

When Will We Ever Learn?

by Michael Novick, *Anti-Racist Action-Los Angeles/People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)*

Many people were stunned by the outcome of the presidential election, and the decisive, if close, victory of Donald Trump. How, they ask, could so many millions of people vote for an open racist and misogynist, immigrant-bashing vengeful narcissist who promised to be a dictator on day one, who has encouraged and unleashed openly fascist thugs, and who plans to use the military to deport tens of millions of people?

But the question must also be asked, how could so many *other* millions of people vote for a warmonger complicit in the genocidal attacks on the Palestinian people and in turning NATO into an aggressive alliance aimed at both Russia and China? How could they vote for hypocritical virtue-signaling about the environment and workers' and women's rights when the outgoing administration presided over record-breaking fossil fuel extraction, broke a railworkers' strike, and never legalized reproductive and abortion rights or raised the federal minimum wage?

That same outgoing Biden-Harris administration convicted Julian Assange of violating the Espionage Act for exposing US war crimes, and prosecuted the Uhuru Three, criminalizing freedom of anti-colonial speech. How could people embrace a campaign that ran away even from Bernie Sanders, and embraced a chicken-hawk war criminal from the George W. Bush administration like Dick Cheney, and his daughter?

The answer to this conundrum lies in the settler colonial nature of US society, in the biggest lie -- that we live in a democracy -- and in the fact that the US is the world bastion of reaction. Elections here are a multi-billion-dollar spectacle that is used to manufacture both consent and a false and fruitless dissent that changes nothing. The choices presented in the election amount to the choice offered to prisoners facing the death penalty in Utah

-- between methods of execution. It is a choice between orderly exploitation, militarism and oppression, and chaotic, disruptive exploitation, militarism and oppression.

No candidate or party with a remote possibility of winning office represents the interests of those exploited, oppressed or colonized by this system.

The willingness of over 150 million people in the US to vote for either of the two main imperialist candidates for president represents the deep-seated defeatism, compliance and complacency of the majority of the US electorate. It demonstrates the current weakness and isolation of anti-imperialist and anti-colonial forces within the US. Even as the material conditions and impact of environmental crisis continue to worsen for most people in this country, the grip of identification with empire remains strong. Neo-fascist strategies and false "solutions" have greater appeal and organic connection to many sectors, even among poor and working people.

How do we begin to turn this around? How can we drive wedges into the mass base for empire and settler colonialism? What will it take to confront, undermine and out-organize the forces pushing from above and below for more naked fascism, and its inevitable partners of war and genocide? Electoral politics, certainly at the federal level, has nothing to offer but delusion.

Imagine if the tens of millions of dollars that poured, in small donations, into the campaign coffers of the duopoly parties had been applied instead to concrete programs of mutual aid, of tenant organizing, land trusts, independent people's media and grassroots educational and consciousness-raising efforts, debt-strike organizing, workers' self-defense efforts at the workplace and in the community (including in carceral workplaces and communities), urban-rural alliances for restorative agro-ecological practices, or international solidarity efforts. We would be manifesting and building our strength rather than bemoaning our losses.

We need to be about creating and nurturing those dispersed seedlings of a new and better world, so that poor and working people begin to get a sense of our own creative power, a sense of what we are fighting for "from one generation to the next." We need to recognize and heighten the frustrations and contradictions of poor and working people towards our rulers, and strengthen the bonds of solidarity and unity among people who have been marginalized and dispossessed.

There are lessons in the breach that has developed between, on the one hand, large numbers of Jewish people in the US opposing the genocide that Israel and the US are inflicting on the Palestinians, and, on the other hand, the pro-imperialist, Zionist dominated institutions of corporatized US Jewish institutions. There are lessons in the sustained practice of a range of Black/African radical organizations that have overcome sectarian divisions and developed concrete programs of social uplift and communal empowerment. There are lessons in the global anti-extractivism efforts and sovereignty struggles of Indigenous people.

There are also negative lessons to be learned, from the illusory "resistance" during Trump's first term that sought to funnel grassroots revulsion into ineffective marches and rallies and into the arms of the Democratic Party. We cannot afford illusions about the nature of this system. Notions that "the left" or progressives can take over and "save" the Democratic Party are a recipe for further demoralization and defeat.

We need proactive cultural and media work, rooted in and helping to sustain mutual aid, serve-the-people

programs that enable people to make a material difference in their own lives and their own consciousness.

We need labor organizing that understands that class war does not depend on recognition, contracts or the National Labor Relations Board, and that addresses and overcomes racial, gender and other divisions among working people.

We need international and internationalist direct action defense of the environment and for restoration of a climate that can sustain life on this planet. This includes impeding and opposing the role of the US military across the globe (and internally to the settler-colonial "homeland") to wage direct, covert and proxy wars and to enforce the unequal exchanges that impoverish the global South.

In all such efforts, we need to address rural as well as urban communities, and to organize (or counter-organize, given the head start by white supremacists and Christian nationalists) inside the ranks of the military. We

RESIST TO EXIST! FROM TTT, DEC. 2016

The persistence of deep-rooted, inter-generational anti-Black racism in the US, manifest in schools, housing, health and medical care, policing, courts, prisons, employment, household income and wealth or poverty, and every other sphere of life is evident to anyone willing to trust the evidence of their senses. Yet as the Nobel laureate Bob Dylan once sang, "How many ears must one man have, before he can hear people cry?"

Liberals and pundits, especially but not exclusively of European descent, who were fond of denouncing Trump and the Republicans for promoting "fact-free" policies and prejudices, were gob-smacked by their own willful ignorance of the facts of white supremacist, patriarchal, exploitative settler colonial capitalism when slapped in the face by Trump's victory. Their blinders removed, they are stunned by the impact of the in-rushing flood of reality. Many are falling back on the old and familiar, trying to circumscribe their response to policy advocacy, fundraising or ritualistic demonstrations. But the times demand that all of us do more, and do better -- quickly.

In 1915, segregationist Democratic US President Woodrow Wilson screened "The Birth of a Nation" in the White House, and helped birth the 20th Century Ku Klux Klan.

In 2016, pResident-elect Donald Trump is installing the 21st Century suit-and-tie KKK directly into the White House, notably in the person of Steve Bannon of Breitbart, a principal platform for the self-named "alt-right" of racists and white nationalists. Emboldened by Trump's campaign, victory and his appointments, they have become more naked in their fascism and racism, chanting "Hail Trump! Hail Victory!" (English translation of the nazi slogan "Sieg Heil!") and giving stiff-armed nazi salutes at their celebration in DC.

On Jan. 20, 2017, the Ku Klux Klan and a variety of other white power and white nationalist formations are planning to be in Washington DC to welcome and celebrate Trump's inauguration. This too, is an echo of earlier occasions, including the 1920s, when the KKK marched in hoods and robes by the thousands in DC and named governors and senators in many states; and 1980, when the Klan announced a rally to welcome Ronald Reagan to DC, but were chased out of town by angry Black Washingtonians and a national mobilization of anti-Klan activists.

That the Klan's plans, along with those of the Empire for a "peaceful transition of power," must be disrupted, should be as evident as the shorter life spans, longer prison sentences, higher unemployment and lower high school graduation rates Black people suffer, or the vast wealth the US rulers extract from all around the globe. But the grip of illusion, denial and identification with the oppressor is very strong. We need to do much more than disrupt the trappings of power, or expose and oppose the blatant neo-nazis and conscious white supremacists. We need a fundamental breach with the settler colonial Empire. We must base our strategies, our tactics, our definitions of friends and enemies, on the understanding that there is an irreconcilable contradiction between, on the one hand, freedom, justice and survival for the vast majority of humanity and most of the living species, and on the other hand, the system of conquest, colonialism and the private expropriation of land, water, and the products of human labor and creativity.

A lot of people these days are talking about resistance without a clear conception of what it entails or on what it can be based. What are the examples that can guide us in deepening our understanding and practice of resistance? Many people associate

must seek to identify and weaken the pillars of support for this system. We need to network out of our silos, without abridging the self-determination of colonized and oppressed people or their capacity to set the terms and pace of their own struggles for liberation.

Turning The Tide is here as one vehicle for advancing such a process and the discussion and communication that will be needed to rise to the moment. We invite correspondence and contributions to generate further such discussion and to share lessons from the kernels of authentic resistance, solidarity and liberation efforts in which you may be engaged. We hope to play a role in dialogue and cross-pollinating among different tendencies, organizations, and movements, and both inside and outside prison walls.

Towards that end, we are reprinting excerpts from *PART's Perspective: Resist to Exist* in Dec. 2016, on the eve of Trump's first inaugural. The entire original document is available online:



the term resistance to opposition to fascism. We can look, it's true, to the French Resistance against Nazi occupation during World War II, as well as that of the Greeks and Yugoslav partisans, and to examples of Resistance inside Nazi Germany itself.

But we must also look to the Algerian resistance to French colonialism, to the Vietnamese resistance against French, Japanese and US occupation, Palestinian resistance to Zionist occupation, Azania/South Africa resistance to the Brits and the Boers, to the indigenous resistance to half a millennium of settler colonialism in the Americas. In Puerto Rico, which has been colonized, with genocidal impact, since Columbus, resistance principles were once summed up in a concept of "retramiento," translated as a refusal to identify with their oppressor or to collaborate in their own oppression.

Resistance must almost always operate at least partially from clandestinity; it must incorporate multiple modalities and tactics that will include physically impeding and disrupting the operations, wealth extraction, military maneuvers, surveillance, propaganda and methods of domination of the oppressor.

The US has for too long been the world bastion of reaction through the active or passive consent of about a third of a billion people (not only white people) inside its militarily-imposed borders. This has allowed the creation of a vast military and counter-insurgency apparatus that imposes compliant governments on other countries and peoples, enforces the extraction of vast amounts of wealth from colonized and semi-colonized people, and inevitably shapes life inside the borders as well.

A weakness of previous forms of anti-fascism and anti-imperialism, which have often been separate from each other, is that, predicated on a cross-class alliance against "extremism" or foreign invasion, they stopped short of full social and economic transformation.

Much more is called for today. Fascism here is rooted in a history of colonialism, particularly settler colonialism,

See: "Resist to Exist," p. 2

FREE LEONARD PELTIER NOW!

by Janene Yazzie, Director of Policy and Advocacy, NDN Collective

With under a month left until January 20th, 2025, NDN Collective has been working diligently to escalate advocacy efforts and elevate the urgency for President Biden to take immediate action to grant executive Clemency for Leonard Peltier. Since President Biden's pardon of his son, Hunter Biden, several notable leaders have heightened the call for action for other non-violent prisoners and federal death row inmates, including calling for the release of boarding school survivor Leonard Peltier.

