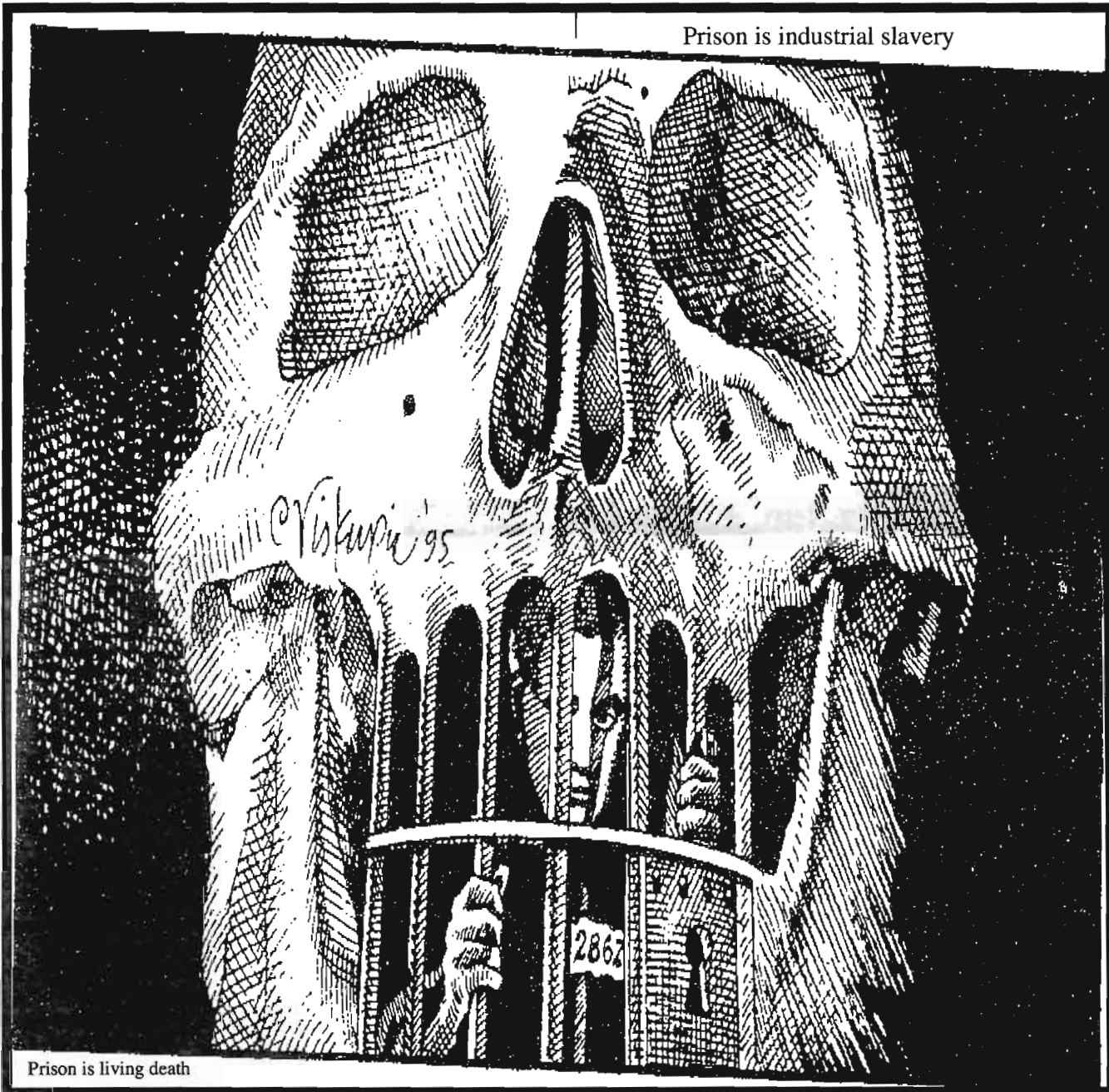


BREAK THE CHAINS

NEWSLETTER OF THE BREAK THE CHAINS COLLECTIVE – ISSUE 19, SUMMER/FALL 2004

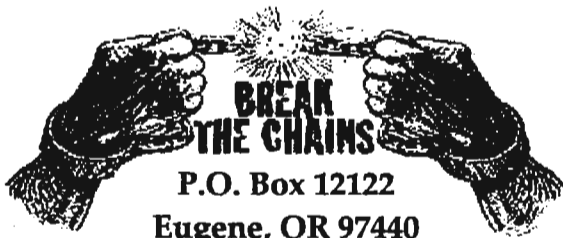
Prison is industrial slavery



Prison is living death

\$2 SUGGESTED DONATION. THIS NEWSLETTER IS FREE TO PRISONERS IN CA, ID, OR, & WA.

“There is no question that support for political prisoners and prisoners of war should and must be an integral part of any movement for liberation. There is no question, that is, for people who have dedicated their lives to the struggle for freedom in this country and realize that it is not possible to talk about a movement for liberation if you fail to liberate people who are incarcerated as a result of that struggle for liberation.” – Safiya Bukhari



P.O. Box 12122
Eugene, OR 97440

www.breakthechains.net

general email: breakthechains02@yahoo.com

women's: breakthechains03@yahoo.com

MISSION STATEMENT

Break The Chains is a non-hierarchical collective working toward building an egalitarian society free of prisons. **We are committed** to the dynamic internal and external process of challenging racism, sexism, classism, and oppression in all its forms. **Our focus is on prison issues**, including, but not limited to: fighting state repression, prisoner support and prison abolition.

• **Fighting State Repression** means exposing and countering the efforts of the state to imprison activists and criminalize dissent and resistance. This takes the form of providing assistance to those on the outside facing time due to their involvement in social movements, exposing grand juries, COINTELPRO and other forms of counter intelligence, while educating the public about political and social prisoners.

• **Prisoner Support includes** supporting national Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, and politically active social prisoners on the West Coast. Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War are people who are incarcerated for engaging in liberation struggles and whose sentences reflect the politics involved. A social prisoner may not have been engaged in political activity on the outside, but has devoted inside time to struggling against injustice. We work to accomplish support by publishing the writings of prisoners engaged in resistance struggles, offering financial assistance when available, getting the word out about various cases, and exchanging information with social prisoners about resistance movements. While we cannot provide legal assistance, we may be able to direct prisoners to resources.

• **Prison Abolition is** the dismantling of the prison-industrial complex by working with groups opposing new prison construction, and engaging in restorative justice and decarceration initiatives. Our ultimate objective is to eliminate the prison-industrial complex by helping to build a society in which prisons are obsolete.

Link the Struggles to Break The Chains!

Note: We have revised our mission statement and would like your feedback. This statement is intended to provide a clearer picture of our work and is subject to change.

Welcome to issue #19 of the *Break the Chains* newsletter. A lot has happened since the last newsletter. Here's an overview of some of our activities over the past six months:

Spring Events

On April 24, BTC organized an event to honor Mumia Abu-Jamal on his birthday. A member of BTC read excerpts from *All Power to the People* by the late Albert Nuh Washington, gave an update on Mumia's case, and discussed some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Black Panther Party before introducing Lee Lew Lee's film *All Power to the People: The Black Panther Party & Beyond*.

A series of BTC-sponsored events titled "Confronting Capitalism" were held in early May. These events included discussions on urban gardening, global capitalism and anarchist activism.

On May 15, we had a benefit for the Native Youth Movement. The event featured a presentation by a traveling member of Solidarity South Pacific, an international network of anti-authoritarians dedicated to supporting the movements of indigenous people in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. A member of the Oregon section of the NYM spoke about Native American struggles to protect the land. The event also featured the film *The Coconut Revolution*.

Open House

On June 5th, we had a BTC Open House event. The focus of the event was to inform people in the community about our activities. Kathleen Pequeno (from Portland's Western Prison Project) and former prisoner Thomas Tripp (from the "Children of the River") were featured as keynote speakers. Kathleen talked about her own experience in the anti-prison movement (she became an advocate for Latinos in Oregon prisons). Thomas Tripp discussed his prison experience and how he got involved in BTC.

Support for Eco-Defense Political Prisoner Jeff "Free" Luers

This past January, BTC wrote a sign-on statement supporting Jeff in his appellate process. The statement clearly outlines why Jeff is a political prisoner, why his sentence is unjust, and why people should demand that his 22+ year sentence be drastically reduced. So far, over 300 people have endorsed the statement, including popular author-activists Mumia Abu-Jamal, William Blum, Chellis Glendinning, Michael Parenti, and Howard Zinn. View the statement for yourself at <http://freefreemow.org/signon.html> or write to us for a copy. Please consider endorsing this statement and asking people in your community to do the same. Jeff's appeal is approaching and he needs your support!

BTC held a major event in support of Free here in Eugene on June 12, as part of the "International Day of Solidarity with Oregon Political Prisoner Jeff 'Free' Luers" commemorating the 3rd year since he was given his outlandish sentence (read the articles about June 12 in this issue for more information). June 12 was inspirational to many people in our community, and

we're hopeful that support for Jeff will continue to grow locally and internationally until he is finally freed.

