

Guild Notes

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WELCOME TO NEW JAILHOUSE LAWYER MEMBERS

If you are receiving this newsletter, that means that we have received your request to be added as a member. We are a membership association of lawyers, law students, legal workers, and jailhouse lawyers. Membership is open to anyone incarcerated who writes to the NLG National Office expressing their interest in becoming a member, and there is no cost. Membership lasts for three years, after which you can write to us again to let us know to renew and if you have a different mailing address. Formerly incarcerated members have the option to annually renew their membership once they are released, with a waiver if needed. Your membership will be as a national member, not affiliated with a local chapter.

MEMBERSHIP CONSISTS OF

- Subscription to Guild Notes, which comes out 2 or 3 times a year
- The Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook (currently 2021 edition—write to us if you need one!)
- Opportunity to submit writing to the Beyond Bars column in Guild Notes:

When submitting, think about what in your experience as a jailhouse lawyer might be beneficial to share with other jailhouse lawyers around the country? Drawing upon personal experience as an illustration of a broader topic is encouraged. There is a word limit of around 750 words. You can send to: GN Submissions, National Lawyers Guild, PO Box 1266, New York, NY 10009. (Please also let us know if you would like your full name published). Unfortunately, we cannot write back to everyone who sends us an article, and there is no guarantee that an article will be published. We do, though, appreciate every submission we receive, and all give us insight that we wouldn't otherwise have of what is going on inside the prison walls.

- Ability to vote in our annual elections on bylaws/resolutions

BEYOND THESE, THE NLG STAFF DO NOT HAVE CAPACITY TO FACILITATE FURTHER BENEFITS, INCLUDING

- Membership cards
- Access to legal representation or to have a lawyer read through your legal documents
- Marking either Guild Notes or the Handbook as “legal mail”, as they go out in bulk and are not considered to be legal mail

Dear comrades:

We are incredibly excited to share with you this latest issue of Guild Notes ahead of our plenaries that will take place from November 11-12, 2023! We have six important resolutions that are included in this issue as well as key instructions for voting, especially for our cherished jailhouse lawyer members.

I am proud to share that the NLG hosted its first-ever National Leadership Summit in Atlanta, Georgia from October 12-15, 2023 with over 75 representatives from different Guild entities from all across the country. The four-day intensive was spent reflecting on the Guild's past, assessing the Guild's present, and laying the groundwork for the Guild's future. It is our intention for this gathering to inform larger strategic planning that we are eager to share with you all very soon!

As 2023 draws to an unbelievably quick close, we look forward to all the developments that this new year will bring. In 2024, our membership will be welcoming newly-elected leadership as well as (hopefully) hosting our first Convention since the 2020 lockdowns. While we are still working through moments of uncertainty and continued pandemic throughout the world, we are grateful for moments when Guildies can gather both in and outside of the streets.

From APEC mobilizations in the Bay Area to Block Cop City in Atlanta to solidarity actions for Gaza across the U.S., the Guild has been relentless in its response to the legal needs of grassroots movements and we cannot stop there! With the increase in political activity in these last few months of 2023, I hope that this issue can inspire courage and tenacity in these enraging times.

From (the river to the sea),

JML Santiago (They/She)



2023 HONOREES

Each year, we honor members and allies whose work embodies extraordinary commitment to our mission of human rights and the rights of ecosystems over property interests. We're thrilled to announce this year's honorees! Learn more about each of them below.

Law for the People Award: Community Movement Builders

Community Movement Builders (CMB) is a member-based collective of Black people creating sustainable, self-determining communities through cooperative economic advancement and collective community organizing. CMB utilizes direct action, including marches, rallies, and mass public comment as a means of enacting change. Additionally, the collective utilizes mutual aid programs, subsidized CSA boxes, a rental and utilities stabilization fund, and free food from its community garden to build trust and connection within the community and meet the immediate needs of the Pittsburgh community. The organization also develops Black worker-owned cooperatives to support sustainable alternative economic development, like sea moss, aquaponics and vending machine cooperatives with

the ultimate goal of a grocery store co-operative to have affordable, fresh food with well-paying jobs. CMB is the Black anchor in the #StopCopCity campaign connecting deforestation and environmental degradation to the over-policing of Black communities.

Ernie Goodman Award: Armen H. Merjian

Armen H. Merjian, Senior Staff Attorney/Legal Director at Housing Works/HIV Law Project, is one of the nation's leading HIV/AIDS and civil rights attorneys. In a career spanning more than three decades, Armen has successfully litigated numerous landmark cases on issues involving HIV/AIDS, homelessness, public benefits, disability, gender, and housing discrimination. This includes establishing the right of unhoused New Yorkers living with AIDS to same-day placement in emergency housing, successfully challenging Mayor Guiliani's systematic violation of the rights of New York's public assistance recipients, and securing novel victories against transgender discrimination and source of income (housing) discrimination. Armen is a co-author of the national treatise on AIDS, AIDS and the Law, and a contributing author of the NLG's Civil Rights Litigation and Attorney Fees Annual Handbook. He is the author of 20 law review articles on human and civil rights and regularly presents in local, state, national and international forums.

Jess Fuller is a dedicated, anti-authoritarian community organizer turned legal coordinator. Over the last decade, Jess has been central in expanding on the ground legal support to struggles at Standing Rock, the U.S./Mexico border, workplace union organizing, and most recently, the Stop Cop City movement in Atlanta. Jess is a frontline legal worker experienced in building defendant-centered strategies to combat state repression. She knows that solidarity, building power and creative legal strategies are the best defense to the criminalization of resistance.

(Awarded by the National Immigration Project
of the NLG)

Laura St. John is Legal Director at the Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project in Arizona, where she has practiced for twelve years. Her practice is entirely devoted to removal defense for individuals who are or were detained in ICE custody. She regularly represents individuals in removal proceedings before the Immigration Court, Board of Immigration Appeals, and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and supervises the Florence Project's federal court litigation, Ninth Circuit appellate litigation, and policy and outreach efforts. Laura served as an Appellate Lawyer Representative to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals from January 2017 through January 2020 and served on the Ninth Circuit's Pro Se Committee. She frequently presents on immigration law and policy to the bar, students, and community groups.

Charlie McKeown is a 2023 graduate from the University of Georgia School of Law, where he was president of the NLG student chapter. Along with fellow Guild members from across the South, he organized legal observation and Know Your Rights trainings in support of the Defend the Atlanta Forest movement. He also assisted in jail support and legal coordination for Forest Defenders facing State persecution. Additionally, he serves on the legal committee for the International Campaign to Free Kamau Sadiki, as well as the Prisoner Support Committee of the Black Alliance for Peace Solidarity Network. He is now a public defender in Georgia, where he lives with his wife and newborn son.

Florida Immigrant Coalition is a hub for a bold, agile, and strategic social movement that advances Florida immigrants, their success and wellbeing. A statewide coalition of 70+ organizations, and 100+ allies united for the fair treatment of all people, including immigrants. FLIC grows the connection, capacity, and consciousness of communities to strengthen pro-immigrant power in Florida. We work in the intersection of love and justice, standing for the equitable world that we aspire and deserve. We move closer to our vision when we build a Florida in which individuals have the right to live, love, and labor without fear.

