

ANATHHEMA

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TRIAL OF ASKIA SABUR BEGINS

On September 3rd, 2010, Askia Sabur was standing with a relative in front of the Lucky Garden Chinese Restaurant at the corner of Landsdowne Ave. and Allison Street in West Philadelphia, waiting for an order of food that he had purchased. Philadelphia Police Officers Jimmy Leocal and Donyule Williams approached the men, unlawfully ordering them to leave the area. Before Askia and his cousin Shawn Merrit could comply, The officers grabbed Mr. Sabur's arm as he was reaching for his identification to place him under arrest. When the officers' reason for arresting Sabur was questioned, the officers viciously beat Sabur in front of a growing crowd of onlookers. Askia was viciously beaten by Philadelphia Police Officers for well over 2 minutes. Officer Leocal wildly and illegally pointed his gun at the crowd. Multiple officers broke or tried to break cell phones that were being used to video the police abuse in order to cover up their fellow officers' misconduct. At the end of the altercation, Mr. Sabur had suffered a broken arm and required 6 staples to close deep gashes on his head. After the incident police first claimed that Askia Sabur was arrested for disorderly conduct and then changed their story to claiming that Sabur was "blocking the flow of pedestrian traffic." Interestingly, Sabur was not charged with either of these crimes and instead was charged with assaulting police.

Officer Leocal, having been previously subpoenaed to testify in this case that began at the end of this past November, failed to appear in court due to having had ankle surgery 2 weeks earlier. In a building with elevators that didn't seem a legitimate excuse to the defense, who initially pushed for a bench warrant. More facts came to light, none entirely excusing Leocal's behavior (an officer alleged to have a violent internal affairs record), but things were postponed for the time being. To further our focus on the officers involved, we see that that Williams has been on the force for nearly eight years and has racked up eight complaints, four alleging physical abuse. Leocal, a 10-year veteran, had six complaints and at least four were for physical abuse, including one by his wife.

Askia Sabur's case has been consolidated with

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DECARCERATE PA BLOCKADES PRISON CONSTRUCTION SITE

decarceratepa.info

Early morning November 19, seven members of Decarcerate PA set up school desks, banners, and a little red schoolhouse to block the entrance to the prison construction site in Montgomery County. They then sat at the desks, linking arms and refusing to move or allow construction vehicles onto the sight. Construction was delayed for over an hour before all seven protesters were arrested and taken away. The new prisons are being built on the grounds of SCI Graterford in Montgomery County. If completed, they will cost \$400 million and house 4,100 people. We believe these prisons must be stopped, and that the money should be reinvested in our schools and communities.

REPRESSION AGAINST ANARCHISTS INTENSIFIES

nopoliticalrepression.wordpress.com

Two recent developments indicate an intensification of the government's campaign against the anarchist movement in the Pacific Northwest.

In late December, the three grand jury resisters being held at the Sea-Tac Detention Center for their refusal to testify were moved into solitary confinement. No explanation has been given for why they were moved.

The Committee Against Political Repression is calling for the discontinuation of the use of solitary confinement for any purpose, and for the immediate release of Matt Duran, Kteeo Olejnik, and Maddy Pfeifer.

In an unrelated case, in Portland, a young man accused of firebombing an empty police car was released on bail, under the condition that he have no contact with any anarchist organizations. He was specifically ordered not to have contact with Resist the NW Grand Jury or the prisoner support group Anarchist Black Cross, clearly indicating that

prosecutors want to prevent him from receiving legal, political, or personal support that would aid in his defense.

These developments come after a year which has seen, in addition to the grand jury hearings, SWAT raids against activists in Portland and Seattle, a grotesque inflation of charges in a Portland case involving small-scale vandalism, and indictments against five people accused of participating in a Seattle May Day demonstration where government and corporate property was attacked. Similar events have played out simultaneously in the Bay Area, and elsewhere in the country, forming what critics have called a Federal anti-anarchist witch hunt.

CAPR believes that the governments most recent actions confirm what we have said all along: The state is using the legal system to target the anarchist movement, in the process criminalizing a set of political beliefs and associations. We decry the use of inquisitorial tactics such as secret hearings, coerced testimony, guilt-by-association, and torture in the form of solitary confinement.

CAPR is asking its supporters to call Sea-Tac (206-870-5700) and demand an end to the use of solitary confinement, and to call US Attorney Jenny Durkan (800-797-6722) demanding an end to the grand jury investigation.

