



# THE FREEDOM ARCHIVES



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## RESISTANCE CONSPIRACY CASE FINDING AID

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Collection processed by Leah Humphreys

**Description:** The Resistance Conspiracy Case (RCC) collection contains the materials relating to six white North-American anti-imperialists who were the target of a political prosecution by the United States federal government. It includes the political organizing and solidarity efforts undertaken by the defendants while incarcerated as well as the organized support that was offered to them by their communities on the outside.

**Resistance Conspiracy Case:** From 1983 to 1985 the Armed Resistance Unit, an anti-imperialist clandestine organization, carried out bombings at the National War College at Fort McNair, the Washington Navy Yard Computer Center, and the Washington Navy Yard Officers Club, the Staten Island Federal Building, the Israeli Aircraft Industries Building, the South African consulate, and the offices of the Patrolman's Benevolent Association, causing extensive property damage but injuring no one. These actions were carried out against symbols of US imperialism in response to the foreign aggression of the United States including: the invasion of Grenada; the US role in Nicaraguan arming the Contra army; its support of dictatorships in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras; the colonization of Puerto Rico since 1898; support of the Israeli occupation of Palestine; support of apartheid in South Africa; and police brutality and anti-Black racism in the United States.

Even though there was no direct evidence linking the 6 defendants to the actions carried out by the Armed Resistance Unit, the US government was able to indict the 6 through a political application of RICO conspiracy laws, arguing that the political stance of the defendants formed a “common purpose” with the Armed Resistance Unit, implicating the 6 in the bombings. The government alleged that: “It was the goal of the conspiracy, among others, that the defendants and co-conspirators would seek to influence, change, and protest policies and practices of the United States government concerning various international and domestic matters through the use of violent and illegal means.”

The RCC 6 were longtime activists and supporters of the struggles for civil rights, Black liberation, revolutionary anti-imperialism, and the liberation of women. This support was articulated through an internationalism which advocated for human rights and self-determination for all oppressed nations. Each defendant spent many years in prison, often in isolation and abusive conditions, such as experimental sensory deprivation in the Lexington Control Unit. Throughout their incarceration, they continued to assert their identities as revolutionaries despite the efforts of the US imperialist state to destroy them.

**Emergency Defense Committee:** Coalitions formed by friends and supporters in politically motivated trials to build awareness and create alternative media narratives around the case while supporting the defendants through monetary, emotional, and legal means. These organizations of support demonstrate how a unified

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**People:** Laura Whitehorn, Marilyn Buck, Timothy Blunk, Linda Evans, Alan Berkman, Susan Rosenberg, and Elizabeth Duke

**Supporting Organizations:** Washington Area Committee for Political Prisoners Rights; Emergency to Defend the Human and Legal Rights of Political Prisoners; Committee to Fight Repression; Women Against Imperialism; Out of Control Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners; Freedom Now; Prairie Fire Organizing Committee; National Campaign to Abolish the Lexington Women's Control Unit

**Subjects:** Political Prisoners; Prison; Resistance; Anti-Imperialism; Women

**Keywords:** North American Anti-Imperialist; clandestine, Armed Resistance Unit, international solidarity, Lesbian and Gay Liberation, armed propaganda, May 19<sup>th</sup> Communist Organization, anti-racism, Lexington Control Unit; revolutionary internationalism; Revolutionary Armed Struggle; political repression; women's liberation; Resistance Conspiracy Defense Committee; militancy; Surveillance; Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF); prison conditions; prison abuse; national liberation; self-determination

