

Political Prisoner

Alvaro Hernandez

Charges

As a longtime anti-police brutality and prison abolition activist, Alvaro Luna Hernandez was a popular target of local and state police in west Texas. On July 18, 1996, Sheriff Jack McDaniel of Alpine, Texas attempted to arrest Alvaro at his home without a warrant. When Alvaro questioned the legality of the arrest, Sheriff McDaniel drew his gun. The unarmed Alvaro managed to successfully disarm McDaniel and fled. Several days later, Alvaro was found by police at his mother's house. Without identifying themselves, police proceeded to open fire on the house and refused to accept Alvaro's attempts to surrender for several hours.



On June 9, 1997, Alvaro was convicted of threatening Sheriff McDaniel. All charges against him relating to the "firefight" at his mother's house were overturned. Alvaro was sentenced to 50 years.

The original charge for which Sheriff McDaniel attempted to arrest Alvaro - robbery -- was later dismissed in court with Alvaro acting as his own lawyer.

Bio

In 1976, Alvaro was convicted of a murder he did not commit. Ongoing media exposure of the injustice of his conviction led to his acquittal and release in short order. In the 1980's, Alvaro was brutally beaten by police in Alpine, Texas. He responded by successfully suing the Pecos county Sheriff's department and began a career as an anti-prison and anti-police brutality activist.

Alvaro has been an organizer with the Prisoner Solidarity Committee, Stop the Violence Youth Committee and La Raza, a national Hispanic anti-poverty organization. In 1993 he was a delegate to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, where he spoke of the injustice of the American prison/industrial complex. Alvaro is a longtime community organizer and 'street lawyer' who has used his understanding of the law to help those in the poor Hispanic neighbourhoods of west Texas.

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