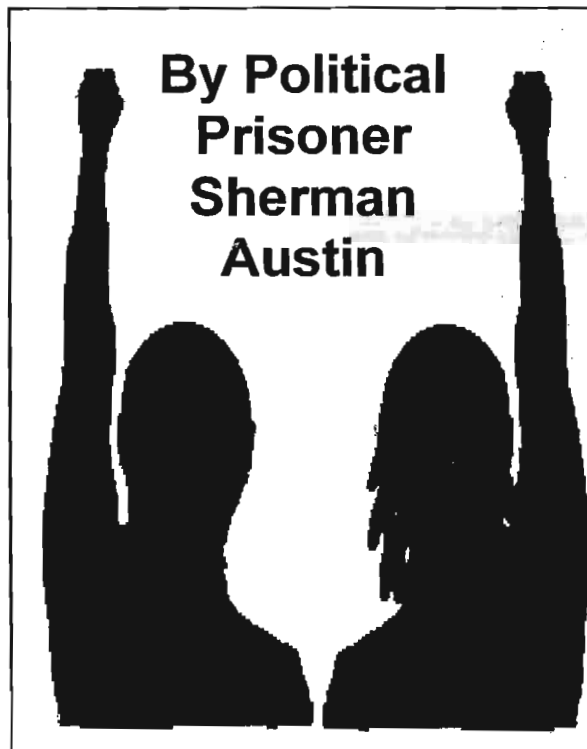
**Matthew "Rampage" Lamont #T90251**  
CSP/A5-114, PO Box 901,  
Imperial, CA 92251

# Raise the Fist: January 24

The network of terror  
Experienced a system error  
with militant packets expressing  
militant minds  
taking deadly bytes out of  
organized crime  
the keyboard like an AK  
being taken to the front-lines  
warfare at your door  
like Jan 24  
they didn't come for peace  
it wasn't some drill  
automatics and bullet proof  
vests  
they came prepared to kill  
"Are you Sherman Austin?"  
said agent John I. Pi  
we're here to let you know  
you've crossed over the  
line  
this is a matter of National  
security  
that's why our guns are  
loaded  
actually it's just because of  
Raise the Fist  
so we'll lie saying you  
wrote info on explosives  
they thought it was  
intimidating  
they thought i'd be fearing  
but little did they know  
this was just the beginning  
Raise the Fist  
back online  
after spending 13 days  
behind enemy lines  
however more than that  
had to be done  
so I started a Direct Action  
Network  
right when they thought  
they won  
chapters around the world  
from Brazil to Berlin  
RTF was growing  
now they wanted a conviction  
they had to set their example  
with their per-indictment plea  
take this or 20 years  
so we can send a message to  
"other revolutionaries"  
Ashcroft had his memo

in cahoots with the judge and  
Fienstine  
scratch the 4 months  
give him at least a year of time  
They thought it would send a  
message  
and make people afraid  
but it didn't do a damn thing  
but fuel this already burning  
rage  
Raise the Fist!  
because I know my enemy  
with first a Direct Action  
Network  
next maybe a Direct Action  
Committee

but it's amazing how things  
manifest  
to the black-top on your streets  
Raise the Fist  
first born on a website  
first getting the wire-tap  
now police with riot gear on  
horse-back  
Raise the Fist  
It don't stop here  
black youth black fatigues  
in the streets  
yes, a Direct Action Committee  
change requires struggle  
if we can't be free then there  
can't be peace



Daily in the streets patrolling  
police who keep killin'  
posted outside of courthouses  
of judges like Steven V. Wilson  
Black beret black star  
disciplined and ready  
in the words of Malcolm X  
by any means necessary  
Raise the Fist  
first seen on the computer  
screen

Revolution through  
determination  
because silence is defeat  
Raise the Fist  
you know what I mean by  
that?  
Ready for liberation  
That's why I started it 4  
years back  
it's not some buzzword, it's  
not some game  
that's probably why the FBI  
had their raid  
actions bring them fear  
with an organized community  
having control over our own  
lives  
is the real threat to National  
Security  
That's why they call it terror  
while they got their guns for  
hire  
That's why I'm one of the  
many, prisoner in the USA  
They try to stop resistance  
jail, interrogation, death, to  
any extent

but I ain't the one for that  
bring it on  
Raise the Fist!

**Sherman Austin**  
#51565-054  
Federal Correctional  
Institution  
8901 S. Wilmot Rd.,  
Tucson, AZ 85706

# Native Youth Movement Statement on Anna Mae

On Monday, December 1, 2003, John Graham was arrested in Vancouver, Canada. He is charged by the FBI with the 1975 murder of Anna Mae Pictou Aquash, a Mik'maq from Nova Scotia whose frozen body was found on the Pine Ridge reservation, South Dakota. Presently free on bail, John Graham faces extradition to the US.

At this time, NYM Vancouver feels it necessary to state its position in regards to this case.

Anna Mae has been an inspiration and example to our movement for many years. She symbolized the warrior spirit and our people's determination to resist. This is also the legacy of the American Indian Movement, to which she belonged.

It was because of this spirit that AIM was targeted by the FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTEL-PRO) in the early 1970's, and why so many AIM members in S. Dakota were killed during this period, including Anna Mae Aquash.

If, as alleged, her killing was ordered by AIM's leadership (under the pretext she was an informant), those ultimately responsible for her death are US government officials, inc. the FBI. For it was under their orders that a deadly counter-insurgency campaign was waged against AIM, which included portraying genuine movement members as informants.

This strategy was used to create paranoia and division, to turn members against one another (just as the FBI had done against the Black Panther Party). Anna Mae was herself the target of an FBI "bad jacket." FBI agents had threatened to kill her in the year prior to her death. When her body was found, despite being on an FBI wanted list, agents had her hands cut off for fingerprint analysis. During the first autopsy, the government coroner determined the cause of death to be exposure, somehow missing the bullet hole in the back of her head.