Every year, our members propose resolutions for the membership to vote on. The following pages are the proposed resolutions for this year. For our Jailhouse Lawyer members, you may tear out this voting form, complete it, and mail to: **Attn: Voting, National Lawyers Guild, PO Box 1266, New York, NY 10009**

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

Yes ☐ No ☐ Abstain ☐

RESOLUTION TO FREE ALEX SAAB, VENEZUELAN DIPLOMAT IMPRISONED BY THE U.S.

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Submitted by: Suzanne Adely and Charlotte Kates

Submitted by: Suzanne Adely and Charlotte Kates Whereas, the National Lawyers Guild has a long history in defending political prisoners held in U.S. jails and in demanding an end to the sanctions regime deployed against Venezuela and other targeted nations by the United States, and

Whereas, Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab Moran is currently imprisoned in the Federal Detention Center in Miami, in violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, and

Whereas, Alex Saab has been denied recognition as a diplomat and denied contact or consular visits from Venezuela because the U.S. has arbitrarily refused to recognize the legitimate democratically elected government of President Nicolas Maduro, and

Whereas, according to Article 36 of the VCCR, which the U.S. has signed, “consular officers shall be free to communicate with nationals of the sending State and to have access to them.” Foreign nationals who are arrested or detained must be given notice “without delay” of their right to have their embassy or consulate notified of that arrest, and “consular officers shall have the right to visit a national of the sending State who is in prison, custody or detention, to converse and correspond with him and to arrange for his legal representation,” and

Whereas, Saab was unlawfully detained, tortured and mistreated by masked interrogators while being held at the behest of the United States in Cape Verde in June of 2020 while serving as a Special Envoy for the government of Venezuela to Iran, and carrying papers identifying him as a Venezuelan diplomat. He was arrested by Cape Verdean authorities, initially without a warrant, at the request of the US District Court of Florida, and was eventually extradited to the United States despite a decision of the ECOWAS court prohibiting his extradition, and

Whereas, Saab’s responsibilities as a diplomat included the negotiation and execution of trade agreements, particularly with other sanctioned parties, to trade oil and gold for food, medicine, fuel and other items needed to support the Venezuelan people and their productive activity under heavy U.S. unilateral coercive measures, and

Whereas, the U.S. coercive economic measures targeting Venezuela are unlawful under international law and function as an act of war, and

Whereas, the U.S. presented eight charges against Saab, all related to economic actions aimed at defeating the unlawful sanctions, seven of which were later dropped. The only remaining charge, one of money laundering, carries a maximum prison sentence of 20 years, and

Whereas, in December 2022, the court hearing Saab’s case rejected his diplomatic status, allowing the U.S. government arbitrary control over who is recognized as a diplomat, saying: ““Only the President may determine which governments are legitimate in the eyes of the United States and which are not[.]. It is clear that the United States does not recognize the Maduro regime to represent the official government of Venezuela. Instead, ‘[t]he United States recognizes Interim President Juan Guaid[ó] and considers the 2014 democratically elected Venezuelan National Assembly, which he currently leads, to be the only legitimate federal institution, according to the Venezuelan Constitution.... Maduro’s regime has been deemed ‘illegitimate.’ Accordingly, any claim to diplomatic immunity asserted by a representative of the Maduro regime must also be considered illegitimate,” and

Whereas, the United States has no legitimate authority to dictate the policies of the government of Venezuela, nor to imprison diplomats by unilaterally declaring the governments of sovereign nations to be illegitimate, and

Whereas, NLG president Suzanne Adely and NLG member Audrey Bomse have met with Saab at the Federal Detention Center in Miami, and the Fact Finding Mission of the International People’s Tribunal on U.S. Imperialism met with Saab’s wife, Camila Fabri Saab, and the committee working for his release in Venezuela, and

Whereas, the President of the United States has the authority to negotiate prisoner exchanges with other countries,

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild calls for the immediate release and repatriation of Alex Saab and endorses the Free Alex Saab campaign, and
Be it further resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild will

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work to achieve the release of Alex Saab, including through a potential prisoner exchange for U.S. citizens detained in Venezuela, and

Be it finally resolved, that the NLG will continue its work to confront and challenge the U.S. unlawful coercive economic measures targeting Venezuela that aim to depose

the democratically-elected government of Venezuela and to replace it with one that will open Venezuela's vast oil reserves to exploitation by US transnational oil companies.

Implementation of this resolution will be undertaken by the International Committee, which consents to this.

RESOLUTION AGAINST U.S. COERCIVE ECONOMIC MEASURES

Submitted by: Suzanne Adely and Charlotte Kates

Whereas, the United States has imposed economic coercive measures, or sanctions, on countries that include approximately 28% of the world's population, and

Whereas, unilateral coercive measures, economic measures taken by one state to compel a change in policy in another state, are illegal under international law and a violation of sovereignty under the UN Charter, and

Whereas, multilateral coercive measures, adopted by the United Nations, have also been used to pursue unjust policies of regime change and wealth transfer, and

Whereas, the United States has used its policy of sanctions to target countries and peoples pursuing an independent path of development, for example, in Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Haiti, Syria, Iran, Libya, Iraq, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, and many other countries, including Russia and China, and

Whereas, there is a clear distinction between the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the U.S. as an imperialist power and popular campaigns to cut off the flow of arms and aid to apartheid and colonial regimes, as in the cases of Israel and apartheid South Africa, and

Whereas, the purpose of such economic measures are inherently violent structures of imperialism, inherently violent, designed to maintain economic inequality, continue the theft of wealth from the Global South, and preserve racial hierarchy in the international system, and are also an act of war, and

Whereas, coercive economic measures have a devastating impact on the populations of targeted countries across a wide range of sectors, with working-class and impoverished people suffering the worst impacts, and

Whereas, coercive economic measures are dangerous to public health, artificially depress the economy, cause

poverty and displacement, coerce forced migration, and have particularly damaging impacts on workers, women, LGBT people and the environment, and create massive excess deaths around the world, and

Whereas, these are not side effects of coercive economic measures but are an intended outcome of sanctions, intended to create regime change through making life unlivable in targeted countries, and

Whereas, former U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright said, when asked about the death of 500,000 Iraqi children due to U.S. sanctions targeting Iraq's economy, society and health system, said, "the price, we think, the price is worth it," and

Whereas, the National Lawyers Guild has a long-standing policy of opposition to U.S. unilateral coercive measures, including in Iraq, Palestine, Cuba, Venezuela, Haiti, Korea and elsewhere, and

Whereas, the National Lawyers Guild is a co-sponsor of the International People's Tribunal on U.S. Imperialism: Sanctions, Blockades, Coercive Economic Measures, which concluded in New York on September 29-30, 2023, with a detailed verdict on the responsibility of the United States for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide, for its coercive economic measures, and

Whereas, the Tribunal will be pursuing litigation, popular education and research to advance the campaign to confront, challenge and defeat coercive economic measures,

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild will participate in organizing, popular education and litigation to challenge U.S. sanctions and coercive economic measures, and

Be it further resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild will publicize the results of the International People's Tribunal

on U.S. Imperialism widely through events, publications, and direct involvement in litigation, and

Be it finally resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild will continue to expand its work to bring U.S. coercive economic measures to an end, including ending the blockades of Cuba,

Venezuela, Zimbabwe, Iran, Syria, Eritrea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and all other impacted countries.

