



SUPPORT
MARIE MASON



FIGHT
THE GREEN SCARE

ABOUT MARIE MASON

Marie Mason is a loving mother of two and a long-time activist in the environmental and labor movements. In March 2008, she was arrested by federal authorities for charges related to two acts of property destruction that occurred in 1999 and 2000; no one was injured in either of them. She accepted a plea bargain in September 2008 and was sentenced on February 5, 2009 to just under 22 years. This is the longest sentence to date for any “Green Scare” prisoner.

ABOUT THE GREEN SCARE

The “Green Scare” is the name given to the recent arrests of animal rights and environmental activists who have been charged with acts of economic sabotage. Federal authorities have sought outrageous sentences (often Life in prison) and have publicly and legally labeled the activists as “terrorists” – despite the fact that no one has been killed or injured in any of the acts.

For More information on Marie and the Green Scare visit:

www.supportmariemason.org

www.freemarie.org

www.greenisthenewred.com




Marie Mason is a 46 year old mother of two. She is an avid community gardener, a musician, a writer, an Earth First! organizer and a volunteer for a free herbal healthcare collective. She also was an extended care assistant at a small Cincinnati school when she was arrested on March 10, 2008 by federal agents. She was charged with involvement with a December, 1999 arson at a Michigan State University genetics laboratory at Agriculture Hall and a January, 2000 arson of logging equipment in Mesick, Michigan. Both arsons were claimed by the Earth Liberation Front.

The burning of MSU's Agriculture Hall was a significant act and one that was bound to be targeted for response as part of the Green Scare repression. As former ELF press officer Craig Rosebraugh explains in *Burning Rage of a Dying Planet*, "Not only was the damage quite significant,... but this was the first time arson had been used to further the cause against genetic engineering (GE) in the US. Furthermore, it was the first time the ELF had taken credit for any GE-related action."

Mason was sentenced on February 5, 2009 in federal court in Lansing, Michigan. She received almost 22 years - the longest sentence of any "Green Scare" prisoner. Her lawyer has said that he will appeal the sentence.

The "Green Scare" is the name given to the recent arrests of animal rights and environmental activists who have been charged with acts of economic sabotage. Federal authorities have sought outrageous sentences (often Life in prison) and have publicly and legally labeled the activists as "terrorists" - despite the fact that no one has been killed or injured in any of the acts. For an intro to the Green Scare, see <http://www.greenisthenewred.com/blog/green-scare/>.

Supporting Marie Mason does not mean agreeing with her acts. It does mean opposing the fear-mongering tactics of the federal government, and the outrageous sentences they have imposed. This is not the same



All hand drawings in this 'zine were made by Marie Mason while she was in jail awaiting sentencing.

as advocating or applauding illegal actions.

Predictably, the media presented the action as an assault on scientific efforts to relieve famine in the so-called developing world. But, as the ELF communiqué plainly stated, MSU's research was funded by the US government and corporations like Monsanto, which then use their considerable power to force such crops on desperate nations. These nations often resist the importation of GE crops and seeds, given their significant risks to human health, cultural identity, biological diversity and ecological integrity.

A long-time environmental, animal rights and social justice organizer, Mason had previously experienced government repression when ELF actions occurred in her community. An easy target for the federal agents in their quest to criminalize dissent, Mason was an identifiable and outspoken critic of genetic engineering and destructive forestry practices.

It is important for the government to realize that when they push communities of resistance with Green Scare tactics that communities push back with solidarity and renewed efforts to make the change we want to see. By supporting our political prisoners, we encourage others to take their place in the struggle.



Poem I (“I am Filled”)

by Marie Mason

August 2008

I am filled with the need to do something sensible
I am filled with the dread of the perceived inevitable
I am fired with the passion of a love unconquerable
I am filled with the poetry that runs a blood river
Deep within me, moving through me
Coming out in ways where I've been wounded.