Leonard Peltier, we recall, was extradited from Vancouver in 1977 under false evidence provided to Canadian courts by the FBI. He was subsequently tried and convicted for the 1975 shoot-out at Oglala, S. Dakota, in which two FBI agents were killed. During this same incident, the FBI shot & killed AIM member Joseph Stuntz Killright.

A basic principle of any resistance movement is non-collaboration with our enemy. As Peltier recently stated in regards to the arrest of John Graham:

"When we talk of sovereignty, we must be willing to solve our own problems and not go running to the oppressor for relief... We have been and still are at odds with the most dangerous, well-funded, strongest military and political organization in the history of the world [the US government]."

We must therefore oppose the attempt to extradite John Graham to S. Dakota by US authorities, and denounce the efforts by certain individuals in our own community to facilitate this process.

In particular, we must clarify that Kelly White, a local Native radio show host who has conducted an ongoing campaign against John Graham, has never been a leader, member, or advisor to the Native Youth Movement. Furthermore, NYM Vancouver does not consider information provided by Ms. White to be credible.

In conclusion, no member of NYM was involved in the conflicts of the 1970s. We weren't there. We cannot say with certainty that John Graham did - or did not - kill Anna Mae. We have neither the information nor witnesses at our disposal to make such a decision.

What can be said is that Anna Mae Aquash, along with many others, died as a direct result of her commitment to the struggle for her people. She is an example of all we aspire to be as a resistance movement. She was a warrior, a veteran of the 71-day siege at Wounded Knee, 1973; a community worker, who helped set up schools & camps. She promoted traditional culture & spirituality. She gave her life for us, knowing all along the consequences. That is why she is called a Brave-Hearted Woman.

Whatever the result of any trials conducted in the court rooms of our oppressor, the same ones' ultimately responsible for Anna Mae's death, we will continue to advance in our movement towards victory, inspired by her memory and her spirit.

**Vancouver NYM**  
nymchapter604@hotmail.com



**W**e call social justice movements to develop strategies and analysis that address both state AND interpersonal violence, particularly violence against women. Currently, activists/movements that address state violence (such as anti-prison, anti-police brutality groups) often work in isolation from activists and movements that address domestic and sexual violence. The result is that women of color, who suffer disproportionately from both state and interpersonal violence, have become marginalized within these movements. It is critical that we develop responses to gender violence that do not depend on a sexist, racist, classist, and homophobic criminal justice system. It is also important that we develop strategies that challenge the criminal justice system and that also provide safety for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. To live violence free-lives, we must develop holistic strategies for addressing violence that speak to the intersection of all forms of oppression.

# GENDER VIOLENCE AND THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

A STATEMENT FROM CRITICAL  
RESISTANCE AND INCITE!

The anti-violence movement has been critically important in breaking the silence around violence against women and providing much-needed services to survivors. However, the mainstream anti-violence movement has increasingly relied on the criminal justice system as the front-line approach toward ending violence against women of color. It is important to assess the impact of this strategy.

Law enforcement approaches to violence against women MAY deter some acts of violence in the short term. However, as an overall strategy for ending violence, criminalization has not worked. In fact, the overall impact of mandatory arrests laws for domestic violence have led to decreases in the number of battered women who kill their partners in self-defense, but they have not led to a decrease in the number of batterers who kill their partners. Thus, the law protects batterers more than it protects survivors.

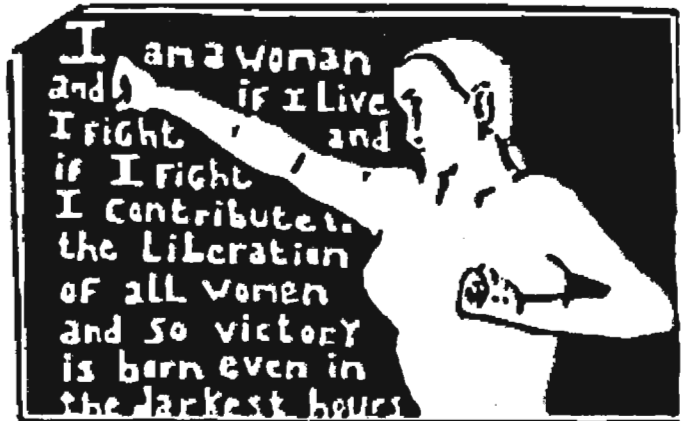
The criminalization approach has also brought many women into conflict with the law, particularly women of color, poor women, lesbians, sex workers, immigrant women, women with disabilities, and other marginalized women. For instance, under mandatory arrest laws, there have been numerous incidents where police officers called to domestic incidents have arrested the woman who is being battered. Many undocumented women have reported cases of sexual and domestic violence, only to find themselves deported. A tough law and order agenda also leads to long punitive sentences for women convicted of killing their batterers. Finally, when public funding is channeled into policing and prisons, budget cuts for social programs, including women's shelters, welfare and public housing are the inevitable side effect. These cutbacks leave women less able to escape violent relationships.

Prisons don't work. Despite an exponential increase in the number of men in prisons, women are not any safer, and the rates of sexual assault and domestic violence have not decreased. In calling for greater police responses to and harsher sentences for perpetrators of gender violence, the anti-violence movement has fueled the proliferation of prisons which now lock up more people per capita in the U.S. than any other country. During the past fifteen years, the numbers of women, especially women of color in prison has skyrocketed. Prisons also inflict violence on the growing numbers of women behind bars. Slashing, suicide, the proliferation of HIV, strip searches, medical neglect and rape of prisoners has largely been ignored by

anti-violence activists. The criminal justice system, an institution of violence, domination, and control, has increased the level of violence in society.