Implementation of this resolution will be undertaken by the International Committee, which consents to this.

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**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE APSP/UHURU 3
AND CHALLENGE FARA PERSECUTION**

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Submitted by: Charlotte Kates and Suzanne Adely

Whereas, the United States federal government has long engaged in political repression, imprisonment and persecution targeting Black liberation movements, revolutionary political movements, working-class struggles and anti-imperialist parties and organizations, and

Whereas, the U.S. federal government has in recent years expanded its use of FARA, the Foreign Agents Registration Act, in several cases that have primarily targeted Black liberation activists and Chinese Americans working for peace with China, and

Whereas, these cases include those of the African People’s Socialist Party and the Uhuru Movement, where three individuals have been charged with acting as foreign agents of Russia based on weak allegations that aim to criminalize basic international exchange and collaboration, and

Whereas, Boston-area trade unionist Li Tang “Henry” Liang, a Chinese American activist and union member who has advocated for peace between the US and China, has also been arrested and indicted under FARA; and

Whereas, there is a long history of using FARA and similar allegations to repress organizers in the United States seeking peace and justice, including the 1951 prosecution of W.E.B. DuBois and the prosecution of the Cuban Five, and

Whereas, these prosecutions create a chilling effect for internationalist and anti-imperialist organizing in the United States, particularly for those challenging U.S. unilateral coercive measures against Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Iran, Syria, Palestine, Zimbabwe and other targeted nations,

in addition to those seeking peace with Russia, China and other nations;

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild will actively work to expose and challenge the rising use of FARA by the U.S. government to target political dissent and in particular, anti-imperialist and anti-war organizing and communication, and

Be it further resolved, that the NLG will provide education, leadership and resources to movement lawyers to assist the in confronting FARA and defending their clients against repressive legislation and prosecutions, and

Be it further resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild calls for all charges to be dropped against the Uhuru/APSP 3, Li Tang “Henry” Liang and all similarly situated people, and

Be it further resolved, that the NLG demands an end to the use of FARA to target political activism working for Black liberation, peace with Russia, peace with China, advancing an anti-imperialist program and other international issues at odds with U.S. foreign policy and unilateral coercive measures, and

Be it finally resolved that the National Lawyers Guild will cooperate with other organizations to strengthen and support the legal defense of activists unjustly charged with FARA violations, domestic terrorism charges and other politically motivated prosecutions in the United States.

Implementation of this resolution will be undertaken by the International Committee, which consents to this.

RESOLUTION OPPOSING PERPETUAL WAR

Proposed by the NLG Military Law Task Force

WHEREAS, the United States has approximately 750 military bases in approximately 81 countries around the world.

WHEREAS, the United States has intervened militarily in other countries approximately 200 times since 1950, including 27 attempts at regime change.

WHEREAS, the United States public military budget for 2023 was over 816 billion dollars.

WHEREAS, the clear pattern of US military support for foreign regimes and armed presence or intervention in other countries is one of protection of US economic and political interests.

WHEREAS, the American people are kept largely unaware of this wide-flung military empire and its purposes and, when the public does become aware of the conflicts, they are falsely given to understand that our country acts only in the interests of freedom and democracy.

WHEREAS, the US's military presence and warfare abroad, often under the guise of training and advising local military forces, serves to prop up a number of dictatorial and repressive regimes.

WHEREAS, such US military presence and action abroad have created a state of perpetual war, to the detriment of independent nations, progressive movements and indigenous populations around the world.

WHEREAS, against this backdrop of ongoing warfare the US government and the interests it serves are also preparing for the very real possibility of "great power" war(s) with international rivals.

WHEREAS, the state of perpetual war and the likelihood of great power war are adverse to the interests of people around the world, including the American people and US military personnel.

WHEREAS, the US military seeks to address this problem and motivate servicemembers to fight in unwanted and unjust wars through military training and

a military culture that glorify violence and warfare, equate military prowess with sexual prowess and sexual violence, and objectify potential "enemies" by painting them as subhuman and "other," often doing so by singling

out as targets of harassment and other mistreatment servicemembers of color as well as those who appear weak or simply different, all with the result that people of color, women and non-binary servicemembers face harsh treatment and abuse in the armed forces.

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense's own reports reveal that 8,942 service members reported they were sexually assaulted in 2022, and that as of 2023, in 9 of the last 10 reporting years, total sexual assaults in the military have increased each year, while sexual harassment is growing at a similar rate

WHEREAS, a GAO report released in May 2019 found evidence that black and Hispanic troops were more likely than their white peers to be investigated by military commanders and tried in courts-martial, but not any more likely to be found guilty.

WHEREAS, in 2019 the number of discrimination complaints which the military officially substantiated was 6% in the Navy, 18% in the Air Force and 35% in the Army. According to the AP, surveys taken on aircraft carriers in 2019 showed that nearly 1 in 4 sailors said they could not use their chain of command to report incidents of racism without fear of retaliation or reprisal, and that 4 out of every 10 said discipline was unfairly administered.

WHEREAS, a 2020 Military Times poll found that 57% of servicemembers of color said they had witnessed incidents of racism or racist ideology, yet there is no specific prohibition against hate crimes in the military justice system.

WHEREAS, The Selective Service System continues to attempt to register all young men in the United States for induction into the military, and the U.S. Congress is considering expanding this registration requirement to women.

WHEREAS, the United States has increased hostilities in the Pacific region and is committed to military intervention in Taiwan against China.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the National Lawyers Guild calls for an end to U.S. policy of preparing for and fighting perpetual wars around the world. The National Lawyers Guild will educate its members on the dangers this policy poses to peoples around the world and in the U.S.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Guild, through its Military Law Task Force, will seek to educate Guild members, committees and other entities, as well as Guild allies and the public, about these issues and encourage Guild entities and members to take part in campaigns to stop the U.S. military from fighting perpetual wars around the world.

IMPLEMENTATION by the NLG Military Law Task Force.

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**RESOLUTION ON THE STRUGGLE TO RESPECT,
PROTECT AND FULFILL THE RIGHT TO HEALTH
IN THE U.S. AND SUPPORT RESISTANCE TO
PRIVATIZATION OF HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS
FOR SENIORS AND VETERANS**

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**Submitted by: The Military Law Task Force, the International Committee,
and the Environmental Justice Committee**

WHEREAS, the NLG’s mission is to promote human and ecosystem rights over property interests (Preamble to Constitution), and

WHEREAS, the Guild was one of the NGOs selected to represent the US at the founding of the United Nations in 1945 and participated in ensuring that human rights provisions were incorporated into the United Nations Charter, and

WHEREAS, Guild members assisted in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in 1948, which protects the right to health in the context of an adequate standard of living, and recognizes the interdependence of social and economic rights, and

WHEREAS, at its 2009 Convention the NLG adopted a resolution calling on all members to work for U.S. ratification of the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the treaty which advances the UDHR, and which articulates in Article 12 the right to physical and mental health, which includes health care, and