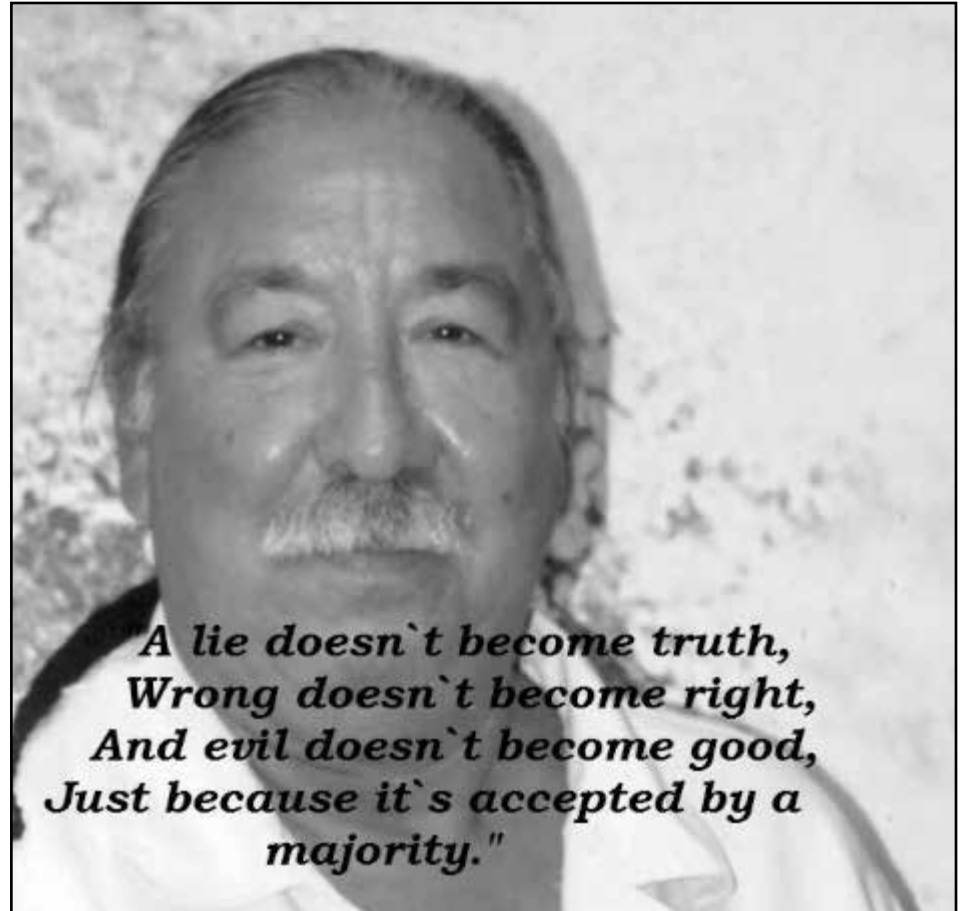
Now, more than ever, we must keep the pressure on President Biden. With your support, we can guarantee justice for Leonard Peltier. EMAIL THE WHITE HOUSE: Write a message electronically in support of Executive Clemency for Leonard Peltier at comments@whitehouse.gov CALL THE WHITE HOUSE: Leave a message at: (202)456-1111

This month has been momentous for our clemency efforts, and we're officially as close as we've ever been to seeing Leonard Peltier free. Here's a recap of the progress made to build visibility and wide-scale support for this long-overdue act of Justice. We're witnessing unprecedented support for our elder Leonard Peltier, who may once and for all be set free to return to his homelands and live the remainder of his time surrounded by his loved ones.

On December 3rd, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez called for President Biden to commute federal death sentences, including specifically referencing Leonard Peltier.

Native News Online released an article covering NCAI President Mark Macarro's meeting with President Biden on Air Force One, en route to the historic event hosted by the Gila River Indian Community, during which President Biden formally apologized for the federal government's role in Boarding School Abuses. President Macarro used his time to bring up Executive Clemency for Leonard Peltier directly to President Biden. This was a significant step in ensuring President Biden heard directly from Tribal leaders about what Leonard Peltier's release would mean for Indian country.

On December 10th, a small delegation of NDN representatives went to Washington, D.C., to advocate with Tribal leaders attending the White House Tribal Nations Summit.



RESIST TO EXIST!

FROM TTT, DEC. 2016

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and its method of rule and of wealth extraction – slave labor, genocide, harsh repression against dissidents and against collective defense of working people's rights, as well as incorporation of a mass base and the integration of private, corporate wealth and the state apparatus – have all been the hallmarks of settler colonialism in the US and elsewhere.

So today, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist resistance in the US must be anti-capitalist and anti-colonialist. Within that framework, there is room for a diversity of tactics, organizations, alliances and even ideologies. The base of solidarity from which people can resist, and the goals of liberation towards which any resistance must chart a course of positive social transformation, do not require uniformity. We will all be inevitably enlightened, educated and transformed in and by the struggle.

Some may resist based on religious faith or the collective consciousness of a denial of national rights and sovereignty. Others may fight to preserve and protect the earth, the water and the life forms that dwell therein, or to end their own poverty, degradation and the theft of their humanity and creativity. Or it may be a combination of such factors.

Too many on the left for too long have been defined by either/or political positions and sectarianism, to mutual detriment and eventual often fatal defeats. Whether we are talking about divisions in South Korea between opposing dictatorship or opposing US domination and division of Korea; about the split within the Black Panther Party, or the differences between the Panthers and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers; or about the divisions between autonomists and anti-imperialists in West Germany, such divisions have weakened the peoples' movements.

They have given a freer hand to the oppressors and exploiters, the Empire, to divide, conquer and repeatedly liquidate threats. We cannot afford the same errors again.

Recently, the Charlotte, North Carolina chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) announced it was dissolving, and called for the dissolution of SURJ nationally, because it asserted that the only correct organizational form for white people's participation in struggles against white supremacy and for racial justice was in multi-racial formations led by people of color. Setting aside other issues or struggles about class composition or political orientation of SURJ, such an either/or proposition is effectively a diktat to people of color as well as to white people that they must be in such multi-racial formations. This is clearly wrong.

There is room and need for national formations, for local coalitions, for groups based exclusively on and within Black, indigenous or other colonized or oppressed people. Thus there may also at times be a role for so-called white people to work together with

other white people to undermine and uproot white supremacy and settler colonialism. I engage in direct solidarity and material aid with revolutionary liberation organizations of various peoples of color, work in multi-racial, international coalitions, and undertake anti-white-supremacist work jointly with others of European descent. Though there are some contradictions, those efforts are in the main mutually-reinforcing.

The definitional struggle about allies or accomplices is another example of limited and limiting either/or thinking. "Allies" can be a powerful statement of people fighting actively alongside each other; or it can be diminished to a kind of self-righteous statement of identity or status, rather than a militant, revolutionary practice. "Accomplice" can be a daring embrace of illegality and transgression of the boundaries of polite or civil obedience, or it can reflect a kind of internalization of judicial criminalization.

We all must increase the level of risk we are willing to take, the level of commitment we are willing to make, recognizing that the greatest risk – in fact the guarantee of defeat, of a half-life of submission and of mass extinctions – is to do nothing. We have to figure out ways to become ungovernable, to weaken the bonds that hold people in subordination to and identification with the oppressor, to identify and exacerbate the internal contradictions of our enemy – the oppressors and exploiters and those attack dogs who carry out their orders.

The erratic nature of Trump's pronouncements and personality make it hard to predict exactly what forms of resistance we may be called upon to practice. But whether it involves an Underground Railroad/Sanctuary system for undocumented people; provision of birth control, abortion and other reproductive health services to women; creation of secure means of communication or whistle-blowing on the surveillance state; community self-defense mechanisms; or protection of fragile and threatened eco-systems from the death machine of capitalism, any effective resistance is likely to involve illegality, and facing down repression.

Resistance presupposes moving from a position of relative weakness to one of relative strength, to begin to dictate to and shape the circumstances of the enemy, as opposed to vice versa. The Black freedom movement, the indigenous sovereignty movement, the prisoners' struggle against legalized slavery under conditions of captivity and repression all point the way forward. Like settler colonialism, these forms of resistance were around long before Trump.

We must base our collective resistance on a culture and communities of solidarity and a vision for liberation that will create a pole of attraction to draw people into the resistance movement and struggle, one that can and must go on beyond the lifetimes of those who initiate or revive it.

During this time, 36 representatives joined the Tribal Leaders Letter requesting President Biden to grant Leonard Peltier Executive Presidency. Lapel pins were shared with Tribal leaders during the White House Summit and several leaders brought up Leonard Peltier to President Biden and White House staff. NDN Collective shared a recording of President Frank Star Comes Out talking to President Biden Directly and asking him to Free Leonard Peltier, to which President Biden responded, "I'm looking into it."

Also on December 10th, Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA 7th District) and other advocates held a press conference in Washington, D.C., addressing the urgent need for clemency and commutation of federal death row cases. Delivering a powerful intervention, Rep. Cori Bush (D-MO 1st District) stood boldly for truth and justice, including Leonard Peltier in her remarks, referencing his continued incarceration as "a symbol of the deep injustices within our justice system." Rep. Bush demonstrated her deep knowledge of the case, laying out multiple established facts, stating, "his trial was rife with prosecutorial misconduct and glaring violations of due process... President Biden can finally grant Peltier the clemency he deserves." We thank Rep. Bush for her powerful advocacy for her community and for Leonard Peltier.

On December 11th, the NDN Collective delegation attended and presented to Tribal Leaders at the IGA/NCAI Tribal Leaders meeting. Tribal Leaders verbalized their support, and several representatives offered to sit in and help advocate in a meeting scheduled with the US Department of Justice later that day.

Tribal Leaders and NDN Collective met with key DOJ officials to ensure Pres. Biden follows through on his commitment to review Leonard's clemency petition. The Tribal leaders in the room represented over 300 federally recognized tribes and were led by Oglala Sioux Tribe President Frank Star Comes Out, a member of Attorney General Garland's Tribal Advisory Committee. Each tribal leader shared facts about Leonard's case with DOJ staff, humanizing him as an elder and leader, and sharing what his release would mean for Indian Country. This meeting ensured Leonard's clemency petition will proceed in the review process to the President's desk.