**4** The reliance on state funding to support anti-violence programs has increased the professionalization of the anti-violence movement and alienated it from its community-organizing, social justice roots. Such reliance has isolated the anti-violence movement from other social justice movements that seek to eradicate state violence, such that it acts in conflict rather than in collaboration with these movements.

The reliance on the criminal justice system has taken power away from women's ability to organize collectively to stop violence and has invested this power within the state. The result is that women who seek redress in the criminal justice system feel disempowered and alienated. It has also promoted an individualistic approach toward ending violence such that the only way people think they can intervene in stopping violence is to call the police. This reliance has shifted our focus from developing ways communities can collectively respond to violence.



In recent years, the mainstream anti-prison movement has called important attention to the negative impact of criminalization and the build-up of the prison industrial complex. Because activists who seek to reverse the tide of mass incarceration and criminalization of poor communities and communities of color have not always centered gender and sexuality in their analysis or organizing, we have not always responded adequately to the needs of survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

**1** Prison and police accountability activists have generally organized around and conceptualized men of color as the primary victims of state violence. Women prisoners and victims of police brutality have been made invisible by a focus on the war on our brothers and sons. It has failed to consider how women are affected as severely by state violence as men. The plight of women who are raped by INS officers or prison guards, for instance, has not received sufficient attention. In addition, women carry the burden of caring for extended family when family and community members are criminalized and warehoused. Several organizations have been established to advocate for women prisoners; however, these groups have been frequently marginalized within the mainstream anti-prison movement.

**2** The anti-prison movement has not addressed strategies for addressing the rampant forms of violence women face in their everyday lives, including street harassment, sexual harassment at work, rape, and intimate partner abuse. Until these strategies are developed, many women will feel shortchanged by the movement. In addition, by not seeking alliances with the anti-violence movement, the anti-prison movement has sent the message that it is possible to liberate communities without seeking the well-being and safety of women.

**3** The anti-prison movement has failed to sufficiently organize around the forms of state violence faced by LGBTI communities. LGBTI street youth and trans people in general are particularly vulnerable to police brutality and criminalization. LGBTI prisoners are denied basic human rights such as family visits from same sex partners, and same sex consensual relationships in prison are policed and punished.

**4** While prison abolitionists have correctly pointed out that rapists and serial murderers comprise a small number of the prison population, we have not answered the question of how these cases should be addressed. The inability to answer the question is interpreted by many anti-violence activists as a lack of concern for the safety of women.

**5** The various alternatives to incarceration that have been developed by anti-prison activists have generally failed to provide sufficient mechanism for safety and accountability for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. These alternatives often rely on a romanticized notion of communities, which have

yet to demonstrate their commitment and ability to keep women and children safe or seriously address the sexism and homophobia that is deeply embedded within them.

We call on social justice movements concerned with ending violence in all its forms to:

1. Develop community-based responses to violence that do not rely on the criminal justice system AND which have mechanisms that ensure safety and accountability for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Transformative practices emerging from local communities should be documented and disseminated to promote collective responses to violence.

2. Critically assess the impact of state funding on social justice organizations and develop alternative fundraising strategies to support these organizations. Develop collective fundraising and organizing strategies for anti-prison and anti-violence organizations. Develop strategies and analysis that specifically target state forms of sexual violence.

3. Make connections between interpersonal violence, the violence inflicted by domestic state institutions (such as prisons, detention centers, mental hospitals, and child protective services), and international violence (such as war, military base prostitution, and nuclear testing).

4. Develop an analysis and strategies to end violence that do not isolate individual acts of violence (either committed by the state or individuals) from their larger contexts. These strategies must address how entire communities of all genders are affected in multiple ways by both state violence and interpersonal gender violence. Battered women prisoners represent an intersection of state and interpersonal violence and as such provide an opportunity for both movements to build coalitions and joint struggles.

5. Put poor/working class women of color in the center of their analysis, organizing practices, and leadership development. Recognize the role of economic oppression, welfare "reform," and attacks on women workers' rights in increasing women's vulnerability to all forms of violence and locate anti-violence and anti-prison activism alongside efforts to transform the capitalist economic system.

6. Center stories of state violence committed against women of color in our organizing efforts.

7. Oppose legislative change that promotes prison expansion, criminalization of poor communities and communities of color and thus state violence against women of color, even if these changes also incorporate measures to support victims of interpersonal gender violence.

8. Promote holistic political education at the everyday level within our communities, specifically how sexual violence helps reproduce the colonial, racist, capitalist, heterosexist, and patriarchal society we live in as well as how state violence produces interpersonal violence within communities.

9. Develop strategies for mobilizing against sexism and homophobia WITHIN our communities in order to keep women safe.

10. Challenge men of color and all men in social justice movements to take particular responsibility to address and organize around gender violence in their communities as a primary strategy for addressing violence and colonialism. We challenge men to address how their own histories of victimization have hindered their ability to establish gender justice in their communities.

11. Link struggles for personal transformation and healing with struggles for social justice.

We seek to build movements that not only end violence, but that create a society based on radical freedom, mutual accountability, and passionate reciprocity. In this society, safety and security will not be premised on violence or the threat of violence; it will be based on a collective commitment to guaranteeing the survival and care of all peoples.

### Please Sign this statement!

To find out more or get an online version, visit: [www.criticalresistance.org](http://www.criticalresistance.org) Or [www.incite-national.org](http://www.incite-national.org) Send signed statements to: Andrea Smith, 123 Felix Street #4, Santa Cruz, CA 95060.



**NEW YORK (WOMENSENEWS)**  
- For the amount of money New York City spends to incarcerate one woman for a year--about \$64,000--it could pay full tuition for four women to complete undergraduate degrees at the City University of New York.