Excerpts from:

BETWEEN ORWELL AND MCCARTHY: THE CRUCIFIXION OF MARIE MASON

BY HENRY REED



Throughout the Green Scare, environmental and animal liberation activists have been charged with inflated sentences (often Life in prison), and have been publicly and legally labeled “terrorists” — though no one has been hurt in their acts of economic sabotage. The term Green Scare is an allusion to the Red Scare of the ’50s, when Communists were persecuted on the basis of new laws targeting them for their beliefs and not their actions, and creating a climate of panic and hysteria in an attempt to intimidate supporters and sympathizers.

A mother of two, Mason lived and worked in the Detroit area for most of her life. Like the late Earth First! (EF!) organizer, Judi Bari, she was part of a generation of radicals who worked to link the environmental and labor movements, and was jointly active in both EF! and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). It was this alliance which led to the initial success of the anti-globalization movement such as at the 1999 anti-WTO demonstration in Seattle. Mason was an editor of the *Industrial Worker*, the IWW newspaper, and a musician who recorded a neo-folk album, *Not For Profit*, with fellow EF!er Darryl Cherney in 1999. She also worked with numerous political as well as traditional charity groups.

The outrageous sentence Mason received should initiate a rethinking of the strategies for those resisting the Green Scare, as well as those who



advocate economic sabotage as a tactic.

Mason was never offered a full non-cooperating plea agreement by the government, as was the case with many other Green Scare arrestees — allowing them to plea guilty and perform a debriefing about their own actions, without requiring them to implicate other activists. After refusing to cooperate with authorities and name other activists, Mason was eventually offered an 11th hour plea agreement for a sentence in the 15–20 year range. It stipulated only that she confirm statements that her ex-husband, Frank Ambrose, had already made. Both Mason and Ambrose eventually admitted to committing 14 acts of property destruction together.

In the preceding years, Mason and Ambrose had been questioned multiple times by authorities, summoned to grand juries, and forced to surrender DNA evidence; at one point authorities attempted to affix a GPS tracking unit to Mason's car.

In early 2007, however, something happened, and Ambrose became an informant for the FBI. He traveled around the Midwest, spying on activists (including many working in legal groups) and tape-recording their conversations with a concealed wire. He filed for divorce the day that Mason was arrested. While he was on bond, Ambrose circulated emails attempting to entrap even more activists. He was eventually sentenced to nine years in prison (four more than requested by the prosecution), and has offered to give workshops to law enforcement officials about Earth Liberation Front (ELF) organization and security culture.

MASON'S SENTENCE

Mason accepted a plea bargain for 15–20 years, but Chief US District Judge Paul L. Maloney sentenced her to 21 years and 10 months and or-

dered restitution of \$4.1 million to the sites damaged by her acts. Part of Mason's plea agreement stipulated that she had to accept the so-called Terrorism Enhancement designation, which provided for broad discretion in sentencing. John Minock noted that the average sentence for arson in federal court is seven years, while the average sentence for murder is 22 years.

The government claims that the prosecution of Mason and the other Green Scare defendants is not about the suppression of environmental and animal-liberation politics, but a brief glance at these cases shows the State's claim to be hollow. Both the public and legal labeling of these acts as "terrorism," and the long sentences sought, reveal that activists are being punished specifically for their political views and not simply for criminal acts they have committed.

The State is mobilizing all its resources to crush those who oppose capitalism's program to commodify all elements of the natural world, to alter the genetic code of living beings in the search of new sources of profit, and to continue the legacy of colonialism by exploiting the agricultural sector of unindustrialized countries with genetically modified plants. This logic is clear but crazy: as the market seeks to destroy the world, the State will act as its bodyguard to neutralize those who have the audacity to attempt to defend the earth.

SUBTEXT

The market is, in fact, deeply implicated in Mason's actions. Without defending her tactics, it is important to understand the role of capitalism in the exploitation of the natural world, the development of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the reasoning behind the acts of Mason and other ELF members. Opposition to GMO research is not (just) grounded in a defense of the natural code against human interference; it addresses issues of the influence of capitalism on knowledge, imperialism and democracy.

