OMNI Newsletter on Bradley Manning #3, February 24, 2013, Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace.  (#1 Dec. 6, 2011; #2 June 29, 2012).

For more on Manning see my Newsletters and Blogs on WikiLeaks (Assange, Manning).  My Blog: It's the War Department  http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

Newsletters on WikiLeaks, Assange, Manning, and related topics: http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

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Courage to Resist Fund
Deserves Medal of Freedom
Whistleblower and Revolutionary
UN Investigator
Misclassified to Justify Torture
Law Professors Protest

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1000 DAYS

Bradley Manning: 1,000 Days in Detention and Secrecy Still Reigns

Ed Pilkington, Guardian UK, February 24, 2013 (from David D)

Pilkington writes: "On Saturday Bradley Manning will mark his 1,000th day imprisoned without trial. In the course of those thousand days...Manning has been on a long and eventful journey."

Protest for Bradley Manning at Obama HQ’s nationwide
8-30-12 to Dick


Dear Dick,

Don't let the Obama campaign ignore Bradley Manning during next week's convention.

As President Obama accepts his party's nomination on September 6th, Pfc. Bradley Manning supporters will gather at his campaign offices across the country to protest the administration's inhumane treatment and secretive prosecution of the accused WikiLeaks whistleblower.

We have to seize upon the media spotlight on the Democratic National Convention and President Obama's nomination in Charlotte to continue to raise America's awareness of Bradley and the administration's unparalleled war on whistleblowers.

Can you attend a protest near you, or chip in $10+ to help us promote the protests with Facebook ads?

RSVP to your nearest Bradley Manning protest on Sept. 6th at Obama 2012 campaign offices nationwide.

-- OR --

Donate $10+ to help us run Facebook ads recruiting Manning supporters to the protests.

Kevin Gosztola will arrive at the DNC to cover events and demonstrations just after covering Bradley's pretrial hearing at Ft. Meade this past week.
Organized by the Bradley Manning Support Network, Afghans For Peace and SF Bay Iraq Veterans Against the War, this protest aims to see demonstrations at Obama 2012 campaign offices nationwide as the president takes the stage in Charlotte to accept his party's nomination.

President Obama has tried to keep a tight lid on Bradley Manning's situation over the last few years of his administration. The immense government secrecy surrounding the investigation of Manning, WikiLeaks and their supporters -- combined with the mainstream media's non-adversarial relationship with the institutions they purport to keep in check -- has left the American public largely in the dark on the subject.

But our efforts have already succeeded in getting more journalists involved in covering this story, and with the court martial expected sometime in January, we need to continue to build momentum behind this trial. Your support of this protest at Obama campaign offices across the country will draw attention to Bradley Manning just as the president is making his case for re-election.

RSVP to your nearest Bradley Manning protest on Sept. 6th at Obama 2012 campaign offices nationwide.

-- OR --

Donate $10+ to help us run Facebook ads recruiting Manning supporters to the protests.

Thank you for your support, from attending protests, to signing petitions, to calling government officials and contributing to our coverage. We couldn't do this without you.

In solidarity,

Brian Sonenstein  Campaign Director,  Firedoglake
NOBEL LAUREATES SPEAK by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Mairead Maguire, Adolfo Peerez Esquivel. The Nation (Dec. 3, 2012), p. 11. Manning is a hero whistleblower who deserves the Noble Peace Prize for revealing the truth about U.S. foreign policy. He has injured nobody. Thus the severe persecution and prosecution of Manning should be denounced by all decent people. (Dick)

“Military Madness and PFC Manning” by Lynn Feinerman

From Tikkun, 7-2-12

Webs of blinding irony are being spun around Private First Class Manning, obscuring the military’s methodical denial of Manning’s constitutionally guaranteed right to a fair trial. Read More http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/military-madness-and-pfc-manning

Bradley Manning's Lawyers Focus on Torturous Holding Conditions, Ed Pilkington, Guardian UK, July 31, RSN

Intro: "Manning's lawyers move to have the 22 charges against him dismissed due to treatment during his detention likened to torture."
Head of Marine Corrections: Bradley Manning’s brig staff violated Navy rules

FORT MEADE, MD -- Head of Marine Corrections Chief Warrant Officer Galaviz today testified in court that Marine staff at the Quantico brig, where WikiLeaks whistle-blower Bradley Manning was held isolated in a 6x8 ft cell for nine months, failed to follow national Marine protocol in several instances. Protocol was not followed fully when it came to determining classification and assignment (C&A), the two main factors dictating restrictions. Also violating Navy policy, Quantico ignored brig psychiatrists’ recommendations to remove PFC Manning from suicide watch, which requires constant monitoring and removal of clothing. CWO Galvaniz described the Prevention-of-Injury (POI) and Suicide Risk statuses upon which PFC Manning remained during his time at Quantico as “invasive” and also acknowledged that being kept on them long-term could cause anxiety.