## Surviving Abuse Inside Oregon's Prisons....

I am currently in the Coffee Creek Facility minimum side and when I read the last BTC newsletter I felt compelled to write about a topic I believe in passionately and have experience with in the DOC prisons. First, a brief explanation of my history. This is my 4<sup>th</sup> prison set in Oregon beginning in 9/90 and again in 9/91, both for 6 months. Then, a visit of 30 days in '95, but this last set of 103 months has opened my eyes to the failure they call rehabilitation of prisoners. I am a survivor of sexual abuse - 17 years of it to be exact and have never been in any counseling. Due to this history, of course, I became a drug addict, criminal and prisoner. Never in all my attempts to receive some sort of counseling within DOC have I been heard. The only group offered was a "Christian" group with a chaplain at EOCI. I am far from Christian. That is also another subject I feel passionately about--discrimination of religious beliefs in DOC. Well, I have been asking questions why there are no groups for survivors of abuse (domestic/sexual) and was informed by a volunteer who does a spiritual group that DOC doesn't want to open a can of worms!! OK, so our emotional issues, which, in fact are the core of who we are should not to be breached or discussed! No, give them pills, make them numb, that's all DOC does. I know for me if I do not tackle those issues I'll return to the drugs and soon be insane.

I only hope that all the women and men of corrections can learn how to cope with abuse issues on their own because as I see it DOC has no intentions of helping us. Turning Point is a joke!! They do not even delve into abuse issues.

Back in '90, I was untreatable by T.P. because of my sexual history! What the hell? My history is who I am! Well, I ask other persons out there: have you been wondering why there's no counseling or groups for

survivors? I have asked over and over for 6 years with NOTHING OFFERED. I believe women and men both deserve to acknowledge their abuse history and to deal with it on a safe level while we're in here. Isn't that what DOC claims to help us be persons able to return to society better? It's a laugh to believe anyone who needs help gets it in here. I, for one, believe the abuse needs acknowledgment if nothing else. Are there any groups non-Christian being offered anywhere in ODOC? If so, please send info for CCCF. The CTS groups don't QUALIFY! Keep up the fight, be real and stand proud.

To write or offer support, contact:

**Tori Nevarez**  
#7239313  
PO Box 9000  
Wilsonville, OR 97070



The women's corner is a regular feature of the Break the Chains newsletter; produced by the women's support committee.

Contact:  
[breakthechains03@yahoo.com](mailto:breakthechains03@yahoo.com)

## **The Jericho Amnesty Movement for U.S. Political Prisoners Rebuilds, Launches School Supply Drive for AIDS Orphans in Africa**

By Herman Ferguson and Efia Nwangaza, National Co-Chairs for the Jericho Movement

Greenville, SC: Over the past Christmas/Kwanzaa holidays, U.S. political prisoners and prisoners of war (PP/POWs) and their allies across the United States pledged to rebuild The Jericho Movement and endorsed the "U.S. Political Prisoners' Education Support Campaign for AIDS Orphans in Afrika." The Campaign, announced at the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee's 8th Annual Political Prisoners' Family Members Dinner and Program, will be coordinated by the Jericho Movement. The Jericho Movement was founded in 1996 as an organization committed to winning recognition and amnesty for a wide range of political prisoners and prisoners of war in the United States including New Afrikan, Native American, Chicano, Puerto Rican and European anti-imperialist freedom fighters. It was jointly sponsored by the Provisional Government of The Republic of New Afrika (PGRNA) and the New Afrikan Liberation Front (NALF).

The idea for the U.S. Political Prisoners' Education Support Campaign for AIDS Orphans in Africa originated with political prisoner Jalil Muntaqim and endorsed by political prisoners from all over the country. It is a year long initiative to raise funds to buy and collect school supplies and materials for Sub-Saharan AIDS orphans and increase AIDS awareness among Blacks in the U.S. The school supplies will be distributed by The Jericho Movement in conjunction with former U.S. political prisoners and organizations serving AIDS orphans. Imprinted pencils, "A Gift of The Jericho Movement to Free U.S. Political Prisoners," are the project's touchstone. The Campaign will culminate in the announcement of the selected recipient organizations during the memorial Safiya Bukhari Human Rights Weekend, in New York, December, 2004.

*"Although we languish in prison, and we may be caught up in our individual cases, in our hearts we know there is something more we can and should be doing in the service of oppressed peoples. There is one principle edict we should never negate, which is that our struggle and movement is based on 'from the masses to the masses'," admonished political prisoner, former Black Panther and author, Jalil A. Muntaqim in an open letter. The letter which followed his meet and greet planning session with The Jericho Movement's national co-chairs, Herman Ferguson and Efia Nwangaza was a step toward organizing The Campaign.*

The call is a timely response to U.S. political prisoners' longtime recognition of the AIDS/HIV pandemic's impact in U.S. prisons and Afrika. Some sounded the alarm long before the corporate media and politicians. In a November, 1993 book review published in DT 14, political prisoner, AIDS educator and Campaign endorser, David Gilbert, noted that "over 2 million Afrikan children [had] already been orphaned [by AIDS]." Prisoner/Health activist, Dr. Mutulu Shakur, and former political prisoner and certified AIDS/HIV awareness educator, Jahid Almant, have offered their full support, networks, and suggestions. Other early endorsers include Abdul Majid, Veronza Bowers, Zola Agona Azania, Albert Woodfox and National Coalition to Free the Angola 3, Seth O'dinga Olugbala Hayes, Russell Maroon Shoats, Ojore N. Lutalo, Mondo Langa. Along with suggestions, Marilyn Buck wrote, "I am glad to think that we, political prisoners, will collectively begin to engage in the AIDS solidarity work." Enthusiastic letters of support and endorsement from our locked down comrades arrive daily.