GMO seeds and foods were developed in search of new profits for corporate entities. The scientific establishment is in close alignment with the bureaucratic state, most obviously in State-funded universities like MSU. In these institutions, hard science closely follows the dictates of corporate funding and needs. One does not need to study the power/knowledge theories of philosophers like Michel Foucault to understand what is going on: corporations provide funding for certain kinds of research, and scientists develop knowledge in these areas.

Scientists are some of the least free of all researchers; they are beholden

to the corporate funders. Scientists are workers in the knowledge factory, creating products as directed. And one of their best “products” is an alteration in the genetic code – something created with no democratic oversight or input from the world’s population. A tiny technocratic elite has determined an irreversible fundamental change in the future history of every living creature.

The MSU office that was attacked belonged to a researcher who was receiving money from both Monsanto (an agricultural biotechnology corporation) and USAID (a federal agency) to develop GMOs. Monsanto GMO seeds were being sold to poor farmers overseas; but the plants had been modified not to reproduce seeds, thereby forcing farmers to purchase new seed again every year from Monsanto. This reduced self-sufficiency and depleted seed stock and plant biodiversity. Far from freeing third world nations from poverty, as the GMO advocates claimed, GMO crops were being designed so that industrialized countries could maintain economic dominance over the peripheries, a contemporary form of “imperialism without colonies.”

Mason said at her sentencing that she wanted to “inspire thought and compassion, not fear.” The State in turn treated her as a murderer, when the only thing she killed was corporate profits.

SABOTAGE

Sabotage is not terrorism — at least not to those whose consciousness is free from colonization by the Orwellian State. The ELF’s acts of economic sabotage are specifically intended not to harm living beings.

In the eyes of the State, however, this sabotage — when inspired by environmentalism or animal rights — is now considered terrorism. This has everything to do with politics and little or nothing to do with the risk those actions pose to other humans. The State and Capital have joined hands to crush those who oppose the circulation of capital in its attempts to commodify the most intimate aspects of the world, including the genetic code itself.

MANUFACTURING “TERRORISTS”

There is no organization called the “Earth Liberation Front”; there are only activists who take actions which are claimed for the ELF. Actions can be claimed as ELF if they fall within the simple written guidelines, which were modeled after those of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF). The ELF Press Office website lists them as: 1. To educate the public on the atrocities committed against the environment and all of the species that cohabitate in it. 2. To inflict maximum economic damage to those who profit from the

destruction of the natural environment. 3. To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal — human or non-human.

Although obviously ELF actions are illegal, activists probably did not expect to receive more than a few years for their actions, as they were specifically not directed at harming anyone. However, the companies who trafficked in exploitation of the natural world and animals had other ideas. They mobilized their powerful lobbying mechanisms to insure that the kinds of actions taken by the ELF and ALF were applicable under the new terrorism laws, such as the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act.

After September 11, 2001, government agencies became flush with money to “fight terrorism,” and the bureaucracies needed to show results. What happened was a win-win situation for the corporate exploiters and State apparatchiks. Wielding fistfuls of money, but faced with an embarrassing lack of domestic terrorists (there were only so many gullible Muslim men who could be recruited into fake Al Qaeda cells by undercover FBI agents), the State developed a new strategy: they would produce new terrorist subjects. That is, if no terrorists were available, they would have to be invented.

Accordingly, sabotage became redefined as terrorism. The bureaucrats succeeded in filing their “terrorist” quotas. The exploiters got the State to act as their own free security force. And the eco-saboteurs, who only a few years ago had been dismissed as apolitical vandals, were now the FBI’s Number One Domestic Terrorist Threat in the US.

Every time there is a Green Scare arrest, the defendant must decide several things. Obviously, whether they will stay steadfast to the principles and not rat out their friends is the first decision. But the second is if they will allow a fully legal public support campaign, which usually consists of activities like websites, fundraisers and press releases. The existence of a support campaign is often used against Green Scare activists at their sentencing.

