

<http://divergences.be/spip.php?article726>



# Twenty Years of Yawning

- Archives - Archives Générales 2006 - 2022 - 2008 - N°13. Mai/may/ 2008 - Art -

Date de mise en ligne : Tuesday 13 May 2008

---

Copyright © Divergences Revue libertaire en ligne - All rights reserved

---

### Preface:

This poem is about a period of time in the late sixties and early seventies when I was undergoing a personal transformation: a transition from political activism to a more spiritual and artistic mode of existence. In 1968 I was one of the “Buffalo Nine” draft resisters and was in two federal trials that ended, in my cases, in hung juries. Other defendants were not so lucky and ended up serving time in federal institutions or having to flee the country. At the same time I was Chairman of the Martin Sostre Defense Committee.

Sostre’s case and the B9 trials were interconnected. Sostre was owner of the Afro-Asian Bookstore and was arrested in 1987 for riot and subversion although the immediate charges were arson and drugs. Sensing a frame-up by state and local police, I started up a defense committee for Martin who was labeled “Martin X” in the newspapers.

After my B9 trials I was expelled from WWP (Worker’s World Party) an old left group that correctly found me too anarchistic for their tastes. I couldn’t find steady work in Buffalo (the FBI had the curious habit of visiting my employers) and decided to travel to the West. I began drifting through the great southwest, first visiting the Grand Canyon.

After various psychedelic experiences in Arizona , New Mexico, California, and Oregon, I ended up living and working for one year in Naco, Sonora on the American border where I taught in a grade school. The poem is about this period of time and afterwards, backpacking in Europe and various adventures there. The political life was never completely abandoned and I continued to work with Amnesty International on Martin’s behalf which helped win his release.

<http://divergences.be/sites/divergences.be/local/cache-vignettes/L64xH64/pdf-b8aed.svg>

Jerry Ross "Twenty Years of Yawning"

[Website](#)