Herman Ferguson, longstanding organizer and former political prisoner, points out that the political prisoners' ready response should not surprise anyone. He notes that "despite excessive sentences, parole denials, and harsh conditions, many of today's political prisoners have continued the humanitarian work they began as youth in the Survival Programs of the Black Panther Party decades ago. U.S. communities, both behind the walls and in the streets, benefit from their continued service." "This project," Baba Ferguson adds, "is simply expanding their reach. It will assist AIDS orphans in Sub-Sahara Afrika; those children whose parents have died of AIDS and related illnesses. These children number in the millions." "If they are to

be saved and have a future, they must have the academic tools necessary to prepare for and safeguard that future," says Brother Muntaqim.

### **WE ARE OUR OWN LIBERATORS!**

#### **Selected prison writings by Political Prisoner/POW Jalil Abdul Muntaqim**

To order, send \$15 to: Abraham Guillen Press, C.P. 48164, Montreal, QC H2V 4S8 Canada

Efia Nwangaza, long time human rights activist organizer attorney, notes that The Education Support Campaign for AIDS Orphans in Afrika continues the legacy of our imprisoned freedom fighters. In 1968, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, through the "Counter Intelligence Program" (COINTELPRO), unleashed the machinery of the federal government, with the assistance of local police departments, to eliminate the Black Panther Party, the Black Liberation Army (BLA) and the RNA and other community based organizations and criminalize their membership.

Indeed, in addition to rebuilding The Jericho Movement, the "U.S. Political Prisoners Education Campaign for AIDS Orphans in Africa," will allow us to join our stalwart warriors and lift up their legacy of struggle as they take the lead in stepping into the international movement to address this humanitarian crisis. In joining them, our standard bearers, we elevate ourselves and dignify our struggle. The U.S. claims its casualties on the field, will we do less?

We call on youth, grade school and college students & activists, faith communities, social and political groups, progressive and human rights groups, and cultural workers and performers, and international supporters to become involved. Help of all kinds is needed; fundraising, literature and materials development, logistics, research and website building and maintenance to name the most immediate.

Individuals and organizations wishing to co-sponsor, endorse or contribute\* to this campaign are asked to immediately contact **Baba Herman Ferguson** ([hbfjericho@aol.com](mailto:hbfjericho@aol.com)) and **Sis. Efia Nwangaza** ([enjericho@aol.com](mailto:enjericho@aol.com)), **Jericho Movement National Office**, PO Box 340084, Jamaica, New York 11434-3401 718-949-3937.

*\*Make tax deductible checks/money orders payable to "IFCO/Jericho Movement". Put Afrika in the memo line.*

**AGITATE, EDUCATE,  
ORGANIZE TO BRING  
THEM HOME NOW!**



## **SOME UPDATES & REPORTS:**

### **Charges against Rob Middaugh dropped!**

January 19: As many of you are aware former anarchist political prisoner Rob Middaugh had a federal case pending against him due to an incident stemming from his involvement in a July 4, 2000 protest against anti-immigrant demonstrators. The Federal DA was charging Rob with 3 counts ranging from assault on an officer, carrying a concealed weapon and wearing a mask while committing an illegal act. The concealment charge and the mask charge were later dropped leaving only the assault charge. As of today the assault charge has been dropped and Rob is no longer facing more prison time. Yeah Rob!

### **Two charged in Chico, CA**

In 2003 Animal Liberation Front & Earth Liberation Front activists visited the town of Chico, California, culminating in the firebombing of two McDonald's restaurants. The FBI investigated the local radicals, some of whom appeared before a Grand Jury.

The authorities failed to find the ALF & ELF activists. But it was alleged by a police informant that two of the local radicals, Harjit Gill & Robert Brooks, who had both openly supported the ELF & ALF, had lied to the Grand Jury. Both men were consequently arrested and charged with two counts of lying to a federal officer and one count of lying to a federal Grand Jury.

Harjit & Robert are in need of support and we ask that people send donations to: Harjit Gill & Robert Brooks Defense Fund, c/o 44 Galaxy Avenue, Oroville, CA 95966. Please make all donations payable to Harjit Gill.

### **Support Oregon prisoner Gary Laird!**

Gary Laird is an Anarchist social prisoner in Oregon currently facing charges of Assault 2, Assault 3, Assault 4 and two counts of Felony Assault on a Public Safety Officer. These charges carry a possible combined total sentence of thirty-six years in prison. These charges stem from an incident in December 2002 in which Gary is accused of assaulting a prison guard in concert with another prisoner. We ask that letters of support be sent to Gary. He needs to know that anarchists support him and his actions. He needs to know that he is not alone. Gary is facing a huge prison sentence for allegedly fighting against state repression at its epicenter - from within its prison system. His fight is our fight. Please let him know that you care.

For more information about Gary or his case please contact me at: [thomastrippj@yahoo.com](mailto:thomastrippj@yahoo.com)

Write to Gary:

**Gary Laird #10268803**  
SRCI, 777 Stanton Blvd.,  
Ontario, OR 97914



## WHAT CONSTITUTES A POLITICAL PRISONER?

### *The Ongoing Suppression of American Indian Activism*

By Lawrence Sampson, Cleveland American Indian Movement

***Political activism is the highest form of spiritual consciousness. - Oren Lyons***

Some might argue the point, but Indians, by our very nature, are political beings. The word politics and political conjure up complex imagery that tends to be different for every individual, and therefore can be confusing. Even as Indians, these contexts tend to be defined in entirely non-Indian terminology. This is especially curious, in that so many Indians declare themselves non-political these days. Of course, throughout Indian history, from time immemorial, Indians had no choice but to be active in our communities. Therefore, by most definitions, Indians were historically politically active.

