

# No private prisons: Our resistance to modern day slavery

In Wellington on Tuesday July 28th, before the Law & Order Select Committee, prisoners declared that privatisation was totally unacceptable, affecting their status as citizens in a democracy. "It would reduce us to slaves in breach of ILO Convention 29, passing control of our lives to unaccountable multinationals" said Justice Action spokesman Brett Collins. Justice Action is an Australian group that travelled to New Zealand specifically to give evidence in the hearing.

Former prisoners were among a range of groups voicing their opposition to the National government's plan to privatise the country's prisons. Other groups making submissions included the Movement for Alternatives to Prisons, the Howard League for Penal Reform, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Corrections Association (the union of prison guards).

Corrections Minister Judith Collins shows her lack of fresh ideas to deal with the resounding failure of prisons, by wishing to outsource this primary government function. She misses the point that people only change their behaviour when they are involved, so she can't treat prisoners like they don't exist if she wants to reduce crime. "Crime is a community responsibility" said Justice Action Coordinator Michael Poynder.

Her contempt is clear. She refused the prisoner consultation arranged by community organisations in May saying the prisoners were too busy, had no suitable area or representatives. She refused to notify prisoners that they could write to the Select Committee. She and her staff were too busy to meet the representatives who had consulted about privatisation. Prisoners were denied the chance to address the

Select Committee as no area was made available and the request to sit in Auckland was not read.

"We had significant meetings with other political parties on the issues, and most importantly were able to tell the Select Committee that we had reached agreement with the prison officers that we would work together to confront privatisation and on policy issues affecting OH&S and recidivism. No corporation would want to reduce crime when it affects their future profit" said Michael Poynder another member of Justice Action

The Select Committee heard compelling evidence of privatisation's failure everywhere to deliver on the sales pitch, and the total opposition by all those involved. "Let's hope that the Minister doesn't discover her authority isn't transferable in practice" said Brett Collins, another member of Justice Action.



Kia ora,

This newsletter is from October 15th Solidarity Wellington. We send out irregular updates on the campaign to support the people arrested in the so-called 'anti-terror' raids in Aotearoa (New Zealand) on 15 October 2007, 19 February and 17 April 2008.

There are Solidarity crews working around the country. If you would like to get involved or start your own solidarity crew, email [info@october15thsolidarity.info](mailto:info@october15thsolidarity.info) for more details. You can make a financial donation to the campaign by direct deposits or automatic payments at any Kiwibank. Account name: October 15 Solidarity, Account Number: 38-9007-0239672-000. Please specify if the money is for 'legal defence', for 'arrestee support' or for 'campaign work'. Cheques made out to 'October 15 Solidarity' can be posted to October 15 Solidarity, PO Box 9263, Wellington, New Zealand. If you would like to submit writing, photos, stories, or responses please get in touch!

[info@October15thSolidarity.info](mailto:info@October15thSolidarity.info)

[www.October15thSolidarity.info](http://www.October15thSolidarity.info)

## EXPLOSIVE EXPRESSION

Creative resistance to the State Terror Raids of Oct '07

Art Exhibition and Auction

You are invited to share in a week of events commemorating the 2007 'terror raids' of communities around Aotearoa. We will acknowledge the on-going struggle for justice and celebrate the power of creative resistance. October 15th Solidarity is hosting an art exhibition and auction at Thistle Hall Gallery in Wellington during the week of October 13-18, 2009. The exhibition is an opportunity for discussion and debate about the issues surrounding the raids including the 'war on terrorism', colonisation and resistance. The auction is also an opportunity for the community to support creative resistance and assistance with funds for people affected by the raids. All works for the auction will be listed on the October 15th Solidarity for sale on the night of the auction. You can view an image gallery of the artworks at

<http://october15thsolidarity.info/en/node/520>

Bids can be made by emailing [info@October15thSolidarity.info](mailto:info@October15thSolidarity.info)

## Gala Art Auction

Saturday 17 October 7pm, Thistle Hall

or bid online at [www.October15thSolidarity.info](http://www.October15thSolidarity.info)

### WEEK OF EVENTS:

**Tues 13 Oct, 6pm:** Exhibition Opening with Tame Iti at Thistle Hall Gallery.

**Wed 14 Oct, 7:30pm:** A celebration of political music featuring the works of Urs Signer, composer, clarinetist and 'Operation 8' defendant with others at the Adam Concert Room, VUW, Fairlie Terrace.