Support for Black Liberation Political Prisoner Jalil Muntaqim

BTC played an important role in mobilizing support for the July parole hearing of black liberation political prisoner Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom). Jalil has been held captive since the age of 19, making him one of the longest held political prisoners in North America. BTC sent out over 100 information packets to groups around the world, asking them to educate themselves about Jalil's case and support his parole. In response, a few hundred letters were sent to the parole board. Unfortunately, our efforts were unsuccessful. Jalil was denied parole, but he may be eligible again in two years, and BTC will continue to fight for his freedom. In addition to supporting his parole campaign, BTC was able to get Jalil an interview broadcast on Free Speech Radio, and we are planning to collaborate with Jalil and other comrades from the Jericho Movement on the "US Political Prisoners' Education Support Campaign for AIDS Orphans in Africa" in the near future.

Stop the Grand Jury

In the course of the past few months, a grand jury investigation has been targeting individuals in the Eugene community who authorities claim may possess knowledge about illegal actions by the radical environmental movement. Most of the people who have been targeted are working class single moms. In addition to supporting political/politicized prisoners, BTC is trying to prevent more allies from going to prison by fighting state repression. We believe the local grand jury investigation is nothing more than a pathetic attempt by local cops to intimidate vulnerable people into collaborating with authorities against activists. We are convinced the subpoenaed have no connection to these incidents, but regardless we unconditionally oppose the grand jury as a matter of principle.

On August 18 we organized a successful benefit for a newly formed Grand Jury Defense Fund. The event opened with a video by the Cascadia Media Collective that documents the disgraceful history of grand juries. Next Jonathan Paul talked about his experience with the grand jury and gave suggestions for fighting it. Attorney Lauren Regan from the Civil Liberties Defense Center talked about its unconstitutionality, including a run-down of the whole ridiculous process, and spoke to this specific grand jury and why we need to stand together to squash it. After the speakers we were treated to musical performances by awesome local punk groups Los Mex Pistols, The Happy Bastards, and The Shudders

We hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter. If you have any ideas for how we can improve our newsletter and our work, please share them with us. We love feedback and constructive criticism. Also, if you're interested in supporting our work or getting involved, please contact us to learn how. In solidarity,

- BTC Editorial Crew

BTC MAILORDER

We have a catalog of radical literature available. Most of the literature is anarchist, anti-prison, and anti-imperialist. Some of our literature is free to prisoners. Most items are cheap. The catalog is free upon request.

Correspondence Project

The second edition of the Prison Correspondence Project manual is now available upon request. Without the help of Break The Chains supporter Ryan Mishap it probably never would have been completed. The Prison Correspondence Project is a compilation of biographies and contact information for prisoners seeking correspondence, along with tips on writing to prisoners for un-experienced folks on the outside. If you're interested in writing to people in prison and you'd like a copy of this manual, or if you're a prisoner looking for correspondence and you'd like to submit your info for this project, please write to: Prison Correspondence Project, c/o Break The Chains, PO Box 12122, Eugene, OR 97440.

A few friends & allies

Anarchist Black Cross Federation

Website: www.abcf.net

Anarchist Black Cross Network

Website: www.anarchistblackcross.org

Howl for Freedom

(Friends of Jeff Luers)

PO Box 3

Eugene, OR 97440

Website: 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.

Music Through Bars

PO Box 661

Eugene, OR 97440

This is an awesome group, compiling information on music accessibility in prisons. Write for more info! But do not request music as these folks have limited resources.

Prison Art Project

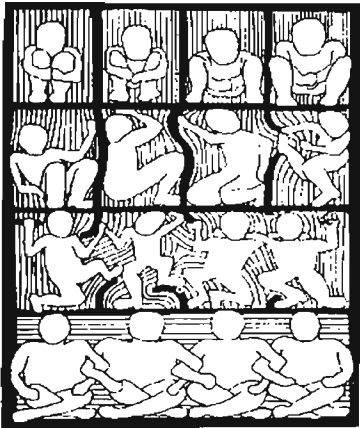
PO Box 31574

San Francisco, CA 94131-0574

Website: www.prisonart.org

They publish the 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.

Black and Gay, Bi, Transgender



I am a 30 year old black transgender prisoner. I've been in and out of youth authority and adult prisons since the age of 12. Every year since 12 I have been coming to jail and prison.

What I have noticed is the

lack of self respect amongst black inmates. I've noticed how other blacks look at other black gay inmates with contempt. There is no unity among black inmates.

We as black folk need to know the meaning behind what black represents and sexual orientation does not make you any less black. Education is the key, only knowledge can and will move the system. Training for life teaches living and understanding and acceptance of those whom appear diverse in nature. It is not wise for black folk to declare color prejudice for the sole cause of their social condition – when black folk are prejudice against their own race of people whom are gay.

What is the purpose of hate? Haven't we blacks been through and still going through a lot of difficult times? Nowadays ignorance is popular and you can find it just by waking up or getting to anxious in your dreams.

You learn by living, you know better you do better. You ask better questions you get better answers.

Prejudice and hate comes from inseminated opinions and beliefs sowed into your heads as a child by parents or associates or taught by some racist man or woman running some non-judicial practice.

We as black men and women must love one another with solidarity, standing juxtapose whether gay or not.

This prison system will hang me as quick as they will hang a non-gay black man or woman. The same can be said in society. This system likes seeing black ignorance perpetuated in prison and our communities. It is way overdue – time is NOW, don't play the fool, ignorance should not play a role in our reality, get educated in mind body and soul. Respect your race and those whom are gay within it.

Eric Johnson

#j00844 CCI/SHU, PO Box 1031, Tehachapi, CA 93581

THANK YOU D.O.C.

Anger is the gift you gave me
Hate is what I have for you
Bitter tears of frustration
Hardened what was once my head

Contempt and loathing are my only friends
Your lies brought us close
Pain has sharpened my senses
Rage feeds the tempest within

You made me what I am today
Can you see what I have become?
You created a monster
And, I'm not the only one

Unfeeling warriors
Turned loose on the streets
Uncaring open wounds
Paroling soon, to a neighborhood near you.

Laura Maca was gleefully released from Coffee Creek Penitentiary in the summer of 2004.

NEW FROM LANTERN BOOKS:

Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?

Reflections on the Liberation of Animals

By Steven Best, Ph.D. and Anthony J. Nocella, II

"Too often, scholarly works about social movements seem to have little to do with the movement, while activist works often have little substance. Not this book, which combines both viewpoints. Here, readers have access to the logic and philosophy of animal liberation as well as its practice and reflections on our current social era. Best and Nocella have filled a huge void. Bravo!" — **Rik Scarce**, author of *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement*.

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New York, NY 10003/www.lanternbooks.com

Locked up - Locked down: A mother's love for her child

By an Anonymous woman within the California Prison System

All names in this article have been changed to protect the identities of those involved.

While inside, we need to fight within ourselves to stay together. I tell my story to uplift other incarcerated mothers, and to reach my son. This goes out to you, my beloved. I lost Peter, my son, when he was nine years old. One of the abusive things his father did snapped my spirit. Anthony, Peter's father and my former husband, raped me. Afterwards I was bleeding to death and I couldn't get up. The next day, I did what I did. In my culture, you don't say my husband's hurting me and my child, so after I was arrested I couldn't say "but he's beating us".

The last time I saw Peter was when he came in for a visit. He asked me, "Mommy, what did you do?" and I said, "I broke the law and I'm going to be here until I fix the problem. But remember to be good and that I love you." Being separated from my son Peter was worse than hearing my sentencing. My mother and I both felt it was better for Peter to be with his father, even though Anthony was abusive. We thought that if something was to happen, he'd actually be held responsible.

Now, thirteen years later, I spend my time in here trying to do everything I can to get out-so I can find my son. I schedule my duties as a prisoner in such a way to make certain to not break any rules, and I keep to myself in here. I write Peter letters, it's a way to speak out to him, even though I cannot mail them to him. I don't have an address due to the fact that everything surrounding Peter has been denied to me.

A lot crosses my mind now, and writing Peter letters is a way to get it all out to him symbolically and spiritually. In these letters I ask him how he's doing, and hope that my heart reaches and finds him in the best of spirits. I tell him to please know that I think of him daily, because I don't ever want Peter to think I ever stopped loving him. I ask him about his life in these letters, which remain unsent. I wonder about things like how he is mentally and physically doing, and so I ask him in the letters. Peter-how was school today, did you do your

homework, what's your favorite subject, do you like sports and if you do-what kind? Peter, do you have any best friends? What are their names? Peter, are you eating your favorite food (spaghetti) still? Are you eating good? Peter, my beloved son, how are you adjusting to your new family? Your new life? Do you know that Mommy never stopped loving you, and I have your name engraved in me to remind me of you everyday?



I have no contact with my ex-husband, Anthony, and he has my son. If I had contact with him, I'd want to say that I'm terribly sorry for the poor choice I made. I pray to God everyday, that he's being a good father to OUR son because OUR son deserves to be happy.

I want to tell other mothers that I know the pain they're feeling; the awfulness that comes because we don't know where our children are, the anxiety that comes around certain dates like birthdays. I know the loss of joy in those days, because they're not things to celebrate without our children. I know, because we're all facing the same problem of not being able to see our children. I think it's more painful to not see our children, then the sentence we have to serve.

We need to get our spirits and mentalities strong and together, to fight the good fight! We have to do whatever we can to work the program to heal our scared and scarred cores, and not let the prison system work us. Do your time, as "they" say, and don't let time do you. There is always tomorrow, and there is always hope. We cannot lose that hope, not now-not ever.

