

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 9, 2017

Congratulations to everyone who worked tirelessly to launch the U.S. Chapter of the International Coalition of Human Rights in the Philippines. Promoting human rights and calls for peace have a place here in Oregon as well as abroad.

I would like to extend a special welcome to Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza, general secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. He has been a fearless leader in the movement to hold Philippine President Duterte accountable for horrific human rights abuses against his own people.

Know that your voices are not in isolation: I have joined Senate colleagues in demanding that President Duterte stop his campaign of murder and adopt a comprehensive approach to drug addiction that centers on treatment.

The United States should be a vocal advocate for our values. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I will continue to push for demonstrated improvements in President Duterte's human rights record and an end to extrajudicial killings.

Thank you for your advocacy for human rights and peace, and congratulations on this new chapter.

All my best,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



To Portland City Council,

We, the undersigned faith leaders in Portland, urge the City of Portland to join Portland Filipinos and allies in the struggle for peace and justice for the Filipino people.

6,000 Filipinos leave the Philippines everyday to seek work abroad. In addition to the already dire economic conditions that force this mass migration, the current Duterte Administration, which President Trump has said "is doing a good job," has instigated over 20,000 extrajudicial killings in a war against the Filipino People. While Duterte's war against the people is veiled in a war on drugs and a war against terror, his tactics have in reality resulted in mass killings against civilians, a crackdown on community organizers and widespread displacement of indigenous peoples.

In May 2018, the City of Portland hosted the Stop the Killings Speaking Tour: The People's Caravan for Peace and Justice in the Philippines to expose and oppose US support of the Duterte regime and the ongoing killings. However, one of the speakers for the tour, Jerome Aba, never made it to Portland. Despite his 10 year visa, Aba was detained for 28 hours at San Francisco International Airport. Aba faced torture tactics at the hands of Customs and Border Protection, who made him strip and sit in front of a fan. Customs and Border Protection further dishonored Aba and his faith, bringing Aba only a ham sandwich when Aba had communicated he could not eat ham.

As faith leaders and people seeking peace, we join the City of San Francisco Board of Supervisors in condemning the inhumane treatment of Jerome Aba and call the City of Portland to create a resolution to further condemn the action and to call on our Federal representatives to investigate. Further, while Jerome could not come to Portland for his scheduled visit the rest of Tour came through Portland, and we ask that the City of Portland to uplift Jerome's message to stop the killings in the Philippines, end US tax dollars to human rights violations, and say no to the growing dictatorship of Trump backed President Duterte. Finally, we call on the city of Portland to resolve to uphold its sanctuary city standards at Portland International Airport, ensuring human treatment and the basic rights of migrants, refugees and all travelers through Portland.

An estimated 23,000 Filipinos live in Portland -- for Filipinos in Portland, for all Portlanders whose tax dollars are used for human rights violations in the Philippines, and for peace and justice, we implore you to heed our call and resolve: Justice for Jerome! Justice for the Filipino People! Justice for all Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers in Airports!

Sincerely,

Rev Barbara Campbell, Presbyterian Church USA
Rev. Randy Woodley, Eloheh Farm
Edith Woodley, Eloheh Farm
Jade Souza, Member of Sierra Cascades Yearly Meeting
Rev. Ron Werner Jr., Lutheran Church
Rev. Solveig Nilsen-Goodin, Wilderness Way
Dr. Kathryn M. Kendall, Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Karyn Dix, Murray Hills Christian - Disciples
Ken Lloyd, The Underground
Emily Rice, Western Methodist Justice Mission
Rev. Dr. Catherine N. Davis, Newberg First United Methodist
Stephanie Simmons, Free Methodist St John's
Evan Simmons, Free Methodist St John's
John Shuck, Minister, Southminster Presbyterian Church
Michelle Foster, Women's Theology Hub
Father Jaime Case, St. Luke's Vancouver Episcopal Church
Lyn Rush, Pinoy Vanport Ministries
Rabbi Debra Kolodny, Portland's UnShul
Joel Sommer, Access Covenant Church
Rev. Jon Umbdenstock, Across Culture, Woodlawn MIC
Ryan Smith, Assemblies of God
Rev. Jim Sequiera, Cascade View Covenant Church

**NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
PORTLAND, OREGON CHAPTER**



3519 NE 15TH AVENUE, #155
PORTLAND, OREGON 97212

June 1, 2018

Mayor Ted Wheeler
Portland City Council
1221 SW Fourth Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Testimony in support of ICHRP call for City Council Resolution

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Portland City Council Members:

I write on behalf of the Portland Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild in support of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) in their call for the Council to support their efforts to protect human rights, both in the Philippines and here in Portland. The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) was formed in 1937 as the nation's first racially integrated voluntary bar association, with a mandate to advocate for fundamental principles of human and civil rights. The Portland Chapter's support for the ICHRP proposal is in keeping with that goal.