So how do we reconcile our natural and historical community involvement as Indigenous people, with a non-political sensibility? Perhaps the words themselves are at the heart of this confusion. In this writer's opinion, the murkiness about just what constitutes politics and all things political in the Indian way, could be cleared away in one simple step. If we replace the word POLITICAL with TRIBAL, it might make the idea of social and community activism easier to palate for some. If it is indeed a tribal value to share one's life and to be active in one's community, it follows that this type of activism is traditional, at least to most Indians. Therefore, it could accurately be said that Indians are in fact, traditionally speaking, political people, at least with the most common understandings of the word political. Perhaps the schism is in the choice of words. Maybe if we started defining activism as a tribal ethic, more folks would not get so caught up in semantics. Would any self-respecting Indian person readily claim to not be tribal? Imagine Crazy Horse, Osceola, Tsalé, Dull Knife, Geronimo, or Sitting Bull saying I'm not tribal, or I'm not political. It begins to take on humorous overtones. Being active in one's community today is just as necessary, and just as relevant, as in the "old" days.



If we agree that Indians are political in nature, we can then move on to the issue of political prisoners. While the U.S. government publicly proclaims that America has no political prisoners, hopefully few in Indian country believe this. To be sure, there are many folks languishing in prison cells in this country for political reasons, both Indian, and non-Indian.

So what constitutes a political prisoner? In this day and age of oppression of dissent, rollbacks of civil liberties, and legalized COINTELPRO practices, perhaps no question is as relevant to a people who are by their very nature, political. The Patriot Act is filling cells and prisons with hundreds if not thousands of folks, for political reasons-even if those reasons have nothing at all to do with politics.

Webster's defines the following:

Political: Pronunciation: po-li-ti-kul  
Function: adjective  
Etymology: Latin politicus

- 1: A: of or relating to government, a government, or the conduct of government, and B: of, relating to, or concerned with the making as distinguished from the administration of governmental policy
- 2: of, relating to, involving, or involved in politics and especially party politics
- 3: organized in governmental terms
- 4: involving or charged or concerned with acts against a government or a political system (political prisoners)

Definition number 4 is obviously the most relevant to this discussion, but let's clarify: How does one become a political prisoner, given that this means being "involved or charged or concerned with acts against a government or a political system"? The answer is probably subjective, but it is the very essence and purpose of this forum, to assign at least a reasonable and tangible explanation of how one becomes a political prisoner. Hopefully, by defining the process by which people find themselves in a politically charged incarceration, we can all better understand what constitutes a political prisoner.

It should be readily apparent, that by promoting and defending Indian sovereignty and self-determination that a case could be made that an Indian is "involved or charged or concerned with acts against a government or a political system". Does the defense of Indian treaty rights constitute a political act? Most certainly! It is therefore a small leap of logic to reason that by engaging in such a political act, that one could in fact become a political prisoner.

In the paradigm of political repression, we should clarify that determining whether a person is a political prisoner could be accomplished with the following criteria:

### **I. Justifications for incarceration, legal and otherwise**

1. Convictions for defying unjust laws such as restrictions on free speech, public assembly, or freedom of worship.
2. Conviction of defying laws in order to draw attention to some inequity, such as an occupation, blockade, or protest.
3. Being falsely convicted of a crime
4. Being convicted of a "crime" committed during the act of defending oneself from the unnecessary threat of brutality from authorities.

### **II. Length of incarceration**

Receiving a longer than average sentence, due to factors such as political views, race, or religion

### **III. Treatment of a prisoner once he/she is incarcerated**

Unreasonably harsh punishment for advocacy behind bars. For example, a person of a minority race and religion is incarcerated, and once incarcerated demands the right to worship as they see fit. Due to this demand, said person goes to lock down, segregation, maximum-security facilities, or some other cruel and unusual punishment, as they are subsequently labeled a problem prisoner, violent, or a security risk.

*"It should be readily apparent, that by promoting and defending Indian sovereignty and self-determination that a case could be made that an Indian is "involved or charged or concerned with acts against a government or a political system". Does the defense of Indian treaty rights constitute a political act? Most certainly!"*

To be sure, there are certainly other more inclusive definitions and terminology, which could be applied in the defining of political prisoners. To some, any unfortunate incarceration of a loved or respected individual automatically translates into political repression, regardless of the charge. But in an attempt to legitimately categorize and identify Indian political prisoners, the aforementioned classifications should do quite nicely. With these criteria in mind, I ask that all review the following list of Indian political prisoners.

### **Leonard Peltier**

The most famous of all American Indian political prisoners, Leonard is in his 28th year of incarceration. An American Indian Movement member convicted of murdering two FBI agents during a shootout on the Pine Ridge reservation, his trial was replete with perjured testimony, falsified documents, and withheld evidence. According to some, the government then tried to have him assassinated while behind bars.

### **Standing Deer Wilson**

American Indian prisoner who was approached and offered a deal to lose 30 years of his sentence if he killed Leonard Peltier. He refused and befriended Leonard, eventually serving out every day of his sentence. He was murdered in Houston under very suspicious circumstances only 18 months after his release.

### **Norma Jean Croy**

Norma Jean Croy is serving time for the alleged crime of "conspiracy to murder" Bo Hittson, a Yreka, California, deputy sheriff. Norma Jean Croy is a Shasta Native American Indian and a lesbian, who has been incarcerated since July 1978. She was sentenced to life in prison. Norma Jean Croy never conspired with anyone to commit murder; in fact, she never carried nor fired the gun that killed officer Bo Hittson.

### **Louis Rodriguez**

Illegal, irresponsible, unethical, biased, and sloppy investigation procedures were used to manufacture this criminal case around him and to acquire his conviction and death sentence. The chief prosecution witness against Rodriguez was mentally unreliable and known to have lied numerous times to police and while testifying under oath at Rodriguez' preliminary hearing and trial.

### **Eddie Hatcher**

First achieving fame by taking over a North Carolina newspaper in order to draw attention to local government corruption, Eddie would many years later

be convicted of murder. A nineteen-year-old was shot once in the shoulder and once in the head, and died soon afterward. The next day, Eddie Hatcher was arrested at an intersection in Hamlet, NC. He was charged with 1st-degree murder for the drive-by shooting and other weapons charges. In a desperate attempt to pin Eddie with the killing, the state has fabricated a confession that Eddie supposedly made to a police officer on the night of his arrest.

