

## Who is William 'Lefty' Gilday?

William 'Lefty' Gilday is a 60s radical sentenced to death for his involvement in a bank expropriation while attempting to finance the anti-war movement during the Vietnam War. Gilday is a former minor league baseball player from Amesbury, Massachusetts, who in his early to mid-thirties was arrested on robbery charges. While imprisoned he met up with Stanley Bond, a Vietnam helicopter pilot also in jail for robbery. The two became friends, and after their release, entered into the Student Tutor Education Program (STEP), a program designed to help former inmates enter into university level education. Gilday enrolled in Boston's Northeastern University with another fellow inmate, Robert Valeri. Bond entered into Brandeis University.

It did not take long before the three former inmates got involved in the student movements of the 1960s. William Gilday and friends became involved in the radical group known as the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and later moved into a militant offshoot of SDS, known as the Weather Underground.

Gilday began to organize around students' rights and the anti-war movement. During this period, the three met up with Susan Saxe, Katherine Power and Michael Fleischer. The three were college students from Brandeis University.

According to the FBI, Gilday and friends were a "radical, revolutionary group dedicated to attacking the United States military system and undermining police powers." The members engaged in an expropriation of funds from the Bell Federal

Savings and Loan Association in Philadelphia on September 1, 1970. They have also been connected with an assault on the National Guard armory at Newburyport, Massachusetts, on September 20, 1970, which left the armory heavily damaged by fire and explosions. Ammunition and a truck were seized during this action but were later recovered by authorities.

## The Boston Robbery

On September 23, 1970, members of the group entered the State Street Bank and Trust Company in Boston with the intent to expropriate funds to help finance the movement against the Vietnam War. The group retrieved \$26,585. As they left, a Boston police officer who had been alerted by a silent alarm was shot and killed by a Thompson .45 caliber sub-machine gun.

Shortly after the incident, Boston police obtained warrants for two college students, Susan Saxe and Katherine Power, and former convicts Stanley Bond, Robert Valeri and William Gilday. The five were charged with murdering the policeman during the robbery. Robert Valeri was quickly apprehended. Stanley Bond was apprehended at Grand Junction, Colorado, four days after the robbery while boarding an airplane.

The hunt for Gilday was the largest man-hunt in New England history, with close to 3,000 police, game wardens, military troops and other personnel involved. For eight days, Gilday was successful in evading the authorities before being captured after a pursuit with police cruisers and a helicopter. He was placed on the 'Most

Wanted' list approximately two hours prior to being arrested and by the time he was placed in custody, there were a total of 69 indictments against him.

In 1972 Bond was killed in an explosion in Walpole State Prison. The facts surrounding the explosion still remain in question. According to the authorities, Bond was making an explosive that was to be used during an attempted escape. Before the explosive could be used, it went off, killing Stanley Ray Bond. Some have suggested that authorities were aware of the planned escape and booby-trapped the explosive to go off when handled. Bond's body was cremated and his ashes were placed in Los Angeles National Cemetery at his mother's request. Robert Valeri became a witness for the state against his accomplices. He was sentenced to ten-to-fifteen years in prison for manslaughter and robbery, and after doing his time, was released. During his time in prison, Valeri changed his name to Christopher Alexander and served his time under that name.

Michael Fleischer, who was responsible for the actual shooting death of the officer in September 1970, also became a witness for the state. Fleischer had nine indictments totally dismissed after he testified against Gilday and Saxe six years later. With the help of the testimonies of Fleischer and Valeri, the government was successful in framing the murder charge on William Gilday rather than Michael Fleischer. Gilday was tried and found guilty for the killing of the Boston police officer and was sentenced to death. His sentence was later reduced to life imprisonment.

The FBI claimed Saxe and Power were able to elude authorities because of the close relationships they developed within the women's movement. FBI agents flooded the women's communities of Boston, Philadelphia, Lexington (Kentucky), Hartford and New Haven. Their conspicuous interrogation of hundreds of politically active women, followed by highly publicized grand jury subpoenas and jailings, wreaked havoc in health collectives and other vital projects. Activists and potential supporters were scared off, and fear spread across the country, hampering nationally organized women and lesbians.

In March of 1975, Susan Saxe was arrested in Philadelphia and served seven years in prison before finally being released. After twenty-three years on the run and five years on the 'Most Wanted' list, Katherine Power was arrested in 1993 after turning herself in to police. She was sentenced to eight to twelve years in prison and was released in October of 1999. Gilday is the only one still held captive. He is presently incarcerated in MCI Shirley in Shirley, Massachusetts. At the present time, he has had approximately nine appeals, having gone to the Supreme Court twice. Despite his imprisonment for thirty-five years, Gilday remains steadfast in his convictions for revolutionary change.

**Free William 'Lefty' Gilday**

**Free All Political Prisoners**

**Free Prisoners of War**

## **Free William 'Lefty' Gilday**

We encourage people to contact 'Lefty' and remind him that he is not alone.

Please write to him at:

**WILLIAM 'LEFTY' GILDAY**

W33537

P.O. Box 1218

Shirley, MA 01464-1218

MCI Shirley

Local groups working with Gilday:

**JERICHO AMNESTY COALITION**

PO Box 34186

Los Angeles, CA 90034

**Anarchist Black Cross Federation  
(ABCF)**

PO Box 11223

Whittier, CA 90603

email: [la@abcf.net](mailto:la@abcf.net)

[www.abcf.net](http://www.abcf.net)

YOU CAN HELP BY GIVING POLITICAL PRISONERS A VOICE AND VISIBILITY

THE TRUTH CAN SET THEM FREE!

# **William 'Lefty' Gilday**



**35 YEARS IN PRISON FOR  
HIS PART IN THE RESISTANCE  
AGAINST AN UNJUST WAR**

**RESISTANCE BY ANY MEANS  
NECESSARY**