According to CWO Galaviz, a brig counselor should make a recommendation to the C&A board responsible for determining custody and status, but should not also be a voting member of the board. Quantico’s then-Gunnery Sergeant Blenis earlier testified that he served as both PFC Manning’s brig counselor in making recommendations to the board, as well as senior voting member of the board. Additionally, CWO Galaviz explained that C&A boards at all Marine brigs had been instructed to use a standard DD form to assess a prisoner’s custody and status, and that the form should not be filled out prior to C&A
meetings, so that meeting discussion could dictate the meeting’s decision. In contrast with these instructions, Quantico used not the standard DD form but a local improvised form, which led to more subjective decision-making, and the brig counselor filled out the form and gave his recommendation, in essence his vote, prior to the meeting’s beginning.

Finally, the brig violated Navy rules when it twice failed to remove PFC Manning from Suicide Risk status in accordance with a brig psychiatrist’s recommendation. CWO Galaviz testified that under Navy instructions, Suicide Risk watch should be lifted less than a day after a psychiatrist found it unnecessary. In PFC Bradley Manning’s situation, the brig left him in Suicide Risk status days after his psychiatrist asked he be removed. The second time PFC Manning was asked to remove his clothing, brig commander Barnes argued she was actually using a modified POI watch; however, the higher-ranking CWO Galaviz believed that removal of clothing was essentially the same as suicide watch, and the same protocol should apply.

The Quantico Marine brig staff’s disrespect for psychiatrists’ opinions of PFC Manning’s mental state appeared to be part of a pattern, as the C&A board also went against three psychiatrists’ recommendations in keeping him on POI status. Testimony has revealed that Quantico brig commander ordered that PFC Manning be kept on POI status pending a mental health assessment in March. According to CWO Galaviz, this could have put the C&A board in the position of simply going through the motions.

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**Manning Up: Praise for Manning**

Thu Dec 6, 2012 7:27 am (PST) . Posted by: "david sladky"

http://www.counterpunch.org/2012/12/04/manning-up/
The Just Actions of a ‘Fan of Sunshine’

**Manning Up by RANDALL AMSTER**

Whatever one’s views about his alleged actions, you would need a pretty hard shell not to be moved by the case of Bradley Manning. Hero to some, traitor to others, this diminutive soldier has endured an unprecedented level of mistreatment, languishing in a largely incommunicado pretrial state for more than two years and facing repeated episodes of humiliation and degradation. Compounding this case is Manning’s status as a gay soldier, for which he had experienced repercussions well before gaining international notoriety as a purported Wikileaks source for some of the whistleblowing site’s most damning allegations about governmental and military machinations around the world.