Reprinted, with permission, from *The fire Inside* - Newsletter of The California Coalition for Women in Prison. 1540 Market St., Suite 490 / San Francisco, CA 94102



Women, Raise your Voices!

We want to hear from you. We are seeking submissions, articles and poetry from women in prison. Some suggested topics might include medical neglect, resistance, relationships - what ever is on your mind.

Prisons and Social Control

Collective piece by staff, from Kinesis, published by the Vancouver Commission on the Status of Women, June 1987

The judicial/prison system most often comes up in feminist discussion in deciding how to deal with men who commit crimes against women. The urgency of ending violence against us has compelled women to implicitly support this system.

However, in doing this, we cut ourselves off from the struggles of women who are imprisoned. We also lose sight of our long-term goal of a society not based in coercion; a goal that requires the dismantling of the prison system. We need to remember how women's issues and prison issues are part of the same struggle. Prison issues are important for feminists, both because individual women are being oppressed by prison and, in a wider context, because the judicial/prison system exists to support the larger power structure that oppresses us all.

Women in prison are fighting to maintain a sense of self within a system that isolates and degrades; one which attempts to teach submission to authority through the constant exercising of power, in both serious and petty ways, over prisoners. What is generated is not obedience but anger, and since a prisoner risks punishment such as being sent to segregation if she directs her anger at the system that's hurting her, that anger often gets directed inward or at other prisoners.

Because the most brutal methods of social control are directed at a society's most oppressed groups, the women most likely to be sent to jail [and prison] are poor and/or women of color. In North America a very high proportion are Native. That the great majority of prisoners are in for crimes against property shows the system's role in maintaining the economic order.

Prison is a type of violence which enforces a state's power over its citizens, in the same way that rape and battering enforce the power of men over women. Since this kind of power by coercion is antithetical to feminism we need to make prison abolition part of our feminist analysis.

One implication of this is that we have to reevaluate the strategy of trying to have abusive men put in prison. For now, it's one of the only strategies available to protect women and children from particularly violent men. What other approach could be used remains a difficult question. However, this doesn't have to stop us recognizing that if we use the system to convict violent men, it is an unsatisfactory and short term solution.

What we have to abandon is trying to inject feminist values into an essentially patriarchal system. We've seen how our demands, even when clearly articulated

are twisted and used in the state's interests in our recent anti-pornography work.

We've implicitly supported the system by trying to change it using its own terms. Since the severity of the penalty for an action is supposed to express society's amount of disapproval for that action, feminists have pushed for stronger penalties for crimes against women as a way of increasing the expressed disapproval for these crimes. This doesn't work for several reasons.

First, the justice system is controlled through government by the economic elite. It therefore supports that elite's interests (retaining power) and will continue to reflect their values and not those of feminists.

An example of these values is a recent sentencing by Supreme Court Judge Samuel Toy. Finding a B.C. man guilty of the rape and murder of a teenage woman, he sentenced him to fifteen years to be served concurrently with the sentence he had already received for the rape and murder of a second teenager. This same judge three years ago imposed a life sentence on political activist Ann Hansen for her part in actions with the Wimmin's Fire Brigade and Direct Action.

This raises another point. When we support the state's imprisonment of a rapist, we support the state's right to imprison, period. And this is used against us when we challenge the system.

In the last decade or so, women in prison have also faced the backlash against feminism. Previously, the court held women less responsible for our actions than it did men and thus women received shorter sentences. But this is one of the few places where disparity between women and men decreased quickly. One of the state's first responses to our demands for equal legal rights has been to hand out longer sentences to women.

Another problem is the whole approach of responding to someone's violent or irresponsible behavior with various degrees of punishment. It implies that revenge is the most important response to a wrong-doing, rather than supporting the victim or trying to prevent the behavior from happening again. It also suggests that people have to be coerced to behave responsibly. Feminists must participate in the search for alternate ways of dealing with those who oppress. With the awareness that the judicial/prison system is not our ally in the long run, we'll be more reluctant to ask one part of the patriarchy to protect us from other parts. Our other task is to learn about and support the struggles of prisoners. Women inside fight back and resist all the time. And although there are few methods of resistance open to prisoners some of them are:

talking back to guards, breaking rules, destroying prison property participating in sit-ins, occupations, work or hunger strikes, and exposing brutality through the media and through lawsuits.

Support from the outside is a crucial factor in the success of prisoners' campaigns. The knowledge that people outside care about what's happening contributes to prisoners' strength and makes prison administrators respond much more quickly to demands.

We can express our support for particular campaigns against unfair court decisions or treatment of prisoners through letter writing, protest phone calls [and faxes], demonstrations and education campaigns in our communities. We can also work for reforms of the prison system, keeping in mind that this is an interim measure to abolishing prisons. This includes lobbying governments to fund more prison programs with as many options available to female as male prisoners and training in a variety of jobs.

On an ongoing basis, we need to strengthen connections with our sisters inside. We must recognize women prisoners' struggles as an essential part of our movement. We can do this by:

- visiting women in prison when possible; meeting with individual women who want visits, organizing informational or skill-sharing workshops, musicians can play gigs at prisons and so on.
- writing to women prisoners who request letters of support or correspondence.
- sharing our resources; sending money to defense funds and prisoner support or action groups, donating books, musical instruments, art supplies to prisoners.
- sharing information; sending periodicals free to prisoners, soliciting articles from prisoners and providing material support to prisoner publications.



BTC responds to sentencing of local cop

On 13 July 2004, Roger Magaña, a former Eugene cop, was sentenced to 94 years in prison for raping 13 women over 8 years.

Shortly after the sentencing, I hear the news. My body responds instantaneously with glee – the idea of a cop in prison, and the wrath he will face once inside given

Magaña's sentence presents interesting contradictions for BTC. While we of course applaud the fact that a rapist pig will never see the streets again, as prison abolitionists, we understand that prison in no way corrects the atrocities committed by Magaña against these women.

Magaña's 94 year sentence also in no way addresses the "above the law" mentality of all cops, which in their mind places them above the people they are charged with protecting. Although one rapist is off the streets, misogyny continues to flourish in police departments everywhere, and women continue to be raped by pigs brandishing badge and gun. This, in addition to the murders, shootings and harassment carried out daily by cops in the streets and in the prisons.

Then my mind and heart kick in. a human being confined behind bars for 94 years, subject to sexual violence that no one should experience, in no way compensates for the atrocities committed against numerous women. In no way combating the rape and death culture we live in. in no way working towards restoration or justice.

Magaña's sentence is satisfying, but it is not the solution. His sentence only allows us to hold him up as an example of police corruption, claim that monsters are punished, and then ignore the underlying issues which created Magaña. We need to continue to struggle for truly meaningful responses to situations like these, and continue to work toward dismantling the system of power which allows and encourages its servants to terrorize by stalking, raping and killing.

They will not stop until we stop them.

As a prison abolitionist and a woman, I feel schizophrenic – at once jubilant and terrified. The complexities involved are numerous and riddled with emotion.

Magana is a man of color. We must recognize that his sentence is likely a direct result of this. Magana can be Labeled as the typical "misogynistic" Latino man and used to perpetuate the myth that Latino men are the predators of white women. Because this case was so high profile, Magana's sentencing reflects a man being used to prove that the Eugene PD is tough on perpetrators – it is not a reflection of how seriously the PIC takes sexual assault. In truth, we know that prison system does not take sexual predators seriously, nor is it color blind. We know that it is the PIC that is violent, not many of the so-called criminals.

How, then, do we respond to Magana's sentencing? And how do we maneuver through the complexities of our feelings?

PAROLE DENIED FOR JALIL MUNTAQIM

Jalil Muntaqim (aka Anthony Bottom) is one of the longest held political prisoners in the U.S. – he has been locked up for over 31 years. He is a former Black Panther and member of the Black Liberation Army. On July 27, 2004, Jalil had his second hearing before the parole board. Once again he was denied parole. Even though many of us expected this outcome, we are outraged and know we must continue to do all we can to ensure Jalil's release.

Here is an excerpt from the most recent letter we have received from Jalil, dated the day of the hearing. In it, Jalil explains what happened and lays out what he would like people to do. It reads:

"As you may have already learned over the net, once again I was denied parole, rescheduled for the next appearance for 7127106. The denial read as follows:

**'DENIED - HOLD 24 MONTHS, NEXT
APPEARANCE DATE: 07/2006**

Upon a review of the record, personal interview and due deliberation it is the determination of the panel that parole is denied. You are presently incarcerated upon your conviction of murder, by verdict, you and 2 cohorts ambushed and gunned down 2 New York City Police Officers, killing both. Your criminal justice history also includes California and Federal felony convictions. The panel has considered your programming and clean disciplinary record since your last board appearance. Also considered is a comprehensive submission advocating for your release. All factors considered, the panel concludes that discretionary release must again be denied. You committed a vicious and particularly violent crime evidencing a callous disregard for the sanctity of human life. Your proclivity towards weapon related criminality lends further support to the panel's conclusion that you lack suitability for release to the community. You destroyed 2 lives denying children of their fathers and wives of their husbands and release at this time would deprecate the severity of your conduct, undermine respect for the law and tend to trivialize the tragic loss of life which you caused.'