**Thurs 15 Oct, 7pm:** Film screening of 'Tuhoe: a history of resistance' and short films about the October 15th raids at the New Zealand Film Archive.

**Fri 16 Oct, 6pm:** Meet the artists and hear about their creative resistance at Thistle Hall Gallery.

Exhibition hours Wed-Sat 12-6pm

### COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:

**Sat 17 Oct, 12-4pm:** Political screenprinting workshop at 128 Abel Smith St. Bring ideas and images to turn into works of art

**Sun 18 a, 1-5pm:** Documenting our communities workshop with local filmmakers at Aro Valley Community Hall. Bring along your ideas for film projects and questions about how to bring them to life.

Admission to both workshops is free. Please register by email to: [Info@October15thSolidarity.info](mailto:Info@October15thSolidarity.info) Supported by a grant from:

Wellington City  
creative  
COMMUNITIES nz

### More Artists and supporters wanted!

A wide range of artists are participating in the events and we are still seeking registrations of interest from more artists. Please email [info@October15thSolidarity.info](mailto:info@October15thSolidarity.info) if you would like to contribute a piece to the exhibition and auction. We are also soliciting help with the week's events. If you are interested in getting involved and lending a hand that week we would love to hear from you. Please send us an email to the above address.

Remember the State Terror Raids...

# October 15th Solidarity newsletter

30 July 2009

Campaign update

Issue 14

## Rousing, rebellious and downright rocking:

### David Rovics!



Riot-folk musician David Rovics is headed downunder for a series of rousing, rebellious, and downright rocking shows. Described as the musical voice of the US progressive movement, Rovics has spent most of his time on the road since the mid-90s, playing hundreds of shows every year throughout North America, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Japan. Regularly sharing the stage with the likes of Billy Bragg and the Indigo Girls, Rovics has been called "a great gale of invigorating fresh air." Over a hundred of his uniquely provocative and satirical songs are available for free download via his website - [www.davidrovics.com](http://www.davidrovics.com). There's even something special for the ankle-biters, a full album of Rovics' 'Pirate Songs for Kids' is also available for free download. David Rovics will

make you laugh, he will make you cry, and he will make the revolution irresistible.

In the words of folk music legend Pete Seeger, "Listen to David Rovics."

### DAVID ROVICS - NEW ZEALAND TOUR DATES 2009

Thurs 13 Aug, 8pm - Bailies Bar, 50 Cathedral Square, Christchurch  
Fri 14 Aug, 7.30pm - Riverside Community & Cultural Centre, Motueka  
Sat 15 Aug, 8pm - Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, Wellington (All Ages), playing with the Klezmer Rebs featuring Op 8 defendant Urs Signer  
Sun 16 Aug, 3pm - Newtown Community & Cultural Centre, Wellington (Kids Show!)

Tues 18 Aug, 8pm - Poverty Bay Club, Gisborne  
Wed 19 Aug, 7pm - Mosaic Church, Newton Rd, Mt Maunganui, Tauranga  
Thurs 20 Aug, 8pm - Wine Cellar, St. Kevins Arcade, K Rd, Auckland

## Operation 8 defendant can now visit family

Afiasco was granted a bail variation in the Wellington High Court on July 17 allowing him to travel overseas to visit his family. All defendants have had to hand in their passports after being released from custody in November 2007 and can't leave New Zealand.

The hearing was scheduled to start at 9.30am. However, the Crown prosecutor was nowhere to be seen (a defence lawyer offered to fill the role). Finally, Mr J Webber showed up: "Sorry for being late. I actually thought I was early."

The defendant had applied for a bail variation to allow him to travel overseas to visit his family while on bail. His grandparents are not well, and he wanted to see them. The Crown was still opposed, and

argued that there was a flight risk.

"The variation is opposed but we have almost nothing to say about it" said Webber, who was appearing for Ross Burns (the Crown prosecutor for 'Operation 8'). "The sole reason is because the defendant is a foreign national."