The National Native American Boarding Schools Coalition (NABS) recently called on President Biden to issue executive clemency to Leonard, a boarding school survivor, in their latest letter sent to the White House.

The National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) released an extraordinary letter urging Pres. Biden to grant clemency to Peltier. Representing 40,000 lawyers in America, NACDL's letter notes that "Mr. Peltier's case and long incarceration stands as one of the most egregious examples of the systemic racism and inequities in the legal system." The letter further states, "His continued imprisonment serves no purpose and contradicts the principles of justice and mercy.

The pressure on President Biden to grant our relative Executive Clemency is needed more than ever. As we keep our community updated on emergent news, your voice is crucial to continue to advocate for our relative's freedom. Help keep our momentum powerful and help amplify our call to #FreeLeonardPeltier!

Perspectives on Syria

The rapid collapse and replacement of the Assad government in Syria by jihadist and other forces backed by Turkiye, Israel and the US presents a challenge to anti-imperialist and pro-Palestinian forces in the region and internationally. It should be noted that Syria, even under Assad, was already a Balkanized country, with many areas outside the control of the central government, and occupied by Turkish, Israeli, and US military forces, and this will no doubt be exacerbated, strengthening Israel's hand, and limiting Iran's ability to support the "Axis of Resistance." *TTT* is printing a number of different takes on the meaning and implications of these developments, and some of the contradictions they expose.

Blinded to Syria

by Patrick Lawrence [Excerpts]

<https://consortiumnews.com/2024/12/15/patrick-lawrence-blinded-to-syria/>

I do not know anyone who was not shocked by the lightning speed with which Damascus fell to expensively armed jihadist militias. Understand that another domino has just fallen in the "seven-front war" Benjamin Netanyahu has boasted this year of waging across West Asia. Recognize that terrorist Israel is well on the way to establishing itself as a dictatorial hegemon across the region.

I know very few people who do not understand that the longstanding project of the Zionist neo-conservatives, who have more or less controlled U.S. foreign policy for decades, i.e., "remaking the Middle East," is the design behind all that has occurred since the Israelis launched their attack on Gaza on Oct. 7, 2023. Recognize the U.S. hand in the stunning sweep through Syria of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham, long-recognized as a terrorist organization. All one needs to grasp this is a little history.

But I know of no corporate or state-funded medium where you can read or hear about any of this. Mainstream media are doing exactly what they did as the U.S.-led "regime change" operation in Syria began in 2012: They are making sure the events are nearly illegible. In the case of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham and the other jihadists who knocked over the Assad regime as if it were made of Lego blocks, it is another exercise in dressing up a monster in a suit and tie.

The corporate press and broadcasters are now resolutely recasting the murderous fanatics who have seized control of Syria. My favorite in this in *The Daily Telegraph*: "How Syria's 'diversity-friendly' jihadists plan on building a state."

Nowhere in the West's mass media can you find a mention of the US-Turkish-and-Israeli support that made possible the swift sweep of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham from Idlib to Damascus. This, like the earlier Western-backed terrorist attacks on the Assad regime, like the proxy war in Ukraine, like the Saudis' U.S.-supported war against Yemen, like the Israeli genocide against the Palestinians of Gaza, and like the Israelis' attacks in Lebanon, is Western-sponsored military aggression we are not permitted to see, obscured by official representations of reality.

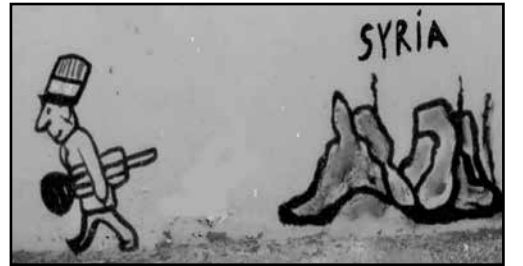
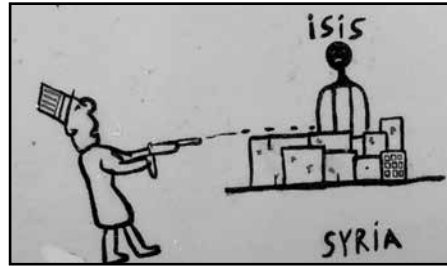
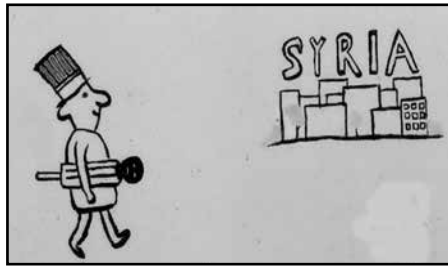
What happened, what is happening, what will happen: I do not know anyone who is not asking these questions, too. We must go further to understand what has just occurred in Syria, to understand why, and finally to understand who Americans are and who they have been since the end of WWII.

Begin with Iran, where the C.I.A., working with MI6, deposed Mohammed Mossadegh as Iran's prime minister in August 1953, and with Guatemala, where a CIA operation forced Jacobo Árbenz from the presidency a year later. Consider a few features of these operations. Stimulating social and economic antagonisms to foment public unrest and political disorder was key in both cases. Both coups removed popularly elected leaders and installed repressive puppets. There was violence in both cases, but by later standards these operations were something close to surgical. Mossadegh withdrew to his farm in the Iranian countryside; Árbenz spent his last years wandering dejectedly through Europe.

But in 1965 the agency began to do things very differently when it organized the coup that brought down Sukarno, independent Indonesia's first president. Vincent Bevins, got this down in *The Jakarta Method: Washington's Anticommunist Crusade and the Mass Murder Program that Shaped Our World* (Public Affairs, 2020). The Indonesian coup was the first to submerge an entire nation in prolonged violence. There are various figures for the number of deaths that resulted as the agency installed the dictatorial, bottomlessly corrupt Suharto in the presidential palace in 1967. Bevins puts it at a million or more. Along with the deaths, the nation's previously lively political culture was extinguished until Suharto fell 32 years later.

The Jakarta Method was applied in the 1973 coup that deposed Salvador Allende in Chile and installed Augusto Pinochet, a vicious dictator in the Suharto mold. Nine years later Zbigniew Brzezinski put a modified version to use in Afghanistan. As Carter's relentless anti-Soviet national security adviser, he got the US to back the reactionary mujahideen fighting the Moscow-backed regime in Kabul. The result was the well-armed, well-financed al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden.

And so we come, via the campaigns of mass violence in Iraq and Libya and the proxy war in Ukraine, to the Syrian operation. People who rely on mainstream media have a hard time accepting



Syria solidarity cartoon painted on the wall of a Venceremos Brigade camp in Cuba. In the first panel, Uncle Sam brings a stick figure of ISIS under his arm into Syria, then shoots it up, leaving Syria in ruins.

that the U.S. and its allies backed al-Qaeda's Syrian forces, the Islamic State, and their heinous offshoots in their war against the Assad regime. The U.S. operation in Syria is a straight readout of Brzezinski's Afghanistan strategy.

Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham was founded at the start of the covert U.S. intervention, in 2011-12. Its name translates as Organization for the Liberation of the Levant. HTS shared with the Islamic State an ambition to establish a caliphate ruled by radical interpretations of Islamic law. HTS was founded by Abu Mohammad al-Jolani, a nom de guerre now all over the news: He has long led HTS and appears now to have plans to make himself Syria's next president. When he spoke at a celebrated mosque in Damascus last week, he shed the public alias in favor of his real name, Ahmed al-Shara. He was once an Islamic State commander who went on to found Jabhat al-Nusra and, after a violent split, HTS. As the HTS leader, he was implicated in numerous cases of torture, violence, sexual abuse, arbitrary arrests, disappearances, and so on. Reflecting his singular malignity, the State Department had declared Jolani a "specially designated global terrorist" as far back as 2013 and HTS in 2018.

But in April 2021 PBS broadcast the first interview with Jolani ever to appear in a Western medium. It was conducted by Martin Smith, a longtime broadcast correspondent. The terrorist in a blue blazer and a buttoned-down shirt, told Smith he planned to build a "salvation government" in Syria. Smith was not shy, to his credit, in his review of Jolani's horrific record. But he gave him ample airtime to make his that-was-then-this-is-now argument. The interview, it is now evident, signaled an already-in-train revival of the Syrian operation; certainly it marked the start of the reinvention of Jolani that is now ubiquitous in Western media.

What happened, what is happening, what will happen? For now, two conclusions:

One, the U.S. and its allies are thoroughly committed to mass violence. This means that the Western powers and Israel will turn on Iran once Syria as a functioning polity has been disabled. What prompted the U.S. and Israel to exercise caution to date has been the risk of a cataclysmic conflict that could tip into another world war. With a six-decade history of mass violence, these powers now appear willing to take this risk.

Two, we now witness the reinvention of a viciously intolerant jihadi terrorist as an acceptable presence at the head of what was a secular nation until earlier this month. This is the outcome of an eight-decade campaign to render the citizens ignorant of the world in which they live. The *New York Times* and other major dailies continue to lie by omission about U.S. support for Jolani and the organization he leads, even as both are still officially designated terrorists. The media ran photographs with their initial stories on the militias' sudden offensive, showing rocket launchers and armored personnel carriers of obvious Western manufacture. Yet we are told not to believe our eyes.

Patrick Lawrence, a correspondent abroad for many years, chiefly for the International Herald Tribune, is a columnist, essayist, lecturer and author, most recently of Journalists and Their Shadows. His Twitter account, @thefloutist, has been permanently censored.

Rojava Under Siege

by Christopher Wimmer [Excerpts]

<https://links.org.au/syria-rojava-under-fire>

Many in Syria celebrated after [Assad]'s fall, including in the Kurdish north-east of the country. But the war there continues, as Islamists with Turkish support attack the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, also known as Rojava. Tens of thousands of people are fleeing and a humanitarian catastrophe looms.

The people of the Autonomous Administration have been organizing themselves — independently of the Syrian state — for over ten years. The Kurdish-dominated regions of the country declared their independence from the regime in 2012, proclaiming the first three cantons of Cizire, Kobane, and Afrin in 2014. Rojava became a global symbol for the fight against the jihadist "Islamic State" (IS) and of the establishment of grassroots democratic structures. Until the fall of Assad, this self-governance expanded and eventually encompassed around one-third of the country. It was home to an estimated

4 million people, including Arabs, Kurds, Yazidis, and Christians. The entire region is administered by councils and committees in which the population can participate directly in local politics.