"This boilerplate decision essentially holds that the nature of the crime, in and of itself - of which will never change due to the conviction, prohibits my release on parole. Basically, this is the same reason for the last denial.

At any rate, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to all supporters, especially those who wrote letters to the parole board in my behalf. However, I will be appealing this denial, and in preparation of my appeal I would urge all those who wrote letters in my behalf to write a second letter to

the Chairman of NYS Div. of Parole, stating the following:

'Based on the unjust denial of parole on July 27, 2004, for Anthony Jalil Bottom, and pursuant to NYS Div. of Parole Policy and procedure Manual - Item 8355.00, I request a FULL BOARD CASE REVIEW. In the parole denial it was stated that, "...the panels conclusion that you lack suitability for release to the community." However, the parole panel has disregarded the fact over 200 letters in support of Mr. Bottom's release was submitted to the parole board. The parole board failed to take in consideration that the conviction is based upon established perjured testimony, and the weapon Mr. Bottom was alleged to have used in this case has turned out to not have been the actual murder weapon. Based on these facts, I ask for a Full Board Case Review of the July 27, 2004 parole denial of Anthony Jalil Bottom.'

"If at all possible, I ask that this be post on the internet and people be encouraged to write and send this letter to: Richard Dennison, Chairman of NYS Div. of Parole, 97 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12206.

Also, in this posting, I ask that people log on to www.thejerichomovement.com and learn how they can participate and contribute to the Jericho campaign to collect school supplies for African AIDS orphans in support of U.S. political prisoners.

Please extend my very best regards to the righteous at heart with you. The struggle continues...

Yours in struggle -

Jalil"

Again, we thank you all who have written letters in support of Jalil and who have spread the word. Please keep doing so. We will continue to keep in touch and work with Jalil in support of his release. Please pass this on.



Anthony Jalil Bottom #77A4283
Auburn Correctional Facility
135 State Street
Auburn, NY 13024



June 12th Report

*"To gain that which is worth having, it may be necessary to lose everything else."
- Bernadette Devlin McAliskey*

This June marked the fourth year that our friend and comrade Jeff "Free" Luers has been imprisoned and held captive by the state. Sentenced to 22 years and 8 months for burning three Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) at a Eugene car dealership to protest ecological destruction, and numerous trumped up arson charges, Jeff has remained active in prison and continues to fight back with his words and inspiration. This June 12, Break The Chains and Free's Defense Network, and many other groups throughout the world, organized a day of solidarity with Jeff to protest his absurd prison sentence and to make a show of force for him before his appellate hearings.

This was the first annual international day of solidarity with Jeff, and it was a great success. Events and protests were organized by environmentalists, anarchists, human rights and prisoner support activists in countries as diverse as Australia, England, Finland, Norway, Poland, Russia, Scotland, and North America. The main event was held in the city where Free was originally arrested - Eugene, Oregon. It was organized by Break The Chains, with the help of the Cascadia Media Collective, Eugene Peace Works, and others.

Due to the threat of police violence, including FBI harassment, we decided not to do a public protest but instead to organize an indoor event focused on community education about Free's case, to mobilize people to take action in support of Free - and other political prisoners - and against Oregon's "Measure 11" mandatory-minimum sentencing guidelines and other forms of state repression.

The event, which was held at the WOW Hall, was attended by approximately 200 people. The main attractions at the event were presentations by former political prisoners Ramona Africa of MOVE and Claude Marks of the Freedom Archives, and a musical performance by the American Indian (Dine) "Alter-Native" punk musicians Blackfire. The event also included a showing of an edited version of the Australian documentary film "Green with a Vengeance" about radical environmentalism in the Northwest, combined with unseen footage of an interview with Free; plus presentations by members of Break The Chains, as well as Kevin Price of Friends of Move, and Free's father, John Luers.

At the opening of the event, a member of Break The Chains greeted the audience and explained his reasons for supporting Free, noting that Free is a principled, compassionate person who belongs on the streets working for change, not held in torturous conditions of confinement. He also emphasized the ridiculousness of Free serving 22 years for actions that harmed nobody, when local cops are getting five years sentences for using their positions of power to sexually coerce women. Before handing over the mic to Claude Marks, he urged people to take action for Free now because if

they get away with keeping him down for 22 years, then all activists and dissidents will be more vulnerable to the wrath of the ruling class.

Claude Marks, the director and founder of San Francisco's Freedom Archives Project, discussed the importance of prisoner support and the importance of being an ally, allowing those you are allies with to determine the direction your support will take. He said that, despite what you may think of their tactics, political prisoners as diverse as Jalil Muntaqim, David Gilbert, Marilyn Buck, and now Jeff Luers, are all fighting for a more just world free from racism, war, and ecological annihilation. They are targeted most severely by the state because they are dissidents who see through the big lie of American "democracy."

Following Claude, Blackfire members Jeneda and Clayson performed traditional Dine singing and drumming while band member Klee performed his award-winning, awe-inspiring hoop dance. The intricacy and sophistication of the dance is breathtaking. Klee spoke about the meaning of the dance for his people and his reasons for performing it at the event.

After the dance, another member of Break The Chains got on stage and read a statement by Free. This statement was written just for the event and was supposed to be read by Free over the phone and recorded to be played at the event. Unfortunately, due to technical difficulties the statement was not recorded so instead a collective member read it to the audience. The statement is very powerful. This is the closing paragraph:

"Look around you. The people you see are your hope. They are your community, they are your allies and they are your source of strength. One person in this room has the power to make a difference. Imagine the difference you can make by working together. You want to be free from the control of multinational corporations that only care about profit? You want to be free from a police force that protects the corrupt? Do you want an alternative to a society and civilization that is destroying its own world? Then take the initiative and create it, build it, and fight for it. Lead by example. If you want change, then take it street by street, community by community until power has been reclaimed."

The edited version of the film "Green with a Vengeance", provided by the Cascadia Media Collective, refreshed everyone's memory about the spin that law enforcement and corporate media put on Jeff's case, and the actual footage of Free - in the forest and then behind bars - gave the event a sense of urgency. "Green with a Vengeance" was originally shown on mainstream television in Australia - something that would never happen here in the US. The filmmaker, Olivia Rousset, had the courage to interview Free, allowing him to explain his real motivations and debunk the lie that he is an "eco-terrorist" when in reality he is an eco-defender who acted out of frustration with continual attempts at making change only to be ignored by the status quo.

Adding to the immediacy of the event was the presence of Free's parents, John & Judy Luers. John Luers had a

short but impassioned statement prepared for the audience. Here it is in its entirety:

“Good evening....Thank you all for coming....Today is intended to be a day for public education and awareness about Jeff and his case....The FBI, in it’s bulletin to law enforcement agencies, has chosen to make it sound like an ELF (Earth Liberation Front) call to action. That’s wrong, but it got Jeff and his case some good publicity in places such as Morgantown, West Virginia and Palm Beach, Florida that may not have developed otherwise....My wife, Judy, and I want to thank all of the organizers and attendees at this event and similar events around the world designed to bring attention to the injustice done to our son, Jeff “Free” Luers.”

Kevin Price, a longtime MOVE supporter traveled from Philadelphia and spoke with fire about the lies surrounding Mumia Abu Jamal’s case. He also made analogies between the misinformation around Free’s case and the severity of Free’s sentence, with Mumia’s case, where he clearly wasn’t the person who killed the cop (another person has even confessed to the shooting). Mumia is on death row for his political beliefs, for his refusal to stop reporting the truth. Kevin started doing work for Mumia and MOVE political prisoners at the age of 14. He’s now working with International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal and is publisher of the Friends of MOVE newsletter. His passion was well-received by the audience.

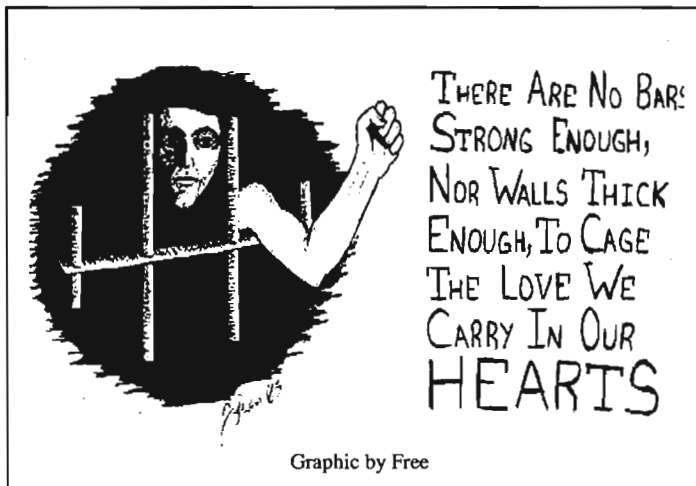
The last speaker was Ramona Africa, the Minister of Communication for the MOVE Organization, a former political prisoner and one of two survivors of a Philadelphia police assault in 1985 which killed 17 people and burned 200 neighbors out of their homes. Ramona spoke eloquently about the absurdity of the same government that refused to punish police for murdering MOVE members and their children in a bomb attack has the nerve to call Free a “terrorist.” She reminded us of the oppression and brutality suffered by people all over the world at the hands of the thugs who run this insane system. She pointed out that to go to the oppressor to ask them to stop oppressing you will never work. She gave many analogies for this, encouraging people to understand that the system itself will never change willingly and that power concedes nothing without a struggle. Ramona finished off her talk shouting this message over a loud applause:

“Long live John Africa! Long live the Earth Liberation Front! Long live the Animal Liberation Front! Long live the Puerto Rican independistas! Long live the Zapatistas! Long live Mumia Abu-Jamal! Long live Free! Long live all political prisoners! And death to this rotten ass system!”