### **Red Carpitcher**

American Indian Movement activist Red Carpitcher is serving 38 years for sexual abuse - a crime his accuser now says never happened. The daughter of Carpitcher's girlfriend says she fabricated a story of child molestation to the Roanoke County jury that convicted him in 1999. A jealous 10-year-old at the time, she says she was angry because Carpitcher was spending too much time with her mother. She just wanted the live-in boyfriend out of the house. She didn't realize her words alone would put a 44-year-old man in a super-maximum security prison for what amounts to a life sentence.

### **Manuel Redwoman**

Manuel Redwoman is a 35 year old Native American incarcerated at Montana State Prison. His heritage is 1/2 Northern Cheyenne, 1/4 Lakota/ and 1/4 Arapaho. He is in prison for having fatally shot a recidivist child molester who was after a very young boy (the boy was a relative of Manuel). His own people, the Northern Cheyenne, have honored him for protecting his family, as a warrior is supposed to do. Despite the fact that the dead man's mother pleaded to the judge that her son was mentally ill, and Manuel should not be sentenced to jail for protecting his family, Mr. Redwoman received a longer than normal sentence for his conviction. When he advocated for spiritual rights behind bars, Manuel became a "problem prisoner" and received several years in solitary confinement.

**A**s varied as the individual cases are, they all have very common characteristics. All of the aforementioned were American Indian activists well before their current incarcerations. Most of them addressed directly or indirectly, federal and local government corruption and mistreatment of Indians. Most of them received longer than average sentences, and severely harsh treatment once incarcerated. All of them have very curious aspects to their cases, which call into question the legitimacy of their convictions. Pray for them, and their families. If you believe their incarceration is unjust, please act accordingly, and support the cause of justice. Perhaps most importantly, recognize that their incarcerations exemplify the ongoing repression of Indian people.

As an American Indian activist/organizer/ educator, I can honestly say that those who advocate for Indian people live with the constant threat of incarceration and surveillance. Accordingly, we are faced with the very real possibility of becoming political prisoners, "enemy combatants" or some other Orwellian classification used to deny us our human and civil rights. Understand that in the days of legalized COINTELPRO/PATRIOT ACT subterfuge, we must remain diligent and committed defenders of our people.

**Remember, the Indian wars are not over.**

From: [www.leonardpeltier.org](http://www.leonardpeltier.org)

# **Northwest Social Forum**

**October 1-3, 2004, in Seattle, WA**

The Northwest Social Forum will be a broad-based gathering of people and organizations where we can learn from each other about our issues and build powerful relationships that will benefit everyone in the struggle for social justice

**For more info: [www.nwsocialforum.org](http://www.nwsocialforum.org)**



**Email: [info@nwsocialforum.org](mailto:info@nwsocialforum.org)**

## **ARISSA CO-FOUNDER URGES THE PUBLIC TO SUPPORT ECO-DEFENDER TRE ARROW AND OPPOSE THE TERRORISM OF THE FBI AND US GOVERNMENT**

MARCH 16, 2004, PORTLAND, OR: Craig Rosebraugh, former spokesperson for the Earth Liberation Front, spoke out today in support of accused "eco-terrorist" Michael Scarpitti. Calling him a hero, Rosebraugh urged the public to stand behind Scarpitti and demonstrate support for his commitment to protecting the natural environment.

"It is a horrific day for our country, for the environment and for those working to make the world a better place," Rosebraugh commented on the news of Scarpitti's arrest. "Tre Arrow is neither a terrorist or criminal, he is a hero and should be recognized as such."

Michael Scarpitti, also known as "Tre Arrow", was arrested yesterday in Victoria, British Columbia after being caught for allegedly shoplifting and assaulting an officer. Scarpitti is accused of multiple felony charges relating to a logging truck arson and concrete truck fire, both in Oregon in 2001. If convicted he is facing life in prison.

"It is inexcusable that Tre Arrow is arrested and labeled a terrorist, while the murderous politicians in Washington slaughter people everyday here in the United States and internationally" Rosebraugh commented. "This incident today is even further proof that a revolution is necessary in the United States to fight the FBI and the federal government. Until this diseased political system is brought to its knees, there will not be justice."

Known for his dedication to protecting the environment, Scarpitti has spent years working legally to effect positive change. Having a broad base of support in the Portland area, he is best known for his anti-logging protests and his run for US Congress.

"On this day, my heart goes out to Tre Arrow." Rosebraugh spoke. "Whether he is guilty or not, the post 9/11 atmosphere of anti-terrorism hysteria in this country will not allow for a fair and just trial. Let this be a wake up call to all those concerned about justice in the United States. The time for action, by any means necessary, is now."

Craig Rosebraugh was the former spokesperson for the Earth Liberation Front. From 1997 through 2001, Rosebraugh received communiqués from the ELF and forwarded them on to news media internationally. In 2003, he co-formed Arissa, an effort to build a successful revolutionary movement in the United States.

Contact: Derrick Bonthell of Arissa: (503) 972-1140. For more info, visit: <http://www.arissa.org>

**PLEASE SEND LETTERS OF SUPPORT TO TRE ARROW.**  
Address your letters to:

**Michael Scarpitti**  
Vancouver Island Regional  
Correctional Centre  
PO Box 9224,  
Stn Prov Govt,  
Victoria BC  
V8W 9J1  
Canada



### **FBI ARRESTS STUDENT IN ANTI-SUV ARSON**

Californian environmentalist William Cottrell has been arrested for his alleged involvement in a series of ELF actions, including the damaging and destruction of approximately 125 SUVs.