In addition to these developments, on December 14th Portland anarchist Kerry Cunneen received a subpoena stating that they were required to appear just 5 days later on the 19th. Their lawyer successfully got the date pushed back until January 3rd, when Kerry declined to even enter the grand jury room. Kerry has stated that they will never under any circumstance cooperate with this or any state in persecuting themselves or others:

I have been subpoenaed to the grand jury in Seattle investigating Anarchists in the Pacific Northwest. I was called to testify on January 3rd at 9am. I did not appear before the grand jury. I will not cooperate with this grand jury nor will I in any way aid the state in its efforts to imprison people. I stand firmly in solidarity with the actions taken against the Nakamura Federal court house during the May Day demonstration and all action taken against the state and capital towards the goal of a more liberated society. I am in solidarity with the May Day 5, with Maddy, Matt and Kteeo, and everyone else who has met repression with resilience. To all whose solidarity has come in some form of action, it is inspiring and must continue. ★

DECARCERATE STEPS FORWARD AND BACKWARD IN GRATERFORD

"Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons?"-Michel Foucault *Discipline and Punish*

This past November presented us with a historical moment in United States prison resistance, as seven activists with Decarcerate PA took part in a blockade of the active prison construction site in Graterford, outside of Philadelphia. Commendable in its basic logic, that when other protest tactics did not succeed they sought to escalate, one might wish this would catch on throughout the political left. Despite its apparent radical musings, however, the undertaking is mired in the left, thusly muddling about in the quagmire of reform.

Seeking to bargain with power, they set up a mock classroom in the path of vehicles, illustrating a desire for the rebudgeting of money away from imprisonment and toward education. As it could easily be illustrated how state-sanctioned education could produce the conformity rendering prisons less necessary in society, and the readily apparent correlations between school, work, and prison, there seems to be more questions as to why the state wouldn't act more favorably toward such ideas, and why activists seeking prison abolition wouldn't see the flaws. Certainly, knowledge can be empowering, but with state funding comes state control, and so we see the tailoring of populations through the breaking of spirits, communities, and disparate cultures. For those who find the oppression of schooling less apparent, too far fetched for this nation, or otherwise too extreme a comparison, I'd encourage looking into the effects of the residential school system on the American Indian population in this country, such as in Ward Churchill's *Kill the Indian, Save the Man*.

Three months ago we saw corporate mouthpiece CNN demonstrating how "authoritarians are getting smarter" through subtler methods of repression, specifically legal reform. However short-sighted the article may be in its foci, it seems relatively easy to draw the parallels between the nations they shed light on and any government in the world, actively tying up resistance in illegality and drawing people's attention toward reforming laws rather than continuing their original fight -- essentially curtailing energies through a fight on authority's home field.

Of course doing something is often better than

doing nothing in the face of

"...this prison behemoth: the psychological torture inflicted daily to break the spiritual will of the imprisoned. Instead of becoming rehabilitated advocates for personal and social transformation, many of these tortured minds become more fearful, docile and semi-childlike under the authority of slave master-ish correctional officers. These "invisible prison scars" are apparent in the high recidivist rates and high levels of violence in brown/urban communities by participants with direct ties to the current prison system."

- James Hough, *Prisoner writing to Decarcerate PA against prison expansion*

And so of course we should support the incarcerated, as they are intimately familiar with the horrors of such treatment. Writing to prisoners, supporting their actions to make their lives more livable and other forms of solidarity (not charity) are very important in this fight, as they are some of our most worthwhile allies.

Still, it should be recognized that prison reform, and even abolition (seen as simply discarding that one aspect of society), is a titanic, myopic pandering to the threats posed by an icebergs's apex, alone. That is to say, changing or even removing prison as it stands from our modern society simply leaves a hole that will be filled by an equally destructive means of controlling populations.

Liberal exemplary, Victor Hugo (long prior to writing the now sensationalized *Les Miserables*), wrote a worthwhile story depicting the psychological torture of a man awaiting execution in *The Last Days of a Condemned Man*, ultimately condemning death penalties and solitary confinement in a moving tale meant to initially come off as the personal journal of the imprisoned. In a later edition of the story he epitomized an almost expectant reformism, however, in an introduction calling for a reimagining of incarceration -- perhaps in the form of medical treatment. Far more recently, noted Italian anarchist Alfredo Bonnano saw this type of horrible euphemism for what it will be in a valuable talk he gave transcribed as, *Locked Up*: "isolation, psychological torture and white coats will take the place of bloodstains on the wall, and science will be applied to obtain the total destruction of the 'outlaws' who have no intention of negotiating with the State." That may even come short of the ways in which prisons are evolving, though, as we note the introduction of such methods nearly two centuries ago in the world's first penitentiary, right here in Philadelphia.

As Marcuse heeded the service of technology to power, we must recognize the collusion of medical science and

power in altering chemical make-ups of people which has long been in vogue so as to contort them into the service of the status quo. The resulting "one-dimensional [individual]" is a withered relic of the critical, questioning, free being (whether born from prison or some other, less hateful term, such as psychiatry). To draw this farther into the heart of the matter, rather than discouraging our siblings in the struggle I hope to light a suggestive fire so as to avoid the strongholds of power (that is the turf allotted to those attempting to bargain with power), as well as broadening the target of our attacks. To emphasize this further, we must keep in mind that reformist achievements, such as redistributing government finances, can render populations more conducive to submission through said compromises with the rulers, reintegrating individuals into the production/consumption mentality.