Being accused of revealing the "emperor’s new clothes" is likely to land one in hot water, but Manning’s treatment has crossed all bounds of fairness, decency, and legality. Having
one’s life stripped down (literally) to its most basic functions, being confined in a space barely
the size of a standard bathroom, having to formally ask even for toilet paper while standing at
attention, and getting access to the outdoors for only 20 minutes per day is the sort of thing
that could drive anyone mad. The fact that the military has justified the conditions of
Manning’s confinement by asserting that he was a suicide risk is a specious argument; being
in such a state can cause one to seek any way out, and putting all options on the table is
more a sign of sanity than the opposite.
We can speculate how any of us would hold up in similar circumstances, which hopefully we’ll
never have to find out. But the art and science of breaking down the human spirit is quite well-
developed by now, and the harshness of Manning’s confinement is likely intended as a
warning and deterrent to anyone else even contemplating blowing the whistle on the
architects of empire. It is thus all the more important and impressive that Manning has
endured this brutal captivity — doing so through methods like dancing in his cell, "working
out" with imaginary weights, and making faces at himself in the small mirror on the wall.
Indeed, as Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights observed upon attending
the recent hearing on Manning’s confinement, the testimony Manning gave showed him to be
"dignified, articulate, smart and self-aware…. His incredible sincerity and strength was visible
to all. We are lucky to have people with the courage of Bradley Manning."
Where Manning found this resolve will likely be a subject for biographers someday, but early
signs indicate that the military itself may have ironically contributed to it. From his first days as
a soldier, Manning seemed to be ill-suited for the role, at least in the eyes of some of his
colleagues. In an interview with The Guardian, an anonymous soldier who served with
Manning recalls the situation: "The kid was barely 5ft — he was a runt. And by military
standards and compared with everyone who was around there — he was a runt. By military
standards, 'he's a runt so pick on him', or 'he's crazy — pick on him', or 'he's a faggot — pick
on him.' The guy took it from every side. He couldn’t please anyone. And he tried. He really
did…. A lot of people let him down. He is not the first one they let down and he is not the last
one." If we subscribe to the school of thought that says our scars make us stronger, then
Manning’s early duress may have steeled him for what would come later.
In another irony, Manning’s first post after basic training was at Fort Huachuca in southern
Arizona, where human rights activists would gather annually to demonstrate against the
base’s claim to fame as being the headquarters of U.S. Army military intelligence and the
place where the "torture manuals" for the War on Terror were developed. The nonviolent
protests there specifically addressed cruel treatment of detainees: "We practice nonviolence
at Ft. Huachuca to call for civilian, human-rights centered oversight of all interrogation training
and practice, which must include absolute prohibition of cruel treatment and command
responsibility for any violation of this prohibition." In fact, the history of nonviolent praxis is
replete with examples of people enduring suffering for their principles. Gandhi referred to this
as tapasya, meaning "austere devotion" and often implemented as a willingness to suffer for
one’s beliefs rather than inflict suffering on another.
In the annals of nonviolence, Thoreau’s famed essay "Civil Disobedience" stands out as a
testament to the principled endurance of unjust confinement: "Under a government which
imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison." In his equally celebrated
"Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King, Jr. extols the virtues of myriad activists
for justice "willingly going to jail for conscience’ sake." Perhaps Manning, implicitly if not
outright, was aware of the essence of these teachings when he made the alleged decision to
transgress the hegemon by revealing its secrets. If so he would be in good company, as
validated by the "198 methods of nonviolent action" developed by Gene Sharp and the Albert
Einstein Institution and their inclusion of "disclosing identities of secret agents" among the list.
of tactics — which we can extrapolate to include disclosing damning evidence of the sort that Manning is said to have given to Wikileaks.

Manning may be guilty of revealing state secrets, but that action pales before the state’s guilt in perpetrating atrocities and committing them to secrecy in the first place. In a recent accounting of what these revelations demonstrate, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange catalogues their import:

"The material that Bradley Manning is alleged to have leaked has highlighted astonishing examples of U.S. subversion of the democratic process around the world, systematic evasion of accountability for atrocities and killings, and many other abuses.... the cables show that torture and killing are not isolated events, but the violent manifestations of an aggressive policy of coercion used by the United States in the pursuit of its strategic commercial and political goals around the world."

The implications of this are wide-ranging and eminently clear: whatever privileges of democratic governance and material comfort we enjoy here in the U.S. (and in other privileged nations), they are provided at the expense of innumerable underprivileged others’ democracy and comfort. Perhaps some are content with this bargain, and they will accordingly construct Manning as a traitor. Many others, however, grasp more deeply that such an inherently unequal system is untenable and unjust. Eventually, it entraps even those nominally "privileged" within its confines, turning us all into captives of a sort as the tentacles of inequality and injustice expand their network. Again, Assange, from a recent interview with Democracy Now! in which he considers the digital-age implications:

"I think this tension between power and knowledge is extremely important. So, we’ve all heard the saying that knowledge is power. Well, it’s true. And the mass surveillance and mass interception that is occurring to all of us now who use the internet is also a mass transfer of power from individuals into extremely sophisticated state and private intelligence organizations and their cronies. Now, if that is to be resisted, we must have a transfer of information that is going the other way."

In getting to hear directly from Manning for the first time, we not only learn more about his story and personal qualities, but also come to understand the deeper connections between this small man and the big questions raised by his alleged actions. Intriguingly, Manning’s testimony itself alludes to the basic issues of transparency that determine whether the balance of power will be struck in favor of "the people" or the entrenched "powers that be" in the days ahead. As reported in The Guardian, in his landmark pretrial testimony Manning reflected on the deprivation of natural light during his excessive period of confinement. "I’m a fan of sunshine," he stated. If we care at all about the cause of justice in our world, Bradley Manning’s fortitude should render us all devotees of sunshine...

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