Rojava is now facing an existential threat from attacks by the Islamist Syrian National Army (SNA), supported by Turkiye. Ankara is using the Syrian state's collapse to achieve goals it has been pursuing for years in northern Syria. The Turkish government views Rojava as little more than an extension of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which it has banned. In recent years, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has therefore repeatedly announced his intention to establish a 30-kilometre-wide security buffer along the southern border in Syria, which would mean the end of self-governance. Current developments indicate that he now wants to realize this plan.

Following Turkiye's repeated invasions of northern Syria in violation of international law — such as Afrin in 2018 and Tel Abyad and Sere Kaniye in 2019, of which it has occupied large parts ever since — SNA militias recently captured the city of Tall Rifaat north of Aleppo, and have been advancing on the city of Manbij west of the Euphrates. Both Arab-dominated areas had been under self-administration since liberation from IS. After several days of bloody fighting, the SNA captured Manbij on the morning of 10 December 2024.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the region's multi-ethnic military alliance, had previously managed to fend off several attempted attacks, according to its own statements. SDF General Commander Mazlum Abdi finally declared that he had agreed to a US-brokered ceasefire on Wednesday morning. "The fighters of the Manbij Military Council will withdraw from the area as soon as possible", said Abdi. The agreement was concluded in order to guarantee the safety of the civilian population: "Our goal is a ceasefire throughout Syria and the initiation of a political process for the future of the country."

Nevertheless, the fighting continues further east and is currently centred on the Qara-Qozak bridge over the Euphrates. At the same time, Turkiye is attacking the northern Syrian city of Kobane with air strikes. It is only 30 kilometers from Kobane.

The city of Kobane became a symbol of the fight against IS in 2015 after Kurdish defense units — with support from the US-led international anti-IS coalition — were able to push back the fundamentalist Islamists for the first time. Now the city is under threat of a renewed Islamist siege. "Syria must be prevented from relapsing into the bloodiest days of the civil war. Only if Turkiye stops its escalation can we utilize the historic opportunity for a peaceful solution to the conflict", explained Khaled Davrisch, representative of the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria in Germany. "Just as the whole world feared for Kobane in 2015, the future of Syria could now once again be decided in Kobane", Davrisch continued.

Flight and expulsion

There are few signs of a political solution, although the self-administration and the SDF have repeatedly called for one since the fall of Assad. The humanitarian consequences of the SNA's

attacks, on the other hand, are devastating. The London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports serious human rights violations by the invading troops following the battles for Manbij. SNA militiamen are said to have executed wounded SDF fighters in a hospital. Looting against the Kurdish population in the multi-ethnic city is also said to have taken place.

In addition, many people had to flee from the areas occupied by the Islamists. According to the aid organizations medico international and the Kurdish Red Crescent, over 120,000 people have been displaced from the region around Aleppo and Tall Rifaat. Those who fled from the Kurdish canton of Afrin had been living in informal settlements and refugee camps since 2018. Now they must flee again, amidst reports of torture and killings. Several children have already died of hypothermia. Hygienic conditions are poor and diseases are spreading.

What can the international community do?

The repeated expulsions illustrate how ethnic and religious minorities are becoming the target of geopolitical interests in the Syrian conflict. Turkiye's NATO membership and the EU's "refugee deal" with Ankara mean they won't condemn the Turkish attacks. Moreover, Western countries' focus on the war in Ukraine means that the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria receives little attention.

We must supply the displaced people in Rojava and other parts of Syria. This includes the provision of food, tents, and medicines, as well as the creation of safe escape corridors. The Autonomous Administration has proven that it can be a stabilizing factor in the region. Recognizing it as a political actor would not only strengthen its position, but also increase pressure on Turkiye to end the offensive. The Autonomous Administration's call for a UN-brokered ceasefire should therefore also be supported, as only through comprehensive dialogue can the course be set for a sustainable, peaceful order in Syria. This would also mean the international community holding Turkiye accountable for its repeated violations of international law and the war crimes committed by SNA militias with Ankara's knowledge and approval.

Assad's end means that Rojava's future is at stake. The achievements of self-administration risk being destroyed in the midst of geopolitical power games and regional interests. Absent decisive action by the international community, the humanitarian catastrophe in Syria will continue to escalate. The struggle for Rojava is not only a struggle for territorial control of individual areas, but also for the future of freedom, equality, and self-determination in Syria and the Middle East as a whole.

Translated by Loren Balhorn. Christopher Wimmer is a sociologist and author from Berlin.

TTT comment: Other elements involved in overthrowing Assad are even more explicitly aligned with Israel than HTS, Hezbollah access to Iranian support has been curtailed, and Israel has increased its physical occupation of Syrian land. Turning this around requires an authentic revolution from below.

The Operators Behind 4 Neo-Nazi X Accounts

by Steven Monacelli and Tristan Lee [Excerpts] Full article online at: <https://www.texasobserver.org/revealed-operators-neo-nazi-x-accounts/>

"This article was originally published by the Texas Observer, a nonprofit investigative news outlet and magazine. Sign up for their weekly newsletter, or follow them on Facebook and X."

Under owner Elon Musk, the social media site X, formerly known as Twitter, has become a hotbed of white supremacist and neo-Nazi content. A recent headline in the Atlantic doesn't mince words: "X is a white supremacist site."

Musk has allowed formerly banned far-right and neo-Nazi accounts back on the platform, and, in some instances, he's directly responded to accounts that traffic in white supremacist and neo-Nazi rhetoric. Meanwhile, anonymous accounts that regularly promote racial hate on the platform have seen their follower counts grow substantially as Musk has taken a more hands-off approach to moderation compared to the social media network's prior owners.

Anonymity has long been a tactic used by extremists to spread their ideology while avoiding consequences, from Klansmen hoods to online pseudonyms. With such ideas spreading rapidly on X, the *Texas Observer* has identified the operators of four anonymous accounts that regularly share racist, antisemitic, and neo-Nazi content on the platform. Three of the operators appear to live or have claimed to own property in Texas, where X moderation operations are based and Musk resides.

Through reviewing posts on X, web archives, leak databases, and other social media profiles, the Observer identified the following individuals as the anonymous operators of neo-Nazi X accounts, which had a collective 500,000 followers at their peak: Cyan Cruz, a 40-year-old marketing professional who appears to have lived in Austin and Amarillo and operates the X account TheOfficial1984; Michael Gramer, a 42-year-old retired mechanical engineer who has lived in New Hampshire, operates the X account 9mm_SMG, and has claimed to have a house in Galveston and to be spending time in Dallas; Robert "Bobby" Thorne, a 35-year-old vice president at JP Morgan Chase in Plano, who operates the account Noble1945 and previously operated the account Noble_x_x_; and John Anthony Provenzano, a 30-year-old who appears to live in Virginia, operates the account utism_ (formerly known as JohnnyBullzeye), and, according to a tip and a records request response from the U.S. Navy, works at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Indian Head, Maryland—where the Navy manufactures explosive ordnance.

These individuals are part of a broader ecosystem of far-right accounts that have rapidly expanded their reach in recent months. They are among the most popular white nationalist and neo-Nazi accounts on X. While this article was in production, the Anti-Defamation League also identified Cruz as the operator of TheOfficial1984.

Their rise to prominence tracks with a dramatic decrease in moderation of hateful content on the platform, which dropped from 1 million moderated accounts in 2021 to only 2,361 accounts in the most recent 2024 X transparency report. Posts from these individuals have received tens of millions of views over the last year and a half. The accounts have also attracted the attention of major public figures. Two of the accounts have received replies from the X account of Elon Musk, who has said he writes all of his own X posts and who, as reported by Mother Jones, has amplified users who promote pseudoscientific arguments that those of European descent are biologically superior. Three of the accounts are followed by a sitting congressman, and many other right-wing media figures and outlets follow at least one of the four accounts.

All four accounts follow the other three, and all four have interacted with at least two of the other three in posts, replies, and spaces on X. The host of a June 2024 X space, an online voice chat room on the X platform, focused on "JQ 101"—"JQ" being an abbreviation used by antisemitic extremists for the "Jewish Question"—tagged all four of the accounts in a post promoting the gathering, in which three of the four accounts participated. Nearly 17,000 listeners tuned into the conversation.

On July 9, Musk posted two replies to Cruz's account TheOfficial1984, which Cruz has used to post pro-Hitler, Holocaust denial, and other antisemitic content. Musk's posts were in response to TheOfficial1984's call to reinstate a prominent neo-Nazi account, Lucas Gage, who had been banned for six months. In the replies, Musk explained that Gage had been temporarily banned for "repeated and clear calls for violence" and identified one of Gage's many antisemitic posts as the specific reason. While Gage cannot currently post, his virulently antisemitic posts from prior to the ban remained visible on X, with many having hundreds of thousands of views.

On July 23, Musk replied to Gramer's account 9mm_smg, which Gramer has used to make posts referring to neo-Nazi tropes such as the "14 Words" and "blood and soil" and identifying himself as a white nationalist. Musk's reply was a laughing emoji in response to a post about a community note—a feature that allows users to add context under a post if enough users vote on it—that described Vice President Kamala Harris as former TV host Montel Williams' "main hoe," which 9mm_smg described as "the greatest community note of all time."

Musk's engagement with these accounts may fit a pattern of the mogul amplifying far-right views on X, including promoting Tucker Carlson's interview with a Nazi apologist, in a since-deleted post, and explicitly agreeing with an antisemitic conspiracy theory, for which he later apologized. Musk's attention to TheOfficial1984 and 9mm_smg may also be due to the fact they boast sizable follower accounts and "verified" blue checks, which can be acquired by paying a monthly fee for X Premium or may be provided for free to those with more than 2,500 verified followers. Verified users who pay for X Premium receive the opportunity to get paid for engagement from other premium users.

In October 2022, Musk committed in another post on X to ensuring "negative/hate tweets" would be "deboosted and demonetized" and not generate revenue for the social media



platform. In practice, this promise appears to have been sometimes broken. The Observer found advertisements in the replies to posts from all four accounts, including posts that featured pro-Nazi, antisemitic, pro-Hitler, or neo-Nazi content.