**Date Range:** 1985 – 1991

**Size:** 71 records (38 digitized)

**Formats:** Monographs, pamphlets, flyers, correspondence, reports, statements, articles, art and audio materials

**Collection Contents:**

**Folder 1: Voices of the Defendants**

**Folder 2: Voices of Supporters**

**Folder 3: Press Coverage**

**Folder 4: Flyers**

**Folder 5: Court Opinion**

**FOLDER 1: VOICES OF THE DEFENDANTS**

**Keywords:** Laura Whitehorn, Marilyn Buck, Timothy Blunk, Linda Evans, Alan Berkman, Susan Rosenberg, Elizabeth Duke

**Description:** Materials created by the RCC 6 while incarcerated. Includes photos; the booklet "Conspiracy of Voices: Poetry, Writings, and Art by the Women of the Resistance Conspiracy Case" and other artworks; correspondence to friends (calling for support and offering updates about the case), statements of various defendants defining their positions; arraignment statements; letter to National Human Rights Campaign for Political Prisoners. There are a series of letters written in solidarity to other political movements and prisoners. Within this folder, there is extensive coverage of the goals of the defendants organizing for while incarcerated:

- attack their indictment and minimize sentences for Alan Berkman and Laura Whitehorn
- expose government repression of revolutionary movements
- counter the narrative of anti-imperialism as "terrorism"
- support struggles for liberation and self-determination
- support all political prisoners and POW's
- struggle for liberation of women and lesbians (in the context of fight against US imperialism)

## **FOLDER 2: VOICES OF SUPPORTERS**

**Keywords:** prison conditions; healthcare; human rights; cancer; anti-colonialism; anti-racism; political prisoners

**Description:** Materials created by the Resistance Conspiracy Defense Committee and other supporters to rally activists in the human rights, solidarity, and left political movements to build a unified political response. These documents often highlight the larger plight of political prisoners in the United States, such as Mumia Abul Jamal and Bashir Hameed. Includes the essay “Trip to Prison: To Those Who Conspire to Resist” by Luís Nieves-Falcón.

Mailings housed in this folder include:

- publications from the Emergency Committee for Political Prisoners
- letters soliciting signatures from supporters
- information about the case and calls to write to the RCC 6

## **FOLDER 3: PRESS COVERAGE**

**Keywords:** isolation; psychological torture; sensory deprivation; Lexington Women’s Prison; Marianna Prison; Oliver North; court; trial; Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); COINTELPRO; criminal justice system; grassroots; underground; Act Up!; women in prison; Alejandrina Torres; Silvia Baraldini

**Description:** Originals and copies of press clippings about the Resistance Conspiracy Case including articles written by the defendants, interviews with the 6, and letters to the editors advocating on their behalf.

- Progressive publications sympathetic to the case: Outside Agitator; Susie Day articles (Sojourner: The Women’s Forum; Resist Newsletter); Breakthrough; off our backs; Hag Rag; CovertAction; On the Issues: The Journal of Substance for Progressive Women; Gay Community News; Village Voice
- Mainstream media coverage: Ann Arbor News; Washington City Paper; The Washington Post; New York Times; The Guardian

## **FOLDER 4: FLYERS**

**Keywords:** Venceremos Brigade; CISPES; Puerto Rican Independence Movement; Anti-War; Civil Rights; anti-Apartheid; anti-Zionism; Central America; Latin America; Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); US Imperialism

**Description:** Materials produced by the Resistance Conspiracy Emergency Defense Committee for publication and dissemination to the wider progressive community. These materials call for activists in related struggles to support the defendants in this case as well as others involved in politically motivated cases to build momentum in the struggle for liberation against US imperialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy. Collection includes pamphlets detailing the political motivations of the defendants and the federal government and other publications with information relating to defendants’ biographies, the histories of revolutionary struggles, and the wider political context.

## **FOLDER 5: COURT OPINION**

**Keywords:** Susan Rosenberg, Timothy Blunk, Legal System, Sekou Odinga, Michael Ratner, Alexis Mansol, international law, Nuremberg Principles, criminal justice system

**Description:** Official court opinion of Judge Frederick Lacey in the case of USA v. Susan Lisa Rosenberg and Timothy Blunk in which he rules to exclude many of the arguments of the defendants by stating:

- A US judge does not have the jurisdiction to judge the crimes of the U.S. government
- All statutes of international law cannot be extended to the level of the individual when in conflict with their own government.
- A government cannot give POW status to one of its own nationals
- Because of their clandestine operations, Armed Resistance does not qualify as conducting warfare according to the Geneva Convention