Blackfire got us dancing for the rest of the night with their inspirational political music, pointing out that

whether we are fighting against injustice caused by homophobia, sexism, racism, or classism, it is all the same fight, we are all fighting against the same oppressive system and we need to work together to become a force to be reckoned with. They brought the message from the Hopi and Dine people on Black Mesa, that their mountain is being ravaged by Peabody Coal, and that the same company that owns half of Peabody Coal is also linked to privatized prisons.

Another thing that Blackfire pointed out was that walls continually are built to create a sense of separation between people and the earth, and between each other. In Palestine, in Iraq, at protests, in prison, on the reservation... these walls are meant to keep people feeling isolated, separated from community and the natural world. We need to work hard to get past the physical and psychological barriers that separate us so that our struggles can become more powerful and the alliances we make can grow stronger as we face oppression on all fronts.



Graphic by Free

Blackfire’s awesome music combines traditional American Indian with punk rock for a truly unique sound (hence the term “Alter-Native”). They played to a very appreciative crowd whom demanded a triple encore! Finishing the night with AIM song, followed by a cover of The Ramones tune, “I believe in miracles”.

Despite a lower attendance than expected (which we attribute to college graduation parties, conflicting events and FBI scare tactics), the event was a great success. Over 200 people came together - despite the corporate media and FBI attempts to slander our efforts with hysterical falsifications about our “terrorist” plans - to show their support for Free and political prisoners, and their opposition to state repression and unjust sentencing. Although we realize that it will take a lot more than this to get Free out of prison and back where he belongs (in his community), we feel this was a real step in the right direction.

Free’s supporters are gaining ground. The amount of international support for Free is indicative of this fact. We are doing what we can to get Free’s sentence chopped back because we know his sentence is our sentence, and that today’s dissidents are tomorrow’s political prisoners. We know we can’t afford to let them get away with locking away our friend, our comrade, for the most important years of his life. So we won’t. And once we get him out, we won’t stop there. Because this isn’t about one person, this is about every life stolen by the prison industrial complex. This is about struggling for a world where all lives are valued and equal, a world free of prisons, torture, genocide, and ecocide. And, to quote Buenaventura Durruti, **“that world is growing this minute....in our hearts”**.

Our Response to the FBI

The following is part of a letter that was sent out to media outlets following the June 12th Event. The FBI attempted to link the event, and Break The Chains with the Earth Liberation Front, an underground, anonymous group opposing environmental destruction.

"In the lead-up to the Day of Solidarity the FBI put out a press release to media outlets, police departments, car dealerships, construction companies, and logging companies saying that they should be on high alert for "eco-terrorist" groups using the event as a jumping off point. The press release went on to say that Jeff is a 'convicted eco-terrorist and member of the ELF'.

This was faithfully reproduced in the Register-Guard (*Eugene's daily paper*), and other corporate media outlets. There was no independent corroboration of the FBI press release. No contact was made by the Register Guard to the organizers of the event, despite having been sent a press release from Break The Chains describing the motives and goals of the Day of Solidarity.

In reality, the International Day of Solidarity was initiated by Break The Chains and FreeFreeNow.org. The events held worldwide were benefit dinners, video showings, discussions, and concerts. By the hysterical standards of John Ashcroft, events such as these are being labeled as "terrorism". This is done to instill fear in people for wanting to support Jeff and for engaging in any critique of the system. Jeff has continually disavowed any connection to the Earth Liberation Front, and despite their efforts and claims, the FBI has never been able to make such a connection.

None of the groups connected with the International Day of Solidarity, has any connection to the ELF. That is a completely baseless and absurd charge. Break The Chains is a prisoner support collective dedicated to providing help to a class in this society that is often powerless and voiceless: the two million people in American jails and prisons

Jeff is considered a political prisoner by many. His sentence is not only for lighting three SUVs on fire, but for his political stance and unwillingness to plead guilty when he didn't *feel* guilty. Had his crime not been political in nature, he would not be serving the next nineteen years in prison."

Dispatch from Free: June 15, 2004

Wow. I've started getting feedback about how well things went on June 12th. Thank you everyone. All day Saturday, I could feel the energy of so many people. The prison officials could feel it too.

The Department of Corrections released a bulletin about the day. It told guards to be prepared for an anarchist threat and the possibility of anarchists showing up at the prison. I heard guards talking about being ready to fire on demonstrators and already getting their stories straight. They also made it clear for my benefit that if anything started inside the prison; they knew who to shoot first. That made me smile.

The day was totally awesome for me. I got to speak with Kevin Price and Claude Marks on the phone. Ramona Africa also gave me very inspirational words which deeply touched my heart. Klee, from the band Blackfire, sang me a very beautiful traditional Dine song about strength of heart. The phone was passed around to many friends, some of who have been continually subject to FBI harassment for being involved in my support.

Several people across the country were intimidated or harassed by agents for supporting me. It is a clear sign of the government's fear that it is losing its power of intimidation. My sentence was supposed to discourage people, not inspire them. All of you have inspired me.

I'd like to ask folks that were targeted by the FBI-if you have business cards or the names of the agents that harassed you, please mail or email copies to the POB Box or website.* I want these people to know that every time they harass someone, their name and all the information we have on them will be posted on my website.

However, I do owe a great deal of thanks to the FBI. If it was not for their bulletin, I would not have had half the media coverage that 'J12' received. Thank you very much-you have done a great service.

I am so thankful for everything you all did. It will take weeks to learn all the details of everything but my utmost gratitude to Eugene, Oregon; Morgantown, West Virginia; Moscow, Russia and everywhere else. I look forward to hearing your stories.

Additionally, I'd like to revisit my June 3rd dispatch. I've been getting a lot of feedback from people about how sad it made them. The reason I wrote that is because I needed people to understand that this experience is not political to me-it is personal. I don't want people to romanticize my situation or me because it would happen to anyone of you. I'm not here for burning SUVs-that is only part of it. I'm here because I will not bow my head. The government and the way our society is structured is wrong. It gives full power to a privileged few. I will resist that until it changes or I die because it offends my belief in freedom.

But I'll save that tirade for another time. Be safe, be courageous and keep fighting. The tides are beginning to turn.

**Ed note: POB 3, Eugene, OR 97440 and/or
freefreenow@mutualaid.org*

What if I had thirty years?

To be caught in the dregs of the system can be the ultimate period of introspection and reflection upon ones life. Memories haunt, relationships wax and wane, dreams falter and taunt and hope becomes the predominant sustenance within everyday existence. Reduced to a number; the last thing that inmates enjoy hearing is that they are being labeled – or classified by anyone. Daily, we struggle to maintain our own identities – somehow stripped of our own human right to self expression by the restrictions the system has placed upon us. It always strikes a nerve to discover that individuals beyond this immediate situation have the tendency to place us in different categories. A common statement from myself whenever I hear someone going off on a tangent about their own status, and someone else's lack of credentials in here is that we have all been busted. We all share the horrible memory and experience of being arrested and coursed through the meat-grinder. Whatever cut or grade of person we were prior is nearly defunct, because now we are all just bits of ground flesh, none any better than the rest. We are all inmates.

It's common in here to observe inmates as they clamber and step upon one another in the struggle for status. The class system in here is very critical to those deemed unworthy of credibility or merit. A man lives on his word, and his actions alone – all of the rest is hinged upon our integrity. We all have our own little support systems set up and I have realized how fortunate I am to know people of honor and integrity because I often observe those in here lacking in those traits – also lacking in meaningful connections out there on the streets. Not to say that there aren't plenty of good people in here without support because that's a given, but it's not likely that a person who was a renegade or rogue on the streets will suddenly learn to find intimacy and connection with others within prison walls.

A noticeable trend is the recent division of support for prisoners locally based upon whether they are "political" or social prisoners...Yet another classification – it never ends. There is a certain degree of credibility and notoriety one receives for being imprisoned for direct action that others that are just casualties of the system can never achieve. Granted, your crimes are verified evidence of dedication – but who can gauge the importance of one caught for an act of animal liberation against one who has spent every day of their life on the outside shoplifting to support themselves (for whatever reasons).

As long as the appropriate foes are targeted, they are both relevant protests/struggles. One is hardship based. I can not justify anyone's crimes because we all have our own motives and inspirations. We all have our own preferences on which angles to attack the structure of the system with. There is a huge difference between tree sitting or squatting and identity theft or drug dealing – yes but to a certain extent they are all linked to the core values of the struggle in some form or fashion. It is just that some angles are more romanticized within activist circles, and some activities leave ones character in question and open to attack.