On September 4, TheOfficial1984 posted a screenshot of an email from X that said the account had been "temporarily paused for revenue sharing" for violating creator monetization standards, though ads—from which X likely profited—appeared in the replies to two of the account's posts that same day. On October 7, TheOfficial1984 posted that it had been permanently demonetized for violating the website's "hate and extremist content" standards. As of late November, the Observer did not find ads in replies to TheOfficial1984's posts, though ads still appeared under the content of 9mm_smg and Noble1945.

X did not respond to a request for comment.

These accounts have drawn the attention of conservative commentators, activists, and even elected officials. The X account belonging to Republican U.S. Representative Thomas Massie of Kentucky follows three of the four neo-Nazi accounts, while the account belonging to GOP Arizona state Senator Wendy Rogers follows two. The account belonging to Sebastian Gorka, former and future deputy assistant to Donald Trump, follows 9mm_smg, and the account belonging to Chuck DeVore, an executive at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, has retweeted one of 9mm_smg's posts.

In an April 2023 tweet, TheOfficial1984 mentioned another X account CyRebel as his "main account." This username is included in a 2023 Twitter data breach and is linked to the address "cyanacruz@gmail.com." Google reviews associated with that email show the username "1984" and reveal a response from a reviewed business that reads, "Thank you for the kind review, Mr. Cruz."

Further corroboration linking the username "CyRebel" to the name "Cyan Cruz" comes from Venmo and Bandlab accounts that feature the name "Cy Cruz" alongside the username "CyRebel." Cruz has an extensive digital footprint under the CyRebel username, including two publicly accessible dating

profiles on Tinder and FriendFinder-X, the latter of which lists the same 1984 birth date as that listed for the only Cyan Cruz in public data maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS).

Requests for comment directed to Cruz's email and phone number went unreturned. However, when messaged from an Android device, Cruz's phone number showed the username "1984" and a profile photo that reads "Handy Rebel," the name of a defunct business that was registered under Cruz's name with the Texas Secretary of State.

According to his recently deleted LinkedIn, some details of which can still be seen via data aggregator site ContactOut, Cruz has lived in Amarillo and Austin and listed himself as the president of Rebel Management Group, for which the Observer could not find a business registration in Texas.

Gramer's account, 9mm_smg, features antisemitic posts, references to neo-Nazi slogans and concepts such as the "14 words" and "blood and soil, and discussions about national socialism and fascism, which he has said he would prefer to our current democratic system. He has also expressed admiration for Oswald Mosley, an early 20th century British fascist politician who espoused antisemitism and was closely associated with leaders of the German Nazi party.

Hannah Gais, a senior research analyst at the Southern Poverty Law Center, said far-right extremists should be categorized by "the words that they themselves say. ... If [Gramer] has any issues being called a neo-Nazi, then I don't know why he would reference a slogan coined by David Lane." (Lane, who died in 2007, was a member of the neo-Nazi terrorist organization The Order and originated the "14 words.")

Gramer's account was created in September 2018 but saw rapid growth over the last year and a half. The earliest Web Archive of the account is from March 7, 2023, when it had 2,083 followers. By May 7, 2023, the account had nearly 10 times that amount, and as of this writing, it has more than 220,000.

After the Observer reached out to two people with apparent ties to Gramer, based on Facebook posts and property records, 9mm_smg sent a message on X: "Hi. I've been told you had questions about me. I'm right here."

When asked if he is the same Michael Gramer who worked for New Hampshire Ball Bearings, 9mm_smg said "yes." Gramer then defended the "14 words" slogan, saying "The words themselves are not extreme," before he stopped responding to other questions about his posts.

Thorne's former account noble_x_x_ was suspended for violent speech in mid-June 2024, at which time it had at least 31k followers. The specific violent tweet he was suspended for says: "The streets are a much safer place with both of them gone", referring to George Floyd and another Black man who was killed by police while reportedly experiencing a mental health crisis.

The account had previously shared pictures of swastikas, statements of Holocaust denial, and the phrase "Sieg Heil", and had repeatedly identified its operator as "a Nazi" and "National Socialist".

A second account featuring the same profile picture, noble1945, was created in October 2023, writing in one tweet: "If you're following me on this account check out my main account at @noble_x_x_. I'm only here because of a week long ban on that one." This account is still active at the time of publication and has around 7,000 followers.

Neither username noble_x_x_ nor noble1945 appear in the Twitter breach. However, another Twitter account with the same Twitter user ID (313782690) as noble_x_x_, with the username "fakebobbythorne," does appear in the breach. The fact these two accounts share the same user ID number indicates that fakebobbythorne was switched to noble_x_x_ at some point, explained Travis Brown, a researcher who has built tools to research and analyze X data.

"Every X account has a numeric identifier that is unique to that account and cannot be changed," said Brown. "A particular account or tweet may have multiple URLs associated with it if the account owner changes the screen name, but the account ID will always be the same and can be found by viewing the source of the profile or tweet page in a web browser. This makes it possible to identify profile changes by comparing current account IDs and their screen names with IDs and screen names from archives such as the Wayback Machine."

Three private data aggregator sites tied the email address to the LinkedIn profile of a Bobby Thorne listed as a vice president at JP Morgan Chase in the Dallas suburb of Plano.

100X100 Campaign to Increase Publication Frequency of Turning the Tide

Over its 36+ year publishing history, *TTT* has been published in magazine format, as a 24-page tabloid, and from time to time on a bi-monthly basis, six issues a year. Economic necessity has dictated that we guarantee four 8-page issues a year, and this year because of obligations at KPFK, only managed to produce three. To restore bi-monthly publication, we launched a fund-raising campaign we've dubbed "100X100."

We are still looking for one hundred people who will donate \$100 a year, or \$10/mo, to make it possible for *TTT* to resume publishing six issues a year, and continue mailing about 1700 copies of each issue into the prisons. You can donate online at <http://gofundme.com/eugzgg>. Help it go viral!

Turning the Tide doesn't print itself, or mail itself. Some prisoners who get the paper contribute a few stamps. Often, they pass the copy of *TTT* that they received from hand to hand, cell to cell, or they send in the names and addresses of half-a-dozen or more other prisoners. **Prisoners, if you can find donors or subscribers outside prison to subsidize your sub, that would help a lot!**

If you'd like to see *Turning the Tide* more frequently, if you want to contribute to breaking down the walls of isolation and separation imposed by the prison system, please contribute. If you can't manage \$100 all at once, you could donate \$10 a month. But any donation you make can help. Postage costs for a single issue of *TTT* are \$1200 and climbing. If you can't donate yourself, please help spread the campaign via your social media, to your Facebook friends, IG, X or Blusky

followers, and email contacts. Everything helps. Nobody makes a dime from working on *TTT*.

If the campaign is successful, we will resume publishing every other month in 2025. Postage is our biggest expense. Nobody gets paid at *TTT*. But the Postal Service is not so generous. We have a handful of people who are sustainers, making a monthly donation, a larger number of people who subscribe once a year or so. Right now, we are at about 10% of our goal. LA area supporters could set up house meetings, where the editor will pitch to your friends for support. The future of *Turning the Tide* is in your hands. Now, while you're thinking about it, go to:

https://ko-fi.com/anti_racist_action_la

and donate, or use paypal to antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com if you prefer. Then share it with your contacts. With your help, *Turning the Tide* can step up to the "urgency of now" -- the necessity for radical organizing, educating and analyzing to respond to the growing crisis of the Empire -- endless war, police terror with impunity, mass incarceration, colonialism, ecological devastation of world-changing consequence.

If you think *TTT* is a useful tool in the struggle for people's power and a new world, please donate today. If you wish, you can also just send cash, check or money order to

Anti-Racist Action, PO Box 1055, Culver City CA 90232.

California's Racial Justice Act Needs a Legal Champion

<https://davisvanguard.org/2024/12/guest-commentary-californias-racial-justice-act-needs-a-law-clinic-champion-who-will-stand-in-the-gap/>

By Ghostwrite Mike, Louis Baca [Excerpts]

It's been nearly 5 years since the California legislature enacted the California Racial Justice Act (CRJA), PC 745, and reset the rules by which criminal defendants can use the courts to undo the structural racial bias that infects the criminal justice system to challenge their convictions and sentences via discovery motions.

[Sadly, not enough is being done by progressive attorneys to carry it out.] "Lots of well-funded lawfare sourced by the left got thrown at former President Donald Trump in order to keep him from intervening on illegal migration, and truck loads of ...money got dumped into DA races as a way to minimize racialized prosecutions," says Torrey Thomas, a Black youth offender preparing to parole from Valley State Prison (VSP), "but if the left really cared about the plight of Black and Brown [people], and truly opposed the carceral state, why wouldn't the left be coordinating money in service of law clinics focused on getting folks in California out of prison using the CRJA?"

Case in point: Ken Coley, a Black second striker who committed a robbery and carjacking without violence in Lancaster, was sentenced to over 80 years to life, while Steve Rosen, a white second striker who shot a woman in the face—killing her—and was found guilty of second degree murder in Santa Rosa, was sentenced to less than 20 years to life. Non-violent Black repeat offenders who get stretched while violent white repeat offenders in white counties slide, provide a snapshot of the racialized injustice the CRJA was designed to remedy.

"These travesties are living on every prison yard in the state out here," observes Thomas, "so why isn't anybody helping us do something constructive about it? Why are all these brothers stacked up in the law libraries firing off these half-baked motions that fail, while sitting on good fact-sets that would otherwise prevail, if only marshaled properly? We need advocates, not rhetoric. These well-intended academics need to stop writing books and start writing briefs."

It makes us wonder how come the state boasting some of the most progressive law school faculties—UC Berkeley, Stanford, and UCLA—and an adult prison population with a functional illiteracy rate of 38%, doesn't have a coordinated plan that centers this wide open opportunity to deliver freedom to those most impacted by the system's structural racial bias, and to help those most unlearned in the law to pursue those claims properly.

Where are the lawyers? Where are the law clinics? Where are the Universities? Where are the funders? Where is the left? There are many solid defenders of freedom working to save those swallowed by a defective legal system—University-backed law clinic efforts around the country have been toiling in the arena for years, marshalling law school students in service of outcomes that seek to liberate those who can't afford representation. As well, these clinics also attempt to solve inequities within the prison industrial complex, as did the Stanford Criminal Justice Center at Stanford Law School and the Warren Institute at UC Berkeley's School of Law—when lawyers Debbie Mukamal and Rebecca Silbert spearheaded an 18-month strategic landscape analysis revealing that, though it had the capacity and mission, the state's public higher education system wasn't serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated learners. That effort built the state's current in-prison college degree ecosystem now improving carceral literacy and public safety.