Please send urgent letters of support to:



**William Cottrell**  
#0403300535  
Central Detention Center  
630 East Rialto Avenue  
San Bernardino, CA  
92415-0025

## Tre Arrow Speaks Out

MARCH 19, 2004, VICTORIA, BC: Tre Arrow, well known forest and animal rights activist, ledge sitter, and congressional candidate, urges the media to focus on the important issues we face, and urges those who receive this message to think about it and act upon it.

On the issue of his true name, Tre says "the media is obliged to use my legal name of Tre Arrow. Check the Multnomah County Courthouse's records and you will see the government is lying to you about my name."

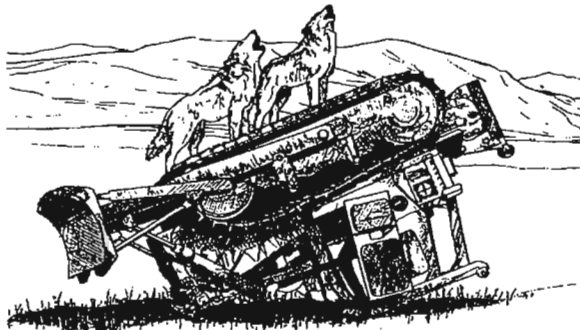
Tre went on to talk to his supporters, the media, and the general public. "I want folks to know I am committed to a fast and I have not eaten any of the poisonous food provided to me as of late, in solidarity with those suffering from the lack of justice in the US injustice system, and in protest of this incarceration.

"The government and media focus on me as an individual when they should be focusing on US corporations' pollution of and ravaging of our environment. Why can't the media give us stories on slaughterhouses, Hanford, and the continuing practice of clear-cutting?

"I encourage folks that the time is now to stand up and put a stop to the injustices to our basic human rights and to the earth, our only human home."

Tre regrets that the US government is preventing him from talking to you all directly, and asks you to do what you can to help defeat the injustices imposed on us.

Contact: Attorney Stu Sugarman. Phone: 503.234.2694. Email: [btc@hevanet.com](mailto:btc@hevanet.com)

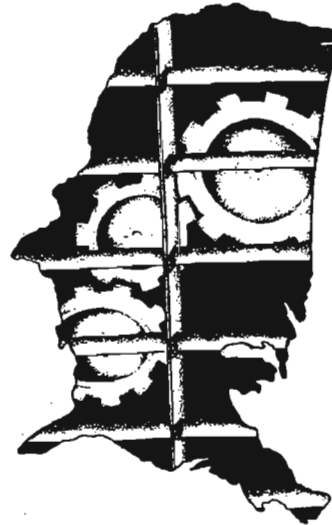


## A Message from the Los Angeles ABCF

The Los Angeles chapter of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation (LA-ABCF) has been greatly affected by the Southern California UFCW Grocery workers strike. We have members who are grocery workers and the LA-ABCF has been forced to become some-what of a strike support organization just for survival. The organization is down to 1-2 people right now and we have no funds left. On top of the lack of recourses and personnel in the organization, the constant stress and anguish of the strike has put us months behind and financially in the hole. We have also had a problem with the Anaheim post office where our PO Box is located. They cancelled our lease even though we had paid up until October 2004 and we have not received mail there since late September. We have since changed addresses to: LA-ABCF, PO Box 11223, Whittier, CA 90603.

Sorry for any and all inconveniences! Thank you for your concern as we go under the gun of the corporate thieves known as Steve Burd and Safeway. Your support of us and the strike is enough to keep us fighting and to think highly of you revolutionaries who cares about us and our wellbeing even if we have been relegated to impotence because of these external factors that we cannot change.

## POSTCARDS TO BENEFIT BREAK THE CHAINS



This artwork was done by CA anarchist social prisoner Walter James as a benefit for Break the Chains. We have made postcards out of several pieces of his art and they are available from us 4 for a dollar.

# *In the Land of the Free* By Chrystos

where they massacre the  
brave  
imprison more people  
than any other place on earth  
where enormous wealth  
accumulates from slave labor  
where each of us  
has been manipulated into  
believing poisonous lies  
about ourselves, our needs  
& our work  
where art & poetry are dirty  
words  
death is more common than  
bread  
for the poor

In the land of the free  
white liberals write about  
how much  
everyone else in other  
countries suffers  
numb to our neighbors and  
families  
When I go to Australia  
speak of our homeless, our  
prison sentences  
they are shocked unbelieving  
Every city to which I have  
gone  
has men & women &  
children  
standing on freeway ramps  
or streets  
with cardboard signs saying  
Will Work For Food  
in a country which is  
called the breadbasket of the  
world  
In the land of the free

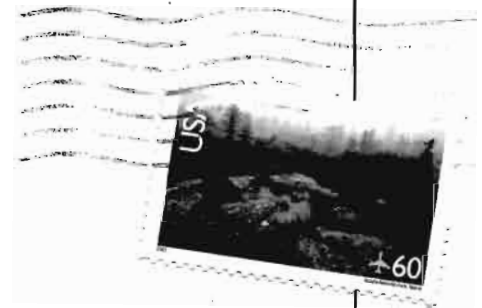
my eyes still see  
the slaughtered bodies of my  
ancestors  
my back is raw with the  
memory of whips  
my belly bitter with hunger  
my mind aches & flails with  
lies  
I grasp what I see  
name it reality  
Refuse to put on the  
emperor's clothes  
pretend to be rich & happy  
drifting  
through movie stills  
stoned out on drugs to  
disguise my despair  
In the land of the free  
I insist on wearing our chains  
our mutilation  
our shame

*(for Roseann Marble)*

**From *Fire Power***

**FROM:**

**Break the Chains  
Publisher & Distributor  
PO Box 12122  
Eugene, OR 97440**



**TO:**

**Freedom Archives  
522 Valencia St.  
SF, CA 94110**

*If you wish to receive this publication in an envelope, please notify us.*