The human rights abuses in the Philippines are well-documented and dire. The U.S. State Department's most recent annual human rights report describes the sharp rise in extrajudicial killings since the start of President Duterte's anti-drug campaign in 2016.¹ Some accounts indicate that the death toll has now surpassed 20,000.² Duterte stands behind these killings; he has made numerous public statements suggesting that killing suspected drug traffickers and users was necessary to meet his goal of wiping out drug-related crime. Duterte has also attacked institutions critical of the killings, including threats to members of the press³ and verbal attacks against the Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court, who was removed from her office after she spoke out against the killings.⁴ The Duterte administration also declared that Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Joan Carling, co-

¹ U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2017: Philippines, *at*: <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm?year=2017&dliid=277111>.

² Ted Regencia, "Senator: Rodrigo Duterte's Drug War Has Killed 20,000," Al Jazeera, (Feb. 21, 2018) *at*: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/02/senator-rodrigo-duterte-drug-war-killed-20000-180221134139202.html>.

³ Carlos Conde, "Relentless Assault on the Philippine Press," Human Rights Watch, April 20, 2018, *at*: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/30/relentless-assault-philippine-press>.

⁴ Carlos Conde, "Philippine Chief Justice Ouster an Assault on Rights, Democracy," Human Rights Watch, May 11, 2018, *at*: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/11/philippine-chief-justice-ouster-assault-rights-democracy>.

convener of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group on the Sustainable Development Goals were terrorists, placing their lives in jeopardy.⁵

Last month, the ICHRP hosted a national speaking tour to oppose U.S. support of the Duterte regime and the ongoing killings, which included a stop in Portland. However, one of the speakers for the tour, Jerome Aba, never made it out of the San Francisco airport. Mr. Aba reports that, despite holding a valid U.S. visa, he was detained for 28 hours at the San Francisco International Airport, was subject to inhumane treatment at the hands of Customs and Border Control agents there and was denied access to the Bay-area NLG lawyers he asked to speak to during that time. The San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a resolution condemning U.S. Customs and Border Protection's inhumane treatment of foreign nationals detained at the San Francisco airport and called on federal officials to open an investigation into Mr. Aba's allegations.⁶

A similar resolution from the City Council will aid ICHRP in their efforts to raise awareness of these issues in the United States and abroad. This awareness will contribute to public pressure to end the abuses and will support human rights activists in the Philippines to continue their brave struggle. The Portland Chapter of the NLG therefore urges the Council to grant the ICHRP's request.

For a Better World,



Shauna M. Curphey

On behalf of

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD

PORTLAND, OREGON CHAPTER

⁵ Investor Alliance for Human Rights, "Investors call for urgent corporate action to address rising threats faced by human rights defenders," April 24, 2018, *at*: <https://www.iccr.org/investors-call-urgent-corporate-action-address-rising-threats-faced-human-rights-defenders>.

⁶ Bay City News Service, "Torture Allegations at SFO Prompt Condemnation of Inhumane Treatment, Calls for Formal Investigation," San Francisco Chronicle (May 2, 2018) *at*: <https://www.sfgate.com/news/bayarea/article/Torture-Allegations-At-Sfo-Prompt-Condemnation-Of-12883684.php>

The NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD is an association dedicated to the need for basic change in the structure of our political and economic system. We seek to unite the lawyers, law students, legal workers and jailhouse lawyers of America in an organization that shall function as an effective political and social force in the service of the people, to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests.