I feel that unification and banding together between factions and across all of the barriers ejected is in serious order. We are convicts. We have all put it down against the system somehow, somewhere. Stop martyring our brothers because they are high profile and the cause of the moment. If you take initiative to help someone, see it through. Stay loyal. I have watched many of my friends in here get hung out to dry as their popularity grew thin, and it's destructive towards their ability to cope effectively and hurts them in the end. I've even had friends that are close to me express feelings of exploitation and being used. Please know that we within these walls respect and appreciate all of the support we encounter through these dark times, and really have the heart and inspiration to continue and expand our causes. We are fertile for politicization and absorb and utilize information endlessly – and we are rather well organized in

our own way, and therefore spread and share all pearls of wisdom far and wide efficiently with many eager compatriots. I understand that a person, or collective, needs to maintain a selective outlook when choosing who or what to support, for how long and to what degree. I also believe that when a group or person expands its focus to the point where it is stretching itself rather thin due to decisions to intensify support to situations far beyond its immediate region it becomes ineffective to the locals. It becomes the token local chapter for trophy causes. I'm sure it's hard to filter through the dreams of success, but in this arena, there are hundreds of losses to every victory. It is very disappointing at times, and full of heartache. But chances are that if you are reading about a national rally of support for a fallen comrade – believe that the locals are putting it down for them. And that they are pooling resources for their own personal reasons towards finding a solution for their hero. Are you doing the same? I'd also like to add that if people stray away from supporting prisoners on a local level to pursue "bigger, better" causes – who do they think will pick up the support that they've left behind?

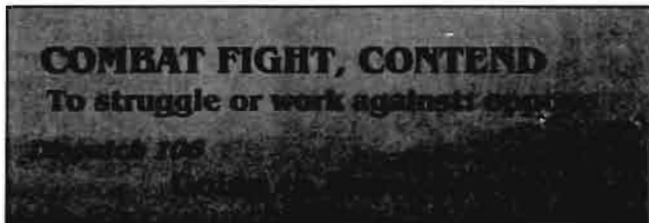
Luckily, I go home in 2 years and I have solid support – but I always get pained to hear that another group from this region has fall off. I've seen a handful disappear over the past 4 years – and I've noticed a drastic change since I began my journey. All I can wonder is, where did all the passion go – the loyalty and philanthropy? I am noticing a sterile change – and I miss what once was beautiful. I notice the loneliness in the eyes of my friends. The general local prisoner has little to cling to, or claim for themselves.

Also, I enjoy feedback on any topic I write about – even negative (though I prefer constructive criticism) from all who can bare to write to an average felon without the master-plan for every solution to the woes of the weeping planet – drop me a line.

True solidarity and resistance starts with you.



Anthony Vaughn
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Volunteers,

I chose the term "volunteer" because it is apropos to combat. "Comrade" or "comrades" are other terms that I like to use a lot in conjunction with combat. I feel as though the two terms are genuinely applicable to Anarchists. I am an Anarchist. As an Anarchist I try to frame my thoughts, my mode of life, and my spirit, in terms of Anarchism. My Anarchism: My Anarchism is what I believe it to be, not what I am told it should be. Still, my Anarchism is fluid. I constantly thirst for, and seek out, Anarchist literature and camaraderie, from anywhere and everywhere that I can. As a prisoner in the Oregon gulag, all contact with outside Anarchists was gradually being choked-off. More on that in a moment.... Let me close this opening paragraph by stating that "volunteers" and "combat" extend beyond the confines of Anarchism. "Volunteers" and "combat" encompass the struggle to move the revolution forward. Given this simple requirement, both "volunteers" and "combat" will tolerate, and seek, extra-Anarchist input....Back to the situation within Oregon prisons.



In 2000, ODOC "documented"¹ Anarchists as a security threat group (STG)². At first, this STG designation, by ODOC definition, earned Anarchists designation as a gang. Prior to this secretive documenting, interaction between myself and outside Anarchists, was relatively free and open. Rejection of Anarchist publication was rare. As far as I know, no Anarchist publication has ever caused actual security problems within the ODOC prison that I have had the pleasure of being interred at.³ Once the documentation occurred, almost all Anarchist literature was intercepted and rejected by ODOC. The reasoning tendered for almost all of the rejections, was the display of a circle-A, or an Anarchist Black Cross symbol. It is the rare Anarchist publication that does not contain either a circle-A or ABC symbol. ODOC was aware of this and they wrote a provision into their mail rule which declared the circle-A, the ABC cross, and the black flag depictions, within Anarchist publications, to be, "gang/STG paraphernalia." They followed up this declaration with a policy of "zero tolerance for any gang/STG activity." My interaction with Anarchists on the outside essentially ceased to exist. I was pissed.

I was not the only one pissed-off. Other Anarchist prisoners, comrades of mine, and yours, were equally pissed-off. We all attempted to challenge the rejection

problem by utilizing ODOC's administrative review system. While I was at EOCI, every once-in-a-while one of these administrative reviews would terminate in my favor. This did not last long before I was transferred to OSP. At OSP not one single administrative review, for any Anarchist prisoner, which I knew of, terminated in the Anarchist's favor.

We were in a quandary as to what to do about the problem. It became obvious to me that only a court injunction was going to get us relief. I was somewhat loathe to file such an action. I tried pleading our case with all of the ODOC top brass, whose sphere of influence touched upon the mail rule, or whom could influence the mail rule. It was totally fruitless. It appeared that the lawsuit avenue was to be our only chance at relief. It was a big risk. I was experienced as

a prison legal assistant and prison litigator. I knew that the courts were not friendly to prisoner litigation. Coupled with the bad press that Anarchists were getting Oregon, it seemed hopeless. But we were already in a position of total repression. We could only improve our situation. However, a loss would only seal the fate we had already attained. I filed suit, McCarvill v DeHaan, et. al., United States District Court, District of Oregon, case No. 02-1167-KI, Portland, Oregon.

The combat had begun. I don't want to bore you with the ins-and-outs of litigating the suit. Anyone who is truly interested in the litigation itself can get the court file and gain a pretty good

idea of the massive effort required to prosecute such a suit from the perspective of a prisoner.⁴ It is formidable, I can tell you.

We won the lawsuit. Notice that I said "we." I could not have accomplished this win alone. Had I been alone in this effort, I would have lost.

There was all manner of support in this combat. This is Anarchism at work.

Brian McCarvill

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¹ This is ODOC's terminology. Webster describes a "document" as: "a paper that furnished information, proof, or support of something else."

² This according to a sworn statement by Benny Ward, ODOC's STG manager.

³ Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution at Pendleton, Oregon and the Oregon State Penitentiary at Salem, Oregon. My interaction with outside Anarchists earned me my transfer from EOCO to OSP for administrative security concerns. These concerns were Anarchist related.

The Mexican Role in Imperial Conquest

Benny Tapia

Historically, the function of the military has been to protect and perpetuate the ideological and material interests of the ruling class. The rank and file are predominantly from the middle and poverty classes and are among the least informed in a society. In the 21st century this fact remains. This explains those justifications given by Mexicans as to why they are in Iraq. They have said, "To free the Iraqi's from Saddam Hussein" and/or to "eliminate an imminent threat to the United States." I will address both of these quotes in turn, but first I want to make a brief historical analysis of our role in imperial conquest.

For us, this first occurred in 1519 when the Cempoallans made a strategic alliance with Hernando Cortez and his conquistadores. On their way to Tenochtitlan the conquistadores continued to acquire recruits and make alliances with tribes who opposed the Aztec empire. These few hundred conquistadores and few hundred thousand allies went on to successfully defeat the Aztecs. The "allies" retained some autonomy during the conquest and were under the belief that, free of Aztec domination, their material conditions would improve. However, once the subjugation of Mexico and Central America was complete and the imperial forces secured, their "allies" were reduced to commodities of the Spanish crown, putting those allies in the same category as the tribes they helped conquer.

Now let's jump forward 300 years to Texas. Believing the propaganda for independence by squatters, many Mexicans did in fact fight alongside S. Houston, thinking independence would equal prosperity. But once independence was realized, Mexicans learned that the new Texans neither acknowledged their

contribution, nor allotted them any significant role inside the new independent state. In fact, their material aspirations only resulted in "Americas" imperial consolidation of land and power.

Then there are the many lessons of North Americas First Nations, who in various "Euro-wars" sided with either the British, the French, or "Americans". Regardless of their alliances, once the smoke had cleared and imperial forces secured, they consequently all met the same fate. In these few example, those indigenous forces had either an independent strategic and/or material interest for fighting in imperial wars. In 2004, what is the Mexicans' interest in imperialism? As a conquered and captured colony of U.S. imperialism, we have no independent interest. Some can point to a "dependent interest", but even this is illegitimate, only testifies to our incapacitated state, and is a manifestation of our neo-colonial status.



Fighting to free Iraqis? When and where has imperialism freed anyone? This historic fact does not exist! We are not even free ourselves. So how are we going to free anyone else? Indeed, we are only free to be good subjects of imperialism. Underneath all the propaganda, it amounts to Mexicans (people of color) killing people of color for white imperialism.

And even if all that was alleged about Iraq was true, which the U.S. administration is now admitting was not, we must realize that imperialism not only provoked, but created that "threat". If we analyze the 20th century, we'll find that imperialism frequently created (and will continue to create) situations all over the world that required our bravery, our blood, and our lives in large amounts.