WHEREAS, the 2009 resolution specifically mentioned the informational problem of health care being referred to as a privilege, a moral obligation or economically beneficial, rather than as a human right, and called on members to help frame the debate on health care, housing, education, and

food as human rights, and

WHEREAS, the individual human right to health and other social, economic and cultural rights are closely related to the collective human right to a clean and healthy environment and to the right of all species on the planet to thrive, and

WHEREAS, perpetual war, preparation for war, nuclear weapons, failure to address climate disruption and other environmental threats and hazards make the right to health care an urgent issue, and

WHEREAS, the U.S. has made few and very incomplete steps toward recognizing health care as a human right because of the rise of neoliberal capitalism at the end of the 1970s, the decline of union membership and the power of unions, the attacks on the Black Freedom movement, and because of other reasons, and

WHEREAS, the passage of federal legislation in the 1990s, supported by Republican and Democratic parties, led to the privatization of the single payer, public program of health care for seniors, Medicare, by Medicare Advantage and, more recently, in 2018 the VA Mission Act, has led to outsourcing/privatization of the nation’s only national, integrated and coordinated healthcare system, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and

WHEREAS, the states have, in the same time period, with two exceptions, also rejected health care as a public good, the foundation of health care as a human right, and privatized the joint federal-state program of Medicaid (Title XIX, Social Security Act), increasing the power of insurance companies who make profits by denying care, and

WHEREAS, although the COVID-19 pandemic allowed many people to benefit from a temporary expansion of public financing of health care and better access to specific goods and services, the deaths of more than 335,000 people were attributable to the lack of a national single-payer financed health care system with health care provided free at the point of access, as a right, and

WHEREAS, the “austerity” measures now being adopted are causing millions of low-income people, disproportionately burdening people of color, to lose access to Medicaid, while the inflated costs of living are causing significant economic damage, including ability to pay for the expensive, private health services and drugs, and

WHEREAS, the austerity measures being used by capital owners and enabled by Congress to slowly privatize the VA system, with more than 15 bills introduced in Congress to outsource VHA care, are an attack on government provision of public health care, which is of higher quality than private, when measured by outcomes, on federal sector unions like AFGE, and on the VA’s ability to serve all patients through its research, teaching, and emergency preparedness missions, and

WHEREAS, the Biden Administration’s expansion of the Trump Administration’s Direct Contracting model (as launched by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, permitted under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) allows profit-seeking insurance companies secretly to manage the doctor-patient relationship and now threatens Medicare, the most popular health care program in the U.S., as a model for expansion to cover everyone (national, improved Medicare for all), and

WHEREAS, the most medically vulnerable people in our society, including not only veterans and seniors, but also detainees, prisoners, immigrants, and all low-income people, as well as Indigenous communities, have specialized needs requiring being treated according to the human rights principle of Equity, of greater financial support and care for those who need the most health care, the opposite of what a private profit-seeking system can and will do, and

WHEREAS, the AFL-CIO has voted to support a national system of improved and enhanced Medicare for All, which would include everyone regardless of their status (social, immigration, etc.) and cover all essential health services, goods, and infrastructure, preventing the dismantling of

health care for women and other genders, and

WHEREAS, VA healthcare is not only critical to veterans, including many who have been injured or made ill by the US’s immoral and often illegal wars, and provides healthcare and benefits tailored to their needs, but also a system of healthcare professional training, research, and emergency preparedness that serves the entire nation, and

WHEREAS, conservative political leaders, Big Pharma and the private healthcare industry have attacked VA health care by trying to privatize and outsource medical and mental healthcare services while ensuring that the VA is underfunded and understaffed, passing legislation to accomplish these goals by increasing the portion of the VA’s budget used to pay outside providers and thus reducing VA funds for its own inhouse healthcare programs and services, and

WHEREAS, this effort treats veterans as pawns in a larger effort to privatize healthcare, and

WHEREAS, progressive veterans’ organizations, the VA unions (American Federation of Government Employees and National Nurses United), and other organizations, are fighting to prevent further privatization and protect healthcare available through the VA,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the National Lawyers Guild condemns government and private industry efforts to outsource and privatize VA healthcare (and consequently reduce the staffing and funds available for direct VA healthcare), and condemns the privatization of Medicare through ACO REACH and Medicare Advantage, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Guild condemns these efforts as part of a broader attack on public health care, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Guild, through its Military Law Task Force, International Committee, and Environmental Justice Committee, will seek to educate Guild members, committees and other entities, as well as Guild allies and the public, about these issues and encourage them to take part in the national campaigns to stop health care privatization.

IMPLEMENTATION by the NLG Military Law Task Force, International Committee and Environmental Justice Committee

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RESOLUTION TO COMMEMORATE 75 YEARS OF NAKBA AND RECTIFY NLG HISTORY ON PALESTINE

Submitted by: Charlotte Kates and Suzanne Adely

Whereas, in 1948, 75 years ago, Palestine was cleansed of, at least, 75% of its indigenous Arab Palestinian population, in an on-going genocide, by Zionist forces seeking to establish the exclusivist colonial-settler state of Israel, an event known as al-Nakba (the Catastrophe) among Arab Palestinians; this took place through a deliberate, planned and militarily executed policy of the expulsion of over 800,000 Palestinians from their homes, lands, and properties in 78% of historic Palestine, the attempted destruction of Palestinian national identity and culture, and the imposition of military rule over the vast majority of historic Palestine, and over the objections and without the consent of the indigenous Arab people of Palestine, and

Whereas, the Nakba was followed in 1967 by al-Naksa, when the remaining 22% of historic Palestine, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai, were placed under Israeli military occupation, in an aggressive military assault which resulted in another wave of Palestinian refugees, with arms and materiel support by the United States, and

Whereas, a 1948 National Lawyers Guild resolution expressly supported the Zionist forces, including, the Zionist militia, the Haganah, by seeking to: “allow the shipment of arms to those [Zionist] forces within and without Palestine” and “equip Haganah and other recognized co-operating forces...to defend the Jewish State and help implement the partition plan.” This 1948 resolution also reveals the NLG “sent a delegation to the UN Security Council to...declare the actions of the Arab states a threat to peace” and “demand Britain [hand over their] strategic positions” to “local [Zionist] militia...to prevent Arab infiltration of men and arms into Palestine.”