We can see the chain of events: 1. authorities arrest activists who are charged with property damage, declare them to be terrorists, and make outrageous charges against them; 2. other activists defend them on the basis of the false claim that they are terrorists and the outrageous sentences they are threatened with; 3. authorities use the very existence of these sympathizers (which include such organizations such as the National Lawyers Guild, the ACLU and the Civil Liberties Defense Center) to justify the long sentences. You must be treated as a dangerous terrorist because people object to you being classified as a terrorist.

ERODING THE LINE

It seems highly likely that non-cooperating pleas may no longer be extended to Green Scare arrestees. The State seems to be working hard to erase the line between “snitches” and “non-cooperating defendants,” even with those who are already in jail. Daniel McGowan was recently called before a grand jury. If he testified, he would be labeled a snitch, but if he refused, he would be prosecuted for perjury and face up to three years in jail-time which would be added to his existing sentence. The State is now using Grand Juries to punish those who have resisted becoming snitches.

A LAST WORD FROM SENATOR JOE

Before and during her sentencing, the State made much of Mason’s refusal to turn in her fellow activists, as compared to her ex-husband, Frank Ambrose. Ambrose was allowed to go on vacation in Florida before his sentencing. Mason, on the other hand, had her bail revoked months before her sentencing, and the week prior to the date, she was summoned before a grand jury. She refused to cooperate or answer questions; when asked by the FBI if this was the choice she wanted to make, she told them it was “the only choice possible.” At her sentencing, her refusal to cooperate was brought up as one of the many reasons she should receive a long sentence. In comparison, praise was heaped on Ambrose for turning in his wife and facilitating the harassment of both her children and her mother, whose house was raided after Mason’s bond was revoked.

The full text of this article is available at:

<http://supportmariemason.org/texts/crucifixion-of-marie-mason>

“Pattern”

Marie Mason
December 2008

What lies within, still ties without
One flowing through one
From one into another
A filament of Spirit
Spun spider fine
And finite
Just enough to touch us all.
Tying tiny threads of possibility
Tangling in the warp and woof of being
Of beings that combined begin to be

A Pattern
My blood a river running through forever
Traveling through Time to be, to die
And yet again to Be
A Pattern
And even so, it is illusion
Everything that is and is not
Solid matter moves in mini-galaxies
Of energy, attraction and repulsion
Particles partnered and divorced
In constant cycles
Spiraling out from tiny orbits to
The constancy of crystals
As they form a myriad molecules
Then break free to form another form
Until the forms are so expanded that they live
Like notions
Sovereign and undivided
A wolf, a man, a mouse, a tree – and even we
Are only parts of something whole
Portals to an entity that seems
Complete, complex
And yet
Spins within the galaxy of
Planets
Space yawning cold between
And all in turn in motion
Moving as a single Universe
A Pattern that is, is not
And is again
Only the most dangerous and
Arrogant of soul insanity
Could dictate the thread
Be cut
At any point
For we are tied
One to another
A filament of Spirit
Spun spider fine
And finite
Just enough to touch us
All.

MARIE MASON'S SENTENCING STATEMENT TO THE COURT

Western District of Michigan
Lansing, MI
February 5th, 2009

Your Honor,

I understand the serious nature of the offenses to which I have plead guilty. I accept responsibility for my actions. At the time, I feared there were dire and immediate threats to both human and non-human lives and that the health and safety of human communities, as well as the ecological integrity of the Earth, were in jeopardy.

I care deeply about my fellow human being and the other living creatures with whom we share this planet. I felt responsible to take extreme action in the hope that it would save lives and halt deadly practices that directly threatened living beings and contributed to the degradation of the environment. I thought that what I was doing would shine a light on these dangerous policies so that an informed public dialogue would ensue and policies would be changed.

In all of my actions, I was present at the moment that property damage was done or a fire was set. I believed that this way I could ensure that no living creature would inadvertently wander into the site and be endangered. At the time, I felt that it was possible to anticipate and avoid any potential threat to life by taking precautions and by being vigilant at each event. This was not possible, despite my efforts.