But for the CRJA, there is too little legal activism in California around an opportunity begging for an army of interventionists who might deliver freedom to thousands of imprisoned Black and Brown citizens.

In a recent phone conversation with our Vanguard Carceral Journalism Guild Fellowship program advisor Elizabeth Hinton, a professor of law at Yale Law School, and the co-director of the Institute on Policing, Incarceration, and Public Safety at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University, she explained how the "equal protection clause has long-since framed the most viable legal path for how best to use declassified public records, statistics, and legislative intent to build a historicized evidentiary vault that can be deployed in service of the many challenges made by defendants who have been subjected to racial bias while prosecuted and sentenced."

Considered one of the nation's preeminent carceral studies scholars, as a professor of History and African American Studies at Yale University, and the author of *From The War On Poverty To The War On Crime: The Making Of Mass Incarceration in America* (Harvard University Press, 2016), Hinton understands the power-shifting leverage a well-aimed effort of legal assistance can deliver to folks who need it.

Sadly, for the more than 90,000 bodies caged in California's more than 30 prisons, she and Yale Law School's Justice Collaboratory are situated more than 3,500 miles away, and too few in-state law clinics have taken up the cause to maximize the unique opportunity the CRJA presents to those who profess to care about removing racial bias from the justice system to do something profound about it. Hinton can't single-handedly save everybody—California's legal and academic communities need to step up.

Under the CRJA, California's legislature set out to depart from the federal equal protection law paradigm of intentional discriminatory purpose, by crafting a law that purges racial discrimination to ensure race plays no role at all in seeking or obtaining convictions or in sentencing, by ensuring that defendants have access to all relevant evidence, statistical data, and records or information necessary to prove one of the four available violations outlined in the CRJA could have occurred.

A multi-factor test of good cause being the main threshold

consideration, defendants who can pass that test need only present a plausible factual foundation that is far less rigorous than the prima facie showing demanded by the federal equal protection clause. In California, the CRJA presents a real chance to scrub bias and deliver freedom using an objectively lower legal standard that is easier to prevail with.

With the CRJA, there is no affidavit requirement comparable to the Pitchess context, no materiality requirement linking defenses to charges, and defendants enjoy a reset of the good cause standard below the rigor imposed by Armstrong, Griffin, and Murgia circa 1990. This very issue was forecast in the US Supreme Court via Justice Brennan's dissent in the McCleskey death penalty case, which argued that the statistical data that the court voted 5-4 to deem merely a "discrepancy" was much more. Brennan painted the statistical data as indicative of the racial bias infecting the process structurally. He described the majority's fear of opening a door to widespread challenges to all aspects of criminal sentencing as a "fear of too much justice."

The CRJA represents an express statutory provision authorizing defense-side discovery that is self-executing and compels disclosures upon a motion supported by good cause seeking whatever form of disclosures that will give the defense

access to the very sorts of information troves that the best carceral studies scholars have been sifting through for years. Who is better equipped to connect these dots than the African American Studies and Public Policy historians who have been scouring the data related to mass incarceration to demonstrate actual discrimination?

In California at least, the CRJA seems to have contemplated precisely the sort of scholarship folks like Hinton, Heather Ann Thompson, Rachel Barkow, and Bruce Western have brought to the analysis of mass incarceration for years by excavating the very sorts of data defendants are now permitted to marshal in order to construct a plausible factual foundation showing of good cause for reductions in sentencing.

For four years, a California state law has existed that was designed to incorporate the multi-discipline knowledge base of evidence previously deemed insufficient to establish discriminatory intent, but that is now ideally positioned to help thousands gain freedom from prison by showing discriminatory results.

If only they can access it. What they need are the lawyers. Where are they?

Japanese Americans Call for Reparations for Tulsa Massacre Survivors

by Tsuru for Solidarity, Nikkei Progressives, Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress (NCRR), JACL National and San Jose Nikkei Resisters.

Given the outcome of the 2024 Presidential Election, we implore President Biden and his Administration to use his executive powers to deliver reparations before the end of his presidential term to Ms. Viola Ford Fletcher and Ms. Lessie Benningfield Randle, the two known living survivors of the Tulsa Massacre. While the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is currently conducting a review of the Tulsa Massacre, we stand behind the calls from the survivors, descendants, and Tulsa's Black community who urge the DOJ to go beyond a review, provide direct reparations, and hold the individuals and institutions accountable for orchestrating and perpetrating the massacre and subsequent anti-Black laws and conditions.

Support us in demanding that the DOJ exhaust all its resources for Tulsa's Black community as it continues to reel from the worst case of domestic terrorism in this country's existence. We ask that the DOJ not only recommend but work with the Biden Administration to provide reparations to the survivors, 110-years-old Mothers Fletcher and Randle, and to the descendants of the Tulsa Massacre as a part of the conclusion of DOJ's review.

Japanese Americans know what the disappearance of our family members feels like, and what the destruction of our communities looks like. We also know that reparations are necessary and reparations are possible, so the time is now to stand with the Tulsa massacre survivors! Take Action!

Sign the petition to pressure the department of justice to launch a full investigation! <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/standwithgreenwood>. Call on President Biden to issue an executive order providing reparations to the survivors and descendants of the Tulsa Massacre. Call the White House: (202) 456-1111

Who is New LA28 Olympics CEO Reynold Hoover?

Earlier this year the LA28 Olympic Committee hired Reynold Hoover to be its 3rd CEO. He's a retired US Army Lieutenant General, which should give you an idea of how important militarism is to the Olympic concept. Hoover has spent the bulk of his career in the Middle East supervising the US war machine's campaigns. He was retired, when headhunters at LA28 came knocking. Though he has no experience running mega sporting events, balancing budgets, working in sustainability, working in entertainment or sports in any capacity or working in the incredibly complex LA region, his military and intelligence bona fides will certainly come in handy.

The Olympics are a National Special Security Event, which means LA hands the keys to city to Homeland Security before, during, and likely after the 2028 Olympics. An NSSE does not augur well for LA, home to the country's largest populations most targeted by policing and surveillance: undocumented immigrants, unsheltered unhoused folks, and street vendors. This is where Hoover's military background will play a role, as well as his experience with the CIA. In fact, the NSSE took effect three days after Hoover's hiring, meaning this will be the longest NSSE in US history, lasting over four years, a reality as unprecedented as it is frightening. So, in a way, he does have the requisite experience for an Olympics; he's helped decimate cities, regions, and countries (including his own) for his professional career. Hoover led FEMA's Office of National Security Coordination from 2003-2005. He was the Special Assistant to the President for Homeland Security. He was the Senior Intelligence Service Officer in the CIA. The NSSE will be executed through the California Olympic and Paralympic Public Safety Command (COPPSC), an ad hoc body coordinating this surveillance and policing nightmare. ICE, Customs and Border Protection, the NSA, LAPD, LASD, and every law enforcement agency in between will have a seat at the table. You and I will not. After all, the Olympics are a project based on corporate and military profit, with sports as a sideshow. More here: <https://nolympicsla.com>

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Postage alone for this issue comes to \$1000. We would like to increase the size and frequency of Turning the Tide, but we can only do it with your support. If you're a prisoner and can send stamps or get someone outside the walls to subsidize your subscription, please do so. If you work with an info shop or other zine or record distro, please consider ordering a bundle of TTT to distribute; \$5 will get you 20 copies. And check out our 100X100 campaign elsewhere in this issue. If you live in L.A. or nearby, we can come to house meetings to speak and collect donations for the paper. Email antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL EMBRACES LGBTQ LIBERATION

excerpts from an interview by Out-FM
<https://www.prisonradio.org/commentary/mumia-embraces-lgbtq-liberation-on-99-5-fm-wbai/>

(This interview with Mumia by Bob Lederer and the associated documentary also ran in full on KPFK's Somethings Happening program, as well as in a later one-hour edited version. The full transcript with extensive historical background material is available on the Prison Radio website, and the audio is there as well as archived at wbai.org, kpfk.org, and outfm.org)

BOB: Brother Mumia, thanks so much for agreeing to this interview for Out-FM. It's an honor to have this opportunity to speak with you, as you are a brilliant and empathic revolutionary analyst, and a role model for progressive journalists and for all people working for peace and justice. This is especially fitting as we celebrate the 100th birthday of the Black gay literary genius and Black liberation fighter James Baldwin.

MUMIA: Well put. You actually remind me that this morning, when I was walking in the yard, NPR did a piece on precisely that – James Baldwin's 100th centennial of his birth.... The guest on NPR opened up a bookstore called Baldwin & Company, and the thing has lines around the block, and he's getting orders every day. He said the most recent was from China, reading Baldwin stuff. So you know, as a writer, as a revolutionary, as a thinker and an organizer, it cannot be more praiseworthy for a writer to continue to have impact a century after his birth.

BOB: Brother Mumia, I want to turn now to your evolving views over the decades on the role of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in U.S. society. You have indeed shown a remarkable evolution, as have many in the overall society, in parallel with the growing organizing and strength of the diverse LGBTQ+ movements demanding our human rights.

In a 2012 book, [you wrote:] "...Huey P. Newton spoke out, back in 1970, about gay liberation. He didn't just mention it. He said... 'We, the Black Panther Party, support gay liberation just as we support women's liberation.' He saw it as part of the struggle for human liberation.... It was the most forward position of any radical and revolutionary movement of the period, and reflected Huey's keen thinking on issues before his time. So even in a movement perceived as 'masculinist,' there were these insights." And I would add one direct quote from Huey Newton's statement, which listeners can read in full at outfm.org. He wrote: "The terms 'faggot' and 'punk' should be deleted from our vocabulary, and especially we should not attach names normally designed for homosexuals to men who are enemies of the people, such as Nixon or Mitchell [who was the Attorney General]. Homosexuals are not enemies of the people." And that's Huey Newton in 1970.

So Mumia, as you look back at your [own] July 1970 statement in The Black Panther calling racist Philadelphia police officials "faggots" who engaged in "perversion," and then look at Huey Newton's August 1970 letter – just a month later – supporting the women's liberation and gay liberation movements, can you tell us more about your viewpoint at that time, when you were 16, and more about how other straight men, as well as women, in the Party viewed the letter, and what impact it had?