Let's not be fooled into believing that the war in Iraq eliminates an imminent threat. This idea is propagated to give people a false sense of security. Who or what is the most imminent threat to us? "Imminent" implies something that

will occur in the future. I'd ask you to examine the material conditions as they exist now and decide which is most detrimental to us: other people of color in foreign countries, or the status quo here in the U.S. Undisputedly it is the status quo, it is U.S. oppression, it is institutional racism, it is Mexican on Mexican violence, it is our high child mortality rate, it is our sky-rocketing incarceration rate, it is our suicide rate, etc, etc. All of which are the consequence of imperialism.

I'd also challenge you to make a quantitative analysis of how many civilian "terrorist" or "rogue nations" have killed outside of their own countries? How many civilians did the U.S. kill in Vietnam? Millions in one war alone! In Iraq the U.S. has already killed ten times the amount of civilians that died on 9/11/01. So, decide who is the most imminent threat to humankind and world stability?

Unfortunately, Mexicans have become equivalent to the Aztec forces after they were militarily defeated, i.e., we are being used (just as the Aztecs were) to fight and die for the same people who have conquered us, taken our land, and reduced us to subsistence. Behind all the pose and illegitimate justifications, Mexicans in the U.S. military are only protecting and perpetuating U.S. imperialism. After 500 years we are back to square one!

The fact that most Mexicans who enlist in the U.S. military do so specifically for economic mobility gives potential to a collective realization of the cause and effects of the U.S. military industrial complex as it directly applies to them, the proletariat, and the "third world". For those of us who are politically advanced, our challenge is to develop this collective realization, to move "our forces" from their current front of stabilizing U.S. imperialism and domination, to ours.



Tenamitl.

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This article will
be featured in
Spanish in BTC
issue 20.

Break The Chains: Message of Solidarity to the Palestinian Abnaa el Balad movement

The Break The Chains group of Eugene, Oregon (USA) condemns the vicious attacks launched by the Israeli state against the Abnaa el Balad movement, including the arrests of movement

leaders Mohamed Ka'hane and Husam Kana'aneh, and the vandalism against their offices.

We call upon radical and progressive



organizations in North America to express their solidarity with the Abnaa el Balad movement, and with the Palestinian freedom fighters living and struggling within Israel itself for their legitimate right to self-determination. The terrorism of the Sharon government must be stopped.

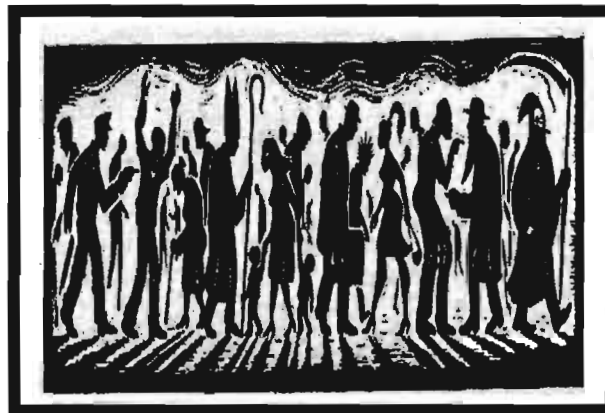
Defend the Abnaa el Balad movement and the left opposition in Palestine!

Freedom to political prisoners Mohamed Ka'hane and Husam Kana'aneh!

Fight state terrorism against the Palestinians and all oppressed people!

Break The Chains

July 14, 2004



In the past two years that I've been locked up, I've used the time on my hands to analyze our movement and study the past histories of the struggle for liberation. I've come to many conclusions, sometimes backtracked and scrapped those conclusions and replaced them with others. One conclusion that has constantly come back to haunt me is that our movement has failed to prepare even in the smallest of ways for revolutionary struggle. Not just for the inevitable armed struggle, but even preparing a strategy for the political and social struggle which is of primary importance. In this document I will give a critique of our current strategic errors, and give general solutions to kick people in the right direction. I leave the solutions general because I want people to take these ideas and study further in order to develop, perfect, change, or even find better solutions to these issues.

Goals

In the introduction to the book "We Are Our Own Liberators" by Jalil Muntaqim, he states the primary questions that are the genesis for a political organization in the movement: "Where is the movement going, what is the ultimate objective of the movement? The answer to this question presents another question - how to best reach our objective/goal."

The first question has us setting our goals straight. We must be clear in what we want. We can't continue to just throw around slogans and rhetoric, because that will not lead to a foundation for a new society. We must show an alternative in clear and precise language.

We say we want a society without a government, than we leave it at that. The picture that we leave behind is that we want a world of chaos and destruction. In the hands of the current anarchist organizations (especially the anti-organizations) that's what it would be. We spend countless time listing the "isms" we are against then we throw one "ism" on top that we are for and expect everything to sort itself out. For the issue-hopping activists moving aimlessly from one issue to another, this is alright. However, if we want a social revolution we must aim higher than certain defeat. Some people have solved the issue (in their own minds) by turning the problem itself into a political ideology and general strategy. They claim to have the entire system to collapse and cling to the hope that they learn enough survival skills they will survive the system collapse. As if this doomsday non-solution is not enough, they incorporate more flaws to their general strategy by claiming to be anti-organizational. If someone is hanging on the fringes, they look down on the people who organize by denouncing them as "bureaucratic" or "organization fetish." The institutions of the state are backwards tendencies into an action of the lazy, undisciplined and undisciplined middleclass activists. Like the Christians of the world they'll forever be sitting around waiting for the end of the world.

For the rest of us, it is not a matter of surviving the coming doom. We don't want to survive, we want them to evolve to the next step in human development. We want freedom and the power to control our means of survival. We want to end imperialism. We want an end to racism and all forms of oppression. We want to bring forth a new world and we must spell out exactly what it is, so people know what they're fighting for. We must show an alternative to the present system in clear and precise language. That's what is meant by long-term objective.

It's Time For Change

By Anarchist/Anti-fascist POW
Matthew "Rampage" Lamont

It's also good to make short-term goals which are steps leading to the achievement of the ultimate objectives. Most likely your short term goals will fall within your political, social, economic, and military strategies.

Strategy

There are very few comrades in the US who have any experience as a revolutionary. Most of us have experience as activists and mistakenly carry over these strategies to the revolutionary struggle. Therefore it's necessary to study the writings of people who have the experience we desperately need. One of the most powerful tools to develop strategy is study groups. Study groups are unique in that you are moving forward together in the struggle. It's important to have cohesion when developing strategy. As the old saying goes, "two heads are better than one." As revolutionaries we must be well versed in political, economic, and military theory, as well as history. Only through a deep analysis of these subjects can we develop a strategy to win. Furthermore, study in these subjects must be constant, because our strategy must be in constant development.

Political/Social Strategy

Popular support is the most important thing to have when developing a revolution. There are many factors in a movement winning popular support, which I will not get into here since most groups haven't even grasped the basic steps, which is having a political/social strategy. This is what we will cover.

Political theories seem to be born overnight, especially in America's drive-through activism. Like Burger King you can "have it your way." However, as revolutionaries we are fighting alongside the oppressed people, and their struggles must be at the forefront. We must also remember that we are anarchists, despite all the extras people want to throw on it to sidetrack us. We must look in the past and study the roots of anarchist theory, but remember at the same time that this is not 19th century Russia and apply theory and practice accordingly. Always keep politics in command.

For too long, oppressed communities have had to rely on institutions created by the government. These institutions not only degrade the people, but they do not provide adequately to meet their needs. Now, with more tax cuts for the wealthy, the little that the community had is being taken away. We must show the people that we are there for the community. We need to feed the hungry, house the homeless and clothe those without clothes. We need to open clinics, rehabilitation centers, and schools. We need to lead tenant strikes and work strikes. By doing these services, while simultaneously pointing out the

government's failure to provide for the people, we draw a clear line in the sand between the classes.

We can't do this all alone, so we need to be constantly recruiting. Each person in the collective should be responsible to bring another person in, and that person should bring in another person. The days of small exclusive collectives need to be over with.

However, we are looking for permanent members. We can't just have people float in-and-out of our organizations, always on the move to the next hottest and newest thing going. Even worse is having these floaters involved in decision-making. Floating is a common tendency in activism, and is dangerous to the revolution. You can't tell if they are police agents, or if they are just the usual weekend warrior searching for a way to make a spectacle. In any case it doesn't matter: their ignorance, laziness, and unstable, disruptive attitudes have no place in a serious revolutionary organization.

Members must be screened by the organization. They need to give the organization their entire background and the organization must verify it. They must show that they are serious about building revolution in America, and must hold nothing above that goal. "Points of discipline" and "points of unity" must be established and prospective recruits must agree to these guidelines prior to joining. We should never have to be in a position where we have to second guess our comrades because we failed to make for certain that they were solid.

Lastly, recruits must be educated by the organization in anarchist theory, decision making processes, and the group procedures. They need to be tested to make sure they understand these subjects before having them participate in membership activity. Will this screening process scare some people away? Perhaps, but most who are unwilling to go through the process are not people we need anyway. Revolution is a dedication which may bring death or life in prison: If they can't go through a simple screening process, what would make us want them fighting alongside us?