In particular, the arson at MSU ended up greatly exceeding the scope of my intent, so much so that I almost became the first casualty in these



types of offenses.

Even so, other than this one instance of danger to myself, I remained blinded to the risks that others were exposed to during that action. Much later, even years later, I became aware of how other people who came to the scene after I left were frightened and confused. I also found out that students and employees were greatly inconvenienced and lost personal property, that they felt that there might be a continued threat to them. As I understand it now, firefighters entered the building and were also in danger from the fire and the subsequent water damage to the building. I never anticipated or intended that anyone would have been endangered and am truly sorry that anyone's life was put in danger.

For more than twenty years, I participated in every legal avenue open to me as a private citizen to educate and persuade government officials and corporate representatives to reconsider policies. I have also participated in civil disobedience in the style taught by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatman Gandhi, whose non-violent teachings I embraced. Given my commitment to non-violence, it was only under an extreme set of circumstances that I rationalized my actions and put people in danger. I believed that I was taking risks to prevent a greater harm to living beings. I never intended to cause danger of harm to any living thing, and by that standard I failed.

I want to explain that the more I learned of the consequences of deforestation and genetic engineering, the more desperate I felt. I am not opposed to conducting research in the interests of expanding knowledge and bringing improvements to health and well being when it is conducted in a responsible and humane way. But genetic engineering research is often conducted in open-air situations that release contaminated pollen into the environment with devastating effects, as in the case of the terminator seed plants. Communities should have the right to choose or refuse the risks that come with GMO's. What I was more and more aware of in my research and in my dealings with indigenous activists' work around the globe is that the use of GMO's forced on communities by collusion between banks, companies and governments was causing starvation, debt and environmental damage through contact with these GMO's. I felt so much grief for this needless suffering, these needless deaths.

The threat posed to all of us by global warming - for which all of the world's forests act as a buffer against - is direct and dramatic. The increase in catastrophic storms that caused so much death and destruction in New Orleans and in many parts of Asia are attributable to the erratic warming of the planet. Forests sequester carbon and cool the planet. As we lose them, we lose the time we need to find new and more sustainable ways of

fulfilling our energy needs before global climate crisis is unavoidable.

But despite my despair, I have never felt entitled to cause physical harm in order to protect life. I have always taken to heart the Buddhist spiritual principle to take no action that would bring physical harm to any living being. Although there were some risks associated with my actions that were unintentional and unanticipated, I had convinced myself they could be eliminated. In retrospect, I see that this was not possible, and I regret it. I acknowledge that greater harm could have happened and that it is very fortunate that no one was physically hurt, and that there was psychological damage done. I acknowledge those risks and knowing what I know now, I would not have taken the same actions.

My actions were individual acts of conscience and I take sole responsibility for them. The property damage was intended to be symbolic and theatrical in nature, not dangerous or threatening to any individual.

I hope to protect my community and the Earth, to respond in defense of the living systems of animals, land and water. I tried to preserve the natural world from destruction because it is all of our home, because its health is necessary for all of use to live well.

I have failed to bring about the changes that I sought and caused harm where I intended none. I am saddened and sorry for that. My hope is that the next generation that inherits this Earth and the responsibility for stewardship will succeed in finding better methods of bringing about the evolution of our society, a transformation that will benefit all those who share this beautiful Earth.

Though I have been wrong and misguided in my actions to defend my community and this Earth from harm, I hope to be able to dedicate what's left of my life to service in better ways. I hope to volunteer at a burn center in my community, as some of my past actions risked injuries of that nature. I have some first aid training from my work experience, as well as training for home health care that might be helpful.

I also hope to be able to contribute to community garden programs, both working with at-risk youth and providing food to distribution programs. These gardens have also been pressed into service to provide herbs to free herbal palliative health care. I have had experience as a volunteer before with these kinds of groups and would be happy to contribute again.

I want to state that I am genuinely sorry to those who have felt personally frightened by my actions. I was unable to see this as a consequence of my actions before, probably as I was so overwhelmed with my own grief and fear that I couldn't empathize with other's perceptions. I meant to



inspire thought and compassion, not fear.