MUMIA: Well, if you're talking about my letter, I actually don't have a memory of it, because this is like my 70th year of life. You're talking about my 16th year of life. But when I read your note referring to that, my mind actually flashed to the Minister of Information at that time, Eldridge Cleaver, who wrote and spoke in similar ways. And as the lieutenant of information of the Philadelphia branch, and later at the national office and newspaper and someone working on the paper, I really adored Eldridge. He was very influential in my thinking, and so I was probably consciously imitating Eldridge and imitating his speech. When you think about what Huey said at the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention about gay folks and lesbian and queer folk, I must be honest with you: It was not well received by members of the Party. We were shocked in some ways, confused in other ways. But as usual, this was Huey at his finest, and he was a true revolutionary intellectual who was usually ahead of his peers. And they were, let's be honest, there were few peers of Huey Newton, which is a good thing and a bad thing, in a way. But what Huey was beginning to understand, I think, especially coming from his prison experience, is that any revolution, any real struggle, in the bastion of the Empire had to really involve all kinds of people in that struggle to be successful. Now to understand that intellectually is one thing, but to understand it empathically, right?, is another. But Huey was always ahead of the pack. That was just the nature of his really acute intelligence and his perception. But you know, 16 is not 70.

BOB: Mumia, in terms of the 1970 Panther-led Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention, which



you mentioned a minute ago, can you talk about the two sides of this historic coin: 1) the leadership of the Black Panther Party in gathering such diverse movements to grapple with a reimagined United States and 2) the failure of that process to advance – in particular, the role of white supremacy within the Left, then and now?

MUMIA: You sound like you read my book, *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party*.

BOB: I have.

MUMIA: I should have known! I was remarking earlier about how Huey was really ahead of the times. In retrospect, when I think about it, and I think about the many positions that the Party had, the Party was ahead of its times. And sometimes, when you're in that structure and you make a call, you expect people to respond to the call, or sometimes some people aren't ready for the call that you're making. So that you know you need to develop it further and even explain things.

I mean, think about this: In 1966, October 15th, the Party began with Huey P. Newton and Bobby G. Seale, two college students who were reading stuff, who were reading primarily *The Wretched of the Earth* by Franz Fanon, which deeply influenced how we saw the world. But this Party really grew by leaps and bounds, so that two or three years later it had 44 chapters and branches all across the United States and some offices overseas, right? And we're talking to – by intention – ghetto folks who we called the lumpen, but people who had difficulty reading stuff about other countries, ideas that – This call is from a Pennsylvania State Correctional Institution, Mahanoy, this call is subject to data monitoring – ideas that were coming from other parts of the world because we were involved in really a world revolution. It was natural for us. But that doesn't mean it was natural for people that we were speaking to or writing to.

And to the Party's credit, some branches organized really community schools, right? Or areas where members could really, you know, sit down and rap with people and answer questions and explain things. All chapters didn't have that, though they had it for members but they didn't have it for the community. Some chapters weren't big enough. Some chapters weren't sophisticated enough. But I mean, that's your most important work, right? Your most important work isn't selling newspapers, even though that's important by putting out information via the newspaper, but your most important work is really communicating with people, answering their questions, letting them know how you see the world, and then bringing them into that construct. That didn't happen in many ways, because we were so far advanced. The RPCC could have been a different kind of thing, if we had projected out to our various audiences that this is the work of the RPCC or the Revolutionary People's Communications Committee and Network, instead of kind of springing it on people when they gathered at Temple University. So, I mean – This call is from a Pennsylvania State Correctional Institution, Mahanoy, this call is subject to data monitoring – think long and hard about how to organize, how to talk to people and listen to people, because you know, they have their ideas as well!

BOB: Mumia, I want to ask you about your conclusions about the roles of both women and sexism in the Black Panther Party and the broader Black liberation movement. Can you share your assessment of the Party's gender relationships in the context of a patriarchal society, and what you learned from the women whom you met while in the Party and then recontacted in writing your book *We Want Freedom*? Can you also comment on the little-remembered FBI-directed repression faced by Panther women, and their brilliance in DEFEATING frame-ups, like Afeni Shakur and Ericka Huggins. Incidentally, Ericka is now a self-identified queer woman and a wonderful community activist, change-maker, and healer in Oakland whom we've interviewed several times on Out-FM.

MUMIA: Well, I've spoken about it. I don't know if I say that in *We Want Freedom*, but I hear a lot of comments about the chapter I wrote about women. The women really were the glory of the Party. And I mean, they were the Party's hardest workers, the most disciplined members and leaders. And you know, a lot of times when a brother would go around the corner, and even though it's against orders, as he would smoke a joint or have a drink, the sisters were there early every morning to open the office or to open the Free Breakfast Program and make sure that

the people got served first. They were the first to open and the last to leave. They were the glory of the Party.

And you talk about Afeni. I quoted from her closing argument to the jury in the Panther 21 trial. It's difficult, even all of these years later, for me to read that without weeping, because she was brilliant. She was the best lawyer, because she understood how to talk to people and to reach them and to, you know, unwrap their fear and to open their hearts. And that was hard work back then. She did it effortlessly. She was brilliant.

And, you know, Ericka: Most people knew of Ericka by reading her poems, right? Her poems just touch the heart and move people in ways that a hard, didactic, analytical, theoretical article could not. She knew how to reach people right, and especially with the tragedy of the loss of her husband, John.

The sisters were the glory of the Party, and in many ways, they remained so even after they left the Party, because they still organized in the community. They still – I mean, there's no Black Panther Party formally right now, but they do the work that they were trained to do when they were young sisters, and they're still active in the world, explaining changes in the world, helping the community cope with its many, many challenges. And they were glorious. They were and are glorious sisters.

BOB: Mumia, can you reflect back on your views – now I'm asking you about 33 years ago – in 1991 when you told QUISP [Queers United in Support of Political Prisoners] about your belief that "heterosexual hookups" were the only natural ones? So three questions about that:

- What was the basis of your views at the time?
- How have your views evolved in the 33 years since then, and who and what influenced your evolution?
- Where do you situate the liberation of queers and trans people in the larger context of human liberation?

MUMIA: When I was writing to QUISP, I was writing from the perspective of a MOVE supporter and someone who was following the teachings of John Africa, and really what was a naturalist revolutionary movement, as opposed to a nationalist one. But what we learned, right, when we study revolution, is that all things change, and that means perceptions, it means perspectives, it means even vision. Like, you know, we see and experience things differently.

One of the things that I don't believe you have read, even though you've done extensive research of course, is one of the last statements of Delbert Africa. I believe I put it in a commentary that I did, shortly before he came out of prison. And this is like, you know, one of the elder brothers of the movement, one of the really clearest thinkers, best speakers and best known of MOVE people, and he made a clarion call to LGBT people. It surprised me to read that, but he was doing that in the context of what? [With] the Black Lives Matter movement that was surging several years ago, we began to understand that the leaders of that movement tended to be gay men and lesbian women. And they were doing some real hellified organizing about the matter of Black life under the threat of police terror. And we hadn't seen any kind of organizing like that in years, in decades. So, you give credit where credit is due, and they were due, and they continue to be due, tremendous credit for their organizing around the simple principle of black life, and it took courage –

At that point, the prison phone system automatically cut off at the 15-minute limit. Fortunately, Mumia was able to call back later.

BOB: Finally, Mumia, I'd like to ask you about homophobia and transphobia within the prisons where you've been held, both from the staff and the other incarcerated men. Can you share any observations or conversations you've had over your 42 years in prison with gay men or trans women that have nourished your understanding of what they're subjected to and their overall situation in prison?

MUMIA: Well, you know, being in many ways, a blockhead and a nerd, I used to think that for a gay or even a trans man in prison would be a touch of heaven. It's quite the reverse. They catch hell from prisoners and staff alike. So think about the alienation in isolation that breathes in such a person. I've seen people – literally seen them – try to commit suicide by jumping off of a rail onto the floor. If you hit your head or your neck, you can kill yourself, and I've seen that several times, in several places, in several prisons. Prison, by its nature, breeds isolation in human beings and atomizes them to the extent that it further isolates and separates them. And for trans and gay men in prison, it's a hell in a hell, you know? They get the worst of it.

And I think the only people who really get worse – the worst treatment in prison – are jailhouse lawyers, because they tend to challenge the system and try to transform how prisons function. But it's not a good place. It can never be a good place. It's not designed to be a good place, and everything about it really works through the destruction of human and social relationships.

BOB: Wow. Any last words as we wrap up?

MUMIA: I want to thank you for your long support and your correspondence, and I applaud you as well.

BOB: Thank you so much. Be well, and let's free Mumia right away!

MUMIA: Thank you, thank you.

Again, I'm Bob Lederer and you've been listening to my recent phone interview with political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. In recent years, Mumia has become increasingly outspoken about queer and trans issues. In 2000, he wrote an insightful and moving commentary denouncing the brutal murders of three white gay men: Matthew Shepard in Wyoming in 1998, Billy Jack Gaither in Alabama and Eddie Northington in Virginia, both in 1999. He was responding to an LGBT campaign in support of his freedom called Rainbow Flags for Mumia. It's available in Mumia's recent reading of it here: <https://www.prisonradio.org/commentary/a-letter-to-workers-world-newspaper/>

Israeli War Criminal Visits Brooklyn, Protesters Demand His Arrest

by Palestine Chronicle

<https://www.palestinechronicle.com/gallant-visits-nyc-despite-icc-warrants-protesters-demand-arrest/>

Pro-Palestine protesters gathered outside the Park Lane Hotel recently, where former Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant was staying, demanding his arrest. The demonstrators called for accountability following the issuance of International Criminal Court (ICC) warrants seeking the arrest of Gallant and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Protesters chanted slogans and held signs condemning Israeli actions in Gaza, urging international authorities to enforce the ICC's rulings. The demonstration underscored growing global outrage over Israel's military actions and the perceived impunity of its leaders.

Despite the ICC warrants, Gallant appeared undeterred, praising the Israeli army during a speech in New York. "This is my first visit to the United States

— here in New York, in Brooklyn — since the war that was forced upon us," Gallant stated, according to Israeli media.

ICC Arrest Warrants

On November 21, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant over war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the ICC announced that it "issued warrants of arrest for two individuals, Mr Benjamin Netanyahu and Mr Yoav Gallant, for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed from at least 8 October 2023 until at least 20 May 2024, the day the Prosecution filed the applications for warrants of arrest."