Economic Strategy

Much work needs to go into our economic strategy, both long-term and short-term. Our economic strategy at this point is worse than George Bush's. What anarchist organization isn't in desperate poverty, desperately grasping for pennies at the last minute for projects, attorneys, bail, etc.? We need collectively owned low risk businesses. By this I don't mean info-shops or bookstores - these don't raise money, they raise consciousness. I mean pubs, clubs, restaurants, laundromats, and any other type of small community-based business which can bring a steady cash flow. We need membership dues paid by the percentage of a person's income (this evens things out as far as class goes). We need work groups on a constant hustle jumping from event to event collecting donations. Groups can even take extreme measures and get funds the old school way - by stealing them in raids on capitalist businesses and banks. We need to open war-chests to keep money on the side in case our members get caught up.

Secondly, we need a long-term economic strategy to put forward an alternative to capitalism. We need people to study both direct economics and capitalist economics, so we can show the benefits of our economic plan in comparison to the highly flawed capitalist economy.

Military Strategy

We are unprepared to win a fistfight let alone a protracted armed struggle with the most technologically advanced and trained military in history. What are people thinking? Are they serious about wanting to win or is this a game? Every collective active in the anarchist movement needs to develop a military doctrine. This means taking an hour out of each day to exercise and practice some form of martial arts (like Thai Boxing or Jujitsu, for instance). It means studying urban and rural guerrilla warfare by looking at current and past movements who have used this strategy. We need to know how to organize, structure, and administer a clandestine military wing.

Furthermore, at the very least, one day should be spent drilling. By this I mean practicing with weapons of warfare, carrying out movement formations, and carrying out various practice operation scenarios. You can't be too early when it comes to preparation, only too late. If we keep on going on in this current non-strategy mode, the only thing we'll need to be prepared for is failure, or a transition to electoral politics.

Conclusion

Now is the time to get right. Not next month, not next season, not next year. I don't claim to have all the answers, only suggestions to the questions left hanging in the air for too long. I do know this: That a vast majority of anarchist groups are nothing more than small activist cliques and lack any revolutionary aspirations. It is not enough to say you are a revolutionary. We must actively work towards liberation, and with every act we must get one step closer. Last but not least, we must dedicate our every breath towards liberty.

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(Note: Matthew is scheduled to be released from prison in mid-October. Contact BTC for more information).



Some News and Updates...

Panel grants Arrow's request to seek refugee status in Canada

The Associated Press
7/30/2004

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Jailed environmental activist Tre Arrow, one of the FBI's most wanted fugitives, will be allowed to apply for refugee status in Canada.

After the recent ruling by a Canadian immigration and refugee board, Arrow's lawyer is applying to have his client released on bond.

But attorney Rudolph Kischer said Arrow would probably immediately be re-arrested on an extradition warrant, which takes precedence over the refugee claim.

Arrow was arrested in Victoria, British Columbia in March on charges of trying to steal bolt-cutters from a home-improvement store.

In Oregon, Arrow is wanted for his alleged role in the 2001 firebombing of logging and cement trucks. The FBI claims he is associated with the Earth Liberation Front, which has claimed responsibility for dozens of acts of destruction over the past few years.

Arrow faces federal charges in Oregon of using fire to commit a felony, destroying vehicles used in interstate commerce and using incendiary devices in a crime of violence. The charges carry combined penalties of up to 80 years in prison.

Arrow, 30, contends that he wouldn't get a fair trial in the United States because of the FBI's assertion that the crimes he is accused of are acts of terrorism.

Camilo "Bikey" Viveiros acquitted of criminal charges!

PHILADELPHIA — In a dramatic victory for critics of the status quo, a Pennsylvania judge acquitted Providence, RI activist Camilo Viveiros of charges that he had assaulted former police

commissioner John Timoney and another officer during the 2000 Republican National Convention. After being tried on three felony charges and four misdemeanors, Viveiros, 34, faced a potential penalty of more than 37 years in jail and \$55,000 in fines. Two codefendants, Eric Steinberg and Darby Landy -- known, with Viveiros, as the "Timoney Three" -- were also acquitted.

"When Timoney left Philly, people proclaimed him as the top cop." Viveiros said. "Today he came back a flop. The truth came out. His is a pattern of abuse and of criminalizing dissent."

Timoney said that although Viveiros and the others were acquitted, he still believes they committed the crimes. He said the defendants got off easily because a judge decided the case, rather than a jury. "Just because you're found not guilty, doesn't mean you're innocent," Timoney said. "I think the judge wanted this case to go away."

Sundiata Acoli Denied Parole

August 11, 2004

Sundiata Acoli is a former member of the Black Panther Party. He was arrested on May 2, 1973 on the N.J. Turnpike following a shootout with NJ State troopers during a "routine" stop for a faulty break light. One passenger, Zayd Malik Shakur, and State Trooper Foster were killed. Assata Shakur and Sundiata were injured and both were tried and convicted of the death of the state trooper. Sundiata was sentenced to life, plus 30 years. After serving 30 years, he has been denied parole.

Veronza Bowers, Jr. denied parole

Veronza Bowers, Jr. was a principal organizer for the Black Panther Party and was sentenced to life for the death of a National Park Service ranger. Under federal law an inmate serving a life sentence in a federal prison is entitled to mandatory parole after serving thirty years, unless the

commission makes findings based on "credible" evidence that one has failed to adapt to the rules of the prison. No such findings were made in the case of Veronza. Remarkably, on the day he was due parole, the US parole commission denied his freedom.

Raymond Luc Levasseur Paroled

Portland, Maine - Ray Luc Levasseur, now 57, was a member of the "Ohio Seven," a group responsible for 19 bombings and 10 bank robberies over a nine-year period that began in the 1970s. In 1986, he was sentenced to 45 years in prison for his role in numerous bombings at corporate offices and military installations. He became eligible for parole after 10 years of imprisonment. He was released after serving 20 years, to be supervised by the government for the remainder of his sentence, minus credit for good behavior. He is still technically serving his sentence in the community. He was paroled to Portland, Maine and is living in a halfway house.



Six Prisoners Punished Working for Better Treatment

Pendleton, Oregon - Six male prisoners of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution have been placed in administrative segregation after being singled out as organizers or "ringleaders" of a boycott of the chow hall starting on May 12th.

The six prisoners (EOCI Six) were convicted of organizing acts of civil disobedience and direct action on May 12th in protest of inhumane treatment. In an ironic retaliation to these acts, the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution found the prisoners, who wanted a safe and humane environment, a threat and silenced them by segregating the six further from the general prison population.

The main focus of the boycott on May 12th was an attempt to disrupt the economy of the facility by refusing to eat in the

dining hall, use the collect-call phones, or purchase items from the canteen. Such acts were to be continued until the prisoners gained the desired attention and respect from prison administrators.

The following is a brief list generalizing the most pressing concerns from the prisoners:

- the use of excessive force/physical punishment
- the disrespectful and vindictive behavior of staff and officers
- the lack of adequate medical/mental health care
- the lack of fulfilling work/education opportunities
- the discrimination against racial/religious/cultural/political groups
- the excessive disciplinary fines and sanctions
- the artificially high cost of phone calls and canteen items
- a myriad of other problems that have created an environment hostile to our well-being, rehabilitation, and reintegration into the free world

The collective prisoners of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution stated, "Unless our concerns are given timely and serious consideration, we will continue to engage in further escalation of direct action...We cannot afford to remain silent any longer!"

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WHERE I COME FROM:

I come from those tears
that my mom shed as she hid in the fields
her belly round with life
as my dad chased after her
to beat her
because he was drunk

I come from that anger
That my dad holds in his heart
Because he was left behind
To be raised by a white family
Because his mother died giving him life

I come from the pain
Of these two people that had the cards
stacked against them
From the beginning
Because she was a white woman
And he was an Indian man

I come from that bitter-sweet love
Of these two people
That brought a half-breed child
Into this world

Where I come from:

I come from that burning
As the first swallow of whiskey
Slides down my throat
Taking me along with it for 18 years

I come from that shame and fear
As I sit in a bath full of cold water
Washing the blood away

From my torn and beaten 12 year old body
After 4 boys raped me

I come from that special place that I go to
as the ones that say
They would always love me
Hits, kicks, shoots, and rapes me
One more time

I come from that blood
That runs down my fingers
As I slide that razor blade
Across my wrist
One more time

Where I come from:

I come from too many bars
And the back seat of cars
Too many lovers that had no names
And always
Not enough whiskey

I come from
Jails, prisons, mental institutions
Boarding schools
The reservation systems, the mission
system
Extermination, assimilation, relocation, self-
determination
All meaning
GENOCIDE
I come from
I will never forget you my sisters
As I leave them behind at the gate

Where I come from:

I come from
HEY, I'm Indian too
I just do not know what tribe
Can you teach me to be Indian
Can you give me an Indian Name?
Can you take me to a sweat lodge?
HEY
What do you mean that you will not take me
to ceremonies?

Where I come from:

I come from the water
That travels over the rocks
That my Auntie listens to
Because they teach her the songs
That will heal our people

I come from hot acorn soup and dried
seaweed
That our women gather and cooked
To feed the people

I come from the sounds
Of the elderberry clapper sticks
That our men play
As the women dance upon the lands

I come from that pebble that Raven
Carried in his mouth
Then dropped it upon the lands
To give life to my people:

**Stormy Ogden
Tule River Yokuts & Kashaya Pomo
Ex-prisoner**



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TO:

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San Francisco, CA 94110**

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