I also acknowledge that my actions endangered lives and I am deeply regretful for that. It was never my intention to cause physical harm and certainly not serious injury. I was wrong to believe it could always be avoided. I am and will always be grateful that my actions did not result in death or injury. But I do understand now that the risk was there.

Lastly, I feel that I need to apologize for the expense and suffering that my actions have caused my family, especially my children. I love my family very much and this has been so hard on them. They have been loving and generous in their support for me.

I hope that you will take all of this into consideration as you make your decision, your Honor.

For more information and ways to help, visit marie's support websites:

<http://supportmariemason.org/>

<http://freemarie.org/>



WRITE TO MARIE

Mason is currently at the federal prison in Waseca, Minnesota. She greatly appreciates letters and images from supporters. These letters keep Marie's spirit up and are very meaningful to her. We encourage everyone to drop her a line, even if it is just a postcard. Please note that all letters are read and copied by authorities.

All letters must have a return address on the envelope. Also put a return address on the letter itself and date it, as prisoners are almost never given the envelopes. Avoid using white-out, stickers, tape, colored ink/paper or glitter. Written correspondence and drawings may be in pencil, standard ink pen, typewritten, or computer generated. Do not use felt pens, markers, crayon, or colored pencil, etc. All personal artwork must be in black & white, but copied pages can be in color. She can get pictures (no polaroids, though), although do not send more than five at once. You may wish to send color photocopies instead.

Books may be sent to her. The prison does not accept hardcovers, but she can receive softcovers (even used books) and they can be sent by individuals. Do not send more than 3 or 4 in a single package. If you can, write her first and ask about what books she wants.

Do not mention any illegal acts! Her mail is closely monitored by authorities. Avoid using initials or talking about the specifics of organizing. The content of letters you send may have an impact on her.

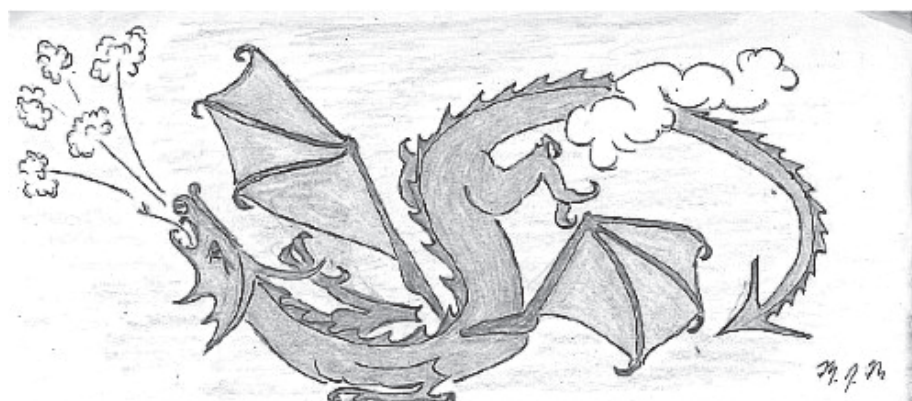
Marie Mason #04672-061
FCI Waseca
Federal Correctional Institution
P.O. Box 1731
Waseca, MN 56093

“Promise”
Marie Mason

My face against the mossish bark
Arms outstretched to hold and feel
the heartbeat throb of
Water
Pulsing low below the surface
Even as it runs through my own veins
Your feet thrust deep within the Earth
Your head held high to track the Stars
An existence both of the Prayer and silent Service
Steadfast in years
And the long reach through time
A storied lesson told in rings
I read through fingers
Ancient Oak
Encircled by your children
Now grown tall
The deer pause to witness
This conversation and this promise
Between the Mouse and Lion, as of old,
Because tonight the blue strips
Flutter all around you in a winter breeze

Banners heralding
Disaster
Houses to be built
Destroying
Home.





<http://supportmariemason.org/>

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