Whereas, this 1948 NLG resolution sought to permit U.S. based Zionists to travel to Palestine to fight with Zionist forces against the indigenous Palestinian Arab population. The NLG adopted a further resolution in 1950, buttressing its 1948 resolution by “deploring US policy to prohibit arms sales to Israel,” and

Whereas, in the ensuing years, the National Lawyers Guild, due to the efforts of its Arab and Palestinian members, as well as many people of conscience of all backgrounds in the Guild, has engaged in significant work to expose, challenge and confront the occupation of Palestine and U.S. support for Israeli occupation and Zionism, and

Whereas, in 1977, Abdeen Jabara led the first NLG delegation to Palestine, Syria, and Jordan, which issued a groundbreaking report for its time highlighting the human rights violations targeting the Palestinian Arab population, and

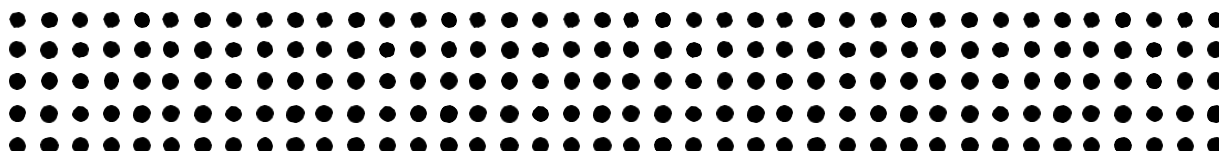
Whereas, in 2001, the NLG again issued another significant human rights report on occupied Palestine, becoming one of the first Western legal organizations to use the term “apartheid” to describe the Israeli regime, in the same year as the Durban Conference Against Racism widely publicized this description and legal analysis, and

Whereas, in 2007, the NLG adopted a resolution in support of boycott and divestment from Israel, as well as its updated resolution in support of boycott, divestment and sanctions in 2019, and

Whereas, the NLG has now established a policy of clearly and unequivocally condemning Israeli state and colonial violence against the Palestinian people from Gaza to Jerusalem, in the West Bank and throughout historical Palestine and escalating our pursuit for legal accountability for Israeli colonial violence, ethnic cleansing, ongoing war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the crime of apartheid, in our global and local legal institutions, and

Whereas, the NLG has clear positions on upholding the right to return for Palestinian refugees, demanding the liberation of all Palestinian political prisoners, affirming and protecting the legal right of Palestinians to resist the colonizing power that seeks to annihilate them, defending the Palestinian community under attack in the United States, and demanding an end to U.S. aid to Israel,

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Lawyers Guild apologizes unconditionally to the Arab Palestinian people,



.....

Nakba survivors, and all victims of Zionist colonization in Palestine for the NLG's support for Al-Nakba and the illegal occupation of Palestine in 1948 by actively seeking to arm and support Zionist forces in 1948 and 1950, and

Be it further resolved, that the NLG officially rescinds the 1948 and 1950 resolutions mentioned herein, and

Be it further resolved, that the NLG will officially commemorate al-Nakba each year on May 15, through statements and actions, and

Be it finally resolved, that the NLG will fulfill its commitments above through active engagement with Palestinian communities and the Palestine solidarity movement in the United States, in occupied Palestine and internationally, for the liberation of Palestine and its people from the river to the sea.

Implementation of this resolution will be undertaken by the International Committee, which consents to this.

STOP COP CITY STATEMENT

Kamau Franklin of Community Movement Builders said, "The Stop Cop City Movement will not be intimidated by continued false charges & we will not be criminalized. Our movement is broad, our tactics diverse and our aim is to continue to fight police and state terror and protect our comrades."

The indictment does not attempt to hide its political motivations. It dedicates nearly five pages to demonizing "anarchism," followed by three further pages aiming to criminalize the entire national and local movement against police violence and racism. Despite recognizing the reality that the movement to stop Cop City has diverse support from many movements, the indictment declares that "the group shares a unified opposition to the construction of the Atlanta Police Department Training

Facility" in an attempt to establish shared political commitment as an element of racketeering.

In fact, the text of the indictment generally does nothing more than describe a popular campaign to resist the creation of a militarized policing facility in a local forest in Atlanta. It is not criminal to raise money to support protests, to spend money on demonstrations and supplies, to have a political ideology or viewpoint, to run social media accounts or host websites, to write articles about policing, to reject capitalism or to object to the harmful use of private property. These actions are the basis of every successful social movement – and it is, therefore, every social movement in place now and every future movement being targeted by Georgia's state repression.



BOOK REVIEW

Becoming Abolitionists: Police, Protests, and the Pursuit of Freedom, Derecka Purnell, 2021

Ria Thompson-Washington (they/she/elle) is an anti-racist activist, Afro-Latine, nonbinary Queer feminist living on unceded Nacotchtank known as Washington, DC.

They have spent the last twenty years, organizing and training Black and Latine people working on various campaigns in the Labor movement to Occupy Wall Street, and more recently, providing legal support to the Movement for Black Lives.

This year as part of my observance of Black August, I read “Becoming Abolitionists: Police, Protests, and the Pursuit of Freedom” by Derecka Purnell (2021). I read this book because as an abolitionist and an organizer, I am always looking for ways to make the conversation about abolition accessible to people who haven’t been to law school or aren’t in movement circles. Derecka did not disappoint: she reminded me that the conversation about abolition is about redistributing resources, mutual aid, and dreams—this book should be required reading for first-year law students. I resonated with her story of how she arrived at abolition through a series of circumstances where perceivably, justice was just out of reach.

I, too, went to law school thinking that it would teach me how to share access to the justice I had never had the opportunity to experience in my own life. In 2005, my apartment in San Antonio, Texas was raided by police who suspected me of dealing drugs. I was a full-time organizer and touring poet who smoked a lot of weed—I never sold drugs. Nonetheless when my house was raided, and I was charged with possession, I thought that the truth would protect me—it did not. In chasing justice, I ended up in law school, because I felt that the law would be a valuable tool to add to my organizer’s toolbox. And I guess, in a manner of speaking it was; but not because I found justice in the courtroom.

In 2015, I joined the National Lawyers Guild as a law student member, it was the year that the Guild adopted a resolution to abolish police and prisons, and it was the first time I had heard of abolition outside of a conversation including Frederick Douglass. It had never occurred to me before then that “we, the people” could materially change the conditions of our society by abolishing police, prisons, and the prison industrial complex. The Guild had provided, for me, a place to dream about what a world we could build if we abolished the police. It’s where I found a place to build

the future through mass defense training and Movement legal support. As a young activist, no one shared with me the tools that I now have access to, so I feel compelled to share them with the next generation of activists who will need them.

Over the last eight years, I have served the Guild in many capacities: I am a member of the DC NLG chapter, where I am a legal observer, coordinator, trainer, and on the Executive Board. I have served on the Executive Council (EC) of the NLG as executive vice president (2016-2019) and as senior co-chair of The United People of Color Caucus (2021-2023) where I led the campaign to change the NLG constitution to add a permanent TUPOCC seat to the EC. I am an active member of the Mass Defense Steering Committee, as well as the Queer Caucus and the Legal Worker Caucus. In 2021, I was awarded Legal Worker of the Year by the National Executive Committee (NEC) for my work training hundreds of legal observers across the country during the Uprisings of 2020 that erupted after the murder of George Floyd and Hulu made a short documentary about my work as a legal support organizer and trainer.

It is with great joy that I declare the intention for my next act of service to the National Lawyers Guild will be to serve as its President (2025-2028), and it is with this pledge that I announce my candidacy.



Photo credit: Peter Aehl. Photo of Ria at the Yes4MN Campaign Launch in 2021 (Black-led coalition campaign to replace Minneapolis Police Department with a Department of Public Safety)



(reprinted from the Massachusetts Chapter Mass Dissent newsletter)

CLIMATE ACTIVISTS SUPPORTED BY MASS DEFENSE COMMITTEE



09/18/2023

by Jeff Feuer

The past eight years were the warmest on record globally, fueled by ever-rising greenhouse gas concentrations and accumulated heat, according to the World Meteorological Organization, and 2023 will be the Earth's hottest year on record, according to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and NASA. We are right now on the verge of extinction level events due to man-made climate change. Massachusetts climate activists have been at the forefront of campaigns to force our state and local governments and corporations to take action to address this crisis and the Guild's Mass Defense Committee (MDC) has been right there with them, providing critical legal support and representation.