Resolution supporting the City of San Francisco Resolution to Condemn Inhumane treatment of detainees held at San Francisco International Airport by Customs and Border Protection, Moving to use the City of Portland's voice against torture and the just treatment of all migrants, refugees, international travelers at port of entries in Portland, and supporting Jerome Aba's message against the 20,000 extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, urging Federal Representatives to call for an independent investigation into the detainment of Jerome Succor Aba.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the federal law enforcement agency under the Department of Homeland Security responsible for admitting citizens and non-citizens into the United States at recognized ports of entry;

WHEREAS, The U.S. Customs and Border Protection is a taxpayer funded agency, responsible for adhering to fundamental standards of fairness and justice when administering the laws of the United States, including the Bill of Right of the United States Constitution;

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration has engaged in a nationwide pattern of abuse and coercion at major ports of entry, including requiring U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents to engage in hostile, coercive, and physically intrusive interrogation tactics;

WHEREAS, Under federal regulations, including 8 C.F.R. 287.8 (standards for enforcement activities) federal border patrol agents may not engage in threatening, coercive, or physically abusive conduct while interrogating applicants for admission into the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution ensures that all individuals subject to law enforcement questioning have fundamental due process rights; including the right to be free from physical and psychological intimidation at the border, including torture;

WHEREAS, The Fourth Amendment to the United States ensures that all individuals subject to law enforcement questioning have a right to be free from the use of excessive force by government officials during an interrogation; and,

WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba, a human rights worker and peace advocate from Mindanao, Philippines was invited by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, and the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines - United States Chapter, to speak in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days and at a peace caravan in the US from April 20 to May 14; and, and ***to come speak in Portland between May 1-5.***

WHEREAS, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines was launched on December 9th by Portland organizations in Vancouver Washington, upon which ICHRP decided to host the Stop the Killings Speaking Tour spurring the invitation of Jerome Aba to the Portland and the United States; and,

WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba was given a 10 -year multiple entry visa by the US Embassy in Manila and was scheduled to meet with US Conference of Catholic Bishops and several congressional offices in Washington D.C. and human rights organizations in major U.S. cities; and,

WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba was invited to the U.S. to speak about human rights violations in the Philippines regarding 20,000 extrajudicial killings under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's "Drug War" campaign, and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of indigenous people and national minorities with the destruction of Marawi City and ongoing martial law in Mindanao; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, a human rights organizations in the Philippines, before he boarded his flight in at the Ninoy Aquino International (NAIA) Terminal he was brought to a room by Filipino Immigration officers and was asked if he was going to participate in rallies in the U.S.; and,

WHEREAS, Upon arrival at San Francisco Airport on April 17 at 8pm, Jerome Succor Aba was escorted by two officers and was brought to the Homeland Security office where his cellphone and bags were confiscated and was detained 28 hours until he was sent back to the Philippines on Thursday, April 19 at 12:30am ; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba immediately and repeatedly requested legal counsel and was informed by officers that he was not entitled to legal representation or any human rights; and,

WHEREAS, During his detention, representatives from the National Lawyers' Guild were requesting to speak to Jerome Succor Aba at SFO but Customs and Border Protection denied them access to see him and speak with him; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, during his 28 hours of detention, Jerome Succor Aba was subjected to ongoing interrogation by armed officials about his political activism and affiliation, and the nature of his visit, and accused of being a "terrorist" and a "communist; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba was offered food only after 24 hours of detention and when he informed the officers that he is Muslim and does not eat pork, the only food they offered him was a ham sandwich; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba was also ordered to strip naked, and was interrogated by three officers as they turned a big industrial fan which blew cold freezing air on him; and,

WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, officers taunted Jerome Succor Aba and threatened to shoot him if he made the wrong move; and,

WHEREAS, Forcing a custodial detainee to strip his clothes and stand naked in front of a wind blowing machine blowing cold air is, by its very nature, humiliating, psychologically traumatizing, and beyond any reasonable boundary of the rules of interrogation; and, antithetical to the very concept of liberty and justice upon which this Country was founded; and,

WHEREAS, the Trump Administration has been documented to have close relations with Philippine President Duterte's administration, and provided tacit, if not express, support for extra judicial violence and assassination as a means to quell legitimate dissent; now, therefore; and,

WHEREAS, there has also been another recent case of violence at the U.S. border, in which U.S. Customs and Border Protections shot and killed Claudia Gomez, a 20 year old indigenous Guatemalan woman seeking education in the U.S.; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Portland has declared itself a Sanctuary City in Resolution 37277 and resolved "to encourages all Portlanders to unite and work together to promote kindness and understanding in our shared community, rejecting hatred and divisiveness, as we strive to protect the freedoms we all hold dear."; and,