Their alleged war crimes include using starvation as a weapon of war and committing acts such as murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts. The ICC emphasized that Israel's acceptance of the court's

jurisdiction is not necessary and disclosed the arrest warrants in the interest of the victims.

According to the statement, the Court found that "there are reasonable grounds to believe that both individuals intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival, including food, water, and medicine and medical supplies, as well as fuel and electricity, from at least 8 October 2023 to 20 May 2024."

The International Criminal Court also assessed that there are "reasonable grounds to believe" that Netanyahu and Gallant "bear criminal responsibility as civilian superiors for the war crime of intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population of Gaza".

"In this regard, the Chamber found that the material provided by the Prosecution only allowed it to make findings on two incidents that qualified as attacks that were intentionally directed against civilians," the statement added.

Statement by Boris Kagarlitsky, issued by the Boris Kagarlitsky International Solidarity Campaign

The Following Material (Information) Is Produced, Distributed, And (Or) Sent By Foreign Agent Boris Yulievich Kagarlitsky, Or Relates To The Activities Of Foreign Agent Boris Yulievich Kagarlitsky. [Ed. note: This is apparently a requirement imposed by Russian authorities on any public statement by Kagarlitsky, who is a political prisoner in Russia, incarcerated for opposing Russia's incursion and war in Ukraine.]

Recently, discussions have intensified about another possible prisoner exchange. Which Russian political prisoners are being considered for exchanging with whom is still unclear, yet the debate on who should and should not be included in swap lists is well under way.

I have stated several times, and I repeat now, that I do not wish to participate in such exchanges and ask not to be included in these lists. I see no purpose or benefit for myself in emigration. If I had wanted to leave the country, I would have done so myself. But I am not planning to leave my homeland, and if it means I must sit in prison to remain here, then I will sit in prison. After all, for a left-wing politician or a social scientist in Russia, imprisonment is a normal professional risk, one that must be accepted when choosing this path—just as it is for a firefighter or emergency worker. It's simply part of the job, which I have done and will continue to try to do conscientiously.

From ancient times, exile from the state has been one form of political repression against citizens unwanted by the authorities, and if we are fighting for freedom, such repression—though softer in form—should also be condemned by us. Political prisoners deserve unconditional release. For all. And to stay here, at home.

It is said that some participants in previous exchanges were removed from Russia against their will. I don't know the truth of this, but I want to state this in advance: if anything like this is attempted with me, I will consider it

as kidnapping and will sue any foreign government as an accomplice to the crime if they try to accept me against my will.

I am grateful to my family for their support and understanding and also to the many people who write to me, approving this choice of mine. But this isn't just about me. There are broader issues that need to be discussed.

There is a risk of replacing the struggle for the full release of all political prisoners (which would not only be a humane act but a step toward changing the moral climate in the country) with the compiling of exchange lists aimed at freeing a few dozen more or less well-known people, while hundreds and even thousands of other prisoners of conscience remain behind bars. Moreover, the compilers of these lists assume the responsibility of deciding who will be released and who will remain imprisoned. This is unjust and undemocratic, contradicting the very principles for which we make sacrifices. The only just demand is the release of all participants in non-violent political protest, all those arrested for exercising their constitutional right to criticize government decisions.

There's also another important point that shouldn't be forgotten. Political prisoners exist not only in Russia. Everything happening to us has global implications. If dictators worldwide learn that political prisoners are a profitable resource that can be successfully exchanged or sold, they will do everything to increase their exchange fund. They will imprison even more. Meanwhile, the task is to make it unprofitable for states to have political prisoners, to make repression too costly a pleasure for the ruling circles. This was the situation in the late 20th century when processes of democratisation unfolded not only in the countries of the former Soviet bloc but also in other parts of the world. We know that this democratisation was

extremely superficial and didn't challenge the dominant position of the elites. But even so, it was a step forward. Now we are witnessing processes everywhere moving in the opposite direction. This is why it's fundamentally important now to fight not for individual well-known political prisoners, but for an end to political repression as such.

Of course, there are different situations, and in some cases exchange is the only available way to save a person. The conditions of detention for political prisoners vary. I am fully aware that my situation is far from the worst by general standards. For this reason, I do not try to make decisions for others or to impose my personal opinion as a universal principle. However, I would, first, recommend that political prisoners who have the physical and moral strength to continue the struggle refuse to participate in exchanges, and second, I ask the organisers of exchanges and the compilers of lists to include only those prisoners who are known to consent to freedom at the cost of expulsion from the country.

In conclusion, I'll say: whatever choice we make, we must never forget that our goal is freedom and rights for everyone. Not only for those behind bars but also for those facing any other forms of oppression in Russia and around the world.

Best regards. November 14, 2024

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Coup Underway at Pacifica Radio

The long-standing efforts of an internal clique at Pacifica which has come to dominate the national board of the foundation and the local station boards of most of the non-commercial educational stations it runs appear to have reached fruition in recent weeks, possibly in a misguided response to the threats posed by HR 9495, which would authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to cancel the non-profit status of any 501c3 he deems supportive of "terrorism", and Project 2025, whose chapter on media, written by a Biden-appointee to the FCC whom Trump plans to name as chair, targets Pacifica by name, and plans to end not only federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting but to eliminate non-commercial educational broadcast licenses entirely for Pacifica as well as NPR and PBS stations (except for religious broadcasters).

Instead of responding to these threats with a political counter-offensive, deepening its engagement with and support of other communities under attack by the current and the incoming administration, or educating people about fascistic threats to free speech and human rights, Pacifica under the control of forces aligned to the corporate Democratic Party appears to be trying to trim its sails to the prevailing winds, violate its own Bylaws, and shut down dissident voices, particularly radical voices from communities of color.

At the national level, the Board voted to restrict membership on critical local board committees exclusively to members of the Board, even though the Bylaws specifically provide for membership on such advisory committees of other interested members of the stations. At KPFA, which has been pushing hard for years to exert either greater control over or independence from Pacifica, the local board suspended two members of the board from a grouping opposing undemocratic trends in the media organization, Steve Zeltzer and Elisabeth Milos. (Suspension allowed them to avoid having to meet the Bylaws standards and methods for removal).

Members of the dominant faction at KPFA had previously filed a challenge to the license renewal of Pacifica station WBAI in NY, which resulted in a consent decree with

the Federal Communications Commission that has hamstrung on-air fundraising by all the stations, worsening a financial crisis precipitated by declining membership as the stations have failed to keep up with changes in the media landscape and have retreated from community-oriented, cutting-edge radical programming.

At KPFA, shortly after it was announced that almost all the proceeds from the sale of the building that housed the station and the Pacifica Radio Archives would be used up paying off and paying down national debts because the Foundation had been unable to get a lien removed from the building in time, the Executive Director of Pacifica dismissed the interim General Manager (Michael Novick of this newspaper), who'd been working unpaid for more than two years, and replaced him with a long-time station insider who proceeded to move or remove many of the community-oriented, locally produced programming that had been introduced -- including Indigenous, Black, Raza, and Asian programmers -- and replace them with repeats of syndicated programs like Democracy Now or programs from KPFA.

The local board chair brought an "adviser" from KPFA to help run the board more like KPFA's, shutting down dissent and public members, and has already eliminated or combined most local board committees. Pacifica's version of "*bending the knee*" to Trump, as Disney/ABC did with their cash settlement, is unlikely to protect them.

You can find out when and how local and national board meetings are being held at <https://kpftx.org> -- some local boards and committees allow for public comment; others, including the national board and its committees can sometimes be audio-streamed from that site.

Pacifica Fightback is a national coalition of listeners and programmers from all five stations and some affiliates seeking to reverse these undemocratic changes and to build support for community-oriented, mission-driven programming, independent of any corporate interests or parties, and faithful to Pacifica's anti-war origins and commitment. More information is available at <https://pacificafightback.org> or email [pacificafightback\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:pacificafightback[at]gmail[dot]com). Email the Board at pnb@pacificafightback.org to express your views.

On-Line Resources for *Turning the Tide* & ARA-LA/PART:

You can find archives of *Turning the Tide* at www.antiracist.org that go back more than 35 years.

In addition, there are several Facebook pages, such as facebook.com/tideturning, and facebook.com/intercommunalsolidarity.

You can follow [@ara_losangeles](https://twitter.com/@ara_losangeles) on Twitter, and the De-Colonize LA! blog at ara-la.tumblr.com.

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- ★ Dec 25 - Ignite the Spirit of Solidarity in the Holiday Season
- ★ Jan 12 - KPFK Delegates meet to Elect Pacifica Directors
- ★ Jan 18 - Peoples March in DTLA
- ★ Jan 20 - Counter-Inaugural Protests in DC and nationally on MILK Day
- ★ February - Make some new Black History
- ★ May 19 - Centenary of the birth of Malcolm X, apostle of African Internationalism

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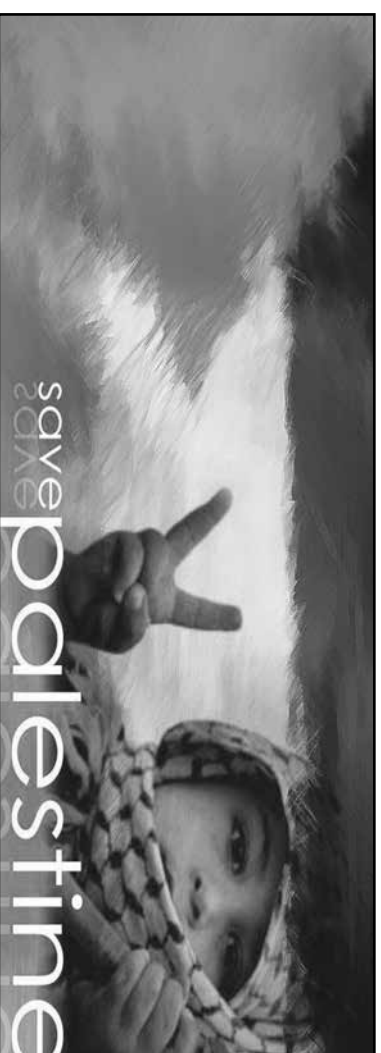
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- ★ Mumia on LGBTQ Liberation
- ★ Billionaires' Ball in DC
- ★ Free Peltier Now!
- ★ Resist to Exist
- ★ Palestine Will Be Free!
- ★ Coup at Pacifica
- ★ Implement the CA Racial Justice Act
- ★ January 20th and Beyond
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