Over the past several years, Extinction Rebellion Boston (XR), with the aid and assistance of like-minded Massachusetts community groups, including Climate Defiance, Scientist Rebellion, 350 Mass., the Sunrise Movement, Green Roots Chelsea, Fridays for Future, Third Act, Climate Courage, Poor People's Campaign, Boston May Day Coalition, Fore River Residents Against the Compressor Station (FRRACS), Red Rebel Brigade of Boston, Our Revolution Mass Climate Working Group, Elders Climate Action, and community members from communities including East Boston, Dudley, Weymouth, Chelsea West Roxbury, and Cambridge (among others) have engaged in numerous Direct Action events designed to raise the consciousness of government policymakers, corporate executives and the general public about the climate crisis.

The Guild has provided Direct Action training and trained Legal Observers™ for many of these non-violent actions, and when the police have arrested demonstrators, the Guild's Mass Defense Committee has been there to provide pro bono legal representation for the activists every single time.

Extinction Rebellion Boston has been particularly active in the last 2 years. On May 10th, 9 climate activists from Extinction Rebellion Boston (XR) and Scientist Rebellion SR were arrested in the House Chamber of the Massachusetts State House. A group of non-violent activists disrupted a joint session of the House and Senate

by reading from a list of demands, chanting, and preventing the legislators from proceeding with their planned session. The activists were arrested for holding up a cloth banner reading "No New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure".

Extinction Rebellion had previously staged a sit-in at the Governor's office this past February, calling on Governor Healey and Climate Chief Hoffer to publicly commit to not building or completing any new fossil fuel infrastructure in Massachusetts. As a result of this action, Hoffer met with the activists and agreed to consider their demands. Last September, 15 XR rebels were arrested while disrupting traffic across the city in an effort to draw attention to their "No New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure" demand. In December, 10 XR activists were arrested after blocking access to a private jet company at Hanscom Airfield, while publicizing the fact the private aircraft of the rich and powerful are one of the biggest polluters in the country. XR activists also helped organize last year's Global Climate Strike March.

In March, XR held a "Die-In" held near Fenway Park that blocked streets for 20 minutes to demonstrate against Earth's rapid biodiversity loss due to man-made climate change (over 1,600,000 species of animals and plants have become extinct since 1990). At that demonstration, one XR rebel delivered a moving speech:

"We are taking action on behalf of all the species endangered by extinction. We are taking action on behalf of humanity — also threatened by extinction. We are taking action on behalf of women and non-binary individuals. Existing vulnerabilities and injustices are worsened by the climate crisis. We are taking action in solidarity with the people of the global South who are producing the least harm and yet suffer the worst impacts."

In June, climate activists from the local community and XR Boston continued their ongoing protests concerning the Eversource East Boston electrical substation, being built in a flood plain and residential neighborhood. Four activists trespassed onto the construction site, climbing over the site's chain link fence, and set up a picnic with picnic blankets spray-painted with "No Eastie Substation." Activists disrupted construction while demonstrating what the site was originally supposed to be, a green space for the community.



Whenever the authorities have reacted to these non-violent, non-destructive demonstrations by arresting the activists (which is often), Mass Defense Committee members,

As the importance of supporting activists who are fighting to save our planet cannot be overstated, the MDC is proud of the work that we have done with Extinction Rebellion and similar groups. We hope that other members of the Guild community will be energized to join us in this work, as we need more lawyers to engage in this struggle.

By Justice Gatson

Ryan was shot and killed on July 28, 2013, by Officer William Thompson. Officer Thompson shot Ryan within 7-10 seconds of seeing him. Ryan was unarmed and posed no threat when he was killed yet the police attempted to cover up their mistake by initiating a false narrative of events. They disparaged Ryan's good name and were even awarded commendations for killing Ryan. Eventually, those commendations were rescinded, once it was uncovered that false information had been given to obtain them. The family's attorney filed a lawsuit on behalf of Ryan's mother and young daughter. Although the investigation showed that Ryan was unarmed and no other officer saw him with a gun, the court ruled that "Officer Thompson's use of deadly force was reasonable. U.S. District Court Judge, for the Western District of Missouri, Brian C. Wimes ruled that Thompson's belief that Stokes had a gun, even though it was proven to be false, and that he intended to use the gun for "ambushing the pursuing officers" justified his use of deadly force.

It didn't matter that Ryan didn't have a gun at all. What mattered was Officer Thompson's "belief" whether real

One might ask, if things are that bad with the Kansas City police department. The answer would be an astounding, YES.

Not only is Kansas City's police budget bigger, there are more officers on duty in comparison to other departments. In 2021 KC had 1286 officers on the force which is more

Narene Crosby, Ryan's mother created the "Ryan Stokes Speaking Truth To Injustice ", a grassroots organization in order to advocate for her son. On Friday, August 4th, 2023, Narene Crosby, working with Reale Justice Network, Operation Liberation, MO Justice, the KC National Lawyers Guild and other organizations in the state of Missouri announced the launch of a campaign to end Qualified Immunity. It is an unfair practice that must end. In addition to prohibiting the defense of qualified immunity, we are pushing to revoke an officer's certifications and ban them from policing jobs. Also, cops who fail to intervene when colleagues use excessive force can also lose their badges and officers must be responsible for their own liability insurance. We stand in solidarity with the family and our partners in this work.

WHO IS OUR WORK FOR? CENTERING CLIENTS IN IMPACT LITIGATION

.....
Alyssa Meurer

Thanks to the National Lawyers' Guild's Haywood Burns Memorial Fellowship, I spent my summer at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area (LCCRSF). LCCRSF is a longstanding non-profit organization created to connect attorneys with the Civil Rights Movement. I am incredibly grateful for the experience engaging in important plaintiff-side impact litigation with the Racial Justice team. Along with the substantive knowledge about litigation and client communications that I gained this summer, this experience has left me reflecting on my role as an advocate and a changemaker in the legal system.

In law school, we review scores of Supreme Court cases, discussing the merits of the legal arguments (on both sides, of course) and the impact that each holding will have on future legal strategies. The key aspect that is missing from these discussions—in almost every course—is litigation's impact on the plaintiffs, those whose harms live on through the names of the cases we throw around in class. From start to finish, Supreme Court cases can take years, even decades, while plaintiffs are forced to relive their harms and have their lives scrutinized and their experiences minimized by lofty attorneys and judges. Further, as litigants, our efforts refining legal arguments and searching for a place to fit our clients' stories in the universe of previous cases overshadow the most important aspect of our work as service providers: we are here to represent our clients and remedy their harm.

Being a plaintiff in an impact suit is incredibly difficult. While we legal workers can close our laptops and shake off our work at the end of the day, our clients can face continual resistance, retribution, and retaliation from the powers that be just for their participation in legal action. As attorneys, we build our careers on fighting harm and misfortune, and there is a tension between our goal of remedying those harms and the harms imposed by the legal system itself. The procedures of the court, its tight deadlines, and the many rules of candor and "professionalism" make the courtroom an intimidating place, especially for those who have been historically pushed away from white, elite spaces. Our clients put their lives, their reputation, and their chance at fair treatment on the line for these efforts. No matter how much we may warn our clients at the outset of a legal challenge—and we certainly should—keeping our clients' needs and sacrifices in mind as we trudge through our litigation may help us put our larger goal into perspective.

