

## **Jeffrey (Free) Luers Resentencing Hearing, Feb. 28, 2008, Eugene, OR**

Lane County Circuit Court Sentencing Hearing in front of Judge J.A. Billings

Present: Defendant Jeffrey Luers, Attorneys Lauren Regan, Jess Barton and Hugh Duvall on behalf of Mr. Luers; Assistant District Attorney Erik Hasselman on behalf of the State of Oregon.

### **Statement of Jeffrey Luers to Judge Billings at Sentencing**

It has been many years since I first stood in court to be sentenced for these actions. I now not only have the benefit of hindsight but also possess the knowledge and understanding that comes from leaving the naiveté of youth behind.

I can now say with all honesty that I was wrong to think that arson would inspire social change. But, my failure in understanding that does not mean I have changed my opinion of radical activism.

Mr. Hasselman has a written statement from me in which I have acknowledged being wrong. I have also committed to living the life of a law-abiding citizen and promoting my activism through legal means and channels. Understandably, the prosecutor has expressed some skepticism of my sincerity. I wish to lay those fears to rest.

I am truly excited about my future. Through the love and support of my family, friends and many people I do not even know, I have numerous options available to me. I am looking forward to furthering my education, and pursuing my goals through hard work. I am ready to share my life with my loved ones and I am dedicated to giving back to the community that has shown me so much love and support through these years of imprisonment. That is not the lip service the prosecutor may fear, but my sincere desire to move on with my life.

However, choosing to take a new path and recognizing my mistakes and failures does not make me ashamed of them. I am sorry if my actions instilled fear or the sense of victimization in the Romania family. That was never my intent.

I sought to promote change through radical struggle. I viewed the refusal of our government and corporate institutions to address the issues and dire consequences of global warming as legitimate reasons for direct action. I still believe that government and corporate inaction is a legitimate reason for direct action. Yet, I recognize that militant struggle has failed to create widespread social change for many reasons. And I'm not sure if it is even capable of creating the change we desperately need.

We are witnessing a mass extinction event taking place in our life times. The world's top scientists are warning that by the middle of this century, 30 to 50 percent of all living species could be extinct. There are predictions of 250 million people, or more, dying for lack of water and food. Fears that melting glaciers in Alaska and Greenland could catastrophically raise global sea levels. While here at home our leading climate scientists have been censored by our government. Their reports edited by Bush appointees who now work for some of Americas biggest oil companies. We have been deceived by the very people responsible for our well-being.

Fortunately, the veil has been lifted and many Americans are now demanding that action be taken on climate change and other environmental issues. Indeed many states are now confronting our federal government on the topic. However, so far all legislative attempts to solve the problem have failed or have lacked the necessary backbone to accomplish anything meaningful. The time for change has to be now. We no longer have the luxury of passing our problems off to the next generation. We must be vigilant in our determination to create change and find solutions to what is arguably the greatest threat humanity has ever faced. It is the people in this courtroom, the citizens of this country, this state and

this country that must carry the responsibility for creating change. For if we can't change our own lives how can we expect others to change theirs?

I'm ready and willing to change so that I can help find real solutions to our problems. I'm ready to help find methods that aren't limited to rhetoric. Doomed to failure by symbolism or rendered meaningless by corruption. I choose to take a new direction because not only is a new path sorely needed in my own life, but a new direction is sorely needed by our country. I recognize that if I'm not helping to create that change, I'm just standing in the way. We are all in this together whether we are labeled radical, conservative or liberal. And together is the only way we are going to solve this problem.

It is easy for me to say these things. I doubt that my commitment to the environment or social change has ever been questioned. However, I am sure the court as well as many others, question whether or not I have truly left my militant past behind. To which all I can say is that I am ready to live my life. I'm ready to put the needs of my family first. And I'm also ready to find success where thus far radical struggle has failed. More than anything, I am just ready to move on."

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To which Judge J.A. Billings responded that he has been a lawyer and a judge for 35 years and he has never received a statement from a defendant of such high quality. "I'm very impressed with you. I have no hesitation in accepting this sentence. I wish you only the best."

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## **2/28/08 Media Statement of Jeffrey Luers After Sentencing Hearing**

Today I feel a great weight lifted off of me, and my loved ones. While I believe my new sentence is still more of a reflection of my activism and my dissent than my actual crimes; I am looking forward to my much closer release date.

I continue to stand by my actions and have no regrets about my choices. These last several years in prison have not deterred me from speaking my mind, following my heart or standing up against oppression and injustice.

I am proud of the many things I have accomplished while incarcerated, including reaching beyond oceans and borders to help raise awareness about global warming and to help combat social injustice.

I am thankful to my family, friends and the thousands of supporters and fellow activists from around the world who have stood by me since day one. And I'd especially like to thank my attorneys, and friends. Lauren Regan, Misha Dunlap and Shawn Wiley for never giving up on getting me out sooner than 22 years.

I am happy to say this journey is almost over and I'll be coming home soon.