Justice Simon France had already read the affidavits filed for the defence and did not want to hear from the defence lawyer nor from the defendant. Instead he granted the bail variation.

"I'm glad I can visit my family, especially my grandparents, again. It's just a shame that the Crown had to be so difficult about it and waste my time, my lawyer's time and the court's time by not consenting to my request in the first place" said the defendant.

# 'Operation 8' court update: a victory and the next struggle

Original Message

Subject: Help with crossword?

From: Ross Burns <ross.burns@meredithconnell.co.nz>

To: Aaron Pascoe <aaron.pascoe@police.govt.nz>

Aaron,

The legal team are stumped over the Police Association crossword, any chance you can put some resources into it?

best Ross

Subject: Help with crossword?

From: Aaron Pascoe <aaron.pascoe@police.govt.nz>

To: Ross Burns <ross.burns@meredithconnell.co.nz>

Ross

I have all of the AK SIG working on it, Woodcock & Wgtn SIG trying to solve last Months Sodoku, CHCH working with Threat Assessment Group & Rob Gilchrist on a colouring in competition for <5's. Over.

Aaron

Across  
1 First letter in alphabet

Down  
1 Indefinite article

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(material collected by the police relating to the investigation) was given to defendants, this only represents a fraction of the total held by the police. Frequently, police have cited it a compromise to 'police surveillance and investigation techniques' if this material was disclosed to defendants. However, from the perspective of a defendant, it is difficult, if not impossible to defend oneself without knowing the full extent of the information held against you.

This week of pre-trial applications is the first opportunity that the defence will have to shape the case. Up until now, the Crown has largely been defining the terms of the court battle. The depositions hearing—a preliminary hearing to decide if the case should go ahead—in September 2008 was limited to Crown witnesses. Defence lawyers did cross examine some witnesses and made closing submissions on the ridiculous nature of the case. That hearing, however, was really a foregone conclusion given the massive expenditure of police resources and the State's desire to shut down genuine political dissent.

These court proceedings are open to the public and we would welcome supporters during the week. There will be a subsequent week of 'pre-trial' applications starting 14 September in the Auckland High Court.

In other news, many of the defendants have had their personal belongings returned by police after nearly two years. Various police detectives have been making the rounds and returning beloved items to the defendants including tramping gear, notebooks, diaries, personal letters, pictures, books and clothing. When Detective Mark Lewis of the Special Investigation group was asked if he really thought that the people arrested in 'Operation 8' were terrorists, he said, 'I have my opinions, but my opinion doesn't really count here.' Seems even the police don't understand the police.



Starting on Monday 17 August, there will be a week of 'pre-trial' applications by defence lawyers for the Operation 8 accused in the Auckland High Court.

High court judge Justice Lang has suppressed the details of the particular applications to be filed by defendants in the case, however, in broad terms, these applications relate to matters of evidence that the Crown would like to use.

Applications will be made both on behalf of individual defendants and challenges presented on behalf of all of the accused.

On 23 July, defendants won another victory in the long road to freedom when Justice Lang appointed a special counsel (a friend of the court) who will act as an advocate for the defendants. This is a very rare occurrence in New Zealand; the most famous case recently was that of Ahmed Zaoui, the Algerian asylum seeker who was deemed to be a threat to national security. In that case, the Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) said that he was a risk, but would not provide him with the substance of those allegations, nor even a summary of the evidence being held against him.

This special 'friend of the court' is a lawyer who will have access to all of the material from police which has not been disclosed to the defendants, in particular the unredacted (uncensored) versions of the various police affidavits to obtain search warrants. This lawyer will advise all of the lawyers for the accused following his review of this material. While some 30,000 pages of disclosure

# State Terror in Germany and France

## 50 days of Muppet Show - and the phantom dissolves

On July 15, the 50th day of trial against three German activists took place. The three are accused of arson attacks against military vehicles in 2007 and they are also charged with membership in a criminal organisation - the Militant Group ('mg'). The original terrorism charges were dropped before the trial.