Regular communication with clients in the confines of litigation's tight turnarounds is difficult. Our unhoused clients at LCCRSF faced additional barriers, including regular displacement and inconsistent access to cell phone coverage. The short timeline for drafting and filing briefs in this environment does not accommodate these challenges. Moreover, beyond taking extra time and care to reach out to our clients regularly, it was essential for us to meet our clients' immediate needs to help them participate more fully in our advocacy efforts. At

LCCRSF, we strategized more comprehensive legal services, including supplying communication devices, partnering with social workers to connect clients with necessary resources, and reaching out to check in with our clients regularly, even on days when we did not have urgent business to take care of. These strategies were aimed at strengthening the trust between us and our clients, understanding them as people beyond their plaintiff status, and allowing them to have more mental energy and time to contribute to our litigation.

Impact litigation sometimes feels like it is a race to nowhere. Accountability is rare, battles are long, and compliance often has to be monitored for years. Meanwhile, the clients' harm is renewed and repeated. For our unhoused clients in particular, I saw the contradiction of engaging in drawn-out fights to force a city government's policies to simply follow the Constitution while our clients were in immediate need of material support. Checking in with clients about interrogatories or other discovery materials felt disjointed with their actual experiences, as we were getting deep in the weeds of a case that would only incrementally change their material conditions.

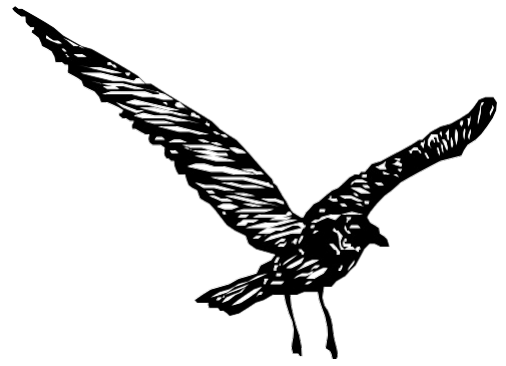
I leave my summer wondering if litigation can even be movement lawyering. Though we can achieve some positive outcomes, these battles are hard-fought and the wins are extremely limited. Further, one of the key tenets of movement lawyering is having impacted people in the driver's seat, speaking truth to their own experiences; yet, in the courtroom, attorneys take the microphone. To ensure the best outcome for our clients, we choose the most experienced litigators, those most well-versed in the language of courtrooms yet most removed from the experiences of our clients. This is a deep flaw in our legal system, that we must revere the status quo and speak to the elitism of the law to get a fair chance at relief.

Legal workers in the movement must be very intentional about our relationships with our clients. Clients who are particularly marginalized from the court system may need additional resources, time, or technical support, both on the front end and during the litigation. Though attorneys are granted full control over the means to our client's ends, inviting clients to strategy meetings and welcoming their full participation in the discovery process may be useful for our litigation. Our clients are the closest to the issues we are fighting, and their creativity can contribute to the team. Indeed, one of my clients this summer asked a question that led to our filing of a discovery request to advance a new advocacy strategy.

Movement lawyering can be a powerful instrument for social betterment, but this field of work requires constant reflection of our roles as counselors and advocates and how we may better center the needs and wishes of our clients. Our goal is to better the world, and the steps we take to get there are just as important as the outcome.

BEYOND BARS

Voices of NLG Jailhouse Lawyers



“At Its Roots”

by E.C. Theus-Roberts
Pendleton, IN

Organizations and universities in states like CA, AZ, and NY have done studies examining root causes of crime such as poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, family breakdown, education, among others. While most so-called root causes of criminality and incarceration are secondary effects, like anger. Without exception, every study I reviewed found education to be a true root causation. For centuries it has been recognized as a primary motive force in economic and social mobility. Beyond making upward mobility possible, education is the “great equalizer” to quote Horace Mann and highlighted in the historic *Brown v School Board* Supreme Court decision. Its importance in our time cannot be overstated.

Studies have found that more than half of all dropouts are unemployed. Many turn to illicit activities leading to involvement in the criminal justice system and incarceration. In part, explaining why some 65 percent of all imprisoned never graduated - dropouts accounting for 41 percent, the remaining represented in general equivalency diplomas (G.E.D.’s). Such a large concentration of under-educated persons is no coincidence. The education-economic viability -crime nexus is further validated by studies showing, on average, 40 percent lower median incomes for non-graduate convicts prior to incarceration in comparison to contemporaries who graduated.

Lack of education is a mountain of a stumbling block in today’s society. Add the credentials of a criminal record which decreases employability by 30 percent. Also, the fact that almost every career with a sustaining salary requires a college degree. This translates to a vicious cycle wherein non-grads recidivate above the national average of 60 percent. Legislators and government officials, both state and federal, are aware of this. The reason why states like NY allocated seven million dollars for college-level courses in state prisons. Why CA Dept. of Correction and Rehabilitation teaches prisoners coding. And why

CO’s Dept. of Corrections teamed up with Denver University’s Prison Arts Initiative. Call it a nascent “smart on crime” revolution. ‘Nascent’ because many states, including those noted here, and the federal government, still view prisoner education, like penal reform, in “non, non, nons” terms. Marie Gottschalk’s term underlines who benefits from penal/criminal justice reforms - non-serious, non-violent, non-sexual offenders. Besides this “non, non, nons” prejudice, both criminal justice systems and Penal Institution labor under iterations of William Barr’s “incapacitative model of crime reduction” from the early 1990s and a bedrock conviction toward the “categorical criminal”. Meaning only 35 percent of state prisons host college level academics, barely 6 percent of the entire captive population has access. Such limited reach while exponentially expanding counterproductive punitive measures in our retributive system guarantees all rehabilitation initiatives suffocate and fail or have negligible impact.

Politicians and prisoncrats are lauded for being “open-minded”, “innovative”, or “humane”. Certainly, receptivity and willingness are laudable, but lack of wholehearted commitment means no non-punitive-based effort bears fruit. Considering participation in any education program, according to RAND Corporation, reduces likelihood of recidivism by 43 percent. We should question confidence in perennially failing punitive responses over education-based rehabilitation initiatives more closely. Perhaps the, at times, almost bellicose opposition to educative responses by carceral proponents has a simple explanation. To quote Clay Shirkey, “Institutions will try to perpetuate the problems to which they are the solution”.

When better education results mean less criminality and diminishing crime decreases the necessity of reliance on imprisonment, the obvious outcome will be that the Penal Institution becomes a footnote in achieving meaningful public safety and prosperity, not the central hypotheses.

BEYOND BARS

Voices of NLG Jailhouse Lawyers



As it Concerns The Quiet Majority

by E.C. Theus-Roberts

Pendleton, IN

For a brief moment let us pretend that jails, prisons, detention centers, race-based oppression, policing, and legislation have finally been abolished. In other words, the PIC is no more. How much celebration, joy, and elation would this provoke? How gratifying would it be to say we abolished the PIC in its entirety?