So, let us not fall into the spectral affairs of radical leftism, hiding the bars of our cages in perceived needs, and address the problems of society (that is, society itself) at its roots -- meaning dismantling every aspect of this civilization that is, in actuality, in dire need of prisons as a means of perpetuating its reign, as well as the very prisons themselves. ★

NYC: Reportback from NYE Noise Demo

anarchistnews.org

On December 31st, at least 60 people responded to the call for a noise demo outside the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in downtown Manhattan. The crowd easily filled the street in front of the institution and an aural ruckus filled the air from noisemakers, voices, air horns, a variety of drums, and even a proper brass trumpet.

Anti-prison and anti-police chants from the crowd accompanied a banner reading "BURN THE PRISON SOCIETY." Rebels in the street cheered on the caged and excluded as they banged on their windows, flicked lights on and off, and gave other signals of life from within an otherwise deadening, lifeless building. We moved back and forth around the building to be sure everyone could hear our screams and tried to be as close as possible to the cell of anarchist hacker Jeremy Hammond as we chanted his name.

Let's make 2013 a terrifying year for capitalists and state operatives the world over and a joyous year for those seeking the triumph of life over death. OUR PASSION FOR FREEDOM IS STRONGER THAN THEIR PRISONS. FOR THE ANNIHILATION OF PRISON AND THE PRISON-SOCIETY.

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another instance of police misconduct involving Sabur's cousin, Tanya Yates. Ms. Yates was at her grandfather's home when it was invaded by police without the authorization of a warrant under the pretense that they were searching for a suspect. When Ms. Yates refused to allow the police to enter her family home without a warrant, police forced their way in and grabbed Ms. Yates by the hair to drag her out of the house for questioning. Ms Yates was beaten by police for resisting. During the altercation between Tanya and the three officers, she was beaten several times in the face and lower body and was rushed to the hospital for treatment. This incident is believed to have been initiated by Philadelphia police in retaliation for Sabur's and his community's outspoken criticism of the police after his arrest. Police involved in Ms. Yates's case were from the same Philadelphia police district where Sabur's attacking officers worked.

This is the reaction to protests that have unfortunately done nothing in holding police accountable for their actions. In a country that has been increasing the criminalization of documenting police officers in action, constant corruption amongst authority -- even in internal affairs (such as recently noted perpetrator Staff Inspector Jerrold Bates of the Philadelphia Police), and the physical destruction and removal of recording devices at a scene (such as during the Askia beating, from which one video thankfully did survive), how are the pigs to be held accountable when they are so frequently above the law?

They police are quite literally the arms of the law. A law that was not on our side to begin with; a law that we opposed from the start; a law that dictates the way we live and die, having us answering to everyone but ourselves concerning our own autonomy; and to hold the police to the letter of the law (rather than sweep the malfeasance beneath the oligarchic carpet) calls into question their authority, and therefore the whole system of operations.

Those in power can not afford that, sacrificing their own avoidance of consequences in the process. At best, a show is put on to paint a facade of consequences every so often, while the majority of authority simply slips behind the curtains of the farce with slaps on their wrists.

"Justice!" people may cry in the streets. However, Justice does not leave hierarchy to remain. It does not leave landlords, commodities, bosses or work. It does not leave prisons, churches or governments

standing. It does not leave rapists, judges, politicians or police alive. It does not accept anyone seeking power over others, or the pitting of the less prosperous against each other (that is, the necessary class divisions of capitalism).

Last year we reached the 316 person homicide mark in Philadelphia, plus five more in the first two days of 2013, but we are not stepping over the corpses of rulers and their henchmen. The old forests are gone, the air is polluted, the water is mostly poison, and we are lost in an alienated crowd where social media is taken more serious than real life. But who knows what living really is anymore, locked away in the utter personal deterioration that is the internet age? Those folks in West Philadelphia who publicly recognized how little the police did for their community when Askia was brutalized took a few short steps toward self determination, but lost any momentum when they still allowed those same powers authority over their lives. When police officers were permitted to patrol their neighborhoods without consequence, shortly thereafter, justice was not preserved. ★

PHILLY BANNER DROP AGAINST FRACKING, AGAINST TAR SANDS

Last November some folks hung a banner from the train bridge in a high traffic area of West Philly that is adorned with the Drexel University insignia. The superbly designed banner featured a burning bulldozer, an anarchy heart, and read, "AVENGE THE FORESTS, NO TAR SANDS! NO FRACK! SOLIDARITY IS ATTACK." The following is the communique they issued a week later:

Too long have we contained our rage for all that aims to control us, our rage for all that destroys what little wild nature remains. This morning anarchists dropped a banner in solidarity with all those who resist the destruction of the wild and those who wage war on civilization and its guardians. We have no illusions that this act will be a turning point in the war against the existent, simply a reminder that those fighting are not alone in struggle.

Undying solidarity with those who fight to become wild, to become free.

Unapologetic hate for all those who destroy forests and enforce hierarchy.

Horrendously revolting, anarchists

ps shout out to all the kids holdin shit down in texas, we see you. fuck a pipeline! fuck every cop in texas!