The trial, started in September 2008, has been marked by prosecution witnesses lying on the stand. There has also been a revelation that police themselves wrote a magazine article for a discussion about militancy in political activism. The authors called themselves 'The Two from the Muppet Show' and described themselves as having followed the militancy debate both from the inside and the outside. This had led to speculation that the state might have had direct involvement in the 'mg' itself.

The Muppet Show article also contained references to material related to the 'mg' published on the web site of the Federal Criminal Office BKA, which—as was later revealed—at the time was subject to surveillance: the identity of every visitor to the site was recorded by tracing their IP address and retrieving the subscriber details from the internet provider. This practice, dubbed 'home page surveillance,' has since been declared unconstitutional by the courts.

What made day 50 of the trial remarkable is the fact that a few days prior, the latest issue of the underground magazine 'radikal' had been published, containing a lengthy interview with the 'mg'. In the article the 'mg' claimed responsibility for three arson attacks earlier this year (for which no charges have been laid against anyone) and the group announced their disbandment. Moreover, 'mg' denied having anything to do with the incident for which the three people are currently on trial.

This leaves the prosecution in a strange state - based on the statement of an informant who worked for the intelligence service, the prosecution had previously claimed that the three accused were key members of the 'mg' and that their arrest had smashed the group's structure. The spy agency has refused to reveal the identity of the informant but claimed that they were 'reliable and truthful.' The latest development casts doubt on that assurance and leaves very little of the prosecution case.

The interview also adds to the argument of the defence that the 'mg' has never been a group with a defined membership, but rather an umbrella name under which individuals carried out actions. The defence has been trying to prove this point by making several applications in court to have the various communiqués of the 'mg' analysed by experts to prove that they were written by different people. These applications have



Gerry Conlon, pictured above following his release from prison, was one of three men from Belfast, along with Paul Hill and Paddy Armstrong, and an Englishwoman, Carole Richardson, who spent 15 years in jail after police falsified confessions on the Irish Republican Army bombing of a pub in Guildford, south of London. They became known as the Guildford Four.

so far been declined, even at the latest court date, which proceeded with business as usual - the prosecution have so far refused to comment on the 'radikal' interview altogether.

We hope that the three German accused do not end up like the Guildford 4. In late 1974 two bombings occurred in Guildford, England, and four people were arrested and sentenced to life in prison. A year later an IRA active service unit was captured and confessed to the Guildford bombings, police evidence supported their claims. However the Guildford 4 still spent 15 years in prison before their convictions were overturned and they were freed.

The farce of a trial against the 'mg' 3 must be stopped, all the charges must be dropped now!

The banner left reads:  
'Solidarity is a weapon'

It was made in response to the German government's raids and arrests of the 3 members of the 'mg.' The community has supported these arrestees and continued to encourage participation in actions against Germany's military participation in the war in Afghanistan.

## French investigators leave empty handed

On November 11th last year, French Anti-Terrorism Police arrested around twenty people, mostly in Tarnac, a small village in central France. Nine were subsequently accused of "criminal association for the purposes of terrorist activity"—these terrorist actions are centred around the sabotage of train lines.

Very little evidence has been presented against them, but central to the prosecution is their alleged authorship of a book, 'The Coming Insurrection', and their association with what a scare-mongering French government and media have termed an 'ultra-left' or 'anarcho-autonomous movement.'

In an attempt to widen the allegations and accuse the Tarnac defendants of being part of an international terrorist network, three people in Germany were recently summoned to appear as witnesses in the courts of Berlin and Hamburg. The prosecution is trying to establish a link to German activists based on the circumstance that the alleged devices used to disrupt the French trains—so-called hook claws—were similar to those often used by German anti-nuclear protesters. Two of the people summoned to court were charged 10 years ago in connection with disruptions of nuclear cargo trains. However, back then the prosecution went nowhere and the charges were dropped before they even got to court.

Last week, the three German supposed 'witnesses' refused to make statements in court. One of them was found in contempt of court and fined 800 Euro, but the prosecution still didn't get a single statement and the five French police investigators who had travelled to Berlin and Hamburg for the occasion had to return empty handed.

You can read a copy of 'The Coming Insurrection' online at:

<http://tarnac9.wordpress.com/texts/the-coming-insurrection>