The prospect must give you goosebumps and anticipation of its eventuality is a heady feeling. Unfortunately, this is only a fantasy. We are not on the cusp of victory, not yet. The road traveled thus far has been a very long, difficult one, full of passions, expectations, griefs and copious disappointments. Though, the goal is within sight. With events in Ferguson, MO those inside of CA prisons, the advancements in state and federal courts regarding prisoner rights are only a sliver of changes wrought within US borders. Coupled with all that is happening in Egypt, Iran, Palestine, throughout the Middle East, and all over Latin America it would appear our goal is, or at least should be, within reach.

Yet, it's not close at hand and not from any lack of organizations like the NLG, Justice Now, Critical Resistance, and numerous others. Nor is it the fault of individual activists, reform efforts, or protests. Despite self-sacrifice, inexhaustible commitment, and renewed determination, success has been slow-coming and the PIC is still thriving, barely diminished at all.

In every movement there comes a time when those who stand to benefit from the ends sought must take up the struggle in mass. In Cuba, as in most places, slavery was not abolished until those enslaved became the active majority. In the US, women's suffrage did not budge until the average woman took up the struggle; the same held true for the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Nothing changes, regardless of how much individual pockets or singular groups strive, unless the majority becomes the most active, most vocal, and most discontent section.

Prisoners must push in numbers and become that majority. Such is the critical time, the pivotal moment which confronts every movement, the abolition movement is no different. In fact, it may be even more imperative than in any other social movement before or after.

What can provide proofs beyond mere statistics? Who else can put a face to the pains suffered at the hands of the PIC and its administrators? Who else can reach the hearts and minds of the public? Who else besides the survivors and victims of the PIC?

Abolition becomes unavoidable when you no longer deal with figures and numbers but people and their ruined lives. Is it possible for prisoncrats to turn a blind eye and deaf ear to the PICs consequences when it's staring them in the face and speaking about the devastation suffered? The answer is yes, but only if they remain a quiet majority. If they are vocal they cannot be ignored or excused away.

What remains to be done? The answer is simple, the subsequent work not. We must build up prisoner activism and increase prisoner involvement. Those who stand to gain the most by abolishing an oppressive, systematically corrupt, and broken system of "justice" must be at the forefront. Prisoners cannot sit back and wait for others to win the struggle for them. They must become active in the pursuit and affect the necessary change(s). Our goal should be not only to pull the rug from under an injustice based PIC but also to involve those whose input and experience is most important. To abolish the PIC and all its iterations prisoners must be engaged and on a high level, exposing the truth of the PIC and helping to ensure a similar travesty is never instituted again.



We wanted to provide information for how to subscribe to a few other publications that may be of interest to those incarcerated. If you happen to know of any that are in alignment with the values of NLG that would be valuable to share with others, let us know! In addition to the ones listed here, we are including information about the Jailhouse Lawyers Manual on the following pages, being that many ask about resources for criminal law and the Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook only provides information for civil law. Please note, the JLM is not a publication of the NLG.

NEWS INSIDE

is a free, award winning publication which is a compilation of criminal justice news from the Marshall Project (a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization that seeks to create and sustain a sense of national urgency about the U.S. criminal justice system). It is produced by Marshall Project editors and writers along with incarcerated contributors.

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THE ABOLITIONIST

is a bilingual (English/Spanish) publication dedicated to the strategy and struggle of abolition which was launched in 2004 by Critical Resistance, a national organization which seeks to build an international movement to end the prison industrial complex by challenging the belief that caging and controlling people makes us safe. It is free to prisoners and is supported by paid subscribers on the outside.

Two times per year, Critical Resistance prints different issues of The Abolitionist, exploring a range of topics. From analyses of racial capitalism and imperialism, to housing, education, land struggles, mental health, confronting gender violence, fights to build life-affirming infrastructure for community self-determination and more, each issue is packed with fresh analytical articles, reflections, poetry, visual art, and organizing resources and tools for resistance inside and outside of prisons

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE JAILHOUSE LAWYERS MANUAL

FULL TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE LATEST JAILHOUSE LAWYERS MANUAL

Chapter 1: How to Use the JLM

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Chapter 18: Your Rights At Prison Disciplinary Proceedings

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Chapter 20: Using Article 440 of the NY Criminal Procedure Law to Attack Your Unfair Conviction or Illegal Sentence

Chapter 21: State Habeas Corpus: Florida, New York, and Michigan

Chapter 22: How to Challenge Administrative Decisions Using Article 78 of NY Civil Practice

Chapter 23: Your Right to Adequate Medical Care

Chapter 24: Your Right to be Free from Assault by Prison Guards & Other Incarcerated People

Chapter 25: Your Right to be Free from Illegal Body Searches

Chapter 26: Infectious Diseases: AIDS, Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, and MRSA in Prison

Chapter 27: Religious Freedom in Prison

Chapter 28: Rights of Incarcerated People with Disabilities

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Chapter 30: Special Information for LGBTQ Incarcerated People

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Chapter 33: Rights of Incarcerated Parents

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Chapter 35: Getting Out Early: Conditional and Early Release

Chapter 36: Special Considerations for Sex Offenders

Chapter 37: Rights Upon Release

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Chapter 39: Temporary Release Programs

Chapter 40: Plea Bargaining

Chapter 41: Special Issues of Incarcerated Women

A JAILHOUSE LAWYER'S MANUAL (JLM)/COLUMBIA HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW (HRLR)

JLM ORDER INSTRUCTIONS AND ORDER FORM

JLM CONTACT INFORMATION

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW 435 WEST 116TH STREET / NEW YORK, NY 10027

JLM.BOARD.MAIL@GMAIL.COM • WEBSITE: JLM.LAW.COLUMBIA.EDU

What publications are available?

The Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual offers four publications designed to explain the legal rights of incarcerated people and help incarcerated people navigate the justice system to secure those rights. All of our publications are softcover books that are stamped "direct from publisher" when shipped. Due to institutional restrictions, we cannot offer any materials from other sources or publishers.

A Jailhouse Lawyer's Manual, 12th Edition (2020)—The main volume of the JLM is a book containing basic self-help litigation information, including information on conducting legal research, seeking legal representation, choosing a court, and filing a lawsuit. The main JLM, which is over 1,400 pages, also contains specific chapters on habeas corpus, parole, DNA, the Prison Litigation Reform Act, religious freedom in prison, infectious diseases, mental disabilities, the rights of LGBT prisoners, and more. The JLM does NOT contain information on substantive law (such as the elements of crimes or degrees of a crime). It covers both federal and state law, with an emphasis on New York State law. JLM Louisiana State Supplement (2018)—The Louisiana State Supplement is a 387-page supplement to the main JLM, containing information specific to incarcerated people navigating the justice process in

Louisiana courts and institutions. JLM Immigration & Consular Access Supplement (2018)—The Immigration & Consular Access Supplement is a 110-page supplement to the main JLM containing information about the immigration consequences of criminal convictions for people who are not U.S. citizens, as well as information about the right of non-U.S. citizens to access their countries' consulates. JLM Texas Supplement (2013)—The Texas Supplement is a 392-page supplement to the main JLM containing information specific to incarcerated people navigating the justice process in Texas courts and institutions.

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