WHEREAS, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors have strongly condemned inhumane treatment of detainees held by Customs and Border Protection in San Francisco Airport; and,

WHEREAS, Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley has staunchly expressed his work for the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines and has promised "to continue to press President Duterte on his human rights record and call on him to end his campaign of extrajudicial killings"; and,

WHEREAS, the detainment, torture, and deportation of Jerome Aba has had a deep impact not only on the estimated 23,000 Filipinos residing in the larger Portland area, but all migrants, refugees, and international travelers in the Portland area; be it

RESOLVED, That the City Council of Portland strongly condemn inhumane treatment of detainees held by Customs and Border Protection in San Francisco Airport; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Portland urges our Federal representatives to call for an independent and transparent investigation into the

detainment and treatment of Jerome Succor Aba by Customs and Border Protection at SFO; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Portland hereby directs the Clerk of the Council to transmit copies to Representative Earl Blumenauer, Representative Suzanne Bonamici, Representative , Senator Jeff Merkley, and Senator Ron Wyden, and with a request to take all action necessary to achieve the objectives of this Resolution; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Portland use its voice to advocate for fair treatment of all migrants, refugees and international travelers passing through U.S. borders in Portland; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City Council of Portland raise the call of Jerome Aba and the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, to condemn the over 20,000 extrajudicial killings under the Duterte Administration in the Philippines and to US military aid that comes from Portlanders and goes towards training and assisting the Philippine military and police in any way in performing extrajudicial killings.

1 [Condemning the Inhumane Treatment of Detainees Held at San Francisco International
2 Airport - Urging an Independent Investigation into the Detainment of Jerome Succor Aba]

3 **Resolution condemning the inhumane treatment of detainees held by United States**
4 **Customs and Border Protection at San Francisco International Airport (SFO); urging**
5 **federal representatives to call for an independent investigation into the detainment of**
6 **Jerome Succor Aba and allegations of torture he experienced during his 28 hours of**
7 **detainment at SFO.**

8
9 WHEREAS, United States Customs and Border Protection is the federal law
10 enforcement agency under the Department of Homeland Security responsible for admitting
11 citizens and non-citizens into the United States at recognized ports of entry;

12 WHEREAS, San Francisco International Airport (SFO) represents the largest port of
13 entry in the Bay Area;

14 WHEREAS, United States Customs and Border Protection is a taxpayer funded
15 agency, responsible for adhering to fundamental standards of fairness and justice when
16 administering the laws of the United States, including the Bill of Rights of the United States
17 Constitution;

18 WHEREAS, The Trump Administration has engaged in a nationwide pattern of abuse
19 and coercion at major ports of entry, including requiring United States Customs and Border
20 Protection agents to engage in hostile, coercive, and physically intrusive interrogation tactics;

21 WHEREAS, Under federal regulations, including 8 C.F.R. 287.8 (standards for
22 enforcement activities), federal border patrol agents may not engage in threatening, coercive,
23 or physically abusive conduct while interrogating applicants for admission into the United
24 States; and

1 WHEREAS, The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution ensures that all
2 individuals subject to law enforcement questioning have fundamental due process rights;
3 including the right to be free from physical and psychological intimidation at the border,
4 including torture;

5 WHEREAS, The Fourth Amendment to the United States ensures that all individuals
6 subject to law enforcement questioning have a right to be free from the use of excessive force
7 by government officials during an interrogation; and,

8 WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba, a human rights worker and peace advocate from
9 Mindanao, Philippines, was invited by the General Board of Global Ministries of the United
10 Methodist Church, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, and the International Coalition for Human
11 Rights in the Philippines - United States Chapter, to speak in the Ecumenical Advocacy Days
12 and at a peace caravan in the United States from April 20 to May 14; and,

13 WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba was given a 10-year multiple entry visa by the United
14 States Embassy in Manila and was scheduled to meet with United States Conference of
15 Catholic Bishops and several congressional offices in Washington D.C. and human rights
16 organizations in major United States cities; and,

17 WHEREAS, Jerome Succor Aba was invited to the United States to speak about
18 human rights violations in the Philippines regarding 12,000 extra-judicial killings under
19 Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's "Drug War" campaign, and the displacement of
20 hundreds of thousands of indigenous people and national minorities with the destruction of
21 Marawi City and ongoing martial law in Mindanao; and,

22 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, a human rights organizations in the Philippines,
23 before he boarded his flight in at the Ninoy Aquino International (NAIA) Terminal he was
24 brought to a room by Filipino immigration officers and was asked if he was going to participate
25 in rallies in the United States; and,

1 WHEREAS, Upon arrival at the San Francisco International Airport on April 17 at
2 8:00 p.m., Jerome Succor Aba was escorted by two officers and was brought to the Homeland
3 Security office, where his cellphone and bags were confiscated and was detained 28 hours
4 until he was sent back to the Philippines on Thursday, April 19 at 12:30am ; and,

5 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba immediately and repeatedly
6 requested legal counsel and was informed by officers that he was not entitled to legal
7 representation or any human rights; and,

8 WHEREAS, During his detention, representatives from the National Lawyers' Guild
9 were requesting to speak to Jerome Succor Aba at SFO but United States Customs and
10 Border Protection denied them access to see him and speak with him; and,

11 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, during his 28 hours of detention, Jerome Succor
12 Aba was subjected to ongoing interrogation by armed officials about his political activism and
13 affiliation, and the nature of his visit, and accused of being a "terrorist" and a "communist;"
14 and,

15 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba was offered food only after
16 24 hours of detention; when he informed the officers that he is Muslim and does not eat pork,
17 the only food they offered him was a ham sandwich; and,

18 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, Jerome Succor Aba was also ordered to strip
19 naked, and was interrogated by three officers as they turned a big industrial fan which blew
20 cold freezing air on him; and,

21 WHEREAS, According to Karapatan, officers taunted Jerome Succor Aba and
22 threatened to shoot him if he made the wrong move; and,

23 WHEREAS, Forcing a custodial detainee to strip off his clothes and stand naked in
24 front of an industrial strength fan is humiliating, psychologically traumatizing, and beyond any
25

1 reasonable boundary of the rules of interrogation; and, antithetical to the very concept of
2 liberty and justice upon which this Country was founded; and,

3 WHEREAS, The Trump Administration has been documented to have close relations
4 with Philippine President Duterte's administration, and provided tacit, if not express, support
5 for extra judicial violence and assassination as a means to quell legitimate dissent; now,
6 therefore, be it

7 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors strongly condemns
8 inhumane treatment of detainees held by United States Customs and Border Protection at the
9 San Francisco International Airport; and, be it

10 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges our
11 Federal authorities to call for an independent and transparent investigation into the
12 detainment and treatment of Jerome Succor Aba by United States Customs and Border
13 Protection at SFO; and be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby directs
15 the Clerk of the Board to transmit copies to Representative Nancy Pelosi, Representative
16 Jackie Speier, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and Senator Kamala Harris, with a request to take
17 all action necessary to achieve the objectives of this Resolution.



City and County of San Francisco

City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

Tails
Resolution

File Number: 180432

Date Passed: May 01, 2018

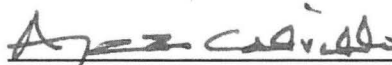
Resolution condemning the inhumane treatment of detainees held by United States Customs and Border Protection at San Francisco International Airport (SFO); urging federal representatives to call for an independent investigation into the detainment of Jerome Succor Aba and allegations of torture he experienced during his 28 hours of detainment at SFO.

May 01, 2018 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED

Ayes: 11 - Breed, Cohen, Fewer, Kim, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, Sheehy, Stefani, Tang and Yee

File No. 180432

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 5/1/2018 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

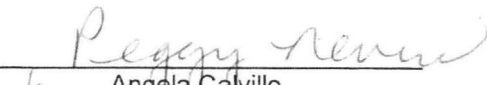


Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

Unsigned
Mark E. Farrell
Mayor

May 11, 2018
Date Approved

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.



for Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

5/11/18
Date

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Tabitha Ponciano <tgponciano@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 02, 2018 11:27 AM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Subject: June 6th City Hall speaking request

Hello,

On behalf of my organization the Portland Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, I would like to request one of the five spots for public comment at City Hall on Wednesday June 6, 2018 to request the city to support human rights in the Philippines.

Thank,

Tabitha Ponciano
702.374.5830

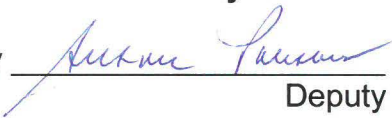
Request of Tabitha Ponciano to address Council regarding supporting human rights in the Philippines (Communication)

JUN 06 2018

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAY 29 2018

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		